

**ERIE CANALWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR
COMMISSION MEETING**

October 2, 2007

**New York State Capitol, Blue Room
Albany, NY**

MINUTES

Call to Order

Commission Chairman Eric Mower called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Chairman Mower's Opening Remarks

Chairman Mower opened the meeting by recognizing some of the special guests at the meeting, including various State agency liaisons, State and Federal legislators and/or their staff members. He reviewed the summer's activities, particularly the journey of the Lois McClure.

Special Presentation to Former Commissioner Levine

Chairman Mower introduced Meg Levine, who resigned the Commission due to responsibilities of her new position in the State Attorney General's office. He praised the commitment, hard work and invaluable expertise she contributed to the Commission over the past five years. On behalf of the Commission, he presented a letter (see attached) signed by himself and Frank Dean, and a framed Erie Canal print. Meg responded with brief words of thanks.

Attendance

Attendance was taken (see attached list), and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Secretary Alan Vincent called for additions and/or corrections to the minutes which had been previously distributed electronically to the Commission. There being none, he called for a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting of June 6, 2007. Lynn Herzig made the motion and was seconded by Carmella Mantello. The motion was approved unanimously.

Budget Report:

Frank Dean presented the budget report on behalf of Treasurer Peter Welsby. He discussed the close-out of FY2007 (see attached worksheet), which ended September 30, 2007. He noted that all funds were basically expended, with the exception of the HUD money, which is reserved for printing the management plan. He also noted that \$155,000 was moved to Parks & Trails New York, a non-profit partner, part of which will be personnel costs for partner staff and part will be for special events and collaborative projects.

Regarding FY2008, he reported that a Federal budget for 2008 has not been signed, and operations are currently authorized under a continuing resolution, which extends FY2007 levels through November 16, 2007. FY2008 budget amounts for heritage areas will be determined by a National Park Service formula, which has not yet been finalized. Ten new heritage areas were added in 2007, but the legislation in the Senate provides \$5 million less than the House version, so final funding levels could be 8-10% lower than FY2007. Efforts will continue by

Commissioners with the Senators from New York State to adjust funding levels to match the House.

Stuart Stein asked what the budget process is under these circumstances. Frank responded that as soon as the situation clarifies, he will present a draft budget to the Executive Committee and distribute it to the Commission electronically for approval at the next Commission meeting. Such a draft would be based on FY2007 funding levels.

There being no further questions or comments, Chairman Mower called for a motion to approve the budget process as reported. Clint Brown made the motion and was seconded by Carmella Mantello. The motion was approved unanimously.

Grants Program Update

Stuart Stein reported that the first year of the grants program is underway. All awardees are in the contractor registration system, as required by the National Park Service for expending funds. Several of the grants involve wayside exhibits and brochures involving graphics. The National Park Service is providing technical assistance through a workshop scheduled for October 17, 2007 in Syracuse (see attached brochure). Awardees with wayside projects are required to attend the workshop which will help ensure the highest level of quality in the projects the Commission has funded. It has not yet been determined whether a second year grants program will be pursued, at what level or with what amendments.

Eric Mower inquired whether the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor is adequately staffed to be sufficiently responsive to the grantees. Frank Dean indicated that providing support for multiple communities with graphics-based projects was proving challenging and options for additional support are being explored. Stuart shared that a lesson learned from this initial program has been that numerous small grants puts considerable demands on the staff, which will be a consideration in future grant programs. Eric Mower requested a review of staffing levels for the benefit of guests at the meeting who were unfamiliar with the program which was explained by Frank Dean. Peter Wiles mentioned that funding projects in numerous communities has strengthened the Commission's partnerships with the communities.

Conservation Study Institute Report

Frank Dean presented a report from the Conservation Study Institute (see attached) which was developed from the Commission retreat in February, 2007. This report complies with the new Congressional evaluation requirement for all National Heritage Areas three years before the renewal of their terms. Assets of the Commission noted by CSI were that the good foundation provided by the management plan, and the Commission's enthusiasm. One challenge was how to engage key partners to accomplish mutual goals efficiently. The CSI recommended three options: 1) Information gathering and analysis; 2) Convene a series of partnership-building workshops to support management plan implementation; 3) Partake in evaluation system pilot program in summer 2008. An appendix to the report contains notes from the Commission retreat, including a ten-year vision and key issues and partners as identified by Commissioners. Clinton Brown requested that a more synthesized version of the Appendix be produced and distributed to the Commission at some time in the future.

Lois McClure Grand Canal Journey Presentation, Part I

Erick Tichonuck of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum made a follow-up report of the 100-day, 1,000-mile Grand Canal Journey of the 1862-replica schooner, the *Lois McClure*. He presented a PowerPoint slide show to illustrate the journey from the viewpoint of the crew who sailed the boat. Some of the high notes of the experience were: 1) great partnerships, especially with the New York State Canal Corporation whose cooperation and assistance were essential; 2) exhibit panels and tents (the Ship's Store and Erie Canalway's sponsor tent) which were instrumental for getting the message across; 3) communities' events and participation; 4) the appeal of the boat itself, making the connection to the canal; 5) the boat's crew; 6) positive response from everyone from municipal leaders to Canal Corporation supervisors to fans on bridges and locks; 7) leaving a lasting, positive impression in communities along the canal. Trip exceeded the museum's expectations in almost every way, thanks to a very successful trinity of cooperation between Federal, state and private interests.

Welcoming Remarks

The Honorable Ronald Canestrari, Majority Leader for the New York State Assembly, welcomed the Commission to the State capital. As a representative from the city of Cohoes, he recalled growing up with the Erie Canal "in his back yard" and the changes that occurred to it over the years. He acknowledged the importance of the work of the Commission in preserving historical resources, noting the efforts at Matton's Shipyard, which he remembered as an active business.

Lois McClure Grand Canal Journey Presentation, Part II

Frank Dean recognized Chris Pierson of Cabot Cheese for that organization's sponsorship and efforts in engaging Pride of New York's participation in the project. He then introduced Project Manager Lori Duell who presented her report of the project's results. She expressed thanks to the partners and especially to the Commission for its support. Some primary gains from the journey were: 1) reinforced the idea of the canalway as a working system for transportation, recreation and tourism; 2) reinforced the historic significance of the corridor and name recognition for the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor; 3) promoted partnerships with local communities and saw needs and issues in each; and 4) encouraged regional cooperation. She distributed the visitor statistics to the Commission with the caveat that there were many factors that affected visitor involvement. She concluded that the information gained from the project can be used to help communities market their own tourism opportunities. Frank Dean presented Lori with a framed photograph of the *Lois McClure* under sail. Names were drawn by Commissioner Carmella Mantello for a two-day cruise on the canal, donated by Mid-Lakes Navigation and for a two-night stay at the Red Mill Inn in Baldwinsville.

Clinton Brown commented that the *Lois McClure* project brought together groups in Buffalo who had not worked with each other before. He suggested that a letter could come from the Chairman on behalf of the Commission to reinforce the partnerships formed.

2007 Photo Contest Winners Presentation

Administrative Assistant Rosemary Button presented a slide show of the twelve winners of the 2007 Photo Contest (see attached list). She reported that there were 96 photographers who submitted 288 images in four categories. The first, second and third place winners from each category will be featured in the 2008 Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor calendar. The

judges were Clayton Adams, professor at Rochester Institute of Technology, Chris Vose of the New York State Canal Corporation and staff members Duncan Hay, Jean Mackay, Mary Cunningham and herself. Each prize winner will also receive a book about the Erie Canal. The calendar will be published in early November.

Public Comment

John Sagendorf of the Upstate New York Tourism Alliance presented an outsider's experience of the *Lois McClure* journey. He attended 14 of the stops between Utica and Whitehall, to distribute tourism materials. He was astonished by the sense of community and the public's response to the boat's visit, particularly the crew. He congratulated and thanked the Commission for bringing the boat.

Erie Canalway Heritage Fund Update

Consultant Maggie Vinceguerra of Vinceguerra Consulting, LLC reported that the Erie Canalway Heritage Fund Inc. was established as a New York State not-for-profit corporation to work closely with the Commission on its projects. The organizing documents for the corporation have been completed and the application for the IRS tax-exempt status was filed in September, 2007. The IRS approval could take from three to six months to complete, which allows time to recruit community and business leaders to work as board members.

Pier A Project Update

Chairman Mower reviewed the history of the Pier A project and updated the status of its ownership issues. The purpose of the Pier A project is to have a space in New York City to place a replica canal boat. The establishment of the Heritage Fund is crucial for bringing the project to fruition. Eric reviewed various meetings with municipal and elected officials regarding the project. Frank Dean reported on the efforts of the National Park Service to locate the Statue of Liberty Ferry at Pier A. Eric reiterated the important reasons for locating such a replica canal boat at Pier A.

Executive Director's Report

Frank Dean opened his report with a reminder of Commission vacancies and efforts made so far to fill them. In addition to the report distributed to the Commission (see attached), he mentioned several upcoming events important to the Commission including the release of a PBS documentary on the Erie Canal from WCNY in Syracuse; the Wayside Exhibit Workshop on October 17, 2007 in Syracuse; a press conference on October 17, 2007 for the World Canals Conference coming to Rochester in 2010; the New York State Heritage Development Forum on November 13, 2007 in Troy; a joint meeting between Hudson River Valley Heritage Area, the Champlain Valley Heritage Project and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor on November 15, 2007 at Saratoga National Historical Park. Frank and Stuart Stein have begun exploring ways and means of collaborating with universities to achieve Commission goals. Eric added his comments on the PBS film and the Commission's goal of funding a high-quality Erie Canal documentary at some date.

New Business

Clinton Brown reminded the Commission that at the June meeting in Buffalo there had been a presentation by Tim Tielman about the possible location of a Bass Pro mega-store at the Erie Canal Harbor. Since then, the location has been changed to a nearby site not directly on the waterfront which many feel is more in keeping with the original plans for the harbor.

Carmella Mantello commented on her organization's experience with the Lois McClure journey. Her initial doubts were quickly allayed by the professionalism of the boat's crew. She praised the Erie Canalway staff who went above and beyond the call of duty. The partnerships forged were very powerful and will enable many future endeavors.

Marcia Kees on behalf of Kevin Millington of the Department of State announced that there are grant funds available from the Environmental Protection Fund which can be applied for. She distributed a flyer regarding the upcoming State Heritage Development Forum where they will be honoring Congressman Maurice Hinchey, a key supporter of Heritage Areas.

Stuart Stein brought up the question of what is next for the Commission and the importance of maintaining a balance between big, high profile projects and smaller, localized projects. Eric Mower concurred and reiterated the advantage of the Commission was the opportunity for a diversity of projects, viewpoints and priorities, particularly relating to economic development. Clinton Brown pointed out that the CSI report included developing relationships at the local level and raising visibility in smaller communities as part of Option 2 in its report.

Venue and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in Syracuse. Frank Dean has been in touch with the Erie Canal Museum and they are willing to host the meeting sometime in early January. A date will be determined via e-mail communication.

Chairman Mower reminded the Commission of the special tour and viewing of historic Erie Canal documents at the New York State Archives scheduled for the afternoon. The documents will include original 1817 survey maps, barge canal construction photographs, lock tenders' monthly reports and personnel histories of canal workers in the 19th century.

Wrap up and Adjourn

Rocco DiVeronica expressed appreciation for the mention of smaller communities and the need to focus on their issues. He pointed out the presence of bicycle traffic on the canal trails in his community. Frank Dean thanked Hannah Blake for all her behind-the-scenes work on the grants program. Duncan Hay announced that the 200th anniversary of the proposal of the Erie Canal is upcoming in October. The original idea was proposed by grain merchant Jesse Hawley in a series of essays written from debtor's prison in which he argued the need for a canal system which would provide a means of getting the agricultural goods from Western New York to their markets.

Carmella Mantello reminded the Commission that the Canal Corporation is involved in around 150 projects at the local level, from waterfront revitalization plans to restoration of historic locks. If interested, a list could be created for the next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Prepared by: Rosemary Button

Date: December 7, 2007

Approved by: Secretary Alan Vincent

Date: January 2, 2008

Approved by Commission

Date: January 31, 2008

**ERIE CANALWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR
COMMISSION MEETING**

October 2, 2007

**New York State Capitol, Blue Room
Albany, NY**

ATTENDANCE

ECNHC Commission Members

Eric Mower, President
Joseph M. Callahan, Vice President
Alan Vincent, Secretary
Russell S. Andrews
Clinton Brown
Rocco DiVeronica
Carol Greenough
Lynn B. Herzig
Christopher Lindley
Ken Lynch
Carmella Mantello
Judith Schmidt-Dean
Robert G. Shibley
Pieter W. Smeenk
Stuart W. Stein
Peter Wiles, Jr.

Proxies held for absent Commission members (as needed)

Proxy held by Clinton Brown for Peter Welsby

Liaisons to the Commission

Marcia Kees, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
Chip Pratt, NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets
Mary Harding, NYS Dept. of Transportation
Bob Miron, Empire State Development Corp.
Kevin Millington, NYS Dept. of State

Guests

Hon. Ronald Canestrari, New York State Assembly
Hon. Tim Gordon, New York State Assembly
Laura Lyman, Senator James Wright's Office
Tracey Brooks, Senator Hilary Clinton's Office
Dottie Pohlid, Senator John DeFrancisco's Office
John Emery, Senator Mary Lou Rath's Office
Sue Senecah, Senator George Maziarz's Office
Michael Miller, Assemblyman James Tedisco's Office
Meg Levine, Office of State Attorney General

Commission Meeting
October 2, 2007
Attendance

Guests (cont.)

Fred Miller, Mohawk Valley Heritage Area
Erick Tichonuk, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum
Maggie Vinciguerra, Vinciguerra Consulting, LLC
John Sagendorf, Upstate New York Tourism Alliance
John Dennehey, Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area
Nelson Ronsvalle, Town of Halfmoon
Sharon Leighton, NYS Canal Corporation
John Callaghan, NYS Canal Corporation
Lucy Breyer, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
Linda Trombley, City of Troy
Robin Dropkin, Parks & Trails New York

ECNHC Staff

Frank Dean
Hannah Blake
Duncan Hay
Lori Duell
Jean Mackay
Rosemary Button

**Worksheet for
FY 2007 Commission Operations
October 2, 2007**

Total Appropriated
\$868,524

Program Area	Budgeted	Expended To Date	Unexpended Balance	% Exp	Comments
BUDGET: \$868,524					
Personnel Services:					
Administrative Salaries/Benefits	\$252,445	\$252,445	\$0	100%	Hannah & Beth full time; Duncan 16 pay periods; 2 park guides
Administration:					
Travel	\$41,924	\$41,924	\$0	100%	
Matton Canal Shipyard Preservation Travel for NPS (Boston) consultation	\$0	\$0	\$0		Boston office paid expenses
Mail Management	\$6,586	\$6,586	\$0	100%	
Utilities	\$3,039	\$3,039	\$0	100%	
Public Outreach	\$8,656	\$8,656	\$0	100%	
Supplies & Equipment	\$40,697	\$40,697	\$0	100%	
Heritage Alliance Dues	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0	100%	
Admin Staff Training	\$4,897	\$4,897	\$0	100%	
Audit	\$8,800	\$8,800	\$0	100%	FY 2007 Audit
Congressional/NPS Assessments	\$0	\$0	\$0		
New York State Parks - Office Space Rental	\$6,300	\$6,300	\$0	100%	
Meetings/Workshops:	\$3,264	\$3,264	\$0	100%	
Projects:					
Grants	\$201,629	\$201,629	\$0	100%	
NY State Parks Heritage Development Conference	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	100%	
Alliance of National Heritage Area	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	100%	International Heritage Development Conference-Detroit
Project Development	\$174,286	\$172,238	\$2,048	99%	
HUD Funding	\$100,000		\$100,000	0%	Plan Printing- estimated at \$33,000
Totals	\$868,523	\$766,475	\$102,048	88%	

*

- \$768,524 FY 2007 Appropriations (Account #1761-685)
- \$100,000 in HUD funding for the Erie Canalway was approved in September 2004 and is reflected in this total of \$868.524
- Expenditures as of September 27, 2007

**Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
Expenditures as of September 27, 2007
FY 2007**

Obj Class	Program Area	Amount Expended
1100	Personnel Compensation	\$198,407.67
1200	Civilian Personnel Benefits	\$54,037.39
	Administrative Salaries & Benefits	\$252,445.06
211B	Non-foreign Travel Management Center Transaction Fees (agent fees)	\$610.29
211C	Non-foreign Commercial Transportation - Tourist Class	\$9,944.81
211D	Non-foreign Employee Per Diem	\$19,826.24
211I	Non-foreign Other Incidental Expenses	\$1,741.70
211L	Non-foreign Local Travel	\$109.13
211P	Non-foreign POV Mileage Allowance	\$7,201.78
211R	Non-foreign Passenger Vehicle Rental	\$1,878.29
211T	Non-foreign Taxi Fare	\$612.10
	Travel	\$41,924.34
221B	Freight-Other (Federal Express)	\$2,019.25
223A	Mail Transport and Package Services (UPS)	\$59.53
233G	Postage	\$559.02
252R	Contracts-Professional Services (U.S. Postal Services & UPS)	\$3,947.91
	Mail Management	\$6,585.71
233C	Commercial Communications Charges-Local (business telephone line)	\$1,694.74
233E	Wireless Communications	\$1,344.49
	Utilities	\$3,039.23
232B	Rental of Exhibit Spaces (NYCOM, APA)	\$1,752.84
412A	Subsidies, Contributions & Other Aid (memberships/sponsorships)	\$6,903.20
	Public Outreach	\$8,656.04
233M	Equipment Rental-Information Technology (software license renewal)	\$149.00
242A	Print & Reproduction-Commercial	\$2,408.29
243C	Copy Centers	\$1,270.25
257C	Repairs & Maintenance-IT Equipment and Software	\$1,236.69
257D	Repairs & Maintenance (vehicle)	\$34.99
257I	Repairs & Maintenance-Equipment	\$584.20
257L	Maintenance-Voice Communications Equipment	\$262.84
261A	Office Supplies & Materials (<i>Lois McClure</i> tent, display rack, promotional items; software; printer & copier cartridges; copier paper, etc.)	\$29,223.44
262A	Books	\$491.01
262F	Periodicals & Subscriptions (Capitol Hill electronic newsletter)	\$1,595.00
264A	Building Supplies	\$33.21
269F	Fuel-Motor Vehicle	\$1,496.95
312A	Noncapital Controlled Equipment	\$1,911.50
	Supplies & Equipment	\$40,697.37
252Z	Other Services	\$6,000.00
	Heritage Alliance Dues	\$6,000.00

Account #1761-685

**Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
Expenditures as of September 27, 2007
FY 2007**

Obj Class	Program Area	Amount Expended
252T	Training/Conference Registration Fees (International Heritage Development Conference; Hannah-grants training; APA conference) Admin Staff Training	\$4,897.03 <u>\$4,897.03</u>
252Z	Other Services Audit	\$8,800.00 <u>\$8,800.00</u>
411C	Cooperative Agreements New York State Parks-Office Space Rental	\$6,300.00 <u>\$6,300.00</u>
232A	Space Rental-Payment to Others (commission meetings & retreat; <i>Lois McClure</i> meetings) Meetings/Workshops	\$3,264.17 <u>\$3,264.17</u>
412A	Subsidies, Contributions & Other Aid Grants	\$201,629.00 <u>\$201,629.00</u>
411C	Cooperative Agreements NY State Parks Heritage Development Conference	\$5,000.00 <u>\$5,000.00</u>
252Z	Other Services Alliance of National Heritage Areas-Detroit Conference	\$5,000.00 <u>\$5,000.00</u>
243D	Graphics Centers (annual report \$2,457)	\$2,901.26
251B	Contracts-Information Technology Support Services (web hosting)	\$4,463.71
252X	Advertising-Commercial	\$2,985.64
252Z	Other (Services) (audio recordings of commission meetings & retreat \$1,720; photographers for <i>Lois McClure</i> voyage \$2,400; Patron mail \$1,020)	\$12,887.31
411C	Cooperative Agreements Project Development	\$149,000.00 <u>\$172,237.92</u>
Total Expended as of September 27, 2007		\$766,475.87

Year-end Summary:

FY 2007 Appropriations

\$768,524.00

Total Expended

\$766,475.87

Unexpended Balance

\$2,048.13



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
P.O. Box 219
Waterford, NY 12188

October 2, 2007

Ms. Megan Levine
Office of the Attorney General
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Meg,

Congratulations on your new role with the New York State Office of the Attorney General. Knowing how you willingly take on new challenges, we are certain you will continue to be of great service to the people of New York.

We understand that your new state position precludes you from continuing to serve on the federal Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission. To put it simply- we will miss you! Your active role in assisting with the establishment of the Commission has been invaluable. During your five years of service beginning in 2002, you served both as Secretary and on the Executive Committee through June 2007. Your leadership with setting up the organizational structure of by-laws, resolutions, and written agreements was essential and enabled us to navigate through uncharted territory in the formative years of the Commission. Your participation in the Erie Canalway's management planning process and the initial grant program were also key to our moving forward.

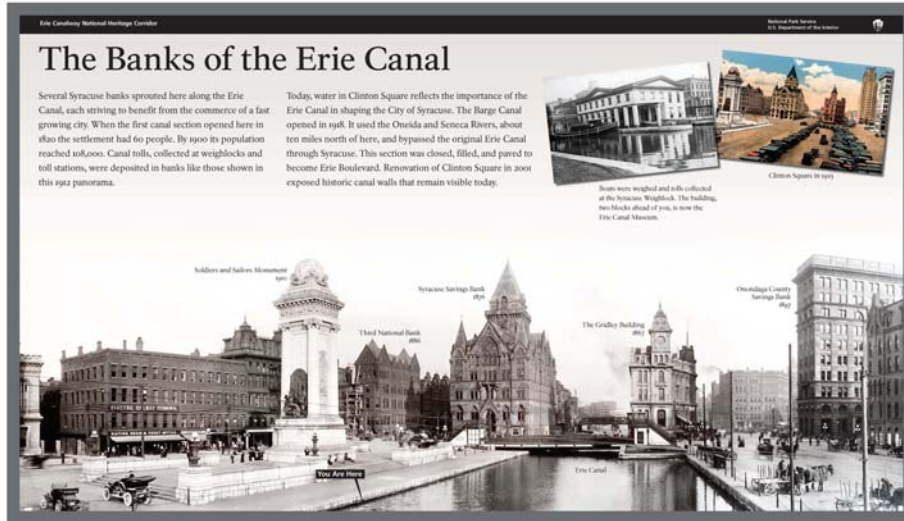
Although you had a demanding schedule with your regular work with the State of New York, your lengthy service with the Erie Canalway was all donated and on your own time. We thank you for all your contributions to our program and wish you all the best with your new responsibilities.

Sincerely,

Eric Mower
Chairman,
Erie Canalway NHC Commission

Frank Dean
Executive Director,
Erie Canalway NHC

Mark Your Calendars for the Wayside Exhibit Workshop!



Join us in Syracuse for this one-day session on wayside exhibits presented by research and design professionals from the National Park Service Harpers Ferry Center.

*Wednesday, October 17, 2007
9:00am – 4:30pm
Renaissance Syracuse Hotel
Syracuse, New York*

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-Mail _____

This Workshop is sponsored by the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and is available for a fee of \$20 to cover the cost of a buffet lunch.

Please complete this registration form and mail with your payment to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, P.O. Box 219, Waterford, NY 12188 by October 10th. Checks should be made out to the Renaissance Syracuse. Call Hannah Blake at the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor office at (518) 237-7000, ext. 202 or send an e-mail to hannah_blake@nps.gov for additional information.

Directions to the Renaissance Syracuse can be found at <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/maps/directions/syrbr-renaissance-syracuse-hotel/>. A small block of overnight rooms is available under “Erie Canalway” at the government rate of \$85 on a first-come, first-served basis and will be held until September 16, 2007. Call the Renaissance Syracuse at (315) 470-7000 to book your room.

Technical Assistance Project Report

Prepared at the request of the

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission

Prepared by

NPS Conservation Study Institute

**In partnership with QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment
and the University of Vermont**

August 2007

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2006, staff of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor (Corridor) approached the National Park Service Conservation Study Institute (Institute) about working together to develop an evaluation framework for the Corridor. The Corridor staff recognize the importance of developing an evaluation approach that can lay the foundation for assessing progress over time, and asked for technical assistance from the Institute because of the Institute's work with other national heritage areas. Previously, the Institute has worked on evaluation strategies with three other national heritage areas, each at the request of the federal commission responsible for the area's management: John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (2005), Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (2006), and Cane River National Heritage Area (study still in progress and the report is expected in early 2008).¹ Each of these commissions asked the Institute to provide technical assistance in designing an evaluation strategy to document their accomplishments, including the development and operation of their partner networks, in order to use this information in their deliberations on their future directions. The Blackstone and the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridors are currently using the findings and the options presented in their reports as they plan for their future. These latter two national heritage areas had almost 20 years of experience and were also approaching reauthorization at the time of their requests to the Institute.

While experience with evaluation strategies at other national heritage areas can provide guidance from lessons learned for the Erie Canalway, an effective evaluation methodology needs to be designed for each situation since national heritage areas are complex landscapes each with a unique complex of resources and partners. Also, given that the Erie Canalway is at an earlier stage of development compared to the other three national heritage areas, the Institute's team and Corridor staff have worked together over the past year to craft an approach that would best meet Corridor needs at this point in time and would respond to the interests and focus of management, both commission and staff.

This report, with its findings and options for moving forward, is the result of the initial scoping phase conducted by the Institute in cooperation with the staff and commission. The next sections of this report provide background context on the status of national heritage areas as a program within the National Park Service (NPS) and on national heritage areas as an example of "governing by network."² These background sections are followed by a brief review of the work carried out jointly by the Institute and Corridor staff. The last section presents the findings of the project and three options for the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission (Commission) to consider for the future.

¹ The Blackstone and Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor reports are available at www.nps.gov/csi/pub_resources/pub.htm

² Stephen Goldsmith and William D. Eggers, *Governing by Network: The New Shape of the Public Sector* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2004)

II. BACKGROUND: NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS

In 2006 the National Park System Advisory Board reported on a year-long study, conducted in response to a request by the NPS director, on the future of national heritage areas and their relationship with the National Park Service. The report, *Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas*, stated that “the national heritage area approach, with its complex but essential networks of relationships and ability to leverage resources for resource conservation and economic and community development, can serve as a model for achieving NPS conservation goals with multiple partners. The process, key elements, outcomes, and impacts need to be identified and better understood.”³ The report also recommended research “to better understand the process of collaborative conservation and partnership networks, and to better evaluate the outcomes of designation and partnership on resource conservation and community economic development over time.” Based on the report’s recommendations, program legislation has been introduced into Congress to establish a system of national heritage areas within the National Park System.⁴ This draft legislation would also require a study three years prior to the cessation of federal funding authorization for each heritage area to provide information regarding future NPS involvement.

III. NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS: GOVERNING BY NETWORK

The evaluation data gathered and analyzed by the Institute at the Blackstone, Delaware & Lehigh, and Cane River national heritage areas yielded lessons on the evolution of the heritage areas’ partner networks and highlighted the importance of using an intentional “governing by network” approach for effective heritage area management. This section, which draws from the material presented to the Erie Commission at its retreat in February 2007, provides (a) an overview of lessons learned from the Institute’s work with other national heritage areas and (b) a discussion of the “governing by network” concept.

A. Lessons learned from other national heritage areas

Although each national heritage area is unique, through research conducted to date the Institute has identified characteristics that may be common to all, including the following:

- Heritage area stories create a context for civic engagement
- A sense of shared heritage creates a platform for action
- The national heritage area’s broad, integrated vision provides a “big tent” for diverse partners
- The national designation adds value
- A federally designated management entity provides credibility and clout
- The ability of the national heritage area to leverage attracts additional resources

These characteristics appear to be critical to the national heritage area approach, and suggest useful strategies for heritage area managers (staff and governing body) as they work with

³ Report available at www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas

⁴ Senate Bill 278

partners while the heritage area evolves and matures. In addition, although every national heritage area is set up to work through partnerships, the Institute’s research suggests that shifting from simply managing a diverse array of partners to acknowledging, creating, and managing a partner network is critical to the success of national heritage areas.

To respond to the National Park System Advisory Board’s recommendation for further research to better understand how national heritage areas work and to better evaluate outcomes, the Institute is conducting an analysis of the three national heritage area evaluations referenced earlier in the introduction, in partnership with the NPS National Heritage Areas Office, the NPS National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, and the Alliance of National Heritage Areas. The objective of this project, titled “Development of a National Heritage Area Evaluation Strategy,” is to create an evaluation framework that can be applied in all national heritage areas to systematically gather information regarding progress toward legislative and management goals.

The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, which is beginning to implement its management plan, can benefit from the lessons learned at other national heritage areas. By adapting the lessons to the Erie Canalway, the Commission can make use of ideas and strategies used with success elsewhere to work with the system of partners and the unique geography and heritage resources that exist within the Corridor boundaries. The section that follows discusses the “governing by network” approach and its application to heritage area management.

B. The “governing by network” approach

According to Goldsmith and Eggers in their book *Governing by Network*, the “governing by network” approach to managing public resources combines a high level of public-private collaboration, coordination and integration across agencies and organizations, a high degree of intentional sustained connectivity among partners and stakeholders (made possible through today’s technology), and a greater engagement of partners and stakeholders in the program at hand. The national heritage areas that the Institute has worked with display these characteristics.

Shifting to an intentional networked approach in heritage area management involves, in part, engaging partners in crafting a future vision and developing a management plan in a way that enables them to increasingly assume leadership in ways that help implement the management plan.

The following quotes have been taken from partner interviews conducted as part of the Blackstone, Delaware & Lehigh, and Cane River evaluations. The interviews probed their views on relationships with heritage area managers (collectively, staff and commission) and the roles played by managers in the network.

What the Blackstone has done is open up a number of constituencies. It brought them under an umbrella and that had not happened in the past. This has allowed a number of organizations to find opportunities to plug into various projects and programs.

* * * * *

The [National Heritage Area] has brought together various state and federal agencies to provide assistance to the smaller municipalities and regions that would not otherwise have the capacity, knowledge, or networking to tap into [existing state and federal] resources.

* * * * *

The Corridor has become the focal point for all these activities and it’s provided the place for people to connect. There used to be all these individual groups running around on their own, and they were not really connected. The Corridor has since given them the ability to connect to each other, and I think there have been tremendous cooperative efforts as result.

Using a networked approach helps to organize a large number of partners so they are an integral part of the success of the heritage area. In the most effective networks, an increasing number of partners over time align their efforts directly with the heritage area's goals and mission. In adopting this approach it is particularly important to pay attention to the management structure and policies that will channel the capacities of the entire group of partners and build leadership capacity for both the partner network and the management entity. The approach to leadership in networked environments is distinct from many other management environments. Some of the principles involved include:

- managing through influence rather than control,
- engaging partners through initiatives that catalyze further partner action and involvement,
- dismantling silos in favor of an integrated approach, and
- adopting a collaborative leadership style.

Implementation of these principles builds trust, relies on good communication, requires a flexible approach, and ultimately enhances shared responsibility and transparency into network operations – all critical ingredients for success.

For a heritage area to be effective in governing by network it is important to **look inwardly** at issues of how management is organized, the style of leadership, and the roles and responsibilities of the various players. Important questions to ask include: What are the roles of the commission and staff and key partners such as the NPS? How do they execute their duties to achieve the mission and the goals of the management plan? How does the commission use its role to implement the management plan? How does it use its role to build and sustain a partnership network? What style of leadership is encouraged? What leadership does the network require? And in a governing by network model of management, how do the

After nearly 20 years...I've grown to understand what they can do for us, and what we can do for them. And the partnership has grown as a result. We're now attacking some of these long-term issues from multiple angles and we're moving in the same direction. I have come to embrace the Corridor and I know what they can do for us. We now offer help to them wherever we can.

* * * * *

The D&L was able to come in and provide the seed money to start the planning [for this project]. This allowed the local community to work with planners and professionals to begin to look at how we could pull this project together. Ultimately, through the D&L's facilitation, this project tied this site's natural and historic resources together. Once that happened, we were able to bring in other partners. The initial D&L contribution of \$5,000 leveraged a \$400,000 public investment from other federal sources, which ultimately leveraged a \$10,000,000 private development.

* * * * *

The Corridor has provided training to us as an organization on internal organizational matters. How do we do brainstorming effectively? How do we write a management plan? How do we learn about management planning processes? This has helped us grow as an organization and allowed us to do more.

* * * * *

We have seen a necessity to have the kind of coordination and collaboration that the D&L provides. The things that we need to do on a local front are often in sync with the goals of the D&L initiative. We discovered that working together gives us results.

* * * * *

Initially we were not quite sure what their role was, but as we got to know them we gained a better understanding. Our trust level has increased dramatically and with that, of course, you get better communication and great interpersonal relationships. And then you start building on that, and it extends, certainly not only to our organization, but [also] to the other organizations in the area. So now I think of it as a partnership and a cooperative relationship. Our project is only part of the whole effort, so, as much as we can, we support their initiatives on community-wide and region-wide levels.

* * * * *

[Working with Cane River NHA] really showed me that you can get a lot more done if you can actually get people on the same page... get people moving in the same direction.

commission and staff “keep their hands on the wheel” and ensure that management plan implementation stays on course?

Governing by network also involves **looking outwardly** across the entire system of partners. Important questions to ask in this regard include: In building the partner network, how can partners be engaged in helping to achieve the purposes of the heritage area and the goals of the management plan? How can key partners become engaged and find common purpose so that ultimately they align their organizational goals, mission, and/or objectives with those of the Corridor?

These management considerations are critical in the process of moving from a set of discrete partnerships to a coordinated Corridor-wide partner network. Also critical is a continuing commitment to learning and applying what is learned to ongoing management. Evaluation is a tool for learning that enables one to gather and analyze information so one can continue to learn and adapt. The questions above can be assessed through an evaluative approach that is designed not only to understand and document the progress being made toward achieving implementation of the management plan but also *how* that progress is made, the effectiveness of the heritage area’s networked approach, and ways to continue to enhance and strengthen it.

IV. OVERVIEW OF THE CSI–ERIE CANALWAY PROJECT

The primary purpose of this scoping project was for the Institute to work with Corridor staff to determine the best approach for assessing Corridor accomplishments and progress over time, one that takes into consideration the Canalway’s unique qualities, resources, and challenges. The original scope of work included the following components:

- Engagement of key stakeholders including the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission, Corridor staff, and community partners to discuss Corridor priorities and learn Corridor needs
- Development of a strategy for identifying indicators within an evaluation framework, and to develop a methodology for ongoing data collection
- Identification of potential project steering committee members
- Identification of experts in community and heritage economic development who might participate in the project
- Preparation of a report on the findings of the scoping phase, to include a proposed scope of work and budget for the next phase of the project

In order to jointly meet these project objectives and determine the most appropriate evaluation approach for the Erie Canalway, the Institute’s team had a series of in-depth discussions with Corridor staff over the past year aimed at understanding their situation, the priorities of the Corridor, and the information they feel is most important to gather at this stage in the Corridor’s development and also sharing the information from the Institute’s previous national heritage area reports. The Institute also met with the Corridor Commission at its February retreat with the same aims in mind. Based on staff feedback, the dialogue with commissioners, and our analysis of the raw data gathered from the flipcharts and post-it notes generated at the February retreat

(see appendix A), the Institute's team proposes for the Commission's consideration three possible next-step options that are tailored for the Corridor.

V. PROJECT FINDINGS

The discussions that follow present the findings from the Institute's initial work with the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. These consist of (a) observations related to the setting and the current situation of the Canalway, and (b) three proposed options, based on these observations, that can help implement the management plan; assess the partner "landscape" and begin building a partner network; and lay a foundation for assessing future progress over time.

A. Context for the Proposed Options

The project team considered both strong points and challenges that emerged during the discussions with both staff and Commission regarding the setting and current situation of the Corridor. These strong points and challenges were reinforced by the data from the flipcharts and post-it notes from the Commission retreat, and influenced the development of the options that follow in part B.

A major strong point is the excellent management plan and thoughtful implementation strategy laid out in chapter 9. Not only does the plan clearly state the goals and set forth a comprehensive, integrated plan of action, it also recognizes a strategic sequencing of activities and addresses the differing roles and responsibilities of the Commission and partners in implementing the plan. A further strength in this regard is the recognition by Corridor staff of the importance of having an evaluation process as they move into management plan implementation. Another strong point is the wide and diverse array of partners across the Corridor, many of them actively working for the betterment of the Erie Canal and their communities, and the potential for building an even stronger, more coordinated partner network. The project team noted that many commissioners are passionate about the Canalway and its heritage, and that the Corridor represents a very important story to be told about the Erie Canal and its impact on the growth and expansion of this country. All of these factors help to lay a strong foundation for the Corridor's future.

There are challenges as well that have factored into the development of the options. The scale of the Corridor poses a significant challenge to effective coordination of a partner network. The project team believes that the Corridor's size, coupled with the comprehensive nature of the management plan and a relatively small staff, argues for a thoughtful, informed approach to "managing by network." With reauthorization currently scheduled for 2010 and the need to move ahead with management plan implementation, it seems essential to ensure that partners are (1) engaged in ways that help build connections with the Corridor and a solid relationship with the Commission and staff, and (2) employed as a network in ways that help bring their efforts into alignment with the vision laid out in the management plan. The project team believes that such an engagement strategy will position the Commission and its partners to implement key initial phases of the plan most effectively as well as to evaluate and document accomplishments in preparation for reauthorization.

B. Options for Next Steps

Based on the feedback received from the many discussions with Corridor staff and from the Commission's February 2007 retreat, the project team has identified a series of options that support the management plan implementation and evaluation needs for the Canalway. Each of the options below could stand alone and would result in outcomes that benefit the management of the Corridor. That said, it is important to note that these options are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Any two or all three could be modified to be undertaken sequentially or in combination.

It is important to note that the suggested options are essentially frameworks for moving forward; if the Commission would like to pursue any of these options, the option(s) chosen would need to be described in greater detail in conjunction with developing a scope of work and budget and defining the roles and responsibilities for the Institute team, the Corridor Commission and staff, and partners. The task of developing a more detailed project description would be jointly carried out by the Institute and Corridor staff in order to produce a scope of work that reflects the unique resources, geography, partners and needs of the Canalway. For any of the options, the Institute along with the Commission and Corridor staff would be carrying out the work together and it is important that the roles and responsibilities will be mutually agreed upon, with Corridor staff assuming the lead in many aspects of the work and the Institute acting as a technical advisor and, at times and as appropriate, assuming the lead in certain aspects or components. There are several reasons for this collaborative approach, the most pertinent of which are the visibility that would be gained by the Corridor as a lead player, the need for the partner relationships to be developed with Corridor Commission and staff rather than the Institute and the Institute's role in providing technical assistance.

OPTION 1: Use customized information gathering and analysis to support Erie Canalway partner network development.

This option would involve more systematic collection of information from key partners and stakeholders, commissioners, and staff, in order to better understand factors important in developing the Corridor's partner network, including where there is coordinated activity and existing networks across the Corridor, the level of partner awareness and understanding of the Corridor and its mission, and the capacity and leadership that exists currently within the array of partners. Information gathering could take place through targeted conversations, focus groups, interviews, and/or surveys. The specific study process and research methods selected will be determined by the Institute and Corridor staff through a more formal scoping process designed specifically around Corridor information needs. The analysis of information gathered will help to identify strengths and challenges of the current partner network, and the degree of overlap and alignment in interests and goals between the Corridor and its key partners and stakeholders.

This information will be very useful in (a) building and strengthening the Corridor's partner network, (b) designing strategies for most effectively engaging current partners as well as other key stakeholders who may not have been involved to date in the Corridor's work, and (c) gaining insights into the most effective role for the Commission and staff. This option could also include briefings on the "governing by network" concept for commissioners and staff, and coaching or

peer-to-peer exchange with people experienced in governing by network (e.g., leaders from other successful national heritage areas and large-scale, partnership-based conservation initiatives). This option can be stand-alone, with a written report on the findings and analysis as a final product, or it can serve as an initial fact-finding step that leads to the design of a more comprehensive partner engagement strategy such as the one described in option 2 (steps 2 and 3).

OPTION 2: Convene a series of Erie Canalway regional partnership-building workshops to support management plan implementation.

This option would build on the Corridor’s partner engagement work to date and strategically bring partner organizations into management plan implementation through a proven partnership-building approach. This interactive approach, which is adaptable to different geographic scales and situations, involves a comprehensive workshop model that engages organizations and stakeholders in regional, theme-based, or community-based teams. The participatory workshop format includes presentations, opportunity for dialogue, and team work sessions. The workshop model can be adapted to fit the Erie Corridor’s needs, and engage participants in planning and carrying out actions that fit with the Corridor management plan and also address local issues. Over the course of the workshop, the teams build a common understanding of the national heritage corridor as a whole and how their regional heritage resources fit into the overall picture. In their team sessions, they work together to develop an action plan for their region or community that has local benefits, helps to implement the Corridor management plan, and also complements what other teams are doing. Through this workshop process and the follow-up, it will be important for the Commission, staff and partners to be prepared to sustain the momentum and provide technical assistance as necessary, to accomplish work, enhance existing partner relationships and build new ones, and develop a more coordinated network.

The Institute has conducted this type of workshop in a variety of settings and the model has proven to be successful in engaging partners and communities in collaborative efforts. The Institute can most effectively serve as a technical advisor, but it is important that the leadership for organizing this effort be led by the key players from the region – the Corridor commissioners and staff, and the partners. The workshop process is a tool that can broaden partnership-building, get partners on board with the Corridor agenda and management plan, and help the Canalway to flourish. Because of the size of the Corridor, a multi-tiered approach would be most effective. One potential approach for the Commission would be a partner engagement strategy that has the following components:

1. Data Gathering

The first task is to conduct initial mapping of the current “nodes” of partner activity and the networks that are compatible with the Corridor’s goals and mission. This information would provide an understanding of the current geographic spread of Commission partners across the Corridor and the key stakeholders who would need to be involved. This would include those groups that were engaged in the Corridor’s management planning in the past as well as stakeholders that may not have been engaged but offer good potential as partners. (Please note that if this option is undertaken after option 1 above, then this first step would be unnecessary. Without option 1, however, some

information gathering would be necessary to get an understanding of the geographic spread of compatible partner activity in order to design an effective workshop strategy.)

2. **Key Partner Engagement and Creation of a Steering Group**

The first partner engagement step involves holding a meeting to discuss the idea of organizing a team-based workshop that brings together commissioners with key partners and stakeholders from regions of the Corridor where there is already some ongoing collaboration, as well as representatives from existing regional and statewide networks with complementary missions, such as the New York State Regional Planning Boards. The purposes of this meeting would be (a) convey the goals and purposes of the project, (b) the content and design of the workshop, and if agreement on this approach is reached, then (c) enlist their support for planning for the workshop and subsequently for recruiting workshop participants. The intent would be to emerge from this meeting with the nucleus of a steering group representative of the region who would work with the Commission to conduct the team-based workshop. The Institute can provide advice on organizing this meeting and participate in and/or facilitate or assist with facilitating it.

3. **Workshop Planning and Delivery**

The steering group and the Commission, in cooperation with the Institute, develop and deliver a workshop that brings together 8 to 12 regional teams that geographically cover the heritage area and that represent the diversity of the Canalway settings (e.g., canal towns, communities that are within the Corridor but not adjacent to the canal, rural settings, urban settings). At the workshop, which ideally would cover up to 3 days, the teams would develop an action plan for their area and brainstorm how they could collaborate across the Corridor in ways that advance management plan implementation.

Designed around the priorities of the Corridor's management plan, this option could engage stakeholders in projects that benefit their communities, strengthen their connections with the Canalway, and strategically build the capacity of the partner network while also helping to implement the management plan in a coordinated fashion across the entire Corridor. With the strong interest on the part of Commission and staff in heritage development initiatives, the workshops could focus on heritage development projects as a way of implementing the integrated purposes of the Corridor. Methods to assess the current status of the partner network and set the stage for documenting accomplishments over time could be incorporated into the design of option 2. If desired, a report could be prepared that documents and describes the development of the partner network and progress in engaging partners in management plan implementation and heritage development initiatives over the course of the project.

Capitalizing on the Momentum: Workshop Follow-up

Our experience in other places is that this workshop generates new partners and lots of follow-up activity, and to capitalize and support the ideas and expectations of partners will require staff time and attention. So the workshop is not the end of the project, but rather the beginning of a partner engagement process that positions the Commission and staff to strategically build its partner network in the initiatives that can follow. In fact, anticipating and planning for follow up is a basic part of the workshop organizing process. The steering group and Commission/staff may want to develop a strategy for following up on the workshop that would continue the

momentum and expand activity into other parts of the Corridor. Follow up can take many forms, including a meeting 6-12 months after the workshop that brings the teams back together with partners and other stakeholders from areas not represented at the workshop; “community mentoring” of sites not at the workshop by those that were; or a second workshop round to engage directly an additional 8 to 12 teams.

OPTION 3: Participate as a pilot area for the National Heritage Area Evaluation Strategy in 2008.

Once progress indicators have been identified through the National Heritage Area Evaluation Strategy Project (see description on page 4), which most likely will be in early summer 2008, they will need to be tested in pilot areas. The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor may be a good candidate to participate as a pilot. Specialized data gathering to obtain additional information could also be built into this option, and this information could be used for evaluating progress toward goals. It is important to note that while the National Heritage Area Evaluation Strategy Project is currently underway, the methodology for conducting pilot tests is still under development.

VI. FINAL THOUGHTS

The Conservation Study Institute has worked with Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor staff over the past year to identify options for establishing an evaluation process that are appropriate to the Corridor’s current needs at this point in its stage of development. Each of the proposed options can be designed to gather and analyze particular types of information that can feed into an evaluation of the Corridor’s progress toward management plan goals. Option 2, with its primary focus on building the partner network, can be designed to also incorporate methodology for tracking growth of the partner network and program accomplishments over time. Option 3 would provide for data gathering beginning in mid-2008 as part of pilot implementation of a national heritage area evaluation strategy. Each of the options would provide valuable information that could be used by the Commission and staff to strengthen their role and visibility in the Corridor, enhance their capacity for building and managing the partner network, and prepare for the future in order to meet their vision for success.

APPENDIX A. DATA GATHERED FROM THE FEBRUARY COMMISSION RETREAT

A.1 2017 Vision of Success in the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

Question: It is the year 2017, and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor is a success. What is one thing that you see which illustrates success from your perspective? (Can be related to the Commission, the partners, or something on the ground)

- The Erie Canalway is a world class tourist destination (with outside capital having been brought in)
- Hundreds of canal-side businesses (compared to 50 today)
- Every elementary school adjacent to the Corridor visits the canal and integrates it into the curriculum
- From end to end of the canal, there is access to a seamless array of services
- Neighbors and those in Washington care about the canal as much as the Commission does
- In every one of the 234 municipalities there has been a signature project
- The Erie Canal “begins and ends” in Buffalo and is more visible
- The Canalway is on a “Top 10” list (increased relevancy)
- All the small towns and villages have experienced economic revitalization and the canal has been a major factor in this
- The flight of business and brainpower out of the area has been reversed
- The Erie Canalway “brand” is widely recognized
- The Erie Canalway displays a vitality that comes from the completion of iconic projects
- The canal trail is completed and so busy that it needs to be expanded
- Fully connected to a range of partner venues along the extent of the Canalway
- There is Corridor-wide interpretation of excellent quality
- Heightened interest in stewardship from all New Yorkers
- People anywhere in the world recognize the Erie Canal, and there is a waiting list for visitors
- With the success of the Canalway, funding Commission activities is no longer a problem
- The resources of the Canalway are in better condition, historic sites preserved, decay stopped

A.2 Stakeholders of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

Primary Stakeholders

- State of New York
- Federal elected officials
- Key elected officials who will be instrumental in reauthorization
- Members of Congress who appointed the ECNHC commissioners
- Locals who invited federal government to come in and establish the corridor
- Erie Canalway NHC Commission
- Adjacent communities
- Residents within the Corridor

- Businesses within the Corridor
- Tour operators
- Hospitality organizations
- Private foundations

Other Stakeholders

- Canal Corporation
- Local/state/federal officials
- Municipal officials
- State heritage areas
- Boaters
- Trail users
- Cycling organizations
- Tourists (potentially, the 6.5 billion people on the planet)
- Outdoor enthusiasts
- Property owners along canal (i.e., physical neighbors)
- Homeowners
- Educators
- Students
- Photographers
- Historians
- Ecologists
- Travel writers
- Agricultural community
- Native Americans
- Mormon church
- Advocates for freedoms (e.g., African Americans, women's rights)
- All Americans
- Nonprofit groups (diverse)
- Environmental groups
- Chambers of Commerce
- Media
- Program staff
- Architectural/engineering firms
- Utilities, water companies
- U.S. Postal Service, Fed Ex, etc. (delivery services)
- Mules

A.3 Questions / Information Needs Identified by the ECNHC Commission at the Feb. 12-13, 2007 Retreat

This preliminary list was generated as an early step in the process of developing an evaluation plan for the ECNHC Commission to consider. All the questions and information needs identified by the meeting participants are included below and grouped by general topic.

Funding

- Where future funding will come from
- Where does the money come from?
- How Corridor projects will be funded
- What future funding Congress will provide
- Level of state and federal support?
- Likelihood of future federal investment
- Federal \$\$ invested
- State \$\$ invested
- Local \$\$ invested
- Foundation \$\$ invested
- What foundations may be interested in partnering with us
- Will we really be able to secure non-gov't \$ (thru foundations, e.g.) & at what level?
- What corporations would support our work

Economic Impacts & Business Development

- Economic impacts
- What new businesses/industries could be developed along canal
- Business opportunities are possible along the canal
- How businesses will be stimulated in the Corridor
- How private business can profit from the Corridor
- What new businesses has ECNHC helped to create?
- What can the ECNHC do for my community/business?
- How the Canalway will connect with tourism businesses
- How many businesses identify themselves as Erie Canal-related businesses?
- Tax revenue generated
- What is the size & character of the Canalway economy?
 - Connection thematically of business community to Canalway?
 - How do businesses work together to promote their area and products/services

ECNHC Spending

- How is the money spent in a geographic sense?
- How is money spent between different types of organizations, municipalities
- If one area where money is spent is too heavy – how can it be spent in future in a more balanced way?
- The economic return on capital investments made by/directly tied to Heritage Corridor

Marketing

- With so many partners & stakeholders, how does ECNHC build its own brand & identity
- How has the Corridor standardized signage, p.r., and marketing?
- What are the best locations for locating visitor centers
- All the entities marketing the Canalway?

- How do we educate service providers about knowing what else is going on in Heritage Corridor
- How has the profile of the canal increased?

Community Perceptions Regarding the Canalway

- Who are the people along the canal who consider themselves part of the “canal community”
- What/which communities think of themselves as canal towns (or not)?
- How many people in the Canalway think of themselves as living in the Canalway region?
- Which communities have a canal contact person?
- What community (res) will really show interest & commitment?
- How many people/organizations know what ECNHC is?
- Survey of awareness about Corridor base level (now) vs future
- Emphasis communities place on Heritage Corridor
- How many communities or organizations believe ECNHC will make a difference? Do they feel there is a need for our program?
- What the communities along the canal think about our plan and vision
- How many know about our program and its objectives
- How many people in Corridor know about our commission now; ask again 5 years from now
- Who thinks of canals negatively? Why?
- Who really cares?

Community-level Capacities, Resources, and Impacts

- Capacity of communities for stewardship
- Which communities have preservation ordinances?
- Where are the historical societies in the Corridor?
- Who are the county/town historians?
- What are the community websites?
- When/what are the established canal festivals?
- If the smallest communities are capable of joining with us
- What are the greatest needs of Corridor municipalities
- Where do residents expect to be living in 5 years? Within Canalway?
- How communities have been revitalized
- How many communities have taken advantage
- How can the ECNHC have the biggest impact on the communities’ economic revitalization

ECNHC Management Plan, Implementation, and Evaluation Process

- What are the plans to translate the master plan into specific action plans by ECNHC?
- Progress towards plan implementation
- What high priority projects were completed?
- How many projects/programs implemented

- Are the goals of the management plan consistent with changing priorities among stakeholders
- What size staff will be available for implementation programs during the next 3 years?
- How many volunteers does ECNHC have?
- What impact our public outreach meetings had on moving projects forward
- Where are the physical and psychic gaps in the Corridor for residents and visitors?
- How long the entire project will take
- How many years will it take to see the positive impact our program has on the communities – effectiveness
- What was the increase in canal utilization?
- What added value the federal program brought
- Want to learn if there were tangible results in harmony with our goals & objectives
- How to convince key stakeholders that qualitative data is as important as quantitative data
- A change in government policy (i.e., a change in education curriculum) – how measure?
- How competing projects will be supported and/or coordinated
- How can the Commission best stimulate immediate “wins”
- Where are the “holes” in services – i.e., geographic, types of organizations, etc.
- I want to know how ECNHC can be a forum for the hard questions
- Is ECNHC focusing its resources (\$, expertise, time) on the most important & effective programs?
- Is the outcome of a project measured in the number of people who benefit?
- How the Canalway will connect with other heritage areas

Partners and Other Stakeholders

- How many partners does ECNHC have?
- Number of stakeholders identified
- How can ECNHC be most helpful to you? (pick a stakeholder group)
- How important is ECNHC to your work/goals?
- How the Corridor brought state & local government together
- How do we build/sustain a positive working relationship with New York State?
- How do we build/sustain working relationships with adjacent communities?
- How the Corridor municipalities will be coordinated
- What is the increase in networking contacts

History, Heritage, and Interpretation

- What is source of most people’s information (history) about the canal
- What “undiscovered” history exists along the canal?
- If the quality of interpretation and level of authenticity is consistent with heritage resources
- What are the most effective interpretive media? (at different locations)
- How “heritage development” has benefited the Corridor
- How do we measure if people are really learning the history of the Erie Canalway
- How the Canalway remains relevant to future generations

Preservation of Historic Structures

- How many historic structures are in the Canalway Corridor?
- How many historic buildings need rehabilitation in the Corridor?
- What structures are most important to preserve?
- Progress in historic preservation
- Status of National Register eligible structures and sites?
- How many structures has ECNHC helped to protect?
- Number of buildings rehabilitated in Corridor/year
- What historic preservation strategies have worked

Schools

- How has ECNHC helped to incorporate the Erie Canalway into school curriculum?
- How much integrated into education?
- What school district could be our bell cows
- What are areas of interest of students (Canal) – i.e., geology, sociology, architecture, etc.

Visitors / Tourists

- Who currently visits (tourism) the Corridor?
- # of visitors to Canalway
- How many added visitors to the area
- How many visitors come to the Corridor in part because of ECNHC?
- What is the increase in visitors to the Heritage Area based on new programs or capital investment?
- How often do residents of Canalway visit other parts (>50 miles) of Canalway
- What are the most visited areas
- Visitors to heritage sites?
- What concepts are tourists looking for
- How many visitors from out of state to our Corridor? Out of country?
- What are the most visited Corridor sites (and why)?
- What actions have the most impact on extending the stay of Corridor visitors?
- What infrastructure (lodging, trails, wayfinding, etc) do visitors need?
- Statistics on trail users
- The number of increased bikers the trails have seen as sections are completed
- Tourist \$\$ spent
- Tourist dollars spent/yr?
- Heritage tourism impact on local businesses
- Does improvement to Corridor site(s) change the Canal share of the NYS heritage tourism market?
- Where do residents go on vacation?
- How recreational activities will be encouraged

Environmental Impacts

- How does ECNHC help to protect/conserv the environment?
- How do you measure improvements that are environmental and which can change w/ arbitrary forces?

Political Influences

- What if Politics (w/ a capital “P”) becomes too involved (especially in the negative)?
- Who Gov Spitzer will nominate
- What the new governor thinks of the plan

APPENDIX B. CONSERVATION STUDY INSTITUTE TEAM AND PROJECT ADVISORS**Conservation Study Institute Team**

Nora Mitchell, director, Conservation Study Institute and assistant Northeast regional director for conservation studies

Daniel Laven, management assistant, Conservation Study Institute

Jennifer Jewiss, research assistant professor, University of Vermont (Institute cooperator)

Jacquelyn Tuxill, director of partnership programs, Conservation Study Institute (Institute cooperator)

Suzanne Copping, national heritage area coordinator, Northeast Region, National Park Service

Project Advisors

Brenda Barrett, national coordinator for national heritage areas, National Park Service

Philip B. Huffman, conservation planning consultant (Institute cooperator)



2007 Photo Contest Winners

History & Heritage

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1st | “Urger” (Waterford) | Lin Butter, Putnam Valley |
| 2nd | “The Beauty of the Past” (Minden) | Terry Potoczny, Fort Plain |
| 3rd | “Nestled In” (Little Falls) | Bart Carrig, Little Falls |

Lois McClure & Other Heritage Festivals

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------------------|
| 1st | “Battle Island Re- enactment, Oswego River” (Oswego) | Naneen Drosse, Fulton |
| 2nd | “Lois McClure Arrives at Ithaca” (Cayuga Lake) | Lisa Everts, Ithaca |
| 3rd | “Morning Haze” (Oswego Canal Lock 5) | Richard Drosse, Fulton |

People on the Canal

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------------------|
| 1st | “The Carriage and the Canoe” (Herkimer/Montgomery) | Marc Goldberg, Clinton |
| 2nd | “Kayakers in Front of Pittsford Flour Mill (Pittsford) | Joe Carey, Clinton |
| 3rd | “Bicycling the Canal” (Unknown) | Deborah Otis, Rome |

Seasons on the Canal

- | | | |
|-----|--|----------------------------|
| 1st | “Winter Morning in Fairport” (Packett’s Landing) | Keith Boas, Fairport |
| 2nd | “Reflections on the Champlain Canal” (Unknown) | Gary Maybee, Fairport |
| 3rd | “Summer Evening” (Spencerport) | Kathy Eichorn, Spencerport |

Honorable Mention

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| “Minnow Catching” (Corbets Glen, Penfield) | Stephanie Barbero, Fairport |
| “Crossing Nine Mile” (Nine Mile Creek Aqueduct) | Paul Blue, Camillus |
| “Below Deck on the Lois McClure” (Lyons) | Keith Boas, Fairport |
| “Beauty After a Storm on the Oswego Canal” (Big Island) | JoAnn Butler, Fulton |
| “Fishing on the Erie” (Little Falls) | Bart Carrig, Little Falls |
| “Fennie’s Gang” (Sullivan/Fenner) | Marc Goldber, Clinton |
| “Richmond Aqueduct” (Montezuma) | Amelia O’Shea, Freehold |
| “Cool Winter Blues” (St. Johnsville) | Terry Potoczny, Fort Plain |
| “Load That Barge – Tug Is Waiting” (Palmyra) | William Rider, Macedon |
| “Oswego River and Canal” (Oswego Low Dam) | Jon Vermilye, Oswego |
| “Oswego Lighthouse” (Oswego) | Jon Vermilye, Oswego |
| “End of Another Year” (Lyons, Lock 28A) | Art Williams, Neward |

See all the winning photographs at www.ErieCanalway.org.

Staff Report, October 2, 2007

ADMINISTRATIVE

2008 National Heritage Area Appropriations Allocation – Executive Director Frank Dean represented the Northeast Region of the NPS at a meeting in Washington on August 22 to develop a formula to assign the federal funding to each National Heritage Area for 2008. This new concept was decided on by Congress and the National Park Service and the Senate Appropriations Committee instructed that National Heritage Areas be consulted in the process. The challenge is that 10 new heritage areas have been added since 2007 and no additional funding at this time. It is likely that all heritage areas with approved management plans will each receive an equal amount of funding and newer areas in the planning stage will receive some start up funds in 2008. It is not clear how the funds would be distributed in 2009. Frank also attended a meeting of heritage areas and the NPS on September 5- 6 in Burlington, Vermont to develop a template for measures of success which will likely be used in the budget allocation process in the future.

New Erie Canalway Legislation – Technical corrections to the Erie Canalway NHC legislation were passed by the U.S. House of Representatives Resource committee on September 26. It will still need to pass the Senate but this would provide a 5- year extension to the Commission and minor fixes to quorum and other issues.

Fundraising Organization – The Commission has established a fundraising organization, the Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, to help ensure the long term financial viability of activities of the Commission. Application for 501(c)3 status is in progress and a Board of Directors is being solicited.

New Governor – We have been meeting with Governor Spitzer's new administration in Albany and have briefed agency heads about our program and opportunities with our Commission. We have gained state interest and support for the Erie Canalway and the NPS Centennial project opportunities by matching with state funds.

Joint Meeting - A joint Erie Canalway- Hudson River Valley- Lake Champlain NHA meeting is scheduled for November 15 at the Saratoga National Historical Park. This will not be an actual Commission meeting but will be a get acquainted session with key staff and commissioners as all three heritage areas overlap in the Champlain Canal section.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Grand Canal Journey of the *Lois McClure* – The Grand Canal Journey of the *Lois McClure* was completed in September as the 1862 canal schooner headed home to Lake Champlain after traveling 1,000 miles through the heart of Upstate New York. More than 30,400 people from 25 states and six countries stepped on board for free tours at more than 25 ports- of- call. The Commission was the primary sponsor and we raised over \$300,000 to underwrite the voyage expenses and marketing from state and corporate sources. Press conferences were held in

numerous communities, calling attention to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and its communities.

Gateway Signage – Motorists along the NYS Thruway from Albany to Buffalo, the I- 87 Northway, and a number of state roads are starting to see new gateway signs to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, thanks to federal transportation dollars secured by Congressman James Walsh. The new road signs were unveiled at the Syracuse Inner Harbor on Friday, August 17. The 162 brown and white signs, which include the National Park Service arrowhead logo and the words “Entering Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor,” present a unified and consistent image that draws attention to the Corridor among the approximately 50 to 60 million people who will see them each year.

2007 Photo Contest and 2008 Erie Canalway Calendar – Our 2007 Photo Contest drew nearly 100 entrants and a total of 288 photographs. A panel of judges selected winning photographs based on creativity, photographic quality, and effectiveness in conveying the beauty or character of the Erie Canalway in one of four contest categories: History and Heritage, People on the Canal, Lois McClure and Other Heritage Festivals, and Seasons on the Canal. The twelve winning photographs and twelve honorable mention photographs will be included in the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor 2008 Calendar.

Rails & Trails Program – Fifteen people attended an orientation session in August to learn about becoming volunteer interpretive guides along Amtrak’s Maple Leaf and Adirondack trains as part of the Trails & Rails Program. Interpretation on the Maple Leaf train heading west out of the Albany- Rensselaer train station covers the rich history of the Mohawk Valley, including the story of the Erie Canal. Programming on the Adirondack train heading north out of the Albany- Rensselaer train station includes local Revolutionary War history and stories of the Hudson River.

Grants Program – The Commission approved over \$200,000 in grants to community partners throughout the corridor at its Annual Meeting in Buffalo on June 6. Staff has been meeting with partners to facilitate implementation of projects, including wayside exhibits, brochures, and site planning.

Wayside Exhibit Workshop – Numerous communities in the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, including nine that received Commission grants in 2007, are planning interpretive exhibits, brochures, and signage to highlight their unique historic assets. Commission staff are working in partnership with NPS Harpers Ferry to offer a workshop on October 17th in Syracuse to assist those communities in developing quality signage and exhibits.

Interpretation Training Session – Volunteers and paid staff of historic sites and the Trails and Rails Program, as well as others seeking a background in interpretation, were invited to attend an interpretation training session on October 1st at the Peebles Island Visitor Center in Waterford. The session covered techniques for educating visitors about the incredible history of the NYS Canal System, Mohawk Valley, and Upper Hudson Valley.

MV Day Peckinpaugh – The operational historic canal motor ship *Day Peckinpaugh* continued to receive rehabilitation and repairs and quality NPS on- deck exhibits have been added for interpreting the story of the vessel to visitors. The ship will be docked at the last remaining Erie Canal shipyard of which the main building is slated for some stabilization this fall with the assistance of the National Park Service, Canal Corporation, and NYS Parks.

Events – Noteworthy special events recently included the Waterford Tug Boat Roundup on September 8- 9, which drew approximately 15,000 people, and the Hudson Crossing Festival on September 15- 16 in Schuylerville on the Champlain Canal and Hudson River.