



For Immediate Release

Contact: John Fieseler, Executive Director, 301-600-4041

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Federal Highway Administration announces Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway

Frederick, MD - The National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP), under the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), added the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway to its coveted collection of America's Byways®. This newly named byway runs through the heart of Frederick County, Maryland in addition to portions of Virginia and Pennsylvania. The announcement came earlier today at the America's Byways® Designation Event 2009, held in Washington DC at the Omni Shoreham Hotel.

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway corridor is a region with unparalleled history and generally follows US15 from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania through Frederick County, Maryland, to VA231 and Monticello in Albemarle County, Virginia. The Maryland portion of the newly named Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway has been a national scenic byway since 2005, formerly known as the Catoctin Mountain National Scenic Byway. With this most recent designation, Pennsylvania and Virginia join Maryland in the America's Byways program and the entire byway route – from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania through Maryland to Monticello in Virginia - will now be called The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway. In addition to historic sites, byway travelers can find Main Street communities that offer unique shopping and dining, stunning views of mountains and the area's most picturesque countryside, parklands, and genuine farm markets, orchards, and wineries.

“We are so pleased to have our neighboring states, under the leadership of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership, follow our lead to apply for and receive this prestigious national designation,” said Chris Haugh, scenic byway and special projects manager for the Tourism Council of Frederick County, Inc. “The designation brings attention to the region's assets and confirms what we have known for quite some time in Maryland – this area is truly rich in recreational, cultural, and heritage resources.” The Frederick County Planning Department, Tourism Council, and stakeholders along US 15 began work over a decade ago which led to the creation of Catoctin Mountain Byway as a Maryland state byway and then designation as a National Scenic Byway. “The effort to extend the byway into other states was envisioned from the beginning,” explains Haugh.

“The Byway, regardless of name, has been vital in carrying today's Civil war enthusiasts, historians and re-enactors through Maryland's Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area” said Liz Shatto, Executive Director of the three-county Maryland Heritage Area. US15 is widely used by travelers heading to Frederick and Gettysburg. In Frederick County, visitors can find the National Museum of Civil War Medicine and Monocacy National



Battlefield. South Mountain State Battlefield, Antietam and Harper's Ferry NPS units are close as well, says Shatto. "The timing of this coincides perfectly as Maryland's Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area prepares for the upcoming Sesquicentennial commemoration of the American Civil War," says Shatto.

"With increased tourism marketing for the byway, Maryland, and Frederick County in particular, is positioned well to welcome the additional visitors the area is expected to see," says John Fieseler, Executive Director, Tourism Council of Frederick County. The multi-lane highway will serve as central Maryland's prime gateway for visitors traveling from Pennsylvania and Virginia and is an ideal stopping point for those traveling the route. The Tourism Council of Frederick County also has plans to open a new Visitor Center in 2010 with enhanced facilities for visitors. "Located in downtown Frederick, our new site will allow easier access for tour buses and will have a state-of-the art film and exhibits welcoming people to the Frederick County portion of The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway," says Fieseler.

One of over 150 scenic roadways in the country, Maryland's portion of the byway boasts 38 miles of picturesque Catoctin Mountain, connecting surrounding towns, parklands, historic sites, restaurants and other businesses from the Mason Dixon line to the Potomac River. It provides easy access to some of Frederick County's best sites, including the Catoctin Mountain Park, Cunningham Falls State Park, The C&O Canal National Historical Park, towns and Main Street communities, the Seton Shrine, the National Fallen Firefighter Memorial Park, historic Covered Bridges, Catoctin Zoo Park, Catoctin Furnace, Rose Hill Manor, Schifferstadt, Museum of Frederick County History, and the Francis Scott Key Monument at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground (JTHG) Partnership is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising national awareness of the unparalleled history in the region. The JTHG Leadership team has been working in partnership with local, state and national officials to create a National Scenic Byway and a National Heritage Area to sustain and strengthen the economy, heritage and quality of life in this region. Frederick County is a part of this heritage area as well as Maryland's Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area

(www.heartofthecivilwar.org). To learn more about the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway, visit www.hallowedground.org. For information about Frederick's portion of the byway and for more great things to see and do in Frederick County, visit the Tourism Council of Frederick County website at www.fredericktourism.org or call 1-800-999-3613.

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