

## PROCEDURE FOR SCENIC HIGHWAY DESIGNATION

The California Scenic Highway Program was established in 1963 to preserve corridors of outstanding scenic quality. Selection of scenic routes throughout the state has been based on the concept that such routes should:

- o traverse areas of high visual quality or significant landscape features;
- o be interconnected and part of a "network";
- o be coordinated with bicycle routes;
- o be predominantly used for recreation; and
- o connect major recreational, historical, or cultural features.

In Colusa County, only State Highway 16 and Highway 20 from the Lake County line Highway 16 are "eligible" scenic highways. The county may apply for designation of any county roads and some state roads as scenic highways through a three step process. First, the Board of Supervisors must ask Caltrans to do a Scenic Highway Report for the highway corridor. Second, the County must prepare a Corridor Specific Plan which contains guidelines for land use, building placement and design, sign control, and earth moving along the highway. Third, the Corridor study must be adopted by the State Scenic Highway Committee.

In lieu of this process, the county can enact local design guidelines or zoning controls which apply to specific scenic highway corridors. Since Colusa County has limited staff resources to prepare corridor plans, this approach seems most appropriate at this time. Policies stated earlier in this document provide the initial direction for protecting these corridors.

The major objective of these policies is to avoid visually obtrusive development in and commercialization of scenic highway corridors. This can be accomplished through the following measures:

- o setback, landscape, and building material guidelines;
- o requiring certain construction practices during road resurfacing and widening;
- o restricting off-site advertising;
- o undergrounding utilities where feasible; and
- o restricting land use to non-urban categories.

In no case should these measures be used to create a hardship for agriculture in the county. Although natural resource management activities may have temporary adverse impacts on scenic vistas, such activities contribute to the long-term beauty of the landscape. For instance, rice burning and timber harvesting have short-term effects on visual quality. These activities and others like them are necessary and should in no way be inhibited by scenic highway programs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR "SCENIC" DESIGNATION

In addition to the segments of Highways 16 and 20 that have already been granted "eligible" status, the following highways should be considered for local scenic highway designation:

- o Highway 20 between Highway 16 and Williams

- o The Maxwell-Stonyford Road (Maxwell-Sites Road, Sites-Lodoga Road, Lodoga-Stonyford Road)
- o Bear Valley Road/Leesville-Lodoga Road
- o Highway 45 from Yolo County to Glenn County
- o River Road/Gridley Road.

The location of these roads and the features that make them visually significant are noted in Figure CIRC-8.

## **CIRCULATION POLICIES**

Based on the above analysis of existing conditions and an evaluation of the future land use plan, the following policies have been applied in the development of the county's circulation plan. Many of the policies have been taken directly from the Regional Transportation Plan, since the plan area is the same in both instances.

### **General**

- CIRC-1 Colusa County should pursue a circulation system that is consistent with the land use plan contained in this document. The following hierarchy of streets and highways should be used to describe this system: Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Major Collectors, Minor Collectors, and Local Streets. These road types are shown in Figure CIRC-1 and are defined in the first part of this chapter. Road standards applicable to each of these road types should be used by the Public Works Department in the planning of future road improvements.
- CIRC-2 Existing transportation facilities should be utilized fully (Level of Service "C", as defined in Table CIRC-3) before making major new capital improvements.
- CIRC-3 Transportation facilities should be used to support the growth of the region and should not be deliberately used to constrain growth or cause social changes.
- CIRC-4 Local streets, County roads, and State highways should remain the primary elements of the circulation system.
- CIRC-5 Circulation facilities should be sited and designed in such a way that damage to the county's scenic and environmental resources is avoided. Roads should be planned and designed to minimize disruption of soils, topography, vegetative cover, and wildlife habitat.

### **Streets and Highways**

- CIRC-6 The County shall pursue all available State, federal, and private funding for the development of its transportation system.
- CIRC-7 The County shall support and encourage legislation that will ensure that Colusa County receives a larger share of State and federal road maintenance funds.