



Imagining the Blue Ridge Parkway for the 21st Century

A two-part conference and conversation about the past and future of this national treasure on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

Part 1: History, Scenery, Conservation, and Community – Appalachian State University, Boone, NC – April 22 to 24, 2010

Part 2: Building Partnerships for Our Future – Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA – October 2010

The Appalachian State University (Part 1) and Virginia Tech (Part 2) sessions of *Imagining the Blue Ridge Parkway* will be linked in terms of content, themes, some participants, and mutual relevance. Both conferences will stand alone, however, and registrants and participants may come to one or both.

At both sessions, participants from many academic disciplines, partnership organizations, local, state and federal government agencies, natural and cultural resource organizations, Parkway communities, and other constituencies will share new research and engage in conversations that will outline a vision for the Blue Ridge Parkway for its next 75 years and beyond.

Part I of the conference, to be held at Appalachian State University, will have a more academic focus, featuring presentation and discussion of serious Parkway-related research from many disciplines in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. The research presented during Part I will provide a foundation for a series of presentations and workshops at Part II of the conference that will address, in an applied and directly practical way, the unique challenges facing the Blue Ridge Parkway and its surrounding communities and region.



The Blue Ridge Parkway is an All-American Road.



Imagining the Blue Ridge Parkway for the 21st Century

Part I: History, Scenery, Conservation, Community

Tentative Dates April 22 – 24, 2010

Broyhill Inn and Conference Center

Appalachian State University, Boone, NC

Call for Proposals

Blue Ridge Parkway 75, Inc. invites proposals for individual papers, sessions, panels, roundtables, or posters to be presented at a two-day interdisciplinary conference focused on spurring, presenting, and discussing serious new research on the National Park Service's Blue Ridge Parkway with the aim of providing information and analysis that will aid Parkway preservation and protection.

The interdisciplinary conference, Part I of "Imagining the Blue Ridge Parkway for the 21st Century," will be held April 22 -24, 2010 on the campus of Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina.

Close to seventeen million visitors annually visit the Blue Ridge Parkway and experience the natural beauty of the landscape the road travels. Thousands of Parkway neighbors along the park corridor and in surrounding communities live in a mutually-supporting relationship with the nation's most popular National Park unit. September 2010 will mark seventy-five years since construction began on what early planners called a "super-scenic motorway."

Yet few visitors or Parkway neighbors understand many of the complexities that led to the construction of this monumental public works project nor the challenges faced by those charged with managing and preserving the Parkway for future generations.

We invite presentation of research from many fields. This event will be the first opportunity since the Parkway's 50th anniversary in 1985 for scholars, professionals, and other students of the Parkway to come together in a single conversation featuring the substantial and important new research about the Parkway that has been done in the past twenty-five years.

This conference aims to be a showcase and forum for conversation about the state of the field of Parkway studies as well as to provide an opportunity for professionals who have engaged in serious Parkway research to begin to form a community.

The conference will examine the Parkway's history and culture as well as its environmental and economic role in the region and nation, with the goal of informing debate and decision-making about its future. We invite proposals from scholars, professionals, and researchers within and outside of academia at all levels from graduate students to senior professionals.

Types of Proposals

The conference planning committee encourages presenters to be creative in thinking about the types of presentations they might make at the conference. Proposals for individual talks or papers will be accepted, as well as proposals for complete sessions (panel discussions, roundtable discussions) focused on particular topics. Innovative presentation formats that invite audience participation and discussion are encouraged.

Poster presentations, which encourage one-to-one interaction between researcher and other interested participants, will also be incorporated.

Conference Topics

We welcome proposals from researchers and professionals in all relevant disciplines from the humanities to the sciences and particularly welcome advanced graduate students to present their research. Topics to be discussed may include (but are not confined to):

- Parkway management past, present and future
- Construction and design of the Parkway
- Biographical studies of key Parkway planners, designers, or builders
- Labor and work on the Parkway
- The Parkway and local communities
- History and role of Parkway partner organizations
- Historical interpretation along the Parkway
- The Parkway and Mission 66
- The Parkway extension debate
- Tourism and the Parkway
- Stewardship and public support
- Education
- Parkway visitor experiences
- Children and the Parkway
- Race and class and the Parkway
- Gender and the Parkway
- Parkway and environmental issues (air quality, noise pollution, view sheds)
- Development pressures
- Environmental challenges and natural resource protection and management
- Parkway agriculture
- Parkway archival resources
- The Parkway's place in the National Park Service
- Historic precedents for the Parkway
- Comparative studies of the Parkway and other National Parks or parkways
- The Parkway and historic preservation

Submission of Proposals

To submit a proposal, please include the following, submitted electronically to asubrp75@appstate.edu by September 1, 2009.

- A 500-word abstract of your proposed presentation that includes a clear description of the presentation format.
- A 250-word biographical paragraph about each presenter, describing the basis for his/her expertise in the area of the proposed presentation.
- Names, affiliations, and addresses (including email), and phone contact information for all presenters

Post-Conference Publication of Papers

To assure maximum possible dissemination of the accumulated research, conference presentations – at least in abstract or shortened form (depending upon the nature of the presentation) – will be made available to the public on the conference website and linked to other relevant Parkway resources. The aim of free web publication is to break the boundaries of professionalization and specialized resource access that sometimes limit the public's ability to make use of the fruits of serious and well-grounded research.

Additionally, the information collected at this conference, and the relationships created there will, we hope, form the basis for future collaborative efforts to protect and enhance the Parkway for the future. This process will begin with Part II of "Imagining the Blue Ridge Parkway," to be held in October of 2010 at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia.

For Additional Information

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