



THE ROAD AHEAD PARTNERSHIP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2019 Update Report

In place of a 2019 4th Quarter Update Report, following is an update on several items the Road Ahead has been working on throughout 2019.

National Historic Trail Designation for Route 66

The bill to establish a Route 66 National Historic Trail has not yet been reintroduced in the current Congress. In December of 2018, the bill was included in a large legislative package of public lands-related bills. However, due to the impending holiday season and then the government shutdown, Congress did not vote on the public lands package before the end of that year.

During the same timeframe, the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals issued a decision in the *Cowpasture River Pre. Ass'n v. Forest Service* court case, which had an unintended consequence of affecting the congressional passage of Route 66 legislation. The court case concerned a permit for the construction of a pipeline across the Appalachian National Trail. Since it was unclear whether the court case impacted national historic trails as well, the Route 66 bill was removed from the public lands package. The court case was then appealed to the Supreme Court. This past October it was learned that the Supreme Court has agreed to consider the *Cowpasture* case, with an anticipated ruling sometime before the end of June 2020.

Given this new development, the prevailing view is to wait to reintroduce the bill. One reason is to allow the legislation to be considered by Congress after the Judicial Branch has resolved the pending issue. This approach is likely the preference of congressional staff, who are aware that this grey area and uncertainty make it easier to wait until things are resolved by the court system. Second, is that the original legislation passed the House unanimously last year and had strong support in the Senate. Avoiding any change to the legislative language gives the bill a much stronger pathway to enactment. If the Supreme Court overturns the *Cowpasture* case and rejects the arguments made in that case, it will be possible to revert to the original language.

In short, because there is uncertainty about whether the *Cowpasture River Pre. Ass'n v. Forest Service* court case impacts national historic trails, the prevailing view is that the legislation should be introduced in this Congress after the Supreme Court announces its ruling.

Route 66 Case Study Project

Work continues by Dr. David Listokin, Rutgers University, on the Route 66 Case Studies Project, which is designed to help communities learn how to effectively leverage Route 66 for economic development purposes, by presenting examples of towns that have already done so.

The Case Study Project will identify and illustrate the policies, strategies, and tools used by Route 66 communities of varying sizes that have successfully leveraged Route 66 for economic development.

With case studies in hand, the Road Ahead will then work to disseminate these findings with the ultimate aim of motivating local leaders to recognize the economic development potential of Route 66 and then take steps to leverage it themselves.

The Route 66 Case Study Project is scheduled to conclude late summer of this year.

State Tourism Departments Recruited to Promotion Working Group

Jennifer Mullins, the new Chair of the Road Ahead's Promotion Working Group has been working to expand the group's membership to include tourism professionals from each of the eight states through which Route 66 runs. Good progress has been made in this regard.

Promotion Working Group membership now includes:

Jan Kemmerling, Director of Tourism, Illinois
Ashley Sneed, Marketing Coordinator, Missouri
Jennifer Mullins, Director of Travel Promotion, Oklahoma
Bridgette Jobe, Director of Tourism, Kansas
Brad Smyth, Tourism Director, Texas
Erin Ladd, Marketing Director, New Mexico
Tim DeClaire, Senior Director of Marketing, Arizona
Jennifer Walker, Director of Brand Advertising, California
Bill Kelly, IL Rt. 66 Scenic ByWay [former director], Illinois
Brennen Matthews, Editor of ROUTE magazine

The first order of business for the newly formed Promotion Working Group will be setting goals, based on the challenges and needs associated with promoting Route 66.

Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership and Research 66 Begin Talk Regarding Collaboration

The Road Ahead and Research 66 have initiated discussions focused on identifying ways in which the two organizations can work with each other. Research 66 [formerly known as Route 66 Archives], includes a set of museums, libraries, and archival institutions in Route 66 states that are working collaboratively to advance Route 66 related research and scholarship.

It was decided last year that the two organizations will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, designed to foster collaboration and leverage mutual interests. A series of teleconference meetings have been initiated with representatives from each group, in order to prepare for their respective annual meetings scheduled this year for the same time in Springfield, Missouri. The two organizations already share common members, who sit on both organization's

boards and work together on the Road Ahead's Research and Education Working Group.

2020 Road Ahead Annual Board Meeting & Route 66 Stakeholders Reception & Update

The Road Ahead will hold its Annual Board Meeting this year in the birthplace of Route 66: Springfield, Missouri. The meeting will be conducted at the Hotel Vandivort in Springfield on Friday, March 27 and Saturday, March 28, 2020. The Annual Board meeting is open to the public, which is invited to make comments during the meeting's designated Public Comment Time.

The Road Ahead's Annual Route 66 Stakeholder's Reception and Update will also be held at the Vandivort in Springfield. It will take place Saturday, March 28, 2020. Members of the Board will provide updates regarding work conducted by the Road Ahead during 2019 and plans for 2020. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.

Additional details will be provided closer to the date of these events.

Established in 2015, with the support of the National Park Service and the World Monuments' Fund, The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership's mission is to revitalize and sustain Route 66 as a national and international icon through partnerships focused on promotion, preservation, research and education, and economic development.

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