

Illinois and Michigan Canal Heritage Corridor

A ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

2011-2021

PRESENTED TO:

Residents of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor
Secretary of Interior
National Park Service

PRESENTED BY:

Canal Corridor Association
Corridor Steering Committee

July 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Steering Committee

Dennis Bieschke, Chairman of the Steering Committee, CCA Board Member
James A. Brown, Planning & Economic Development Director, Village of Lemont
Andy Connor, CCA Board Member
Charles Firke, CCA Board Member
Kathleen Konicki, Will County Board Member
Ana B. Koval, AICP President and CEO, Canal Corridor Association
Ron Lehman, Former IMCNHC Commission Chairman and Member
Michele Micetich, President, Carbon Hill Historical Society
Bob Navarro, President and CEO, Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitor's Bureau
Ole Oldenburg, Director of Natural Resources, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County
Christopher Rollins, Region 2 Land Manager, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Edmund Thornton, President of the Edmund B Thornton Foundation, Former IMCNHC Commission Member
Jeanette Virgilio, Village of Lemont Trustee, Former IMCNHC Commissioner
Reed Wilson, Director of Economic Development, City of Ottawa

National Park Service Staff

Nicholas Chevance, Regional Environmental Coordinator
Sue Pridemore, Midwest Region National Heritage Area Coordinator
Martha Raymond, National Coordinator for Heritage Areas
Heather Scotten, Assistant Coordinator for National Heritage Areas

Writers and Contributors

Dennis Bieschke, CCA Board Member
Sue Bobinsky, former Executive Director, Heritage Corridor CVB
Andy Connor, CCA Board Member
Michael Conzen, Ph.D, Former IMCNHC Commissioner
Meridith Donahue, editor
Charles Firke, CCA Board Member
Leslie Jacobs, Leslie W. Jacobs and Associates
Peter Kodat, Editor
Ana B. Koval, AICP, CCA President and CEO
Pieter van Drielen, Report Layout
Ron Vasile, former CCA Historian
Heather Wickens, Project Coordinator
Tom Willcockson, Illustrator & Mapmaker

June 2011

Dear Friends of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor:

On behalf of the Canal Corridor Association and the 14-member Steering Committee, I am pleased to share with you the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor's Roadmap for the Future 2011-2021. I hope as you read this document that you will become as excited about the future of our National Heritage Corridor as my team has in constructing it!

Congress established the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) in 1984; it was the first heritage area in the nation and introduced a new concept of a national park. In 2006, the IMCNHC was reconfigured and reauthorized by Congress with the Canal Corridor Association designated as the coordinating entity. Beginning in the fall of 2009, the Canal Corridor Association began its Congressionally legislated duty to prepare a management plan outlining the best ways to fulfill the legislation between now and 2021 through the use of up to \$10 million of National Park Service funds to match \$10 million of local funding. During the planning process we have been very fortunate to have many of the residents of the heritage corridor actively participate in shaping the direction of our Roadmap for the Future.

I would like to publicly thank the 14 volunteer members of the steering committee that participated not only with their time and ideas, but their great expertise which further enhanced the focus of the vision and mission through the creation of our goals and stories of the I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor. They, along with our team of writers, were the "builders" of our Roadmap of the Future! We believe in the future of this heritage corridor, but more importantly, we believe that others, perhaps you, share our vision and are willing to share your time, talents, and energy to appreciate this rich opportunity and to act on it at the grassroots level. There are many ways within the plan for individuals and groups to participate, making this Plan become a reality and causing our National Heritage Corridor to be the best in the nation. You are all invited to become part of this great opportunity and participate!

Please consider participating and becoming part of the ongoing history of your National Heritage Corridor!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Bieschke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "D".

Dennis Bieschke, Chairman
Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Steering Committee

PREFACE

Between 2007 and 2011, the Canal Corridor Association met with residents and stakeholders of the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor and convened several committees to develop a framework to work towards fulfilling the goals of the National Heritage Areas Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-338).

The Canal Corridor Association looked to the National Park Service for guidance and technical assistance and to the stakeholders of the corridor for the vision of what could be accomplished through collective efforts over the next ten years. This plan is the result of many, many conversations throughout the region from Chicago to LaSalle and many points in between. Many people, including the Canal Corridor Association board and staff and the Corridor Steering Committee spent many hours conducting research, meeting with residents and groups, and synthesizing all the ideas and suggestions that were gathered. This plan is the product of that effort.

The plan is organized into six parts. Some sections will serve as references going forward and others to provide direction and mission critical structure. This is a starting point. It is intended to be flexible as we find better ways of working together to meet our goals.

Part 1 is the executive summary.

Part 2 is all about the stories that make up the national story of the Illinois & Michigan Canal region – before, during and after the operation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal itself. Part 2 includes the national significance of the corridor, its role in the development of Chicago, and its connection to Abraham Lincoln. The events of the Corridor are organized into a timeline. Interpretive themes are developed to organize and collect the smaller stories that enrich the overall story. Those extant physical resources that tell these stories are also identified.

Part 3 of the plan identifies the work of the national heritage corridor that has come before this plan. Designated as the first national heritage corridor in 1984, there is an extensive body of work and collection of activities sponsored by a list of organizations and advocates for the Corridor. This section is a brief history of these efforts.

Part 4 of the plan talks about the planning process. It covers the initial work of the public in developing the vision, mission, guiding principles, goals, and strategies of the plan. It outlines the public process

and alternative governing structures that were presented to stakeholders. Modified boundaries for the national heritage corridor are also included.

Part 5 of the plan identifies the various ways that people can become involved in working toward the vision for the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. It sets up a framework as a starting point to work together. It also identifies many of the organizations and government agencies that have an interest in the IMCNHC and how they may come together to collectively accomplish the mission created in the plan.

Part 6 of the plan identifies how we will communicate some of the core activities that need to be done to fulfill the obligations of the federal legislation, how we will identify projects over the ten years, how we propose to secure the local investment necessary, how the work will be evaluated, and how we will sustain the work and the coordinating entity after 2021.

The plan also includes an appendix with extensive additional information relevant to this plan.

This is our plan, one that we, the residents and stakeholders of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, have commented on and also are receiving comments from the National Park Service in anticipation of sending a finalized document to the Secretary of Interior in the summer of 2011.

Please come and join us in this effort to fulfill the mission of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.

Illinois and Michigan Canal Heritage Corridor

A ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part 1: Executive Summary	1-1
Part 2: The Story of the Illinois and Michigan Canal	
Introduction.....	2-1
National Significance.....	2-1
Timeline of Historical and Significant Impacts on the I&M Canal.....	2-9
The Unifying Story of the Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway.....	2-19
Key Corridor Sites.....	2-34
IMCNHC Maps with Key Sites.....	2-39
Part 3: The History of the IMC National Heritage Corridor	
Introduction.....	3-1
Creation of the Corridor.....	3-1
Overview of Legislative Mandate.....	3-3
Partners.....	3-5
History by Year.....	3-7
NPS Funding Summary.....	3-22
Part 4: The Planning Process	
Purpose of the Roadmap.....	4-1
Overview of Planning Process 2008-2010.....	4-3
Mission, Vision, Guiding Principles.....	4-6
Goals.....	4-7
Strategies.....	4-11
Alternatives.....	4-14
Boundaries.....	4-22
Part 5: IMCNHC Partnerships & Working Structure	
Introduction.....	5-1
Canal Alliance Membership.....	5-2
Resource Protection and Preservation Committee.....	5-8
Recreation Committee.....	5-10
Conservation Committee.....	5-12
Education & Interpretation Committee.....	5-14
Tourism Committee.....	5-17

Alliance Coordination.....	5-21
----------------------------	------

Part 6: Implementation

Introduction.....	6-1
Communications Plan.....	6-2
Activities Plan.....	6-10
Investment Plan.....	6-25
Sustainability Plan.....	6-28
Evaluation Plan.....	6-34

Appendix

Foundation Documents

1984 I&M Canal Legislation
1992 US Army Corps/I&M Canal Legislation
2006 I&M Canal Legislation
I&M Canal State Park Legislation
Lemont Ordinance 286 I&M Canal Purchase
1997 Boundary Study
IMCNHC Inventories

Planning Documents

IMCNHC Boundary Description
IMCNHC Communities List
MP Planning Process
MP Participants List
IMCNHC Governance
IMCNHC Goal/Project Sheets
IMCNHC Designations
IMCNHC Key Sites
References

List of Figures

Figure 1.1. Guiding Principles.....	1-4
Figure 1.2. Alliance Working Groups and Alliance Resource Committees.....	1-6
Figure 1.3. IMCNHC Map.....	1-10
Figure 2.1. Nineteenth Century Transportation Map.....	2-2
Figure 2.2. Stagecoach.....	2-3
Figure 2.3. Packet Boat.....	2-4
Figure 2.4. Steam Boat.....	2-5
Figure 2.5. Abraham Lincoln.....	2-7
Figure 2.6. French Trapper.....	2-19
Figure 2.7. Canal Construction.....	2-23
Figure 2.8. Railroad.....	2-26
Figure 2.9. Mule Driver.....	2-30
Figure 2.10. Key Corridor Sites.....	2-34, 2-35, 2-36
Figure 2.11. IMCNHC Map (Peru to Ottawa).....	2-38
Figure 2.12. IMCNHC Map (Marseilles to Aux Sable).....	2-39
Figure 2.13. IMCNHC Map (Aux Sable to Joliet).....	2-40
Figure 2.14. IMCNHC Map (Joliet to Sag Bridge).....	2-41
Figure 2.15. IMCNHC Map (Sag Bridge to South Chicago).....	2-42
Figure 2.16. IMCNHC Map (Sag Bridge to Navy Pier).....	2-43
Figure 3.1. UPPER ILLINOIS VALLEY ASSOCIATION.....	3-5
Figure 3.1. IMCNHC Funding Summary 1985-2010.....	3-22
Figure 4.1. Management Planning Process Timeline.....	4-3
Figure 4.2. IMCNHC Management Plan Roadmap.....	4-5
Figure 4.3. Goals.....	4-7
Figure 4.4. Cor-Ten® Steel Silhouettes.....	4-8
Figure 4.5. The Seneca Grain Elevator.....	4-8
Figure 4.6. Two bicyclists.....	4-9
Figure 4.7. natural environment.....	4-9
Figure 4.8. The LaSalle Canal Boat.....	4-10
Figure 4.9. Gaylord Building.....	4-11
Figure 4.10. Strategies.....	4-11
Figure 4.11. Potential Stakeholders.....	4-12
Figure 4.12. Governing Alternative 1.....	4-15
Figure 4.13. Governing Alternative 2.....	4-17
Figure 4.14. Governing Alternative 3.....	4-19
Figure 4.6. IMCNHC Communities List.....	4-22

Figure 5. 1. Alliance Committee/Resource Committees.....	5-2
Figure 5.2. Canal Alliance Groups.....	5-2
Figure 5.3. Canal Alliance Pledge Form.....	5-4, 5-5
Figure 5.4. IMCNHC Management Structure.....	5-6
Figure 5.5. Resource Protection & Preservation Working Group and Partners	5-9
Figure 5.6 Recreation Working Groups and Partners.....	5-11
Figure 5.7. Conservation Working Groups and Partners.....	5-13
Figure 5.8. Education and Interpretation Working Groups and Partners.....	5-15
Figure 5.9. Tourism Working Groups and Partners.....	5-17
Figure 5.10. Canal Alliance and Working Groups.....	5-20
Figure 5.11. Process for New Ideas/Projects.....	5-22
Figure 5.12. IMCNHC Project Proposal Form.....	5-23
Figure 5.13. Canal Alliance Project Submittal Form.....	5-24, 5-25
Figure 6.1. Communications Strategy.....	6-2
Figure 6.2. Civic Engagement.....	6-2
Figure 6.3. IMCNHC Website Suggestions.....	6-3
Figure 6.4. Posting information on other Websites.....	6-5
Figure 6.5. Communication Channels matched to Audiences.....	6-8
Figure 6.6. Annual Communication Schedule.....	6-9
Figure 6.7. Activities Strategy:.....	6-10
Figure 6.8. IMCNHC Goals STORIES Goal.....	6-11
Figure 6.9. STORIES Goal:.....	6-12
Figure 6.10. SPECIAL PLACES Goal:.....	6-14
Figure 6.11. RECREATION Goal:.....	6-16
Figure 6.12. CONSERVATION Goal:.....	6-17
Figure 6.13. ECONOMIC IMPACT.....	6-18
Figure 6.14. SUSTAINABILITY Goal:.....	6-19
Figure 6.15. Example Volunteer Positions.....	6-19
Figure 6.16. Examples of Internships.....	6-20
Figure 6.17. Subcommittee Decision Making Model.....	6-23
Figure 6.18. Investment Strategy:.....	6-25
Figure 6.19. Three year budget.....	6-27
Figure 6.20. NPS's National Heritage Area Sustainability definition.....	6-28
Figure 6.21. Levels of Stakeholder Involvement in the IMCNHC.....	6-30
Figure 6.22. Sustainability Strategy.....	6-30
Figure 6.22. Engagement Pyramid.....	6-31
Figure 6.23. IMCNHC Logic Model.....	6-32, 6-33
Figure 6.24. Data Collection.....	6-35
Figure 6.25. Evaluation Strategies.....	6-36

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Aqueduct — a bridgelike structure that carries a water conduit or canal across the valley or over a river.

Canal Alliance Partner (Partner) — a group or organization that is a member of the Canal Alliance and participates in any Canal Alliance event, project or activity with the intent to fulfill one or more of the goals of the heritage corridor.

Canal Alliance Stakeholder (Stakeholder) — an individual, group, or organization that have an investment, share or interest in the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.

Canal Corridor Association (CCA) — Congress designated the Canal Corridor Association as the local coordinating entity for the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor in 2006. CCA's board of directors has direct fiduciary responsibility for the federal funds received from the federal government.

Canal Prism — The shape of the canal as seen in a cross section.

Illinois & Michigan Canal — a 96-mile long artificial waterway stretching from Chicago to LaSalle, Illinois which connects Lake Michigan to the Illinois River.

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) — designated in 1984, this 862 square mile linear zone in northern Illinois includes 57 communities. The purpose of the IMCNHC is to retain, enhance, and interpret, for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the cultural, historical, natural, recreational, and economic resources of the heritage corridor.

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Ad Hoc Resource Committee — an Ad Hoc Resource Committee may be formed by the Alliance Committee Chair for a specific task within a specific time period.

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Alliance (Canal Alliance) — The IMCNHC Alliance is a group of self-selected stakeholders that sign an Alliance membership agreement to work towards the vision and mission of the heritage corridor and agrees to abide by its guiding principles. Each Alliance member identifies what resources they contribute annually to the local investment.

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Alliance Committee (Alliance Committee) — In accordance with the directives of the CCA Board of Directors, the Alliance Committee oversees the implementation and ongoing operations of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, providing the CCA Board of Directors with guidance and advice.

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission — A nineteen member Federal Commission established in the 1984 authorizing legislation for the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. The Federal Commission was to meet quarterly and oversee the development of the heritage corridor. The Federal Commission oversaw the development of the heritage corridor from August 1984 to August 2004.

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Standing Resource Committees — Initially five in number; each Resource Committee represents a distinct program area and has multiple responsibilities of a continuing nature; such as engaging the citizenry of the IMCNHC and gathering the expertise needed for good decision-making. Can be eliminated, replaced or revised, as needed, by a vote of the Alliance Committee.

IMCNHC — Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.

Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois (Landmarks Illinois) — Landmarks Illinois is the state's leading voice for historic preservation. This not-for-profit organization was founded in 1971 to present the demolition of the Adler and Sullivan designed Chicago Stock Exchange Building. Although this effort failed the organization has grown to become a 2500 member statewide organization.

Local Coordinating Entity — A National Heritage Area designation places an invisible overlay upon a living landscape, and some residents choose to perform specific actions to create and maintain their nationally important cohesive story, a story that is shaped by the region's individual parts. To assure that this invisible overlay is established and nurtured, the heritage area's public law also establishes a "coordinating entity." While individual municipalities, nonprofits, universities, businesses and industries continue operating as usual, the coordinating entity – typically a nonprofit, university or federal commission – focuses on the area's national story, coordinating local efforts to collectively preserve and share their unique national story for a stronger future and to educate local, regional and even national audiences. By bringing together those ongoing or newly initiated individual efforts, long term collaborations are formed and nurtured

to enhance a stronger and more sustainable future. Representing the landscape as a whole, whenever residents gather to establish mutual goals and opportunities, the coordinating entity maintains focus on unifying objectives they facilitate through public dialogs. Without this perspective and overall coordination, the national relevance of the story -- and many of the key locations representing that story -- may remain hidden or only quietly noted for many more generations. In many cases, relevant sites disappear for good. Living landscapes are always evolving and the region's national voice is maintained and continuously nurtured by its unique one-of-a-kind story. Some of this important work is also nurtured with the addition of federal funds which are administered by the coordinating entity.

National Heritage Area (NHA) or National Heritage Corridor (NHC) — National Heritage Areas are places where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make National Heritage Areas representative of the American experience through the physical features that remain -- and the traditions that have evolved -- in them. These regions are acknowledged by Congress for their capacity to tell important stories about our nation. Continued use of National Heritage Areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscape enhances their significance.

National Park Service (NPS) — a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The NPS manages the 394 units of the National Park System. The NPS also helps administer dozens of affiliated sites, the National Register of Historic Places, National Heritage Areas, National Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Historic Landmarks, and National Trails.

Steering Committee — a fourteen-member committee comprised of the chairs of the special interest committees (boundaries, civic engagement, conservation, education, heritage development, recreation, and tourism/economic development), former federal commissioners of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor and Canal Corridor Association board members. The purpose of the steering committee was to guide the development of the management plan for the heritage corridor.

The Plan — the National Park Service states that management plan describes comprehensive policies, strategies, and recommendations for telling the story of the region's heritage and encouraging long-term resource protection, enhancement, interpretation, funding, management and development of the National Heritage Area. The plan specifies actions, policies, strategies, performance goals, and recommendations taken to meet the goals of the heritage area.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Connecting a Proud Heritage To an Exciting Future

In 1984, the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) made history when it became the first heritage corridor in the nation. This was a fitting continuation for the historic Illinois & Michigan Canal, which opened in 1848 to connect the American heartland to New York Harbor and New Orleans. This plan serves as a roadmap for the IMCNHC and conveys an important part of the American story. The plan illustrates how the local coordinating entity will work within the heritage corridor to: tell its stories, recognize and protect its special places, enhance recreational opportunities, promote stewardship of its natural resources, while also promoting tourism and economic development.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal set the stage for Illinois to become the most populous inland American state and Chicago the greatest city of the American heartland. The implementation of this Roadmap For The Future has the potential to impact the lives of the over five million people who live and visit the 830 square mile heritage corridor. As Americans are inundated by new technology, the Roadmap will adapt using the appropriate technology, to connect people and create community within the heritage corridor.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal

At a stroke, the opening of the Illinois & Michigan Canal in 1848 made Chicago and northern Illinois the key crossroads of the American mid-continent. ‘The dream of the canal had animated every’ vision and underlain every plan for Illinois for 200 years before. As that vision was realized, the canal’s commissioners laid out a canal port that would grow into a great metropolis; their fellow citizens patented agricultural and industrial innovations that would make this the richest economic zone the world had ever seen. That Illinois is now the most populous inland American state, and Chicago, the greatest city of the American heartland, is directly traceable to the ninety-six mile canal that linked the Great Lakes to the Illinois and Mississippi rivers.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal has never attracted the recognition it deserves. Though few know today how vital the canal was, past residents of the Corridor knew it a century and a half ago. We cannot know Illinois’ history without understanding how the canal, as a symbol of the continent-straddling ambitions of America, made it possible for a great civilization to arise here.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal stretches ninety-six miles connecting Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River via the Illinois River. When the Illinois & Michigan Canal opened in 1848 it was the final link in an all-water route connecting the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River. The canal, designed to be 60 feet wide and 6 feet deep, drops 141.3 feet between Chicago and LaSalle and consists of 15 locks, 4 feeder canals (Calumet, DuPage, Kankakee, and Fox), and 4 aqueducts. Commercial traffic on the canal utilized 9 canal basins, 12 widewaters, sundry backwaters, three lateral canals, and two hydraulic basins. Eleven significant towns developed along the Illinois & Michigan Canal to take advantage of the enhanced transportation, six of them platted by the canal commissioners including: Ottawa, Chicago, LaSalle, Lockport, DuPage/ Channahon, and Morris.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor

Passed by Congress and signed into law by President Reagan in 1984, the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) is the first national heritage corridor, becoming a new type of national park for the 21st century. This 830-square-mile region is a hundred mile corridor whose centerpiece is the I&M Canal. The Corridor's historic canal towns, nature preserves, state parks, museums, more than 80 miles of recreational trails, and the I&M canal itself collectively draw more than a million visitors annually.

A Story About a Passageway

The overarching theme of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor is the Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway. The Illinois & Michigan Canal was carved through a glacial passageway that has been used by migratory birds, Native Americans, French fur traders, nineteenth-century pioneers, canal traders, and modern shipping industries. Today, the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor continues as a passageway for transportation and recreation. The transportation corridor includes highways Rt. 6 and Rt. 66, interstates I-80 and I-55, railroads, intermodal locations, and the Illinois Waterway and Sanitary and Ship Canal both of which replaced the Illinois & Michigan Canal. The visitor to the Corridor is yet another traveler through this passageway.

The IMCNHC Planning Team

In the National Heritage Areas Act of 2006, Congress reauthorized the IMCNHC and selected the Canal Corridor Association (CCA) to be the local coordinating entity and directed the organization to develop a plan to guide the work in the IMCNHC through 2021.

CCA reached out to potential partners and stakeholders throughout the area to become involved in the decision making process. Planning allows civic leaders, the business community, the non-profit community, and citizens to all have a meaningful role in coming together to create better places to live, work, and visit.

CCA held four rounds of public workshops throughout the IMCNHC between November 2009 and February 2011. Six resource committees were formed to assist in developing the plan and all stakeholders were invited to participate. The committees worked through the winter and spring of 2010 to develop goals and activities for the IMCNHC in the following six areas:

- Boundaries
- Conservation/Natural Resources
- Education/Interpretation
- Heritage Development
- Recreation
- Tourism/Economic Development

Additionally, a steering committee was formed with the purpose of providing direction and/or approval during the creation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor's Roadmap for the Future.

The IMCNHC ROADMAP

The purpose of this plan is to guide and coordinate all stakeholders of the IMCNHC to effectively utilize local resources along with any federal investment.

This plan is designed to:

- Serve as a framework for the existing heritage work of the stakeholders in the IMCNHC
- Serve as a roadmap for all the stakeholders in the Corridor to work together building on mutual interests
- Focus on adding value to the existing work by identifying work which is better done across jurisdictional boundaries and in partnership
- Identify current needs and gaps in the existing work
- Articulate partners and resources which can be brought together to accomplish the work of the legislation

The IMCNHC Plan Foundation

Early in the planning process, through a series of public meetings, a vision, a mission, guiding principles, and goals were crafted.

Figure 1.1. Guiding Principles

Stewardship:

- We hold our history in high regard and will use it to inform our stewardship decisions.
- We will respect the environment and property, public and private.
- We will respect each community's needs and goals in a way that is consistent with the concept that the Corridor is a region consisting of many communities and places which are geographically, historically and culturally connected by the canal.
- We will consider sustainability as an important criteria in making plans, selecting projects and allocating resources.
- We will communicate to our partners and the public in multiple ways to reach as many as possible, using technology to bring the Corridor to the world.
- We will include all groups, including future generations, in our plans, goals and actions.

History:

- We will appreciate the area's history both before and after the canal was created.
- We will provide education about the canal and the Corridor.
- We will respect our history and culture through honest and authentic portrayals of places, people and events.
- We will use multiple forums and media to spread the word about the Corridor's history to as wide an audience as possible.

Economic Development:

- We will encourage and foster economic development opportunities in the Corridor.
- We will provide places where people can bring their families and friends for recreation and fun.

Vision Statement

The Illinois & Michigan Canal connected the Illinois River to Lake Michigan, bringing people and commerce to northeastern Illinois. The canal and the towns that grew up along it share a legacy. Through interpretation, preservation, and providing educational and recreational experiences, we see the Heritage Corridor creating economic development, recreation, and education opportunities for residents and visitors, making the Corridor more prosperous and a place where people enjoy the benefits created by the canal and take pride in the region's history.

Mission Statement

The mission of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor is to: protect and preserve the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the Corridor; advance and stimulate economic development and activity within the Corridor; create and enhance opportunities for recreation in the Corridor; and interpret and cultivate the history of the Corridor and its significance in the settlement and growth of the region and nation.

Guiding Principles

Twelve principles were agreed to around the topics of stewardship, history, and economic development. See Figure 1.1 for the list of guiding principles.

Goals

Six goals were established towards accomplishing the work of the IMCNHC.

STORIES Goal:

The rich and complex stories of the history and continuing importance of the I&M Canal Corridor will be told through increasingly accurate, compelling and interesting ways to larger audiences.

SPECIAL PLACES Goal:

The Corridor's distinctive sense of place and natural, cultural and historic resources will be recognized, embraced and protected.

RECREATION Goal:

The recreational amenities of the Corridor will be enhanced and expanded to facilitate their enjoyment by more people.

CONSERVATION Goal:

The stewardship of the Corridor's natural resources will be improved. Both the number of stewards and the commitment level and involvement of stewards will be increased.

ECONOMIC IMPACT Goal:

The Corridor's economic growth will be built through an increase in heritage tourism and heritage development. Historical and cultural based venues in the Corridor will be enhanced through increased interpretation, use of new technologies, and increases in visitor services and marketing. Entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses will be supported with increased tourism strengthening our historic downtowns.

SUSTAINABILITY Goal:

The work of the IMCNHC will be sustained after 2021 by continually engaging more people in increasingly intense roles, continuing to strengthen the collective voice of the region, continuing the coordination and celebration of the work, and securing sustainable funding sources.

Partnerships and Working Structure

Successful heritage areas have a strong grassroots base involving local residents, organizations, and non-profits groups in the operations of the heritage area. In addition, a close coalition between a strong grassroots base, local and state governments, and investors coupled with a small investment from Congress and some technical expertise from the National Park Service, creates a unique opportunity for meeting the challenges and needs of the resources and communities of a heritage area.

The plan proposes to establish an alliance of individuals and organizations, called the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Canal Alliance. All stakeholders are invited to join the Alliance. There are opportunities available to become involved in the projects, programs, and activities of the heritage corridor whether you are a recreation enthusiast, a historian, or you are interested in the economic development of your community. Although members of the Alliance may have diverse objectives or interests they agree to work together towards a common mission.

Alliance members will come together around common goals forming committees and working groups. These committees and working groups will be flexible, able to adapt and change as the needs of the Alliance and the IMCNHC change. During the planning process five

initial resource committees and several working groups were identified to give structure to the Alliance. They are listed below.

Figure 1.2. Alliance Working Groups and Alliance Resource Committees

Alliance Working Groups	Alliance Committee/ Resource Committees
Canal Working Group, Special Places Partners, Special Places Advocates	Resource Protection & Preservation Committee
Recreation Partners, Recreation Advocates	Recreation Committee
Conservation Partners, Conservation Advocates	Conservation Committee
Storytelling Partners, Education Partners	Education/Interpretation Committee
Tourism Alliance Working Group, Tourism Partners, Designated Sites & Events	Tourism Committee

The Alliance through these resource committees and working groups will come together to enlarge and inform the IMCNHC coordinating structure. The coordinating structure is comprised of the Canal Corridor Association Board, a coordinating committee called the Alliance Committee and Alliance staff. Alliance members will populate the Alliance Committee.

As the Roadmap is implemented, the Canal Alliance will work to enable all opportunities within the corridor that meet the mission to become projects. Within the Roadmap, there is a management structure and processes to enable an objective approach to all potential opportunities generated by anyone in the Canal Alliance or interested in participating and aligned with the IMCNHC Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles.

Employing Strategies to Accomplish Goals

All strategies are really about resources. Our five strategies are different ways to maximize the resources of people and money. To accomplish our goals, the following strategies will be employed.

Partnership Strategy:

The Canal Alliance will engage with many partners to complete its work.

Communications Strategy:

The Canal Alliance will communicate effectively with many stakeholders through a variety of ways.

Activities Strategy:

The Canal Alliance will organize programs and activities that meet the identified goals.

Investment Strategy:

The Canal Alliance will raise the local match required by the federal government and strive to leverage additional funds. In addition, long-term, sustainable funding options will be explored and pursued.

Sustainability Strategy:

The Canal Alliance will involve as many people as possible through the above strategies and move them along a continuum of activity and commitment going from minimal interest to being involved and enthusiastic participants.

Potential Activities

Core Activities

Core activities are central to the mission of the IMCNHC and are ongoing. Some core activities were identified through public planning workshops and others meet the administrative requirements of federal funding and are necessary for continued local investment. The Canal Corridor Association (CCA) staff conducts day-to-day coordination of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor operations, actions, activities and business that will include an annual report, annual audits, and quarterly public workshops. The CCA will maintain or coordinate maintenance of the Corridor infrastructure including but not limited to interpretive and wayfinding signage, highway signage, radio transmitters, and other infrastructure created by IMCNHC funds. In addition there will be on-going communication to involve stakeholders and communication and coordination for the IMCNHC Alliance.

Potential Activities for STORIES Goal

The key to the national heritage corridor is telling the story of this nationally important place. We envision accomplishing this goal by working together on activities which: improve the accuracy of the stories, make the stories more compelling and interesting, and find new audiences for the stories.

- Create and manage Certification & Designation Programs for storytelling, education, visitor readiness and programming.

- Develop and manage outdoor interpretation and wayfinding for this outdoor museum.
- Encourage the development of I&M Canal Books.

Potential Activities for SPECIAL PLACES Goal

- Update the Historic Landmarks Nomination for the Corridor.
- Develop strategies towards assisting the owners towards the ongoing maintenance and development of the I&M Canal.
- Support the preservation of the eleven canal towns.

Potential Activities for RECREATION Goal

Recreation on the original canal tow-path trail is a perfect introduction to the canal stories for a large audience of people who are interested in walking, bike riding, or running.

- Encourage amenities for the bicycling market.
- Identify the need for trails to fill the gaps and advocate for them.
- Research the need for bicycle rentals.
- Develop bicycle tours in the Corridor.
- Include trail patrols and trail tenders in the IMCNHC Volunteer program.
- Promote other recreational activities that cause people to visit the canal.

Potential Activities for CONSERVATION Goal

The IMCNHC natural resources attract both residents and visitors, but our objective will be to integrate educational awareness of environmental concerns through recreational exposure in order to develop a vested interest sufficient for volunteers to take stewardship.

- Include conservation stewards in the IMCNHC Volunteer program.
- Develop kids programs for environmental education and stewardship training.

Potential Activities for ECONOMIC IMPACT Goal

- Develop and maintain a marketing plan and program for the Corridor.
- Maintain a training/technical assistance program to strengthen and enhance cultural, historical, natural, recreational and economic resources.

Potential Activities for SUSTAINABILITY Goal

- Develop and maintain a diverse Corridor-wide volunteer program.
- Develop and maintain an internship program.

The Local Investment

The local “1 to 1” match which is required in the IMCNHC legislation (Section 125) will be met and exceeded in five different ways:

- Raise unrestricted donations from individuals, corporations, foundations, and local and regional governments.
- Secure grants to fund a percentage of Alliance projects.
- Record IMCNHC related projects of partners that are already funded and meet the mission of the legislation and can be counted as local match.
- Solicit Alliance partner projects that meet the mission of the legislation with some existing funding and provide IMCNHC funds to complete the projects.
- Provide the promise of federal funds as the “seed monies” to assist in getting relevant projects funded with matches.

Evaluation of our Work

Everyone who steps forward to preserve and interpret relevant sites of this nationally significant Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway story is committed to doing good work. Routine evaluation of our individual and collective efforts not only will provide investors with important feedback, but also documents adjustments that improve what we do, how we do it and how we can enhance good work even further.

The evaluation plan will

- Alter and enhance, on an annual basis, the activities and strategies that the Canal Alliance is undertaking to do a better job.
- Collect the data necessary for a longer-term evaluation of the program by the National Park Service for reporting to the US Congress and other investors.

Based on current evaluation standards, in 2018, three years before the end of the current legislation, the National Park Service will begin an evaluation of the success of the IMCNHC Roadmap for the Future.

Sustainability after 2021

Sustainability of the local coordinating entity is vital for the sustainability of the work of the national heritage corridor. The work of the

Canal Corridor Association (CCA) as the local coordinating entity is necessary if the nationally important story is to remain as the main contribution to the region's uniqueness. Individual organizations, community leaders, site managers, and landowners who chose to preserve and interpret this national treasure operate independently out of necessity and with limited resources for the broader work. Seamless visitor experiences and a regional perspective of the story necessitate coordination by an entity without the encumbrance of competing interests.

To sustain the key activities of the CCA, stable funding sources and an increasing number of stakeholders and partners must be found.

In Conclusion

The creation of this plan involved a diverse local population that included a substantial number of local experts. This inclusive involvement generated a plan designed to give focus and a process to reach the mission identified in the IMCNHC legislation. Its success lies with the commitment of the owners and managers of the resources in the IMCNHC and with the stakeholders who have the passion and energy to make the region a better place to live, work, and visit. The Canal Corridor Association, as the local coordinating entity, and the National Park Service, as the federal agency, will work to add value, create opportunities for successful projects and provide seed money to help enable these local efforts.

Figure 1.3.
Map of IMCNHC with new boundaries. (Next Page)

Introduction

At a stroke, the opening of the Illinois & Michigan Canal in 1848 made Chicago and northern Illinois the key crossroads of the American mid-continent. The dream of the canal had animated every vision and underlaid every plan for Illinois for over 200 years. As that vision was realized, the canal's commissioners laid out a canal port that would grow into a great metropolis. Their fellow citizens patented agriculture and industrial innovations that would make this the richest economic zone the world had ever seen. That Illinois is now the most populous inland American state, and Chicago the greatest city of the American heartland, is directly traceable to the 96-mile canal that linked the Great Lakes to the Illinois and Mississippi rivers.

The Illinois and Michigan Canal is one of the best-kept secrets of American history. Though few know today how important it was, everyone here knew it a century and a half ago. We cannot know Illinois' history without understanding how the Canal, as a symbol of the continent-straddling ambitions of America, made it possible for a great civilization to arise here.¹

The Illinois & Michigan Canal stretches 96 miles, connecting Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River via the Illinois River. When the I&M Canal opened in 1848, it was the final link in an all-water route connecting the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River. The canal, designed to be 60 feet wide and 6 feet deep, drops 141.3 feet between Chicago and LaSalle and consists of 15 locks, 4 feeder canals (Calumet, DuPage, Kankakee, and Fox) and 4 aqueducts. Commercial traffic on the canal utilized 9 canal basins, 12 widewaters, sundry backwaters, 3 lateral canals, and 2 hydraulic basins. Eleven significant towns developed along the I&M Canal, six of them founded by the canal commissioners, including: Ottawa, Chicago, LaSalle, Lockport, DuPage/Channahon, and Morris.²

National Significance of the Illinois & Michigan Canal

The Canal Era

The I&M Canal was the final link in a national plan to connect different regions of the vast North American continent via waterways. Linking the waters of the Illinois River (and ultimately the Mississippi River) with those of Lake Michigan, the idea of the canal went back to Louis Jolliet and the early French fur traders of the 1670s.

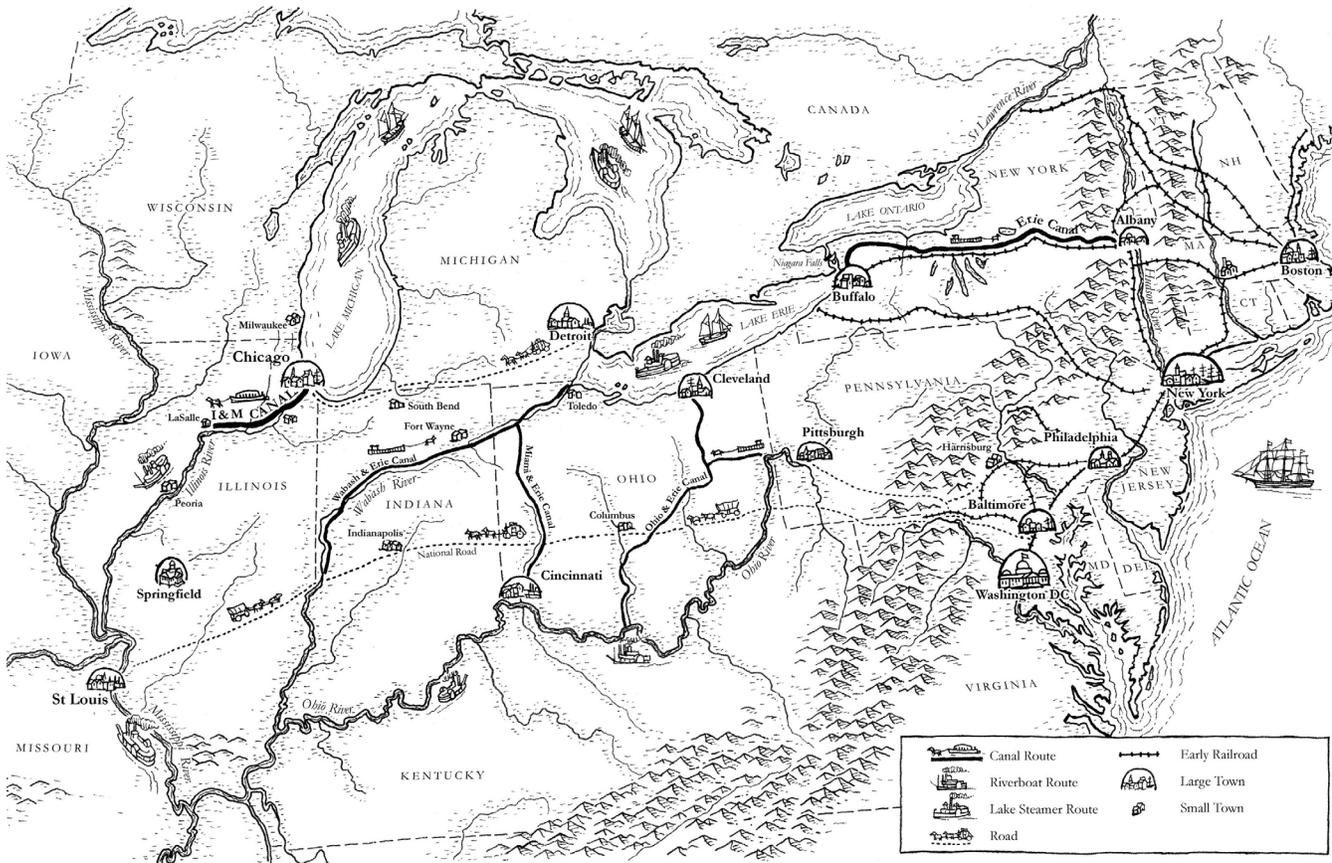


Figure 2.1. Nineteenth Century Transportation Map

The opening of the Illinois & Michigan Canal radically reduced the costs of transferring goods, particularly grain, lumber, and merchandise, between Midwestern prairies and the East via the Great Lakes trading system. For the first time, the canal allowed goods from the southern U. S., including sugar, salt, molasses, tobacco, and oranges, to be shipped to Chicago. By cutting travel times, the Illinois & Michigan Canal also precipitated a new era of travel for people from the south to the north, and vice versa. (Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)

The years between 1800 and 1850 have been characterized as the Canal Era in U. S. history. Since the birth of the new nation, American leaders recognized the urgent need for a network of internal improvements to ease the problem of continental transportation. The success of the Erie Canal, completed in 1825, marked a period of intensive canal building in the U. S. This chapter in our nation's history has been largely overlooked, as most historians have focused on the railroads as the prime force behind America's economic development.

Construction of the I&M Canal and the sale of canal lands brought thousands of people streaming into northeastern Illinois in the mid to late 1830s, and those who braved the hazards of this frontier outpost quickly realized the necessity of improving transportation. Contemporary accounts of stagecoach travel emphasize the perils and discomforts of traversing rutted paths that passed for roads. Much of the region consisted of wet prairie, and spring rains and melting snow turned the trails into quagmires. In 1847, a reporter took a trip by stagecoach along the route of the soon to be completed I&M Canal. He noted that the ride "was as uncomfortable as any enemy, if we had one, could desire. They made progress at the rate of less than three miles an hour; the weather was intensely hot; and not a breath of air

was stirring; the horses and carriage raised any quantity of dust, which, of course, rose only high enough to fill the carriage.” Another traveler noted that a long stagecoach ride “left one more dead than alive.” Canal travel promised a new level of comfort and convenience.



Few events in Chicago's

history were more eagerly anticipated than the opening of the Illinois and Michigan Canal. The digging of the most massive public works project ever attempted in the young state of Illinois, digging began on July 4, 1836. Many hoped the canal could be completed in a few years, but in 1837 the nation suffered its first major depression, and by 1840, Illinois teetered toward bankruptcy. Work on the canal largely ceased until New York, English, and French financiers invested \$1.6 million to jump-start the stalled project in 1845. It took 12 years of on-again, off-again labor to construct the canal, which finally opened in April of 1848.

Figure 2.2. Stagecoach

Stagecoach travel tended to be very rough and uncomfortable for passengers. Before the canal, northern Illinois had no paved roads or railroads. During rainy seasons the few trails turned into rivers of mud, and in the summer, clouds of dust choked horses and people alike.

(Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)

A New Transportation Corridor

On its completion, the I&M Canal created a new transportation corridor. By connecting the waters of the Illinois River with those of Lake Michigan, a vast all-water route connected widely scattered sections of the United States, specifically the Northwest, South, and East. Travelers from the eastern U. S. took the Erie Canal to Buffalo, New York, where steamboats brought them through the Great Lakes to Chicago. Transferring to canal boats, a 96-mile trip on the I&M Canal brought them to LaSalle/Peru. Here people boarded river steamers bound for St. Louis and New Orleans. The canal opened the floodgates to an influx of new commodities, new people, and new

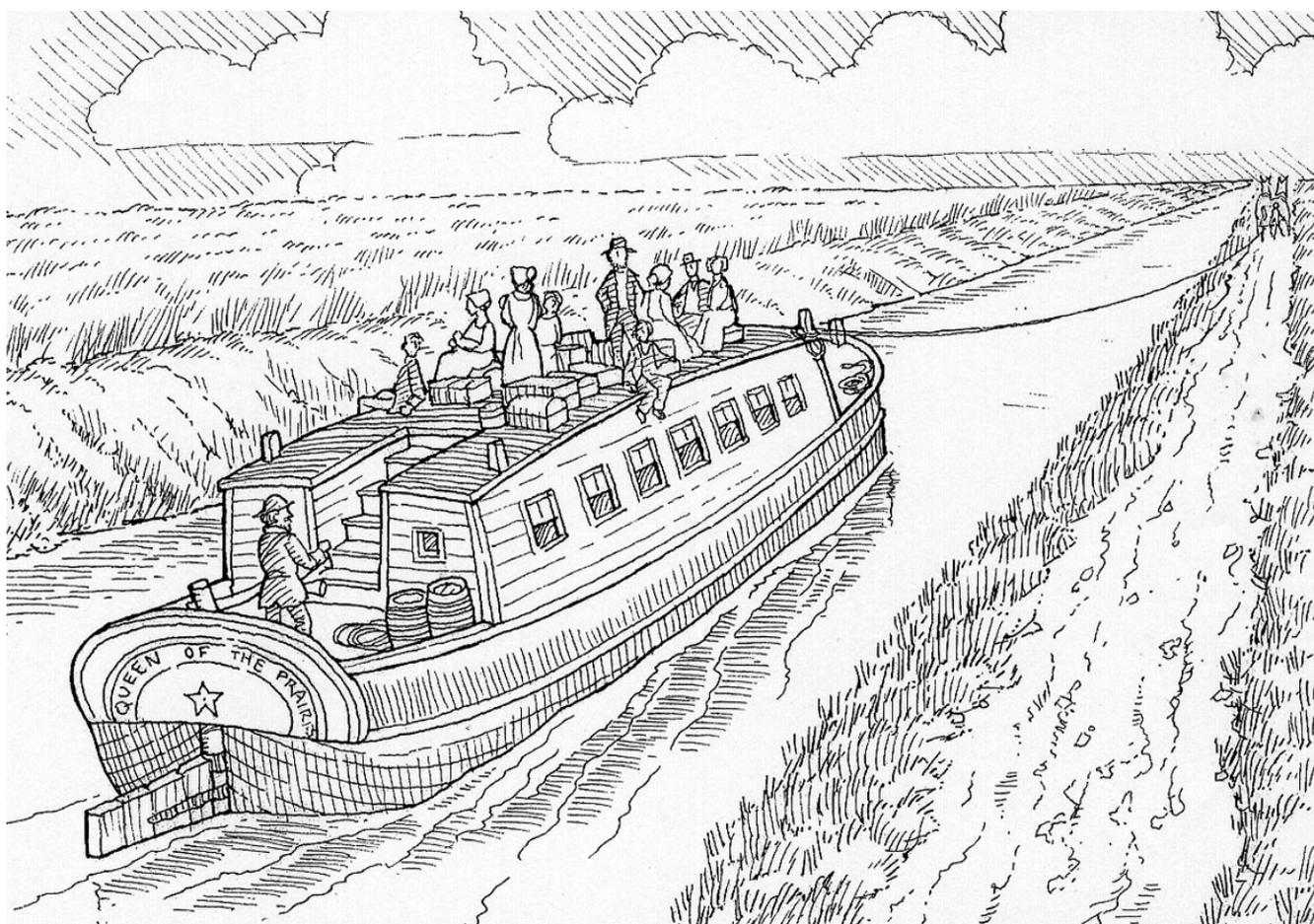
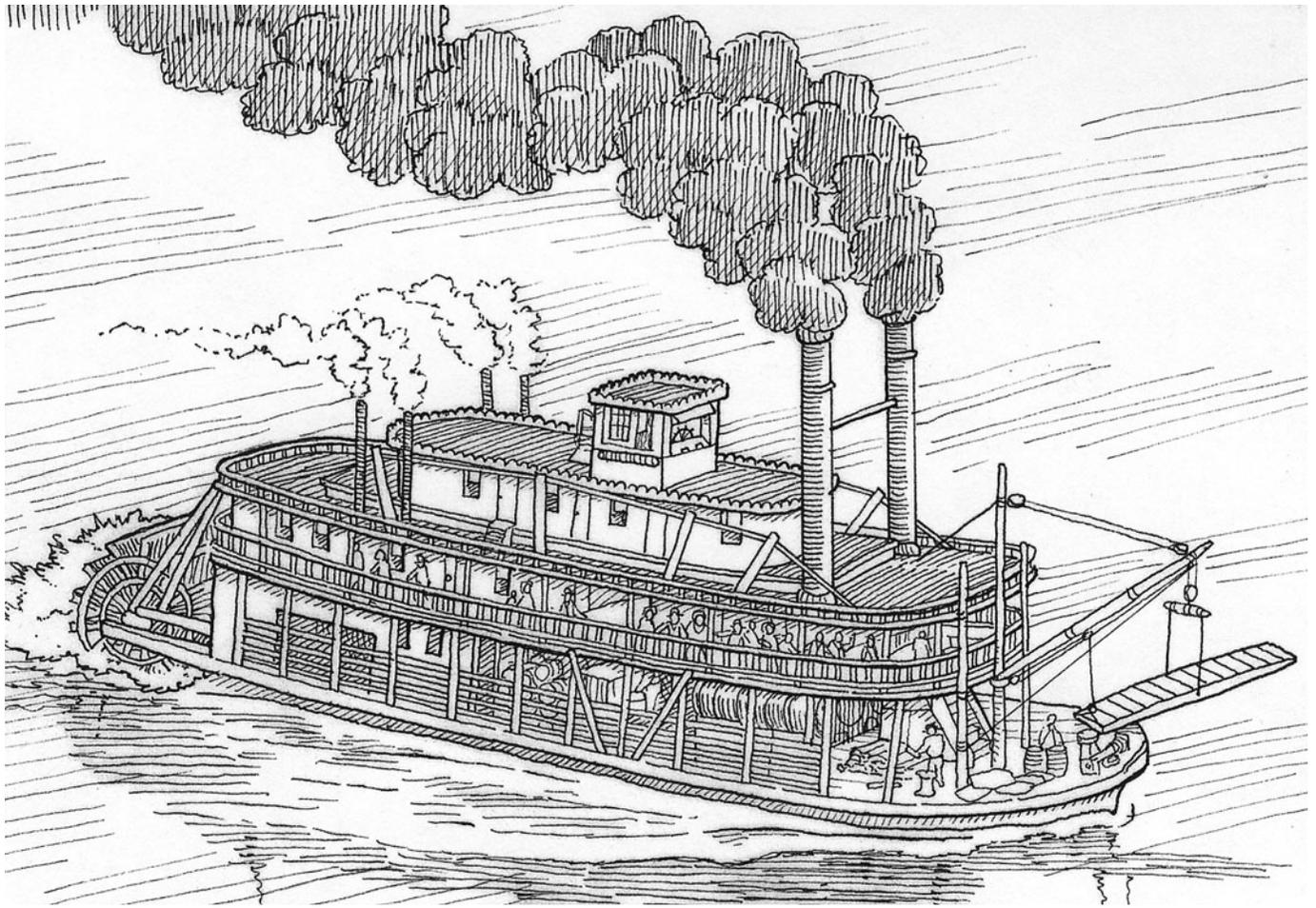


Figure 2.3. Packet Boat

In general, people enjoyed traveling on packet boats during daylight hours. After dark, passengers slept in cramped quarters with little space or ventilation. In fair weather one could loll about on deck, enjoying the passing scenery. Some played cards or backgammon, while others sang or read the latest newspapers. Since a trip on the Illinois & Michigan took anywhere from 17-24 hours, meals were also served on board. (Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)

ideas. The I&M Canal, and the railroad and highway connections that soon paralleled its path between Chicago and LaSalle/Peru, became the great passageway to the American West. The opening of the Illinois and Michigan Canal in 1848 made Chicago and northern Illinois the key crossroads of the American mid-continent.

The opening of the canal heralded a new era in trade and travel for the entire nation. The I&M Canal allowed travelers the option of taking an all-water route from New York Harbor to Chicago, Illinois, to St. Louis, Missouri and even to New Orleans, Louisiana. This water highway provided a mud and dust-free alternative to overland travel. Passengers increasingly chose the all water route to the West, bypassing the Ohio River route. Freight could go from St. Louis to New York in 12 days via the I&M Canal and the Great Lakes, while the Ohio River route might take 30-40 days. Packet boat companies touted their role in a new transportation network by noting that the packets connected with a daily line of steamboats bound for St. Louis, enabling travelers to make the 400-mile trip between Chicago and St. Louis in 60-72 hours, at a cost of only \$9. One commentator estimated that the number of people traveling from Chicago to St. Louis had tripled since the packet boats began running.



The I&M Canal and the Making of Chicago

Chicago's rapid development in the nineteenth century is regarded as one of the most remarkable stories in American history, yet few today make a connection between this unprecedented growth and the Illinois and Michigan Canal. The last of the great U.S. shipping canals, the I&M Canal helped transform Chicago from a small frontier town to the fastest growing city on earth. The canal also siphoned off trade from St. Louis, one of the factors that allowed Chicago to surge ahead of its chief commercial rival. St. Louis and others had laid claim to the title of "Queen City" of the West: Chicago solidified its claim through the changes wrought by the I&M Canal. The I&M Canal was the first of the region's transportation systems; all others followed in its wake. Understanding the story of the I&M Canal is critical for understanding the incredibly rapid development of Chicago and Northeastern Illinois in the nineteenth century.

The first few years of the I&M Canal were critical in launching Chicago on its path to urban greatness, and in spawning a dozen other towns along its banks that would soon industrialize and help

Figure 2.4. Steamboat

Passengers traveling on the Illinois & Michigan Canal could transfer to steamboats to continue their journeys at both the western and eastern termini. (Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)

consolidate the western end of the American Manufacturing Belt in northern Illinois. The opening of the Illinois & Michigan Canal radically reduced the costs of transferring goods, particularly grain, lumber, and merchandise, between Midwestern prairies and the East via the Great Lakes trading system. The degree to which the I&M Canal forever altered life in Chicago cannot be overstated. For the first time, the canal allowed goods from the southern U. S., including sugar, salt, molasses, tobacco, and oranges, to be shipped to Chicago. By cutting travel times, the I&M Canal also precipitated a new era of travel for people between the south to the north.

Changes Wrought by the Canal

The I&M Canal's influence reached its peak during 1848-1852, when it had no serious rival as a major artery of commerce in northeastern Illinois. Many people mistakenly believe that the construction of railroads in the early 1850s ended the use of the canal as a transportation artery. Indeed, by 1853, when the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad paralleled the canal, the brief and colorful days of the I&M canal packet (passenger) boats were over. But freight traffic on the canal continued to increase through the 1880s. The I&M Canal remained open for traffic for 85 years, of which only the last 33 were a time of steady decline until traffic was but a mere trickle. The existence of the canal as an alternative shipping route forced railroads to keep rates down on bulk goods, to the benefit of consumers everywhere. With the exception of the Erie Canal, only the I&M Canal opened up a water transportation corridor still viable today. This nationally important water corridor today consists of the Sanitary and Ship Canal and the Illinois Waterway, which eventually supplanted the I&M Canal in 1933.

The results of the canal in the Midwest were profound. Farmers now had a reliable way to get their crops to market, thus allowing them to open up new acreage for cultivation. The mining of limestone, coal, sand, and gravel shifted into high gear, as the canal made it economically feasible to quarry and ship large quantities to fast growing Chicago. Exploiting these natural resources in turn spurred new industries, especially the manufacture of glass, bricks, hydraulic cement, and zinc.

Abraham Lincoln and the I&M Canal

Throughout his public life, Abraham Lincoln advocated for improvements to the nation's transportation network, including a canal system that would be tied to the harbors, rivers, and roadways of America. He believed the waterways held the key to success, advancing the economic development of his home state and the

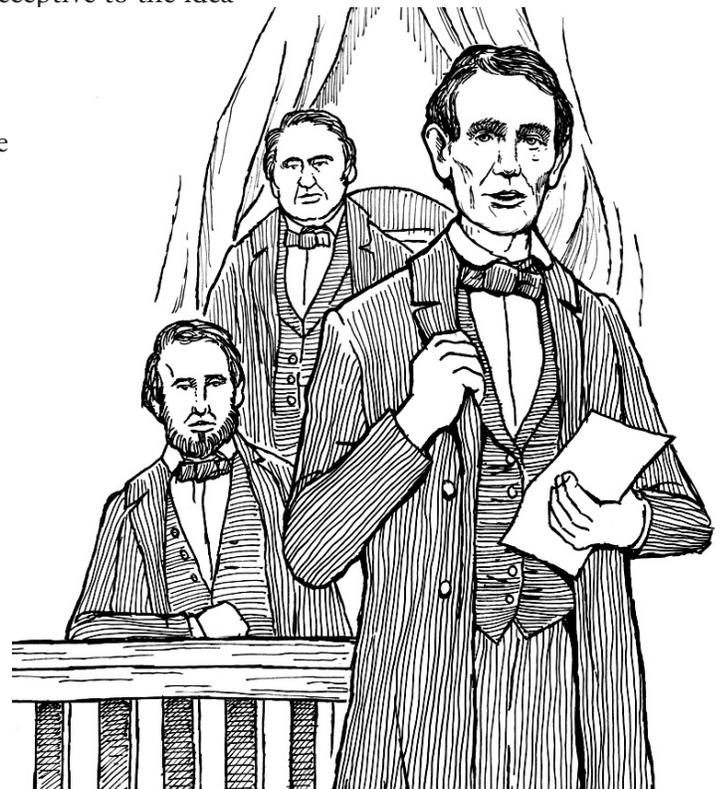
entire nation. As a legislator, an attorney, and the President of the United States, Lincoln actively supported the construction, use, and expansion of the Illinois & Michigan Canal.

While serving in the Illinois General Assembly, Representative Abraham Lincoln and eight of his colleagues addressed the slow development of northeastern Illinois. Some historians argue that legislators from Sangamon County, known as “the Long Nine” because of their height, swapped votes with northern legislators. In this act of “horse trading,” the Long Nine would lobby for the construction of the Illinois & Michigan Canal in exchange for northern legislators’ support of the capitol’s move to Springfield. Given his experiences on the rivers, Lincoln was receptive to the idea of a canal that would connect the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico through northeastern Illinois.

In February of 1835, Lincoln and 39 of his House colleagues voted to approve the construction of the I&M Canal, but funding problems ensued. Lincoln offered two amendments that were ultimately included in the authorizing legislation that passed in January of 1836. One of his proposals reduced the number of Canal Commissioners from five to three, and the other permitted the Governor to remove a Commissioner “for good cause.” As a lawyer in private practice, Abraham Lincoln remained involved in the affairs of the I&M Canal. During the summer of 1852, the Illinois General Assembly appointed Lincoln, along with Hugh Dickey and Noah Johnston, to a special commission. The commission’s task was to gather information about claims against the state resulting from the construction and operation of the I&M Canal. Lincoln and the other special commissioners traveled along the canal and interviewed claimants and witnesses in the Cook, Will, and LaSalle county courthouses. By the end of the year, they submitted a report to the Governor. As President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln’s goal was to preserve the Union. He advocated for improvements to the nation’s transportation system in order to move troops and supplies. Since the Confederacy blocked the lower Mississippi River, more freight and passengers traveled through Illinois. In his annual messages to Congress in 1861 and 1862, Lincoln specifically included improvements to the I&M Canal. The proposed canal enlargement would have allowed warships to travel between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River. It also

Figure 2.5. Abraham Lincoln

In the mid 1830’s Abraham Lincoln, then a member of the Illinois State Legislature voted in favor of construction of the Illinois & Michigan Canal. A staunch advocate of public works projects, Lincoln knew that the young state of Illinois desperately needed to improve its transportation system. (Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)



would have permitted a greater amount of freight to be shipped through the canal between the upper Mississippi River region and the eastern United States. Congress did not approve the project, but Lincoln's proposal laid the foundation for the construction of the Illinois Waterway System.

During his lifetime, Lincoln was honored on the I&M canal for his many efforts and accomplishments. No less than three canal boats used his moniker. The first was the Rail Splitter from Morris, which began its voyages in 1860. The following year, Old Abe out of Joliet and A. Lincoln from Morris joined the flotilla of canal boats.

A Story with National and International Significance

The I&M Canal had significant implications not only for Illinois, but for the entire nation. In 1827, the Federal Government gave the state of Illinois nearly 300,000 acres of prime farmland, the sale of which would finance construction of a canal. The I&M Canal shares with the Wabash Canal in neighboring Indiana the distinction of being the first American canal to receive a federal land grant toward its financing. This precedent is of great historical importance, as it later served as the model for the first federal land grant to support a railroad—the Illinois Central Railroad.

During the years of the California Gold Rush (1848-1856), the population of California increased by 300,000 people. Many of the individuals migrating to California traveled part of their journey on the Illinois & Michigan Canal. In the midst of the California Gold Rush, a nationwide cholera epidemic erupted in 1849. The epidemic came to Chicago on the "John Drew," an Illinois & Michigan Canal boat.

The canal story is also one with international implications. In 1845, with construction of the I&M Canal stalled due to the state of Illinois's near bankruptcy, investors from New York, England, and France put up \$1.6 million to complete the canal. The investors were not disappointed in their returns, and the I&M Canal is one of the few American canals to have more than paid for its construction and operation.

Timeline of Historical and Significant Impacts on the Illinois & Michigan Canal

Before the Canal

- 1673 Jolliet and Marquette explore northern Illinois, and Jolliet recommends construction of a canal to link Lake Michigan with the Gulf of Mexico.
- 1763 Britain wrests control of the future Corridor from the French.
- 1770s Portage site is used as a trade route during the Revolutionary War.
- 1783 US Government assumes control of the future Corridor.
- 1795 Treaty of Greenville transfers land around mouth of the Chicago River from Native American to U.S. control.
- 1803 Construction begins on Fort Dearborn (future site of Chicago).
- 1812 War of 1812 with Britain begins. Battle at Fort Dearborn.
- 1816 Treaty with Ottawa, Potawatomi, and Chippewa tribes cedes land along the Illinois River to build a canal.
- 1818 Illinois becomes the 21st state with an amended northern boundary which was moved 41 miles north to encompass the proposed canal.

Building the Canal

- 1822 On March 30, the United States Congress passes a federal act authorizing the survey and construction of the I&M Canal connecting the Illinois River with Lake Michigan. The canal route is to be 90 feet wide on each side of the canal. The land survey is to be completed within three years and the canal completed within 12 years. When completed, the canal will be used by the United States government, free of charge.
- 1823 On February 14, the Illinois General Assembly appoints a commission to ascertain the best route for the proposed canal.

- 1824 The commission submits five possible routes for the proposed canal to the Illinois General Assembly.
- 1825 Erie Canal opens, increasing migration to Illinois.
- 1827 The United States Congress gives Illinois 284,000 acres of land to finance construction of the canal.
- 1829 On January 22 the Illinois General Assembly passes An Act to Provide for the Construction of the Illinois & Michigan Canal. It establishes a board of Canal Commissioners with the authority to employ surveyors, engineers, draftsmen, and other individuals necessary for the completion of the I&M Canal.
- 1830 Canal Commission plats Chicago and Ottawa, the prospective western terminus of the Illinois & Michigan Canal.
- 1833 On March 1 the Illinois General Assembly abolishes the Board of Canal Commissioners and abandons the proposed I&M Canal due to lack of funds.
- 1835 On February 10, the Illinois General Assembly establishes another Board of Canal Commissioners with the authority to generate funds to complete construction of the proposed I&M Canal.
- 1836 On January 9 the Illinois General Assembly reorganizes the Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners finalizes plans for the construction of the I&M Canal.
- 1836 The canal commissioners plat Lockport, Channahon, and LaSalle and designate Lockport as the administrative headquarters of the I&M Canal.
- 1836 Construction of the Illinois & Michigan Canal officially begins on July 4 at present day Bridgeport.
- 1837 I&M Canal Headquarters is built in Lockport.
- 1837 Panic of 1837, first major national depression.
- 1838 The State of Illinois builds the Gaylord Building as a materials depot for the construction of the I&M Canal.
- 1838 Labor violence erupts among canal workers.
- 1840-44 Most work on the canal halts due to lack of funds.

- 1842 Morris is jointly platted by the county commissioners and the canal commissioners at the geographical midpoint of the county along the canal traverse.
- 1843 To generate funding for the canal, the Illinois General Assembly authorizes the Governor to pledge the property and all revenues generated by the canal to the bondholders in a deed of trust. According to the agreement: the canal, its revenues, and its property will revert to the state once the principal and interest are paid to the bondholders. During the period of the trust agreement, the canal will be governed by a Board of Trustees composed of three members. Two members will be chosen by the bondholders, and one member appointed by the Governor.
- 1845 Funding arranged by Governor Ford with new york, english, and french investors. Construction resumes.
- 1845-1848 Canal construction completed.
- 1847 Canal diggers strike for more wages and fewer hours. The strike fails.

Commerce on the Canal

- 1848 Illinois & Michigan Canal opens in April. Construction begins on railroad to parallel the I&M Canal.
- 1848 The Chicago Board of Trade is founded to handle increases in shipments of grain.
- 1852 Last year of major passenger travel on the I&M Canal; Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad opens for business and attracts most passengers.
- 1854 Chicago and Rock Island Railroad opens to the Mississippi River.
- 1861-1865 The I&M Canal plays a key role in the Civil War. The years 1861-1865 were among the busiest and most profitable in the canal's history, with a record \$300,000 in tolls in 1865. With the Mississippi River blockaded for much of the war, the canal and Great Lakes trade become critical to the war effort. Tons of government grain and oats pass through the canal toll free on its way to the Union soldiers.

- 1871 I&M Canal is deepened and the flow of the Chicago River is reversed in hopes of allowing Chicago sewage to be sent down the Illinois River. The attempt was successful, however the growth of the city and increased volume of sewage made the attempt inadequate.
- 1871 In April, the Illinois General Assembly formally dissolves the agreement between the state and the canal creditors. Beginning May 1, the canal bondholders are paid off and the state of Illinois resumes complete control of the I&M Canal. A Board of Canal Commissioners appointed by the Governor is to administer the canal.
- 1882 Greatest tonnage shipped on the canal in a year, over 1 million tons.
- 1889 The Illinois General Assembly creates the Chicago Sanitary District (now the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District) in 1889 for the purpose of managing water supply and wastewater issues. The Chicago Sanitary District begins a project to permanently reverse the flow of the Chicago River by building the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.
- 1900 On January 17, the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal opens between Chicago and Lockport, reversing the flow of the Chicago River, sending sewage from Chicago to the Des Plains River, and diverting barge traffic from the I&M Canal.
- 1910 The northernmost section of the I&M Canal between Chicago and Lockport is permanently closed to traffic.
- 1911 Construction begins on the 16-mile long Calumet-Saganashkee (Cal-Sag) Channel.
- 1914-18 I&M Canal experiences a brief resurgence during World War I.
- 1917 The Illinois General Assembly transfers control of the I&M Canal to the Illinois Department of Public Works and Buildings.
- 1922 Cal Sag Channel opens, reversing the flow of the Calumet River and connecting the Calumet River to the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal just east of Lemont. The Cal Sag is designed to carry sewage and heavy commercial traffic.

- 1925 The Illinois General Assembly transfers control of the I&M Canal to the Illinois Department of Purchases and Construction.
- 1933 The Illinois Waterway, a series of locks and dams that regulate the Illinois River at a depth of 9 feet, opens and the LaSalle-Joliet section of the I&M Canal officially closes.

Recreation on the Canal

- 1933 The Illinois General Assembly transfers control of the I&M Canal back to the Illinois Department of Public Works and Buildings.
- 1933 The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) establishes five camps along the I&M Canal from Willow Springs to LaSalle to make repairs to the canal.
- 1933-38 The CCC develops bridle paths, foot trails, trailside shelters, comfort facilities, and boat docks. In addition, the CCC plants trees and shrubbery and constructs picnicking accommodations.
- 1935 Designation of Illinois and Michigan Canal State Parkway from Joliet to LaSalle, built by the CCC to connect recreational areas along the canal. The canal begins to be used solely for recreational purposes.
- 1936 Charles M. Gates writes a Historical Report on the Illinois & Michigan Canal at the request of the director of the National Park Service.
- 1947 On July 1, 1947, the United States government relinquishes the title to the Illinois and Michigan land and cedes it to the State of Illinois (HR 1628).
- 1955 The I&M Canal and adjacent areas become a state park.
- 1963 Open Lands Project (Openlands) is founded and becomes the official voice for open space in the civic community and media in northeastern Illinois. Openlands spearheads a movement called Operation Greenstrip to utilize the I&M Canal and its adjacent land as a recreational corridor. Recreational use of the I&M Canal is supported by many organizations along the canal including: Illinois Audubon Society, the National Campers and Hikers Association, the Sierra Club, the LaSalle and Will County historical societies, and

- the Chicago Heritage Committee. Openland's first director, Gunnar Peterson, lobbies the state legislature for a "Greenstrip" designation of the I&M Canal.
- 1963 The I&M Canal is listed in the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings as one of 33 "sites of exceptional value" under the "Travel and Communication" category for the country.
- 1964 The I&M Canal is designated a National Historic Landmark.
- 1964 Stevenson Expressway (I-55) opens in Chicago, built over the eastern-most 7 miles of the I&M Canal. An old canal warehouse is dedicated in Utica to the LaSalle County Historical Society.
- 1966 Openlands forms an "I&M Canal Coordinating Committee", which pushes for state preservation of the canal as a recreational area.
- 1969 I&M Canal office in Lockport closes and is turned over to the Will County Historical Society.
- 1970 On December 2, 1970, the Village of Lemont purchases the I&M Canal between Cal-Sag Channel and the Cook-Will county line, for \$333,750.00 to be paid over a 20-year period, with payments of \$16,687.50 per year.
- 1971 The Illinois General Assembly transfers the I&M Canal to the Illinois Department of Transportation which assumes responsibility for all administrative activities connected with the canal.
- 1972-1975 Beginning in the Spring of 1972, a group of individuals from the LaSalle Rotary Club called the Canal Volunteers start to work on restoring a section of the I&M Canal from LaSalle, IL to Split Rock. They dredge the canal and turning basin, remove garbage, cut down trees, restore portions of the towpath, and repair Lock 14, returning it to its original state.
- 1974 On January 1, the I&M Canal jurisdiction is transferred from the Illinois Department of Transportation to the Illinois Department of Conservation (now Illinois Department of Natural Resources). A comprehensive development and management plan of the Illinois & Michigan Canal

is developed for the state of Illinois Department of Transportation, as part of the transfer agreement, and the Illinois & Michigan Canal Task Force Committee by Harland Bartholomew and Associates of St. Louis, MO. This plan is never formally adopted.

- 1974 A 61.5-mile stretch of I&M Canal State Trail opens from Rockdale (south of Joliet) to LaSalle/Peru.
- 1980 John Husar, a sports writer for the Chicago Tribune, writes an award winning series entitled Chicago's Hidden Wilderness, about the DesPlains River Valley. He becomes an advocate for the creation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.
- 1980 National Park Service releases their report entitled Reconnaissance Survey of the I&M Canal.
- 1981 National Park Service creates a concept plan for I&M Canal written by John D. Peine and Deborah A. Neurohr. The study provides a conceptual plan for protecting and enhancing the many cultural and natural resources in the I&M Canal Corridor, while at the same time providing opportunity for economic development. In many ways, the Peine report serves as the blueprint for all subsequent visions of what comes to be known as the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor.

A National Heritage Corridor

- 1984 Congress passes a bill authorizing the creation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. On August 24, President Ronald Regan signs the bill in the Chicago Hilton establishing the first National Heritage Corridor.
- 1986 Buffalo Rock Effigy Tumuli Sculptures, the largest earth sculptures in the world, are completed by artist Michael Heizer near Starved Rock State Park. The project reclaims a seriously disturbed, former coal strip mine and creates a remarkable expression of site sculpture drawing in the tradition of the ancient Native American mound builders. This sculpture enhances the IMCNHC for public enjoyment.
- 1986 IDOC resurfaces 13 miles of the towpath, dredges canal prism between Utica and LaSalle, rebuilds the

- foot bridge over the Fox River parallel to the I&M Canal aqueduct at Ottawa, and improves drainage by dredging a portion of the canal near Seneca.
- 1987 IDOC resurfaces the hiking/biking trail through Ottawa, and puts a pump and spillway in the Utica-Marseilles area.
- 1988 IDOC surfaces 30 miles of the canal towpath and rehabilitates the Aux Sable Aqueduct, the Little Vermillion Aqueduct, and Lock 14.
- 1988 Forest Preserve District of Cook County surfaces over five miles of the canal towpath at Willow Springs.
- 1989 Construction begins on a 26-mile Centennial Trail between the Chicago Portage Site and Lockport. The trail will be built and maintained by the Forest Preserve Districts of Cook, DuPage, and Will Counties. By the end of the year, 11 miles of the 26-mile long Centennial Trail opens for hiking.
- 1989 The Forest Preserve District of Cook County surfaces 5.5 miles of towpath along the I&M Canal in Willow Springs.
- 1990 Forty-six wayside exhibit panels are completed and installed throughout the Corridor.
- 1992 Three wayside exhibits are completed for Navy Pier.
- 1992 IDOC continues improvements along the I&M Canal State Trail with the placement of two bridges across the canal in Utica to improve access to the trail and surfacing of the trail from Channahon to Interstate 55.
- 1993 IDOC improves the I&M Canal State Trail with the placement of two bridges across the canal at Channahon and one across the Aux Sable Creek Aqueduct.
- 1993 Several projects in the Corridor are funded by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) including: the Fox River Aqueduct, the Pullman Railroad Car site, locks and the towpath of the I&M Canal, the dredging of the Canal prism in three spots, the locktender's house at Lock 8, the Seneca Grain Elevator, stone facing on the Aux Sable Aqueduct, and the steel mill ruins in Joliet Heritage Park.

- 1994 Thirty-two new wayside exhibits are completed. These exhibits supplement the 46 wayside exhibits already installed throughout the Corridor.
- 1994 The Village of Lemont extends the canal trail system, opening a two mile stretch of trail west of the Village into the downtown.
- 1995 Work begins to repair and rehabilitate the Fox River Aqueduct at Ottawa using ISTEA funds.
- 1996 Congress directs the Federal Commission to study possible additions to the IMCNHC (Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Act, Sec. 902 P.L. 104-333).
- 1996 In July, areas of the I&M canal are affected by a 500-year flood. The DuPage River washes out the dam and intake gate at Channahon, de-watering the canal for a distance of about 15 miles. (Federal Emergency Management Agency provides \$685,000 for repairs State Department of Natural Resources provides another \$250,000).
- 1997 An archeological excavation of seven canal boat segments in the canal bed in Morris is completed by IDNR. These canal boats are discovered after a portion of the canal is de-watered during the flood of 1996.
- 1998 Congress extends authorization of the Federal Commission to August 24, 2004 (Automobile National Heritage Area Act, Title V—Other Matters, Sec. 502 P.L. 105-355).
- 1998 A 15-mile section of the canal between Channahon and Morris, that had been closed since the flood of July 1996 is re-watered and the canal boat remnants are entombed.
- 1998 The repair and rehabilitation of the Fox River Aqueduct in Ottawa is completed.
- 1998 Face stones are replaced on the Aux Sable Aqueduct. At Aux Sable, several old buildings are demolished and later additions removed from the locktender's house.
- 1998 A new segment of the I&M Canal State Trail between Channahon and Joliet opens making a continuous trail of 67 miles.

- 1998 This year is the 150th anniversary of the opening of the canal and the dedication of the Joliet Iron Works Historic Site.
- 1999 The Chicago Park District completes Phase 1 of the Canal Origins Park in Bridgeport. The project includes: site clean-up, bank and shoreline stabilization, grading, and preliminary landscaping.
- 2000 Congress increases the funding authorization from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, Sec. 126 P.L. 106-554).
- 2000 Canal Corridor Association launches the I&M Canal Passage Wayfinding Program installing 75 mile markers along the I&M Canal State Trail and the towpath north of Joliet to Lockport and in Lemont.
- 2000 IDNR completes restoration of the Seneca Grain Elevator and completes all stone and concrete work on Locks 2-12. Trail restoration and landscaping around the locks is also completed. The exterior rehabilitation of the Aux Sable Locktender's House is completed.
- 2001 Canal Corridor Association develops and installs the I&M Canal Passage driving tour signage throughout the western portion of the I&M Canal.
- 2001 NPS staff works with IDNR to advise on reuse plans for the Ottawa Toll House and to talk about ways in which the Commission could contribute to development of a master plan for the I&M Canal State Trail.
- 2004 The Village of Lemont opens the I&M Canal Heritage Quarries Recreation Area through the assistance of an Illinois First Grant.
- 2006 On October 12, 2006 Congress designated the Canal Corridor Association the local coordinating entity for the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.

The Unifying Story of the Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway

Overarching Theme: Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway

The overarching theme of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor is the “Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway.” This theme summarizes the diverse themes of the Corridor in one simple word: passageway. The Illinois & Michigan Canal was carved through a glacial passageway that has been used by migratory birds, Native Americans, French fur traders, nineteenth-century pioneers, canal trade, and modern shipping industries. The visitor to the Corridor is yet another traveler through this passageway.

This corridor through the prairies has been a critical continental passageway for millennia. Every May and October, its skies witness the annual flight of migratory birds. In their own astonishing continent-wide commercial system, pre-contact Indians plied these waters and portaged their canoes here to connect far-flung trading partners. The French voyageurs and trappers recognized over 300 years ago that this wetland would be the easiest link between the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence. Enterprising Americans in the second quarter of the 19th century, among them State Representative Abraham Lincoln,

calculated that extraordinary wealth might flow into Illinois if a canal could connect the young nation’s greatest seaport at New York to New Orleans. From that early investment stemmed not only Chicago’s dominance of the inland trade in basic commodities but an explosion of industrial growth within the corridor itself of iron and steel, glass, zinc, clocks, ships, and a thousand other products. Into the corridor and through the corridor have come streams of the world’s people and goods.

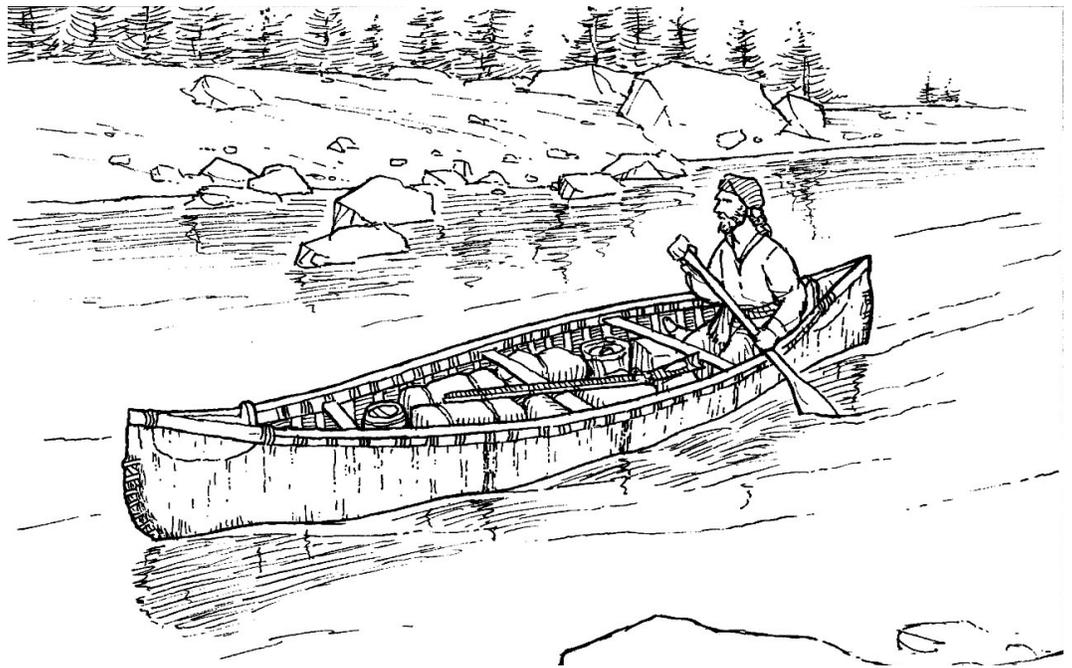


Figure 2.6. French Trapper

French Trappers used the passageway carved by the glaciers to travel between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River. (Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)

Much of this history, human and natural combined, is still visible in our living landscape. For those who take time to read it, the Corridor tells the story of geology and American Indian cultures, diverse intersections of ecology, social change, and changes of economics. With a bit of imagination, visitors see pelts being traded, stone cut and laid into canal walls, barges off-loaded at these industrial plants. They can also imagine how immigrants arrived and signed up for jobs in these factories, Americans rallied to join in the war effort, and post-war families created new homes and enjoyed the outdoors in a new leisure-time economy. ³

Today, the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor continues as a passageway for transportation and recreation. The transportation corridor includes I-80 and I-55, railroads, intermodal locations, and the Illinois Waterway and Sanitary and Ship Canal that replaced the Illinois & Michigan Canal. It is also a recreational corridor with its network of state parks, trails, and recreational opportunities that draw thousands of visitors a year. A haven for both casual and active outdoor enthusiasts, the Corridor offers a variety of experiences for its visitors and residents.

Core Sub-Themes

The interpretive sub-themes of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor illustrate the continued use of the Corridor as a passageway. They reflect the past, present, and future evolution and unify the Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway as our own unique contribution to our nation's story. While the big idea of the IMCNHC is the Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway, three core sub-themes emerge within the context of the Passageway:

- The IMCNHC Passageway: A Natural Connector
- The IMCNHC Passageway: A Magnet
- The IMCNHC Passageway: A Place for Recreation and Reconnection

Within each are multiple stories that collectively combine to make the overarching theme of the Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway. Illustrations under each are by no means comprehensive but guide us into topics to be explored within each story.

Sub-Theme: A Natural Connector

Glaciers carved a natural passageway through the prairies a natural connector and an obvious place for people and animals to pass through and live within for centuries. Native people traversed between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River in their continental trading network, and during times of high waters paddled along easily in their handmade canoes. When the water was low in the marshy

prairie rivers, they carried, portaged, their canoes through parts of the passageway, giving the low divide between the Chicago and Des Plaines River the name of the Chicago Portage. French explorers were the first to recognize that this natural connector could be manipulated to create a transportation passageway with the construction of a canal. Today, this corridor is a conduit for transportation against the backdrop of the ever-changing natural passageway.

Story: The Natural Pathway

Although the canal was built in the 19th century, its story actually begins with the geologic forces that created the passageway and its underlying soils and bedrock. These forces created varied landforms that became habitats for diversified plant and animal life.

Illustrative points:

- Today's landforms in the Corridor were formed during the last glacial period, the Wisconsinian glaciation, which ended over 10,000 years ago. The glaciers of this period carved out Lake Michigan, flattened our prairies, created wetlands, and established today's topography and drainage patterns.
- The vast ice sheets of this period covered most of northern Illinois, and when they retreated the melt waters created Lake Michigan, the Des Plaines and Illinois River valleys—the Illinois & Michigan Canal passageway.
- Between Ottawa and Marseilles is a large moraine, formed when the glaciers retreated from the area more than 10,000 years ago.
- Four thousand years ago a sub-continental divide rose up to interrupt this passageway and force the Chicago River to flow east into Lake Michigan and the Des Plaines River to flow west into the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers.
- The limestone that was discovered here when the canal was constructed indicates that 400 million years ago the region was a warm, saltwater ocean.

Story: The Idea of the Canal

The idea of a canal that could connect the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River was central to plans for northeastern Illinois for 200 years before it opened. French explores were the first to recognize the need for a canal to connect the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River. The idea of the canal was pursued by the young American nation and the new State of Illinois.

Illustrative points:

- Early French explorers recognized the advantages of a canal

from Lake Michigan to the Des Plaines River. In 1673, Native American guides led French explorers Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet from the Illinois River to the Des Plaines, across the Chicago Portage to the Chicago River and Lake Michigan, providing them with a shortcut back home to Canada. Jolliet immediately conceived of a canal that would allow an inland passage from the Great Lakes down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico.

- In 1803, Fort Dearborn was constructed at the mouth of the Chicago River to protect this strategic future port site.
- Before the canal was built, it took days of bone-jarring travel on rutted turnpike roads that baked rock-hard every summer and became a sea of mud after each winter. Pioneers had two main choices for travel by wagon and horseback over muddy roads or by canoe. The marshy prairie rivers were unreliable for shipping. In 1818, Gurdon Hubbard wrote of an agonizing 3-week-long journey across the Chicago Portage to the Illinois River. Later he joined the ranks of political leaders, including Abraham Lincoln, who advocated for a canal.
- If not for the idea of the proposed Illinois & Michigan Canal, some of Chicago would have been a part of Wisconsin. In 1818, legislators decided that the canal should be within only one state's borders, so they moved Illinois' boundary north 41 miles.
- In 1822, a Federal Act authorized the survey and construction of the canal, but provided no funds. Five years later, Congress gave Illinois 284,000 acres of land to help finance the construction of the canal.

Story: Canal Construction

The construction of the Illinois & Michigan Canal was a major undertaking that involved engineers, contractors and thousands of immigrants. Canal laborers worked long hours, lived in temporary shantytowns near the construction sites, and frequently were injured or killed in accidents or by diseases that plagued the shantytowns.

Illustrative points:

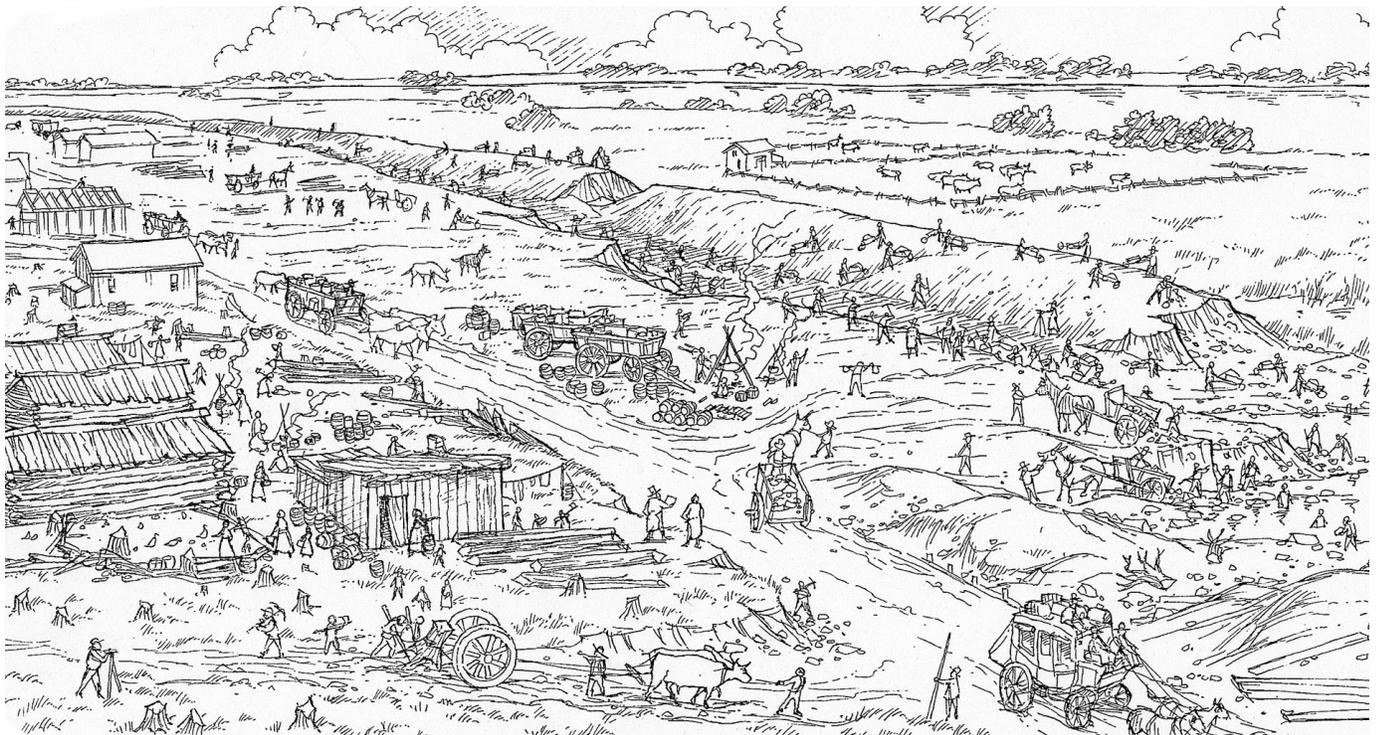
- Before the canal could be dug, men had to clear the land of trees, brush and boulders.
- Many different ethnic groups helped to dig the canal - Scandinavians, French Canadians, and Germans among them but the Irish played the lead role in this backbreaking work.
- Digging the canal was backbreaking labor done by brawny men. Their basic tools were shovels, wooden scoops, and wheelbarrows. They earned a dollar a day for 12-14 hour days filled with hard labor. By the end of 1838, over 2000 men

were working to build the canal. It took 12 years to build and over 1000 workers died of accidents, disease and squalid living conditions.

- One European visitor called the construction of the canal “truly fabulous” given the “savage condition” of the state of Illinois.
- Shantytowns for canal diggers and their families sprang up along the canal. Living conditions in these shanties were deplorable; dozens of people often lived crowded into small huts.
- In 1838, a posse was formed to put down a bloody feud between different factions of Irish canal workers.
- Canal workers unearthed large quantities of magnesium-rich dolomite, a kind of limestone that is particularly hard. It was used to construct the canal locks and area buildings.
- Canal contractors faced serious obstacles, including unruly workers, rough terrain, and lack of funds. Many were driven to bankruptcy in the 1840s when work on the canal was suspended. Canal employees were issued scrip, which could be redeemed for land, and many turned to farming.
- The canal was a minimum of six feet deep, 60 feet wide at the top and 36 feet at the bottom. Several widewaters allowed canal boats to pass each other.
- Canal engineers built four aqueducts - Aux Sable, Nettle Creek and at the Fox and Little Vermilion Rivers - to carry the canal over water.

Figure 2.7. Canal Construction

Irish, as well as German, Scandinavian and other immigrants, attracted by the promise of abundant jobs, flocked to Illinois to begin the arduous work of digging the canal by hand. The workers lived in rude shanties, and many died of diseases, including cholera and dysentery. (Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)



Story: The Gateway to the West

The Illinois & Michigan Canal was the key to the development of the Midwest and helped fuel westward expansion. The canal revolutionized the transportation system of Illinois and established Chicago as a gateway for goods and people traveling throughout the continent. It also served as the gateway to the West, and ended Chicago's days as the western frontier in 1848. Today, Illinois is still a leader in transporting goods and people, but few realize that it all began with the Illinois & Michigan Canal.

Illustrative points:

- The opening of the Illinois and Michigan Canal in 1848 made Chicago and northern Illinois the key crossroads of the American mid-continent.
- The 96-mile canal connected the waters of Lake Michigan with the Illinois River. It brought people, commodities and prosperity to canal towns like Lockport, Chicago and Ottawa, as well as the entire Midwest.
- The Illinois & Michigan Canal connected agricultural and industrial producers to markets. Canal boats pulled by mules carried grain and livestock, stone, coal and foodstuffs like sugar, salt, molasses and whiskey to fuel the region's rapid growth.
- The canal meant that farmers would no longer have to traverse muddy roads to reach the grain port in Chicago. Families could get calico for clothing, woolen blankets, furniture, and other finished goods from New York and New England. Sugar and oranges could be found on dinner tables.
- During the first six years of canal operation, grain exports grew from three million to 13 million bushels as the prairie was settled and turned into farmland. In 1855, the canal transported almost 26,000 cubic yards of limestone.
- The Illinois & Michigan Canal was the last of the great American canals built during an era when waterways were the nation's major highways.
- The I&M played a role in major national stories, including the California Gold Rush, the Underground Railroad, the 1849 cholera epidemic, and the Civil War.

Story: A Transportation Corridor

The Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway has been used as a transportation corridor for over 400 years. The Native Americans used the passageway in their continental trading network. French and American trappers used it to transport their furs to market. The opening of the Illinois & Michigan Canal played a major role in establishing the passageway as a major transportation highway. Railroads were built along the passage enhancing shipping and passenger travel. As the Illinois & Michigan Canal became too small to handle the bulk and magnitude of the shipping industry the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, the Illinois Waterway, and the Cal Sag Channel replaced it. These waterways, the railroad and the interstate highway system still play a major role in the national transportation network.

Illustrative points:

- Native Americans traveled between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River using a natural water passageway on rivers we know today as the Chicago, Des Plaines, and Illinois Rivers. During times of high waters, they paddled easily in canoes. When the water was low in the marshy prairie rivers, they carried their canoes through parts of the passageway, especially over a low divide between the Chicago and Des Plaines River that later became known as the Chicago Portage.
- Native Americans used this passageway as a link in their continental trading network.
- Railroads first paralleled the canal in 1853 and quickly supplanted packet boats for passenger traffic. The canal remained the cheapest way to ship bulky goods, and competition from the canal kept railroad prices low, helping to cement Chicago's preeminence.
- The Illinois & Michigan Canal closed in 1933, replaced by the Illinois Waterway comprised of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, the Cal-Sag Channel, the lower Des Plaines River and the Illinois River.
- Barges on the Illinois Waterway can carry 10 times as much cargo as an I&M Canal boat could, and one tugboat can push 15 of them, equaling 22,500 tons.
- The Stevenson Expressway (I-55) was built over the easternmost seven miles of the I&M Canal. During the planning stages it was even called the Illinois & Michigan Canal Expressway.
- The North/South bound Interstate I-55 intersects with the East/West bound I-80 within the Corridor, linking two of the great interstate highways in the nation.



Figure 2.8. Rail Road

The Illinois & Michigan Canal carried on a lively passenger trade between 1848-1852. Canal packet boats carried thousands of people back and forth between Chicago and La Salle. By the end of 1852 the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad paralleled the canal, effectively ending the Illinois & Michigan canal packet boat.

(Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)

- The Corridor remains a national transportation hub for industrial and consumer products, the center of passenger air travel, railroads, modern waterways, and a major crossroads on the interstate highway system.

Sub-Theme: A Magnet

The Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway has been a magnet for people for over 400 years. Native Americans used the passageway as a trade route and a place to live. The opening of the I&M Canal attracted an endless sea of people moving west, looking for work and a place to call home. Many individuals and families earned their living through the daily operations of the canal. Canal towns sprang up along the canal becoming individual centers of commerce and industry. The services of the Illinois & Michigan Canal soon established Chicago as the pre-eminent city of the Midwest, the city that served as the terminus and the connector for goods now smoothly moving between the east and the west.

Story: Native Americans - first to travel and live in the passageway

For thousands of years before the canal was built, Native Americans traversed the passageway, utilizing trade highways along the Des

Plaines and Illinois Rivers. The passageway was home to many Native American tribes and the location of the Grand Village of the Illinois.

Illustrative points:

- Native Americans have been in the region since the last glaciers retreated over 10,000 years ago. At one time, the Potawatomi, Ottawa, Illinois and Miami tribes all lived in the corridor.
- In both Morris and Utica large Native American settlements were established, numbering thousands of residents. Illinois Indians maintained a large village of as many as 6000 people on the Illinois River near Utica. The Grand Village of the Illinois was a meeting place for many tribes.
- Little is known about the Illinois Indians. Composed of a dozen related tribes, their culture was largely exterminated by 1800. Many perished atop Starved Rock in 1769.
- Buffalo Rock, situated between Utica and Ottawa, was once home to the Miami tribe.
- Following the War of 1812, an 1816 treaty ceded much of the present-day canal corridor to the United States from Great Britain.
- After the Black Hawk War of 1832, Native Americans in Illinois were forced to sign treaties ceding all of their land east of the Mississippi River. Soon after the last of the Native Americans departed, the first shovel full of dirt was turned for the construction of the canal.
- Canal surveyors in 1837 discovered 19 Indian mounds in what is now downtown Morris. Other Indian mounds were found at Channahon and Starved Rock.

Story: Chicago— The pre-eminent city in the Midwest

Chicago's phenomenal growth began with the canal, which established Chicago as the nation's greatest inland port.

Illustrative points:

- In 1830, much of northeastern Illinois was designated canal lands and sold for \$1.25 an acre. Thousands of people from all over the country took advantage of these sales to realize the American dream of owning their own land.
- The mere idea of the canal drew land speculators to Chicago, and when work on the canal began in 1836, Chicago's meteoric growth was launched and its future as the Midwest's pre-eminent city was assured.
- Before 1871, Chicago received more vessels than San Francisco, New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Charleston and Mobile combined.

- Because of the canal, Chicago would outstrip St. Louis as the Midwest's major port and transportation hub. By 1880, Chicago was the busiest port in the United States.
- Immigrants flocked to Chicago to dig the canal and unload canal boats filled with grain, stone and coal. They worked in the city's vast lumberyards, stockyards, steel mills and factories. They helped build the Sanitary & Ship Canal and the railroads and highways that followed the canal.
- After the canal opened, Germans, Italians, Poles, Swedes, and many other immigrant groups came to canal towns to plow the prairies, farm the rich soil, process corn and wheat, mine coal, quarry stone, build railroads, and make steel. They also worked as canal boat captains, locktenders, toll collectors, and mule drivers.
- Two of Chicago's greatest landmarks - the Water Tower and Pumping Station - were built of dolomite quarried in the Corridor.
- The Chicago Board of Trade was created in 1848 to take advantage of the new trade opportunities afforded by the canal.

Story: Canal Towns — Eleven distinctive towns grew and prospered along the I&M Canal

The Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor includes 11 significant historic towns/cities that grew and prospered because of the Illinois & Michigan Canal. Six of these towns were platted by the canal commissioners during the planning and construction of the Illinois & Michigan Canal including: Chicago, Channahon, LaSalle, Lockport, Morris, and Ottawa. The five additional communities that developed were: Joliet, Lemont, Marseilles, Seneca, and Utica. As you travel in the passageway you can visit these special places that still exhibit the distinctive characteristics of nineteenth-century canal towns.

Illustrative points:

- Local industry sometimes fueled by waterpower from prairie rivers, helped canal towns become centers of employment and markets for meeting the needs of farmers.
- Canal towns, like Lockport, Joliet, Morris, Ottawa and LaSalle boomed with the canal's construction. They became shipping points for the region's rich resources and developed as local transfer points for grain and other farm products and as quarrying, mining, milling, and manufacturing centers.
- Settlers were drawn by the rich natural resources of the passageway and created markets for them.

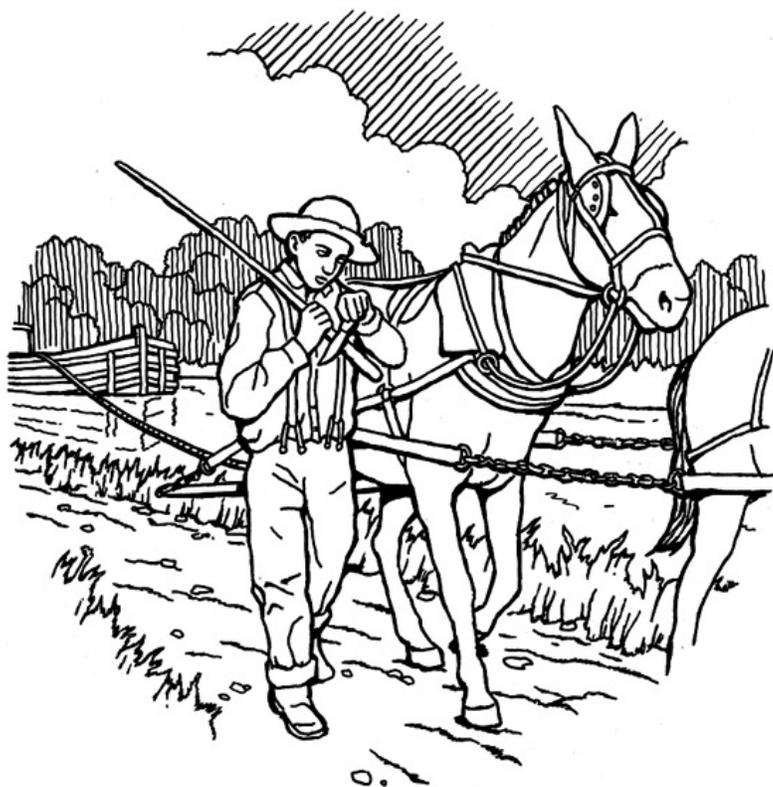
- In Morris, there were breweries, factories, and grain elevators that dotted the landscape along the canal.
- In the 1830s, Lockport, headquarters of the Canal Commissioners, had hopes of surpassing Chicago.
- Irish and English immigrants flocked to the western half of the canal to work in coalmines. The coal was shipped on the canal from Morris.
- Joliet, the second largest city in the IMCNHC, drew thousands of immigrants to work, first in its dolomite limestone quarries, and later in the steel industry.
- Many residential and commercial buildings still visible in the Corridor are constructed of the dolomite unearthed when the canal was built.
- In the early years of the I&M Canal, the arrival of a canal boat was cause for great excitement. Boat captains blew a large horn to announce their arrival. Residents came to the canal and to nearby stores to buy fresh lemons and oranges, sugar, molasses, and tobacco.
- Ottawa's Washington Square Park was the site of the first Lincoln-Douglas debate in 1858, which drew thousands of people from all over Illinois.
- Ottawa was home to a prosperous glass industry - and the very fine silica sand from this area is still used for glass making.
- Canal towns were vibrant community centers where farmers' wagons crowded the streets and grain elevators dotted the landscape.
- The last two remaining canal warehouses along the I&M Canal are located in Lockport and Utica.
- Seneca contains the oldest surviving grain elevator in the passageway.
- LaSalle, the canal's western terminus, was a place where northern and southern culture came together as canal boats and steamboats from the Mississippi exchanged goods and passengers. Here boatmen would gather in the rough and tumble levee district.

Story: Life on the I&M Canal

The canal looks serene today, compared to its heyday when there was great activity along the route. In the first few years, thousands of passengers used the canal, and over its life, millions of tons of freight were shipped. Boat captains, lock tenders, towpath walkers, toll collectors, and mule drivers were among the colorful characters who made the canal work on a daily basis.

Illustrative points:

- Teenage boys led the mules that pulled the canal boats. Mule drivers had a reputation for swearing, smoking and gambling.



- James Butler “Wild Bill” Hickok was once a mule driver on the I&M Canal. In the first known fight of his career, he and an opponent fell into the canal.
- The list of items shipped on the canal included: ale, beeswax, ice, horns, hemp, animal skins, corn, wheat, stone, and timber. People were also transported on the canal.
- One passenger likened the experience of traveling on a packet boat to a floating dormitory, a cramped one in which men slept on one side and women the other.
- Mules pulled the canal boats, some loaded with 150 tons of goods.
- The trip from Chicago to LaSalle took packet boats 17 to 26 hours.
- From 1848 to 1852 thousands of people traveled on the Illinois & Michigan Canal between Chicago and LaSalle. Railroads eclipsed passenger traffic on the canal after 1852.

- There were 15 locks along the canal needed to compensate for the 140-foot drop in elevation. Locktenders operated the wooden canal lock gates. They occasionally had to break up fights between boat captains jockeying for position.
- Going through each lock took more than 15 minutes.
- Several women worked as locktenders, including Mrs. George Funk, who operated Lock 11 from 1896 to 1915.
- Canal boats moved through such a rich countryside, passengers sometimes shot deer as they passed along the canal.
- Mule barns dotted the length of the canal. Mule teams were changed every 10 miles.
- Life on the canal boats was often a family affair. The wife of the boat captain cooked, and children were sometimes tethered to the deck to keep from falling in the canal.
- Many canal workers and settlers in the region contracted malaria and typhoid.

Figure 2.9. Mule Driver

Many young men found jobs on the canal as mule drivers. In 1850 Morris had nineteen canal drivers, the majority of them teenagers. Mule drivers often had a reputation for swearing, smoking and gambling. (Tom Willcockson, © Canal Corridor Association)

Sub-Theme: A Place for Recreation and Reconnection

The Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway is a recreation corridor and a place to reconnect with the special places of the passageway.

With the construction of a series of parks and trails along the Illinois & Michigan Canal the passageway has become a haven for recreation enthusiasts and nature lovers. It's also a place to reconnect with the natural and historical landscapes of the passageway and a place to retrace the steps of our forefathers reconnecting with our heritage.

Story: Creation of a Recreation Corridor

Recreation along the Illinois & Michigan Canal dramatically expanded in the early 20th century. Increased leisure time, the popularity of the automobile, the closing of the I&M Canal in 1933, and the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression led to the development of a recreational corridor along the I&M Canal. A series of state parks were created along and connected by the Illinois & Michigan Canal creating a ribbon of natural areas for the enjoyment and recreation of visitors and residents. The CCC enhanced the state parks by developing picnic areas, hiking trails, bridle paths, boating and camping facilities, parking lots, trailside shelter, and comfort areas. The state further improved the recreation corridor by developing a portion of the Illinois & Michigan Canal towpath into a hiking/biking trail in the 1970's.

Illustrative points:

- Between 1911 and 1935 five state parks were created: Starved Rock (1911), Buffalo Rock (1928), Illinois & Michigan Canal (1933), Gebhard Woods (1934), Illini (1935).
- The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) established five camps within the western portion of the Corridor to create recreational facilities and enhance these state parks.
- The CCC developed picnic areas, hiking trails, bridle paths, boating and camping facilities, parking lots, trailside shelter, and comfort areas.
- The CCC created Channahon State Park in 1939.
- Between 1938-39 the Works Progress Administration (WPA) cleaned the canal of weeds and debris between LaSalle and North Utica.
- Several additional state parks were created: Matthiessen State Park (1943), William G. Stratton State Park (1959), and Goose Lake Prairie State Park (1969).

Story: Special Places — Reconnecting with the passageway

Within the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor there remains extant pockets of pre-settlement landscape that support flora and fauna. Forests, prairies, wetlands, spectacular geologic

formations, river islands, and diverse bird and animal life are to be found throughout the Corridor. Natural areas reminiscent of the pre-canal era provide opportunities to reconnect with the natural landscape of the passageway and experience the passage as it was when the French explorers arrived in the 17th century. The Corridor also provides opportunities to reconnect with the people from a previous time by retracing their steps through the passageway. Within the Corridor are special places that stand as testaments to our past that allow us to walk where our forefathers walked. Places like the Grand Village of the Illinois, the Chicago Portage National Historic Site, the last remaining tollhouse along the Illinois & Michigan Canal and the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center tell the stories of the passageway and allow us to reconnect to our roots rejuvenating us for the future.

Illustrative points:

- The Illinois River valley, which comprises much of the IMCNHC, remains a haven for wildlife. More than 200 species of birds either breed in the valley or use it during migrations.
- Great blue herons, great egrets, and other water birds flourish on the Illinois & Michigan Canal. Fishermen routinely catch channel catfish, carp, and bluegill.
- Several remnants of original prairie exist within the corridor, and restoration efforts are adding to the total acreage covered by native Illinois plants.
- The Corridor is home to at least four plants and animals on the Illinois and federal lists of threatened or endangered species: the Hines emerald dragonfly (federal endangered list), the Lakeside daisy (federal threatened list), the Blandings turtle (Illinois endangered list), and the Leafy prairie clover (Illinois threatened list).
- Along the canal corridor, there are sandstone canyons and panoramic views. In some cases, transportation and industrial systems actually preserved nature because they needed land as a buffer along their edges, like the Santa Fe Prairie along the rail road or the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie on the site of the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant.
- Traveling in the passageway today, visitors can still see limestone and sandstone bluffs and canyons, reminders of the great natural resources that helped the region grow and prosper. Many historic canal buildings in the Corridor as well as the canal locks are built of limestone unearthed when the canal was being built.
- The Fox River is the most popular canoe route in the state. Its scenic bluffs—vertical walls of St. Peter’s sandstone—reach up to 150 feet high.

- The Grand Village of the Illinois is the site of the first European contact with Native Americans in Illinois and home to the Illini Confederacy.
- Chicago Portage National Historic Sites is the last surviving remnant of the Chicago Portage Area also known as Chicago's Plymouth Rock.
- The canal tollhouse in Ottawa is the last surviving tollhouse along the Illinois & Michigan Canal Corridor.
- There are only two remaining locktender's homes along the canal. One is located in Aux Sable and the other in Channahon.

Key Corridor Sites

The strongest assets of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor are the waterways and key resources along those waterways that tell the stories of the Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway. The Illinois & Michigan Canal, the Sanitary & Ship Canal, the Cal Sag Channel, and the Illinois Waterway form the spine of the heritage corridor. Each of these waterways has its own story and brings its own list of sites and resources that help tell the broader themes of the Passageway. Within the heritage corridor are sites that tell the story of the creation and use of the natural passageway before the construction of the canal such as the Chicago Portage National Historic Site. Along the Illinois & Michigan Canal are locks, aqueducts, a tollhouse, two locktender's houses and a number of sites that have gained significance from the canal such as the Gaylord Building. Additional sites along the waterways and within the heritage corridor interpret the themes of the Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway.

During the planning process we compiled a preliminary list of key sites that have the potential to interpret one or more of the themes of the heritage corridor. As opportunities for additional development arise other sites could be added to this list.

Figure 2.10. Key Corridor Sites

THEMES	A Natural Connector	A Magnet	A Place for Recreation and Reconnection
LaSalle County			
Buffalo Rock State Park			X
Fox River Aqueduct	X		
Hegeler Carus Mansion		X	
I&M Canal Locks 9-13	X		
I&M Canal Locks 14-15	X		
Illinois Waterway Visitors Center	X		
Lock 16 Visitors Center/ LaSalle Canal Boat	X		
LaSalle County Historical Society (canal warehouse)	X	X	
Lincoln and Douglass debate site (Washington Square Park)		X	

THEMES	A Natural Connector	A Magnet	A Place for Recreation and Reconnection
Little Vermilion Aqueduct	X		
Marseilles Dam & Hydro Electric	X	X	
Marseilles Lock and Dam	X		
Ottawa Scouting Museum		X	
Ottawa Toll House	X		
Reddick Mansion		X	
Seneca Grain Elevator	X		
Split Rock	X		X
Starved Rock State Park			X
Sulphur Springs Hotel	X		
Grundy County			
Aux Sable Aqueduct/ Aux Sable Locktender's House/ Lock 8	X		
Canalport Park	X	X	
Canalport Plaza	X	X	
Carbon Hill School Museum (Carbon Hill Historical Society)		X	
Dollinger Family Farm	X	X	
Dresden Lock and Dam	X		
Evergreen Cemetary		X	
Gebhard Woods State Park			X
Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area			X
Grundy County Historical Society	X	X	
Mazon Creek Fossil Beds			X
Mule Barn	X		
Nettle Creek Aqueduct	X		
Rutherford's Tavern	X		
Will County			
Brannndon Lock and Dam	X		
Channahon Locktender's House	X		

THEMES	A Natural Connector	A Magnet	A Place for Recreation and Reconnection
Four Rivers Environmental Education Center			X
Gaylord Building	X	X	
Grant Creek Prairie Nature Preserve			X
I&M Canal Lock 1-4	X		
Isle a la Cache Museum	X		
Joliet Area Historical Museum		X	
Joliet Iron Works		X	
Keepataw Preserve		X	X
Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve			X
Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie			X
Norton Warehouse	X	X	
Public Landing (Lockport)	X	X	
I&M Canal Commisioners Office (Will County Historical Society)	X	X	
Cook County			
Canal Origins Park	X		
Chicago Portage National Historic Site	X		
Heritage Quarries Recreation Area		X	
Lake Katherine Nature Center			X
Lemont Historical Society (Old Stone Church)	X	X	
Gateway Park (Navy Pier)	X		
Pullman Historic District	X		
Santa Fe Prairie Nature Preserve			X
St. James of the Sag (Lemont)	X		
DuPage County			
Waterfall Glen			X

(Endnotes)

1 Rabinowitz, Richard, PhD, American History Workshop, 1998.

2 Conzen, Michael, PhD, I&M Canal National Historic Landmark application, pg. 4

3 These last three paragraphs were taken from Illinois and Michigan Canal Corridor Wayfinding Design Study completed for the Canal Corridor Association by the American History Workshop, 1996.

Introduction

The Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor is a linear zone in northern Illinois, one hundred miles long and an average of six miles wide. Designated in 1984, the IMCNHC was the first National Heritage Corridor in the country. The purpose of the IMCNHC was “to retain, enhance, and interpret, for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the cultural, historical, natural, recreational, and economic resources of the corridor.”¹

The Corridor includes major cities such as Chicago and Joliet, industrial enclaves such as Bedford Park and McCook, rural farms in the vicinity of Marseilles and Seneca, and coal towns such as Carbon Hill and Coal City. Forging a collective identity for such disparate communities is a challenge as each community has its own unique story to tell but each has a connection to the I&M Canal, some directly, others indirectly.

The Creation of a Heritage Corridor

The creation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor has its roots in the Openlands Project. Founded in 1963, Open Lands Project (Openlands) soon became the official voice for open space in the civic community and media in northeastern Illinois. The organization played an early role in advocating for the I&M Canal, as Openlands’ first director Gunnar Peterson lobbied the state legislature for a “Greenstrip” designation along the canal route. In 1966 Openlands formed an “I&M Canal Coordinating Committee,” which pushed for state preservation of the canal as a recreational area. When the State of Illinois was considering selling the canal, a grass roots effort coordinated by Openlands Project forced the state to change its plans. In 1974, the I&M Canal State Trail was designated from Brandon Lock in Joliet to the western terminus in LaSalle.

In the late 1970s Gerald Adelman, an energetic and committed young Lockport native, approached Openlands Project with a proposal to study the Des Plaines River Valley holistically. In February 1980, with a contract from the Illinois Institute of Natural Resources, the Openlands Project launched its Des Plaines River Valley Program, designed to highlight the Des Plaines River Valley’s natural and cultural resources from Summit to Joliet. The study identified preservation opportunities in the 25 miles of canal that was not part of the state trail system. Project director Adelman became convinced that the area had much to offer and enlisted the support of Chicago Tribune sports writer John Husar. Husar became a passionate champion of the area, writing an award winning series called Chicago’s Hid-

den Wilderness. These widely distributed Chicago Tribune articles brought wider public recognition of the region, and helped galvanize support for seeing this largely industrial corridor in a new way.

At the same time, Ottawa resident Leonard Lock agitated for a federal study of the I&M Canal. Congressman Thomas Corcoran advanced the measure, leading to a 1980 National Park Service report entitled Reconnaissance Survey of the I&M Canal. Senator Charles Percy pushed for an additional federal study of Illinois & Michigan Canal by the National Park Service. Around the same time, the Material Service Corporation held a series of breakfast meetings for leaders in various industries to learn more about the I&M Canal and the larger corridor.

In 1981 the Illinois Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities funded a series of public meetings designed to inform and engage the public throughout the corridor. Top scholars, including historical geographer Michael P. Conzen of the University of Chicago, wrote essays on the Des Plaines River valley. Four meetings were held in canal towns that summer, bringing together local advocates of the canal.

Sensing the growing support for turning the canal corridor into a regional showpiece, a group of business leaders took decisive action by forming the Upper Illinois Valley Association (UIVA) (later renamed the Canal Corridor Association), which was duly incorporated July 17, 1981. The involvement of so many business leaders was a critical component of the success that led to the creation of a “new kind of national park.” Momentum continued to build throughout 1981 for the establishment of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. The Wall Street Journal gave prominent coverage to the idea in August, two weeks later a Chicago Sun Times editorial applauded the concept as “imaginative” and an “attractive and immensely creative idea.” A delegation to Washington met with Senator Charles Percy, and by October they had received Secretary of the Interior James Watt’s approval of the heritage corridor, the latter calling the plan “important, daring, and precedent-setting.”

Given these developments, the NPS report entitled *Illinois & Michigan Canal Corridor: A Concept Plan* was completed November 1981. Written by John D. Peine and Debora A. Neurohr, the study provided a conceptual plan for protecting and enhancing the many cultural and natural resources in the I&M Corridor, while at the same time providing an opportunity for economic development. In many ways the Peine report served as the blueprint for all subsequent visions of what is now known as the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor.

The UIVA working with stakeholders throughout the Corridor took the lead role in pushing for federal designation of the Heritage Corridor and after concerted lobbying Congress passed legislation in authorizing the establishment of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor. In the Senate, the bill was sponsored by Republican Charles Percy and backed by Democrat Alan Dixon. In the House, the entire Illinois Delegation supported the bill sponsored by Rep. Tom Corcoran. President Ronald Reagan signed the bill establishing the first National Heritage Corridor on August 24, 1984. As one author put it, this landmark notion of a public/private urban national park “changed the nature of perceptions of open space preservation in this country.” The Heritage Corridor concept was the first explicit marriage of preservation, conservation, recreation, and economic development. Indeed, the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor helped spark a national trend, one that shows no signs of abating. To date there are 49 national heritage areas, and in a sense all owe their existence to the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor.

Overview of Legislative Mandate

On August 24, 1984, President Ronald Reagan signed Public Law 98-398, creating the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, the first national heritage corridor. The purpose of the heritage corridor was “to retain, enhance, and interpret, for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the cultural, historical, natural, recreational, and economic resources of the corridor, where feasible, consistent with industrial and economic growth.”² The authorizing legislation for the IMCNHC established a nineteen member Federal Commission known as the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission. The Federal Commission was comprised of:

- The Director of the National Park Service, ex officio, or a delegate.
- Three individuals...who will represent the interests of State and local government.
- One member of the board of a forest preserve district... appointments shall rotate among the three forest preserve districts in the corridor.
- One member of the county board of each county.
- Five individuals...who will represent the interest of history, archaeology, and historic preservation; of recreation; and of conservation.
- Five individuals...who will represent the interests of business and industry.

The Federal Commissioners would serve three-year terms and oversee the development of the IMCNHC as outlined in the following eight duties:

1. The Commission shall assist the State, any political subdivision of the State, or any nonprofit organization in the appropriate preservation treatment, and renovation (in accordance with the plan) of structures of the canal.
2. The Commission shall assist the State or any political subdivision of the State in establishing and maintaining intermittent recreational trails, which are compatible with economic development interests in the Corridor.
3. The Commission shall encourage private owners of property that is located in or adjacent to the Corridor to retain voluntarily, as a good neighbor policy, a strip of natural vegetation as a visual screen and natural barrier between recreational trails established under paragraph (2) and development in the corridor.
4. The Commission shall assist in the preservation and enhancement of Natural Areas Inventory, prepared by the Illinois Department of Conservation.
5. The Commission shall assist in the enhancement of public awareness of, and appreciation for, the historical, architectural, and engineering structures in the corridor and the archaeological and geological resources and sites in the corridor.
6. The Commission may assist the State, any political subdivision of the State, or any nonprofit organization in the restoration of any historic building in the corridor. Such assistance may include providing technical staff assistance for historic preservation and revitalization efforts.
7. The Commission shall assist in the interpretation of the cultural and natural resources of the Corridor.
8. The Commission shall assist in establishing recognition for the Corridor by actively promoting the cultural, historical, natural, and recreational resources of the Corridor on a community, regional, statewide, national, and international basis.

The Federal Commissioners were to meet quarterly and would be assisted in fulfilling their duties by a director and additional staff, which were to be appointed by the Commission.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission managed the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor for twenty years from August 1984 to August 2004. For 26 months until October 2006 there was no official management entity. In October 2006 the Canal Corridor Association was Congressionally designated the new coordinating entity.

Partners

While the federal commission had the official duties of the legislation for 20 years, the work of the Heritage Corridor was truly a public-private partnership. The grassroots effort that fought for the original legislation continued after the designation and in fact grew. Before the designation, the Upper Illinois Valley Association (UIVA, 1981) and the I&M Canal Volunteers were organized. As the legislation was passing, the Joliet Visitors Bureau became the Heritage Corridor Convention & Visitors Bureau (1984) and the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Civic Center Authority (1984) was authorized by the Illinois legislature. Soon afterwards the Friends of the I&M Canal was formed.

Also projects that fulfilled the mission of the legislation were completed by state agencies, local government agencies, and local universities.

Below is a listing of the major players who worked with the federal commission.

Canal Corridor Association (CCA) (1981-present)

CCA, formerly the Upper Illinois Valley Association (UIVA), was formed by business and community leaders from northeastern Illinois to promote federal designation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. It is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization managed by a board of directors and a professional staff. The mission of the Canal Corridor Association is to preserve history, protect nature and open space, create destinations where people can learn and have fun in the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor. It enhances, raises awareness of and expands the parks, trails, landscapes and historic sites that make the I&M Canal region a special place.

Friends of the Illinois & Michigan Canal (1982-2008)

The Friends of the Illinois & Michigan Canal was a non-profit organization established in 1982 to assist in the creation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. The purpose of the group was to be a “friends” grass-roots organization to involve more stakeholders and to promote retention and enhancement and interpretation of the cultural, historical, natural, archeological, geological, recreational and economic resources of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor for the benefit and the inspiration of present and future Americans. The Friends spearheaded canal workdays and events, which attracted people to the canal corridor.

Figure 3.1. UPPER ILLINOIS VALLEY ASSOCIATION 1984-1985 Work Program

With the passage and signing of federal legislation establishing the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, the demands on the Upper Illinois Valley Association will increase, since the Association occupies a focal point in the Heritage Corridor network. In order to fulfill its purpose, the Association must emphasize its role as a catalyst for the Corridor, stimulating and encouraging local revitalization activities.

The Association cannot be a surrogate for community organizations, nor can it serve as an open-access information center. As a catalyst, the Upper Illinois Valley Association initiates important pilot projects, helps facilitate community action and promotes the Corridor to major media. The Association works to build links between state, local and federal agencies, major corporations and foundations, citizens groups, small businesses, park districts and historical societies. Working along the entire length of the 100-mile Corridor, the Association serves by helping each piece fit into the greater whole.

Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitor Bureau (HCCVB)
(1984-present)

The Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau was incorporated in 1984 to service the communities along the Illinois and Michigan Canal. The Bureau is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of leaders in the tourism industry from the four areas serviced by the Bureau. The mission of the Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau is to ignite, influence and impact the visitor's experience through tourism partnerships.

I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Civic Center Authority (IMCNHCCCA) (1984 – present)

The Civic Center Authority is a municipal corporation created by state legislation in 1984. Their district is composed of twelve cities and villages from Lyons to Lemont including: Bedford Park, Bridgeview, Burr Ridge, Countryside, Hodgkins, Indian Head Park, Justice, Lemont, Lyons, McCook, Summit, and Willow Springs. It was created to promote the historic, recreational & economic development of the National Heritage Corridor in Cook County.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

IDNR is the owner and manager of the Illinois & Michigan Canal and the I&M Canal State Trail. IDNR was formerly called the Illinois Department of Conservation (IDOC). Its mission is to promote an understanding and appreciation of natural resources and to work with the people of Illinois to protect and manage Illinois' resources to ensure a high quality of life for present and future generations.

History of the Heritage Corridor Initiative 1984-2010

1984 Overview

Federal Investment

- No funding.

Administrative

- Congress establishes the IMCNHC as the nation's first Heritage Corridor, (P.L. 98-398) Established the National Heritage Corridor and the Commission for 10 years; Authorized \$250,000 per year for the Commission.
- President Ronald Reagan signs legislation in Chicago on August 24, 1984.

Studies

- None noted.

Publications

- Legislation garnered much publicity including articles in the Washington Post, Christian Science Monitor and The Wall Street Journal.

Activities

- UIVA and Friends of the I&M Canal form a speaker's bureau.
- Partners celebrate legislation by driving a caravan through each corridor town on September 14 and 15.

Physical Improvements

- 2.25 mile trail built along canal in Lockport from north end of town to Dellwood Park , first community trail built since passage of legislation (joint project of Lockport Township Park District and the Illinois Dept. of Conservation). US Senator Percy spoke at groundbreaking. \$200,000. (Source: Outdoor Highlights)
- Rehabilitation of 1862 limestone Lockport Train Station funded for \$225,000. (Source: National Trust Newsletter)
- Material Service Corporation donated the 1862 Fitzpatrick House in Romeoville to the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois.
- \$400,000 grant secured from U.S. Department of Housing and Development (HUD) towards rehab of the Norton Building in Lockport (estimated \$1.6 million rehab costs) into a mixed use development.

Partners

- I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Civic Center Authority was created by the Illinois General Assembly in 1984.
- Working Conference on the National Heritage Corridor Revitalization held March 21st-23rd in Joliet. (UIVA and others)
- Efforts underway to secure the Lake Renwick Rookery a habitat for herons and egrets. (UIVA, and multiple partners)

1985 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$245,000.
- \$419,650 of federal funds were appropriated for restoring and rehabbing historic buildings in IMCNHC. (Source: Herald News, 12/20/1985)
- \$320,000 of federal funds were appropriated for inventorying of resources. (Source: Joliet Herald News, 12/20/1985)

Administrative

- First Federal Commission nominations made by Governor Thompson in January and appointed by Secretary of Interior in May.
- First Federal Commission meeting held at Starved Rock State Park, four other meetings held in 1985.
- The Fitzpatrick House, Romeoville was sold to the IHPA for \$50,000 and leased to the commission for their office. \$330,000 of state funds were used to purchase and rehab the building.
- Commission began working on interpretation in corridor selecting Graphic Solutions of Maryland.

Studies

- Joliet chosen as one of eight communities nationally for the Main Street Program.
- US Steel and National Trust for Historic Preservation fund a reuse study for the mostly vacant US Steel Plant in Joliet.
- HABS/HAER Inventory of Canal structures and historic resources in Lemont and Morris begins, to be completed over three summers.

Publications

- Auto tour brochure completed and distributed. (UIVA)
- Lockport Historical Trail brochure printed. (City of Lockport)

Activities

- First economic development roundtable held in Marseilles on November 12. (UIVA)
- Bridgeport Community Conference held October 22-23. (UIVA)

Physical Improvements

- Rehabilitation of Gaylord Building in Lockport begins.
- Lockport Trail completed.

Partners

- Buffalo Rock Effigy Tumuli Sculptures, the largest earth sculpture in the world completed by artist Michael Heizer near Starved Rock State Park. The project reclaimed a seriously disturbed, former coal strip mine and created a remarkable expression of site sculpture drawing on the tradition of the ancient Native American mound-builders. This sculpture enhanced the IMCNHC for public enjoyment.

1986 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$237,000.
- NPS Assistance \$300,000.

Administrative

- Four permanent committees are established within the Federal Commission:
 1. Planning and Priorities
 2. Boundaries Historical Significance and Interpretation
 3. Interpretation and Signage
 4. Economic Development
- Illinois governor James Thompson designates the IMCNHC a “Corridor of Opportunity.”
- The Federal Commission sought to clarify the Corridor boundaries east of Harlem Avenue and submitted a draft of the Corridor boundaries to the Secretary of the Interior.

Studies

- None noted.

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- The IMCNHC logo design was adopted.
- Labor Day Celebration of the Sesquicentennial of the 1836 start of construction of the I&M Canal.

Physical Improvements

- Thirteen miles of the towpath resurfaced. The canal prism between Utica and LaSalle was dredged and drainage was improved by dredging a portion of the canal near Seneca. The foot bridge over the Fox River parallel to the I&M Canal aqueduct at Ottawa was rebuilt. (IDOC)

Partners

- The Joliet Area CVB expanded and became the regional Heritage Corridor CVB. This destination marketing organization, certified by the State of Illinois, promoted the IMCNHC and all of Will, Grundy, and LaSalle counties.
- The UIVA received the National Trust Honor Award for promoting the development of the IMCNHC.

1987 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$250,000.
- NPS Assistance \$351,900.
- The Economic Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce gave a grant to the IMCNHC federal commission to establish a Revolving Loan Fund.

Administrative

- IMCNHC Federal Commission approved their bylaws.

Studies

- A report on the “Geology of the Illinois-Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor” was received and approved by the National Park Service.
- A preliminary Water Resources Study was completed by the University of Illinois’s Institute for Environmental Studies. (Federal Commission)

Publications

- IMCNHC general brochure printed for general distribution. (Federal Commission)

Activities

- Seven visitor information centers were established in the Corridor utilizing existing facilities.

Physical Improvements

- The Aux Sable Aqueduct and Lock 14 were restored. The hiking/biking trail through Ottawa was resurfaced and a pump and spillway were installed in the Utica-Marseilles area. (IDOC)

Partners

- An IMCNHC sign plan was developed for use by the Federal Commission. (IDOT)
- The original canal warehouse in Lockport was rehabilitated for adaptive re-use as a visitor’s center, restaurant, a gallery by the Illinois State Museum, and exhibit space by IDOC. This structure later became known as the Gaylord Building. (Private sector, Gaylord Donnelley family)

1988 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$250,000.
- NPS Assistance \$151,200.

Administrative

- Initial Draft of the IMCNHC Interpretive Plan was completed. (Federal Commission)

Studies

- A hydrology study of the I&M Canal in Lockport was funded. (City of Lockport, Lockport Park District, IDOC)

Publications

- IMCNHC general brochure reprinted for general distribution. (Federal Commission)
- A new brochure was printed entitled, Ice Age Geology of the Corridor. (Federal Commission, Illinois Geological Survey)
- The Journal was published to publicize area attractions. (Federal Commission)

Activities

- A Wayside Exhibit Plan was developed and approved. (Federal Commission)
- Two contests to identify the oldest farm and industry in the Corridor were held. (Federal Commission)
- New interpretive exhibits were opened at the rest area on Interstate 80.
- Of the seven visitor centers established in 1987 one was moved to Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area and an additional visitor center opened at the Little Red School House.

Physical Improvements

- Seven miles of the canal towpath was surfaced. (IDOC)
- Five miles of the canal towpath at Willow Springs was surfaced. (Forest Preserved District of Cook County)
- The Aux Sable Aqueduct, the Little Vermillion Aqueduct, and Lock 14 were rehabilitated. (IDOC)

Partners

- The first I&M Canal Rendezvous was held at Columbia Woods in Willow Springs. (IMCNHCCCA)
- First National Canals Conference was hosted in the Corridor. (Federal Commission, IDOC, Friends of the I&M Canal)
- A 23- mile trail was established between the Chicago Portage Site and Lockport. (Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago)
- IMCNHC logo signs created and distributed to parks and museums throughout the Corridor. (IDOC)

1989 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$250,000.
- NPS Assistance \$150,300.

Administrative

- Preservation Treatment Policy was adopted.
- Three parcels of land were purchased within the Corridor. (Federal Commission)
- All state parks, forest preserve parks, and museums in the Corridor added the IMCNHC logo to their entrance signs.

Studies

- A public relations marketing survey was completed by the Federal Commission.
- A hydrology study was completed for Lockport to determine the feasibility to putting more water into the I&M Canal. (Illinois State Water Survey)
- Profile of Commercial/Industrial Activity and Associated Impacts on Enjoyable Recreational Use of the Upper Illinois Waterway by the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Institute for Environmental Studies and the Department of Commerce & Community Affairs. (Federal Commission)

Publications

- A trail guide was developed and printed for Starved Rock State Park. (Federal Commission)

Activities

- Four low-range radio transmitters were set up in the Corridor to give motorists visitors information through their car radio. (Federal Commission)
- A traveling exhibit was created. (Federal Commission)

Physical Improvements

- Rehabilitation was completed on the Aux Sable Aqueduct and the Little Vermillion Aqueduct. Thirty miles of towpath along the I&M Canal was resurfaced. (IDOC)
- 5.5 miles of towpath was surfaced along the I&M Canal in Willow Springs. (Forest Preserve District of Cook County)
- Eleven miles of the 26-mile long Centennial Trail opened for hiking. (Forest Preserve District of Cook County)

Partners

- 16 foot tall Cor-Ten® steel Statue of Marquette, Joliet, and unmanned Native American by Ferdinand Rebeccini was installed at the Chicago Portage National Historic Site. (Cook Co. Forest Preserve and IMCNHCCCA)
- Isle a la Cache museum was renovated. (Forest Preserve District of Will County)
- A fountain adjacent to the Chicago River in downtown Chicago was dedicated. (Metropolitan Water Reclamation District)

1990 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$250,000.
- NPS Assistance \$148,000.

Administrative

- None noted.

Studies

- The Federal Commission reviewed the hydrology study of Lockport and authorized \$5,000 to continue the study and develop and plan for putting more water into the I&M Canal.

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- None noted.

Physical Improvements

- Forty-six wayside exhibit panels were completed and distributed throughout the Corridor. (Federal Commission)

Partners

- U.S. Soil Conservation Service and IDOC met with local officials and landowners along the I&M Canal to study development potential and problems existing with IDOC 's operating procedure.
- Joliet Preservation Ordinance passed. (City of Joliet)
- A training manual was developed for guides to use when giving tours of the I&M Canal through Lockport. (Lockport Township Park District, Illinois Department of Commerce & Community Affairs)
- HCCVB opened a visitor center at 829 LaSalle Street in Ottawa in partnership with the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce.

1991 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$249,000.
- NPS Assistance \$153,000.

Administrative

- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act was passed. (U.S. Congress)

Studies

- A survey of limestone structures in the IMCNHC was completed. (CCA)

Publications

- Ice Age Geology brochure was reprinted. (Federal Commission)
- Cache Magazine made its debut. (HCCVB)

Activities

- The Federal Commission funded a regional Main Street Program with additional funding from the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs. The Canal Corridor Association hired a regional coordinator to administer the program. The three communities that were selected to participate were: Lemont, Lockport, and Ottawa.

Physical Improvements

- None noted.

Partners

- The Upper Illinois Valley Association changed its name to the Canal Corridor Association. (CCA).
- The U. S. Soil Conservation Service and IDOC made an effort to involve local landowners in the decision-making process for future development along the I&M Canal.

1992 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$247,000.
- NPS Assistance \$154,000.

Administrative

- P.L. 102-580, Water Resources Act of 1992 directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to study the I&M Canal for navigation with capital improvement authorization. The Secretary is authorized to make capital improvements to the canal.

Studies

- A study on the Seneca Grain Elevator for IDOC including a phased plan for the rehabilitation of the elevator was funded. (Federal Commission)

Publications

- Cache Magazine was published quarterly. (HCCVB)

Activities

- Three wayside exhibits were completed for Navy Pier.
- New exhibits were installed at the Fitzpatrick House about the family, the federal commission and the IMCNHC.
- The Federal Commission identified projects in the Corridor that need funding to preserve or enhance the interpretation of sites.
- The regional Main Street Program entered its second full year. Lemont, Lockport, and Ottawa continue to participate and the program expanded its operation by utilizing students from the architectural design classes at Purdue University to provide drawings for 24 buildings in Blue Island, Joliet, and Riverdale.

Physical Improvements

- Improvements continued along the I&M Canal State Trail with the placement of two bridges across the canal in Utica to improve access to the state trail. The state trail was surfaced from Channahon to Interstate 55. (IDOC)
- Brush was cleared from around the steel railroad swing bridge over the I&M Canal. (Marseilles Rotary Club and the U. S. Soil Conservation Service)

Partners

- A Conservation Congress was formed to advise IDOC. (State of Illinois)
- The central Clock Tower Building at Pullman State Historic Site, a National Register property, was repaired. (IHPA)
- The Main Street Project continues in Lockport, Lemont and Ottawa. (CCA)

1993 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$248,000.
- NPS Assistance \$154,000.

Administrative

- None noted.

Studies

- None noted.

Publications

- An auto tour guide of the Corridor was completed and published. (Federal Commission)
- Cache Magazine was published quarterly. (HCCVB)

Activities

- New messages were recorded for the four low-range radio transmitters. (Federal Commission)
- The Commission participated in the Illinois Conservation Congress, sponsored by IDOC to plan the future direction of the State in conservation.
- The Corridor Main Street Program entered its third and last year. Lemont, Lockport, and Ottawa continued to participate and limited assistance was provided to Blue Island, Utica, and Marseilles.

Physical Improvements

- Improvements were made to the I&M Canal State Trail with the placement of two bridges across the canal at Channahon and an additional bridge across the Aux Sable Creek Aqueduct. (IDOC)
- Several projects in the Corridor were funded by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) including: the Fox River Aqueduct, the Pullman Railroad Car site, locks and the towpath of the I&M Canal, dredging of the Canal prism in three spots, the locktender's house at Lock 8, the Seneca Grain Elevator, stone facing on the Aux Sable Aqueduct, and the steel mill ruins in Joliet Heritage Park. ISTEA awarded \$8,302,900 for projects within the Corridor with an additional \$1,000,000 in matching funds available from the State of Illinois.

Partners

- HCCVB, partnering with the I&M Canal Civic Center Authority opened a visitor center in Willow Springs.
- HCCVB moved their Ottawa Visitor Center to Utica.
- Friends of Community Public Art incorporated.
- The Main Street Project continues in Lockport, Lemont and Ottawa. (CCA)

1994 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$250,000.
- NPS Assistance \$153,000.

Administrative

- No activity on the revolving loan fund.

Studies

- None noted.

Publications

- Professor Michael Conzen (University of Chicago) published a new book of student papers entitled *The Industrial Revolution in the Upper Illinois Valley*.

Activities

- One of the four low-range radio-transmitters was modified to allow frequent updates to the taped message.
- A IMCNHC passport book was developed by the Commission with stamps to be distributed to Corridor attractions.

Physical Improvements

- Over \$13 million awarded to Corridor projects by funding under ISTEA. (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act)
- Thirty-two new wayside exhibits were completed. These exhibits supplemented the forty-six wayside exhibits already installed throughout the Corridor. (Federal Commission)

Partners

- Celebrated the 10th anniversary of the I&M Canal NHC at Joliet's Union Station. (HCCVB is partnership with the federal commission, Corridor Chambers of Commerce, and Lewis University.)
- HCCVB opened an office in Marseilles but closed one in Lockport due to lack of local match money.
- Ottawa held its 3rd reenactment of the first Lincoln-Douglas Debate which was broadcast on CNN. There was also a symposium on Lincoln.
- The Main Street Project continues in Lockport, Lemont and Ottawa with lesser efforts in three additional communities – Blue Island, Marseilles, and LaSalle. (CCA)

1995 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$250,000.
- NPS Assistance \$152,000.

Administrative

- Sesquicentennial Committee appointed to prepare to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the opening of the I&M Canal. (Federal Commission)

Studies

- None noted.

Publications

- The original IMCNHC brochure was revised and reprinted. (Federal Commission)
- A single-page trail map was developed for the I&M Canal State Trail. (NPS Staff)

Activities

- Two more low-range transmitters were modified to frequent updates to the taped messages. Three of the four low-range transmitters have now been modified.
- The Corridor Interpreters Group updated the Corridor's traveling exhibit and constructed three additional traveling exhibits for festivals and events.
- IMCNHC Information was prepared for inclusion on the NPS's web site.
- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, caption decoders were installed on all interpretive center VCR's in the Corridor.
- NPS staff and Corridor interpreters developed site-specific literature, an I&M Canal State Trail volunteer recruitment flyer, and improved the quality and presentation of their programs.
- The Main Street Project continues in Lockport, Lemont and Ottawa with lesser efforts in Blue Island, Marseilles, and LaSalle. Improvements continue to be seen in structural work on facades of buildings and an increase in the number of businesses in the communities. (CCA)

Physical Improvements

- Lake Katherine Nature Center was developed along the banks of the Cal Sag in Worth.

Partners

- Five tourism offices are maintained throughout the Corridor. (HCCVB)
- Interpretive prospectuses were prepared for: Isle a la Cache Museum, Lake Renwick Rookery, Monee Reservoir and Plum Creek Nature Center. (Forest Preserve District of Will County)
- The Fox River Aqueduct to be rehabbed using ISTEA funds. (IDOC)
- The Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie was established through the Illinois Land Conservation Act of 1995. (U.S. Congress)

1996 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$238,000.
- NPS Assistance \$152,000.

Administrative

- P.L. 104-333, Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Act, Sec. 902. Congress directs the federal commission to study possible additions to the National Heritage Corridor.

Studies

- An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Structures within the Illinois & Michigan Canal NHC written by Gray Fitzsimons of the Historic American Engineering Record/Historic Building Survey was published.

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- The main IMCNHC Brochure and Geology Brochure were reprinted. (Federal Commission)
- NPS staff prepared information on the Corridor for inclusion on the NPS's World Wide Web site.
- The Corridor Main Street Program was folded into a new State of Illinois Main Street Program.
- The Marseilles Hydroelectric Plant opened to visitors with funding from Illinois Power.
- A project to microfilm canal archives stored at Gebhart Woods in Morris by IDNR was funded. This is the first phase in an ongoing project to get all the canal archives microfilmed and available to researchers. (Federal Commission, Illinois State Museum)

Physical Improvements

- A two-mile stretch of trail along the I&M Canal east of the Village of Lemont was opened. (Village of Lemont)

Partners

- Four tourism offices were maintained throughout the Corridor. (HCACVB)
- The Canallers in the Corridor, a group of independent historic interpreters, was founded in 1996 to provide interpretation about the story of the I&M Canal. The members of the group portrayed real and composite characters of the 1800's.
- A booklet identifying the I&M Canal State Trail as an integral part of the American Discovery Trail was distributed. (American Discovery Trail)

1997 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$238,000.
- NPS Assistance \$152,000.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released funds that had been earmarked for work in the I&M Canal NHC in 1995.

Administrative

- None noted.

Studies

- The boundary study outlined in Public Law 104-333 was completed and submitted to the Department of the Interior for review.

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- NPS Staff updated information on the Corridor for the National Park Service's website.
- Rails & Trails program was initiated for the Corridor on trains traveling between Chicago and Joliet.

Physical Improvements

- None noted.

Partners

- A new commemorative license plate highlighting the I&M Canal was created. (State of Illinois) (was not released until 2000)
- A musical play about the I&M Canal was produced. (Canallers & Company and Gallimaufry)
- Four tourism offices are maintained throughout the Corridor. (HCAC&VB)
- The State of Illinois started its own heritage tourism program under the Bureau of Tourism.
- An archeological excavation of seven canal boats in the canal bed near Morris was completed by IDNR. CCA developed an interpretive program for Morris school children and the public around the archeology of these barges.
- The Santa Fe Prairie was donated to the I&M Canal NHC Civic Center Authority. (Santa Fe Railroad)
- Gaylord Building in Lockport was donated to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. (Gaylord Donnelley heirs)
- Annual I&M Canal Award initiated at the Illinois History Fair in Springfield. (CCA)
- Eighteen grants awarded through a Sesquicentennial Grants Program to canal communities totaling \$41,400. (CCA)

1998 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$238,000.
- NPS Assistance \$153,000.

Administrative

- P.L. 105-355, Automobile National Heritage Area Act, Sec. 902, Congress extends authorization of the Commission to 2004.

Studies

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed planning for a trail in Summit, additional studies on the hydrology of the I&M Canal in Lockport, and design work for pilot projects on the Wayfinding Project.

Publications

- Hiking and Biking the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor was published by noted outdoors author Jim Hochgesang.

Activities

- The IMCNHC celebrated the Sesquicentennial of the opening of the I&M Canal from April 1998-April 1999 with organized events throughout the year. (Federal Commission, CCA)
- NPS staff updated IMCNHC information on the NPS website.
- The Santa Fe Prairie opened to the public.

Physical Improvements

- The repair and rehabilitation of the Fox River Aqueduct in Ottawa was completed. (IDNR)
- Face stones were replaced on the Aux Sable Aqueduct. At Aux Sable several old buildings were demolished and later additions removed from the locktender's house. (IDNR)
- The Joliet Iron Works Historic Site and the adjacent four-mile section of the I&M Canal trail linking Joliet and Lockport opened to the public. (Forest Preserve District of Will County)

Partners

- IMCNHC was selected as one of seven demonstration projects for the state of Illinois's heritage program managed by the Bureau of Tourism. Funding for the program was awarded to the Canal Corridor Association.
- The IMCNHC hosted the World Canal Conference in September. (Federal Commission, IHPA, Canal Corridor Association)
- Work continued on the I&M Canal State Trail and the section between Channahon and Joliet is opened. (IDNR)
- A major photographic exhibit on the I&M Canal called "Prairie Passage" completed its run at the Chicago Cultural Center and was displayed in Lockport most of the year. (CCA)

- Prairie Passage: The Illinois and Michigan Canal Corridor, was published by the University of Illinois Press featuring 180 photographs by Edward Ranney. (CCA)
- HCCVB unveils its I&M Canal Collection, a series of ten scenes by artist Paul Aschak.
- I&M Canal Sesquicentennial Quilt Exhibit traveled to sites in Ottawa, Willow Springs, Morris, Palos Hills, Joliet, Utica, Streator, and Plainfield. (Willow Springs Quilters, the Heritage Quilters Guild, the Grundy County Historical Society, and the Illinois Valley Quilters)
- Water Marks, situated in Gateway Park at the entrance to Navy Pier, is one of the country's most monumental community public artworks. A project of the Chicago Public Art Group and the Canal Corridor Association, the mosaic bench sculptures and walkway commemorate the 150-year history of the Illinois & Michigan Canal--its land, the people who built it and who have lived alongside it, and the way the canal has shaped the history of the region.

1999 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$239,000.
- NPS Assistance \$154,000.

Administrative

- None noted.

Studies

- None noted.

Publications

- HCCVB's Passport to the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor received national American Pathways 2000 itinerary award.

Activities

- None noted.

Physical Improvements

- Sixty-one mile marker posts were installed along the I&M Canal State Trail and a William Gooding silhouette south of the 7th Street bridge in Lockport. (CCA)

Partners

- The Canallers in the Corridor were incorporated on May 5, 1999 as a 501 (c) (3) organization having left the umbrella of IDNR's Volunteers in the Parks Program. Their mission is: To continue to develop means of telling the stories of the I&M Canal to groups throughout the National Heritage Corridor, to recruit new members, to raise money for various causes; and to promote knowledge of the Illinois & Michigan Canal through historical interpretation, public speaking, entertaining, and educational school programs throughout the National Heritage Corridor.
- An exhibit entitled: Illinois Passage: Connecting the Continent opens in the first floor of the Gaylord Building. (National Trust)
- The Ottawa Visitor Center publishes the book: The Canal that Built Ottawa by Lawrence Natta one of the Sesquicentennial Grant Projects.
- Canal Origins Park was designated an official project of the Save America's Treasures Initiative, a public-private partnership of the White House Millennium Council and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- The I&M Canal Pioneers: Bringing History to Life in the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor booklet was published. (CCA)
- Three-day teacher workshops were held for 20 teachers grades 3rd-10th on the I&M Canal featuring geography and history lessons. (CCA)
- The I&M Canal Sesquicentennial Celebration was selected by Landmark Preservation Council of Illinois to receive the 1999 Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award for innovative and effective programs.

2000 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$240,000.
- NPS Assistance \$182,527.

Administrative

- P.L. 106-554 Consolidated Appropriations Act, Section 126. Congress increases authorization for the Federal Commission's annual appropriations from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000. (December 19, 2000).

Studies

- None noted.

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- A ceremony was held in May to welcome a cross-country team inaugurating the launch of the American Discovery Trail, which incorporates the I&M Canal State Trail. (Federal Commission, ADT)
- 60 minute film Prairie Tides is filmed.

Physical Improvements

- None noted.

Partners

- The Commission renewed its two current cooperative agreements in support of publications and interpretive activities and other public outreach. (CCA, HCCVB)
- CCA completed a five-year strategic plan. The new mission of CCA is to preserve history, protect nature and open space, and create destinations where people can learn and have fun in the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor, from Lake Michigan in Chicago to the Illinois River in LaSalle/Peru.

2001 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$239,000.
- NPS Assistance \$182,527.

Administrative

- None noted.

Studies

- A Strategic Plan for the IMCNHC was released. (Federal Commission)
- A series of steering committee meetings organized by CCA on the development of a vision plan for the Corridor, funded through the cooperative agreement. There was not enough interest to pursue the project. (Federal Commission)
- A historical and architectural survey of the downtown commercial area of Morris was contracted. (Federal Commission)

Publications

- A new introductory brochure about the IMCNHC was designed to supplement the Unigrd brochure for distribution in high volume “gateway” locations. (NPS staff, HCCVB)
- A LaSalle Sesquicentennial publication distributed through the local newspaper, the News Tribune was written, produced and distributed. (CCA)
- I&M Canal Driving Tour. (see below)

Activities

- The Federal Commission became an active participant in the Amtrak Trails and Rails program with volunteers on trains between Chicago and St. Louis.
- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 4th year. (CCA)
- The I&M Canal Summer Teachers Workshop was NOT held due to lack of funding. (CCA)

Physical Improvements

- 120 driving tour signs installed along a 75 mile tour from Lemont to LaSalle/Peru. 100,000 driving tour map brochures printed. The tour was also put on the website. (CCA)
- Armstrong family silhouettes installed in Morris at Canalport Plaza. (CCA)

Partners

- The Federal Commission executed modifications to its two current cooperative agreements with the non-profits CCA and HCCVB in support of publications and interpretive activities and other public outreach.
- Reuse plans were developed for the Ottawa Toll House. Discussion were held about ways in which the Federal Commission could contribute to development of a master plan for the I&M Canal State Trail. (NPS staff, IDNR)
- Cooperative agreement between NTHP and CCA was signed for CCA to manage the Gaylord Building in Lockport.

2002 Overview

Federal Investment

- The Federal Commission received \$500,000.
- NPS Assistance \$154,900.

Administrative

- The Federal Commission joined the Alliance of National Heritage Areas.

Publications

- Distributed a new Gateway brochure that makes information about the Corridor available in high-traffic Chicago Locations. (Federal Commission)
- The Commission tripled their mailing list, revived their newsletter and launched a new weekly e-mail bulletin for partners.

Activities

- The Partnerships Project Fund, a new competitive funding program, was launched making use of the Commission’s cooperative agreement authority. (Federal Commission)
- The IMCNHC Unigrd (brochure) was revised with technical assistance from the Harpers Ferry Interpretive Center. (NPS Staff)
- Replaced equipment and did new programming for four TIS radio transmitters in the Corridor. They are again operational after a five-year break in service. (Federal Commission)
- The film, Prairie Tides: The Canal That Built Chicago was released. (Federal Commission, CCA)
- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 5th year. (CCA)

Physical Improvements

- 70 bicycle racks installed in 8 canal-side communities in Grundy and LaSalle Counties. (CCA)

Partners

- The Commission executed modifications to its two pre-existing cooperative agreements with the Canal Corridor Association and the Heritage Corridor Convention & Visitors Bureau.
- Stories in Stone interpretive pod at Bi-centennial park in Joliet was installed. It included five Cor-Ten® silhouettes and markers and four interpretive panels. (CCA)
- Special Places Project launched. Over 100 citizen photographers submitted over 1,000 photographs of places they considered special in the heritage corridor. (CCA)

2003 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$745,000.
- NPS Assistance \$157,000.

Administrative

- None noted.

Studies

- An update Interpretive Plan for the the IMCNHC was funded and begun. (Funding from Federal Commission to CCA)

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- Local screenings of Prairie Tides in Morris, Romeoville, Bedford Park, LaSalle and Ottawa took place throughout the year.
- Dinner/Lecture series held in Lockport and LaSalle in the spring and fall. (CCA)
- 15 teachers participate in three day canal training.
- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 6th year. (CCA)

Physical Improvements

- 23 new wayfinding panels installed along the I&M Canal Trail in Lemont, Lockport, and Joliet. (CCA)

Partners

- Special Places Project continued with a traveling display, which took a three-month tour around the Corridor allowing 1,200 people to vote for special places of their choosing. The project culminated with a daylong special places showcase with 75 participants. In the fall, the Special Places Advocates Network was launched with monthly meetings in each county. (CCA)

2004 Overview**Federal Investment**

- The Federal Commission received \$596,000.
- NPS Assistance \$121,480.
- The Federal Commission's Revolving Loan Fund, which had operated since 1987 to support economic development projects in the National Heritage Corridor, ceased operations. Its remaining loans and assets were donated to Lewis University in Romeoville to contribute to the endowment for the Canal and Regional History Collection.

Administrative

- Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Renewed Vision and Implementation Strategy released. States that the Federal Commission should be reauthorized. (Federal Commission)
- IMCNHC Federal Commission sunsets on August 24, 2004.
- All Federal Commission records were transferred to the Great Lakes Region National Archives and Records Administration in Chicago.
- HR 4492 passed the House on July 19, 2004 to reauthorize the IMCNHC.

Studies

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed an infrastructure study of the canal at the western terminus, the site of the proposed canal boat. (City of LaSalle)

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- Work was completed on a publication entitled; The Illinois & Michigan Canal: A Resource Handbook for Project Planning. The handbook summarizes background information on the canal's historic importance, highlights issues that should be considered when contracting for services, explains "best practices" in historic preservation, and outlines compliance procedures to meet federal and state regulations. (NPS staff)
- The Federal Commission gave the Canal Corridor Association the four Traveler Information Radio Stations and related equipment that provided visitor information to drivers along I-55 and I-80. The Commission also gave the Canal Corridor Association the wayside interpretive signs erected by the Commission and replacement materials.
- A five-day teacher workshop was held during the summer entitled The Last Great American Canal: How the Illinois and Michigan Canal United 19th Century America. The 5 day workshop was attended by 150 teachers and was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to the CCA. (with Lewis University)

- Dinner/Lecture series held in Lockport and LaSalle in the spring and fall. (CCA)
- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 7th year. (CCA)

Physical Improvements

- The Ottawa Toll House, the last remaining toll house in the canal, was moved and rehabilitated. (IDNR, Federal Commission)

Partners

- Second floor gallery of the Gaylord Building was vacated. (IDNR)
- The IMCNHC 20th anniversary exhibit and booklet was created. The exhibit traveled throughout the IMCNHC in 2004. (Federal Commission, CCA)
- The I&M Canal/Heritage Quarries Recreation Area which is an integral part of Lemont's corridor officially opened. (Village of Lemont)
- A five-day teacher workshop was held three times during the summer entitled The Last Great American Canal: How the Illinois and Michigan Canal United 19th Century America. The workshop educated 150 teachers was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. (CCA, Lewis University)
- Intergovernmental Agreement between IDNR and the City of LaSalle was signed for proposed canal boat attraction. (CCA)

2005 Overview

Federal Investment

- No Federal Money received in FFY05.

Administrative

- No Federal Commission or National Park Service Staff.

Studies

- An Interpretive Plan was developed for the IMCNHC. (CCA)
- A Survey of Downtown LaSalle was completed. (CCA, City of LaSalle)

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- Dinner/Lecture series held in Lockport and LaSalle in the spring and fall. (CCA)
- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 8th year. (CCA)

Physical Improvements

- One hundred concrete interpretive relief panels created by Chicago youth installed in the "canal cut" wall at Canal Origins Park. Additionally two seven-foot sculptural panels were installed depicting present-day landscape on the exterior of the entry-wall, six interpretive panels on the inside of the entry wall. Additionally, two reader rails were installed along the riverside of the park. (CCA)
- Installed 13 full-scale Cor-Ten® Steel Silhouettes at Lock 14. The silhouettes depicted 10-people who rode on the canal between 1848-1852 and 3 that worked on the canal during that time period. (CCA)

Partners

- In February of 2005, a series of three public workshops were held to gather public input for the interpretive themes of the IMCNHC. (CCA)
- A five-day teacher workshop was held three times during the summer entitled The Last Great American Canal: How the Illinois and Michigan Canal United 19th Century America. The workshop educated 150 teachers was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. (CCA, Lewis University)
- Port of La Salle Management Agreement between the City of LaSalle and CCA was signed for CCA to manage the proposed canal boat attraction.

2006 Overview**Federal Investment**

- No Federal Money received in FFY06.

Administrative

- No Federal Commission or National Park Service Staff.
- In October, FFY2007, Congress reauthorized the IMCNHC and designated the Canal Corridor Association the local coordinating entity for the IMCNHC.

Studies

- None noted.

Publications

- CCA's historian Ron Vasile guest edited a special issue of the Illinois History Teacher devoted to the I&M Canal.
- A new exhibit "Generations of Waterways in the Illinois & Michigan Canal Corridor opening in the Gaylord Building, Lockport.

Activities

- Dinner/Lecture series held in Lockport and LaSalle in the spring and fall. (CCA)
- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 9th year. (CCA)
- Prairie Tides, a 60 minute film on the building of the I&M Canal was introduced in DVD format.

Physical Improvements

- A new outdoor interpretive exhibit was installed at the western terminus of the canal in LaSalle at Lock 14. The exhibit includes 13 Cor-Ten® steel silhouettes of canal workers and passengers in the 1848-1852 era, nine markers, and six proto-type "barrels and trunks" seating.

Partners

- Canal Origins Park was selected for a City of Chicago 2006 Preservation Excellence Award.

2007 Overview**Federal Investment**

- In FFY07 the Canal Corridor Association received \$18,000 for training.

Administrative

- CCA staff attended NPS training on management planning.

Studies

- Research began for new management plan.

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- Dinner/Lecture series held in Lockport and LaSalle in the spring and fall. (CCA)
- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 10th year. (CCA)

Physical Improvements

- None noted.

Partners

- Extensive planning and fundraising was completed for the construction of a replica canal boat and its operation at the western terminus of the canal in LaSalle. Construction of the boat and rehabilitation of a historic downtown building in LaSalle for a western terminus visitor center began. (CCA)

2008 Overview

Federal Investment

- \$148,000 from the Heritage Partnership Program.

Administrative

- Outreach to public officials and organizations began for the new phase of administration of IMCNHC.

Studies

- Research continues for new management plan. Existing documents from 20 years of heritage corridor work reviewed as well as documents from other heritage areas.

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 11th year. (CCA)
- The I&M Canal Walk & Ride was held in Morris in September with 150 people walking or riding their bicycles on the canal tow path trail.

Physical Improvements

- A replica canal boat named The Volunteer arrived in LaSalle in May and commenced operations as the LaSalle Canal Boat through the end of October. A dock and other site improvements were made at the western terminus of the canal. 754 First Street in LaSalle was rehabbed and opened as the Lock 16 Visitor Center. Two mules named Larry and Moe came to work along the canal for the first time since the 19th century. A goat named Curly came to keep them company.

Partners

- None noted.

2009 Overview

Federal Investment

- \$148,000 from the Heritage Partnership Program and \$10,000 for training.

Administrative

- First five public meetings for the management plan held in November and December in the communities of Morris, Lemont, LaSalle, Channahon, and Alsip.
- CCA staff was trained by the International Association of Public Participation.

Studies

- The foundation documents for the management plan were drafted.

Publications

- None noted.

Activities

- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 12th year. (CCA)
- The Abraham Lincoln and the I&M Canal Exhibit was opened in the Gaylord Building as a permanent exhibit and a traveling exhibit of the same name moved to numerous venues in the corridor as part of the Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration. (funded by the Illinois Lincoln Bicentennial Commission)

Physical Improvements

- A new Cor-Ten® steel silhouette of engineer and Utica resident James Clark was added to the interpretive system in Utica at the LaSalle County Museum.

Partners

- The LaSalle Canal Boat operated from May and October at the western terminus of the canal and the Lock 16 Visitor Center attracted 25,000 visitors year-round.

2010 Overview**Federal Investment**

- \$150,000 from the Heritage Partnership Program.

Administrative

- A staff person was hired to assist in the planning process.
- Six public meetings for the management plan were held over the course of the year in the communities of Ottawa, Lemont, Chicago, Joliet, Seneca, and Alsip.
- A Corridor Steering Committee was formed to guide the management plan and met monthly from May through October and met by phone in December.

Studies

- The drafting of the management plan continued.

Publications

- The IMCNHC website was launched with introductory information concerning the heritage corridor and the planning process.

Activities

- The LaSalle Canal Boat operated from May and October at the western terminus of the canal and the Lock 16 Visitor Center attracted 35,000 people.
- I&M Canal Awards were presented at the Illinois History Fair for the 13th year. (CCA)
- The I&M Canal Walk & Ride was held in Morris in May with 150 people walking or riding their bicycles on the canal tow path trail.

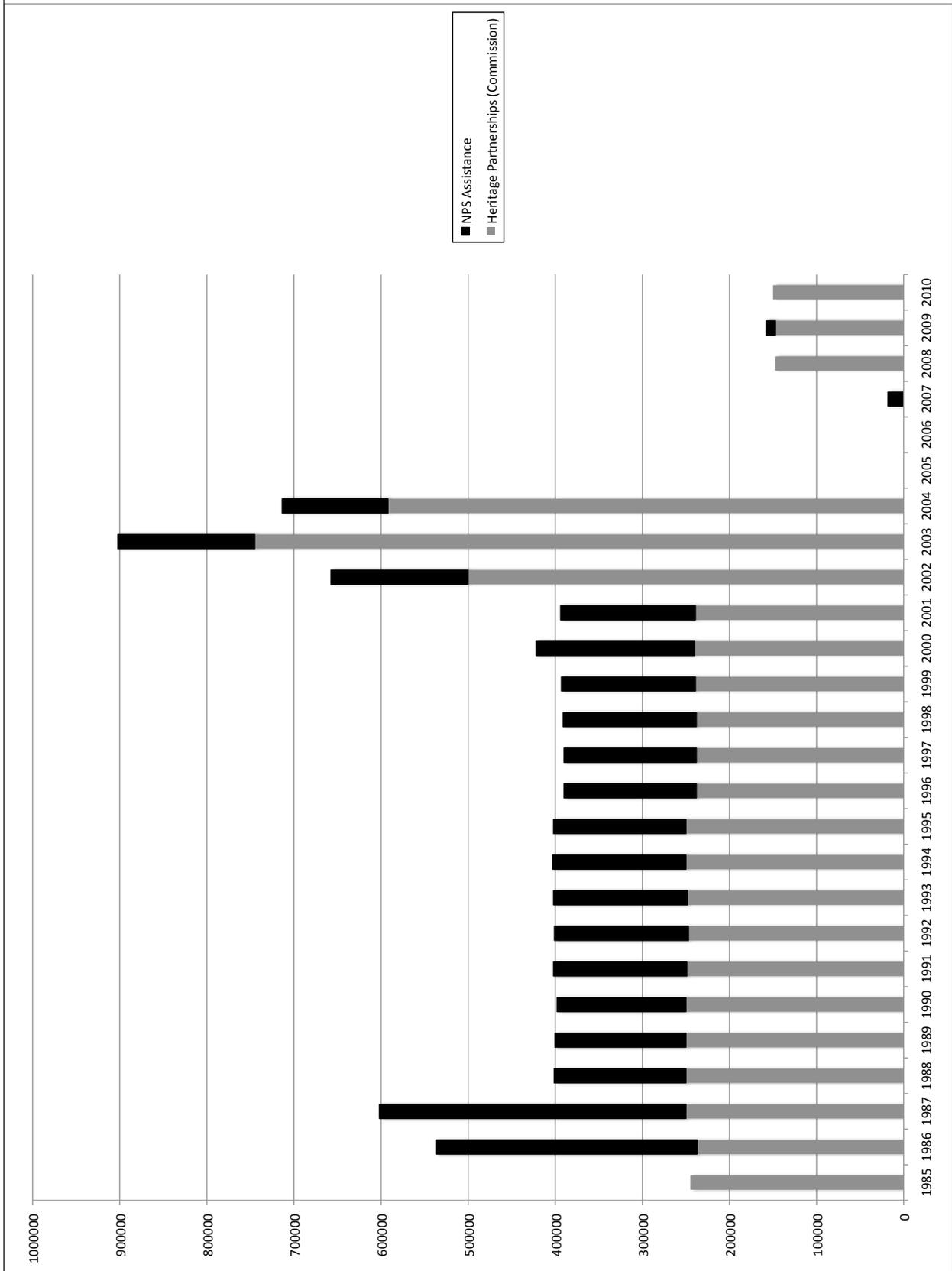
Physical Improvements

- A new Cor-Ten® steel silhouette of Civil War veteran Sgt. James Sanborn was added to the interpretive system in Marseilles.

Partners

- Two training sessions were held for partners in interpretive and tourism related subjects.

Figure 3.2. NPS Funding Summary 1985-2010



(Endnotes)

1 Public Law 98-398- Aug. 24, 1984, pg. 1 (Section 102)

2 Public Law 98-398-Aug. 24, 1984, pg. 1

Purpose of the Roadmap

Planning allows civic leaders, the business community, the non-profit community, and citizens to all have a meaningful role in coming together to create better places to live, work, and visit. The purpose of this roadmap is to do that in the nation's first national heritage area – the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) and guide the federal investment given to this special place by Congress. The roadmap will focus on how to let the unique history and resources of the region guide a responsible, inclusive, and sustainable vision for the future. The plan will set up a process to ensure excellence in decision-making and inclusiveness in scope.

A National Heritage Area is a nationally distinctive landscape shaped by natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources, recognized by the U.S. Congress. A heritage area tells a nationally important story through its geography, its man-made structures, and the traditions that have evolved within the landscape.

National Heritage Areas are managed by a local entity in partnership with various stakeholders. These stakeholders include individual citizens, local, state, and Federal governments, and nonprofit and private sector groups. Together these stakeholders work to preserve the integrity of their distinct landscape and local stories so that future generations will understand their relationship to the land. This collaborative approach does not compromise traditional local control over and use of the land.

Using this approach, National Heritage Areas are based on their constituents' pride in their history and traditions and interest and involvement in retaining and interpreting their special landscapes. Heritage areas work across traditional boundaries in order to collaboratively shape a plan and implementation strategy that preserves the area's unique and distinct qualities.¹

The above definition of a national heritage area comes from the National Park Service and in many ways articulates the purposes of this roadmap for the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor. This roadmap will:

- Serve as a framework for the future heritage work of the stakeholders in the IMCNHC.
- Serve as a roadmap for all the stakeholders in the Corridor to work together building on mutual interests.
- Focus on adding value to the existing work by identifying work which is better done across jurisdictional boundaries and in partnership.

- Identify current needs and gaps in the existing work.
- Articulate partners and resources which can be brought together to accomplish the work of the legislation.

The formation of this plan has already engaged stakeholders and the public involving them in formulating policy and taking action to work towards making the IMCNHC a better place to live, work, and visit and permitting the IMCNHC to achieve its full potential. This plan has been informed by extensive public input.

Legislative Mandate

Congress directed the Canal Corridor Association to include the following in the new plan for the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor:

- (1) take into consideration State and local plans and involve residents, local governments and public agencies, and private organizations in the corridor;
- (2) present comprehensive recommendations for the corridor's conservation, funding, management, and development;
- (3) include actions proposed to be undertaken by units of government and nongovernmental and private organizations to protect the resources of the corridor;
- (4) specify the existing and potential sources of funding to protect, manage, and develop the corridor; and
- (5) include--
 - (A) identification of the geographic boundaries of the corridor;
 - (B) a brief description and map of the corridor's overall concept or vision that show key sites, visitor facilities and attractions, and physical linkages;
 - (C) identification of overall goals and the strategies and tasks intended to reach them, and a realistic schedule for completing the tasks;
 - (D) a listing of the key resources and themes of the corridor;
 - (E) identification of parties proposed to be responsible for carrying out the tasks;
 - (F) a financial plan and other information on costs and sources of funds;
 - (G) a description of the public participation process used in developing the plan and a proposal for public participation in the implementation of the management plan;
 - (H) a mechanism and schedule for updating the plan based on actual progress;
 - (I) a bibliography of documents used to develop the management plan; and
 - (J) a discussion of any other relevant issues relating to the management plan.²

Overview of Planning Process 2008-2010

The Canal Corridor Association (CCA) began the process of creating a comprehensive management plan in 2008. Documents were collected from the former Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Federal Commission to determine potential relevance to forming the new management plan. The staff reviewed other heritage area plans and worked to define best practices to incorporate them into the plan as it was being developed. Additional research was conducted and documents collected from other organizations, which had participated in the Heritage Corridor efforts in the past. Informal discussions were held with stakeholders and elected officials throughout the Heritage Corridor, in Chicago, and in Springfield, the state capitol. Throughout this period many presentations were given to groups interested in the status and future of the national heritage corridor.

CCA held four rounds of public workshops throughout the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) between November 2009 and February 2011. The workshops engaged the public, collected information, and facilitated the development of the this roadmap. The data collected from these workshops was critical in shaping the plan. The initial round of public workshops introduced the public to the planning process and explored what types of projects should be done within the IMCNHC. The public also addressed what they felt the vision, mission, and guiding principles for the Corridor should be. The second round of public workshops allowed the public to weigh-in on the allocation of resources and determine the priority of projects within the IMCNHC. A third round of workshops was a dialogue with the participants. The discussions centered on how to effectively engage the public and partners within the IMCNHC. Our final rounds of public workshops explored the various alternatives of the governance structure.

Six resource committees were formed and all stakeholders were invited to participate. The committees worked through the winter and spring of 2010 to develop goals and activities for the IMCNHC in the following six areas:

- Boundaries
- Conservation/Natural Resources
- Education/Interpretation
- Heritage Development
- Recreation
- Tourism/Economic Development

Figure 4.1. Management Planning Process Timeline

2009

11/16/09-Public Workshop (Morris)
 11/17/09-Public Workshop (Lemont)
 11/18/09-Public Workshop (LaSalle)
 11/19/09-Public Workshop (Channahon)
 12/2/09-Public Workshop (Alsip)

2010

2/6/10-Special Interest Committee Meetings (Channahon)
 5/19/10-First Steering Committee Meeting (Channahon)
 6/23/10-Second Steering Committee Meeting (Channahon)
 7/14/10-Third Steering Committee Meeting (Channahon)
 8/4/10-Public Workshop (Ottawa)
 8/5/10-Public Workshop (Lemont)
 8/18/10-Fourth Steering Committee Meeting (Channahon)
 9/29/10-Fifth Steering Committee Meeting (Channahon)
 10/20/10-Sixth Steering Committee Meeting (Channahon)
 11/3/10-Public Workshop (Chicago)
 11/9/10-Public Workshop (Joliet)
 11/10/10-Public Workshop (Seneca)
 11/11/10-Public Workshop (Alsip)
 12/8/10-Steering Committee Conference Call

2011

1/12/11-Seventh Steering Committee Meeting
 2/23/11-Public Workshop (Lockport)
 2/24/11-Public Workshop(LaSalle)
 3/23/11-Final Steering Committee Meeting

A steering committee was formed with the purpose of providing direction and/or approval during the creation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor's comprehensive management plan. The core of the steering committee was three CCA board members, the CCA president, and the committee chairs of the six resource committees. The steering committee was a diverse group of fourteen individuals from across the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor whose varied knowledge base and skill set form a competent and capable committee.

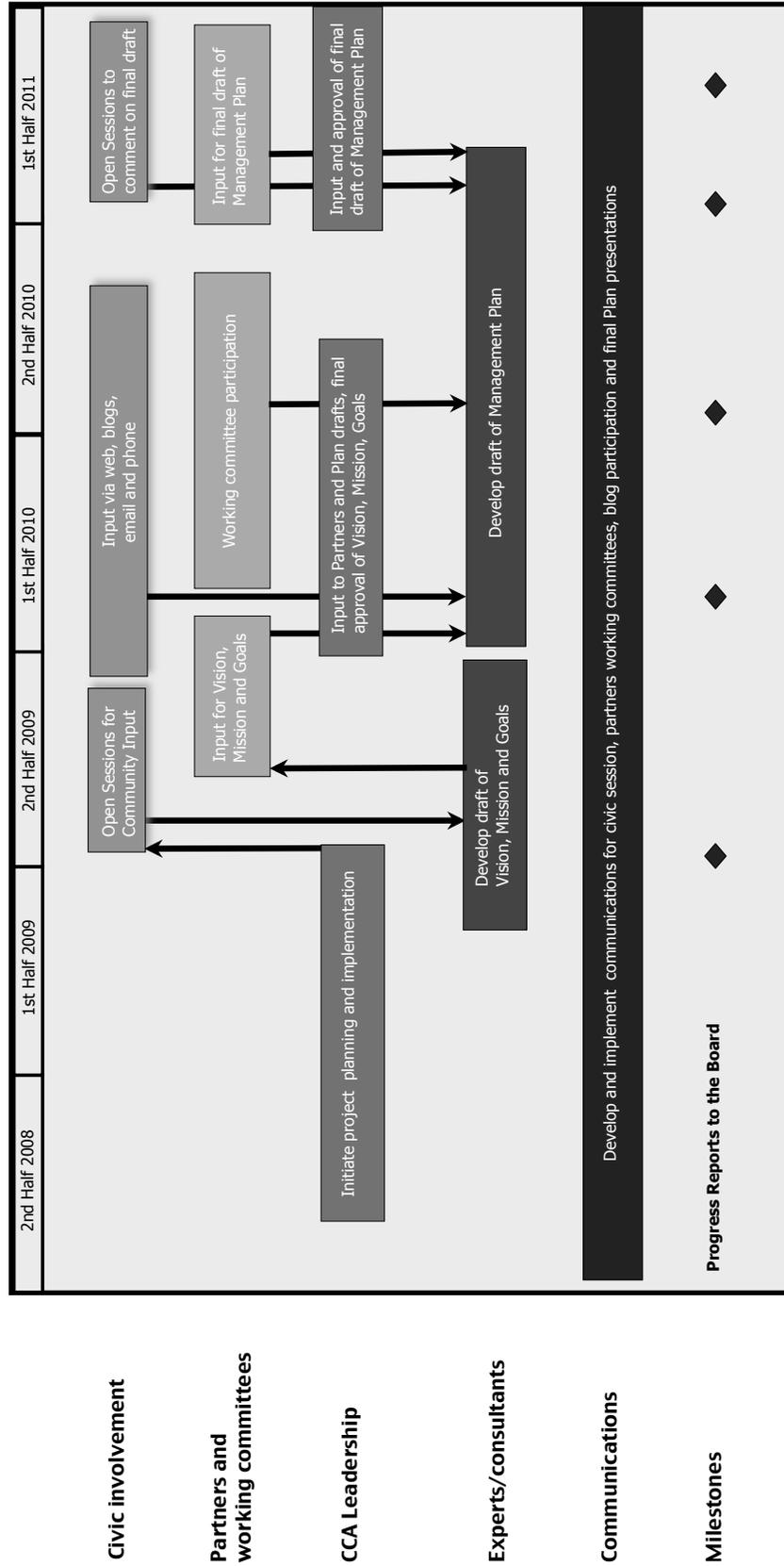
To help facilitate public participation during the management plan process CCA created a website and blog dedicated to the management plan. The website included information about the management planning process, how individuals could be involved in the process, and posted the upcoming workshop schedule. The blog created a forum for discussion and a way to engage the public in the planning process. We also established a management plan e-news list for individuals interested in the management planning process. Frequent updates, public workshop notices, and other information were transmitted to our subscribers.

Members of the steering committee also visited various city council and village board meetings to encourage participation in the process.

The management plan was written collaboratively utilizing the abilities of steering committee members, staff, and contracted consultants. The drafts were reviewed and approved by the steering committee, staff, the Canal Corridor Association Board of Directors, and finally the National Park Service.

I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor Management Plan Roadmap

Figure 4.2. IMCNHC Management Plan Roadmap



Foundation of Plan

In 2009, stakeholders came together to establish the foundation of the plan. The foundation is outlined below in the vision statement, the mission, and the guiding principles. This foundation is the basis for the goals, strategies, and activities that follow as well as all recommendations.

Vision Statement

The Illinois & Michigan Canal connected the Illinois River to Lake Michigan, bringing people and commerce to northeastern Illinois. The canal and the towns that grew up along it share a legacy. Through interpretation, preservation and providing educational and recreational experiences, we see the Heritage Corridor creating economic development, recreation and education opportunities for residents and visitors, making the Corridor more prosperous and a place where people enjoy the benefits created by the canal and take pride in the region's history.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor is to: protect and preserve the natural, historical and cultural resources of the Corridor; advance and stimulate economic development and activity within the Corridor; create and enhance opportunities for recreation in the Corridor; and interpret and cultivate the history of the Corridor and its significance in the settlement and growth of the region and nation.

Guiding Principles

Stewardship:

- We hold our history in high regard and will use it to inform our stewardship decisions.
- We will respect the environment and property, public and private.
- We will respect each community's needs and goals in a way that is consistent with the concept that the Corridor is a region consisting of many communities and places which are geographically, historically and culturally connected by the canal.
- We will consider sustainability as an important criteria in making plans, selecting projects and allocating resources.
- We will communicate to our partners and the public in multiple ways to reach as many as possible, using technology to bring the Corridor to the world.
- We will include all groups, including future generations, in our plans, goals and actions.

History:

- We will appreciate the area's history both before and after the canal was created.
- We will provide education about the canal and the Corridor.
- We will respect our history and culture through honest and authentic portrayals of places, people and events.
- We will use multiple forums and media to spread the word about the Corridor's history to as wide an audience as possible.

Economic Development:

- We will encourage and foster economic development opportunities in the Corridor.
- We will provide places where people can bring their families and friends for recreation and fun.

Goals

The following six goals have been formulated based upon the vision, mission, and guiding principles articulated by the committees, the project work of the six committees and the review of the steering committee.

STORIES Goal: The rich and complex stories of the history and continuing importance of the I&M Canal Corridor will be told through increasingly accurate, compelling and interesting ways to larger audiences.

Over and over again through the planning process the public has confirmed the following:

- Most people don't know the significance of the I&M Canal to Chicago, Illinois and the nation
- People who have recently learned about the canal can't believe that canal history was not taught when they were in school
- Many local history resources shortchange the impact of the I&M Canal (i.e. that it was only vital until the railroads displaced it)
- Most people are amazed to learn how the canal shaped many aspects of Illinois life today

Telling the stories of the I&M Canal, it's history, the people of the region, and it's impact makes this "ditch" come alive for many people. The story will be told in the context of the American story through the interpretive themes outlined in Part 1 of the plan. The stories of the people who lived and worked in the corridor will be told to highlight the richness and complexity of the I&M Canal story. Potential methods and audiences for these stories will be explored in the plan.

Figure 4.3. Goals

STORIES Goal: The rich and complex stories of the history and continuing importance of the I&M Canal Corridor will be told through increasingly accurate, compelling and interesting ways to larger audiences.

SPECIAL PLACES Goal: The Corridor's distinctive sense of place and natural, cultural and historic resources will be recognized, embraced and protected.

RECREATION Goal: The recreational amenities of the Corridor will be enhanced and expanded to facilitate their enjoyment by more people.

CONSERVATION Goal: The stewardship of the corridor's natural resources will be improved. Both the number of stewards and the commitment level and involvement of stewards will be increased.

ECONOMIC IMPACT Goal: The Corridor's economic growth will be built through an increase in heritage tourism and heritage development. Historical and cultural based venues in the Corridor will be enhanced through increased interpretation, use of new technologies, and increases in visitor services and marketing. Entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses will be supported with increased tourism strengthening our historic downtowns.

SUSTAINABILITY Goal: The work of the IMCNHC will be sustained after 2021 by continually engaging more people in increasingly intense roles, continuing to strengthen the collective voice of the region, continuing the coordination and celebration of the work, and securing sustainable funding sources.

Figure 4.4. These Cor-Ten® Steel Silhouettes tell the story of the Armstrong Family and their involvement in the Morris Community and the Illinois & Michigan Canal.



Figure 4.5. The Seneca Grain Elevator is the only remaining historic grain elevator along the Illinois & Michigan Canal that was in operation during the canal's early days.



SPECIAL PLACES Goal: The Corridor's distinctive sense of place and natural, cultural and historic resources will be recognized, embraced and protected.

The I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor is full of historic sites, as well as natural and cultural resources, that contribute to the local and regional “sense of place.” Almost all of these places have been identified and inventoried since the corridor was designated in 1984, but most are not protected and have the potential to be negatively impacted by neglect, growth and development. This plan looks for ways to use the collected information to enhance this distinctive sense of place.

The centerpiece of the IMCNHC and its most unique resource is the canal itself. Unfortunately, the condition of the I&M Canal is currently deteriorating. While much has been done to rehabilitate the canal and its related structures since 1984, the last ten years have seen a reversal in the condition of all aspects of the resource, but especially in the tow-path trail along the canal. The majority of the canal is owned and managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources whose ability to maintain this historic landmark has been substantially reduced.

Parts of the 61-mile I&M Canal State Trail have been closed recently. Currently the canal has some significant water and structural issues. A fund for the canal created over ten years ago and funded by special automobile license plates has never been allocated for any of these needs. Activities to promote well-maintained open trails, assure water levels, and make needed structural repairs will be explored within the plan.

RECREATION Goal: The recreational amenities of the Corridor will be enhanced and expanded to facilitate their enjoyment by more people.

A large number of stakeholders involved in the planning process currently use the tow-path trail along the I&M Canal and the largest number of concerns expressed during the planning process were concerning the availability and condition of the existing trails. While the number of trail users is currently unmeasured, it is evident that the trail is used by many people from residents walking or bicycle riding for a short time every day or several times a week to long-distance runners or bicycle riders coming from greater distances to ride the trail at less frequent intervals. As Americans are looking for ways to improve their health and fitness, the trail system within the IMCNHC will become more popular as a convenient and low-cost way for thousands to exercise and improve their health.

While the use of the trails was the most frequent recreational activity mentioned during the planning process, several other recreational opportunities currently exist or have been advocated including: fishing, canoeing, kayaking, hiking in the state parks, biking in the state parks, riding snow-mobles, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice climbing, skydiving, horse back riding, golfing, boating, waterskiing, wakeboarding, tubing, hunting, camping, picnicking, and bird watching.

CONSERVATION Goal: The stewardship of the corridor's natural resources will be improved. Both the number of stewards and the commitment level and involvement of stewards will be increased.

Although much of the natural landscape has been transformed and reshaped by humans, both small pockets and large expanses of natural resources remain in the corridor. Restoration efforts are once again transforming landscapes, this time to a more natural way than that of the human influence over the last two centuries. Restoration of most areas needs to focus toward those that are sustainable under current environmental conditions. Some strategic habitats need to be created to enhance and protect vulnerable biodiversity that is considered scarce. Some remnant natural communities that are reminiscent of those roamed by Native Americans and first seen by French explorers and other European settlers to the area, need only nurturing by stewardship.

Since the designation of the IMCNHC in 1984, many acres of open space have come into public or non-profit ownership, but many of these new owners lack funding to restore the open space to its native

Figure 4.6. Two bicyclists ride along the Illinois & Michigan Canal State Trail.



Figure 4.7. A group of visitors learn about the natural environment of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.



state or to adequately maintain the areas once they are restored. The Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie is the largest addition of open space in the region in the last 25 years.

These natural resources and landscapes can neither be maintained nor enhanced, however, without good environmental stewardship. Not only the number of stewards needs to be increased, but the commitment level of existing and future stewards must be assured and enhanced. The natural resources of the Corridor attract both residents and visitors, but our objective will be to integrate educational awareness of environmental concerns through recreational exposure in order to develop a vested interest sufficient for persons to volunteer toward stewardship action within these natural resources. The protection of the scenic elements of the IMCNHC and the biodiversity within the IMCNHC will help accomplish the preservation and economic development mission of the IMCNHC. It is the goal of the IMCNHC to advance the stewardship of our natural heritage for future generations by preserving the plants, animals and natural communities through management of the lands and waters they need to survive.

ECONOMIC IMPACT Goal: The Corridor's economic growth will be built through an increase in heritage tourism and heritage development. Historical and cultural based venues in the Corridor will be enhanced through increased interpretation, use of new technologies, and increases in visitor services and marketing. Entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses will be supported with increased tourism, strengthening our historic downtowns.

Figure 4.8. The LaSalle Canal Boat offers mule-pulled boat rides along the I&M Canal. Period dressed guides tell the stories of the I&M Canal Passageway.



The successful sustainability of restored natural, cultural, and historic resources depends on ongoing financial resources. For most sites, this will require at least some annual revenue coming from visitation by tourists. Increased tourism in the IMCNHC will help sustain the resources and support local businesses, jobs and tax revenues. An increase in local tax revenues may, in turn, justify partnerships between these resources and local governments.

The plan encourages a stronger, more unified identity to assist in the marketing of this special place. Tourism needs to continue to be an important segment of the Illinois and IMCNHC

economy. The plan explores opportunities to increase heritage tourism in the region by continuing to develop a concentration of high-quality tourism attractions and services and to successfully market the IMCNHC to the lucrative tourism market, especially the heritage tourist, the recreational tourist, and the international tourist.

Increased coordination will improve the efficiency, reach, and effectiveness of existing tourism development and marketing efforts. Efforts need to continue to link IMCNHC sites with other visitor destinations and services.

SUSTAINABILITY Goal: The work of the IMCNHC will be sustained after 2021 by continually engaging more people in increasingly intense roles, continuing to strengthen the collective voice of the region, continuing the coordination and celebration of the work, and securing sustainable funding sources.

The plan explores how to engage more people in the IMCNHC and how to engage them in more meaningful ways both in specific projects and in overall Corridor volunteerism. The opportunities in all the goals of the IMCNHC need to be able to attract local people to invest their time and funds. The plan will explore ways to build the “people and excitement” investment and to sustain that effort into the future.

Strategies

All strategies are actually about resources. Our five strategies are different ways to think about the resources of people and money. To accomplish the previously stated goals, the following strategies will be employed.

Partnership Strategy: The Canal Alliance will engage with many partners to complete its work.

There are many opportunities to partner with existing agencies and organizations and also to bring partners together to enhance the results of their activities and streamline their operations for the benefit of the IMCNHC. Much of the work of the IMCNHC is best done at a regional level; however, many of our potential partners have a local jurisdiction. The framework of the IMCNHC will make it easier for groups to cross jurisdictional lines and work together for more effective results.

Figure 4.9. Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Area visitors learn about the Gaylord Building, the oldest industrial structure remaining along the I&M Canal. This rehabilitated multi-purpose facility includes a restaurant, a visitor contact station, and interpretive exhibits.



Figure 4.10 Strategies

Partnership Strategy: The Canal Alliance will engage with many partners to complete its work.

Communications Strategy: The Canal Alliance will communicate effectively with many stakeholders through a variety of ways.

Activities Strategy: The Canal Alliance will organize programs and activities that meet the identified goals.

Investment Strategy: The Canal Alliance will raise the local match required by the federal government and strive to leverage additional funds. In addition, sustainability funding options will be explored and pursued.

Sustainability Strategy: The Canal Alliance will involve as many people as possible through the above strategies and move them along a continuum of activity and commitment going from minimal interest to involved and enthusiastic.

Figure 4.11. Potential Stakeholders

A survey of potential stakeholder groups identified approximately 150 state government agencies, local government entities, and non-profit organizations that may consider themselves stakeholders in the issues of the IMCNHC.

A summary listing of potential stakeholders follows.

- The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the owner/ manager of I&M Canal and other state parks within corridor boundaries.
- The 57 municipalities within the current boundaries of the heritage corridor and any other municipality within the proposed new boundaries.
- The Illinois Office of Tourism, the state agency for promotion and development of tourism in Illinois and several regional tourism organizations certified by the state including the Heritage Corridor Convention & Visitors Bureau and Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau, which is the regional tourism entity for the majority of the municipalities within the corridor.
- Conservation organizations – such as Openlands, and the Forest Preserve District of Will, DuPage, and Cook counties.
- Recreation organizations – municipal park districts, non-profit bike clubs, scouting organizations, and other groups.
- History based organizations – county and local historical societies, house museums.
- Tourism based organizations – non-profit tourism attractions.
- Economic development organizations – such as the Will County Economic Development Council.
- Illinois River Road & Route 66 National Scenic By-ways.
- Civic Center Authority.

The IMCNHC includes 57 communities within five counties. It overlaps the boundaries of the Lincoln National Heritage Area. The IMCNHC contains 14 State Parks, and three state owned Historic sites. Included are three county forest preserves, and numerous local park districts. Added to these government jurisdictions are the non-profit enterprises in the region with missions which include natural, cultural, and historic resources. The list of potential partners is several hundred and that is without the educational institutions.

The partnership strategy will be to engage the right partners for each activity to accomplish the activity in an effective and efficient way, while also looking towards the sustainability of the activity by that partner.

Communications Strategy: The Canal Alliance will communicate effectively with many stakeholders through a variety of ways.

The IMCNHC Alliance needs to identify the information stakeholders would value about the heritage corridor. This includes information concerning the various aspects of the area and its work. Technology is changing so quickly that it is anticipated that the activities found to achieve this strategy will be constantly evolving.

Activities Strategy: The Canal Alliance will organize programs and activities that meet the identified goals.

The IMCNHC Alliance will need to be involved in many activities to continue to develop and engage stakeholders.

Investment Strategy: The Canal Alliance will raise the local match required by the federal government and strive to leverage additional funds. In addition, sustainability funding options will be explored and pursued.

Congress has asked the IMCNHC to match each federal dollar with a local dollar. This is a minimum requirement. In addition, the IMCNHC will seek to leverage the federal investment by many more dollars. Also, the funding strategy needs to address the needs of the IMCNHC after the current promise of the federal investment runs out in 2021.

Sustainability Strategy: The Canal Alliance will involve as many people as possible through the above strategies and move them along a continuum of activity and commitment going from minimal interest to involved and enthusiastic.

Stakeholder continuum of interest and commitment

Level 1: Observer

Level 2: Visitor

Level 3: Alliance member/Leader

Level 4: Investor

Level 5: Enthusiast

This strategy will investigate how to establish communications and activities that make stakeholders want to become more involved in the work of the IMCNHC as well as share this work with their family, friends, co-workers, and children. This strategy will also identify various resources such as time, money and expertise.

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) Management Plan Alternatives

Introduction

The IMCNHC planning process requires the exploration of different management alternatives by which the Canal Corridor Association (CCA) can achieve the purposes of the legislation. Three organizational models outlined here are based on the work of the IMCNHC steering committee, CCA board and staff, and consultants. These alternatives, their impacts, and the preferred alternative will be further discussed in the environmental assessment of the Plan. These alternatives were prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Alternatives

Alternative 1: Continuation of Current Practices/No Action

Per the IMCNHC authorizing legislation, the Canal Corridor Association's board of directors has direct management and fiduciary responsibility for the IMCNHC. The board, president of CCA, and CCA staff will make all the decisions regarding the management of the Corridor and how the authorized federal dollars will be spent. Funds will be delegated based on the vision, mission, guiding principles, goals and the other guidelines outlined in the IMCNHC plan.

The required local match of the federal investment will be raised through grants, donations, and fundraisers. The Canal Corridor Association's staff will work with other non-profit organizations and local, state, and federal governments to implement the plan and meet the goals outlined in it. The public will be invited to attend quarterly meetings as defined in the governing legislation to review the implementation of the plan.

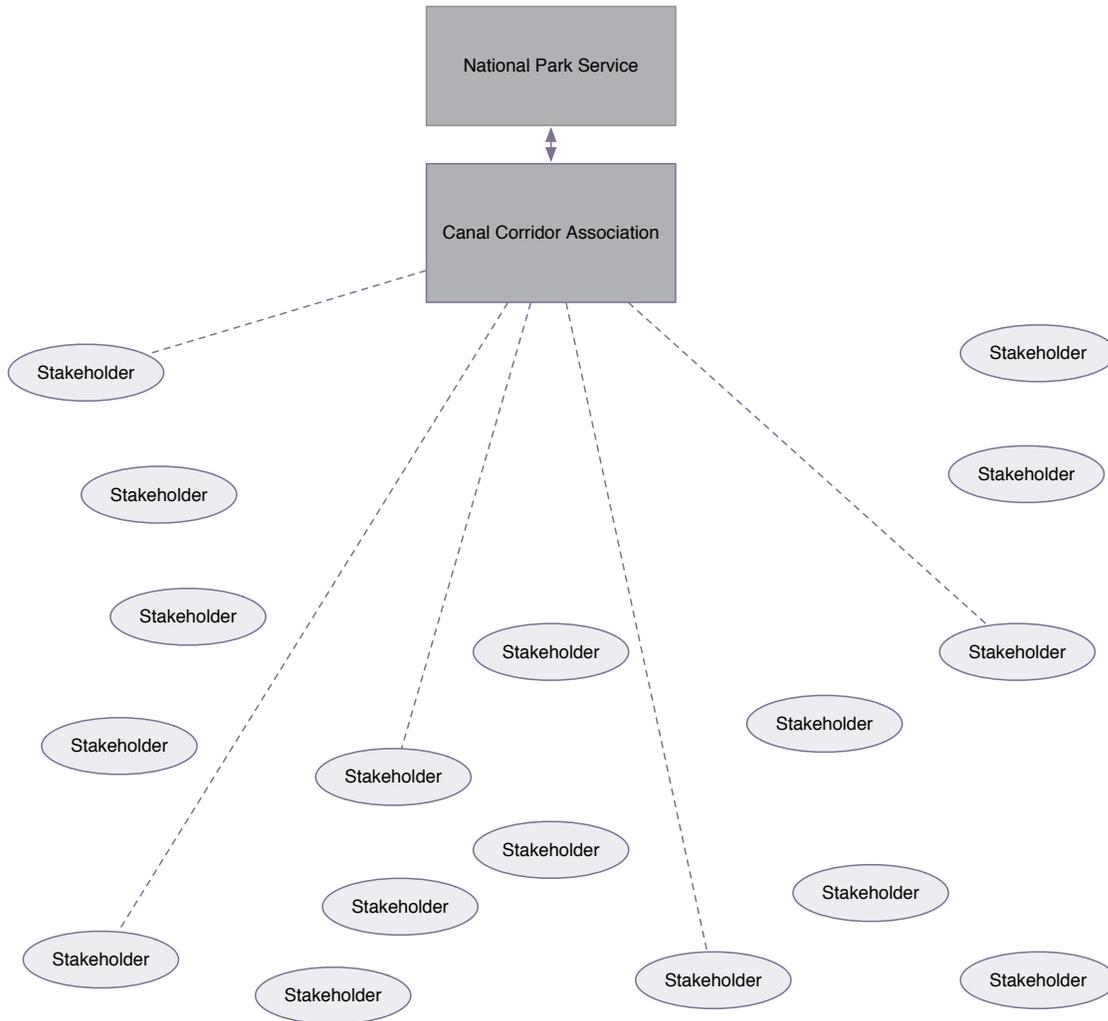
Pros:

- This alternative is the simplest to implement.

Cons:

- The Canal Corridor Association alone will raise all local match funds.
- There will be little synergy from work already being done by other organizations.
- The process doesn't allow for inclusions of all groups/individuals throughout the Corridor.

Figure 4.12. Governing Alternative 1



Alternative 2: IMCNHC Membership Model

Per the IMCNHC authorizing legislation, the Canal Corridor Association's board of directors has direct management and fiduciary responsibility for the IMCNHC. The CCA board of directors and staff will solicit sites/organizations to join an IMCNHC Network. Members will pay dues to the Canal Corridor Association. The dues will be used to meet the portion of the federal match that is necessary to cover administrative costs.

CCA's board of directors will establish an IMCNHC Network committee and hire staff to manage the network and allocate funding/resources to members. The IMCNHC Network Committee will be composed of network members selected by the general population of network members and approved by the CCA board for two-year terms. Members desiring funding for projects, programs, and activities which meet the goals outlined in the management plan will write an application for 50% or less of the funding to the IMCNHC Network Committee. The Network Committee will select which projects, programs and activities will be funded based on the vision, mission, guiding principals and goals of the IMCNHC Plan. The Network Committee will determine which applications are appropriate, feasible, and sustainable and recommend them to the CCA board for final approval and recommendation.

Pros

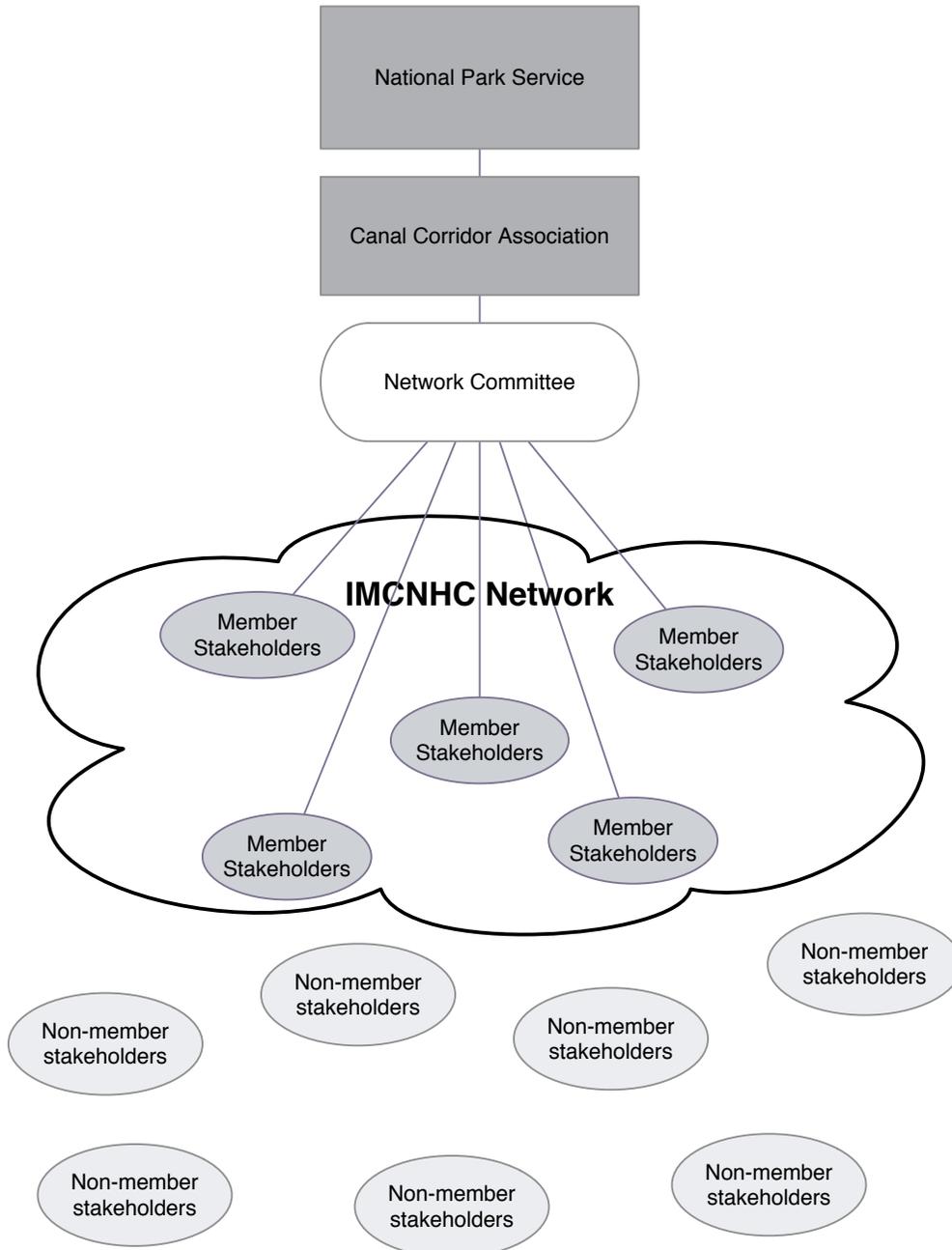
- This organizational model is known and used by many groups.
- Those organizations with the capacity to implement the plan will raise the local match money to carry out the plan.
- The local match will be met by memberships and grant projects.
- "Members" are more likely to be organizations with specific reasons to be involved (ie. greater "buy-in").

Cons

- Those organizations without the funds for dues will be left out. If the dues are set high then there will be potential members who will decide not to participate in the network for financial reasons.
- This model favors the work of individual members over larger regional projects as any collaborative projects will need to be designed and organized by individual members for the collective good.

- The model will only benefit the parts of the IMCNHC that are represented by members. This model will favor the larger, richer communities, organizations, and sites within the IMCNHC.
- Staff will be needed to promote and generate membership.

Figure 4.13. Governing Alternative 2



Alternative 3: IMCNHC Alliance Partner Model

Per the IMCNHC authorizing legislation, the Canal Corridor Association's board of directors has direct management and fiduciary responsibility for the IMCNHC. The board will establish a Corridor Committee to manage the implementation of the IMCNHC Plan for the corridor. The Corridor Committee will have five standing sub-committees: recreation, education/interpretation, heritage development/tourism, conservation/natural resources, and resource protection/historic preservation. In addition, ad hoc committees will be setup as the need arises. All sub-committees will be composed of individuals actively involved in the corridor selected for their interest and expertise.

The CCA Board, Corridor Committee and subcommittees will work together to develop, design, fund and implement projects which have the largest impact possible to meet the goals of the IMCNHC. These local, regional and collaborative projects will be based on the vision, mission, guiding principles, and goals of the IMCNHC.

In addition, CCA's board and staff and the Corridor Committee will reach out to form an alliance with as many stakeholders, other organizations, and local units of governments within the IMNCHC, agencies of the State of Illinois, and federal agencies as possible. CCA will ask all potential alliance partners to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to work together towards common goals outlined in the IMCNHC Plan. All Alliance partners will be eligible to participate in the structure outlined below and the programs outlined in the IMCNHC Plan.

The business of the IMCNHC will be accomplished through the groups outlined below:

CANAL ALLIANCE – those individuals and organizations that sign the pledge to work towards the vision and mission of the IMCNHC and abide by the guiding principles. All of the members of the groups below will be part of the CANAL ALLIANCE (Self selected from all stakeholders).

Canal Corridor Association (CCA) – local coordinating entity (Selected by Congress).

Investors – governments, foundations, corporations, and individuals who have given financial resources to match the federal investment (Self Selected Stakeholders, Investment Levels developed).

Figure 4.14. Governing Alternative 3



National Park Service (NPS) – national coordinating entity (Selected by Congress).

Corridor Committee – the committee that will report to the CCA Board and recommend annual work plans and budgets in accordance with the IMCNHC Plan (Selected initially by CCA from existing board, planning committee and subcommittees, once established will be recommended by existing committee for approval by CCA board).

Conservation Committee – a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the conservation advocates and conservation partners (Nominated from Conservation Advocates and Partners).

Conservation Advocates – those individuals and organizations that advocate for conservation in the corridor (Self Selected Stakeholders).

Conservation Partners – the organizations that own/manage the natural resources in the Corridor (Cooperative Agreement Required).

Education/Interpretation Committee – a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the Storytelling Partners and Education Partners (Nominated from Storytelling Partners and Education Partners).

Education Partners – teachers and schools in all levels of education (Agreement Required).

Storytelling Partners – the organizations and individuals that help tell the stories of the corridor (Self Selected, can be exhibit venues, programming organizations, individual lecturers, storytellers, performers) (Process of certification will be developed).

Heritage Development/Tourism Committee – a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the Canal Tourism Alliance and tourism partners (Nominated from Tourism Alliance and Tourism Partners).

Tourism Partners – stakeholders who have an interest in the heritage development/ tourism development of the IMCNHC (Self Selected Stakeholders).

State/Regional Tourism Alliance – a group of tourism officials from the State Bureau of Tourism and the regional tourism organizations currently designated by the State of Illinois with an interest in the IMCNHC.

Recreation Committee – a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the recreation advocates and recreation partners (Nominated from Recreation Advocates and Partners).

Recreation Advocates – those individuals and organizations that advocate for recreation in the corridor (Self Selected Stakeholders).

Recreation Partners – the organizations that own/manage the recreational resources in the Corridor (Cooperative Agreement Required)

Resource Protection Committee – a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the Canal owners/managers, Special Places owners/managers, and Special Place Advocates (Nominated from the above mentioned groups).

Canal owners/managers – those agencies that own and/or manage sections of the I&M Canal. The group must contain one or more representatives from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. (Cooperative Agreement Required).

Special Places Advocates – those individuals who volunteer their time to advocate for the natural, cultural, and historic resources of the corridor including the canal (Self Selected Stakeholders).

Special Places Partners – the owners/managers of heritage and cultural resources of the corridor (other than the canal) (Cooperative Agreement Required).

Pros:

- The organization of the IMCNHC will be inclusive, allowing the greatest opportunity for participation.
- The process will encourage collaborative regional projects.
- The process also allows for local projects, programs, and activities.

Cons:

- The organization of the IMCNHC will be complex.
- Staff will be needed to coordinate all the people involved throughout the Corridor.

Figure 4.15.
IMCNHC Communities List

The 57 communities within the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor are:

Alsip	Romeoville
Bedford Park	Seneca
Blue Island	South Holland
Bolingbrook	Stickney
Bridgeview	Summit
Burnham	Utica
Burr Ridge	Willow Springs
Calumet City	Woodridge
Calumet Park	Worth
Carbon Hill	Wilmington
Channahon	
Chicago	
Coal City	
Countryside	
Crest Hill	
Crestwood	
Dixmoor	
Dolton	
Forest View	
Harvey	
Hickory Hills	
Hodgkins	
Homer Glen	
Indian Head Park	
Joliet	
Justice	
La Salle	
Lemont	
Lockport	
Lyons	
McCook	
Marseilles	
Minooka	
Morris	
Naplate	
Ogelsby	
Orland Park	
Ottawa	
Palos Heights	
Palos Hills	
Palos Park	
Peru	
Plainfield	
Posen	
Riverdale	
Robbins	
Rockdale	

Boundaries

Background

The Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (the “Corridor”) was created in 1984 by an act of Congress. The legislation included a finding that

An abundance of sites and structures within the corridor defined by the Illinois and Michigan Canal from Chicago, Illinois to LaSalle-Peru, Illinois symbolize in physical form the cultural evolution from prehistoric aboriginal tribes living in naturally formed ecosystems through European exploration, nineteenth century settlement, commerce, and industry right up to present-day social patterns and industrial technology.³

The act then stated that its purpose was “to retain, enhance, and interpret, for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the cultural, historical, natural, recreational, and economic resources of the corridor, where feasible, consistent with industrial and economic growth.” These themes, those sites and structures within the Corridor symbolize its cultural evolution, and the retention, enhancement and interpretation of the cultural, historical, natural, recreational and economic resources of the Corridor, provide a framework for considering where the Corridor boundaries should be. Webster’s defines boundary as something that fixes a limit or extent, a bounding or separating line. Development and implementation of the management plan is an opportunity to consider what separates, or should be considered as separating, the Corridor from the remainder of Northeastern Illinois from a cultural, historic, natural, recreational or economic perspective.

The act itself defined the Corridor as consisting of “the areas depicted on the map (the “Original Map”) dated May 1983, and numbered IMC-80,000, entitled “Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.” The act further directed that such map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the (now defunct) Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission (the “NHC Commission”) and of the National Park Service (“NPS”). Unfortunately, the Original Map was incomplete and did not designate Corridor boundaries east of Harlem Avenue and the act itself gave little guidance as to the subject. Perhaps in recognition of this fact, the act did include a provision stating that upon request of the NHC Commission, the Secretary of the Interior could make minor revisions in the boundaries of the Corridor.

In May, 1987, the NHC Commission issued a follow-up report to the Secretary of the Interior (the “1987 Report”) dealing with the undefined boundaries of the Corridor from Harlem Avenue eastward (the “Eastern Portion”). The 1987 Report sheds some light on the criteria for choosing boundaries, stating that a boundary was prepared in the months leading up to the legislation, which fulfilled these specific requirements:⁴

- that it bound a continuous, unbroken zone from one end of the Corridor to the other;
- that the zone extend from Lake Michigan (at the Chicago River and Calumet River outlets) to the LaSalle-Peru area;
- that the zone be easily recognizable on the ground and on maps in terms of prominent physical edges or community limits;

The 1987 Report also includes the following statements (among others) about boundary criteria:

- 1) The key purpose behind the delineation of the Corridor boundary is to make possible the historical interpretation of all the major phases and elements of the Corridor’s development. Therefore, the boundary is drawn to include places and territory just sufficient to give a coherent, comprehensive, and integrated view of this history. The history includes the canal system as a set of physical features, but it is not limited solely to canal features.
- 2) Historically related to the canal system are all the other transportation arteries in the Corridor, before and after the canal, the adjacent rural and agricultural territory bordering it, and the towns, industries, and other settlements along and near its course, for all historical periods.
- 3) Any significant aspect of local history that is to be found on, along, or near the canal is considered proper content for the overall historical interpretation of the Corridor.
- 4) The boundary is set solely for purposes of interpretation. The act does not in any way alter or mandate land use, property ownership or local jurisdiction in the Corridor.
- 5) With the acceptance [by the Secretary of the Interior] of this delineation of the eastern Corridor portion, the boundary of the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor can henceforth be considered fully defined as called for in the enabling legislation.

The conclusion in point five was not accepted by the Secretary of the Interior, who responded in September, 1987 with the opinion that the delineation of the boundary of the Eastern Portion was more than a minor adjustment and should be referred to Congress. Congressman Lipinski subsequently introduced new legislation to delineate the boundaries. Hearings were held and some changes to the boundaries

delineated in the 1987 Report were proposed, but Lipinski's bill never came to a vote. However, parts of it were incorporated in the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-353).

Section 902 of Public Law 104-353 called for a study of the boundaries of the Corridor and for the inclusion of the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant in the Corridor. Pursuant to that mandate, the NHC Commission and the NPS prepared a Boundary Study dated September 4, 1997 (the "1997 Study", see Appendix). According to the 1997 Study, the failure to denote boundaries east of Harlem Avenue had "led to confusion as to whether certain historic or natural resources were in the Heritage Corridor, or not." The 1997 Study pointed out that being included in the "nationally recognized heritage corridor" could be a source of civic pride for communities and resources. The 1997 Study then proceeded to an analysis and discussion and to make proposals for the boundaries of the Eastern Portion. Specifically, the following were recommended:

- a) Inclusion of Lake Renwick Heron Rookery, a State Nature Preserve just north and west of I-55 where U.S. 30 crosses. This would be a change to the Congressionally designated boundaries west of Harlem Avenue.
- b) Delineation of the boundaries of the "Chicago River Arm" east of Harlem Avenue.
- c) Delineation of the boundaries of the "Calumet River Arm" east of Harlem Avenue.
- d) Inclusion of the Joliet Arsenal site, including the structural remnants of the "Kankakee Feeder" (a canal between the Kankakee River and the I&M Canal to provide additional water to the I&M Canal and a means for farmers to move grain to the I&M Canal at Joliet for transshipment). This would be a change to the Congressionally designated boundaries west of Harlem Avenue.

No action was taken by Congress with respect to the proposals set forth in the 1997 Study.

In 2006 Congress enacted the National Heritage Areas Act of 2006⁵ (the "2006 Act," see Appendix) designating Canal Corridor Association as the local coordinating entity for the Corridor. Section 123(a) (5) provides that the Canal Corridor Association shall submit to the Secretary [of the Interior] for approval a proposed management plan that shall, among other things, include identification of the geographic boundaries of the Corridor. Under the 2006 Act, the Secretary shall approve or disapprove the proposed management plan not later than 180 days after it is submitted. If the Secretary takes no action within such period, the plan shall be deemed approved. Thus, it appears that

geographic boundaries that are identified in the proposed management plan will become the official boundaries of the Corridor upon the Secretary's approval of the plan. National Park Service has confirmed to the Canal Corridor Association that National Park Service takes this view of the issue.

Boundaries

The original 1984 legislation, speaks of a "corridor defined by the Illinois and Michigan Canal" and states that the purpose of the act was to retain, enhance, and interpret the cultural, historical, natural, recreational and economic resources of the Corridor. The 2006 Act reiterates these themes. It mentions increasing public awareness of, and appreciation for, natural, historical, and architectural resources and sites in the Corridor. Consistent with these goals, the boundaries of the Corridor are defined as follows:

The Corridor boundaries shall remain the same as outlined in the 1984 authorizing legislation with the following additions:

Additions to the East of Harlem Avenue

Chicago River Arm

Historically, the Illinois & Michigan Canal connected to the South Branch of the Chicago River at Bridgeport and ceremonies marking the beginning of the excavation of the canal were held in Bridgeport, July 4, 1836. There is still a small remnant of the canal east of Ashland Avenue, north of Interstate 55. In the 1960's, all of the canal between Bridgeport and Summit was filled in and Interstate 55 (The Stevenson Expressway) was built over the right-of-way. This section of the canal had been abandoned in 1900 when the Sanitary & Ship Canal was opened. Although canal construction stopped at Bridgeport, canal boats utilized the Chicago River to get to warehouses and docks in Chicago at Lake Michigan. Two roads that paralleled the canal and river are historically important. Ogden Avenue was built to enable trade with the Indians and permit rapid military response to settlements west of Chicago. Archer Avenue was built to link Chicago with Lockport and to support the construction of the I&M Canal. Another major industrial area of Chicago, which lies along this arm, is the old Union Stockyards. While the stockyards no longer exist, the area was historically important for the railroad transportation network.

Along the Michigan shoreline, the Field Museum was cited in the I&M Canal Concept Plan as an important element in the interpretation of the Corridor. This museum is included in this boundary. Other interpretive facilities adjacent to the Field Museum are the

Shedd Aquarium and the Adler Planetarium.

The boundary is defined as extending north along Harlem Avenue from Joliet Road to Ogden Avenue, northeast along Ogden Avenue to Grand Avenue and east to Lake Michigan, south along the shoreline to Pershing Road, west along Pershing Road to Interstate 94, the Dan Ryan Expressway, south to Garfield Boulevard and west via Garfield, 55th Street and Archer Avenue to Harlem Avenue.

Calumet River Arm

When the I&M Canal was first designed, it was planned that the Chicago River would provide most of the water for the upper reaches of the canal. However, funding shortages led to a less expensive shallow cut, precluding the use of the Chicago River except with pumps, and other sources of water had to be found. One of these was the area now occupied by the Cal-Sag channel. A dam was constructed at Blue Island, Illinois, and water was brought to the canal through a feeder along Stoney Creek.

The opening of the Sanitary & Ship Canal in 1900 closed the I&M Canal north of Joliet, Illinois and obviated the need for a feeder canal from Blue Island. To provide additional sewage capacity for the rapidly expanding Chicago metropolitan area, the Cal-Sag Channel was completed in 1922. This channel reversed the flow of the Calumet River and connected it with the Sanitary & Ship Canal. Today, most of the barge traffic between the Illinois River and Lake Michigan utilizes the Cal-Sag Channel.

An important historic district near the Calumet River is the Pullman Historic District, made up of the Pullman Sleeping Car factory, the Hotel Florence and the company town of Pullman. The first two are owned and being developed by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. The site is not only important for the development of Pullman Sleeping Car, but also for Pullman's ideas for a utopian community for his workers and the labor unrest that developed in opposition to Pullman.

The boundary is defined as running east along 95th Street from Harlem Avenue to Crawford Avenue, south on Crawford to 119th Street, east on 119th Street to the Illinois Central Railroad, north along the railroad to 103rd Street, east on 103rd Street to Torrence Avenue, north on Torrence to the Chicago Skyway, northwest along the Chicago Skyway to Yates Boulevard, north on Yates to 79th Street and east on 79th Street to Lake Michigan. It then follows the shoreline south to the Indiana State Line, south along the State Line to the center line of the Little Calumet River, northwest to Illinois 83 (147th Street), west along Illinois 83 to the Tri-State Tollway, north-

west along the Tollway to the Midlothian Turnpike then southwest-erly along the Midlotian Turnpike to 143rd Street, then west to the Will-Cook Road.

Additions to the West of Harlem Avenue

Homer Glen Township

Homer Glen Township, Will County, shall be included as representing significant aspects of local history found near the canal which is relevant to the overall historical interpretation of the Corridor. This area, consisting of 36 square miles, just east of Lockport, includes many buildings and historic farmsteads that are part of the story of settlement of the area in connection with the canal's construction and use. It contains several examples of farmsteads that are illustrative of 19th century farmstead planning techniques. It also includes early examples of balloon framing, one of the most revolutionary developments in American building. A number of structures incorporating Joliet limestone, a particularly useful dolomite, are also present. The most notable of which is Gorham-Frazer house on Hadley Road in the Southeast part of Homer Township, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Inclusion of the entire township is consistent with the criterion that the Corridor be easily recognizable on the ground and on maps in terms of prominent physical edges or community limits.

Lake Renwick Heron Rookery

The Lake Renwick Heron Rookery is a State Nature Preserve owned and managed by the Forest Preserve District of Will County and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. A series of abandoned quarries, which are now filled with water, provide an ideal habitat for several species of wading birds, herons and egrets. These birds nest in trees on islands in the quarries and raise their young. The birds fly approximately five miles to the Des Plaines and DuPage Rivers and to the Illinois & Michigan Canal to feed and get food for their young. Limited access to the site provides an opportunity for the public to view the birds and learn more about them.

To include the Lake Renwick Heron Rookery in the Corridor, the boundary is moved west from Interstate 55 where U.S. 30 crosses I-55, goes northwest to State Route 59, north to State Route 126 and northeast along Route 126 back to Interstate 55.

Joliet Arsenal (U.S. Army Ammunition Plant) and Kankakee Feeder

The Joliet Arsenal site came into being with the purchase of farmlands south of Joliet in the 1930's to establish a munitions factory. From

World War II through the Vietnam War, large quantities of TNT were produced to make bombs and artillery shells. Declared excess by the U.S. Army, the land has been transferred to the U.S. Forest Service, two local communities and Will County, with a section made into a veteran's cemetery. Because gerrymandering to omit the developed areas is impractical and economic development is a part of the Commission's mandate, the whole area is proposed for inclusion in the Corridor. The major part of the Arsenal site, the 19,500 acre Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, will be jointly administered by the U.S. Forest Service and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The prairie is contiguous with existing prairie areas in the Des Plaines Wildlife Conservation Area and Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area already in the Corridor.

Extending the boundary to include the Joliet Arsenal will also provide an opportunity to include the structural remnants of the Kankakee Feeder in the Corridor. The Feeder extended for some distance up the Kankakee River, but the structural remains are between Wilmington, Illinois, and the Des Plaines River. These consist of dams, locks and the trace of the canal itself between the Kankakee and the Des Plaines. The aqueduct over the Des Plaines is gone, as are some of the dams. This canal not only provided additional water to the I&M Canal, but was also intended to provide a means for farmers to move their grain to the I&M Canal for transshipment.

The boundary extends south from Laraway Road along Cherry Hill Road to the northern edge of Hoff Road, east to the western edge of the Norfolk and Western Railroad, southeasterly to the boundary between Township 32 North and Township 33 North and west along this line to link up with the existing southern boundary of the Corridor.

The Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor as defined above is an 862 square mile linear zone in northern Illinois, one hundred miles long and an average of six miles wide. It encompasses fifty-seven distinct communities and spans portions of five counties (Cook, DuPage, Will, Grundy and LaSalle), representing a wide swath of territory along the main route of the canal, as well as associated feeder canals. The heritage corridor also includes the three waterways that replaced it including the Sanitary & Ship Canal, the Cal-Sag Channel, and the Illinois Waterway. A complete boundary description can be found in the appendix.

(Endnotes)

1 (<http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FAQ/INDEX>)

2 Public Law 109-338, enacted October 12, 2006, National Heritage Areas Act of 2006, Title IV – Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Act Amendments, Sec. 123. Management Plan.

3 Public Law 98-398, August 24, 1984. 98th Congress.

4 All information and quotes from the 1987 Report are taken from the 1997 Study, referred to in the following materials in this report. The entire 1987 Report is set forth, verbatim, in the 1997 Study.

5 Public Law 109-338, October 12, 2006, 109th Congress.

Introduction

Successful heritage areas have a strong grassroots base involving local residents, organizations, and non-profit groups in the operations of the heritage area. In addition, a close coalition between a strong grassroots base, local and state governments, and investors with a small investment from Congress and some technical expertise from the National Park Service creates a unique opportunity for meeting the challenges and needs of the resources and communities of a heritage area.

The IMCNHC was the first national heritage corridor designated in 1984 and has always had a strong grassroots base that has come together in both “official” and ad-hoc ways. Over the last 20 plus years, a variety of programs and projects have been completed both inside and outside the official structure set up by the IMCNHC Commission.

This plan proposes a different structure for the working relationship of all those interested in the IMCNHC. Established in 1981, the Canal Corridor Association (CCA) has always been part of the grassroots base of the IMCNHC working on a variety of projects over the last almost thirty years. In 2006, CCA was asked by Congress to expand its role and be the convener and the organizer of the “official” IMCNHC efforts moving forward.

Partnership Strategy: The Canal Alliance will engage with many partners to complete its work.

The Canal Alliance is a group of self-selected stakeholders that sign an Canal Alliance partnership agreement to work toward the vision and mission of the heritage corridor and agree to abide by its guiding principles. Each Canal Alliance member identifies the resources they bring to the table annually to contribute to the local investment.

Canal Alliance membership is open to everyone. There are opportunities available to become involved in the projects, programs, and activities of the heritage corridor whether you are a recreation enthusiast, a historian, or you are interested in the economic development of your community. Although members of the Canal Alliance may have diverse objectives or interests, they agree to work together toward a common mission of protecting and preserving the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the Corridor; advancing and stimulating economic development and activity within the Corridor; creating and enhancing opportunities for recreation in the Corridor; and interpreting and cultivating the history of the Corridor and its significance in the settlement and growth of the region and nation.

**Figure 5.1. Alliance Committee/
Resource Committees**

Resource Protection & Preservation
Committee
Recreation Committee
Conservation Committee
Education/Interpretation Committee
Tourism Committee
Alliance Committee

Heritage areas are dependent on their partners and volunteers to achieve their goals. Without their partnership, support, and collaboration, heritage areas would lack the ability to make a lasting difference. The necessity of volunteerism for the success of the IMCNHC cannot be overemphasized. Our partnership strategy depends upon engaging and retaining a strong volunteer base that will work toward achieving the vision, mission, and guiding principals of the IMCNHC.

The work of the IMCNHC will be informed and shaped through the Canal Alliance.

Canal Alliance members will come together around common goals, forming committees and working groups. These committees and working groups will be flexible, able to adapt and change as the needs of the Canal Alliance and the IMCNHC change. During the planning process, five initial resource committees and several working groups were identified to give structure to the Canal Alliance. They are represented in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 and are explained in more detail in this part of the plan.

The Canal Alliance, through these resource committees and working groups, will come together to enlarge and inform the IMCNHC coordinating structure. The coordinating structure is comprised of the Canal Corridor Association Board, a coordinating committee called the Canal Alliance Committee, and Canal Alliance staff. Canal Alliance members will populate the Canal Alliance Committee. The Canal Alliance Committee will be assisted in their efforts by the Canal Alliance staff. Details on the coordinating structure can be found at the end of this part of the plan.

Canal Alliance Membership

Individuals and organizations join the Canal Alliance annually by signing an Canal Alliance Pledge Agreement (Figure 5.3). Members agree to work toward the vision and mission of the IMCNHC and abide by its guiding principles. Canal Alliance members identify the resources that they are willing to invest in the IMCNHC.

Individuals or organizations can become a member of the Canal Alliance by downloading the Canal Alliance Membership Agreement, filling in the appropriate information, signing the agreement, and mailing the completed agreement to the Canal Corridor Association. Membership is open to individuals and organizations that have an interest in a variety of areas such as preservation, recreation, conservation, education, interpretation, heritage development, and/or tourism.

Figure 5.2. Canal Alliance Groups

Canal Working Group
Special Places Partners
Special Places Advocates
Recreation Partners
Recreation Advocates
Conservation Partners
Conservation Advocates
Storytelling Partners
Education Partners
Tourism Alliance Working Group
Tourism Partners
Designated Sites & Events
Investors
Canal Alliance Members-At-Large

Responsibilities of Canal Alliance Members

- Work toward the vision and mission of the IMCNHC
- Abide by the guiding principals of the IMCNHC
- Contribute to the local investment
- Volunteer expertise

Benefits of Canal Alliance Membership

- Join others in working toward the goals of the IMCNHC
- Participate in IMCNHC activities and projects that otherwise would not happen
- Receive information about the IMCNHC
- Receive invitations to a wide variety of events
- Receive invitations to trainings, conferences, tours
- As is appropriate, benefit from collaborations in marketing such as a Corridor website

Figure 5.3. Canal Alliance Pledge

Canal Alliance Pledge for 2011-2012

As a member of the Alliance in the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC), the undersigned dedicates himself/herself to join other Alliance members in supporting the Corridor's vision, mission, guiding principles, and goals. To uphold the integrity and purpose of the management plan, the undersigned pledges to work on behalf of the common good of the heritage corridor and make decisions that validate the intended vision, mission, guiding principles, and goals of IMCNHC.

Vision 2021

The Illinois & Michigan Canal connected the Illinois River to Lake Michigan, bringing people and commerce to northeastern Illinois. The canal and the towns that grew up along it share a legacy. Through interpretation, preservation and providing educational and recreational experiences, we see the Heritage Corridor creating economic development, recreation and education opportunities for residents and visitors, making the Corridor more prosperous and a place where people enjoy the benefits created by the canal and take pride in the region's history.

Mission Statement

The mission of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor is to: protect and preserve the natural, historical and cultural resources of the Corridor; advance and stimulate economic development and activity within the Corridor; create and enhance opportunities for recreation in the Corridor; and interpret and cultivate the history of the Corridor and its significance in the settlement and growth of the region and nation.

Guiding Principles

Stewardship:

We hold our history in high regard and will use it to inform our stewardship decisions.

We will respect the environment and property, public and private.

We will respect each community's needs and goals in a way that is consistent with the concept that the Corridor is a region consisting of many communities and places which are geographically, historically and culturally connected by the canal.

We will consider sustainability as an important criterion in making plans, selecting projects and allocating resources.

We will communicate to our partners and the public in multiple ways to reach as many as possible, using technology to bring the Corridor to the world.

We will include all groups, including future generations, in our plans, goals and actions.

History:

We will appreciate the area's history both before and after the canal was created.

We will provide education about the canal and the Corridor.

We will respect our history and culture through honest and authentic portrayals of places, people and events.

We will use multiple forums and media to spread the word about the Corridor's history to as wide an audience as possible.

Economic Development:

We will encourage and foster economic development opportunities in the Corridor.

We will provide places where people can bring their families and friends for recreation and fun.

Goals

STORIES Goal: The rich and complex stories of the history and continuing importance of the I&M Canal Corridor will be told through increasingly accurate, compelling and interesting ways to larger audiences.

SPECIAL PLACES Goal: The Corridor’s distinctive sense of place and natural, cultural and historic resources will be recognized, embraced and protected.

RECREATION Goal: The recreational amenities of the Corridor will be enhanced and expanded to facilitate their enjoyment by more people.

CONSERVATION Goal: The stewardship of the corridor’s natural resources will be improved. Both the number of stewards and the commitment level and involvement of stewards will be increased.

ECONOMIC IMPACT Goal: The Corridor’s economic growth will be built through an increase in heritage tourism and heritage development. Historical and cultural based venues in the Corridor will be enhanced through increased interpretation, use of new technologies, and increases in visitor services and marketing. Entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses will be supported with increased tourism strengthening our historic downtowns.

SUSTAINABILITY Goal: The work of the IMCNHC will be sustained after 2021 by continually engaging more people in increasingly intense roles, continuing to strengthen the collective voice of the region, continuing the coordination and celebration of the work, and securing sustainable funding sources.

The Canal Corridor Association pledges to:

- Keep the Alliance members updated on the implementation of the management plan, events, training workshops, and other opportunities available to members of the Alliance.
- Maintain the IMCNHC website and blog
- Send you a copy of the IMCNHC annual report
- Staff meetings and sponsor events which will bring Alliance members together

I pledge to contribute to the efforts in the following ways: (Check all that apply)

- Contribute \$ _____
- Contribute in-kind goods and services
- I pledge _____ volunteer hours within 2011-2012 and will record my involvement in the IMCNHC on a quarterly basis

I am interested in the following geographic areas of the IMCNHC. (Check all that apply)

- All
- Chicago
- Cook County
- Grundy County
- LaSalle County
- Will County

Interest Areas (Check all that apply)

- Conservation
- Education
- Heritage Development/Historic Preservation
- Interpretation
- Recreation
- Tourism

I am interested in joining the following Alliance groups

- Special Places Partners/Advocates
- Recreation Partners/Advocates
- Conservation Advocates
- Storytelling Partners
- Education Partners
- Tourism Partners

Signature

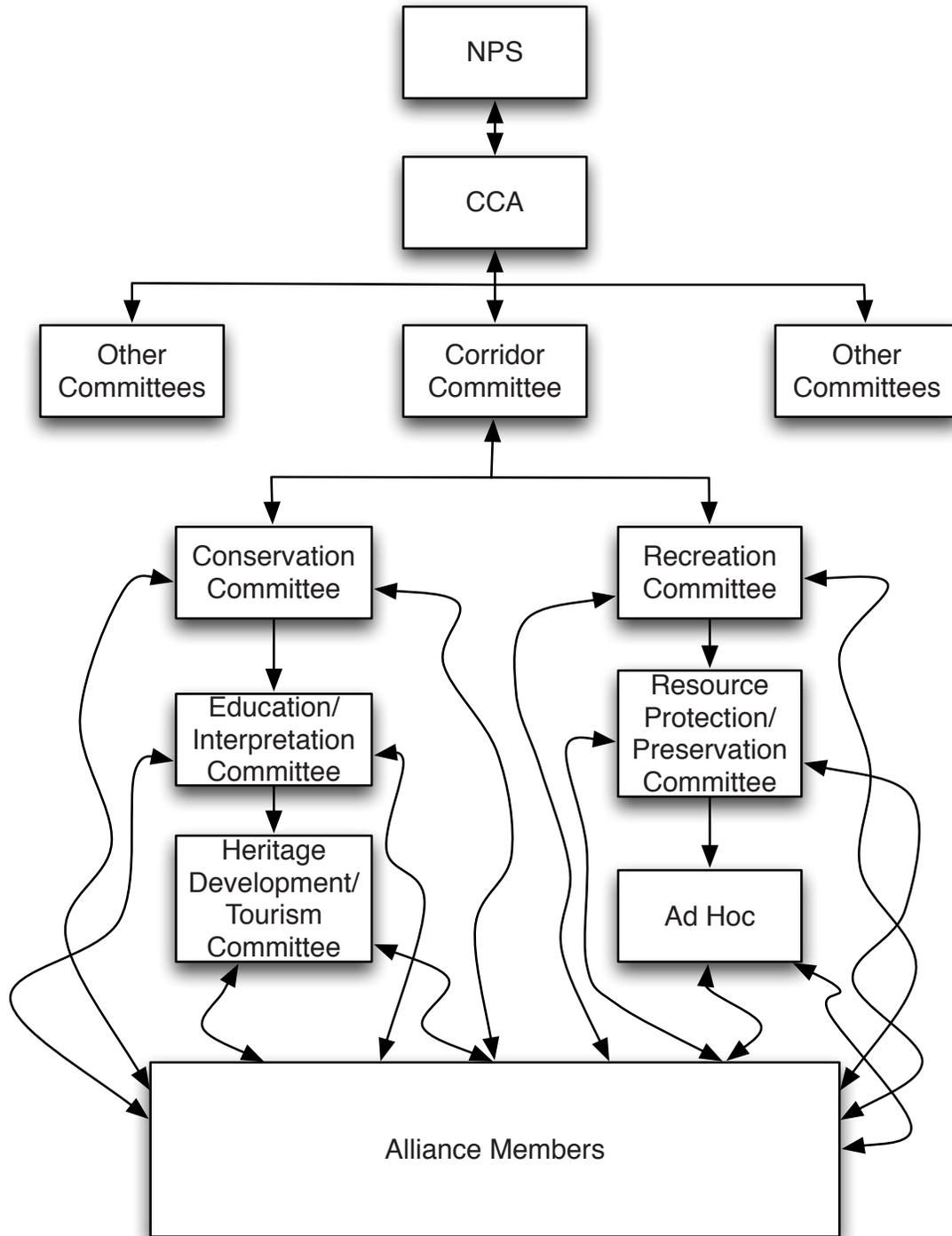
Date

Printed Name

Email Address

Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Figure 5.4. IMCHNC Manegment Structure



Canal Alliance Committees

The members of the Canal Alliance work through five resource committees to develop projects and programs, coordinate activities, and communicate with like-minded members of the Canal Alliance.

Five Standing Resource Committees

- Resource Protection/Preservation Committee
- Recreation Committee
- Conservation Committee
- Education/Interpretation Committee
- Heritage Development/Tourism Committee

In addition, ad-hoc committees will be set up as the need arises. The resource committees are composed of Canal Alliance members actively involved in the Corridor and/or are members of a working group. They are recruited by the chairman of a specific resource committee for their interest, expertise, and commitment to the vision, mission, and guiding principals of the IMCNHC.

Resource Committees Responsibilities

- Advise the Canal Alliance Committee as to the needs within each program area.
- Recommend to the Canal Alliance Committee annual and other goals, priorities, and projects, including ways to educate and further involve constituents throughout the IMCNHC.
- Participate in accomplishing the goals of the IMCNHC.
- Help define the evaluation of the programs that they propose.
- Share informational materials with constituents in order to promote and encourage active participation throughout the IMCNHC.
- Identify to the Canal Alliance Committee any potential new Canal Alliance members and Investors.
- Recommend to the Canal Alliance Committee any individuals to serve on committees or as Members-At-Large.

In addition to the five resource committees, we expect several working groups to be established. These working groups will be created by Canal Alliance members, who will work with the five resource committees during the implementation phase of the management plan. These working groups identified below may change as the needs of the Canal Alliance and the heritage corridor change. They will be formed and disbanded as needed to address issues, concerns, or special projects that may arise during the implementation phase. Some working groups may require certain prerequisites while others are open to all Canal Alliance members.

Resource Protection and Preservation Committee (Figure 5.5)

The Resource Protection and Preservation Committee is one of the five resource committees of the Canal Alliance. This committee focuses on promoting the special places goal within the IMCNHC.

SPECIAL PLACES Goal: The Corridor's distinctive sense of place and natural, cultural, and historic resources will be recognized, embraced, and protected.

The Resource Protection and Preservation Committee is comprised of members selected from the Canal Working Group, Special Places Partners, and Special Places Advocates by the chairman of the Resource Protection and Preservation Committee. These working groups interface with the rest of the Canal Alliance through the Resource Protection & Preservation Committee.

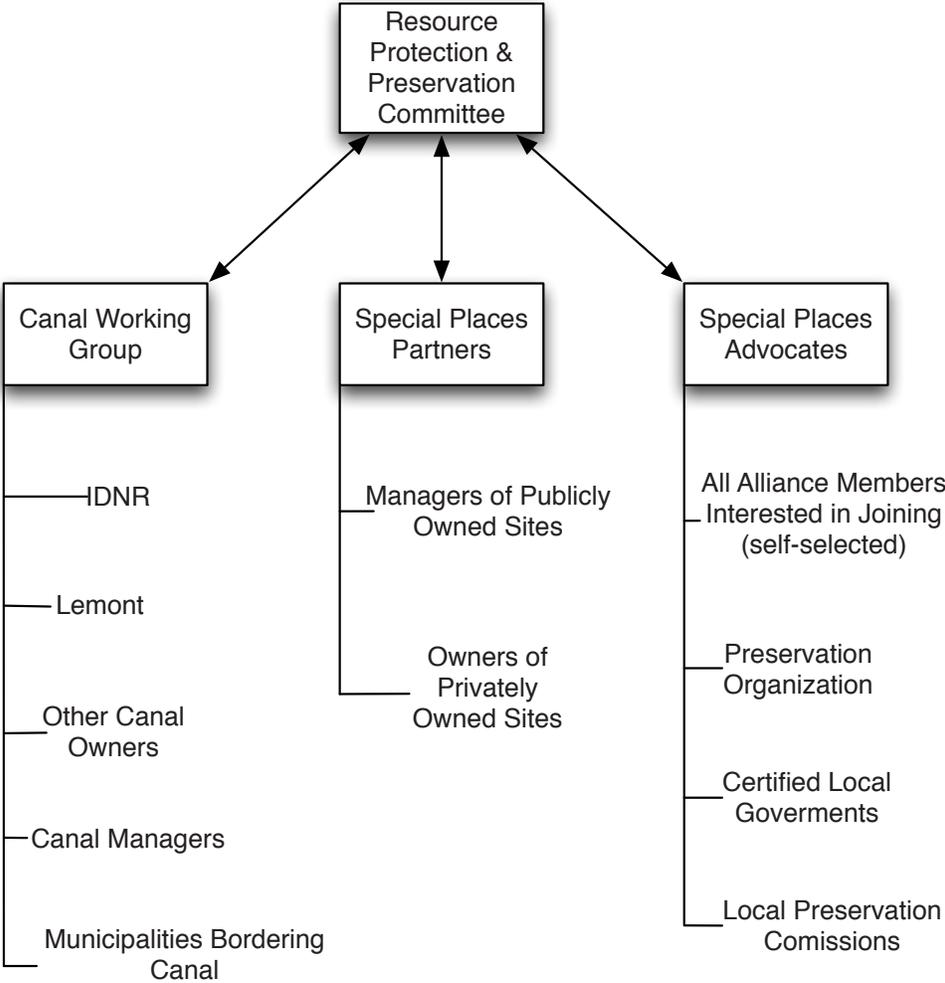
Canal Working Group

The Canal Working Group includes governmental agencies that own and/or manage sections of the I&M Canal, as well as municipalities that border the canal. The group will contain one or more representatives from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources as the main owner/caretaker of the majority of the canal. Other agencies that are currently eligible to participate are: the Chicago Metropolitan Area Planning, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Village of Lemont, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, the Will County Forest Preserve, Channahon Park District, the Lockport Township Park District, and National Park Service-Rivers & Trails MWR. The following municipalities are also eligible: Peru, LaSalle, North Utica, Ottawa, Marseilles, Seneca, Morris, Channahon, Rockdale, Joliet, Lockport, Crest Hill, Romeoville, Lemont, Willow Springs, and Summit. An agreement among members of this group and the Canal Corridor Association will be developed to define and document our goals and actions for collectively moving forward to preserve and interpret the I&M Canal.

Purpose:

- This group will define how the I&M Canal Alliance can best assist the canal's owners and caretakers and identify other potential funding sources to assist in routine and long-term maintenance of the canal.
- This working group will design new strategies and a new model for working collaboratively for the good of the resource.
- This group will explore potential roles for other federal and state agencies, including the US Army Corps of Engineers and the US Coast Guard.

Figure 5.5. Resource Protection & Preservation Working Groups and Partners



Special Places Partners

There are many “special places” in the IMCNHC that make the Corridor unique. This working group is comprised of owners and/or managers of these historic, cultural, and unique Corridor resources (other than the canal). They will come together to explore issues that are uniquely theirs. This group will develop and implement an action plan for recording, preserving, protecting, interpreting, and developing these resources for future generations. They may also develop training options for expanding their knowledge, skills, and capability to be successful in the long term.

Special Places Advocates

In addition to the Special Places Partners (the owners and/or managers working group), there are many individuals and a few preservation minded organizations that can be expected to want to volunteer their time to promote the recording, preservation, and protection of the Special Places of the IMCNHC. This working group will come together in ways that meet these goals. This group of advocates will be self selected and acknowledged for their efforts on an annual basis.

Recreation Committee (Figure 5.6)

The Recreation Committee is one of the five resource committees of the Canal Alliance. This committee focuses on promoting the recreational opportunities within the IMCNHC and enhancing and expanding the recreation amenities within the heritage corridor.

RECREATION Goal: The recreational amenities of the Corridor will be enhanced and expanded to facilitate their enjoyment by more people.

The Recreation Committee will be comprised of Recreation Partners and Recreation Advocates selected by the chairman of the Recreation Committee. These working groups interface with the rest of the Canal Alliance through the Recreation Committee.

Recreation Partners Group

The Recreation Partners Group is comprised of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, owners of privately owned recreation facilities or businesses, managers of publically owned recreational resources, recreational groups, and private recreation providers within the IMCNHC.

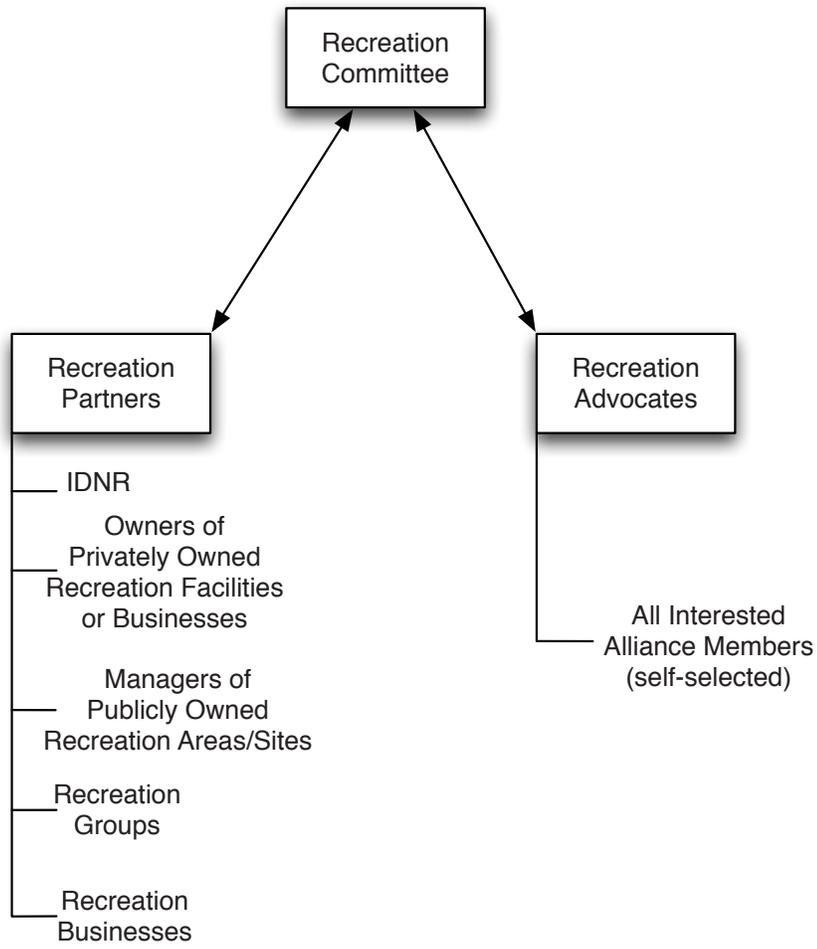
Purpose:

- Address concerns or issues facing recreation users within the IMCNHC
- Identify missing links in the trail system and/or user services in the IMCNHC
- Develop regional projects to promote, enhance, and coordinate recreation within the IMCNHC
- Market recreational opportunities within the IMCNHC
- Address trail maintenance issues within the IMCNHC

Recreation Advocates

Recreation Advocates are individuals and organizations (self-selected stakeholders) that advocate for recreation in the IMCNHC. They will work with Recreation Partners to promote recreation within the heritage corridor.

Figure 5.6. Recreation Working Groups and Partners



Conservation Committee (Figure 5.7)

The Conservation Committee is one of the five resource committees of the Canal Alliance. This committee focuses on promoting the stewardship of the natural resources within the IMCNHC.

CONSERVATION Goal: The stewardship of the Corridor's natural resources will be improved. Both the number of stewards and the commitment level and involvement of stewards will be increased.

The Conservation Committee will be comprised of Conservation Partners and Conservation Advocates selected by the chairman of the Conservation Committee. These working groups will interface with the rest of the Canal Alliance through the Conservation Committee. They will be charged with the design of an annual work plan to add value to the current conservation work being done in the IMCNHC.

Conservation Partners

Currently there are a number of government entities and non-profit organizations that are actively conserving natural resources within the boundaries of the IMCNHC. The U.S. Forest Service manages Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie, the first national tallgrass prairie in the country. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources owns and manages fourteen state parks and has designated twenty-one nature preserves within the heritage corridor. The three most eastern counties have county forest preserve districts which manage various natural sites within the IMCNHC. Some of these sites are potential locations for interpreting the stories of the heritage corridor. Cook County Forest Preserve District manages seventy-one natural sites. DuPage County Forest Preserve District manages three natural sites and Will County manages 28 natural sites. A complete list of the natural sites can be found in the appendix.

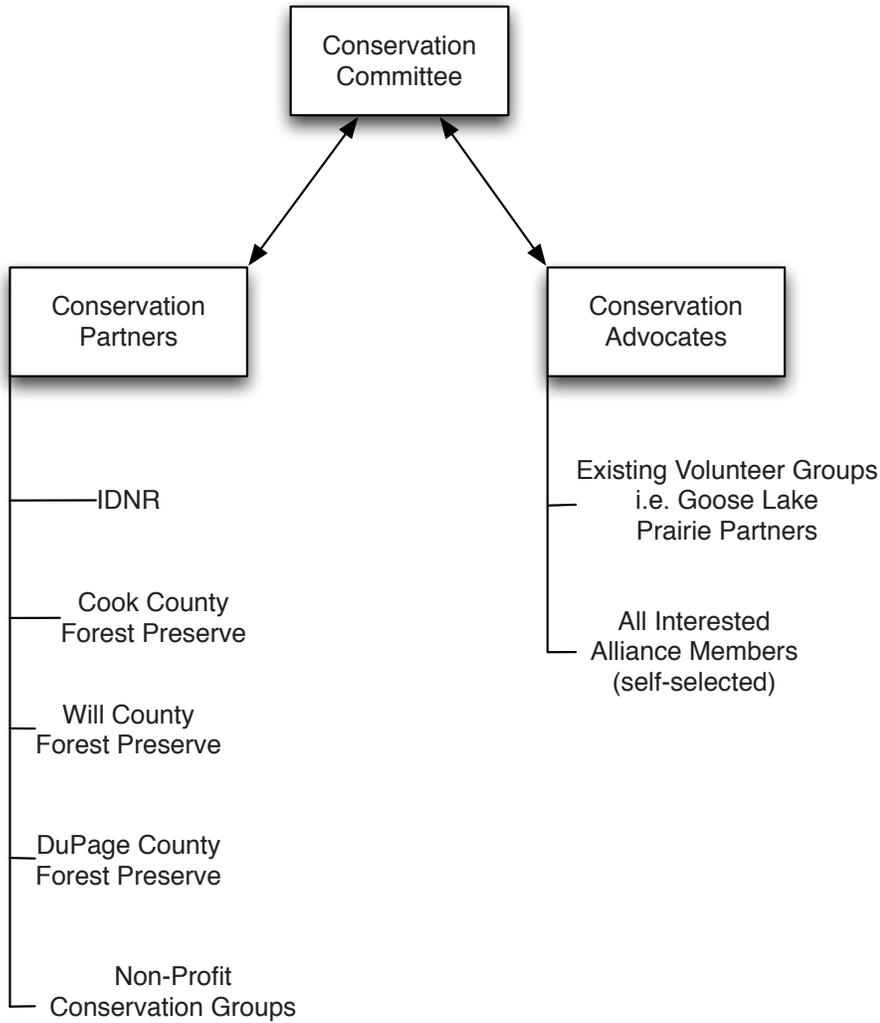
In addition there are several non-profit groups that work within the boundaries of the IMCNHC on conservation projects, including the Conservation Foundation, the Openlands Project and the Wetlands Initiative.

Conservation Advocates

In addition to the agencies and organizations that are currently conserving natural resources, there are many individuals who volunteer their time. A good example is the Goose Lake Prairie Partners, who assist in maintaining a natural prairie and promoting discovery of the natural heritage of the prairie ecosystem. The Canal Alliance will bring new and seasoned volunteers together as a volunteer workforce to address the current gaps in conservation work within the

IMCNHC boundaries. This group of advocates will be self selected and acknowledged for their efforts on an annual basis.

Figure 5.7. Conservation Working Groups and Partners



Education/Interpretation Committee (Figure 5.8)

The Education/Interpretation Committee is one of the five resource committees of the Canal Alliance. This committee focuses on promoting the stories of the IMCNHC.

STORIES Goal: The rich and complex stories of the history and continuing importance of the I&M Canal Corridor will be told through increasingly accurate, compelling, and interesting ways to larger audiences.

The Education/Interpretation Committee will be comprised of Storytelling Partners and Education Partners selected by the chairman of the Education/Interpretation Committee. The work of these two working groups will be facilitated, collected, and advocated by the Education/Interpretation Committee. These working groups will interface with the rest of the Canal Alliance through the Education/Interpretation Committee.

This committee will research and develop the stories of the IMCNHC based on the key themes outlined in Part 1 of the management plan. They will use a variety of methods to articulate the rich and complex stories of the passageway, sharing them with a diverse audience within the heritage corridor. The Education/Interpretation Committee will engage their audience utilizing a range of interpretive techniques to better convey their stories and make lasting connections with their audience, whether students or adults.

Storytelling Partners

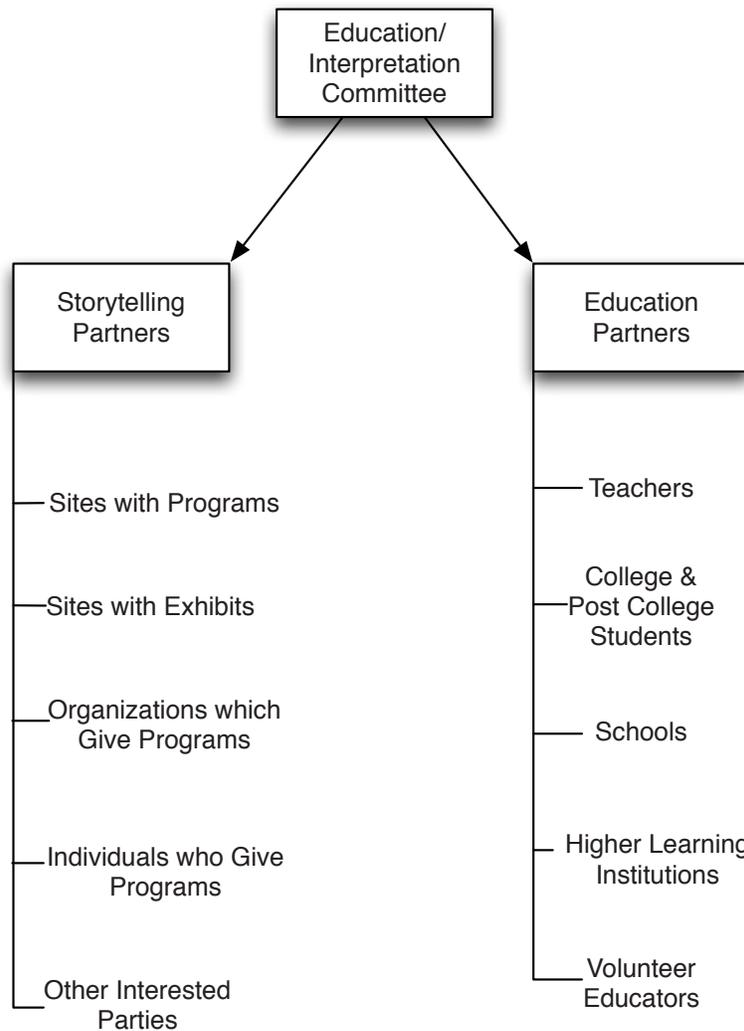
Those Canal Alliance members who are telling stories of the Corridor may join the Storytelling Partners. Storytelling Partners may also include sites that tell some part of the stories through exhibits or programs, as well as partners who tell stories without sites. For example, the LaSalle County Historical Society may join, as they have exhibits that tell part of the story. The Lemont Library may join, as they sponsor programs that tell the story; the Canallers, a group of first person interpreters, may want to join. They tell the stories of the Corridor at sites owned and managed by others.

Storytelling Partners will be certified. The certification process will ensure that the stories being conveyed are accurate, compelling, and interesting. Each applicant will answer the following questions as part of the review process.

- How do you convey the overall I&M Canal Passage storyline?

- Which I&M Canal themes do you cover in your exhibits/presentations/programs/events?
- How do you convey them to visitors?
- Describe your exhibits, programs, and/ or events.

Figure 5.8. Education and Interpretation Working Groups and Partners



The Storytelling Partners will work with each other and with other members of the Canal Alliance in an on-going peer review process to ensure high standards of interpretation.

The Canal Alliance will work to provide the following services to the Storytelling Partner Network:

- Interpretive services
- Traveling exhibits
- Speakers bureau

- Interpretive signs
- Exhibit text and/or research assistance
- Classes on interpretation techniques
- Classes on presentation technique
- Classes on new technologies

Education Partners

Education Partners are teachers, college or post-college students, schools, higher learning institutions, and volunteer educators who are self-selected and work toward furthering the Storytelling Goal. There are many ways Education Partners can further the Storytelling Goal. A few examples are listed below.

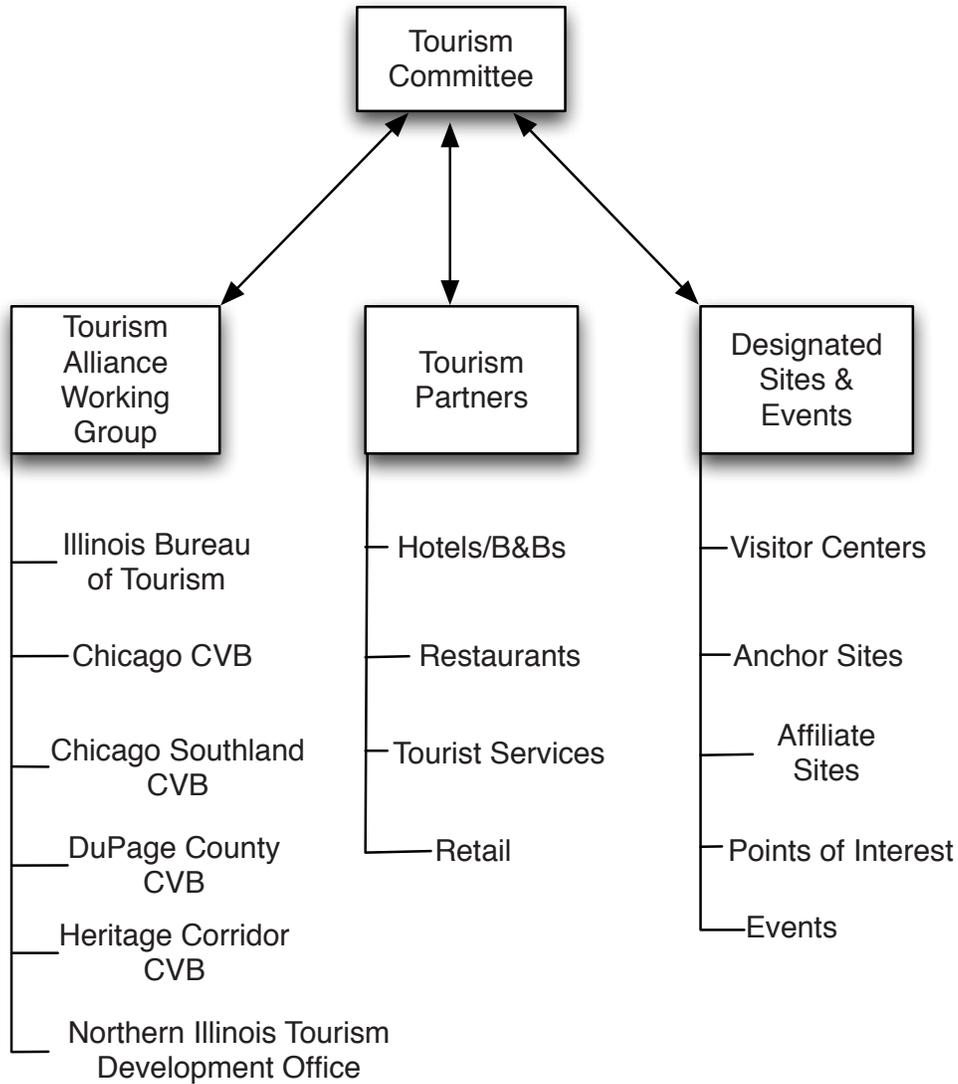
- Teachers: Share the stories of the history and continuing importance of the IMCNHC with their students and develop teaching tools for communicating the stories of the Corridor
- College/Post College Students: Research and develop the stories of the Corridor as an intern in the IMCNHC internship program
- Schools: Commit to teaching the history of the I&M Canal
- Higher Learning Institutions: Develop and run training programs for teachers to better equip them to tell the stories of the Corridor
- Volunteer Educators: Research and develop educational programs and present programs to students in the heritage corridor

The Education Partners will sign an agreement with the Canal Corridor Association outlining how they will tell the history and continuing importance of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor. The Canal Alliance will provide lesson plans and educational resources to teachers who in turn pledge to teach canal history, communicate how many students they instructed, and evaluate the success of their lessons and educational programs. The Educational Partners will also be asked to provide feedback on educational materials used and to share any original material they produce.

Tourism Committee (Figure 5.9)

The Tourism Committee is one of the five resource committees of the Canal Alliance. This committee focuses on promoting the economic growth of the IMCNHC through heritage tourism and heritage development.

Figure 5.9. Tourism Working Groups and Partners



ECONOMIC IMPACT Goal: The Corridor's economic growth will be built through an increase in heritage tourism and heritage development. Historical and cultural based venues in the Corridor will be enhanced through increased interpretation, use of new technologies, and increases in visitor services and marketing. Entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses will be supported with increased tourism strengthening historic downtowns.

The Tourism Committee will be comprised of the Tourism Canal Alliance Working Group, the Tourism Partners, and the Designated Sites & Events selected by the chairman of the Tourism Committee. These working groups will interface with the rest of the Canal Alliance through the Tourism Committee.

Tourism Working Group

The Illinois Office of Tourism within the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity currently certifies several organizations that promote tourism within the boundaries of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor.

It is proposed that the Canal Alliance work with this group of government agencies and organizations as a working group to develop a coordinated strategy to assist the I&M Canal Canal Alliance in meeting the Economic Impact goal of this Plan.

The organizations with their areas of jurisdiction are listed below.

- Illinois Office of Tourism (entire Corridor)
- Chicago Convention and Visitors Bureau (Chicago and Stickney)
- Chicago Southland CVB (Alsip, Bedford Park, Blue Island, Bridgeview, Burnham, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Crestwood, Dolton, Forest View, Hickory Hills, Palos Heights, Palos Hills, Palos Park, Riverdale, Robbins, Summit, and Worth)
- DuPage County CVB (Woodridge and Burr Ridge)
- Heritage Corridor CVB (Bolingbrook, Channahon, Coal City, Countryside, Crest Hill, Hodgkins, Indian Head Park, Joliet, Justice, LaSalle, Lemont, Lockport, Lyons, McCook, Marseilles, Minooka, Morris, Oglesby, Ottawa, Peru, Romeoville, Seneca, Utica, Willow Springs, Carbon Hill, Naplate, and Rockdale)
- Northern Illinois Tourism Development Organization (Grundy and LaSalle Counties)
- Chicago Plus Regional Tourism Development Office

Tourism Partners

Tourism Partners are stakeholders who have an interest in the heritage development and/ or tourism development of the IMCNHC. Tourism Partners may have sites which are open for tourists, have businesses that cater to tourists such as hotels and restaurants, and/or hold events that attract visitors. Some members of the Tourism Partners may want to get their site(s) or event(s) designated by the I&M Canal Alliance in the programs listed below, while others will not qualify. Tourism Partners will define ways to work together.

I&M Canal Designated Sites & Events

To help achieve this goal, the Canal Alliance will establish a designation program for visitor centers, anchor sites, affiliate sites, points of interest, and events. Criteria will be established for each designation and a benefits program will be established to enhance and promote the designated sites. The designations are briefly outlined below.

I&M Canal Passage Visitor Centers

Designated as first stops to assist the visitor in planning his or her I&M Canal visit. Visitor Centers must meet the highest standards for highway access, signage, and visitor services such as parking, restrooms, visitor information, and hours of operation.

I&M Canal Passage Anchor Sites

Full service sites that are open to the public more than 1200 scheduled hours per year and actively interpret at least two IMCNHC interpretive themes are eligible.

I&M Canal Passage Affiliate Sites

Sites that are open less frequently and/or have more limited services than Anchor Sites. Affiliate sites must be open more than 600 scheduled hours per year, have on site staff or volunteers, and interpret at least one IMCNHC theme on a regular basis.

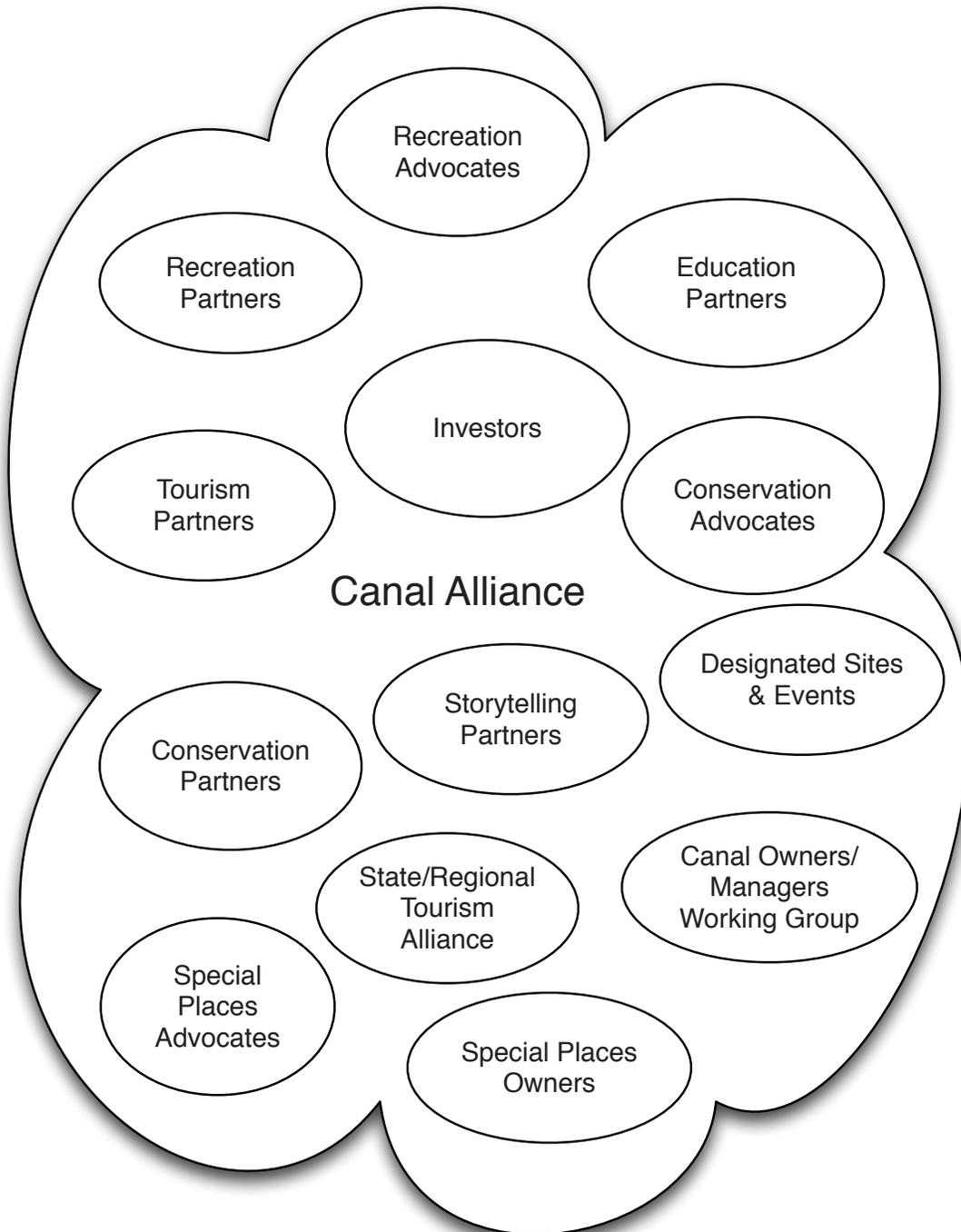
I&M Canal Passage Points of Interest

Extant canal sites that do not have staff or services but are safely accessible to the public and relate to one or more IMCNHC interpretive themes. An interpretive sign or other agreed upon interpretive material must be available to the public. A single entity may register multiple sites as Points of Interest.

I&M Canal Passage Events

Existing and proposed events that have a historic, cultural, or natural focus, have limited services, and are open to the public and marketed to a visitor market.

Figure 5.10. Canal Alliance and Working Groups



Canal Alliance Coordination

In 2006, the US Congress designated the Canal Corridor Association (CCA), a 501 (c) 3 non-profit governed by a board of directors, to be the local coordinating entity for the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC). The Canal Corridor Association's board of directors has direct fiduciary responsibility for the federal monies appropriated to the IMCNHC. They are responsible for raising and accepting the local match for the federal monies appropriated and preparing an annual audit.

CCA will hire Canal Alliance staff to manage the day-to-day activities. The Canal Alliance staff will serve as the staff to the Alliance Committee, the five resource committees and all working groups, and will facilitate communication between the parts of the Canal Alliance.

To further facilitate the coordination of efforts made on behalf of the heritage corridor, CCA will create an additional standing committee of the board, the "Canal Alliance Committee," to oversee the implementation and ongoing operations of the IMCNHC program outlined in this plan.

The general duties of the Canal Alliance Committee are as follows:

- Oversee the implementation of the management plan
- Ensure continued civic involvement, including holding quarterly public meetings to present, review, and update the public on the activities and programs of the IMCNHC
- Design and oversees plan for soliciting sponsor donations and other means to meet federal match requirements, such as fees for service
- Review recommendations of its subcommittees
- Set annual priorities consistent with the legislation and management plan based on funding considerations and the decision making criteria included in the plan
- Develop projects that cross subcommittee program areas
- Recommend projects to CCA Board for approval

The Canal Alliance Committee will be composed of three CCA board members, the CCA President, sub-committee chairs, and four committee members-at-large. To initially establish the Canal Alliance Committee, the CCA Board Chairman will name the Canal Alliance Committee Chair and two additional members from the CCA Board; name the five sub-committee chairs from those participating in the Plan development activities; and name the members-at-large based on recommendations from the CCA Board and CCA President, the Re-

source Committee Chairs, and others the CCA Board Chairman may choose to consult. The Canal Alliance Committee shall approve a list of candidates for At-Large membership at its first meeting.

All Canal Alliance Committee meetings shall be held at specified times and places which are convenient and open to non-committee members and held no less often than quarterly.

The Canal Alliance Committee will coordinate with and accept project proposals from the five resource committees.

Figure 5.11. Process for New Ideas/Projects

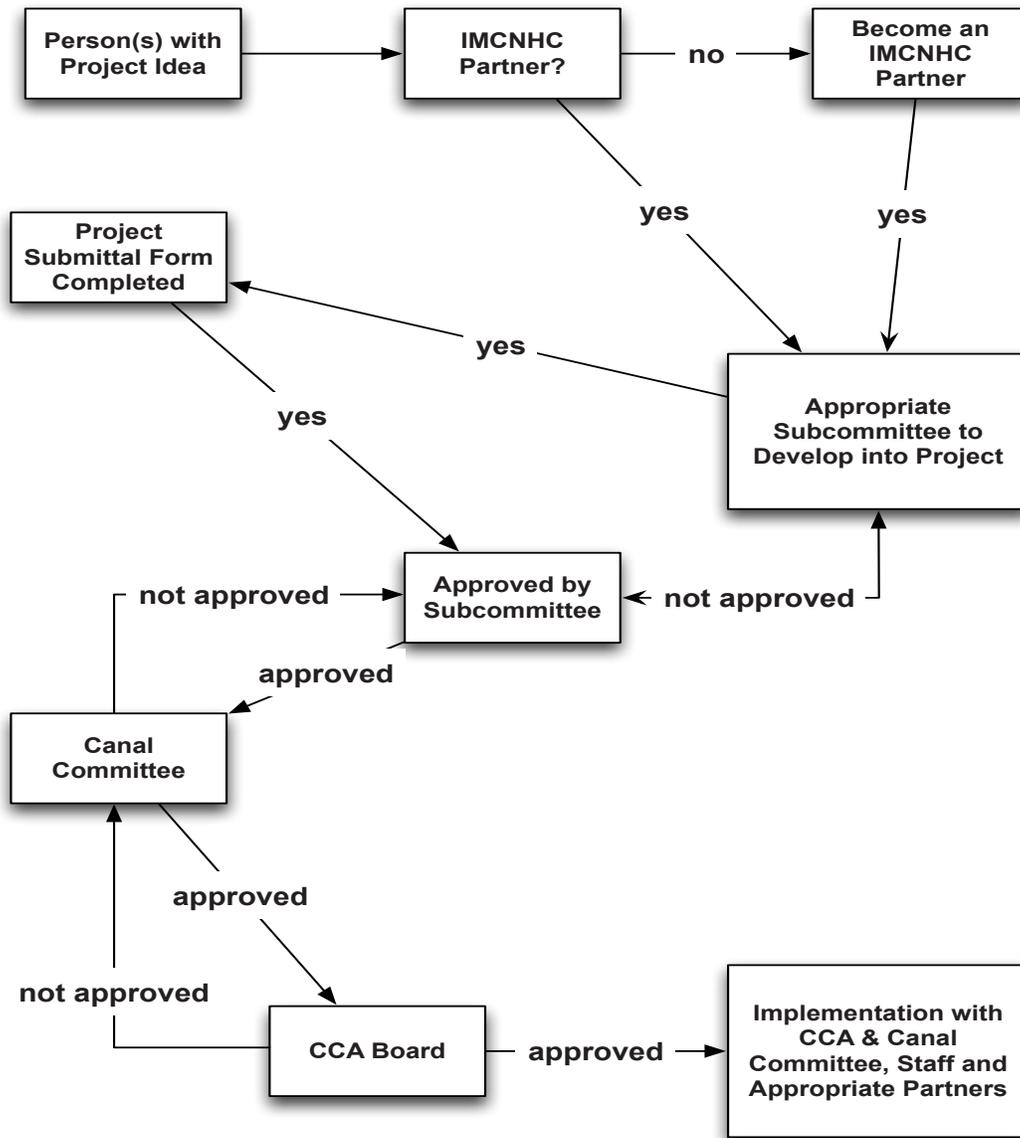


Figure 5.12. IMCNHC Project Proposal Form

IMCNHC Project Proposal Form

Date: _____

Project Name _____

Project Sponsor _____

Contact Person: _____

Email _____

Phone: _____

Short Project Description

Does this project align with the vision, mission, and guiding principles of the IMCNHC?

- YES
- NO

Are you aware of any potential funding for this project?

- YES
- NO

Are you aware of any other individuals/groups who would like to be involved in this project?

- YES
- NO

Please submit this form to the Canal Corridor Association by:
E-mail: cca@canalcor.org

Fax: 815-223-6129

Mail: 754 First Street
LaSalle, IL 61301

Figure 5.13. Canal Alliance Project Submittal Form

Project Name _____

Corridor Subcommittee _____

Part A

Which IMCNHC goal(s) will your project address?

Estimated Project cost: _____

Estimated Project people hours: _____

Counties in the IMCNHC Affected _____

Potentially interested partners in the Canal Alliance:

Check all that apply at this time

Project is in idea stage

Project is partially planned

Project is fully planned

Project has over 25% funding committed

Project has over 50% funding secured

Project has over 50% of people resources committed

Project is ready to be implemented

Project has an evaluation of success criteria determined

Partner request(s) (check all that apply)

This project needs matching funding through the IMCNHC Plan

This project needs implementation help from the IMCNHC Plan

This project needs staff help to apply for potential inclusion in IMCNHC Plan

This project needs other Canal Alliance partners for regional implementation

This project needs communications aid for promotion, once accepted

Part B

Project Name: _____

Project resource requirements

Maximum people required

Local funding secured - \$_____

other resources (list) _____

Project Steps

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

Communication Requirements

1. Press release sequence
2. Photo ops planned
3. Web presence
4. Other

How does the project fit within the IMCNHC Vision? _____

How does this project help accomplish the IMCNHC Mission? _____

Which IMCNHC Guiding Principles are most used in the project? _____

How will the project be evaluated for meeting the IMCNHC Goals? _____

How will the project be evaluated for success? _____

Partners involved in the project

-
-
-
-
-
-

How many of the "public" will be "touched" because of the project? _____

Introduction

Successful heritage areas are a strong grassroots coalition involving local residents, organizations, and non-profits groups in the operations and activities of the heritage area. In addition, local governments, corporations, and foundations need to be committed to the concept and the work of the heritage area and invest in its work. As the legislative mission of the IMCNHC is diverse, the interests and expertise of the people involved need to be diverse as well. As the ideal is to involve many people in many different ways and projects, communication between those involved and with others in the region becomes very important. Local investment is necessary to match the federal investment and a diversification of funding is critical to the long-term sustainability of the work of the IMCNHC. The collective activities and accomplishments of the IMCNHC need to be recorded, evaluated, and celebrated.

This section of the plan identifies all aspects of the implementation phases:

- Ways to communicate within the IMCNHC coalition and to other stakeholders
- Core activities that are required and/or desirable for the IMCNHC operations
- Ways to successfully coordinate all activities that support the mission and vision of the IMCNHC
- How IMCNHC projects will be identified and chosen over the life of this plan
- A strategy toward finding the local investment required
- Ways to evaluate the progress toward the goals of the IMCNHC legislation
- Strategies for the sustainability of IMCNHC activities and projects after 2021

Figure 6.1. Communications

Strategy: The Canal Alliance will communicate effectively in the Canal Alliance and with other stakeholders through a variety of ways.

Communications Plan

Introduction

The authorizing legislation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) requires the Canal Corridor Association (CCA) to “increase public awareness of and appreciation for the natural, historical, and architectural resources and sites in the corridor.” This section outlines how the public will increasingly become aware of the heritage corridor’s unique assets and become involved in the work of the Corridor, thus in the implementation of the plan.

Outcomes of the Communications Plan

- To engage more people in increasingly intense ways within the IMCNHC
- To routinely communicate within the Canal Alliance to maintain sustained support across the IMCNHC
- To support an Canal Alliance community so that Canal Alliance members are enhanced by becoming more aware of all the activities within the Corridor

Outcomes Target

The communications plan targets three different audiences: the Canal Alliance, potential Canal Alliance members, and partners, residents, and visitors to the IMCNHC.

Methods of Civic Engagement

The plan considers methods for one-way information sharing with a wide audience and how to facilitate two-way communication between all stakeholders and Canal Alliance members.

Through the planning process, the Canal Corridor Association asked our stakeholders how they would prefer to receive information about the various activities and programs of the IMCNHC.

The vast majority agreed that email was the preferred method of communication, as long as the emails were not sent too often. Potential Canal Alliance members expressed the desire to come together as a community to allow for conversation and information exchange.

The communication methods used to inform stakeholders may need to be adapted as technology changes. Our goal is to remain flexible and take advantage of emerging technologies to more effectively connect with and between Canal Alliance members and other IMCNHC stakeholders.

Figure 6.2. Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is a continuous, dynamic conversation with the public on many levels that reinforces public commitment to the preservation of heritage resources, both cultural and natural, and strengthens public understanding of the full meaning and contemporary relevance of these resources.

National Park Service Director's Order 75A: Civic Engagement and Public Involvement, 2003

While the primary strategy for communication utilizes the Internet, it is understood that not everyone is on-line. To accommodate individuals without Internet access, paper copies of our materials will be provided for free or for a minimal fee.

The following is an overview of the communication methods proposed to engage our stakeholders. The methods have been divided into three categories of communication: face-to-face, electronic, and traditional. This is meant to be a starting point, not a complete list.

Electronic Communications

IMCNHC Website

A website is currently the single most important electronic tool to assist in engaging the public and increasing awareness of the IMCNHC. It is an effective avenue to keep the public and the Canal Alliance abreast of the implementation process, and inform stakeholders of the various activities and sites within the heritage corridor. It allows the IMCNHC to engage a diverse audience in a multitude of ways by providing the information necessary for visiting the heritage corridor, recreating, and participating in the activities and programs offered throughout the IMCNHC. It also provides a communications channel to share resources for the Canal Alliance, educators, and children. It can also solicit and gather feedback from stakeholders, including the general public, visitors to the Corridor, students, and special interest groups.

The website will include resources for stakeholders to get involved and invest, including signing up for email and mailing lists, volunteer opportunities, and information to join the Canal Alliance.

The Canal Corridor Association will coordinate and maintain the IMCNHC website. Canal Alliance members will be able to submit/post upcoming events on the IMCNHC website. By linking the IMCNHC website with other websites within the Canal Alliance, a broader audience will be reached and increase awareness of the heritage corridor. The site also will be linked to the appropriate pages on the National Park Service website.

Other Websites

A broader audience will be reached by posting various events, activities, and programs of the IMCNHC on a variety of websites, both within and outside the Canal Alliance.

E-news to IMCNHC distribution list

Based upon research within the IMCNHC, the preferred

Figure 6.3 IMCNHC Website Suggestions

Visit Section

- *Visitor information*
- *Recreation information*
- *Upcoming events*
- *Children's activities*
- *Links to key sites*

Learn Section

- *IMCNHC history*
- *Information for educators*
- *Volunteer Opportunities*
- *Investment Opportunities*

Canal Alliance Section

- *Information for new Canal Alliance members*
- *Canal Alliance Pledge*
- *Training opportunities*
- *Downloadable forms*
- *Tool kits*

communication channel is email when providing information about public participation opportunities and events. CCA has developed an email distribution list of approximately 1000 people who have expressed interest in the IMCNHC. The email distribution list will be built by providing the following opportunities for stakeholders to be added:

- Including an invitation to be added to this list at the end of all appropriate correspondence
- Including an invitation to be added to this list at the end of all press releases
- Including an invitation to be added to this list at the end of all e-news issues
- A sign-up for the email distribution list on the IMCNHC website
- A sign-up list at meetings and events

Email will be used to share information, including notifying stakeholders when new material is posted to the website, sharing summaries of meetings, inviting people to come to upcoming workshops or trainings, and requesting feedback after events or trainings (i.e., comment and evaluation forms).

Email also allows CCA to receive feedback and new information from stakeholders, which allows for continuous improvement of the IMCNHC Plan.

IMCNHC acknowledges that not all of the public who wish to participate will have access to email. For these people, information will be sent by mail.

Social Media

Social media is becoming a key component of communication in modern society. CCA will use various forms of social media to effectively engage IMCNHC stakeholders in the programs and activities of the Corridor and in the implementation of the Plan.

Several current social media tools have been identified below as possible tools to engage more people in stronger ways in the activities of the Canal Alliance.

Social Networking

- Facebook™—Communicates with followers on a daily basis. It allows a wide variety of information to be generated, but can easily be focused on a specific topic by using fan pages, groups, creation of an application, and posting special events. Real time communication can be created through status updates or replies,

posting on walls, creating notes, posting different forms of media, and tagging friends in uploaded media such as videos. It serves as a very easy way to inform, converse, and engage viewers.

- **Twitter™**—Provides an outlet for sharing short messages and is very useful for posting photos, links to websites, and documents. Twitter is great for relationship building through creating quick, witty dialogue with users.
- **LinkedIn™**—Is a site for professionals to network. Creating a group page for Canal Alliance allows members to participate and view discussion boards, promotions, and jobs for the group. Each professional that joins the Canal Alliance group can also have their membership shown on their profile if they so choose.

Social Sharing Sites

- **Flickr™**—Can be used to create a topic related group where people can add photos and video, and there is a discussion board. Anyone can upload photos and/or videos for submission to a group page.
- **YouTube™**—Allows users to upload and share videos. Channels can be created for specific topics of focus and users may subscribe to them. Any YouTube user can view videos and share them via social media, email, or embedding on a website all without even registering.
- **Tripadvisor™**—Travel related sites create a profile with a description, general information, and photos. Travelers can review and rate sites.
- **Blogs**—Offer a unique way to communicate information, generate dialogue, and receive feedback from stakeholders within the IMCNHC. It is also easy to repost from blogs in other social media forms, creating more ways to disseminate information.

Other

- **Niche Social Media Sites**—Help to narrow the target audience by creating content with a specific focus for each type of group.
- **Social Bookmarking Sites**—A way to share favorite websites, articles, and stories. Creating a member profile can potentially direct traffic back to your site.

Podcasts

Podcasts will be written, created, and marketed to increase awareness of the heritage corridor. Some of them may highlight the Corridor's rich and complex stories and its recreational opportunities. Podcasts may also be used to promote sites and enhance interpretation of the themes of the Corridor. Podcasts could be accessible on the IMCNHC website and other websites within the Canal Alliance.

Figure 6.4. Posting information on other Websites

Visitor information will be posted to various sites such as:

- *Enjoy Illinois—Official website of the Illinois Office of Tourism*
- *Visit Northern Illinois*
- *Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau*
- *Illinois River Road*
- *Other tourism-related websites*

Program information can be posted to a wide variety of sites such as:

- *The National Trust for Historic Preservation*
- *Public Radio*

IMCNHC Wikipedia® Site

The Canal Alliance will develop a Wikipedia type site, which will allow the collection and dissemination of information about the I&M Canal and the heritage corridor that has been collected and produced over the last 30 years. Individuals and Canal Alliance members will be able to upload information on the canal and a large number of related topics and share our collective knowledge with one another and with the world of Internet users. This will allow for a richer interpretation of the sites in the IMCNHC, enhancing the stories of the people who lived, worked, and visited the IMCNHC.

As the channels for electronic communication will most likely change substantially over the course of this plan, new channels of communication will be adopted as they become available.

Traditional

Annual Reports

CCA staff will develop an annual report for the IMCNHC to illustrate the accomplishments within the heritage corridor. It will be posted on our website and distributed to members of the Canal Alliance and governmental officials. CCA will develop a press release highlighting the accomplishments of the heritage corridor and include information on how to access the annual report.

Books

The steering committee suggested the development of easily accessible printed material on the IMCNHC. They suggested several different types of books be created to better inform the residents, visitors, and children of the unique history of the IMCNHC. Book suggestions include a travel guide, a local history with lots of photos, a definitive history of the IMCNHC, a scrapbook style book or journal, and a children's book about the I&M Canal.

Newspapers

When appropriate, the IMCNHC will issue press releases to notify stakeholders of special events, programs or activities, and updates on the implementation of the management plan.

Radio/Television

When appropriate, the IMCNHC will issue public service announcements (PSA) to television and radio stations throughout the heritage corridor. The IMCNHC will solicit local radio and television network coverage of significant IMCNHC sponsored events. There are several local community television networks within the heritage corridor that could serve as a conduit for information to stakeholders about the events and activities of the IMCNHC.

Face-to-Face Communication

Canal Alliance Conference or Congress

During the public process, many expressed the desire to come together with other stakeholders to share information and foster coordination. In response to this request, the Canal Alliance will host a conference or congress (annually, or as needed) for members of the Canal Alliance to gather for information sharing, training workshops, and discussions of the issues facing the resources and stakeholders of the IMCNHC. Canal Alliance members will be asked to identify key topics for discussion at the Canal Alliance Congress and some Canal Alliance members will be asked to present “best practices” at the congress.

I&M Canal Day

The Canal Alliance will improve awareness of the IMCNHC and its management issues by coordinating an annual Canal Day in Springfield, the Illinois State Capital. Members of the Canal Alliance will discuss the key issues of the Corridor with the various branches, department, and offices of the Illinois state government.

Community Presentations

CCA board, staff, and members of the Corridor Committee or sub-committees will make presentations to local governmental entities within the Corridor communities and state government agencies concerning this plan to:

- Raise awareness
- Impart information
- Answer questions
- Increase participation

Representatives of local, regional, and state government will also receive written materials about the Corridor, including a progress report and information about how they can benefit from involvement in the Canal Alliance.

Canal Alliance members will also be recruited to make presentations to civic and non-profit organizations to raise their awareness of the heritage corridor and benefits from their prospective involvement.

Public Workshops

Public workshops will keep everyone informed on the implementation status, outcomes, impacts, and ideas for new projects to build on current successes.

Tours & Field Trips

Tours and field trips will be provided to the CCA Board, committee members, and the Canal Alliance members concerning the issues and projects being implemented throughout the IMCNHC for those who may not be familiar with sites and projects outside of their individual geographic or interest area. These tours and field trips will be coordinated by CCA, who will ask Canal Alliance members to volunteer to host groups at their site and help raise awareness of their programs, projects, and/or activities.

The tours are currently conceived to be day-long motor coach trips, but may be redesigned as the purpose and itinerary of each trip is defined. Travel time will be used for background presentations. These tours also offer another opportunity to attract the media.

Figure 6.5: Communications Channels Matched to Audiences

	Residents	Children	Alliance	Tourists
Face-to-Face Communication				
Alliance Conference	Secondary		Primary	
Canal Day	Secondary		Primary	
Community Relations Plan	Primary		Secondary	
Public Workshops	Primary		Secondary	
Tours	Primary	Minor	Secondary	Primary
Field Trips	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Electronic				
E-news	Primary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary
Social Media				
Social Networking Sites	Secondary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Other	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Podcasts		Secondary		
Videos (YouTube)	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Primary
IMCNHC Website	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Traditional				
Annual Reports	Primary		Secondary	
Books	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary
Newspapers	Primary		Secondary	Secondary
Radio/Television	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary
	Primary Communication Channel			
	Secondary Communication Channel			
	Minor Communication Channel			

Figure 6.7. Activities Strategy:

The Canal Alliance will organize programs and activities that meet the identified goals.

ACTIVITIES PLAN

Introduction

During the planning process, many potential activities were identified by the public. Other activities discussed below are mandated by the IMCNHC legislation. This section of the plan is organized into activities that were identified by the public and the working committees as being core to the mission of the IMCNHC and potential categories of activities that further the goals identified in the planning process. First described are the core activities, a building block in each goal critical to its accomplishment. Then described and explained are categories of activities for each specific goal.

Core Activities

Core activities are central to the mission of the IMCNHC and are ongoing. Some core activities were identified through public planning workshops and others meet the administrative requirements of federal funding and are necessary to continued local investment. An example of a core activity is the IMCNHC website. During the planning process, the need for a national heritage corridor website was a high priority for stakeholders within the IMCNHC. A website is not a one time activity but a monthly and yearly commitment; successful websites require continual updating and maintenance.

The Core Activities are grouped into two categories:

- Administrative
- Communications & Coordination

Administrative

IMCNHC Administration. The Canal Corridor Association (CCA) staff conducts day-to-day coordination of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor operations, actions, activities, and business.

Canal Alliance staff compiles and distributes an annual report documenting the Canal Alliance's accomplishments, outcomes, and impacts. The report demonstrates how federal funds were invested and matched, as well as the Canal Alliance's effectiveness at moving toward regional sustainability of that nation's story.

The CCA will complete annual audits, making available all records pertaining to the income and expenses of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor as per our legislation and commitment to financial transparency.

The CCA will hold quarterly public workshops regarding the implementation of the management plan as per our authorizing legislation. For more information on open meetings, see the Communications Plan.

IMCNHC Infrastructure Maintenance. The CCA will maintain or coordinate maintenance of the Corridor infrastructure, including but not limited to: interpretive and wayfinding signage, highway signage, radio transmitters, and other infrastructure created by IMCNHC funds.

Communications & Coordination. See Communications Plan for details.

Stakeholder Communication & Involvement. Everyone who chooses to participate in the decision making process is welcome to participate. Several options are available, providing opportunities for everyone to bring their strengths to the collective success of the region. For more details, please reference the Communications Plan, and the Decision Making Process later in this section.

Canal Alliance Communication & Coordination. Detailed plans of both communication and coordination with the Canal Alliance are in other sections of this plan. For more details, please reference the Partnership Plan with details of the Canal Alliance, and the Communications Plan.

Figure 6.8. IMCNHC Goals

STORIES Goal: The rich and complex stories of the history and continuing importance of the I&M Canal Corridor will be told through increasingly accurate, compelling, and interesting ways to larger audiences.

SPECIAL PLACES Goal: The Corridor's distinctive sense of place and natural, cultural, and historic resources will be recognized, embraced, and protected.

RECREATION Goal: The recreational amenities of the Corridor will be enhanced and expanded to facilitate their enjoyment by more people.

CONSERVATION Goal: The stewardship of the Corridor's natural resources will be improved. Both the number of stewards and the commitment level and involvement of stewards will be increased.

ECONOMIC IMPACT Goal: The Corridor's economic growth will be built through an increase in heritage tourism and heritage development. Historical and cultural based venues in the Corridor will be enhanced through increased interpretation, use of new technologies, and increases in visitor services and marketing. Entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses will be supported with increased tourism strengthening our historic downtowns.

SUSTAINABILITY Goal: The work of the IMCNHC will be sustained after 2021 by continually engaging more people in increasingly intense roles, continuing to strengthen the collective voice of the region, continuing the coordination and celebration of the work, and securing sustainable funding sources.

Figure 6.9. STORIES Goal: The rich and complex stories of the history and continuing importance of the I&M Canal Corridor will be told through increasingly accurate, compelling, and interesting ways to larger audiences.

Over and over again through the planning process, the public has confirmed the following:

- Most people don't really know the significance of the I&M Canal to Chicago, Illinois, and the nation
- People who have recently learned about the canal can't believe that canal history was not taught when they were in school
- Many local history resources shortchange the impact of the I&M Canal (i.e. that it was only vital until the railroads displaced it)
- Most people are amazed to learn how the canal shaped many aspects of Illinois life today

Telling the stories of the I&M Canal, its history, the people of the region, and its impact makes this "ditch" come alive for many people. The story will be told in the context of the American story through interpretive themes. The individual stories of the people who lived and worked in the corridor will be told to highlight the richness and complexity of the I&M Canal story.

Potential Activities for STORIES Goal

The key to the national heritage corridor is telling the stories of this nationally important place. The IMCNHC stories are currently being told in the landscape as a large outdoor museum with extant canal buildings and structures such as the Canal Commission's Office in Lockport, the Toll House in Ottawa, and the canal itself with its locks, aqueducts, and attractions like the The Volunteer, a replica canal boat at the western terminus of the canal. Currently, interpretive signs and life-size CorTen™ steel silhouettes also help tell the stories in the landscape of the 100-mile region. Several indoor exhibits in a variety of small museums such as the Gaylord Building in Lockport and the Joliet History Museum and in presentations by numerous people assist in telling the stories. There have been several changes to the Corridor in the last five years, and is it a good time to review the interpretation at each site and make recommendations for next steps toward telling more complete and compelling stories.

The above goal will be accomplished by working together on activities which:

- Improve the accuracy of the stories,
- Make the stories more compelling and interesting, and
- Find new audiences for the stories.

Some of the activities that have been identified toward this are outlined below.

Certification & Designation Programs

In order to meet the requests made by stakeholders and to offer our best to visitors, CCA will guide the Canal Alliance through development of a certification program for storytelling, education, visitor readiness, and quality of programming.

As the Storytelling Partners convene, the program will be defined to assist the partners and enhance the visitor experience. In addition, sites will be designated as partner sites to assist the visitor in identifying quality sites to visit, as well as assisting partners in maintaining a quality visitor experience. The initial concept of the sites program is outlined in this section of the plan under the SPECIAL PLACES goal. It will be further developed by the Canal Alliance.

The training, internship, and volunteer programs outlined in this section of the plan will help provide resources to obtain and maintain these certifications and designations.

Outdoor Interpretation and Wayfinding

The current system of interpretation is over 25 years old and is a combination of at least two different systems. Many of the sign panels from both systems have reached the end of their lifecycle and need to be replaced at their current location and within their current sign structure. Each sign needs to be inventoried and recommendations made to its replacement. The current wayfinding system includes approximately 120 driving tour signs and many other directional signs. Currently, 330 plus interpretive signs and 48 life-size Cor-Ten® steel silhouettes also tell the story over the 100-mile region. They all need to be reviewed for accuracy and condition, and recommendations need to be made for any replacements.

In addition, as a new system is developed, new technology may be incorporated, such as 2D barcodes or references to cell phone or podcast options to extend the storytelling.

Illinois & Michigan Canal Books

Currently, the communication of the I&M Canal story is difficult to tell, as there are no real books on the I&M Canal in print and accessible to the public. Several types of books have been suggested in the planning process. The addition of several different books concerning the history of the canal would enhance the accuracy and the amount of the storytelling.

Illinois & Michigan Canal Education Materials

During the almost thirty years of the heritage corridor's existence, a plethora of educational material has been developed about the Illinois & Michigan Canal. As such, the Education & Interpretation Resource Committee will need to review all the existing educational materials available, determine if there are gaps, and develop a list of recommendations for enhancing and expanding the extant I&M Canal educational materials. Existing materials include teacher guides, training courses, and lesson plans from a variety of sources.

Figure 6.10. SPECIAL PLACES Goal:

The Corridor's distinctive sense of place and natural, cultural, and historic resources will be recognized, embraced, and protected.

The I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor is full of historic sites, as well as natural and cultural resources that contribute to the local and regional "sense of place." Almost all of these places have been identified and inventoried since the Corridor was designated in 1984, but most are not protected and have the potential to be negatively impacted by neglect, growth, and development. This plan looks for ways to use the collected information to enhance this distinctive sense of place.

The centerpiece of the IMCNHC is the canal itself. Unfortunately, the condition of the I&M Canal is currently deteriorating. While much has been done to rehabilitate the canal and its related structures since 1984, the last ten years have seen a reversal in the condition of all aspects of the resource, but especially in the tow-path trail along the canal. The majority of the canal is owned and managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, whose ability to maintain this historic landmark has been substantially reduced.

Parts of the 61-mile I&M Canal State Trail have been closed recently. Currently, the canal has some significant water and structural issues. Activities to promote well-maintained open trails, assure water levels, and make needed structural repairs need to be explored.

Potential Activities for SPECIAL PLACES Goal***Updated Historic I&M Canal Landmarks Nomination***

The Illinois and Michigan Canal was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1963. The original landmark nomination does not meet today's standards. A revised nomination was written in 1999 by Dr. Michael Conzen; however, the nomination was never accepted by the National Park Service. The Canal Alliance will work with the National Park Service to revise the current draft until it is acceptable to the National Park Service. The proposed boundaries in the new landmark nomination would add many buildings to the landmark nomination. It would be beneficial to those many buildings to be considered landmarks and could assist in the protection of these resources.

Illinois & Michigan Canal

The plan advocates that a working group be formed which will come together to assist the owners of the canal in developing strategies toward its ongoing maintenance and usage. For further information on the working group, see the Partnership Plan.

Historic Preservation Workshops

Eleven canal towns remain from the canal era. All of those towns have special places that help tell the stories of the IMCNHC. To increase the historic preservation capacity in these communities, workshops will be considered to educate the citizens and decision makers in these communities and other communities within the heritage corridor about historic preservation strategies that will assist in retaining the sense of place of these communities.

Designated I&M Canal Passage Sites and Events Program

The Canal Alliance will define a designation program for sites and events that assist with the goals of this plan. The initial concept for the designations is outlined below.

I&M Canal Passage Visitor Centers

Designated as first stops to assist the visitor in planning their I&M Canal visit. Visitor Centers must meet the highest standards for highway access, signage, and visitor services such as parking, restrooms, food, and visitor information.

I&M Canal Passage Anchor Sites

Full service sites that are open to the public more than 1200 scheduled hours per year and actively interpret a least two IMCNHC interpretive themes are eligible.

I&M Canal Passage Affiliate Sites

Sites that are open less frequently and/or have more limited services than Heritage Partner Sites. Affiliate sites must be open more than 600 scheduled hours per year, have on site staff or volunteers, and interpret at least one IMCNHC theme on a regular basis.

I&M Canal Passage Points of Interest

Extant canal sites that do not have staff or services but are safely accessible to the public and relate to one or more IMCNHC interpretive themes are eligible. An interpretive sign or other agreed upon interpretive materials must be available to the public. A single entity may register multiple sites as Points of Interest.

I&M Canal Passage Programs and Events

Organizations or sites that wish to have their events designated an I&M Canal Passage Event must prove that their program or event meets one of the themes of the Corridor and submit an outline of the program for approval by the Education/Interpretation Resource Committee.

Historic Preservation Consultant

Another potential project identified to increase the historic preservation capacity in the Corridor is to hire a “circuit rider” who would service the eleven canal towns, advising those towns on historic preservation and downtown revitalization efforts.

GIS Mapping

Currently, not all of the special places within the IMCNHC are mapped using GIS. Opportunities will be explored utilizing GIS technology to map the special places of the Corridor, including but not limited to designated I&M Canal Passage Sites and wayfinding signage. Once mapped, this tool will be put to use reaching our goals.

Figure 6.11. RECREATION Goal:

The recreational amenities of the Corridor will be enhanced and expanded to facilitate their enjoyment by more people.

A large number of stakeholders involved in the planning process currently use the tow-path trail along the I&M Canal and the largest number of concerns expressed during the planning process were concerning the availability and condition of the existing trails. While the number of trail users is currently unmeasured, it is evident that the trail is used by many people from residents walking or bicycle riding for a short time everyday or several times a week to long-distance runners or bicycle riders coming from greater distances to use the trail at less frequent intervals. As Americans are looking for ways to improve their health and fitness, the trail system within the IMCNHC will become more popular as a convenient and low-cost way for thousands to exercise and improve their health.

While the recreational use of the trails was the most frequent recreational activity mentioned during the planning process, several other recreational opportunities currently exist or have been advocated including: fishing, canoeing, kayaking, hiking in the state parks, biking in the state parks, riding snow-mobiles, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice climbing, skydiving, horse back riding, golfing, boating, waterskiing, wakeboarding, tubing, hunting, camping, picnicking, and bird watching.

Potential Activities for RECREATION Goal

Recreation on the original canal towpath trail is a perfect introduction to the stories Illinois & Michigan Passageway for a large audience of people who are interested in walking, bike riding, or running.

Bicycling is the number one activity on the canal towpath, followed by running and walking. The flat, mostly shaded, crushed limestone path is ideal for these activities and Chicagoland provides a large market of recreational enthusiasts. There are several bicycle related projects that have been proposed, including a regional bicycle map, researching good multi-day parking options, and identifying other missing amenities for this market.

Improving Recreational Amenities

Regional Marketing Plan and Map—Develop a marketing plan to promote bicycling through the heritage corridor. In conjunction, develop and make available on-line a downloadable map of the bicycle trails within the IMCNHC.

Signage System—Analyze the existing wayfinding signage system for recreational users and determine how it can be enhanced. See outdoor interpretation and wayfinding.

Improving Canal Trail System—Identify existing trail systems that link to the Illinois & Michigan Canal Trails and analyze the “missing” portions of the Illinois & Michigan Canal Trail from LaSalle-Peru to the Portage Site. Work with the canal owners, recreation partners, and local communities to identify and enhance the existing system of trails to promote the ease of use.

Recreational Amenities—Analyze the level of amenities along the Illinois & Michigan Canal Trails and develop suggestions for enhancing these amenities. In addition, research the need for bicycle rentals and/or other identified services for bicyclists.

Trail Volunteers

The proposed IMCNHC Volunteer Program could also include trail patrols and trail tenders to enhance the visitor experience on the trails. See Canal Alliance Volunteer Program.

Additional Activities

There are many other recreational activities currently in the Corridor. One of the newest is geocaching. The Canal Alliance may wish to promote one or more of the other activities, which cause people to visit the canal or other designated sites within the IMCNHC.

Potential Activities for CONSERVATION Goal

The IMCNHC natural resources attract both residents and visitors, but our objective will be to integrate educational awareness of environmental concerns through recreational exposure in order to develop a vested interest sufficient for volunteers to take stewardship action. The protection of the scenic elements and the biodiversity will help accomplish the preservation and economic development mission of the IMCNHC.

It is our goal to advance the stewardship of our natural heritage for future generations by preserving the plants, animals, and natural communities through management of the lands and waters they need to survive. There are several well-staffed and well-funded potential government partners who are currently good stewards of the natural resources within the IMCNHC. The Canal Alliance will work with these partners to expand the educational opportunities available to our stakeholders.

Volunteer Program

A Corridor-wide volunteer program can include volunteer stewards to take care of the I&M Canal lands and other natural areas and teach the principles of conservation. The Canal Alliance will seek to coordinate volunteer efforts with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and other canal owners.

Kids Programs

Programs designed for children within the IMCNHC may include environmental education and stewardship training. Programs may include camps, school field trips, scouting activities, and other individual and group activities.

Figure 6.12. CONSERVATION Goal:

The stewardship of the Corridor's natural resources will be improved. Both the number of stewards and the commitment level and involvement of stewards will be increased.

Although much of the landscape has been transformed and reshaped by man, both small pockets and large expanses of natural resources remain in the Corridor. Restoration efforts are again transforming landscapes, this time from the ones altered over the last two centuries. Since IMCNHC designation, many acres of open space have come into public or non-profit ownership, but many of these new owners lack funding to restore the open space to its native state or, if restored, to adequately maintain the areas.

These natural resources can neither be maintained nor enhanced, however, without environmental stewardship. The number of stewards needs to be increased and the commitment of existing and future stewards must be enhanced.

Figure 6.13. ECONOMIC IMPACT

Goal: The Corridor's economic growth will be built through an increase in heritage tourism and heritage development. Historical and cultural based venues in the Corridor will be enhanced through increased interpretation, use of new technologies, and increases in visitor services and marketing. Entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses will be supported with increased tourism strengthening our historic downtowns.

The successful sustainability of restored natural, cultural, and historic resources depends on ongoing financial resources. For most sites, this will require at least some annual revenue coming from visitation by tourists. Increased tourism in the IMCNHC will help sustain the resources and support local businesses, jobs and tax revenues. An increase in local tax revenues may, in turn, justify partnerships between these resources and local governments.

The plan encourages a stronger, more unified identity to assist in the marketing of this special place. Tourism needs to continue to be an important segment of the Illinois and IMCNHC economy. The plan explores opportunities to increase heritage tourism in the region by continuing to develop a concentration of high-quality tourism attractions and services and to successfully market the IMCNHC to the lucrative tourism market, especially the heritage tourist, the recreational tourist, and the international tourist.

Increased coordination will improve the efficiency, reach, and effectiveness of existing tourism development and marketing efforts. Efforts need to continue to link IMCNHC sites with other visitor destinations and services.

Potential Activities for ECONOMIC IMPACT Goal***Marketing Plan & Implementation***

Develop and maintain a marketing plan and program for the IMCNHC to increase the public awareness and support of the Corridor and its many resources. A brand will be created for the heritage corridor to increase marketability and recognition of the Corridor. Development of a marketing plan will increase visitation, enhance the visitor experience, and engage visitors in special events throughout the Corridor.

Canal Alliance Training Program

The Canal Alliance will maintain a training/technical assistance program that shares "best practices" and hones skills, knowledge, abilities, and other areas as identified by Canal Alliance members. The program will reach out to the National Park Service and other national and regional organizations to leverage resources. The training seeks to better equip the Canal Alliance members to strengthen and enhance their cultural, historical, natural, recreational, and economic resources by improving the overall sustainability of their sites and organizations.

This, in turn, increases the sustainability of the IMCNHC and offers stronger promotional opportunities to residents, guests, and other visitors. Training topics will be based on the needs expressed by Canal Alliance members. Current requests include: developing interpretive and educational programming, marketing, social media, outcome-based evaluation, capacity building, and new technologies.

IMCNHC Tours

The Illinois & Michigan Canal and the eleven canal communities offer a perfect venue for heritage tourism. To facilitate this, an inventory of tour operators, existing tours, and amenities will be completed. Once an inventory is completed, the Canal Alliance will work with the local tourism organizations, including the Convention & Visitors Bureaus, designated sites, and local communities to develop a heritage tourism program and develop tours along the Illinois & Michigan Canal.

IMCNHC Radio Transmitters

Several radio transmitters were installed by the IMCNHC Federal Commission, most of which have ceased to operate. It is proposed that the current radio transmitters be revived as a marketing tool to broadcast upcoming events to visitors to the heritage corridor.

Passenger Rail

The expansion of Amtrak™ and Metra™ passenger rail schedules within the IMCNHC, especially on the weekends, should be advocated as an enhancement of visitor services.

Potential Activities for SUSTAINABILITY Goal

Canal Alliance Volunteer Program

The Canal Alliance will develop and maintain a diverse Corridor-wide volunteer program to involve as many residents as possible, develop more stakeholders for the future, and assist Canal Alliance members in finding volunteers.

Figure 6.15. Example Volunteer Positions

Interpreters/ Docents	First-person interpreters and guides who tell the stories of the IMCNHC
Youth Coordinators	Volunteers who design and staff youth programs related to any of the goals
Canal Scholars	Speakers bureau
Trail Patrol	Volunteers who regularly walk or bike the trails to provide information and basic services to trail users and report on the condition of the trails
Trail Tender	Volunteers who maintain and enhance the I&M Canal State Trail and other trails throughout the Corridor. They will work with the canal owners toward keeping the trails an open avenue to history, nature, and physical health
Visitor Services	Volunteers who orient visitors to the IMCNHC and provide them with the resources needed to enjoy and enhance their experience in the heritage corridor

Canal Alliance Internship Program

The Canal Alliance will develop and maintain an internship program for college students to complete individual projects throughout the IMCNHC. This internship program is designed to extend a student’s education beyond the classroom, provide opportunities to network with various businesses, museums, and other Corridor service organizations, and to bring young, enthusiastic people into the local preservation, interpretation, and economic development fields.

Figure 6.14. SUSTAINABILITY Goal:

The work of the IMCNHC will be sustained after 2021 by continually engaging more people in increasingly intense roles, continuing to strengthen the collective voice of the region, continuing the coordination and celebration of the work, and securing sustainable funding sources.

The plan will explore how to engage more people in the IMCNHC and how to engage them in more meaningful ways, both in specific projects and in overall Corridor volunteerism. The opportunities in all the goals of the IMCNHC need to be able to attract local people to invest their time and funds. The plan explores ways to build the “people and excitement” investment and to sustain that effort into the future.

Through the establishment and on-going work of the Canal Alliance, a strong, sustaining, and diverse network of partners will be established. Individuals will find opportunities to get involved in coordinated and meaningful ways. Through the organized work of the Canal Alliance and the individual volunteer efforts of citizens, the goals of the IMCNHC will be shared across a larger community of people and will be integrated into more plans and goals of groups of people in all sectors of the IMCNHC communities.

Projects provide valuable experiences for the intern, as well as for the Canal Alliance organization. The internship program will be jointly funded by IMCNHC and local Canal Alliance funds. The interns receive coordinated training and other professionals will critique internship projects to further enhance the intern's and Canal Alliance member's experience and strengthen the final outcomes and impacts for the student, the Canal Alliance member, and the IMCNHC.

Internship opportunities will vary based on need, Canal Alliance members, priorities, and the pool of applicants. Examples of possible internship opportunities are below.

Figure 6.16. Examples of Internships

Technical Support	Works with Canal Alliance member to enhance the website, develop social media outlets, and/or create podcasts
Education and Interpretation	Works with Canal Alliance member to develop education programming, volunteer handbooks, lesson plans, and other forms of programming
Marketing	Assists Canal Alliance members in marketing to enhance site or event visibility throughout the IMCNHC
Conservation	Restores native habitat along the I&M Canal
Recreation	Assists with recreational programs, from walks and runs to youth camps
History/ Research	Works with Canal Alliance members on research and writing projects to improve the accuracy of the existing story telling

Corridor Projects

Over the life of the plan, the Canal Alliance through the resource committees will work to identify and give priority to a list of projects to be considered over the next three-year period as the projects move from good ideas to actionable projects.

Most projects will benefit the Corridor overall or benefit multiple partners and jurisdictions. These projects will generally require matching funds raised by the CCA board, staff, and the Canal Alliance. Canal Alliance projects will receive matching funds from multiple sources. A current example is the interpretive signage project replacing 330 plus extant sign panels throughout the heritage corridor, funded through the Illinois Department of Transportation ITEP grant.

During the planning process, stakeholders identified the need for capital projects within the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. These capital projects, proposed by both public and private sector, would enhance the natural, cultural, and historical resources of the heritage corridor. The capital projects submitted represent an investment of over \$73 million to the heritage, cultural, and natural infrastructure of the corridor. While neither the Canal Corridor Association nor the Canal Alliance expects to be able to fund capital projects with the money allocated for the IMCNHC, it would be remiss to not identify the need for capital funding in the IMCNHC and include strategies and activities to advocate for these investments within the IMCNHC. Through the Investment Plan, the Canal Alliance will seek to identify other sources of funding which may be used for these worthwhile projects.

Decision Making Process

Everyone who is interested in positive outcomes, improvements to current situations, and making a difference in the Corridor deserves an opportunity to step forward. The following steps are outlined to provide a process everyone can understand and follow with ease.

Because it is impossible to set priorities which will be valid and desirable for the entire life of the plan, a decision making process has been established that will be used to make decisions on an annual basis.

Potential projects will be evaluated through a number of “screens” or filters.

Research Screen—Has the project been researched and is it ready to implement?

Legislative Screen—Does the project fit within the legislative mandate?

Plan Screen—Does the project fit within the vision, mission, guiding principles, and goals of the plan?

Funding Screen—Does the project have a local funding source designated?

Sustainability Screen—Is there a commitment to maintain, keep up, reprint, or evaluate the project so as to continue its life for a reasonable period of time?

Guidelines for Decision Making

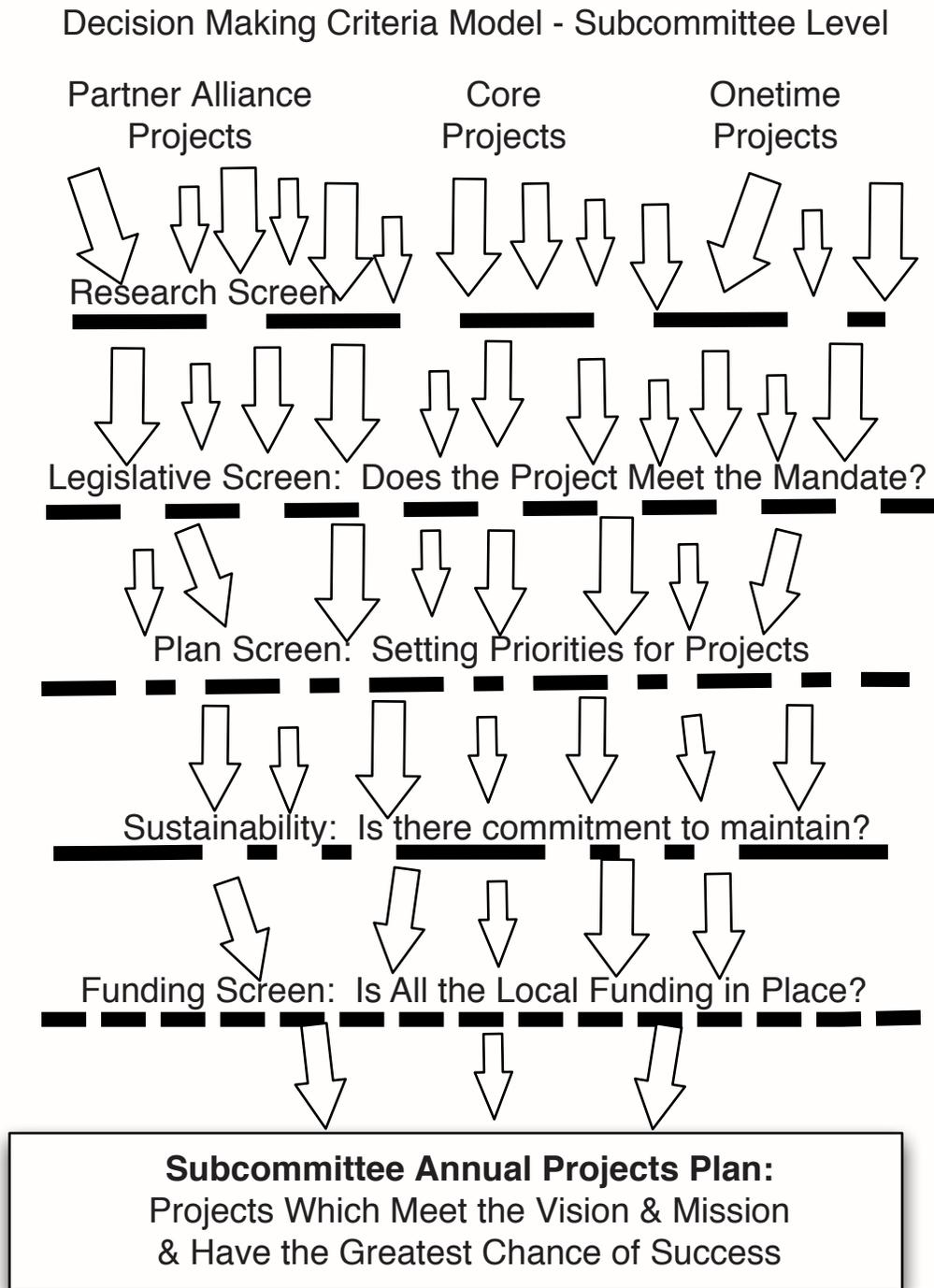
Federal legislation established the IMCNHC and also authorized the Canal Corridor Association to coordinate the heritage area's funds, planning processes, and program implementation. Our federal mandate will be met by working together with the members of the Canal Alliance. To assure that our actions are mission based, on target, and meet the requirements, these guidelines must be followed:

The CCA Board, Canal Alliance Committee, and Subcommittees will set the priority to the projects proposed through the process outlined and make the final determination for IMCNHC funding based on the vision, mission, guiding principles, and goals of the IMCNHC established in this plan. In addition, the following criteria will assist all to understand the process employed to the best decisions can be made.

Appropriateness as a heritage corridor action or activity

- Does the project work toward achieving our legal mandate? Our vision? Our mission?
- Does the project comply with our guiding principles?
- Is the project part of our core activities?
- Does the project help us tell our stories as outlined in our interpretive themes?
- Does the project enhance, further, or augment our current position, situation, or status? Is it outside routine operations or seen as a potential prototype?
- Does the project have a regional rather than a local impact?
- Is this something that the American taxpayer would consider worthy of their participation?

Figure 6.17. Subcommittee Decision Making Model



Feasibility to be accomplished with current resources

- Are there written commitments from partners to make the project a reality?
- Are there technical resources available to assist the project?
- Does the project fit the current budget or can one be finalized through collaboration?
- Does the project have multiple funding sources?
- Does the project have non-NPS funding sources of 60% or more?
- Will a change of elected officials or participating partnerships negatively affect the outcome(s)?
- Are there enough partners at the table to assure it will succeed when the work is done?
- Is there a method to evaluate project outcomes?

Investment Plan

The local “1 to 1” match which is required in the IMCNHC legislation (Section 125) will be met and exceeded in five different ways:

- Raise unrestricted donations from individuals, corporations, foundations, and local and regional governments.
- Secure grants to fund a percentage of Canal Alliance projects.
- Record IMCNHC related projects of partners that are already funded and meet the mission of the legislation and can be counted as local match.
- Solicit Canal Alliance partner projects that meet the mission of the legislation with some existing funding and submit for IMCNHC funds to complete the projects.
- Provide the promise of federal funds as the “seed monies” to assist in getting relevant projects funded with matches.

All investors will be invited to the IMCNHC events and receive information concerning the progress of the IMCNHC through the annual reports, audits, and e-newsletters. All investors will be acknowledged on the website and in the annual reports.

Unrestricted Donations

Since before the establishment of the IMCNHC, individuals, corporations, foundations, and local and regional governments have supported the work of the heritage corridor. Each year, as the work plan is proposed for the upcoming year, Canal Alliance members and others will be solicited to help raise the core funding for the administration of the IMCNHC.

The Canal Corridor Association currently has a database of those who have already invested in the IMCNHC and will grow the database on an annual basis. An annual solicitation will be made in November to individuals, to local and regional governments in January, to foundations according to their schedules, and to corporations according to their schedules. All investors will be invited to gatherings and meetings as appropriate. They will receive an annual report and audit.

Canal Alliance Project Grants

Grant money from foundations, corporations, the state government, and the federal government will be solicited as projects and sources are identified. Also, there is a long history of projects within the IMCNHC being funded from Illinois foundations and corporations. There are a number of Chicago based foundations that will fund projects that will benefit Chicago and Cook County and there

Figure 6.18. Investment Strategy:
The Canal Alliance will raise the local match required by the federal government and strive to leverage additional funds. Sustainability funding options will also be researched and pursued.

are other foundations that will consider projects throughout the IMCNHC.

Potential foundation and corporation funding will be matched with the potential projects as the projects are identified by the Canal Alliance Committee. Also, there are state and federal funds available for specific types of projects through the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Illinois Office of Tourism, and the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity. A list of potential sources of local matches with the timing of funding opportunities will be identified for each project.

Current Partner Projects

There is a certain amount of work done each year in the IMCNHC that meets the goals of the IMCNHC but is being done independently of the IMCNHC efforts. Identifying this work and recording the money expended will acknowledge the local investment and help establish the ratio of local to federal funds which accurately reflects the local commitment to the Illinois & Michigan Canal.

Partner Projects Seeking IMCNHC Funding

As the annual federal appropriation grows toward the \$1 million annual authorization, partner projects will help raise the local match required through funding partner projects that have already secured some local funds.

Figure 6.19. Three year budget

REVENUE	FFY2012	FFY2013	FFY2014
NPS Heritage Partnership Funds	\$300,000	\$400,000	\$500,000
Unrestricted Donations			
Local government	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Organizations	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000
Corporations	\$5,000	\$15,000	\$25,000
Foundations	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Individuals	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Alliance Project Grant Funds			
Foundations	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$125,000
Corporations	\$5,000	\$50,000	\$15,000
Individuals	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
State of Illinois	\$200,000	\$75,000	\$50,000
Local Governments	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$20,000
Sustainability Funding		\$50,000	\$200,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$600,000	\$820,000	\$1,050,000
EXPENSES			
Core Activities & Administration			
Staff Salary & Benefits	\$125,000	\$175,000	\$200,000
Office Expenses	\$43,750	\$61,250	\$70,000
Communications Expenses	\$50,000	\$52,500	\$55,125
Alliance Partnership Programs	\$25,000	\$26,250	\$27,563
Infrasructure Maintenance	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$11,025
Marketing Expenses	\$50,000	\$55,000	\$60,500
Alliance Project Expenses	\$290,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$593,750	\$680,500	\$724,213
Funds available for other projects	\$0	\$139,500	\$325,788

Figure 6.20. NPS's National Heritage Area Sustainability definition

The National Heritage Area coordinating entity's continuing ability to work collaboratively and reciprocally with federal, state, community and private partners through changing circumstances to meet its mission for resource conservation and stewardship, interpretation, education, recreation and economic development of nationally significant resources.

Critical components of sustainability of a National Heritage Area include but are not limited to:

- Coordinating entity and the National Park Service honoring the legislative mandate of the National Heritage Area
- Coordinating entity's management capacity including governance, adaptive management (such as strategic planning), staffing and operations
- Financial planning and preparedness, including the ongoing ability to leverage resources in support of the local network of partners
- Partnering with diverse community stakeholders including serving as a hub, catalyst and/or coordinating entity for on-going capacity building, communication and collaboration among local entities
- Program and project stewardship where the combined investment results in the improved economic value and ultimately long-term quality of life of that region.
- Outreach and marketing to engage a full and diverse range of audiences.

Sustainability Plan

This plan adopts the National Park Service's working definition of sustainability for national heritage areas. (See the sidebar to the left.) Discussion of these components of sustainability, as were defined by the National Park Service, are woven throughout the plan as well as discussed here. A key to sustainability is to always be attracting more people to the to the IMCNHC and to entice and invite them to contribute their expertise, time, and resources to the effort.

Coordinating entity and the National Park Service honoring the legislative mandate of the National Heritage Area.

The legislative mandate is the backbone of the vision, mission, guiding principles, goals and strategies that were developed through the planning process and are presented in Part 4 of this plan.

Coordinating entity's management capacity including governance, adaptive management (such as strategic planning), staffing and operations.

The sustainability of the local coordinating entity is vital for the sustainability of the activities of the national heritage area. The work of the Canal Corridor Association (CCA) as the local coordinating entity is necessary if the nationally important story is to remain as the main contribution to the region's uniqueness. Individual organizations, community leaders, site managers and landowners who choose to preserve and interpret this national treasure operate independently out of necessity and with limited resources for the broader work. Seamless visitor experiences and a regional perspective of the story necessitate coordination of an entity without the encumbrance of competing interests.

The Canal Corridor Association has a 29-year history in the work of heritage planning and development in the IMCNHC, conceiving, spearheading, and implementing a diverse list of projects from all types of planning to the implementation of projects such as the current Way-finding system to the LaSalle Canal Boat. CCA has served as an advocate, a sponsor, or an implementer for a long list of both short-term and long-term projects. The association has adapted to the opportunities within the IMCNHC, the needs of partners, and the potential of funding throughout its 29 year history.

Financial planning and preparedness, including the ongoing ability to leverage resources in support of the local network of partners.

The key activities of the local coordinating entity of funding coordination, facilitation and regional capacity building need to find stable funding sources. The Investment Plan identifies ways to diversify the funding sources and work towards generating stable funding. Our belief is that while these are challenging economic times there are always opportunities to pursue.

CCA has a history of soliciting funding at the local, state, and federal level and within the private foundation community. CCA's operations and projects have been supported by local individuals, businesses and corporations since 1982.

Partnering with diverse community stakeholders including serving as a hub, catalyst and/or coordinating entity for on-going capacity building, communication and collaboration among local entities.

The key activities of the local coordinating entity of funding coordination, facilitation and regional capacity building need an ever-growing population of involved and committed stakeholders and partners. A large amount of time and energy was devoted towards organizing ways that individuals, organizations, local governments, and state agencies can work together to accomplish the goals of the legislation and this framework. Part 5, the Partnership Plan outlines a starting place and details how the Canal Alliance anticipates organizing the communication and work with all interested stakeholders.

Program and project stewardship where the combined investment results in the improved economic value and ultimately long-term quality of life of that region.

The economic development goal articulated in this plan speaks to developing and supporting heritage development and tourism and supporting entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses to improve the economy, especially of our canal towns and quality of life of the region. Projects will be evaluated for their economic value as a component of prioritization and overall evaluation of their success.

Figure 6.22. Sustainability Strategy: The Canal Alliance will involve as many people as possible through the identified strategies and move them along a continuum of activity and commitment going from minimal interest to involved and enthusiastic.

Outreach and marketing to engage a full and diverse range of audiences.

The key to sustainability was identified as involving more people over time in more committed ways and our sustainability strategy was based on that idea. There have been many advocates for the IMCNHC over the last 30 some years. Many of these early contributors have moved to other areas or have retired and the loss of their time, expertise, and resources is felt. This acknowledgement lead to the sustainability strategy.

Moving individuals along the continuum of involvement is our focus. People who don't know about the IMCNHC will become aware and interested. People who don't visit the historic buildings, cultural sites, trails and natural sites of the IMCNHC, will start to visit them. People who volunteer in the activities that further the mission of the IMCNHC will become more involved becoming advocates and investors. Investors will become recruiters, and so on. A concerted effort will be made over the next year to learn how many people are currently involved and to what degree, and then their movement will be measured along this continuum at key points within the next ten years to measure the success of our strategies.

Figure 6.21. Levels of Stakeholder Involvement in the IMCNHC

Level	Title	Definition
1	Observer	Interested in the I&M Canal and may be aware of the IMCNHC organization - casually visits website, references, articles/resources and may participate in a mailing list or other forms of communication.
2	Visitor	Visits the canal and/or associated sites and enjoys the resources.
3	Canal Alliance Member/Leader	Signs the pledge to contribute to the IMCNHC in one of many ways including volunteering. Someone who leads activities and brings other to the IMCNHC.
4	Investor	Provides financial support for the IMCNHC.
5	Recruiter	Believes in the spirit and mission of the IMCNHC and advocates for others to learn, participate, become involved and invest – a true advocate!

Figure 6.23. Engagement Pyramid

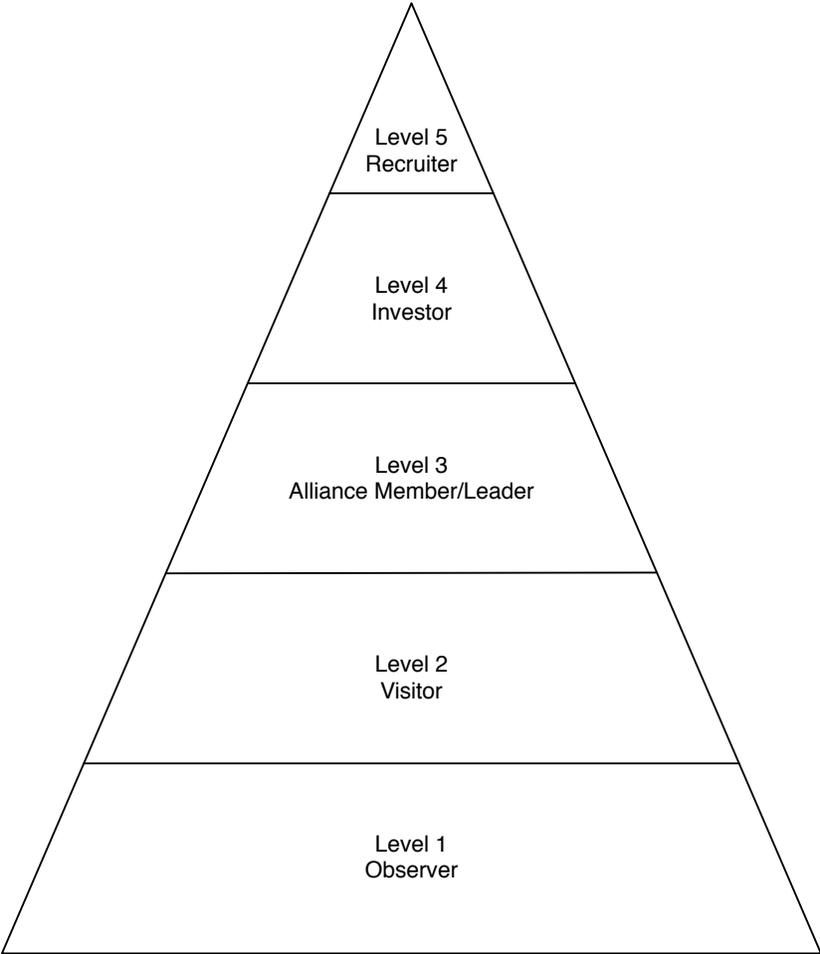
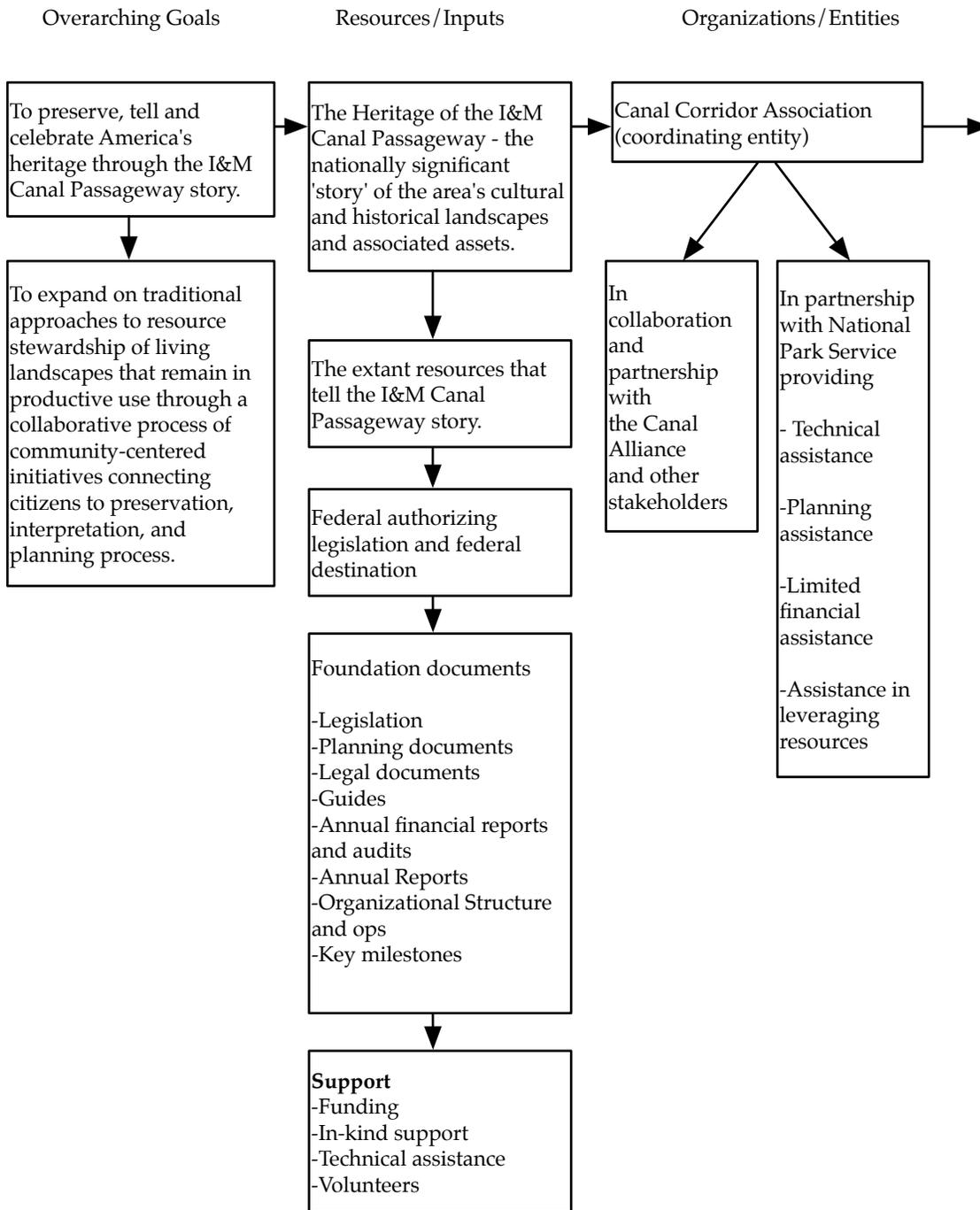
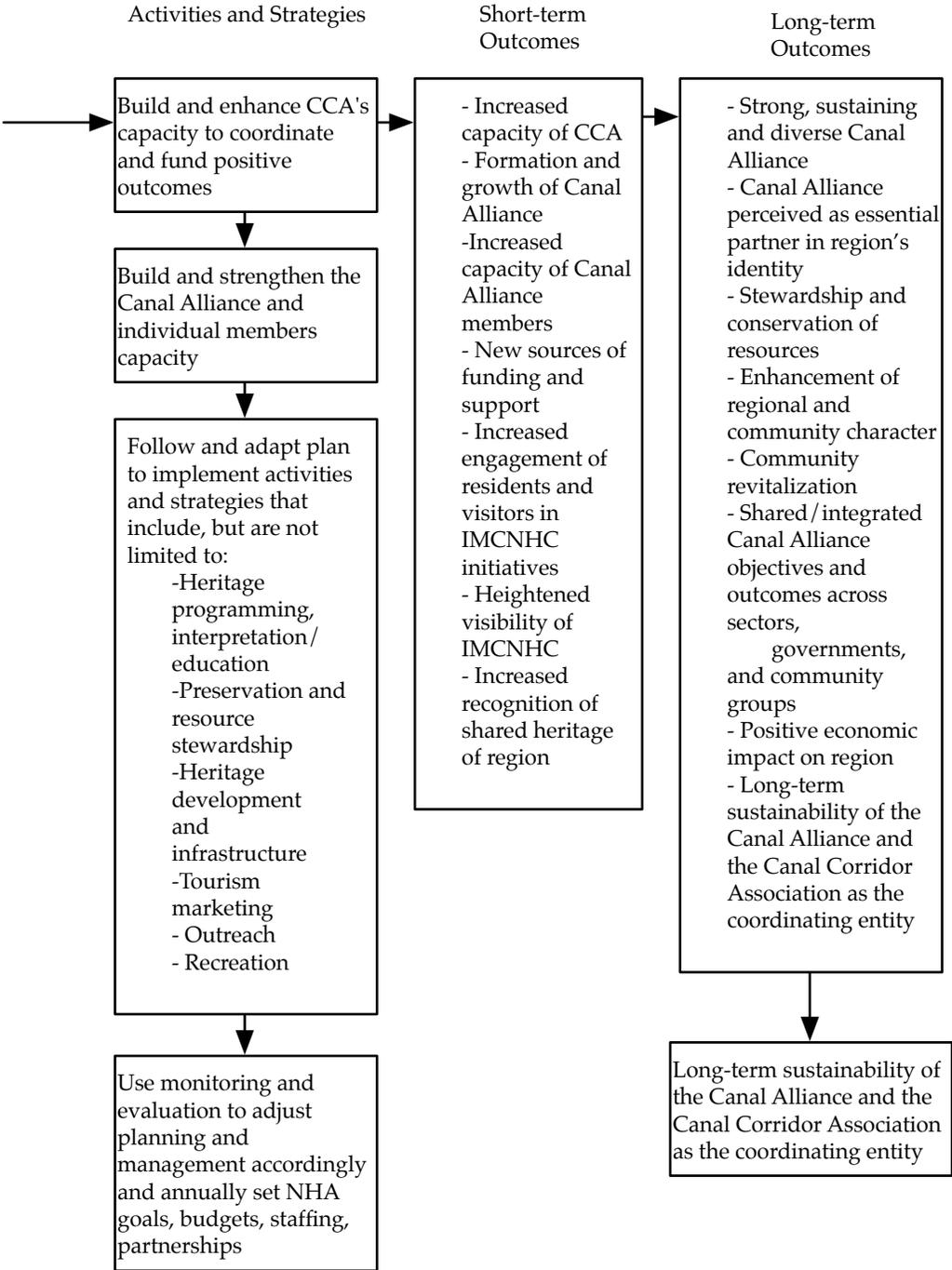


Figure 6.24. IMCNHC Logic Model





Evaluation Plan

Introduction

Everyone who steps forward to preserve and interpret relevant sites of this nationally significant Illinois & Michigan Canal Passageway story is committed to doing good work. Routine evaluation of our individual and collective efforts not only will provide investors with important feedback, but will also document adjustments that improve what we do, how we do it and how we can enhance good work even further.

The purpose of this evaluation plan is two fold:

1. To alter and enhance, on an annual basis the activities and strategies that the Canal Alliance is undertaking to do a better job.
2. To collect the data necessary for a longer-term evaluation of the program by the National Park Service for reporting to the US Congress and other investors. Based on current evaluation standards, in 2018, three years before the end of the current legislation, the National Park Service will begin their evaluation of the success of the IMCNHC.

Evaluation Design

In 2010 as the National Park Service was developing the methodology for the evaluation of the other national heritage areas, a generic NHA Logic Model was constructed. This plan uses that generic logic model to construct a logic model that fits the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor. The model is presented below.

I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Logic Model

This logic model is designed to provide a clearer understanding of what to evaluate when evaluating the success of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor. The goal of this plan is to collect the data necessary for informative and efficient evaluations in the short and long-term.

Data Collection

The Canal Corridor Association is committed to a meaningful on-going evaluation of our collective efforts, both to provide the basis for improvement and to meet all reporting requirements our investors expect. However, to preserve scarce resources, the people who will carry out this on-going evaluation will not be professional evaluators. Our plan is simple and rooted in obvious logic. CCA will assist Canal Alliance partners, volunteers, and program leaders to assure that data collection and evaluation is a routine part of how we all do business and keep records of the work and data to determine evaluation outcomes. Recordkeeping and evaluation data requirements will be required in every agreement so our promises to our investors are known from the beginning and are as important as all other aspects involved.

To facilitate this data collection and evaluation, the Canal Alliance will collect information quarterly to accommodate three different fiscal years --the National Park Service's (the federal fiscal year), the Canal Corridor Association's fiscal year, and the calendar year.

Data Retention

The data collected and foundation documents created in each fiscal year will be retained for the long-term evaluation process. Documents collected and retained will include, but not be limited to:

- Annual report, annual audit
- Printed copies of program materials
- Printed copies of website and documents outlining the usage
- Printed copies of press releases and press coverage
- Minutes, attendance, and other documents related to all Canal Alliance committee meetings and activities
- Donor, grant, and other financial records
- In-kind and volunteer time records
- Visitation records for key sites
- Canal Alliance membership records

Discussion of Questions

It is anticipated that the evaluations by the National Park Service will be based on the following three questions.

1. Based on the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor authorizing legislation and the "Roadmap for the Future" management plan, has the Canal Alliance achieved the proposed accomplishments?
2. What have been the impacts of the investments made by Federal, State, and local government and private entities?

Figure 6.25. Data Collection

All electronic records will be kept in an electronic form. The CCA will work with the NPS to store the necessary information in the most "green" manner that is acceptable.

3. How does the Canal Alliance structure and the current funding contribute to the sustainability of the Canal Corridor Association (as local coordinating entity), the Canal Alliance, and positive outcomes of the IMCNHC?

Question 1: Based on the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor authorizing legislation and the “Roadmap for the Future” management plan, has the Canal Alliance achieved the proposed accomplishments?

One of the five strategies identified in the plan - Strategy 2: The Canal Alliance will organize programs and activities, pertains to this question.

Figure 6.26. Evaluation Strategies

The five strategies identified in this plan will assist in answering these three questions.

Question 1 is best answered through the review of the success of **Strategy 2**

Question 2 is best answered through the review of the success of **Strategies 2 and 3**

Question 3 is best answered through the review of the success of **Strategies 1, 4 and 5**

Data Collection for Question 1

We will systematize data collection and evaluation at the program level by putting it into the necessary program planning. Leaders of short-term programs will document what the status was before they started (2nd graders lack of knowledge of the Canal’s history or the lack of tourist materials telling the stories of the I&M Canal), what they did (taught the IMCNHC-developed curriculum to 24 students or developed brochures, podcasts, and videos), and what it was like when they were done (sheets collected with two facts that kids said they learned or number of tourist brochures distributed, podcasts and videos downloaded).

We will encourage photographs before, during, and after programs and activities. We will use whatever technology is appropriate for the activities and participants and what the program leaders are comfortable with for our records.

Open-ended and more abstract activities will have a similar planning process; we will build in descriptions that are appropriate for the activity. Communication efforts will include quantifying efforts and outcomes, such as blogged items, number of replies, and the results. For workshops, we will quantify how they were promoted, how well attended they were, their content, and the progress made in advancing the content.

All records will be organized and retained for possible long-term evaluation.

Strategy 2: The Canal Alliance will organize programs and activities.

Our questions to answer:

- What is the baseline?
 - What activities and programs exist in the Corridor?
 - What stories are being told?
 - Which stories identified in the plan aren't being told?
 - What are unmet needs?
 - Who is offering programs and activities?
 - How can partners help?
- Are there opportunities to improve/expand existing programs or help create new ones?
- Is there duplication of programs? Are there programs that are not worth continuing?
- How can the Canal Alliance increase programs and activities?
- Should the Canal Alliance offer programs or collaborate with others?
- What are the priorities?
- What differences are our actions making? More programs, more participation, more results, and so on.

What can we count? What information can we collect?

- Count the number of visitors at partner sites.
- Count the number of partner sites open to the public.
- Count the number of Canal Alliance programs and activities conducted.
- Count the numbers of people who attend those programs and activities.
- Count the number of partner programs and activities conducted.
- Count the number of people who attend those partner programs and activities.
- Survey a sample of the attendees at the programs, activities, meetings, conferences, public workshops, tours, field trips to evaluate effectiveness of event.
- Record what stories are being told.
- Record how the stories are being told.
- Record how many people are participating in the story telling.
- Count the volunteers and volunteer hours.
- Survey annually the volunteers to understand the quality of their experience.
- Count the interns and the internship hours.
- Count the number of Canal Alliance members who participate in training.

How can the experience be evaluated?

The Canal Alliance will review the above data to evaluate if we are organizing programs and activities that tell the stories of the IMCNHC as identified in one or more of the themes: annually assess what programs and activities are offered by the Canal Alliance; what programs/activities should be added or eliminated based on the effectiveness of the programs/activities and ability to meet the needs of the stakeholders. The Canal Alliance will evaluate the change in programs from previous years.

Question 2: What have been the impacts of the investments made by Federal, State, and local government and private entities?

Impacts are measured by the amount of the investment and what outcomes were delivered. Two of the strategies identified in this plan will help answer this question. Strategy 2, which was developed under Question 1 and Strategy 3 below.

Strategy 3: The Canal Alliance will raise the local match required by the federal government.

Our questions to answer:

- What is the history/baseline?
- Who has supported the CCA and the IMCNHC in the past?
- What messages will make people willing to support the IMCNHC?
- How long will we need to cultivate prospects—will the payoff be soon enough?
- What are our priorities?
- Whom should we solicit?
- Will corporations offer support? Foundations? Individuals?
- Who should make the ask? How many people are making the ask? How much should we ask for?
- Money is easily counted. What other measures of success are there?
- Are the sources sustainable? Will they recur?

What can we count?

- Count the money raised
- Count the number of sources of the money
- Count the number of reoccurring sources of money
- Count the number of people making the ask for money
- Count the money from individuals
- Count the money from corporations
- Count the money from foundations
- Count the money from non-federal governments

- Count the money from non-NPS federal government sources
- Count in-kind donations
- Count volunteer time

How can the results be evaluated?

The Canal Alliance will evaluate their success annually in raising the local match required by the federal government: quarterly tally the monies, in-kind donations, and volunteer time (allocating it toward the local match). The CCA Board, Corridor Committee, subcommittee members, and Canal Alliance members will record their time and mileage towards meeting the local match. The amount of local match will be evaluated against previous years and trends will be evaluated.

Impact Evaluation

Return on investment or the impact of the investment can be evaluated by looking at what has been accomplished under question 1 and what was invested (counted here) for that accomplishment.

Question 3: How does the Canal Alliance structure and the current funding contribute to the sustainability of the Canal Corridor Association (as local coordinating entity), the Canal Alliance, and the work of the IMCNHC?

The IMCNHC plan is based on civic engagement. Essentially, the sustainability of the activities of the Canal Alliance will be evaluated, by evaluating the number of people involved in the IMCNHC work and the quality of their engagement. Our long-term evaluation objective is to get an accounting of the people involved and a measure of the depth of their connection and then over time to see how many more people get involved and if their involvement gets deeper. We believe that two key measurements to assure our sustainability are vitality and a variety of funding sources.

Vitality is based on a mix of more activities/programs, more partners, and more investors, and of bigger programs, more committed partners, and a larger local investment. Our collective goal is that the pyramid of involvement grows wider and taller. Due to the limits of the Canal Alliance, one measure of vitality is to spin off successful programs/activities/events/ destinations. As they become established and successful, they can take care of themselves and the Canal Alliance can nurture other fledgling efforts.

Another measure of sustainability is to have many revenue sources as well as the flexibility to pursue one or two sources that may become easier to obtain without distorting the mission of the Canal Alliance.

For example, the sources may include program fees, government contracts, foundation grants, sponsorships, royalties, special events, and philanthropic support—as the Canal Alliance works to obtain all of these all the time, it needs to be able to double one source (or increase it tenfold) without becoming over-reliant on one source and without upsetting the balance of funding resources in the Canal Alliance.

Establishing a Baseline 2011-2012

While we work on establishing this long-term evaluation, we will evaluate our progress with communication and activity goals as short-term results. For example, we know we need to use current technology to make it easy for people to be engaged in our activities—using web sites, Twitter™, YouTube™, blogs, Facebook™, and so on—and we will evaluate those efforts, including the number of people involved and, as much as possible, their degree of involvement. We will evaluate our success with public meetings, face-to-face communication, and on tours, as well.

As committee chairs gather information about unmet needs, we will collect their findings to form a baseline. Eventually we can use the baseline to measure progress in civic engagement. We will take a year to establish the baseline, and in some cases many years will be needed to see impact. To provide meaningful evaluation during the ten years, we will follow the progress of the strategies; if it seems that the group leading a strategy is not moving along a path that will reach its goals, the strategies may need to be changed.

Three strategies identified in the plan address question 3.

- Strategy 1: The Canal Alliance will communicate with as many stakeholders as possible through a variety of ways.
- Strategy 4: The Canal Alliance activities will engage as many Canal Alliance members as possible.
- Strategy 5: The sustainability of the Canal Alliance relies on involving more people in the Canal Alliance and engaging them more deeply in the IMCNHC.

Strategy 1: The Canal Alliance will communicate with as many stakeholders as possible through a variety of ways.

Our questions to answer:

- What is the baseline?
- Who are the stakeholders?
- How many are in each group?
- How many are being communicated with now?
- What methods are we using to reach them?

- How can the Canal Alliance improve existing communication?
- What do we need to reach more people/carry more messages?
- What are our priorities?
- What differences are our actions making?

What can we count?

- Count number of people attending the Canal Alliance Conference
- Count number of people attending Canal Day
- Count number of people who hear our presentations
- Count number of people attending public workshops
- Survey all of the above groups to evaluate the experience and whether they are more or less likely to get further involved

How can the experience be evaluated?

We will evaluate which communication methods are working and measure the change from year to year. With limited resources increased awareness and changes in attitude won't be measured. Rather we will use programs and activities as a surrogate with more programs creating more results in meaningful/successful communication. Program/activity evaluation will be an efficient and effective evaluation for the IMCNHC.

Strategy 4: The Canal Alliance activities will engage as many Canal Alliance members as possible.

Our questions to answer:

- What is the universe of prospects?
- How many might come to us, or do we figure we will need to go to them?
- What are our priorities?
- What activities are we using to engage prospects?
- How many activities are in each main goal?
- Failure may be more common than success; how/what can we learn from being turned down? Can we build on it?
- How many partners do we have? What differences are they making?
- Based on our learning, what is the next step? For example, do we build deeper connections with current partners or continue to try to acquire new ones?

What can we count?

- Count the number of Canal Alliance members
- Count the number of members of each group in the Canal Alliance

- Count the number of volunteer hours given by those members
- Survey the Canal Alliance members to see if their attitudes and behaviors have changed concerning the IMCNHC and the Canal Alliance
- Count the number of activities started and completed

How can the results be evaluated?

The evaluation will be based on how activities are engaging the Canal Alliance members in the Canal Alliance. The Canal Alliance will evaluate their success annually in engaging as many Canal Alliance members as possible in as many activities as possible. To this end, the Canal Alliance will report quarterly on the number of the Canal Alliance members engaged per activity as e-news, social media, tours & field trips, the Canal Alliance Conference, Canal Day, etc. In addition, the Canal Alliance will utilize data received from partner training workshop evaluations and an annual evaluation survey of Canal Alliance members on how to more effectively engage them in the IMCNHC activities.

Strategy 5: The sustainability of the Canal Alliance relies on involving more people in the Canal Alliance and engaging them more deeply in the IMCNHC.

Our questions to answer:

- Are the programs growing? Is the audience growing?
- Are the Canal Alliance members more committed?
- Are the funding sources more diverse?
- Are the funding sources stable?
- Is the funding base secure?
- What programs are being spun off?

What to count?

- Count the people who are visiting partner sites
- Count website hits. Record the length of time spent on the site.
- Count blog hits and comments
- Count interactions on social media
- Count number of photos and videos posted to Flickr™ and YouTube™
- Count number of people on our e-news list
- Evaluate the quality of the electronic responses
- Count the number and size of newspaper articles covering issues and events

- Survey all stakeholders and Canal Alliance members and ask them to rank their involvement on the pyramid. Compare with baseline and previous years
- Evaluate the current and projected funding
- Evaluate all of the counting and data collecting from above to evaluate, project, and guide the sustainability

How to evaluate?

The evaluation will be based on how engaged the Canal Alliance members are in the Canal Alliance. The Canal Alliance will evaluate their success annually in engaging as many Canal Alliance members as possible. To this end, the Canal Alliance will report quarterly on the number of the Canal Alliance members engaged via e-news, social media, tours & field trips, the Canal Alliance conference, Canal Day, etc. In addition, the Canal Alliance will utilize data received from partner training workshop evaluations and an annual evaluation survey of Canal Alliance members on how to more effectively engage them in the IMCNHC.