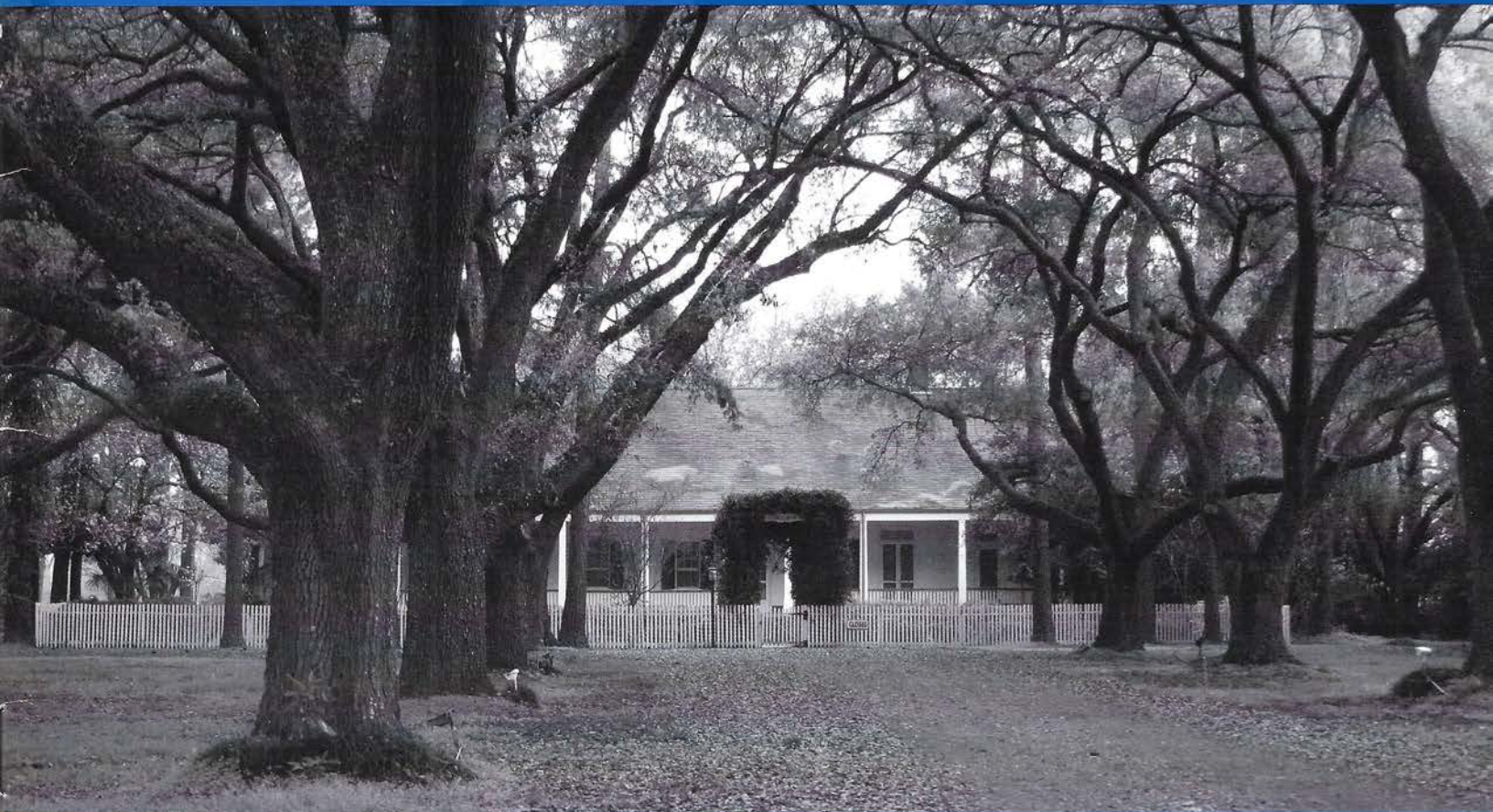


a national trust publication

Getting Started with Heritage Areas

by Brenda Barrett and Carroll Van West



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In northwestern Pennsylvania visitors can explore places named Oil City and Pithole, ride bicycles on a network of former rail lines, canoe on Oil Creek, and visit historic sites and museums that tell the story of the country's first energy boom. In Natchitoches, La., residents share stories and continue traditions that reflect their legacy of French, Spanish, African, American Indian, and Creole cultures. The Civil War brought intense conflict to the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, and today citizens work to preserve and interpret 16 battlefields and establish a new National Park unit on this now fertile landscape. All these areas are different, yet they share one commonality—they are all using a heritage area strategy to conserve the past and build for the future.

This booklet will examine how these heritage areas got started, ingredients for their success, and the best practices to launch a heritage area in your community.

What Are Heritage Areas?

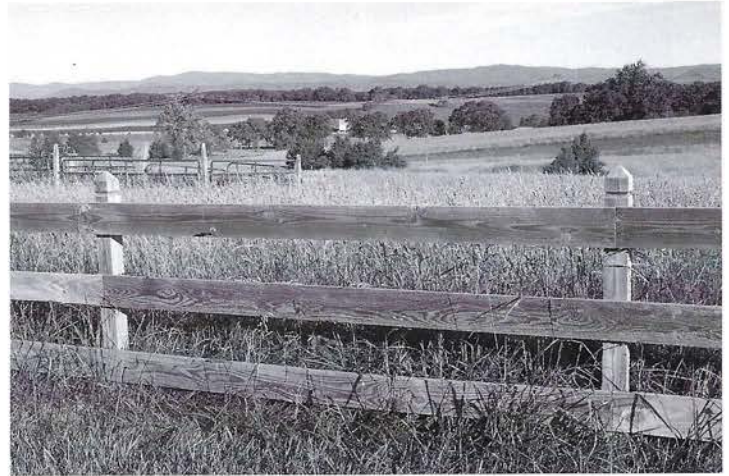
For more than a century the historic preservation movement has expanded its scope of interest, from saving individual houses to revitalizing main streets to conserving large rural historic districts. However, despite such success stories, preservationists face many new challenges as sprawl, disinvestment in urban areas, and ill-conceived transportation projects threaten to erode entire cultural and heritage regions. The historic preservation movement continues

to search for a strategy that turns the often reactive case-by-case approach of preservation into one that is proactive, community-based, grounded in the commitment and involvement of the people that live there, and works at the landscape scale.

The recent but rapidly expanding heritage area movement is a step in that direction. It embraces preservation, recreation, economic development, heritage tourism, and heritage education and weaves them into a new conservation strategy. By thinking bigger, heritage area advocates have found a diverse group of new partners who care about related issues and, most importantly, advocates have been able to tap the power of the residents and property owners who are the foundation for any partnership efforts.

The creative impulse behind the national movement for heritage areas represents a fundamental change in the way Americans weigh the value and potential of their pasts and how they work together to conserve and enhance the stories, places, and landscapes that define their sense of identity and pride in their community.

Heritage area advocates, in fact, often identify themselves as heritage developers and shy away from overt identification as historic preservationists. They see themselves as the next generation of heritage conservationists, achieving positive preservation and conservation outcomes in a political and cultural world far removed from the heady activism of the 1960s and 1970s.



Conserving Civil War battlefields and agricultural landscapes through creative partnership arrangements with landowners is critical to preserving nationally significant stories throughout the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District in Virginia.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

The advocates for heritage areas seek to ensure that the past remains part of the living fabric of the community. Their goal is not so much to create a region pock-marked with parks, historic districts, individual landmarks, and natural areas as to nurture a landscape, protected in large part by a shared conservation ethic, where heritage is a key tool for cultural, educational, and economic development. Although defined by boundaries, albeit fluid, heritage areas do not possess or manage large swaths of land; their regulatory functions in most cases are nil—the good they achieve comes from creating meaningful locally-driven conservation, recreation, education, and tourism projects that rely on interlocking, reciprocal partnerships to achieve success.

Cover: The restoration and interpretation of the main house on Melrose Plantation is a cooperative effort among Cane River Creole National Historical Park and Cane River National Heritage Area and community leaders and stakeholders who are reconnecting with the region's Creole heritage.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.



A volunteer at Augusta Canal National Heritage Area's Interpretive Center demonstrates how a weaving loom works. The onlookers have been participating in a workshop sponsored by the Heritage Development Institute, a training initiative of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas which educates emerging leaders and practitioners about heritage development.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

This new model has its roots in conservation as well as historic preservation and joins those people and organizations that are interested in both nature and culture. By working close to the ground, heritage areas have built a stewardship ethic at the community level. By fielding a bigger team, heritage areas have been able to tackle projects that in the past would have daunted any one interest group.

The congressionally-designated National Heritage Areas are the national standard bearers for the movement and they are preserving and telling America's story in innovative, exciting ways. Yet their different sizes, administration, funding, and themes raise a simple question: What is a heritage area?

The Alliance of National Heritage Areas (ANHA), a membership organization composed of national heritage areas and partners that support and practice sustainable heritage development, serves as the country's leading organization of heritage area advo-

cates. ANHA defines a heritage area as a geographic region where "a combination of natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources has shaped a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape." But just as important, the Alliance insists that geography is not enough; a commitment to working together, of knitting together diverse perspectives and interests are also crucial components of a heritage area.

"The partnership approach to heritage development," according to ANHA, "involves collaborative planning around a theme, industry and/or geographical feature that influenced the region's culture and history. This planning strategy encourages residents, government agencies, nonprofit groups, and private partners to agree on and prioritize programs and projects that recognize, preserve, and celebrate many of America's defining landscapes."¹

The National Park Service (NPS), which has played a key leadership role in the heritage

area movement for more than a generation, defines heritage areas in similar terms, but with slightly more emphasis on resources. Heritage areas are combinations of cultural, natural, and recreational resources defining "a landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography." They are lived-in landscapes where people continue to follow and celebrate important cultural traditions, conserving and enhancing those landscapes and traditions by following the heritage area "strategy." To the NPS, this strategy seeks "short and long-term solutions to conservation and development challenges by fostering relationships among regional stakeholders and encouraging them to work collaboratively to achieve shared goals."²

Our definition is similar to that of both organizations: *Heritage areas are meaningful places where residents, property owners, nonprofits, businesses, and governments work through recipro-*

Heritage Areas Go Where Others Fear to Tread

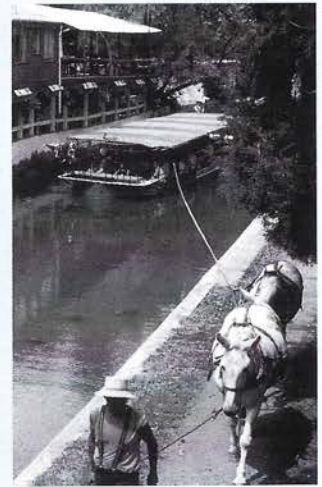
The Delaware and Lehigh Canal system was once a 120-mile conveyor belt that delivered anthracite coal to the eastern seaboard. The lower portion, the Delaware Canal, was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1978. While substantial sections of the system were managed as part of Pennsylvania State Parks, there were missing links, and maintenance of the whole canal system was a never-ending challenge. Over the past 15 years the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, in partnership with state agencies, local governments, and nonprofits, has worked to close those gaps, and today all but 20 sections of the canal's original 165-mile system are open and linked together by paths and trails.

But access is only the first step; to help maintain the corridor a "Trail Tenders" program was established and today volunteers provide thousands of hours of work on their special section of the towpath. By joining forces, corridor leaders can better advocate for dollars to improve state park holdings and repair damage from the area's frequent floods.

The mass production of the automobile is a preeminent American story, and in Detroit stands the Ford Motor Company's Rouge Plant,

a 1,200-acre complex that was once the largest manufacturing complex in the world. The site's innovative design by architect Albert Kahn shaped the industry's image and contributed to the site's designation as a National Historic Landmark in 1978. A few years later, however, the effects of globalization and a national recession raised questions about the Rouge Plant's future—it seemed destined for the wrecking ball and preservationists despaired on what to do next.

Fast forward to 2005 and see the impact of the MotorCities National Heritage Area. Visitors on the bus tour of the Rouge Plant see a video by Bill Ford, Jr., celebrating the "National Historic Landmark Rouge Plant" and tour a new \$25 million visitor center that features high-energy media experiences to tell the story of the Ford Motor Company and the state-of-the-art environmentally friendly converted Rouge Plant that now produces Ford trucks. In its first year of operation 180,000 visitors boarded the bus. "We never would have made this investment without the national heritage designation. It made us realize that this is important," commented Tim O'Brien, a Ford vice president for Corporate Relations.³



A mule-drawn canal boat tows passengers down the Delaware Canal in the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor in Pennsylvania. Mules amenable share the towpath with bikers and walkers around New Hope and Easton, where residents and tourists can board replica canal boats to experience the corridor from a different vantage point.

— Photo by Elissa Marsden

cal partnerships to enhance, conserve, interpret, and promote community resources, peoples, and traditions that define their region as a special place worthy of conservation for the benefit of the present and the future.

How Do Heritage Areas Get Started?

The Right Conditions

Heritage area initiatives are more likely to blossom in areas where residents have a deep sense of place and an identity that is tied to their perceived pasts and the surrounding landscape which

embodies that history and culture. Heritage areas are regions where community celebrations and festivals—from music fests to October fests to battle reenactments to rodeos—are commonplace, and where many residents still prize the open space of their historic landscape and the landmarks that define it—from coal tipples to steel mill stacks to Creole folk housing. However, heritage area residents often are not confident that their children will either recognize or appreciate this cultural legacy, and they worry whether the landmarks that define their sense of place will survive.

Thus, heritage areas often

emerge in communities under stress: the former economic base has disappeared; young people are moving elsewhere; sprawling development threatens to erase the historic landscape and replace it with cookie-cutter suburbs and bland commercial strips; the region is depopulating; or new development is happening so quickly that new residents do not know the old stories and do not seem to care.

When residents of a distinctive region face an uncertain future, old divisions and guarding cultural turf suddenly become less important. Residents, property owners, officials, and civic



During the annual Environmental Fair, thousands of students in the Lackawanna Heritage Valley in Pennsylvania benefit from exposure to the environmental sciences through field trips, hands-on experiments, demonstrations, and a career fair.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

leaders are more willing to come together and form new partnerships to tackle what is essentially regional revitalization—both culturally and economically—from the ground up. The impetus for cooperation may come from a successful partnership project such as a watershed cleanup or a regional trail project; it may come from imminent loss such as the demolition of an industrial landmark; or it may stem from a more general sense that the world is changing and not for the better. Shaping the future through celebrating and investing in cultural traditions, not merely freezing the present in the past, is a primary goal of heritage area developers.

Local Commitment

The process of change, of course, is never ending and it takes place at various degrees and speeds across the country. Change that threatens a community's sense of itself and its past is not the only

incubator for heritage areas. Success begins with local involvement and commitment. Whether the initial efforts come from regional economic development agencies, nonprofit environmental groups, or local museum or preservation coalitions, all successful heritage areas are locally grown and powered by local energy. Heritage areas are rooted in a conservation strategy of regional collaboration.

Indeed, one of the most empowering aspects of the heritage area movement is that it is more than a governmental designation conveyed by outsiders. Although there are designation programs at the state and national level, most heritage area initiatives are locally generated strategies to build on the past and manage change in the future. They provide the opportunity for competing views and interests to learn to work together.

Support from State Programs

At the time of publication, only a few states have developed programs to assist in the planning and recognition of heritage areas, parks, or regions, although interest in the idea is growing. Augie Carlino of the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, which is also a state designated heritage area in Pennsylvania, notes that “states in particular can play an important role in coordinating the many state and federal programs that flow through state capitals, such as transportation enhancement projects, support for the arts, state historic preservation programs, recreation and trails assistance, economic development aid, and so much more.”¹⁴

Maryland has developed a very active and well-supported statewide program. Its State Heritage Areas Authority has built upon earlier historic preservation programs to create a viable network of places, landscapes,



and communities that reflect impressive environmental, cultural, historical, and recreational diversity. Criteria for the program emphasize that resources of statewide significance, defined by listing in or eligible for listing in the Maryland Register of Historic Properties, must be involved. The Secretary of Natural Resources may also designate natural or recreational resources to be of statewide significance.

But the natural and cultural landscapes are just the building blocks. The Maryland heritage areas program also assesses whether a region has ten essential characteristics, including whether the heritage area will strengthen the viability of the local economy; enhance local and outside recognition of the significance of Maryland's heritage; encourage more local involvement by government and residents; and strengthen the region's commitment to stewardship, which "indicates the level

of community support for the maintenance of community character and quality of life."⁵ Through its regional partners, the Maryland program coordinates important initiatives for preservation, recreation, cultural tourism, heritage education, and economic revitalization.

(For a list of state heritage areas, see page 20.)

Support at the Federal Level

Responding to the public demand to bring resource conservation to a more complex and peopled environment whether coastal areas such as Cape Cod National Seashore or former industrial centers such as Lowell National Historical Park, the National Park Service has developed a number of innovative partnership approaches. In 1984 with the designation of the first National Heritage Area or corridor, the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor,

the NPS recognized the region's national importance and the significant role that local communities could play in managing it. Since the heritage area approach was experimental, and was based on resources that required preservation and conservation without ownership and management, limits were set on the amount and the time these areas could receive NPS funding.

Today there are 27 National Heritage Areas established by Congress and many more areas are under consideration. Each area has its own legislation tailored to reflect the individual needs of the region, but certain commonalities can be found: a statement of the region's contribution to America's story, identified boundaries, and a designated management entity that administers the programs and projects of the heritage area. The NPS is authorized to provide technical assistance to National Heritage Areas in preparing their required

The former slave quarters on Melrose Plantation at Cane River Creole National Historical Park are being preserved and interpreted with the help of the Cane River National Heritage Area and the connections the area has fostered with communities of Creole descent in and around Natchitoches, La.

- Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

NPS Criteria for Suitability/Feasibility Studies for NHA Designation

Before a region seeks congressional designation as a National Heritage Area, the National Park Service recommends that residents, officials, and property owners of the region meet and determine whether or not a heritage area is suitable or feasible. The NPS criteria for designation are:

1. The area has an assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed as such an assemblage, through partnerships among public and private entities, and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities.
2. It reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folk life that are a valuable part of the nation's story.
3. It provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and/or scenic features.
4. It provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities.
5. The resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation.
6. Residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and governments within the proposed area were involved in the planning and have demonstrated support for designation of the area.
7. The proposed management entity and units of government supporting the designation are willing to commit to working in partnership to develop the heritage area.
8. The proposal is consistent with continued economic activity in the area.
9. A conceptual boundary map has been reviewed by the public.
10. The management entity proposed to plan and implement the project is described.

management plan. This plan, which is reviewed and approved by the Secretary of the Interior, establishes a vision for the area's future and serves as roadmap for all partners. National Heritage Areas are also authorized to receive matching federal dollars for planning and implementation. This funding can be used for staffing and for grants and seed money, and creates a powerful tool for leveraging other dollars. Funding is generally limited to a set time period of 10 to 15 years and a set amount of no more than \$10 million. (For a list of current National Heritage Areas, see page 19.)

The state and national programs are important standard bearers for the heritage area movement. However, residents, property owners, and officials have self-designated the majority of heritage areas. The National Park Service has records on more than 200 such projects and estimates that another 200 are either developing or are operating on a more local basis. The best advice for communities interested in this new approach to heritage development may be the maxim: "If you want to be a heritage area start acting like a heritage area."

What Are the Principles for Success?

Building a flourishing heritage area relies on many of the same traits—patience, commitment, vision, and diversity—of any successful historic preservation project. Strategies for heritage area achievement may vary but advocates believe that the following five principles define the best practices of the field.

1. Heritage areas must embrace the region's most significant resources and embody its most compelling stories.

Heritage areas are mapped in the mind not on the ground. While many areas follow political boundaries—often county lines—for administrative convenience, others are based on recognized geographic and cultural boundaries such as watersheds or settlement patterns. They are almost always multi-jurisdictional and some, such as the Quinebaug and Shetucket National Heritage Area in Connecticut and Massachusetts, have cross-state borders. The diversity in size of the 27 National Heritage Areas designated by 2005 is striking, ranging from an entire state for the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area to a historic canal and associated industries in Augusta, Ga. Yet, the different sizes reflect the National Heritage Areas' multiple national stories—and the landscape that is needed to tell that story as inclusively as possible.

A first test for identifying the scale of a heritage area is to find those boundaries that include people and communities who feel an affinity for each other's heritage. The next test is to identify a region that contains the key resources to tell a compelling story. As a project develops, boundaries may change to better meet the needs of residents, property owners, and the resources themselves. Identifying the area that is bound together by a story and geography should be a major part of determining the feasibility of starting a heritage area. If the various stakeholders interested in creating a heritage area cannot agree on the region's general



Visitors to Split Creek Farm in South Carolina National Heritage Corridor enjoy the fall harvest and participate in special activities. Split Creek participates in “Falling For Farms,” an annual series of agricultural-related events held at various farms between September and December. The Heritage Corridor coordinates the events, publishes brochures, and provides publicity for the annual event.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

boundaries or scale, the heritage area approach may not be the best strategy to undertake.

2. Without meaningful inclusive stories and resources, a heritage area lacks a sense of place, a sense of the past, and a sense of identity and authenticity.

Heritage areas should try to identify, interpret, and enhance those stories that link the region together and that make a contribution to statewide heritage, in the case of state heritage areas, or that help shape our national heritage, in the case of National Heritage Areas. Thus, when residents, property owners, and officials get together to consider the feasibility of a heritage area, they need to ask: What important story does our region tell?

To bring people and communities together to envision the future and to work together across boundaries, there needs to be a compelling reason. A common

historical narrative that resonates with the community starts the process. It provides the necessary motivation to look beyond political boundaries and make common cause with those similarly situated. Resources and stories are tightly intertwined in successful heritage areas.

Heritage areas are rooted in place and powered by the people that live there. While they may lack the architectural cohesiveness or integrity of a historic district, a heritage area needs to have a sense of the geographic, architectural, economic, and social factors that shaped the region’s story. Since they are focused on people and pasts, however, heritage areas also value and embrace intangible resources, such as festivals, food, faith, and music that express the culture of the people who live in the area. Landscapes, buildings, and places, together with living cultural traditions, are the ties that bind a region together and give its citizens a sense of identity and pride of place.

Effective education programs help to ensure that a heritage area’s stories are meaningful and inclusive. The best heritage area programs are actively engaged in the classrooms of their region, providing teacher workshops, educational curricula, and programs for adults. Heritage areas start with education programs about local history and efforts to

The Bedrock for Heritage Development

“What I’ve learned from my colleagues on the front lines and what I see them doing so well day in and day out... is applying the bedrock of heritage development at its best.... *Educate. Understand. Value. Protect.* Every successful heritage development project that ever was is built upon that foundation. By strategically engaging the people whose story the project is intended to tell... they are learning the story, so that it is better understood, so that it is more highly valued, so that it is best protected. It’s that kind of dedication and that kind of passion for the story of America that makes heritage development in the U.S. so amazing, so worthwhile, and so effective.”

— John Cosgrove, executive director, Alliance of National Heritage Areas



A young boy bicycling along the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail, which traverses from New Philadelphia to Cleveland, Ohio.

— Photo by Paul Labovitz

make the landmarks and landscape accessible to the people that live there. It should be no surprise that heritage areas feature some of the most innovative heritage education programs in the country.

For example, children in the Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area interview grandparents about the past and script radio shows based on these stories. The top stories are broadcast on a local commercial radio station. The Essex National Heritage Area in Massachusetts developed an online Educators Resource Guide, which helps teachers integrate local site visits into their classroom instruction and meet state educational standards. The 37 counties of the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area in northeastern Iowa have developed a website based on the region's farming heritage called "Camp Silos." Visitors learn about region from top to bottom—they can watch the birth of baby piglets and contemplate a growing cornfield on the "CornCam."

To ensure that the resources are meaningful to a broad spectrum of residents and property owners, heritage areas often conduct their own resource surveys

and community studies to be sure that all groups contribute to the heritage story. Heritage area advocates always start with what is already known—beginning with surveys from the state historic preservation office, the state folklorist, and other past documentary efforts, such as the Historic American Building Survey and the National Register of Historic Places. They also work with the state museum association and state folklorist to identify museums and historic sites, large and small, and also assess which local festivals are appropriate for the heritage area. Many arts and cultural associations play a vital role in enhancing a region's living cultural traditions and are important contributors to successful heritage areas.

Identifying what is already known is only the start; the most exciting and challenging step is to identify what needs to be known. Heritage area planners carry out community meetings and discussions not just in the planning stage but also as part of the ongoing programming and commitment to the region. Continually reaching out to and interacting with the diverse residents and property owners creates a two-way exchange of information and perspectives between heritage area staff and the people of a region.

The Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, for example, established a Professional Services and Outreach program that provides a wide array of technical services and other assistance to property owners of resources from the Civil War and Reconstruction era for no charge. Staff members visit the resources in person—a big outreach effort for an entire state—

and provide preservation assessments and guidelines. They conduct workshops on heritage area planning and provide educational symposia on heritage area themes. They also provide in-house review of educational materials and tourism information. This program allows citizens and property owners from all walks of life and officials in smaller rural counties to interact with heritage area staff on a regular basis. The outreach program is geared to building local capacity and recognition among property owners that their resources do matter, thus empowering them and their communities to become part of the heritage area story.

Throughout the entire process of identifying key resources, heritage area leaders should remain committed to a serious assessment of what resources are crucial components, and what resources perhaps do not fit. A commitment to authenticity is an overriding concern—without it the area may merely be marketing an imagined past, not telling a story through real resources that resonate now and into the future. Residents and visitors recognize the difference between a real, complete heritage experience and one that is contrived, even sanitized. Tourism experts agree: Visitors to heritage areas want the "real deal."

Certainly not all resources are of equal weight; resources will have different levels of significance—local, regional, or national. Heritage areas are responsible, in alliance with residents and property owners, for setting priorities for both conservation and enhancement and for building constituencies, information, and support through community engagement. The Cane River National Heritage Area in

Louisiana for instance, developed a driving tour of historic African-American churches and related historic sites in order to give this significant story line more attention and to involve to a greater degree local African-American residents and property owners in heritage area activities.

3. Reciprocal partnerships are the foundation for effective, efficient heritage area administration and management.

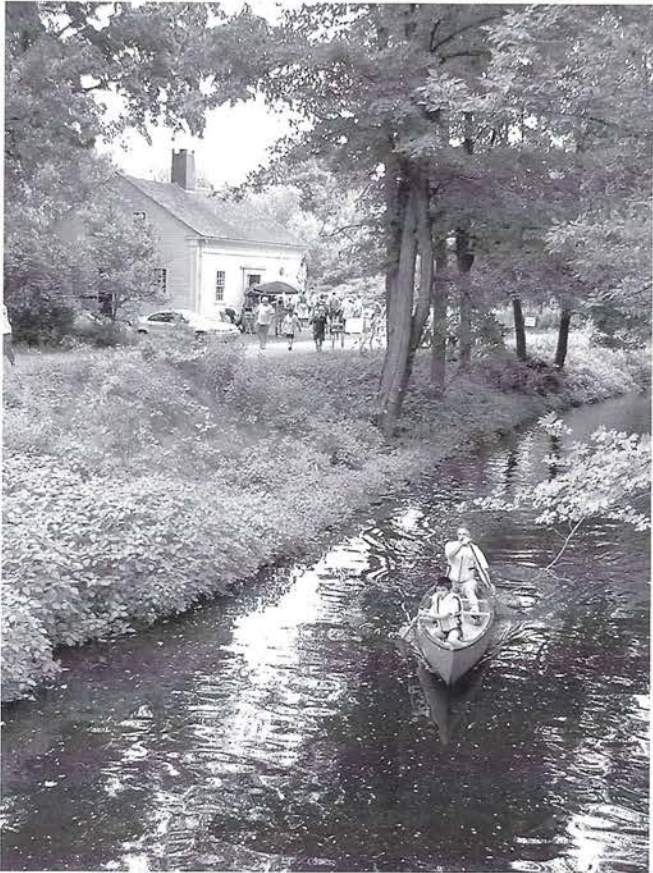
To discover whether a heritage area approach will meet community needs, planners must evaluate existing partnerships between cultural, recreational, historical, and conservation groups. If reciprocal partnerships already exist to some degree, it indicates that all parties may welcome a more coordinated effort to tackle regional issues. The challenge is to expand that existing network of cooperation to include as many groups as possible. Since heritage areas lack regulatory authority, they rely on a web of institutional relationships where a commitment to a region's resources, its past, and its people provide the necessary common ground. Community-based partnerships are the best way to blend the story, residents, interested partners, and a preservation ethic into a worthwhile project.

The word partnership is often overused and sometimes abused. All partnerships are not created equal. In "good intentions" partnerships, the partners want to have a winning heritage area, and have every intention of doing so... "someday." They usually fail because common interests and shared goals are *assumed*, but not clarified. The partners never share a true commitment to work collaboratively.

Then there are "unequal" partnerships, where one partner has the money and/or power and dictates the terms of the partnership, or one partner controls the resources and refuses to share "turf" unless its terms are met. In this case, the dominant group wants partners merely to lessen the costs of doing what it wants to do. Rarely does the lead group open up the decision-making process and allow its partners a real stake in the project. What eventually happens in "unequal" partnerships? The partners drop away and project stalemate is one common result—nothing happens.

"Reciprocal" partnerships embrace a dynamic relationship grounded in mutually agreed-upon commitments and responsibilities. Partners work toward shared goals based on mutual interests and consensus. All parties accept that shared goals, shared resources, and shared responsibility equal long-term success and they are willing to bring something of value—funds, labor, media access, needed expertise—to the table to contribute to the project. Reciprocal partnerships also go far to insure community involvement and interest and help to alleviate most property rights concerns because property owners are key parties at the table. Nothing can really happen if the property owners of the vital resources do not want to join the partnership.

Building reciprocal partnerships depends on respect being shown to all parties and perspectives. Respect between partners then contributes greatly to the level of trust—and without trust, true reciprocity will not happen. Respect and trust are then maintained by open communication between all partners. A reciprocal partnership is ongoing and



The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor in Massachusetts and Rhode Island has enabled river cleanups and canal and historic preservation projects that now provide visitors with the opportunity to paddle the Blackstone Canal and visit museums such as the Kelly House, a former lock tender's home, nearby.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

evolving. As long as the groups retain their commitment to themselves and the project, and if they continue to bring value to the partnership, a reciprocal partnership can be elastic and creative, bringing the flexibility in approach, funding, and perspective that any successful heritage area needs.

The Ohio and Erie National Heritage CanalWay is one of the most partnership-centered efforts among the National Heritage



Participants in Walking Weekends, sponsored by Quinebaug and Sbetucket National Heritage Corridor in Connecticut and Massachusetts, learn the history of Norwich Green in Norwich, Conn. This event, now in its 15th year, highlights local natural, cultural, and historic resources and typically attracts up to 6,000 participants over two weekends.

— Photo by Jim Gotbreau

Areas. Its model partnerships extend beyond nonprofits, federal and state agencies, and local governments to include the region's corporate interests, bringing property owners and developers into the heritage development process as active, creative partners. For example, the CanalWay and the Akron General Medical Center have teamed up to promote walking on the canal's 70-mile towpath with the Healthy Steps program. Different sections of the canal are promoted with feature articles, and walkers who meet their mileage goals are rewarded with canal-related items and trail posters.

4. Heritage areas strive to enhance community capacity and to bring about a covenant between people and places defining a region.

Support for the heritage area must come from residents, property owners, officials, and the busi-

ness community. Heritage area advocates have learned, sometimes from harsh experience, that top-down heritage development rarely works effectively, if at all. Heritage area strategies are implemented through the consensus of the people who live in the region. Support for the heritage area needs to be broad-based and reflected in the number of partners involved in various heritage area projects. Community engagement through reciprocal partnerships also helps to build local infrastructure and capacity for heritage programming and conservation as it reinforces local bonds between public and private partners.

Building heritage areas one project at a time, thus enhancing community capacity with each successful initiative, is not easy. A basic challenge in getting started is selecting the first projects and how then to ensure that all sectors of the community will be heard as planning for these projects gets underway.

Differences in power and influence between groups undoubtedly exist; some groups, for example older members of the community with a more traditional outlook, may be more circumspect than cultural and heritage activists accustomed to grabbing the spotlight. Heritage area planners must make continual efforts to reach out to all members of the community.

The tools of engagement range from newsletters and websites to manning booths at trade shows and county fairs. However, heritage developers agree that nothing is as effective as personal contact. For example, the heritage development initiative Handmade in America held hundreds of meetings in North Carolina's Appalachia before publishing its very popular tour books of regional resources. The Center for Desert Archaeology in its work with emerging heritage areas in Arizona found that getting letters of support after a per-



sonal presentation to a local government or organization helped build momentum and support for the idea. For a project in the Santa Cruz Valley, the Center gathered almost 100 letters of support for a heritage area including letters from the governor of Arizona, all of the region's tribal leaders, superintendents of related national park units and land managing agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses.

What successful heritage areas do best is to create ways where regional goals and objectives can be achieved by community-based partners aligning their missions and initiatives with the heritage area. By developing a foundation from the ground up through community-based projects, the heritage area provides broad, long-lasting community benefit, ensures community interest and support, creates effective networks to involve all key parties and resources, and leverages a combination of support to maxi-

mize funding and achieve long-term sustainability. Networks, partnerships, community engagement, leveraging, and sustainability are key concepts for a winning heritage area strategy.

In fact, if advocates are sincere in pursuing those concepts, they will create a program that strengthens regional identity, a very desirable outcome for any heritage project. A strong sense of regional identity does not happen by chance. While many community members may share a common heritage, this identity needs to be reinforced and some communities may need the introductory course. *Westsylvania*, a quarterly magazine of the Path of Progress National Heritage Tour Route in southwestern Pennsylvania, has a circulation of almost 10,000 and introduces readers to the region's deep and rich heritage of transportation history and folk culture. Rhode Island's John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley

National Heritage Area, in partnership with chambers of commerce in two states, started a leadership program that introduces residents to the wealth of heritage in their backyard. Five years later Leadership Blackstone Valley has graduated 87 leaders and these alumni provide an active web of heritage connections for valley projects.

5. Without effective resource conservation and enhancement, a heritage area lacks authenticity and distinctiveness, making it impossible to distinguish the region from Anywhere USA.

Conservation and preservation programs in heritage areas are crucial to maintaining a sense of authenticity to the region's heritage experience. The existing National Heritage Areas pursue these goals in many creative ways, blending strategies from cultural conservation, natural

The view from the observation deck at the Ford Rouge Factory Tour Visitor Center shows the National Historic Landmark Ford Rouge Factory in the distance, including the 10 acre grass-covered roof, the keystone of the plant's stormwater management system. Ford management has credited the MotorCities National Heritage Area designation as an important factor in the Rouge Plant's revitalization.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

Rural Conservation and National Heritage Areas

The Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Area in Connecticut and Massachusetts bills itself as the Last Green Valley to reflect its relatively pristine condition in the heavily developed Northeast corridor. The Green Valley Institute is a partnership of the heritage area and the University of Connecticut's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, to provide assistance to land-use decision makers both public and private. The College's Cooperative Extension Service offers workshops and technical assistance on such topics as protecting family land, GIS resource mapping, and conservation tools for local governments. This initiative recently won an American Planning Award for Public Education.

The Colorado River defines the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, but as the river has been tapped by upstream users, its exposed bottomlands have become a no man's land choked by invasive vegetation and favored for illegal activities. In partnership with the Quechan Indian Nation, which has traditional ties to the area, and with funding from a consortium of federal agencies including the Bureau of Reclamation, the heritage area has initiated an ambitious 1,400-acre reclamation project that will make the Colorado River accessible for recreation and natural resource conservation.

resource conservation, historic preservation, heritage tourism, and recreation. In several National Heritage Areas, natural resource conservation is a fundamental focus since the federal designation centered on historic canals, rivers, and turnpikes. These early transportation routes weave together communities and have always required intergovernmental cooperation.

The development of heritage areas also leads to additional walking, hiking, driving, and biking routes, which are tied to recreational and tourism experiences. Trail projects of all kinds have served as incubators for heritage initiatives across the country. By building access to underutilized

pathways and waterways, residents and visitors can explore the region and gain a different perspective on their resources. For example, the 150-mile water trail of the Schuylkill River Valley National and State Heritage Area connects the headwaters of the Schuylkill to Philadelphia. By publishing a water trail guide, developing river access sites, and hosting a week-long paddling tour known as the Schuylkill River Sojourn every June, the heritage area has introduced thousands of people to this formerly hidden resource. Plans are underway to reconnect many of the communities along the river with gateway improvements, interpretive signage, and, most recently, with a major grant for public art installations to enhance the trail experience and communicate the valley's nationally significant story.

Other heritage areas fund preservation and conservation plans for threatened resources within their boundaries. They fund surveys and, at the request of property owners, assist in the nominations of eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places. In partnership with other groups, they provide funds for the restoration of key resources. Heritage areas often aggressively work with state agencies and local governments to leverage other grant funds such as Transportation Enhancement Funds for their communities.

Heritage areas advocates pursue these conservation strategies as the best way to leverage their funding and support, stretching their dollars as far as possible. In general heritage areas do not have the authority or the mission to acquire and protect land; most National Heritage Areas are forbidden by statute to use their federal funds for land acquisition.

However, this does not prevent them from encouraging local stewardship that leads to the conservation of the natural resources and open spaces in their area. By taking a regional perspective they can link protected areas and identify gaps in natural corridors that should be considered for conservation in the future.

Strong recreation and conservation programs also underscore the heritage area's commitment to supporting economic vitality and growth. The development of recreational opportunities, historic attractions, and programs to preserve an area's sense of place offer an improved quality of life, attracting newcomers and providing incentives for residents to stay. Through showcasing authentic resources and real stories, heritage areas attract visitors who in turn, help support local businesses. The Augusta Canal National Heritage Area in Georgia, for instance, ties together conservation, economic growth, and sustainability through its restoration and maintenance of a historic textile mill's electrical plant. By restoring the facility, the heritage area conserves a nationally significant resource, it generates power for the local utility, and it generates money for the heritage area through the sale of the electrical power, thus helping the heritage area gain self-sufficiency.

By enhancing the "product" development of the heritage tourism industry, national heritage areas have clearly become key contributors to local and regional economies. Typically state and local tourism agencies focus on marketing and promotion while heritage area programs focus on enhancing the actual heritage resources and linking historic, cultural, and natural attractions with meaningful,



inclusive stories conveyed by signage, markers, and publications. Heritage areas also assist sites and attractions to become visitor-ready with capital investments and improved interpretation. They create the necessary critical mass of heritage attractions so to tempt visitors to remain in a region for a longer time.

The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area in North Carolina, for example, brings marketing savvy and promotional networks to bear on well-crafted and diverse heritage tourism properties. Visitor experiences can range from the grandeur of Biltmore Estate to the homely vernacular of a craftsman's shop, all tied together by the Blue Ridge Parkway. On the other side of the country, across the boundaries of Utah and Idaho, the Bear River Heritage Area has developed a guidebook and a website that helps visitors explore heritage sites, experiences, food, lodging,

and purchase locally-made products. The South Carolina National Heritage Corridor, the MotorCities National Heritage Area, and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor have developed gateway interpretive centers to bring consistency to their story lines and information to visitors. These model installations offer more than traditional visitor centers. In addition to interactive exhibits, films, and public programs, these centers encourage visitors to explore the landscape by providing driving tours and maps. All these initiatives help the visitors plan their heritage area touring experience and also help to emphasize the heritage area's national story within the local context.

What Are the First Steps?

Do you think that your community or region can benefit from a heritage area strategy? Do you have the energy to launch such a

comprehensive effort? Do you have the patience and the flexibility to see it through—and to see initial ideas and assumptions evolve into often quite different realities? Then you are ready to take the plunge and enter the creative, challenging, and exciting process of heritage development.

1. Assessment begins with you.

Assess your own institution or community group and see if it is ready for a program that centers on shared goals, shared responsibility, and shared funding. If no organization exists that meets the need, are there individuals with the energy and interest needed to create one? The experiences of the existing National Heritage Areas underscore the fact that major stakeholders must be committed to sharing labor, expertise, access, and funds to achieve common goals set by consensus planning. This type of

Music and craft traditions, Cherokee influences, rural villages, and pastoral working landscapes are linked together by the Blue Ridge Parkway, the spine of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. Tobacco is still grown in parts of western North Carolina.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.



Visitors tour the Friendship, a reconstructed 171-foot three-masted Salem East Indiaman. Managed as a partnership among the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Essex National Heritage Area, and Friends of Friendship, Inc., in Massachusetts, the replica's sailing program includes boat tours and trips close to home as well as ambassador sailing events for the heritage area.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

collaborative partnership network is not for everyone—many institutions are never able to share time or money with others unless they maintain complete control. Keep the principles of good partnerships in mind. If your institution, group, or agency is not ready for reciprocal partnerships, then the heritage area strategy is probably not for you.

2. Talk with other regionally-focused groups and incorporate their best ideas.

The next step is not as easy as it might appear. Too often heritage and cultural groups only talk among themselves, and they either fail to reach out to other regionally-centered organizations, or worse, they see no need to do so. You need to reach out to more than preservation, museum, local arts groups, folklore societies, and county historical societies—you need to talk with chambers of commerce, tourism groups, regional economic devel-

opment agencies, councils of governments, sportsmen groups, recreational or watershed associations, agricultural districts, trade organizations, and labor groups. These groups should not be viewed merely as funding sources—they also share in the regional story and need to be engaged to have broad-based, sustainable partnerships.

3. Talk to your local officials and elected representatives

Once you have broadened the discussions to include as many regionally-focused groups as possible, you need to quickly engage local officials and elected representatives. No politician likes to hear of an exciting new community initiative from second-hand sources. They too need to be brought in at the “ground level” and their ideas and concerns need to be incorporated into the emerging regional dialogue of what everyone can do in partnership to make the region a better place.

4. Hold open meetings and creative public forums to engage property owners. Listen carefully to their concerns.

By this step, your planning group for heritage area development has started to form. It should include representatives from various professional fields, business groups, community organizations, and elected officials. You may even have a working document that establishes the significant resources and stories of the region and begins to demonstrate benefits from a heritage area.

Now is the time to fully inform property owners and residents and bring their insights and concerns into the process. Well-publicized, open meetings are one way to invite people to join the effort; groups also have established internet-based forums and chat rooms to encourage public participation. Regional planning is a scary phrase for many people because too often in the past it

imposed the vision of “experts” on residents and property owners who perceived their needs quite differently. A heritage area will not work if it does not gain strength from the involvement of residents and property owners.

5. Don't re-invent the wheel: get training and information.

Specific training in best practices of heritage areas is available from the Heritage Development Institute (HDI), a program of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas in partnership with the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University and the National Park Service. These one-day workshops, taught by directors of National Heritage Areas, take place on a regular basis throughout the country and have been held as affinity sessions at the National Preservation Conference of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the last three years. For the latest schedules, reports, or to subscribe to the online monthly HDI newsletter, go to www.heritagedevelopmentinstitute.org.

The most comprehensive research sources on heritage areas are the websites maintained by the National Park Service (www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas) and the Alliance of National Heritage Areas (www.national-heritageareas.org). Other sources for information about heritage area programs are state historic preservation offices, state economic development agencies, and state tourism departments.

However, nothing replaces the impact of visiting an already established heritage area. Go on a field trip and take key leaders from your region. Members of the Alliance of National Heritage

Areas welcome visitors, especially those who stay awhile and help support their local economy. By joining Alliance of National Heritage Areas or its allied partner, the Heritage Development Partnership, you have an opportunity twice a year to join other Alliance members in visiting a National Heritage Area. These regular meetings help ANHA members to stay current in best practices in the field and to learn new concepts and programs that they and their partners can implement back home.

6. Schedule workshops and/or “house calls” in your region with heritage area experts from national leadership organizations.

If taking your leadership team to national meetings, workshops, or already-established heritage areas is impractical, you could also contact national heritage organizations, such as the Alliance of National Heritage Areas, the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Heritage Development Institute to schedule an on-site workshop or “house call” with a key national leader. House calls in the early stages of project development have proven to be of great value. If you bring a national leader to your region, be sure to advertise the meeting widely and leave plenty of time for discussion. Heritage area advocates like to assist emerging heritage areas as it provides insight into the growth of the movement and differing regional practices. They do not like to be part of closed door sessions that involve only a handful of the region's stakeholders interested in heritage area development.

7. Move from the planning group to a management entity.

You have been planning already for months; be careful not to fall into the trap of planning for planning sake. Don't waste momentum and community interest waiting for the perfect plan to emerge. Planning always needs to be moving toward implementation.

Therefore, by this stage, you have identified the stakeholders interested in reciprocal partnerships, engaged local officials, informed property owners and residents, and carried out research on what heritage area strategies work best and might fit your region's specific needs. You are ready to take the stakeholders and form your initial management entity, or the group responsible for administering the heritage area.

As these areas are locally managed and rely on strong local support, it is important to have an organization, either a newly created one or an existing organization that has credibility across the region, to guide the planning process and manage the implementation of the first projects. Such an organization must be able to take a regional perspective and place the interests of the heritage area first. The management entity must also have financial resources to provide staff, support, and seed money for those all-important first community projects. Remember the maxim that people power a heritage area? That's doubly true for the new area's founding board and staff for the management entity. They serve as the convener of the community, a keeper of the vision, and are essential for forward motion.

The group forming a heritage area must first decide what kind of management structure works best for the region. A number of options are available:

- **Nonprofit organization**—This is the most common management structure for good reasons. Board structure and membership can be tailored to local situations and the nonprofit can act quickly and entrepreneurially to take advantage of opportunities. It can hire staff without constraint of government rules and seek public and private funding. Sometimes an existing organization can be transformed into the management entity, if the board and staff place the interest of the heritage area before individual interests or past agendas.
- **Federal or state commissions**—Under this management approach the heritage area is governed by members appointed to a statutorily established commission by the Secretary of the Interior for National Heritage Areas or by the governor for state heritage areas. The commissions are governmental entities and for this reason they have a certain stature and authority. However, as creatures of government they can be bound by bureaucratic requirements, and the appointment of members is subject to political will and schedules. Commissions can be useful for areas where there are diverse constituencies to be represented or a strong governmental partner. For example the Erie Canalway National Heritage Area has a close partnership with the New York Thruway Authority which provides day-to-day

management of the 500-mile Erie Barge Canal's \$50 million annual budget. A federal commission was seen as essential to offer fair representation and to place the two organizations on a more equal footing.

- **State agency management**—In some cases a branch of state government manages the heritage area. That approach works well as long as the state program relies on local leadership to manage individual heritage areas. State officials are often too removed and too focused on the needs of state government to operate a heritage program at the community level. Other specialized agencies such as state authorities or academic institutions are successful when they embrace and involve local leaders.

To be effective, management entities need to keep leadership close to the ground and at the same time focused on the big picture. They must maintain their fiduciary responsibility to regional needs ahead of any one local project or state area of emphasis.

8. Staff heritage area.

Starting a successful heritage area requires, at the very least, one person who has the daily job of "how can I make the heritage area more successful." Basic staff positions include an executive director; an administrative assistant (who frees up the director to attend local meetings and have constant hands-on experiences with resources and communities within the heritage area); a financial manager; and a project or program manager. The qualifications for these positions will vary according to the focus, size, and purpose of the heritage area project.

9. Develop a management plan.

Heritage area management planning is an important opportunity to create awareness of the heritage area and build consensus around a shared mission and goals. The plan should be founded on initiatives that are community based and tailored to the conditions of each area. The essential elements of a management plan are a vision statement, goals and objectives, and an action agenda or framework to achieve the vision. Many plans also identify potential roles and opportunities for partner participation, identify key resources, and identify how the plan complements similar efforts and programs in the region. More recent National Heritage Area plans include a section on potential sources of funding or even a business plan.

Unlike some planning efforts, heritage area plans do not just sit on the shelf. Recent evaluations of National Heritage Areas that have been in operation for 12 to 15 years have demonstrated an impressive record of accomplishment based on early management planning. The secret to success is the level of public engagement in developing the plans; the best ones truly reflect community consensus and involvement.

10. Obtain funding.

Last but not least is funding for the heritage area. Operating funds are the most important as they provide for a staffed organization that is not competing with its regional partners for funding to survive. Experienced development officers will testify to the difficulty of raising operating monies. One of the advantages of having an established state program, or an annual congressional appropriation, is a steady funding source for operation.



Heritage area initiatives without that advantage have found alternative sources of support. Regional coalitions, such as councils of governments and regional development districts, have provided seed money for the initial staffing and management planning of heritage area ventures. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Resource Conservation and Development Districts, which work closely with a range of regional initiatives, are little-recognized federal sources for early funding and support.

Project funding is easier to find. Heritage areas often coordinate with other government officials to focus dollars, often public dollars that may have already been flowing toward the community, on high visibility projects that can demonstrate strong community support. Heritage areas, for example, have obtained a disproportionate share of federal transportation enhancement funds as they are prepared to

work with the program's long time frames and extensive planning requirements.

While governmental funding at every level provides the bulk of heritage area funding, more and more areas are turning to private revenue from foundations and donor gifts as well as money-making activities such as tours and programs. Membership programs and volunteer programs are also growing and provide not just in-kind support, but develop the community's stewardship ethic.

How Do We Know It Works?

The 2005 International Heritage Development Conference, held in Nashville, Tenn., centered on the theme, "Creating Economic Futures One Story at a Time." Heritage development professionals, grounded in the work of the existing National Heritage Areas across the country, used the conference to measure suc-

cess, identify challenges, and create new partnerships to advance the heritage area agenda.

Four sessions in particular demonstrated the success and continued growth of the heritage areas approach. First, the National Park System Advisory Board released its findings on the role of National Heritage Areas within the National Park System. The Advisory Board found that National Heritage Areas were of significant value in that they conserve nationally significant landscapes and cultures; they develop and utilize new strategies to meet the core NPS mission; and they build new constituencies, with an enhanced stewardship ethic, which will benefit the future of the entire national system. The Advisory Board thus concluded that National Heritage Areas contribute to the National Park Service core mission, but they needed a defined place in the park system.

The Larimer Youth Corps and other partner organizations have installed 13 wayside exhibits along the Cache la Poudre River Corridor in Colorado that interpret the history of water law and water distribution in the West.

— Photo courtesy National Park Service National Heritage Areas Washington Office U.N.O.

The second session was the Heritage Development Institute workshop where specific research on the positive economic impacts of National Heritage Areas was presented and discussed. Over the last two years, an ANHA pilot project has worked with Michigan State University's MGM2 (Money Generating Model 2) model of measuring economic impact of tourism activity. Seven National Heritage Areas profiled visitors, measuring not only spending habits but also their reaction to educational and recreational programming, identifying future marketing and promotional agendas. The success of the pilot project has led 13 National Heritage Areas to participate in the visitor survey during 2005. These efforts will yield key baseline economic data on the impact of heritage development in a regional context.

The third session, presented international research of how heritage area initiatives reflect the worldwide reaction against globalization. Dennis Frenchman, professor of planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and one of the nation's leading heritage area experts, reported that successful European projects are very much like their United States counterparts, involving "territories of different sizes and historical themes, managed by partnership entities, with no control over land use."⁶

Frenchman and his co-presenter, Serge Menicucci, representing the Fédération des Parcs Naturels Régionaux de France, presented as one particularly valuable international model, the French Regional Park System, which has 43 parks "that illustrate aspects of French culture and that are now threatened

either with urbanization or loss of economic productiveness. These projects include urban and rural areas that range in size from a few hundred to a thousand square miles."⁷

The fourth session showed that the best measurement of heritage area success remains community-based. In 2004-2005, the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor worked with its many local partners and the National Park Service's Conservation Study Institute to review 20 years of building a national heritage area. This study, available at www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas, addressed the project's accomplishments and leverage; its current and future management; and its critical ingredients for success. It concluded with a new action plan, outlining programs and projects in addition to the necessary new commitments needed to move the heritage area into the 21st century.

Clearly, heritage areas also have learned from the business model of collaboration. In the 20th century, too often the fields of historic preservation, natural conservation, economic revitalization, heritage tourism, and heritage education stood apart, sometimes communicating but rarely cooperating. Heritage areas have helped to break down those artificial barriers. Today to build a better community infrastructure for its valued resources, heritage area advocates often combine such seemingly disparate efforts as trail development, shared conservation goals of sportsmen and recreational enthusiasts, the demand for scenic byways, the need for regional tourism promotions, the development of new model regional plans, and the demand for authenticity reflected in the

need for stories from the people who own them.

Heritage areas work—and their partnership approaches are models for the future of preservation, conservation, education, and economic development in the United States.

Endnotes:

¹ Alliance of National Heritage Areas website, accessed May 25, 2005.

² National Heritage Areas webpage, National Park Service website, accessed May 25, 2005.

³ Personal communication with authors, Timothy O'Brien, Ford Motor Company, April 27, 2005.

⁴ Augie Carlino and Brenda Barrett, "What is in the Future for the Heritage Areas Movement," *Forum Journal*, 17 (No. 4, 2003).

⁵ Maryland State Heritage Areas website, accessed June 2, 2005.

⁶ Dennis Frenchman, "Session Proposal for International Heritage Development Conference," October 2004.

⁷ *Ibid.*, and comments and material presented in the session, "Heritage Development in an International Context."

For Further Reading:

Websites:

The Alliance of National Heritage Areas: www.national-heritageareas.com

The Heritage Areas program of the National Park Service: www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas

The Heritage Development Institute: www.heritagedevelopmentinstitute.org

Key Publications:

Aplin, Graeme. *Heritage: Identification, Conservation, and Management*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Barrett, Brenda, et al. "Regional Heritage Areas: Connecting People to Places and History." *Forum Journal* 17 (Summer 2003).

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National Heritage Areas as of August 2005

Augusta Canal National Heritage Area
(706) 823-0440
www.augustacanal.com

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
(828) 687-7234
www.blueridgeheritage.com

Cache La Poudre River Corridor
(970) 225-3565
www.nature.nps.gov/cachelapoudre

Cane River National Heritage Area
(318) 356-5555
www.caneriverheritage.org

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor
(610) 923-3548
www.delawareandlehigh.org

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
(518) 237-7000
www.eriecanalway.org

Essex National Heritage Area
(978) 740-0444
www.essexheritage.org

Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area
(518) 473-3835
www.hudsonrivervalley.org

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor
(800) 926-2262
www.canalcor.org

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor
(401) 762-0250
www.nps.gov/blac/home.htm

Lackawanna Heritage Valley National Heritage Area
(570) 963-6730
www.lhva.org

Mississippi Gulf National Heritage Area
(228) 374-5022
www.dmr.state.ms.us

MotorCities National Heritage Area
(313) 259-3425
www.experienceeverythingautomotive.org

National Aviation Heritage Area
(937) 475-7627
www.birthplaceofaviation.com

National Coal Heritage Area
(304) 256-6941
www.coalheritage.org

Ohio and Erie National Heritage CanalWay
(330) 434-5657
www.ohioeriecanal.org

Oil Region National Heritage Area
(800) 483-6264
www.oilregion.org

The Alliance of National Heritage Areas

The Alliance of National Heritage Areas (ANHA) is a membership organization that includes national heritage areas and partners that support and practice sustainable heritage development. ANHA activities enhance the efforts of individual congressionally-designated areas and promote the heritage development movement in America. The Alliance holds an international conference every two years to create a dynamic forum where best practices can be explored and debated.

ANHA recently announced the creation of the new Heritage Development Partnership, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to connecting heritage development professionals and organizations and promoting sustainable heritage development practice through education and the sharing of best practices, techniques, and tools. This professional outreach to the broader heritage industry will help to encourage more groups and communities to embrace heritage area principles in their regional and local projects.

Path of Progress National
Heritage Tour Route
(814) 696-9380
www.sphpc.org

Quinebaug and Shetucket
Rivers Valley National
Heritage Corridor
(860) 963-7226
www.thelastgreenvalley.org

Rivers of Steel National
Heritage Area
(412) 464-4020
www.riversofsteel.com

Schuylkill River National
Heritage Area
(484) 945-0200
www.schuylkillriver.org

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields
National Historic District
(540) 740-4545
www.ShenandoahAtWar.org

Silos & Smokestacks National
Heritage Area
(319) 234-4567
www.silosandsmokestacks.org

South Carolina National
Heritage Corridor
(803) 734-0141
www.sc-heritagecorridor.org

Tennessee Civil War National
Heritage Area
(615) 494-8916
histpres.mtsu.edu/tncivwar

Wheeling National
Heritage Area
(304) 232-3087
www.wheelingheritage.org

Yuma Crossing National
Heritage Area
(928) 373-5190
www.yumaheritage.com

State Heritage Areas

State Heritage Area Programs
Louisiana Heritage Area
Commission
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[www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net/
hb-1.html](http://www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net/hb-1.html)

Pennsylvania Heritage
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Rachel Carson State Office
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P.O. Box 8475
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8475
(717) 783-0988
Fax: (717) 772-4363
[www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/
heritageparks/](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/heritageparks/)

New York Heritage Areas
Program
NY State Parks, Recreation &
Historic Preservation
Peebles Island P.O. 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189
Phone: (518) 237-8643 (x3269)
Fax: (518) 233-9049
[http://nysparks.state.ny.us/info/
heritage.html](http://nysparks.state.ny.us/info/heritage.html)

Texas Heritage Trails Program
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711-2276
Phone: (512) 463-6100
Fax: (512) 463-8222
[www.thc.state.tx.us/heritagetourism/
htprogram.html](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/heritagetourism/htprogram.html)

Utah Heritage Areas Program
Utah State Historical Society
300 Rio Grande
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
Phone: (801) 533-3500
Fax: (801) 533-3503
[http://history.utah.gov/heritage_
tourism_toolkit/index.html](http://history.utah.gov/heritage_tourism_toolkit/index.html)

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a private, non-profit membership organization dedicated to protecting the irreplaceable. Recipient of the National Humanities Medal, the Trust was founded in 1949 and provides leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize communities. Its Washington, DC headquarters staff, six regional offices and 26 historic sites work with the Trust's 270,000 members and thousands of local community groups in all 50 states. For more information, visit the Trust's web site at www.nationaltrust.org.



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