The Lake Country Scenic Byway is 67-miles long on Hwy 34. It runs through the Smoky Hills in the Shell River watershed. The Smoky Hills protects the remaining biodiversity in a growing region of industrial agriculture expansions.

THE PROBLEM:
The Minnesota Department of Transportation plans to clear cut a 65-foot-wide stretch on either side of the Lake Country Scenic Byway (Highway 34). They also plan to log many trees farther into the forest.

In the face of accelerating climate change and habitat loss, clear cutting of our trees is a big move in the wrong direction.

The expansion of the road corridor will further fragment biodiversity and forests, which are already being fragmented by logging and agricultural expansion.

Large communities of Showy Lady’s Slippers along the corridor that tourists seek out will be negatively impacted.

Cutting miles of forest disregards the mission of the Scenic Byway program which includes protection of key Byway assets and community involvement.

Road safety can be addressed by alternative measures like reduced speed limits, increased signage for posted speed limits, and warning signs/signals for seasonal hazards.

TAKE ACTION: Tell our state officials “Protect the Smoky Hills: Don’t clear cut the Lake Country Scenic Byway. Please take public input into account and cancel plans to clearcut the forest along the Highway 34 scenic route.”

1. Visit www.dot.state.mn.us/d4/projects/hwy34
2. Use the “Comment on this Project” box to tell MNDOT.
3. Email and Call:
   * Steve Green 1-888-682-7179 rep.steve.green@house.mn
   * Paul J. Utke 651-296-9651 sen.paul.utke@senate.mn

Tell them why protecting our forests, flowers, and wildlife are important to you.
The expansion of the road corridor will further fragment biodiversity and forests, which are already being fragmented by logging and agricultural expansion.

Visit “Lake Country Scenic Byway” on Facebook to learn more.

Groups working to protect the Smoky Hills include: The Detroit Lakes Tourism Bureau, The Izaak Walton League, Honor the Earth, and Friends of the Lake Country Scenic Byway.

PROTECT THE SMOKY HILLS

7-miles of full removal from the Smoky Hills of all trees and vegetation, including the Lady Slippers, from both sides of the Highway 34.

DOT Proposed Schedule
DNR logging: Fall 2022
Letting: September 2022
Construct: Summer 2023
www.dot.state.mn.us/d4/projects/hwy34