

# Blue Ridge Parkway Wayside Planning, Design, and Fabrication

*Blue Ridge Parkway, VA and NC*



In 2010, the National Park Service at Harpers Ferry Design Center selected the 106 Group to develop new wayside exhibits for Blue Ridge Parkway, a 469-mile park that connects Shenandoah National Park in Virginia with Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina. The parkway is world-renowned for its picturesque vistas. Carrying 20 million visitors each year, it is the most visited national park in the United States.



The planning and design team for the project included staff from the 106 Group, staff from Harpers Ferry Design Center, and staff from the Blue Ridge Parkway. To launch the project, the team traveled the entire length of the parkway assessing 18 potential locations for wayside exhibits. As a team, the group sited each sign and outlined initial content while at the exhibit location. Many of the sites already contained wayside exhibits that were installed in the 1980s and were badly in need of replacement. Each site was assessed for visitor orientation needs, interpretive potential, accessibility, and a range of other factors. Through this process, the team developed a custom sign solution that allows the park the flexibility to regularly update and change information.



Following the site visit, the 106 Group further developed content for each of the signs and completed graphic design working with the park and Harpers Ferry Design Center along the way to ensure continued collaboration and consensus. This is a pilot project since it is one of the first wayside projects to include audio descriptions. In the end, the new wayside exhibits will vastly improve visitor orientation along the parkway.

