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Scenic Ohio is a nonprofit 501(c) (3) charitable organization dedicated to conserving Ohio's scenic resources and planning and maintaining safe and attractive highway corridors.

Scenic Ohio has a unique history as the only organization dedicated to the sustained beautification of Ohio's byways and communities. Founded in 1933 as the Ohio Roadside Council, it has a distinguished heritage as the longest standing non-profit organization in America dedicated to improving roadway environments and aesthetics.

Scenic Ohio works with local and state agencies, communities, and individuals to achieve its goals to conserve and protect Ohio's many scenic byways, historic, prehistoric, ecological resources and appearance of our gateways.



SCENIC
OHIO

America's Longest Standing
Advocate of Scenic Highways

AWARDS PROGRAM

Scenic Ohio honors those communities and other entities that are working to improve and protect their visual qualities, distinctive culture, or historical character. These awards recognize community and government agencies, organizations, and individuals who have taken positive measures to protect and enhance Ohio's scenic resources.

ODOT District 10 State Route 664 Relocation

Millions of visitors to Old Man's Cave in Hocking Hills State Park now have an easier and safer passage into the popular recreational area as a result of a new roadway and other improvements. The cornerstone of this project involved re-routing a short section of State Route 664 to improve safe entry into the park by an estimated two million visitors annually. Previously, visitors were required to park and cross the highway on foot. The new alignment eliminates the need for pedestrians to cross SR 664, and moves the roadway further from natural features of the park. Portions of the original roadway now serve as a pedestrian pathway. The plaza and entrance to the Visitors' Center were redesigned to include a new bus drop off zone, an outdoor eating area, and accessible walkways.

The Ohio Department of Transportation, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the Friends of the Hocking Hills State Park all had a central role in planning and funding these improvements. Environmental and aesthetic concerns and the transportation and recreational needs of the public were met through improved parking and access for emergency vehicles; greater compliance with ADA requirements; new aesthetic elements; additional landscaping incorporating native species; bio-filtering technologies; and post-construction Best Management Practices.

The cooperation between these public and private organizations enabled this project to be completed in less than a year to address the needs of the park. It improves safety for park visitors and supports the area's tourism industry by creating a more pleasant guest experience and enhancing visitor access in and around the state park. Through the collaboration of ODOT with the consultants, Stantec and Pro Geotech. and the Friends of Hocking Hills, a simple roadway relocation became an opportunity to enhance one of Ohio's most popular natural resources and make it safer for public use and enjoyment.

ODOT District 10 State Route 124 Emergency Project

ODOT District 10 needed to evaluate and recommend solutions to repair an important section of State Route 124 that is part of the Ohio River Scenic Byway near Long Bottom in Meigs County. Slope instability and landslide problems necessitated frequent temporary repairs of this section of the Scenic Byway. In 2005 the situation became serious due to a rapid draw-down event of the Ohio River. The recommended solution was to realign and relocate a 1.4 mile stretch of the roadway onto a rock shelf above the existing roadway out of the Ohio River floodplain. This solution presented challenging special features and a very tight timeline.

The site includes a rock shelter called the 'Devil's Hole', once used by Native Americans to hold captured settlers. Now a significant archaeological site, the Devil's Hole contains petroglyphs and an historic stone used by the settlers to make pitch. Given its importance to the history of the area, careful steps were taken during design and construction to preserve and protect the site: shifting the alignment uphill away from the rock shelter; prohibiting the use of heavy blasting; reducing erosion and runoff damage; and purchasing the entire privately owned property parcel where the site is located to give the State of Ohio ownership. The natural beauty and recreational use of the area were always major considerations. A new scenic overlook and a new public fishing access placed along SR-124 now provide a beautiful vista and safe access to the Ohio River.

Stantec Consulting Services was retained as the lead consultant. Environmental services, geotechnical services and roadway design services were also important parts of the project, which had to meet the approval of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) and the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The teamwork by ODOT, Stantec, and the other participants made this project unique and noteworthy.

ODOT District 6 & Ohio Garden Clubs 1-71 Rest Stop Garden / Blue Star Memorial Hwy

In 2009 the rest stop at mile marker 6 / 26 southbound on I-71 in Delaware County (north of Polaris and south of Route 36) received the Blue Star Memorial Highway designation from the National Garden Clubs Inc. The Blue Star program pays tribute to the armed forces that have defended the United States of America and was initiated during WW II. Markers are customarily dedicated along highways, at memorial parks and hospitals and are sponsored by state garden clubs which are part of the National Garden Club Inc.

This rest stop designation was sponsored by the Garden Clubs of Columbus District, GCO Inc., in cooperation with the Garden Club of Ohio Inc. and ODOT, District 6. The National Garden Club Inc. paid for the landscape design, installations and planting. The local garden clubs selected and planted most of the plants assisted by ODOT, District 6 and Eagle Scouts who helped with the walkways and some of the physical work. ODOT District 6 maintains the site.

The natural area is well designed and beautifully planted using native plants and grasses, daisies and other perennials which require little maintenance and have a high survival rate. A split rail fence encircles part of the area intersected by a walkway. This natural rest area showcases Ohio at its best and is a worthy ambassador to the state's residents and visitors. The Garden Club of Ohio, the Garden Clubs of Columbus District and ODOT, District 6 are to be commended for this quality project created by public-private partnership.

ODOT Central Office, Office of Environmental Services • Hwy Mgmt Environmental Impact Assessment Process

To bridge the gap between 100% state-funded maintenance projects and regulation, the Office of Environmental Services developed an environmental review process for these projects. A goal of this process is to improve maintenance, sustainable practice awareness, performance and environmental compliance.

The process includes a simple HMEIA checklist, an interactive GIS compliance mapping tool, and a simplified

coordination process that increases cooperation / oversight by environmental professionals that improves ODOT's environmental performance. This process change is designed to better ODOT's environmental performance and ensure a higher degree of environmental sensitivity with our maintenance program.

The HMEIA form is meant to provide a simple beginning step towards the development of full compliance with environmental regulations. The form provides guidance to Highway Maintenance Managers on what activities could result in a violation of environmental regulation. The form is assisted with a new GIS application that communicates how maintenance work may interact with sensitive and regulated resources.

From this tool, the maintenance team can know, by work category, what environmental areas could be a concern and the requirements needed before the work can begin in an environmentally responsible manner. These tools trigger these individuals to consult with their district environmental staff to capture any necessary environmental permissions, permits, or coordination prior to completing the work.

The end result of this effort is a maintenance team that is aware of environmental resources within their work area and through this effort, they have already planned their work approach to ensure they are sensitive to these resources and thus their work is completed without delay.