

# Michener's Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway

TALBOT, CAROLINE AND DORCHESTER COUNTIES, MARYLAND

Michener's Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway highlights the pristine waterways, historic waterfront villages and wide natural expanses found along a series of scenic roads and historic travel routes in Talbot, Dorchester and Caroline Counties. As the mid-shore section of the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway, it links such small towns as Easton, St. Michaels, Tilghman Island, Oxford, Denton, Preston, Federalsburg, Cambridge, East New Market, Secretary and Vienna. Visitors learn about and enjoy the rich maritime history and natural resources of the region. From birding to bicycling, to beaches, to boating - Michener's Chesapeake Byway is one way to see and do it all.



*A fishing boat in Dorchester County*

Talbot, Caroline and Dorchester Counties are fortunate to have been awarded a grant to develop a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for their section of the Byway. The purpose of the CMP is to help the three counties and their agency partners (Maryland Office of Tourism Development, Maryland State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Maryland Department of Planning) protect and promote the rich natural and cultural resources found throughout the byway corridor and to implement strategies for sustainable tourism development based on that heritage.

The plan will help highlight and interpret the region's rich history and accentuate its rural character, maritime culture, and natural resources. Some examples might include strategies for land and resource conservation, the development and marketing of theme-based itineraries, and roadside enhancements to make it easier to find and follow the byway.



*View of the Nanticoke River from Vienna, MD*

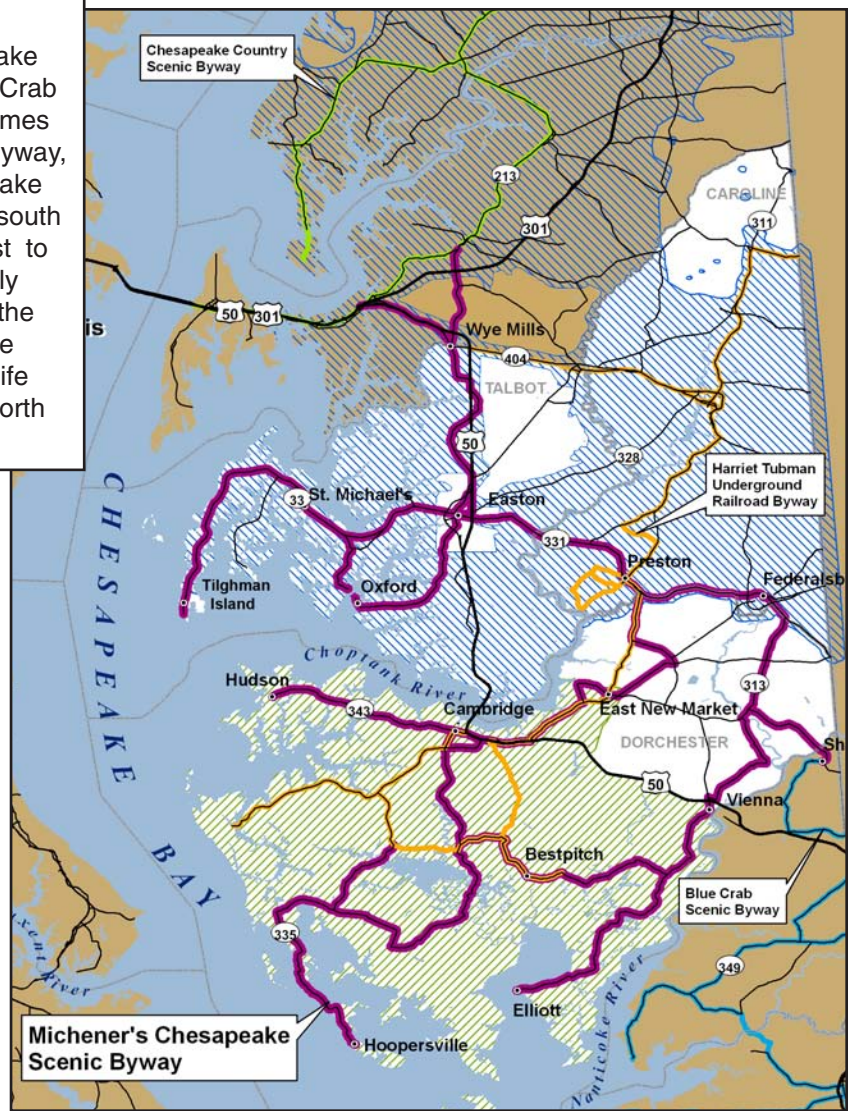
The plan will also propose strategies for integration into an already complex tourism network on the Eastern Shore. The Michener's Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway is situated between the nationally designated section of the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway to the north and the Blue Crab Scenic Byway to the south. In addition, the route overlaps with the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway in several locations, and it traverses two state heritage areas: Stories of the Chesapeake and Heart of the Chesapeake. This creates a complex web of decision-making for travelers. Careful coordination, particularly with the Harriet Tubman Byway, is needed to ensure that visitors have a clear, seamless, and enjoyable travel experience.

Talbot, Caroline and Dorchester Counties have hired a multi-disciplined team headed by Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects to assist with this planning effort. Lardner/Klein has prepared corridor plans for Byways throughout the eastern United States and are well known for their collaborative working style. One of the first tasks will be to reach out to members of our communities for their involvement, ideas and suggestions as to how this byway planning effort can help preserve and enhance the heritage tourism opportunities— as well as agri-tourism and eco-tourism – that are abundant in the region.



*Sailboats on the Choptank River*

Michener's Chesapeake Scenic Byway connects the nationally designated portion of the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway to the north with the Blue Crab Scenic Byway to the south while overlapping at times with the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway, an All-American Road. The Michener's Chesapeake route begins in Wye Mills on MD 662 and heads south to Easton. From Easton, the Byway extends west to the Chesapeake Bay and heads in a southeasterly direction toward Preston. In Dorchester County, the Byway forms a loop, traveling along the Nanticoke River, then through the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge reaching out towards the Bay and back north to Cambridge and the Choptank River.



**How will the plan be developed?**

A Byway Advisory Committee is being formed and will meet a total of seven times over the next year at different locations throughout the corridor. In addition, there will be two public planning workshops to (1) confirm the direction of the planning process and review the initial vision, goals, and issues that need to be addressed; and (2) to review the plan's recommended strategies for preserving and enhancing the travel route as an important vehicle for heritage and eco-tourism opportunities. If the group recommends pursuing designation as a National Byway and each Board of County Commissioners or County Council concurs, a permanent group will need to be identified that will be responsible for implementing the plan.

All meetings of the Advisory Committee are open to the public, and all are welcome to attend and participate. The tentative schedule of meetings and their topics are as follows:

AC Meeting #1: Getting Started with Vision and Goals	May 18, 2010
Public Planning Workshop #1: Are we headed in the right direction?	June 22 and 24, 2010
AC Meeting #2: Preservation and Conservation Strategies	July 15, 2010
AC Meeting #3: Enhancement Strategies	September 2010
AC Meeting #4: Heritage Tourism Development	October 2010
AC Meeting #5: Interpretive Development Strategies	November 2010
AC Meeting #6: Context Sensitive Roadside Safety and Signage Strategies	January 2010
Public Planning Workshop #2: Did we get it right?	Spring 2011
AC Meeting #7: Draft Plan Revisions and Implementation Strategies	Spring 2011

**Where can I get more information about the plan?**

<b>TALBOT COUNTY</b> Debbi Dodson, Director Talbot County Office of Tourism 11 South Harrison Street Easton, MD 21601 410-770-8000 ddodson@talbgov.org	<b>CAROLINE COUNTY</b> Kathy Mackel, Director Caroline County Office of Tourism 15 S. Third Street, Suite B Denton, MD 21629 410-479-2730 kmackel@tourcaroline.com	<b>DORCHESTER COUNTY</b> Amanda Fenstermaker, Director Dorchester Tourism 2 Rose Hill Place Cambridge, MD 21613 410-228-1000 Amanda@tourdorchester.org	<b>BYWAY PLANNER</b> Jim Klein, Principal Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C. jim.klein@lardnerklein.com 1-800-337-1370 <u>For meeting information go to:</u> www.lardnerklein.com/mcsb_index.html
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