



# Connecting Stories, Landscapes, and People: Exploring the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Partnership

*A Technical Assistance Project for the  
Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor  
Commission and the Delaware & Lehigh  
National Heritage Corridor, Inc.*



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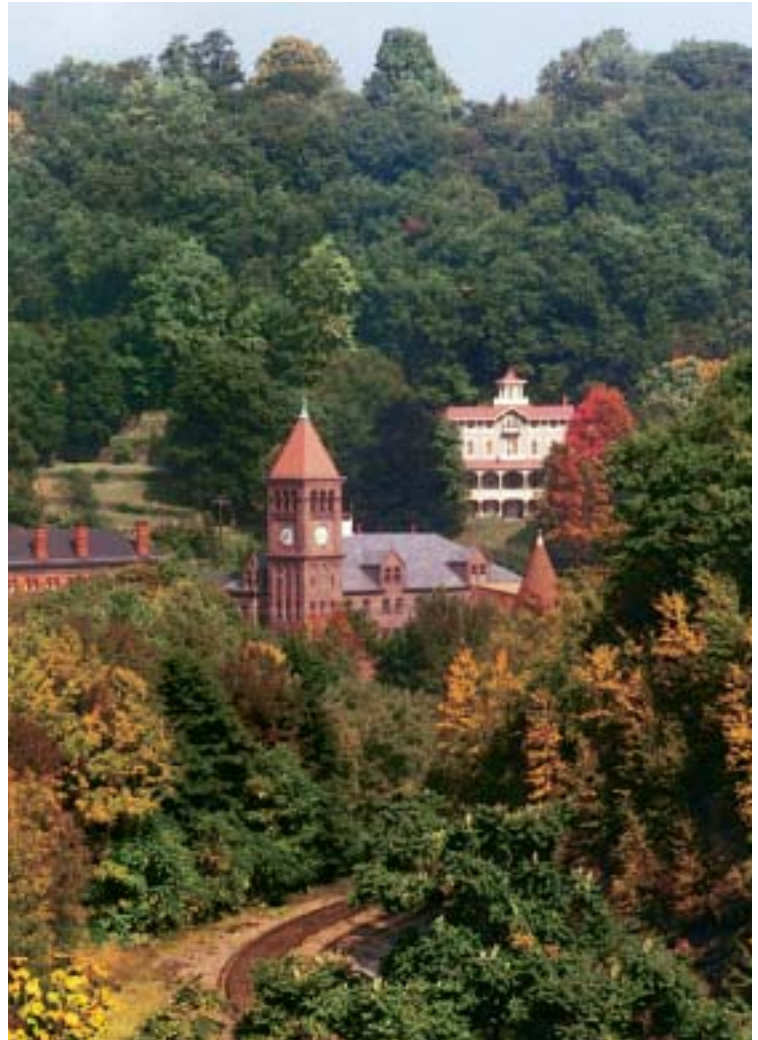
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Jim Thorpe, formerly Mauch Chunk, was a center for commerce and transportation.

# **Connecting Stories, Landscapes, and People: Exploring the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Partnership**

Sustainability Study Report

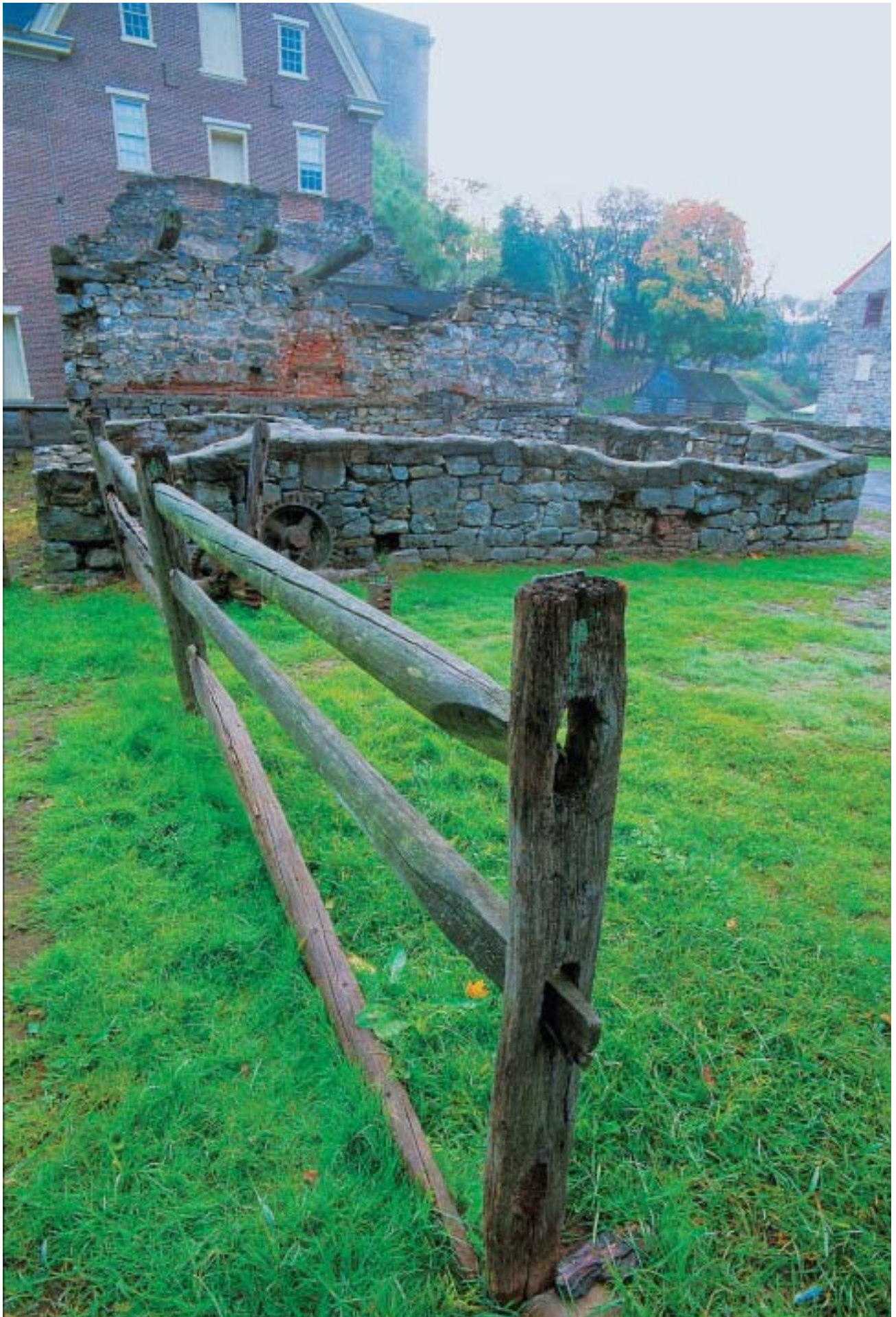
*A Technical Assistance Project for the  
Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Commission  
and the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.*

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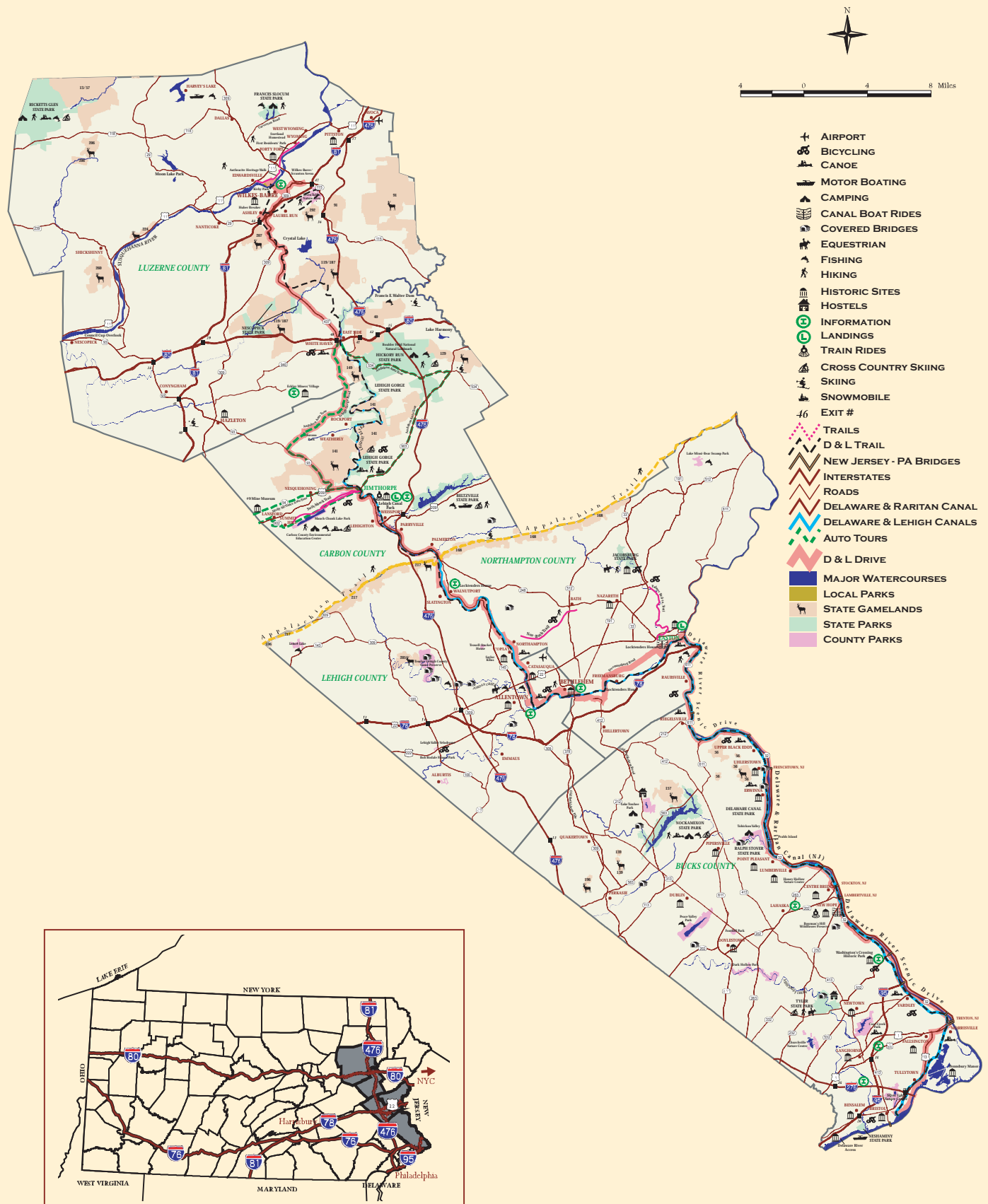
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# Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor



- AIRPORT
- BICYCLING
- CANOE
- MOTOR BOATING
- CAMPING
- CANAL BOAT RIDES
- COVERED BRIDGES
- EQUESTRIAN
- FISHING
- HIKING
- HISTORIC SITES
- HOSTELS
- INFORMATION
- LANDINGS
- TRAIN RIDES
- CROSS COUNTRY SKIING
- SKIING
- SNOWMOBILE
- EXIT #
- TRAILS
- D & L TRAIL
- NEW JERSEY - PA BRIDGES
- INTERSTATES
- ROADS
- DELAWARE & RARITAN CANAL
- DELAWARE & LEHIGH CANALS
- AUTO TOURS
- D & L DRIVE
- MAJOR WATERCOURSES
- LOCAL PARKS
- STATE GAMELANDS
- STATE PARKS
- COUNTY PARKS

# SECTION I: SETTING THE CONTEXT

## Chapter 1

### *Background and Introduction to the D&L Sustainability Study*

Congress established the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (Corridor) in 1988 as the nation's third national heritage area.<sup>1</sup> In 1993 the Corridor was also designated as Pennsylvania's third state heritage park.<sup>2</sup> Located in the eastern part of the state between Wilkes-Barre and Bristol along 165 miles of rivers, canals, and railroads, the Corridor conserves the historic transportation network that brought anthracite coal from the mines to the markets in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Corridor interprets the stories of the communities that grew up around the mountain mines and along the transportation route, the industries that flourished in the region because of the availability of coal, and the people who have lived and worked in the Corridor area. The Corridor's authorizing legislation also established the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Commission (Commission) to assist state and local authorities in preserving and interpreting the Corridor's historic and cultural resources and in fostering compatible economic development. The Commission's authority is due to expire in November 2007.

Facing the possible expiration of the Commission's authority and federal funding, Corridor management initiated the Delaware & Lehigh (D&L) Sustainability Study in 2005 to document accomplishments over the past 17 years, evaluate how the Corridor partnership has worked, and explore options for the future. Corridor management believed this study would help them make better informed decisions about the future, provide a participatory approach that would engage current and potential partners, and strengthen the case for continued investment by key state and federal partners. They also saw an opportunity to reflect on and learn from the past through an approach that builds on research conducted in other national heritage areas. By engaging in this study, D&L management has demonstrated a willingness to look critically at its accomplishments and consider adjustments to its partnership process in order to become more effective at achieving Corridor goals. D&L management also believes that its investment in a rigorous evaluation will inform the development of policy at the national level that will benefit both existing and emerging national heritage areas.

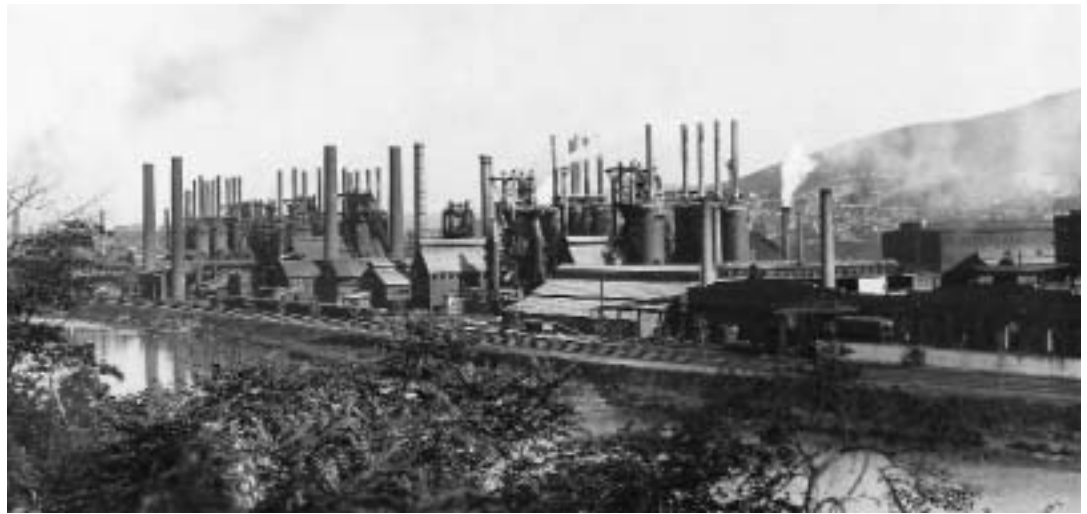
At Weissport, remnants of a Lehigh Canal lock make a great outdoor classroom for the study of local history and ecology.



<sup>1</sup> Public Law 100-692.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/heritageparks/> for further information on the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program.

Bethlehem Steel was a twentieth century economic engine. In the twenty-first century, it's a key heritage development opportunity.



### A. The Scope and Methods of the D&L Sustainability Study

The Commission asked the Conservation Study Institute (Institute), a program of the National Park Service Northeast Region, to provide technical assistance by conducting the sustainability study, and identified four points that the study should address:

- Evaluate progress toward accomplishing the purposes of the Corridor's authorizing legislation and the strategies set forth in the Corridor's Management Action Plan of 1993.
- Identify additional actions and work needed to protect, enhance, and interpret the Corridor and its nationally significant resources.
- Analyze the National Park Service and Pennsylvania Heritage Park Program (PHPP) investments to determine the leverage and impacts of these investments.
- Examine models, options, and opportunities to enhance state and local partnerships and to continue the NPS relationship, including the possibility of a permanent NPS designation or a new framework to support the work of the Corridor initiative.

In carrying out the study, the Institute's project team investigated three primary aspects of the Corridor partnership's efforts to date: (1) accomplishments and progress toward Corridor goals, and the leveraging of public investments; (2) the structure and operations of the current management framework; and (3) partners' perspectives on how the partnership has worked. The team obtained data from various sources, including the Corridor management plan, annual reports, and other documentation of accomplishments and leverage, and used a variety of participatory techniques, including confidential interviews, meetings, informal conversations, and focus

groups, to engage and gather insights from key individuals. These included commissioners, board members of the Commission's nonprofit operating partner Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc. (D&L, Inc.), D&L staff, Corridor partners, individuals who played important roles in the Corridor's formation, and people with expertise in heritage areas and partnerships.

The study was carried out in three phases. Phase one involved data collection in the three main study areas identified above, followed by an analysis of the strengths and challenges that emerged from the data. In this phase individual team members worked primarily within their assigned study areas. In phase two the team began a joint, iterative process of synthesis in which each member shared insights from his or her phase one analysis. Through joint analysis of the study data, the team refined its understanding of the D&L partnership system and identified ingredients that are critical for sustaining and enhancing this system in the future. In phase three the team identified and analyzed options and opportunities for sustaining and enhancing the D&L partnership system. While the focus of each phase was distinct, the three phases were closely linked through the team's collective synthesis, and the findings for each phase were refined through the process of iterative analysis as the study progressed. For more on the study methodology, see appendix A.

### B. The National Context

There is growing realization by Congress, the National Park Service, and the public that heritage areas are an important direction in conservation. There are currently 27 national heritage areas across the country, and legislation is pending in Congress to designate at least 17 new ones and study eight more for possible designation.

With the number of national heritage areas potentially about to double, in 2004 National Park Service Director Fran Mainella asked the National Park System Advisory Board to examine the future of national heritage areas and their relationship to the National Park Service. The board, composed of 13 citizens with various kinds of expertise and a commitment to the mission of the National Park Service, has the statutory responsibility to advise the NPS director and the secretary of the interior on policy and program matters.

After a year of deliberations, the board's Partnerships Committee reported its findings and recommendations. The report finds that among other things, "The national heritage area approach, with its complex but essential networks of relationships and ability to leverage resources for resource conservation and economic and community development, can serve as a model for achieving NPS conservation goals with multiple partners. The process, key elements, outcomes, and impacts need to be identified and better understood." The report also recommends investing in research "to better understand the process of collaborative conservation and partnership networks, and to better evaluate the outcomes of designation and partnership on resource conservation and community economic development over time." Finally, the committee recommends establishing a legislative foundation for a system of national heritage areas within the National Park Service, including a policy requiring a study three years prior to the cessation of federal funding authorization to make recommendations regarding future NPS involvement.<sup>3</sup>

The D&L Sustainability Study and a similar study completed a year ago by the Conservation Study Institute for the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission offer a model for how such studies might be conducted.

### C. Organization of the Report

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

- Section I continues to set the context for readers, with a retrospective on the origins of the Corridor (chapter 2) and a description of the current management framework (chapter 3).
- Section II, Assessing the D&L Corridor Partnership, presents the results from the phase one analyses, including a discussion of accomplishments and leverage (chapter 4), an analysis of the existing management framework (chapter 5), and a discussion of the D&L partnership system from the perspective of the partners (chapter 6).
- Section III, The Future of the D&L Corridor, describes the critical ingredients of the D&L partnership system (chapter 7) and presents options and opportunities for the future of the D&L Corridor, including management considerations (chapter 8) and other considerations (chapter 9). Chapter 10 presents closing thoughts.

To minimize confusion regarding terminology and acronyms used in this report, readers are encouraged to consult the glossary of terms that begins on page 75.

The Lehigh River flows along the western boundary of Hickory Run State Park.



<sup>3</sup>The advisory board's report, *Charting a Future for the National Heritage Areas*, is currently in publication and will be available at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas> in early summer 2006.



Scenes along the Delaware Canal near New Hope have long delighted the eye.

## Chapter 2

### *Establishing the D&L National Heritage Corridor*

The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor was established because of its historical significance in America's early industrial expansion, its stories of human ingenuity and entrepreneurship, its social and cultural heritage, and the lessons of environmental devastation and recovery that are present in the region's landscape. The Corridor's national designation came about because of the vision, leadership, and hard work of many people and organizations. This chapter examines the Corridor's significance and the history leading up to its designation.

#### **A. The Heritage of the D&L Corridor**

When the efficiency of anthracite coal for both domestic and industrial purposes was demonstrated in the early 1800s, the abundant deposits in the Corridor's northern reaches sparked the development of the Lehigh Navigation System (comprising a network of mountain railroads and a canal along the Lehigh River) and the Delaware Canal along the Delaware River. The construction of this transportation system to bring anthracite coal to the growing industrial markets in Philadelphia and other coastal cities dramatically changed the region's landscape and its people. With a new transportation system in place, industry sprang up in what had been primarily an agricultural landscape and it did not take long for the Lehigh Valley to be trans-

formed. By the mid-1800s the valley had become the nation's leading iron-producing region, and in 1873 the Bethlehem Iron Company made the transition from iron to steel. Although iron making was dominant, other industries—portland cement manufacturing, slate quarrying and processing, textile manufacturing, and zinc processing—were also important during the Corridor's industrial prominence.

Also important to the heritage of the D&L Corridor are the stories of the communities that grew up around the mines and the transportation route, and of the people who have lived and worked in this region dating to precolonial times. The industrial heritage overlies an earlier story about principles of tolerance, respect, and individual freedom that were personified by William Penn and characterized the culture of the fledgling state of Pennsylvania. The social and legal reforms that Penn put in place drew people of many backgrounds to the area. Native Americans, the early European settlers, and the immigrant workers who came during the Industrial Revolution have all contributed to the ethnic diversity that still characterizes the Corridor region and its rich cultural heritage today.

A third aspect of the Corridor's heritage relates to its scenic and recreational importance and the

In Wilkes-Barre, an early twentieth century miner's family dressed for a wedding celebration.



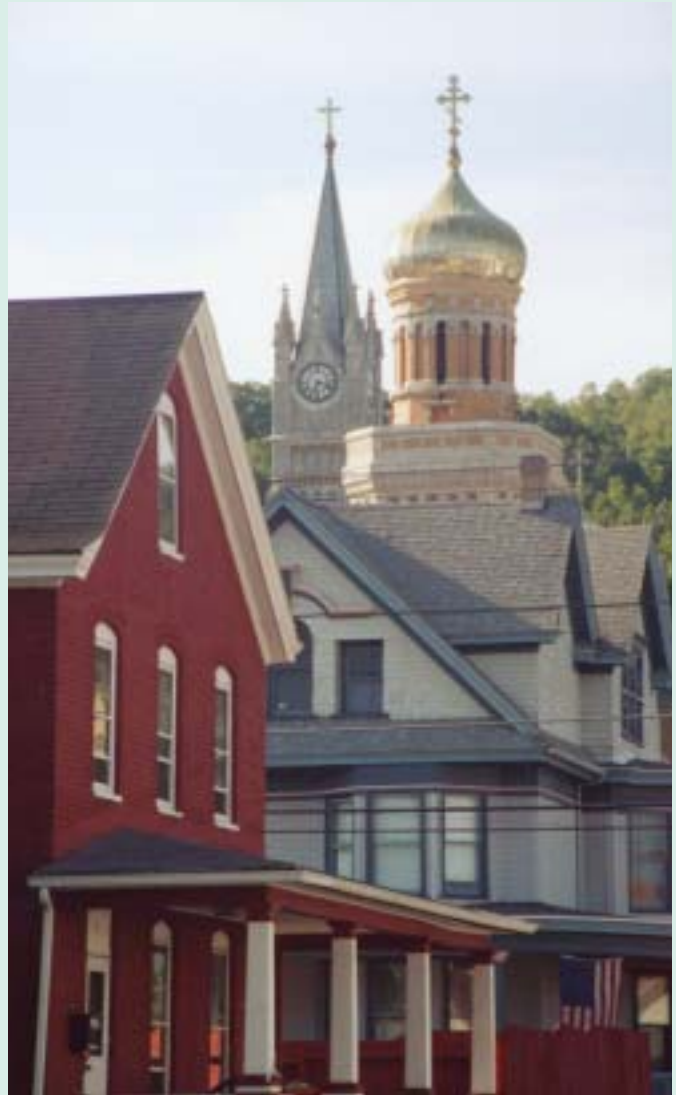
lessons to be learned regarding restoration and recovery of the landscape. The resource extraction and processing that were part of the 1800s industrial boom led to a despoiled landscape and polluted waters in many areas, with the impacts still evident in some places today. However, as forests have grown back and water pollution laws have brought improved water

quality, the Corridor region has become a destination for people seeking high-quality recreation. In some areas where the impacts of pollution are still visible, efforts are underway to restore the landscape. (See page 33 for one example.) The importance of these cultural, natural, and historic resources led to the Corridor's designation as a national heritage area.

## The National Significance of the D&L Corridor

The early nineteenth-century system of railroads, rivers, dams, and canals, devised to move anthracite coal from the mines to the markets, forms the central "spine" of the Corridor. The system, remarkable in its time for its engineering, daring, and vision, is equally remarkable today for its endurance and integrity. The Corridor contains nationally significant and intact cultural, natural, and recreational resources that tell stories of the early social development in America, the anthracite coal mining era, the Industrial Revolution, the development of canal and rail transportation, and the regeneration of natural resources. Some highlights include the following:

- The Corridor contains sites that represent the earliest practices of the principles that became the foundation of the American Constitution: religious freedom, the separation of church and state, mutual responsibility between government and the people, and equality. The region was a destination for immigrants during the nineteenth century, and the landscapes, towns, and traditions created by the more than 50 ethnic groups that settled here are still intact.
- The scale of the anthracite industry that began here (and still continues) resulted in numerous technological and commercial innovations that transformed American business and industry. The system built to transport coal was so efficient that the Delaware and Lehigh canals were the longest- and last-operated towpath canals in America, with navigation continuing until 1942. Most of the historic elements are still intact.
- Along with the story of the historic exploitation of natural resources, the Corridor also illustrates the natural and cultural forces for regeneration that have given value to the Corridor today as an outstanding recreational and scenic resource. The region contains more than 100,000 acres of public land, including many state, county, and local parks. In addition to the D&L Trail that traces the historic transportation route, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and five other national recreational trails traverse the region. The Corridor's historic resources are enhanced by exceptionally scenic settings along wide rivers and in gorges, mountains, agricultural valleys, and small towns.



- Along with nine state parks, three state historical sites, 14 state scenic rivers, and 20 state game lands, the Corridor contains 13 national historic landmarks, two national natural landmarks, and hundreds of sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

—Excerpted from *Delaware & Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor and State Heritage Park Management Action Plan (1993)*.



Construction of the Delaware Canal was a major development for Bristol's economy.

---

*There was a lot of interest from the environmental community, and from people who cared about the preservation of history: ...local historical societies, local environmental groups, friends of the canal, you name it. There was a wide variety of individuals and groups who gave this the energy and the focus and the direction that it needed.*

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## **B. The Origins of the Corridor Partnership**

To understand the factors and players who were instrumental in the Corridor's designation and to capture the thinking about the heritage area approach in its early years, the study team interviewed four people who were leaders in the early formation of the D&L Corridor. Re-visiting the formation of the Corridor through the eyes of its pioneers enabled the team to explore the forces that contributed to the Corridor's creation and provided a lens through which to view its progress since establishment. The interviews also provided an opportunity to probe the relationship of the Corridor's designation to the national heritage area movement and the formation of the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program, and to understand the early roles of current partners.

Efforts to preserve the Delaware and Lehigh canals began as early as 1931 when Lehigh Coal and Navigation, Inc. (LC&N), transferred 40 miles of the Delaware Canal to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Over the years, as LC&N transferred additional segments of canal into public and private hands, the declining condition of some sections caused residents to voice their concern to local leaders. Many of these people had a working connection with the

canals, and found value—environmental, recreational, aesthetic, and historical—in the canal system. Concerned with threats to the integrity of these waterways, some residents took action into their own hands. In 1978, the nonprofit organization Friends of the Delaware Canal helped the canal to achieve national historic landmark designation.

The National Park Service first acknowledged the canal system when it documented the national significance of the Delaware and Lehigh canals in a 1977 National Urban Recreation Study. However, in the early 1980s the National Park Service declined the Commonwealth's offer to transfer ownership and management of the Delaware Canal to the NPS because of high maintenance costs and the lack of a formal study of this proposal.

Throughout the 1980s, as preservation, parks, and recreation leaders within Pennsylvania discussed the Delaware and Lehigh canals, their ideas about the future of the region gradually merged. The thinking of these leaders was informed by visits to the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical



Camelback steam locomotives were used for local hauling around coal and rail yard operations.

Park, and Lowell National Historical Park, where they saw the impacts of NPS involvement on the preservation of historic canal resources. These leaders adapted their observations to the D&L region, where the concept of “regionalism” and its inherent possibilities led to new collaborations between the state, the NPS, and neighboring jurisdictions such as Lehigh and Northampton counties.

In 1988, the NPS and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania sponsored a seminar in Scranton to discuss the idea of a heritage approach in the Lackawanna Valley that would represent the resources and themes that were related to, but not included in, Steamtown National Historic Site. The meeting brought together economic development, historic preservation, trails, and parks experts using a heritage area approach elsewhere in the U.S. with practitioners interested in adopting this approach in Pennsylvania.

The meeting strengthened political support for heritage areas in the state and has been credited with influencing the formation of the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program.<sup>1</sup>

Bipartisan support from key members of Congress was critical to the D&L Corridor’s national designation. Congressman Peter Kostmayer, a Democrat, first became involved in 1984 in response to constituent requests to “do something” about the condition of the Delaware Canal in Bucks County. He learned about options for conserving canals from congressional colleagues with national heritage corridors and urban historical parks in their districts. Congressman Don Ritter, a Republican, became involved through an economic development initiative to create a Lehigh River heritage corridor. As pressure from their constituents grew in breadth and intensity, Congressmen Kostmayer and Ritter joined efforts and championed

<sup>1</sup> The Lackawanna Valley became Pennsylvania’s first state heritage park in 1991, and was designated by Congress as a national heritage area in 2000.

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*The team effort...it's amazing, the hands on this one—the local leaders and public, the experts from around and from afar, people from Congress, the Senate, Pennsylvania, NPS—a core of people with expertise and visions, and the skills. ...When you look at who touched this...I think those folks are the reason that this effort was successful.*

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legislation to establish a heritage corridor that encompassed the canals along both the Delaware and Lehigh rivers. After the Scranton seminar, in 1988 Kostmayer and Ritter, along with the state, supported a heritage conference in Bethlehem that focused specifically on the D&L region, which influenced the movement of the D&L's federal legislation through Congress.

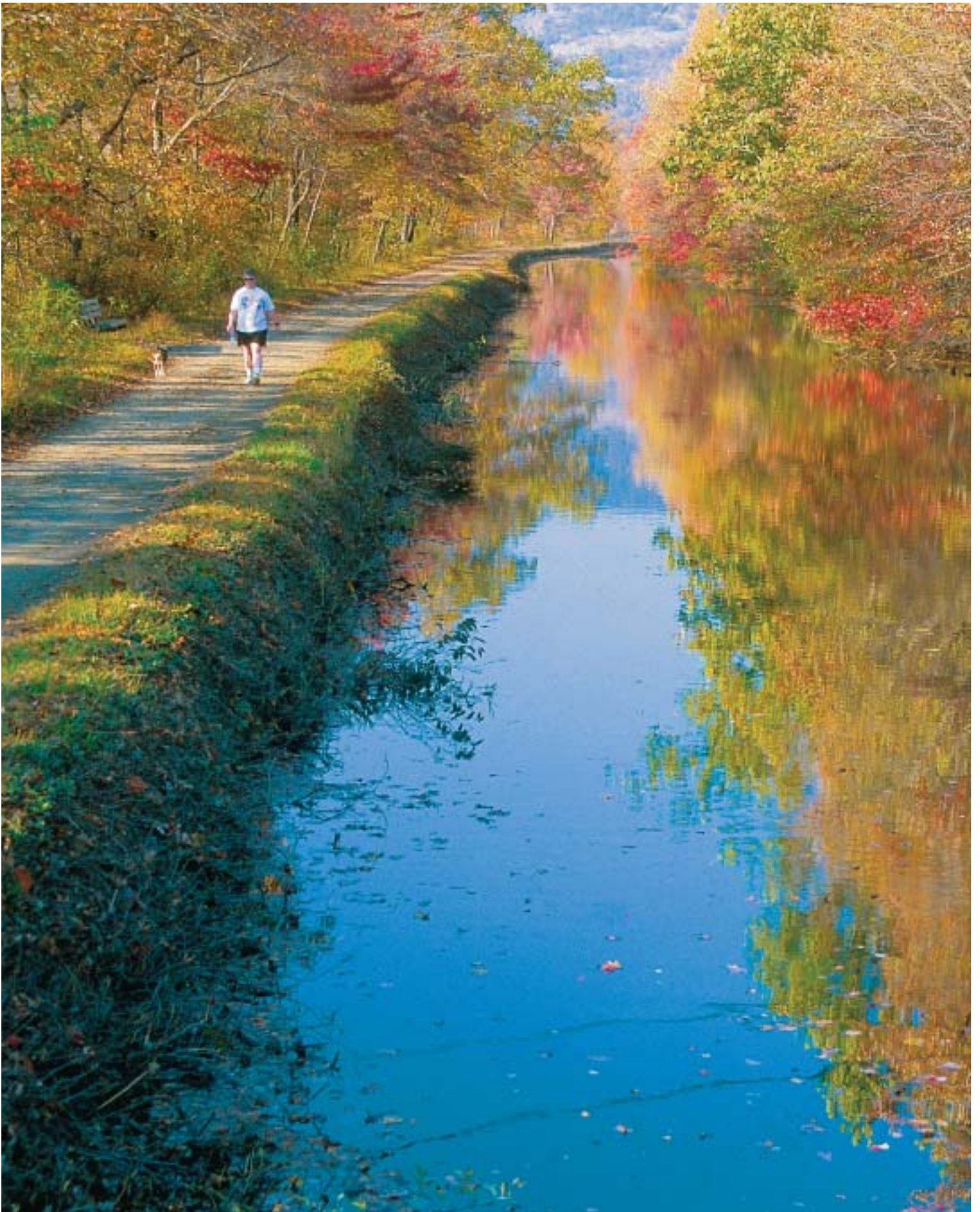
In addition to local activism and federal and state leadership, another motivating force for the D&L's national designation was the inherent quality of the resource. As one interviewee described it, "It helps if the resource has a strong, iconic image, an image that people relate to." The Corridor's visible reminders of the past made many residents strong advocates for preservation, and their support made the designation and subsequent management planning process clearly a public priority and effort.

After Corridor designation, the National Park Service played an integral role in working with

partners and residents to develop a management action plan that remains a model for heritage area planning 13 years later. An NPS official involved in the Corridor's formation and initial years characterizes the NPS role in the public planning process in this way: "We were a partner, but we didn't want to be the dominant partner. We didn't want to dictate. ... More often than not, our role was more to facilitate than to be a seat at the table..." NPS expertise and facilitation were very helpful in empowering local participants in the newly formed heritage corridor to define the Corridor's boundaries and historical themes, the resources it would preserve, the stories it would tell, and the network of partners it would involve. The planning process, although at times arduous, built a consensus among local leaders and residents that created buy-in and a solid foundation of public support for the Corridor. The management plan that local individuals and organizations created to carry out their collective vision for the future remains a relevant, guiding document to this day.



The dam at White Haven was popular with local swimmers and created hydro-electric power.



Local partners maintain towpath and trail including this stretch of the Lehigh Canal near Walnutport.

# Chapter 3

## *The Existing Management Framework for the D&L Corridor Partnership*

A central purpose of the D&L Corridor’s authorizing legislation was to establish a management framework to facilitate implementation of the Corridor initiative. That framework, as refined through subsequent legislative amendments<sup>1</sup> and the Corridor’s 1993 Management Action Plan, consists of several interrelated components:

- purpose, vision, and mission;
- geographic scope;
- management entity;
- partners;
- funding and other forms of support.

Each of these components is summarized below.

### **A. Purpose, Vision, and Mission**

The starting point for the Corridor’s management framework is the *purpose* for which the Corridor was established, as articulated in the authorizing legislation: “[...] preserve and interpret for the educational and inspirational benefit of present and future generations the unique and significant contributions to our national heritage of certain historic and cultural lands, waterways, and structures within and surrounding the Delaware and Lehigh Navigation Canal...”. The 1998 amendment also specified an additional purpose of “enhancing economic development within the context of preservation.”

Building on these purposes, the Management Action Plan identified a “multi-faceted *vision* of what residents and leaders want for the Corridor” that emerged from the extensive public dialogue during the planning process. The vision includes the following elements:

- “A region that becomes even more strongly defined by the remarkable remnants of our history, and that becomes even greener, with towns centered on clean rivers;
- The continuation of the innovative capacity that has always characterized the Corridor, a capacity that ensures a healthy environment and a visible heritage for us and our children;
- A robust economic future that is based on the desirability and rarity of our singular natural and cultural environment, a park-like setting;

- Pride and an ethic of stewardship growing in the heart of every resident—we will understand the meaning of what we have, and act to uphold it.”

To achieve that vision, the management plan laid out the following *mission* for the Corridor initiative:

- “To conserve the historic canals and amplify the recreational and educational opportunities based on them;
- To broadly tell the story of the region by strengthening the infrastructure for interpretation and education;
- To establish a framework for stewardship which will preserve significant historic sites, enhance recreation, and conserve the natural and cultural environments;
- To provide opportunities for capitalizing on heritage development.”

Together, these purposes, vision, and mission have provided the basic guiding direction for the work that has occurred through the Corridor initiative since its establishment.

### **B. Geographic Scope**

The area included in the Corridor is another basic building block of the management framework because it defines the geographic scope of the resources to be addressed and the political jurisdictions and public constituencies that need to be involved in management. Based on the direction of the authorizing legislation and further refinement in the management plan, the Corridor stretches for 165 miles through five counties in eastern Pennsylvania (Luzerne, Carbon, Northampton, Lehigh, and Bucks), from Wilkes-Barre in the north to Bristol in the south. Altogether, there are more than 200 municipalities in the Corridor, ranging from small townships and boroughs to some of Pennsylvania’s larger cities. The Corridor’s geographic extent is illustrated in the map on page 4.

<sup>1</sup>Public Law 105-355 (November 6, 1998) and Public Law 108-199 (January 23, 2004).



Diverse natural areas and unique geological formations make Hickory Run State Park ideal for outdoor education.

### C. Management Entity

For every national heritage area, the federal authorizing legislation identifies an organization that is given lead responsibility for coordinating the initiative and for developing and implementing a management plan. This “management entity” is a central component of the overall management framework. The D&L Corridor’s authorizing legislation created the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Commission to serve in this capacity. The Commission has 21 members who represent key governmental agencies and stakeholder interests across the Corridor.<sup>2</sup> Its members are appointed by the secretary of the interior based upon recommendations from the governor. The Commission was originally authorized for ten years, but received legislated extensions in 1998 and 2004. Its authority is now due to expire in November 2007. In addition to being the federally authorized management entity, the Commission has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program as the manager for the D&L State Heritage Park.

While the Commission has served as the official management entity since the establishment of the Corridor, participants recognized early on that a strong nonprofit partner was needed to assist the Commission and potentially serve as its successor. As a result, the nonprofit corporation Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc., was established in 2002, and the Commission and D&L, Inc., have been working in tandem ever since. They formalized their partnership for implementing the Corridor initiative through a cooperative agreement in 2003.

The Commission and D&L, Inc., currently share a staff of seven full-time and four part-time employees. The staff covers a range of disciplines, expertise, and functions, including planning, facilitation, community and economic development, resource conservation, historic preservation, volunteer coordination, and administration.

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<sup>2</sup> The Commission’s membership was adjusted in the 1998 amendment to the Corridor’s authorizing legislation to include the following interests:

- Three representatives of state government, specifically from Pennsylvania’s Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Department of Community and Economic Development, and Historical and Museum Commission;
- Eight representatives of local government, including one each from a city, a borough, and a township, and one from each of the five counties;
- Nine representatives of the general public, including three each from the northern, central, and southern regions of the Corridor;
- The director of the National Park Service or a designee.

The Corridor’s authorizing legislation gives the Commission certain powers to carry out its responsibilities. As with all other national heritage area management entities, the Commission has the authority to receive, use, and distribute federal funds that are appropriated for the initiative. It also has a variety of administrative authorities (e.g., to hire staff and consultants, hold hearings, receive and use donations, enter into cooperative agreements with other governmental agencies and private organizations, establish advisory groups). The Commission can acquire land and property, but only by gift, devise, or purchase from willing sellers using funds specifically given for that purpose. In addition, it must transfer any property it acquires under these terms to an appropriate public or nonprofit entity as soon as practicable. The Commission does not have authority to regulate land use or acquire land through condemnation (i.e., eminent domain).

#### D. Partners

The Corridor initiative is fundamentally a regional partnership involving all levels of government, private organizations, and individuals to achieve the wide-ranging purposes, vision, and mission. Following is a brief summary of the ways in which each broad category of partners is involved in the effort.

##### I. State government

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is the lead state agency in the Corridor partnership. DCNR has

been deeply engaged in Corridor activities in a number of different ways, including:

- Managing Lehigh Gorge and Delaware Canal state parks, which together encompass nearly half of the Corridor’s spine;
- Providing financial and other support through the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program;
- Offering grants, technical assistance, and other services for conservation and recreation initiatives;
- Participating as a designated member of the Commission.

Several other state agencies are also actively involved in the Corridor initiative. Most notably, these include the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), and the Department of Transportation (PennDOT). These agencies have lead responsibility for many activities related to Corridor goals (e.g., managing state historic sites, implementing economic development programs, building infrastructure), and also provide staff assistance and/or funding to other collaborative projects within the Corridor.

##### 2. Federal government

The Department of the Interior and, more specifically, the National Park Service hold lead responsibility on behalf of the federal government for assisting the Commission, D&L, Inc., and their partners. The secretary of the interior

Delaware and Lehigh River Sojourns offer paddlers an opportunity to discover the D&L’s waterways.



is responsible for appointing commissioners, and federal funding appropriated specifically to the Corridor initiative flows through the NPS Heritage Partnership Programs. The NPS has provided varying levels and types of technical assistance and staff support to the initiative since its establishment, particularly planning and interpretive assistance. The NPS also participates through its designated membership on the Commission.

Other federal agencies (e.g., the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Highway Administration) also are involved in some activities related to Corridor goals, such as environmental restoration projects, canal maintenance, and transportation infrastructure development. In addition, the authorizing legislation requires all federal agencies to consult and cooperate with the Commission and the secretary of the interior (i.e., the NPS) regarding any activities affecting the purposes of the Corridor initiative and, to the maximum extent practicable, to ensure that those activities are consistent with the management plan and the legislation.

### 3. Municipal and county government

The five counties and the multitude of municipalities in the Corridor have lead responsibility for many activities related to Corridor goals (e.g., managing local parks and historic sites, implementing local regulations, building infrastructure), and participate in other collaborative projects within the Corridor. They also provide the overall Corridor partnership with vital knowledge of the needs, priorities, and concerns of local residents, businesses, and organizations. Because of these important roles, local governments have eight designated seats on the Commission, or more than a third of its membership.

### 4. Nongovernmental partners

Organizations and individuals outside of government, including nonprofit organizations, businesses, and Corridor citizens, are also central to the partnership. These partners have lead responsibility for many initiatives related to Corridor goals (e.g., managing sites, economic development planning, providing education and interpretation), and contribute to other collaborative projects and programs within the Corridor. Although specific nongovernmental entities do not have dedicated membership on the Commission, the nine regionally based seats provide a mechanism for the representation of these interests.

### E. Funding and Other Forms of Support

As alluded to elsewhere in this chapter, support for the Corridor initiative comes from all levels of the partnership and in a variety of forms (financial support, staff time, in-kind contributions, volunteer involvement, etc.). Indeed, this dependence on a breadth of support and participation is a fundamental aspect of the D&L partnership model, and of national heritage areas in general.

The primary sources of direct financial support for the Corridor initiative are federal funding through the NPS Heritage Partnership Programs budget and state funding through DCNR's Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program. In accordance with the 1998 amendment to the authorizing legislation, federal funding is authorized for up to \$1 million per year for operations of the Commission and up to \$1 million per year in fiscal years 2000 through 2007 for implementation of the management plan. Federal funds appropriated for these purposes require at least a 1:1 match from other sources. Matches can be in financial or non-financial form. As shown in figure 3.1, from fiscal years 1989 through 2005 actual annual federal appropriations through the NPS Heritage Partnership Programs budget ranged from \$329,000 to \$844,000 and totaled \$7.56 million overall.<sup>3</sup>

During that same period, annual appropriations to the Corridor initiative through the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program ranged from \$150,000 to \$829,000, with total program funding to the Corridor of \$6.59 million. (See figure 3.1.) These funds have been provided through grants for a variety of purposes, ranging from early planning and Commission operations to the implementation of on-the-ground projects called for in the management plan. Grants of up to \$100,000 per year with no matching requirement (either cash or in-kind) have been provided for heritage park management (i.e., to support the operations of the Commission and now D&L, Inc.). Grants for planning, studies, and implementation projects require matches from other public and private sources of 25 to 50 percent of the total cost, and these matches must be in cash rather than non-financial form.

The Commission and D&L, Inc., distribute a substantial amount of the NPS and DCNR funding to Corridor partners through re-granting programs for various implementation projects. (See chapter 4 for further discussion of these programs.) For example, in 2005 a total of \$269,750 in DCNR and NPS funding was awarded to partner organizations.

<sup>3</sup>In FY 2000, an additional \$462,000 was provided through the NPS construction budget.

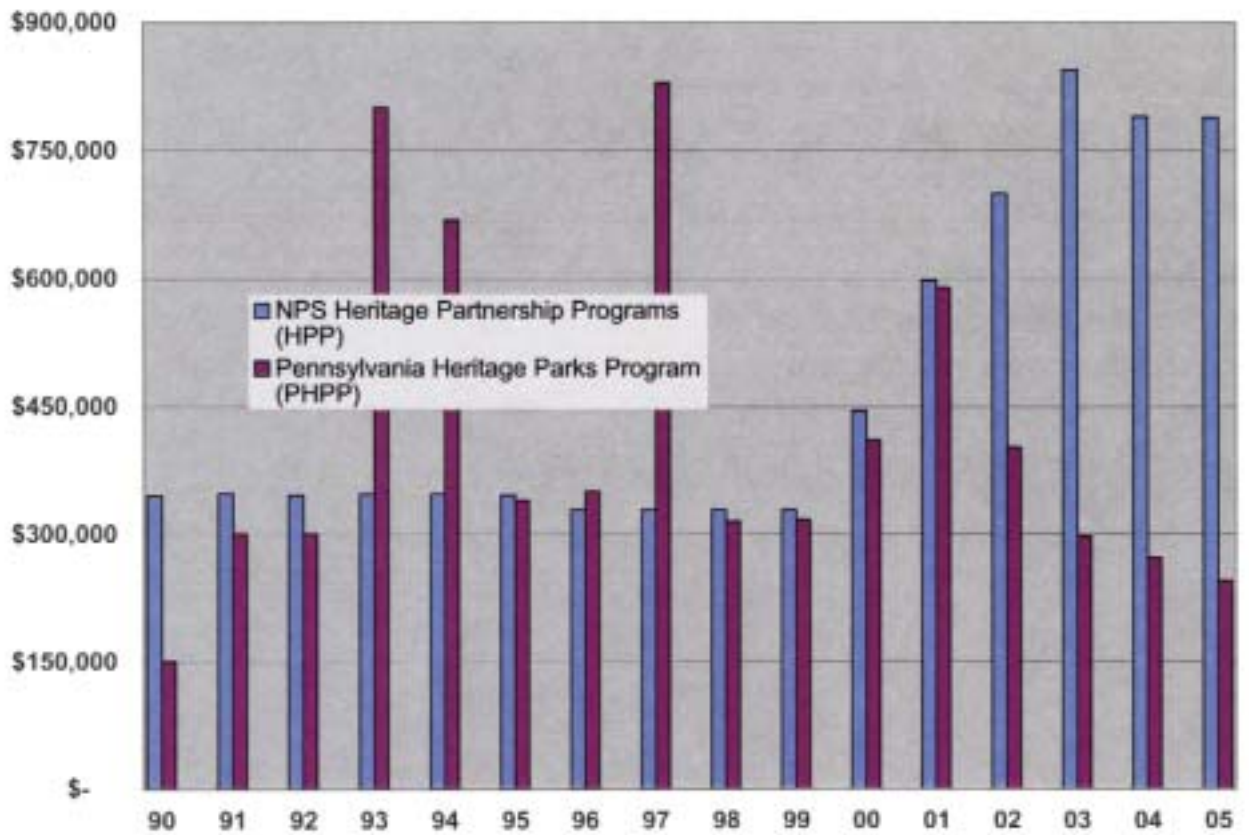


Figure 3.1. NPS and DCNR funding for the Corridor initiative, 1990–2005

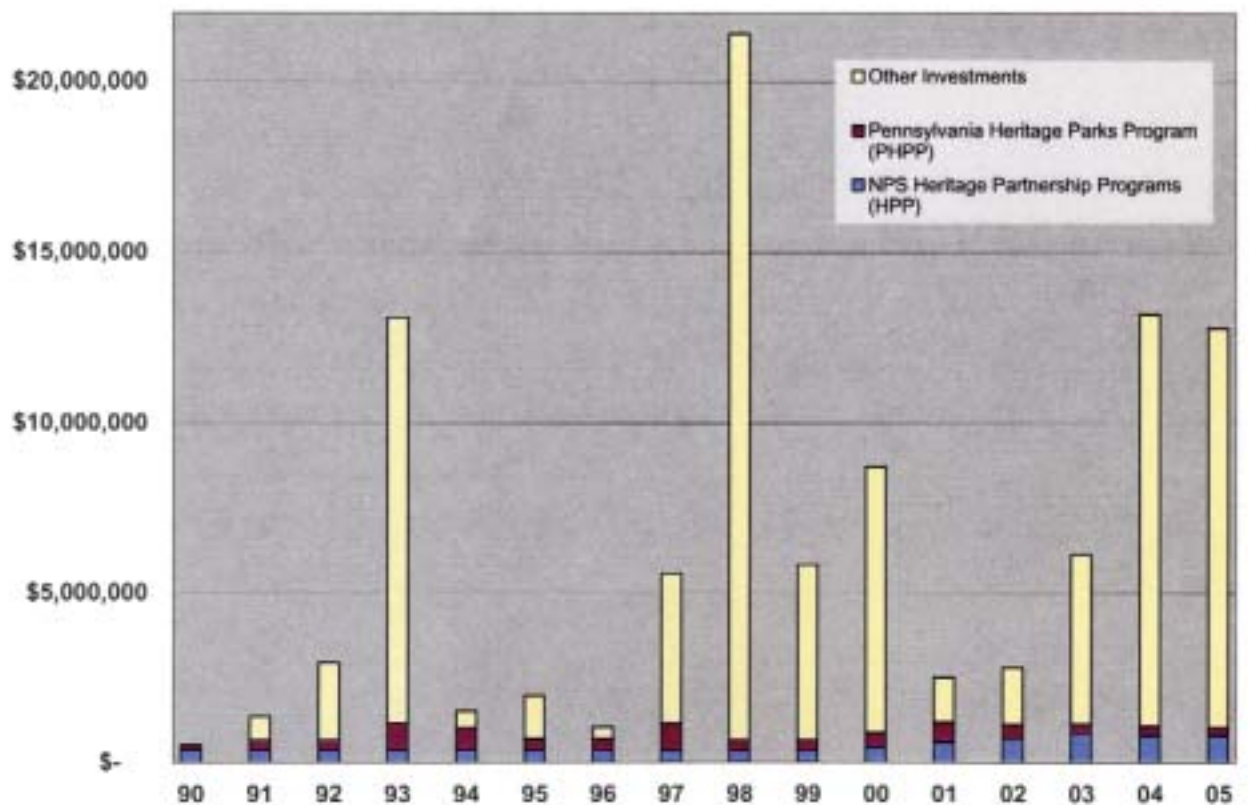


Figure 3.2. Total funding for the Corridor initiative, 1990–2005

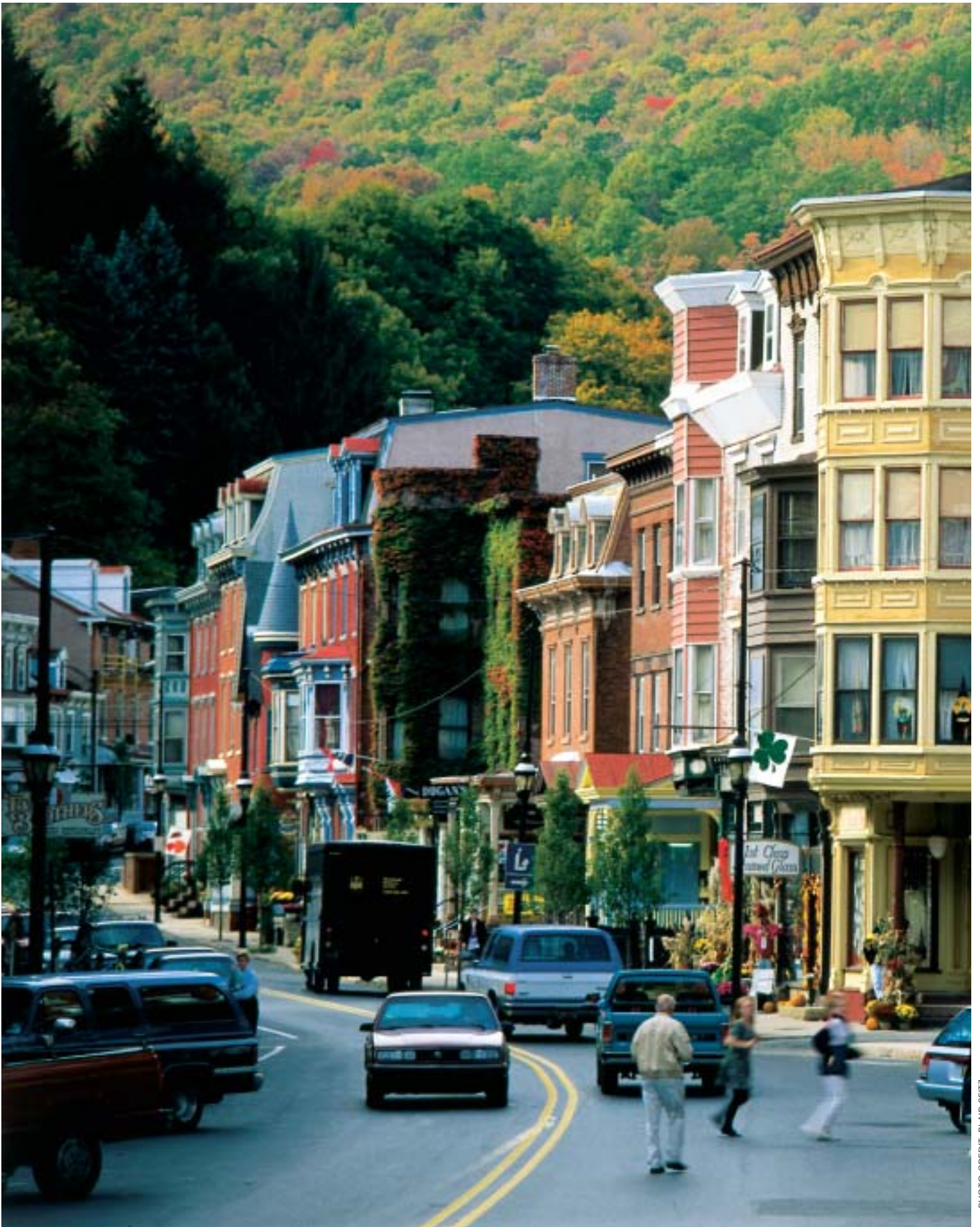


PHOTO CREDIT: BLAIR SEITZ

Jim Thorpe's main street is part of a National Historic District.

# SECTION II: ASSESSING THE D&L CORRIDOR PARTNERSHIP

## Chapter 4

### *Pursuing the Corridor Vision: Progress, Accomplishments, and Leverage*

Individuals and organizations involved in developing the Management Action Plan of 1993 agreed to pursue a set of 175 strategies for accomplishing the purposes stated in the D&L Corridor's legislation. Corridor management has addressed many of these strategies through hundreds of projects and programs. The investments of D&L partners in these activities have created impressive financial and non-financial impacts.

Several methodologies were used to document the D&L Corridor's progress toward accomplishing its vision for the future. This chapter describes the progress of the initiative through:

- an overview of management plan progress;
- observations on the D&L Corridor's progress and accomplishments;
- program and project highlights;
- investment and leverage in the D&L Corridor;
- influence on the regional economy and heritage tourism.

#### **A. An Overview of Management Plan Progress**

The Management Action Plan of 1993 refers to strategies as "actions" that will accomplish the purposes stated in the D&L Corridor's legislation. In the context of the plan, each action describes an approach or a concrete project that the partnership should implement. Project-specific actions direct the Corridor partnership to, for example, "work with partners to design and develop an Easton landing." Other actions, such as "support river and canal access improvement projects," have a broader intent and require a range of projects or programs to complete. The Corridor partnership has addressed a number of both project-driven and broad-based actions with a wide range of partners and various levels of investment. Overall, the Corridor partnership has divided its attention consistently among the southern, central, and northern regions, as well as Corridor-wide, but this was not always the case. In the early years, almost half of the projects initiated were in the central region. As a result of the growing partner network, however,

project locations now span the geographic breadth of the Corridor.

A closer look at the 175 actions included in the management plan reveals that Corridor management has succeeded in addressing 145, or 83 percent, of them. More than half of the actions addressed are Corridor-wide in scope, making their implementation more logistically challenging and time-consuming than individual local projects. Even so, the D&L Corridor has already addressed 92 percent of the Corridor-wide actions in some way. Corridor management's involvement in some of these actions will continue indefinitely. The project team rated individual actions according to their level of completion<sup>1</sup> and found that 67 of the 145 projects addressed are considered "ongoing." For example, Corridor management involvement in actions such as "implement the Corridor-wide interpretive plan" will never be completed. In addition, 88 percent of the 67 ongoing actions are Corridor-wide in scope. The D&L partnership has invested heavily in Corridor-wide actions that will require ongoing commitment to maintain their achievements to date.

The management plan organizes the actions into four categories (or priority areas): navigating, understanding, conserving, and enriching. More than a third of the actions focus on understanding (i.e., interpretation), of which a third have been completed and only a few remain to be addressed. Conservation activities are more challenging to complete because most involve coordination on a Corridor-wide scale and a long-term commitment, such as "assess the state of water quality in the Delaware and Lehigh watersheds." Of 53 conservation actions outlined in the management plan, 5 have been completed, and 37 are in various stages of completion.<sup>2</sup>

The passage of time has played a role in the continual expansion of the Corridor management's responsibilities and program focus. Early in the development of the Corridor initiative, the focus was on management and interpretive planning

<sup>1</sup> Actions were rated "completed," "ongoing" (e.g., actions that have no anticipated completion date), "underway" (e.g., actions that have a proposed completion date or product, such as an interpretive plan), or "no activity."

<sup>2</sup> Figure B.1 (appendix B) provides a more in-depth illustration of the D&L Corridor's progress toward implementing the actions outlined in its management action plan.

and small formative projects (partly because the partnership was in an early stage of development and partly because of the influence of key individuals). Following this initial phase, the focus was on implementing and expanding existing projects and programs. In the last six years, Corridor management has concentrated on addressing the remaining management actions, building staff and partner capacity, and making small, strategic investments across the four priority areas, with most projects addressing multiple priorities (i.e., navigating and conserving). Of the more than 160 projects and programs undertaken since management plan implementation began,<sup>3</sup> at least 132 have been active at some point in the past six years, and more than 100 have been initiated since 1999.

These projects and programs vary in their scope and in their level of staff involvement. They also vary in their impacts on the region and on the Corridor partnership itself. As discussed later in this chapter (see section 4.C), some activities have affected the way Corridor partners engage with D&L management, with one another, and with the Corridor's resources.

### **B. Observations on the D&L Corridor's Progress and Accomplishments**

The characteristics that follow are often evident in the Corridor initiative's most successful activities. These observations emerged from a broad review of activities that the D&L initiative has undertaken and a detailed examination of selected projects. They are useful to keep in mind as D&L management reflects on its accomplishments and thinks about how to build on its achievements.

**Projects and investments often address multiple objectives.** All of the D&L Corridor's activities address objectives in at least one of the major categories in the management plan (i.e., navigating, interpreting, conserving, enriching), and they often cross multiple categories.

**Projects benefit from opportune timing, availability of resources, and partner readiness.**

The concurrent availability of resources (e.g., funding, willing and visionary partners, staff expertise) has been critical to many successful projects—i.e., the right people came together at the right time and the money was there to make things happen.

**Some projects benefit from the passage of time.** Over time, relationships develop, new technologies become available, and new and unanticipated opportunities arise that create windows of opportunity for advancing larger, more complex, Corridor-wide initiatives.

**D&L Corridor successes create demands for staff assistance, a situation that requires careful consideration of how to invest staff time and expertise.**

As the D&L partnership has undertaken new projects and expanded its reach, Corridor management is increasingly selecting projects that minimize staff investment and maximize impact—e.g., providing grants and training that shift the responsibility for implementing activities to partners. The staff's ability to identify strategic investments with high potential impacts has been honed by years of working in the region and knowledge of the strengths and limitations of various partners.

The Wyoming Valley Levee System provides an opportunity for recreation and interpretation.



<sup>3</sup>Figure B.2 (appendix B) inventories projects and programs that have been implemented to address management plan actions.

Partnership was crucial to re-opening the No. Nine Mine in Lansford as a visitor attraction.



**Partner capacity varies across the network, and building capacity is a continual challenge.** Some partners are strong and have substantial capacity, while others are more limited. As D&L management has expanded its reach and focused on shifting responsibility to partners, its staff has provided more training and mentoring to those partners most in need. While initially a time-consuming investment, this support strengthens the partner network over the long term.

**The staff has played multiple roles and demonstrated flexibility in response to project needs and partner capacity.** D&L management often assumes different roles (as funder, advisor, mentor, connector, facilitator, and expert) over the life of a project. The staff assists with projects at all scales and geographic locations, and identifies and fills gaps in financing or partner capacity to get projects done.

**Individuals in D&L management act successfully on their intuition.** Leaders in D&L management who know the region intimately challenge others to see the growth potential in new opportunities. The maintenance of strong and open relationships has been critical to making their intuition and vision effective.

**Long-term, trusting relationships with partners have contributed to the Corridor initiative's success.** The Corridor partnership has benefited from the long-standing involvement of key people over the years and the movement of staff members and leadership among partner organizations. Trusted personal relationships transcend job changes, and can lead to new partnerships and lay the groundwork for new projects.

**Projects often result in partners' increased understanding of the Corridor's resources.** To gain early consensus on the direction of a project, D&L staff members encourage people to share and discuss their project visions and find ways to integrate them. This consensus-based planning approach can change partners' understanding of and relationship to Corridor resources, as they see their ideas incorporated into projects that are larger in scale and positive impact than they initially imagined.

**PHPP and NPS funding have been critical to facilitating projects.** Annual PHPP and NPS investments, which together have provided more than 14 percent of the Corridor partnership's total funding, have been essential to implementing projects and strengthening the partnership's ability to leverage other funding sources. The funding available for individual grants and projects, however, continues to be dispersed more thinly as the Corridor initiative takes on more activities.

**Corridor management's ability to leverage resources has been critical to project implementation.** Most projects have leveraged financial and non-financial resources far greater in value than Corridor management's initial investment.

**Geographic balance and a multidisciplinary focus keep a diverse set of partners engaged throughout the Corridor.** Integrating local and regionwide priorities and using conservation, development, and interpretation strategies help the partnership maintain political and programmatic support Corridor-wide. These approaches encourage residents and local leaders to align their goals with those of the Corridor initiative to improve the region's well-being.

### C. Program and Project Highlights

Following are descriptions of several programs and projects that illustrate the characteristics described above. Collectively, these activities span all three phases of the D&L Corridor’s existence, reflect both Corridor-wide and local-

level work, and describe the range of approaches used by the D&L initiative to address management plan actions. These activities also illustrate the impacts of Corridor initiatives on the region’s resources, people, and organizations.

Program or Project	Management Plan Actions Addressed	Geographic Scope	Time
<b>Visually and Graphically Speaking</b> Project example: Wyoming Valley Levee Trail	Navigating, understanding	Corridor-wide	1995–present
<b>Corridor Market Towns</b> Project example: White Haven Engine House	Understanding, conserving, enriching	North and north-central	2000–present
<b>Two Rivers Landing</b>	Understanding, enriching	Central	1994–1996
<b>Municipal Assistance for Conservation</b> Project example: New Hope parking lot	Conserving, enriching	Corridor-wide	2000–present
<b>D&amp;L Trail/Trail Tenders</b>	Navigating, understanding, conserving	Corridor-wide	1988–present
<b>Lehigh Gap/Wildlife Information Center</b>	Navigating, understanding, conserving	Central	2004–present

Figure 4.1. D&L project highlights: time, disciplinary, and geographic distribution

### Visually and Graphically Speaking

#### Project description

In 1995, with guidance from an NPS interpretive specialist, the Corridor partnership created “Visually Speaking,” a graphic identity and interpretation system with design and production guidelines and standards for interpretive panels, directional signage, publications, and printed materials. The system establishes a Corridor “look” and helps visitors and residents navigate and appreciate the region’s natural, cultural, and historic resources. Additional graphic standards were added in 1999 and the system is now called “Visually and Graphically Speaking” (VGS). Partners interested in using the D&L Corridor’s graphic identity may request technical assistance, including editing, fact-checking, and design review. D&L management approves the final design to ensure that the D&L Corridor “look” is consistent and remains distinctive. Small grants are available to fund content development and sign production.

#### Project impacts

Throughout the Corridor, approximately 200 wayfinding and interpretive signs have been

installed. More than 34 publications have been produced, including two audio tours and a 150-page book, *D&L Trail, Towns, and Culture: The Stone Coal Way*. The VGS plan is widely considered a model for guiding successful regional interpretation. The requests for assistance in using the D&L identity package have increased in recent years, which should lead to enhanced visibility and recognition of the Corridor initiative and the thematic connections among sites across the region.

#### Corridor partnership investment and leverage

*Corridor management:* \$120,000 for the original plan, technical assistance, training in end-product visualization, and project coordination.  
*NPS:* technical expertise (1990–1999) with development of Visually Speaking guidelines and an interpretation and education plan, technical assistance, matching VGS grant funding.  
*DCNR:* \$160,000 awarded over four phases and re-allocated by Corridor management for individual interpretation and signage projects.  
*Municipal and nonprofit partners:* matching funding and project implementation.



The landscape of the Wyoming Valley Levee System.

## Visually and Graphically Speaking Project Example: The Wyoming Valley Levee Trail

### Project description

In the mid-1990s a Luzerne County engineer approached the Commission about installing a sign to provide rules for trail use along the Wyoming Valley levee, where the county had planned a 22-mile trail network as part of an Army Corps of Engineers levee restoration project. On a guided walk arranged by the NPS interpretive staffer working with the D&L initiative, naturalists and historians recorded nearly 80 sites for signage, which were paired with photos and stories provided by local residents. On seeing the proposed interpretive signs, the engineer, a descendant of anthracite coal miners, became convinced of their power to tell the regional story and persuaded the Army Corps of Engineers to fund their installation. The panels interpret the science and history of the levee system and its people along four themed routes.

Luzerne County continues to maintain the levee system, trails, and interpretive materials. The signs were reproduced in a commemorative book, *A Story Runs Through It*, to which the Commission contributed \$5,000 and Luzerne County Flood Authority contributed \$15,000. Other partners included the City of Wilkes-Barre, the Wyoming Valley Historical Society, and DCNR.

### Project impacts

The project introduced partners to the value of historical interpretation. It has fostered new relationships between D&L management and local authorities and has led to a new trail connecting the levee with downtown Wilkes-Barre, where the city has installed new historic waysides and a new visitor center. Currently, Wilkes-Barre is working with the D&L initiative on a \$10-million project to develop the “Susquehanna Landing,” a future Corridor visitor center.

Race Street in Jim Thorpe is home to several local artists.



## D&L Corridor Market Towns

### Project description

In 2000, the D&L Corridor partnered with DCED and the Pennsylvania Downtown Center (a statewide nonprofit), which together sought to pilot a regional Main Street revitalization approach. They introduced “Corridor Market Towns” (CMT), an initiative to help communities build local capacity for future planning and development projects that enhance downtown activity. The six pilot towns completed a visioning exercise to establish a community consensus for involvement and to help the D&L staff evaluate their readiness to undertake new projects. The D&L staff currently provides assistance with community visioning, preservation and tourism planning, façade and streetscape improvements, training, marketing, and program assessments. Mini-grants are available for downtown revital-

ization. Successful implementation relies on the readiness of towns to participate as lead partners in Corridor Market Town strategies, and, since the towns must request assistance, on public understanding of the CMT program and the benefits of participation. The staff’s professional expertise and creativity has greatly influenced the success of this pilot initiative.<sup>4</sup>

### Project impacts

Direct products include 279 individual projects and 137 facade renovations completed, underway, or planned. Since 2000, the six pilot towns have seen a net gain of 33 businesses. Grants awarded have leveraged up to 54 times their value (e.g., the Jim Thorpe historic train station rehabilitation received \$650,000 in Transportation Enhancements [TE] funding),<sup>5</sup> with an average leverage of 3.4 times the grant amount. The CMT initiative has been so successful

<sup>4</sup> More information on Corridor Market Towns can be found at <http://www.markettowns.net>.

<sup>5</sup> States receive Transportation Enhancements (TE) funding as a percentage of their annual Surface Transportation Program appropriation from the Federal Highway Administration. TE funding is reappropriated by each state for local projects that fit within one of 12 eligible categories related to surface transportation improvements. The program, created in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), was reauthorized in 1998 under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and again in 2005 under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

that Pennsylvania Downtown Center and DCED are implementing a similar small-town revitalization strategy in other regions of the state. The D&L program is now providing assistance to Corridor towns outside the original scope of the CMT pilot.

### **Corridor partnership investment and leverage**

*Corridor management:* technical assistance, mentoring, and fostering of partner relationships; mini-grants; funding for seasonal interns from Kutztown and Lehigh universities.

*Pennsylvania Downtown Center:* \$160,000 over four years.

*DCED:* \$80,000 over four years for staff support and façade improvement grants.

*DCNR:* matching funding of \$40,000 over two years.

*PennDOT:* TE funding.

*Carbon County:* Community Development Block Grant funding and other support.

*Boroughs of White Haven, Lansford, Jim Thorpe, Lehigh, Palmerton, Slatington, and Coaldale:* project leadership, financial and in-kind support and coordination.

*Pennsylvania Power and Light:* \$15,000.

*Heritage Conservancy:* planning and technical assistance.

*Kutztown and Lehigh universities:* provision of seasonal interns.

*Dozens of businesses, local organizations, and local government entities:* matching funding and in-kind support for CMT projects.

### **Corridor Market Towns Project Example: White Haven Engine House**

#### **Project description**

In 2003, the town of White Haven, which was

targeted for a D&L visitor center, was struggling economically following a 1980s fire that engulfed part of the downtown. Through CMT assistance, the D&L staff was able to facilitate resolution of some of the town's post-disaster issues while also forwarding Corridor goals. The assistance came at a critical time: the White Haven Area Community Library was looking for a larger venue, the borough had income from sale of the water company and wanted to create a visitor center, and a local contractor was selling a historic railroad engine house adjacent to a planned trailhead for the D&L Trail. D&L staff members assisted White Haven in holding stakeholder meetings that led to the borough's purchase of the engine house and a long-term lease for its use by the library and as a visitor center. The Corridor initiative helped to set the engine house within the broader regional story, and community partners came together around a very complex project. The volunteer-run library association secured funding from many sources, including a county bond issue (\$200,000), TE funding (\$350,000), DCNR (\$35,000), a PHMC Keystone Grant (\$90,000), and private contributions. Although the D&L staff continues to provide technical advice, the library association has embraced the project and become largely self-sufficient.

#### **Project impacts**

The White Haven Engine House will house a community library, visitor center, and exhibits that describe how the railroad met the canal. Librarians will provide visitor services and distribute tourism information. Since the engine house project, the D&L initiative has worked with White Haven on a streetscape improvement plan and an interpretive trail that links the downtown with the D&L Trail.

The former Lehigh Valley Railroad Engine House will include the White Haven Area Community Library and Visitor Center.



## Easton's Two Rivers Landing Visitor Center

### Project description

In 1994, with PHPP funds, the D&L Corridor studied potential locations in Easton for the Corridor's first "landing" or visitor center. What followed was an extraordinary confluence of events. Easton was suffering economically, but the newly elected mayor had promised down-

town revitalization and wanted to build a landing quickly. The president of Binney & Smith, Inc., a Lehigh Valley native, wanted to relocate the Crayola Crayon Discovery Center to downtown Easton as part of a downtown historic redevelopment strategy. As the landing study proceeded, outgoing governor Casey announced the availability of two capital budget programs for redevelopment assistance. An advisor to the governor encouraged the D&L initiative to partner with

Centre Square in Easton has been a gathering place since the 1700s.



The D&L's largest visitor center is located in downtown Easton.



Binney & Smith and Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums, Inc., to propose a project for a vacant downtown building that would house the Discovery Center, the National Canal Museum (a project of Hugh Moore Park), and a Corridor visitor center. With public support for the proposal, the city purchased an adjacent building and added to the proposal its plan to renovate the building for city offices. The joint project was awarded a \$2.8-million capital grant, and when Two Rivers Landing opened on July 4, 1995, Governor Ridge welcomed 40,000 visitors at a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

#### **Project impacts**

In its first year, the landing admitted 138,000 visitors. By 2001, Easton had gained a net of 43 businesses and almost 2,000 new jobs, with 39 new full-time jobs in the landing alone. The city garage was parking 67,000 cars annually, 10 times more than in 1995. Today, Two Rivers Landing, with 300,000 visitors per year, has anchored the redevelopment of downtown Easton, and existing sites have benefited from the increased visitation (e.g., in 1999 Hugh Moore Park experienced a twofold increase in canal boat ridership). While the project required little D&L funding, it put the D&L Corridor “on the map” and demonstrated that the partnership approach to preservation can create economic development.

#### **Corridor partnership investment and leverage**

*Corridor management:* \$38,000 for renovations to and exhibits in the National Canal Museum and Corridor visitor center, completion of the landing study, technical assistance and coordination during planning and construction.

*Pennsylvania:* \$2.8 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Grant.

*DCNR:* \$37,500 for the landing study, \$125,000 for the visitor center.

*DCA:* \$187,000.

*U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):* \$1.1 million.

*Binney & Smith, Inc.:* \$2 million.

*Easton Economic Development Corporation Loan Pool:* \$2.6 million.

*City of Easton:* funding and project coordination.

*Northampton County:* \$50,000.

*Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums, Inc.:* \$112,000 in fundraising.

*Lafayette College:* \$130,000 for exhibits.

## Municipal Assistance for Conservation

### Project description

In 2000, DCNR awarded the D&L initiative \$30,000 for small local projects that address conservation and preservation goals. The resulting Municipal Assistance for Conservation (MAC) program provides flexible funding for small technical assistance grants (under \$5,000) to help Corridor towns develop consensus on projects relating to local conservation and preservation. D&L staff members participate in the dialogue to ensure that residents discuss relevant preservation and conservation issues. In return for D&L assistance, recipient communities must commit to implementing their projects. Corridor management contracts with the Heritage Conservancy (a nonprofit partner) or a private consultant to facilitate stakeholder visioning along with assistance in creating a concept plan or sketch as a foundation for the next phase of the project. This assistance often leads to new design guidelines, streetscape plans, and development of public spaces. When the timing is critical, money and assistance can be obligated quickly through the MAC program to encourage a town to think more broadly prior to submitting a grant application or approving a municipal plan.

### Project impacts

The MAC program has enabled the D&L initiative to be more engaged locally and to demonstrate its commitment to small towns in the region. While the program is focused at the local level, the strategy encourages communities to think regionally and empowers them to develop their own projects. In five of the six grant instances to date, a follow-up plan or project has been implemented within six months of completing a concept or action plan.

### Corridor partnership investment and leverage

*Corridor management:* mentoring, technical assistance, and communications expertise; following MAC project completion, limited technical assistance including review of grant applications, networking, and preservation and fundraising advice.

*DCNR:* \$30,000, reallocated by D&L management in amounts up to \$5,000.

*Heritage Conservancy:* \$5,000 plus staff expertise.

*William Penn Foundation:* \$5,000.

*Recipient communities and organizations:* matching funding, hosting public meetings and visioning exercises, project leadership during subsequent planning and implementation activities.



New Hope residents and businesses take great pride in their properties.

The design of the Bridge Street Parking Facility has leveraged nearby interpretation and signage projects.



### **Municipal Assistance for Conservation Project Example: New Hope's Bridge Street Parking Facility**

#### **Project description**

In the first MAC project, the D&L staff challenged the town of New Hope to think more broadly about the canal heritage and environmental impacts as it considered the future of a public works storage area—the site of a proposed parking lot—adjacent to the canal and the historic Union Camp mill. With \$5,000 in MAC funding and D&L staff assistance, the town held a community visioning session that considered the ecological and social impacts of various parking lot alternatives. The concept selected included ecological drainage design principles, plantings of native plants and trees, and a D&L kiosk to orient visitors and interpret the nearby canal. After the visioning, New Hope secured and matched a \$333,000 HUD Economic Development Initiative grant to build the facility. New Hope also established a standing revitalization committee, giving the D&L initiative a seat, to foster the development of new projects. In 2003 the project won an award from the Bucks County Audubon Society for its environmentally friendly development.

#### **Project impacts**

The MAC program engaged residents in considering conservation values as a part of downtown planning and decision making. The community was able to see itself as part of a larger regional economic development strategy, and, as a result of the visioning process, has embraced the concept of heritage tourism as a way to provide a quality experience for residents and visitors. The project has leveraged several nearby improvements, including a new Canal Cultural Walk that will connect the parking lot to the downtown, renovation of the downtown visitor center, and directional signs to improve pedestrian and traffic circulation, all of which include VGS elements. The walk has received \$316,000 in TE funding.

Honey Hollow Environmental Education Center plays an important role in promoting harmony with the natural environment.



## The D&L Trail/Trail Tenders Program

### Project description

A top priority of Corridor management has been working to acquire and reconstruct privately owned sections of abandoned rail line in order to complete the entire 165 miles of the D&L Trail. Achieving its goal of 100 percent public access is a challenge, as the Corridor staff must engage with 31 separate landowners. Since 2004, the D&L initiative has provided workshops for trail owners, and future plans are to shift greater responsibility for trail maintenance and monitoring to residents and users of the spine. TE funding of up to \$2.6 million per project has been critical to the acquisition and restoration of some sections, especially in locations where road obstructions require building a pedestrian bridge or tunnel. In addition to acquisition, planning, and construction, the D&L Trail project includes use of VGS grants for wayfinding and interpretive signage and for promotional events. In 1998, D&L management, in partnership with the Wildlands Conservancy, helped create (and now coordinates) the D&L Trail Tenders, an all-volunteer organization responsible for trail construction and maintenance. In 2005, D&L management hired a full-time staff member to build the Trail Tenders' capacity and create outreach programming and training on trail maintenance and stewardship. Since 1998, approximately 5,000 Trail Tenders volunteers have participated in trail construction, native plant restoration, general cleanup, archeological

preservation and stabilization, and special events and celebrations.

### Project impacts

When the Corridor was designated, 80 percent of the spine was publicly accessible; now 98 percent has been secured for public access, and 82 percent of the trail has been completed. The trail is gaining recognition as an economic tool that generates recreation, tourism, and historic preservation activities. Marketing the trail and celebrating the completion of trail segments helps to generate public enthusiasm as the D&L works to complete it.

### Corridor partnership investment and leverage

*Corridor management:* acquisition, planning, and improvement of sections of the D&L Trail; funding for design and installation of interpretive signs; grants for planning, construction, and interpretation of structures including canal boats and lock houses; Trail Tenders coordination, educational programming, and internships.  
*NPS:* interpretation assistance through Visually and Graphically Speaking.

*DCNR:* funding for a full-time "circuit rider" to coordinate trail construction projects and secure funding and access.

*PennDOT:* TE funding.

*Municipalities:* landowners and trail maintenance.

*D&L Trail Tenders:* almost 30,000 hours of trail construction and maintenance; educational programming.

## Lehigh Gap and the Wildlife Information Center

### Project description

In 2002, the Wildlife Information Center, a small, nonprofit educational and research organization, was interested in purchasing and reclaiming three contaminated parcels along the Kittatinny Ridge for a wildlife refuge and a research and educational facility. The site, which contained three miles of the D&L Trail that was inaccessible under existing ownership, included diverse habitat with forested slopes, ponds and wetlands, cliffs, and savanna. The soil, however, contained toxic quantities of zinc, cadmium, and lead from past zinc smelting, and had been designated a Superfund site by the EPA. Viacom, Inc., the former owner of the smelters, was responsible for the cost of mitigation, but a restoration attempt in the early 1990s had been unsuccessful. The D&L staff provided guidance to the Wildlife Information Center on acquiring the land and helped it to connect with key organizations, including The Nature Conservancy and the Wildlands Conservancy, from which the center received grants and technical assistance for acquiring the land. While the center is a small organization, with some mentoring its staff easily grasped how to do a large-scale project and

readily took on new challenges, asking for D&L assistance only when necessary. Following acquisition of the parcels, D&L staff facilitated the design of the Lehigh Gap Wildlife Refuge master site plan, which includes educational and research initiatives and a 15-mile trail network. With assistance from Viacom's engineers and approvals from the EPA and other agencies, the center laid out 50 demonstration areas using EPA standards for decontaminating brownfields. An inexpensive revegetation strategy using native grasses is being followed to restore the landscape. The site is gradually regaining its habitat value as a stopover site for migratory birds, including raptors and songbirds.

### Project impacts

The project integrates multiple nature, recreation, and cultural conservation activities. Adjacent to state game lands, part of a proposed state greenway, and a critical piece of the Lehigh River watershed, the reforested landscape will improve water quality, reduce erosion, and encourage wildlife to return to the ridge. The project provides a useful model for landscape-scale conservation and restoration. Strip mines in the area need similar treatment, and the approach is one that inspires people in spite of the scarred landscape. The project also provides opportunities to link the D&L Trail with the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, nearby downtowns and county parks, and rail-trails currently under development. Having completed a \$900,000 campaign for land acquisition, the Wildlife Information Center has created an environmental education partnership with neighboring towns, through which it holds monthly educational events, including hawk watches, "HawkFests," field trips, and open houses.

### Corridor partnership investment and leverage

*Corridor management:* no direct financial investment; staff assisted with grant writing, funding advice, partner connections, and master site planning.

*Wildlife Information Center:* lead partner.

*Viacom, Inc.:* mitigation costs and engineering expertise.

*The Nature Conservancy of Pennsylvania:* \$200,000 loan.

*DCNR:* \$33,000 for baseline ecological studies.

*Natural Lands Trust:* consultant.

*Wildlands Conservancy:* guidance with acquisition.



Annual raptor counts are taken along the Kittatinny Ridge.

#### D. Investment and Leverage in the D&L Corridor

As illustrated in the activities highlighted above, financial and other support from a broad range of partners is essential for implementing successful projects and programming. Through the NPS Heritage Partnership Programs and the DCNR Heritage Parks Program, the federal and state governments have made critical financial investments in the daily operations of D&L management and in specific projects and programs. Both organizations have also committed other resources, such as staff time and expertise. However, project planning and implementation usually require additional funding and resources beyond those provided through the NPS and DCNR.

NPS and DCNR investments in the Corridor initiative help to generate or “leverage” substantial funding and resources from additional federal,

state, local, and private partners, as illustrated in figure 4.2. “Leverage,” used as a verb, refers to the process of obtaining additional financial and/or non-financial commitments beyond the initial investment. “Leverage” can also be used as a noun, in which case it refers to the additional resources that are committed in response to the initial outlay. (Resources that are leveraged are also considered the “match” to the Corridor investment, as required in varying ways for NPS and DCNR funding.) For example, Corridor management invested \$5,000 in the White Haven Engine House project, which generated additional funding from the Borough of White Haven, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and PennDOT. Corridor management’s initial investment leveraged additional funding, and that funding is considered leverage.

In implementing the management plan, the Corridor initiative uses both financial and non-



The Walnutport Canal & Locktenders House provides a museum and picnic facilities.

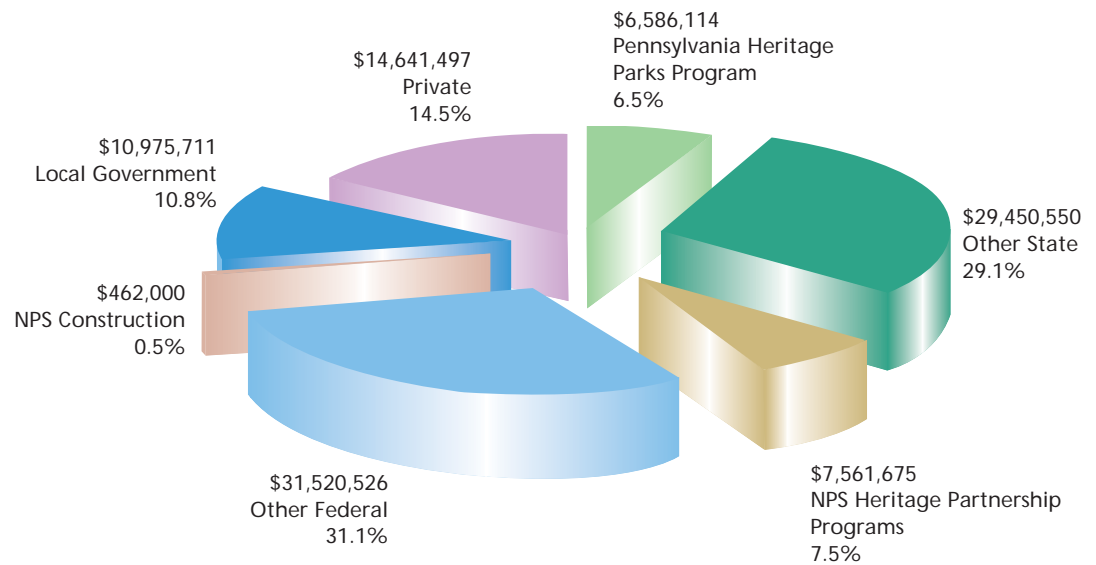


Figure 4.2. D&L National Heritage Corridor partnership funding (\$101,198,073 from FY 1989 through FY 2005)

financial resources and assets to leverage commitments from others, and these partner commitments can also come in financial and non-financial forms. The next sections explore further the D&L initiative's leveraging activities, looking at (1) leveraging financial resources, (2) leveraging non-financial resources and assets, and (3) indirect leverage.<sup>6</sup>

### 1. Leveraging financial resources

Since its establishment, Corridor management has documented the funding received from various sources for projects it has helped to facilitate (see figure 4.2). Through fiscal year 2005, the total federal investment of \$8.02 million provided through the National Park Service has leveraged nearly 12 times its financial value in direct funding from other sources. State funding totaling \$6.59 million through the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program has leveraged more than 14 times its value. As a whole, Pennsylvania state agencies have supplied more than 35 percent of the funding invested in D&L Corridor projects. These figures reflect funding for projects in which Corridor management had a direct investment and/or a leadership role. Not included are state, federal, and other investments in the region in which Corridor management has been integrally involved but has not played a leader-

ship role. For example, the \$9-million Two Rivers Landing project in Easton is included, but related projects (e.g., Easton public square, adjacent public buildings) totaling \$7 million are not. Also, the state invests substantial resources through separate mechanisms for management and operations of the Lehigh Gorge and Delaware River state parks, which together account for half the length of the D&L spine. Similarly, the costs associated with maintaining other state parks and game lands within the Corridor's boundaries are not included in these figures. Figure 3.2 (in chapter 3) illustrates how much the combination of NPS and PHPP funding has leveraged annually since 1990.

Grants administered by D&L management require a match but often leverage many times that amount in other funding and resources. For example, a Corridor Market Towns grant to restore the Jim Thorpe historic train station leveraged 54 times its value in other funding. The grant leveraged non-financial resources (e.g., volunteer time by partners to implement the project) as well. In 2005, the D&L awarded a total of \$550,500 in DCNR, DCED, and NPS Heritage Partnership Programs funding. Eight partner grants and 42 CMT façade grants were awarded, which leveraged \$11,500,000.

<sup>6</sup>The issue of leverage is complex and warrants a separate study and analysis. Findings from this study are largely descriptive, but could inform future research on this topic.

## 2. Leveraging non-financial resources and assets

Along with funding, the Corridor partnership uses other assets to secure additional financial and non-financial commitments. The partnership draws on, intentionally or otherwise, the status associated with the NPS and state designations; the connections that various partners have to sources of funding, expertise, and other resources; the region's history; personal or organizational connections and relationships; and association with the D&L Corridor identity. Sometimes the initiative utilizes its non-financial resources to generate financial commitments from project partners. For example, the involvement of Corridor staff in seeking National Register of Historic Places eligibility for the White Haven Engine House and connecting the library association with funding sources was crit-

ical in securing a significant amount of state and federal funding for that project. Sometimes the D&L initiative's investment of resources leverages non-financial matching commitments including partner staff time, in-kind support, and volunteer time. For example, Corridor management has invested staff time to coordinate the D&L Trail Tenders. This investment has been matched by financial contributions by partners as well as tens of thousands of volunteer hours to improve the D&L Trail. In addition, partners in study interviews described the project and partnership opportunities that the D&L's ideas, influence, clout, and credibility have created. (See chapter 6 for further discussion.) While it is difficult to quantify the impacts of non-financial investments and leverage, it is important to acknowledge their presence and their influence on the Corridor's residents and resources.<sup>7</sup>

William Penn's Delaware River home was reconstructed in the late 1930s.



<sup>7</sup> During this study, qualitative data on non-financial leverage was gathered through interviews with staff and project partners.

### 3. Indirect leverage

Indirect leverage, which exists in both financial and non-financial forms, is created when partners or recipients of assistance from the D&L partnership invest energy, money, and time in new activities as a result of being involved in or influenced by an earlier D&L partnership activity. For example, after receiving D&L assistance through the MAC program for its parking lot project, New Hope Borough is now investing money and staff time in creating an interpretive walk to connect the downtown and new heritage attractions with the canal. This investment by the borough in linking its resources and interpreting its history is an example of indirect leverage and demonstrates the ongoing influence of the Corridor partnership's expertise, vision, and promotion of the canal story.

#### E. The Corridor's Influence on the Regional Economy and Heritage Tourism

The complexity and scale of the D&L initiative make it difficult to determine the magnitude of its influence on economic and tourism activity in the region. Nonetheless, it is apparent that the D&L initiative plays an important role in generating regional economic development.

One relevant aspect is the economic impact of heritage-related tourism in the Corridor. In 2005, the D&L Corridor participated with four other national heritage areas in a study to estimate visitor impacts, based on the "Revised Money Generation Model" (or MGM2) used by national parks. This model provides a method for estimating the direct and indirect economic impacts of visitation to communities in heritage areas

based on the money that visitors say they spend when they visit the region's natural, cultural, and historic sites. Data collected from on-site visitor surveys was put through a computer model designed to generate the direct and indirect economic effects of visitation. The following results from the MGM2 analysis for the D&L Corridor are based on an estimated total of 3,876,980 annual visitors in 2005.

Direct effects of visitation within the Corridor:

- \$144.5 million in sales
- 2,304 jobs
- \$53.3 million in personal income from jobs
- \$81.3 in total value added

Indirect effects:

- \$236.1 million in sales
- 3,766 jobs
- \$87.4 million in personal income from jobs
- \$138.3 million in total value added<sup>8</sup>

Direct effects of visitation are based on the direct economic impacts generated by visitor spending. Indirect effects represent the secondary impact of money and jobs on the regional economy. "Total value added" is the sum of personal income, profits and rents, and indirect business taxes generated by visitor sales and added to the local economy. While the extent of the economic impacts of heritage tourism directly attributable to the work of the Corridor initiative has not been established, the results provided above nonetheless demonstrate the clear significance of tourism to the Corridor's economy.

Mules tow passengers in authentic canal boats in New Hope and Easton.



<sup>8</sup> *Economic Impacts of Visitor Spending in National Heritage Areas*. West Chester, PA: Public Works, LLC, in press.



Hanover Township Canal Park.

# Chapter 5

## *Analyzing the Existing Management Framework*

As described in chapter 3, the legislation that established the D&L National Heritage Corridor created a federally authorized management framework to assist public and private partners in protecting and interpreting the region's heritage resources and fostering compatible economic development. With the existing framework due to expire in 2007, part of the sustainability study involved an examination of the framework's strengths and challenges as a precursor to considering possible options for the future. This chapter summarizes the findings of that analysis. The analysis draws particularly on meetings and conversations with commissioners, board members of D&L, Inc., and Corridor staff, as well as two focus group dialogues that were held during the study. Additional information on the methods and sources used in the analysis is presented in appendix A.

### **A. Purpose, Vision, and Mission**

The purposes, vision, and mission of the D&L initiative represent a broad and ambitious mandate—integrating interpretation and education, conservation, preservation, recreation, and economic revitalization, with a community-based focus that emphasizes the importance of the region's heritage and story. This broad mandate, which was directed by Congress in the authorizing legislation, helps to ensure the relevancy of Corridor programs and activities. It also provides a “big tent” for collaborating and building partnerships with diverse organizations and individuals. Moreover, it reflects a conviction that effective heritage conservation and development in the Corridor's lived-in, working landscape require an integrated approach across multiple disciplines, rather than a more traditional approach that might address each of these concerns independently. This broad yet integrated mandate is a fundamental strength of the D&L initiative.

Corridor participants recognize the importance of the economic development and community revitalization component within the overall mandate. Linking economic development with heritage conservation, recreation, and interpretation can open up a variety of opportunities that might not be available otherwise, such as:

- increasing the connection with local, state, and federal policy and funding priorities;
- bringing in public agencies, businesses, and

community organizations that might not see the relevance of a more narrowly focused effort;

- building support for other aspects of the mandate from those who may be primarily or initially focused on economic and community development concerns.

While the Corridor initiative's broad, integrated mandate is a key strength, it also presents certain challenges. It is a demanding agenda and, coupled with the realities of working through partnerships, it can be difficult and time-consuming to sustain progress on every dimension simultaneously. Moreover, while the Corridor partnership has made considerable progress with limited resources in a relatively short amount of time, it is clear that attaining the integrated vision outlined in the management plan is a long-term proposition. The breadth of the Corridor's mandate, the inherent challenges of cross-disciplinary work in a lived-in landscape, and the commitment to a partnership-based approach all require sustained energy, expertise, and resources over time if success is to be realized.

### **B. Geographic Scope**

The Corridor's substantial size and configuration (i.e., encompassing the five counties but with an emphasis on the long, linear spine) are a logical reflection of the initiative's primary interpretive themes, particularly the anthracite coal transportation story. This broad geographic scope presents some clear challenges to the cohesiveness of the Corridor and to successful implementation of the initiative over time, but also offers some important strengths and opportunities.

The challenges associated with the fact that the Corridor stretches 165 miles through five counties and hundreds of municipalities include:

- logistics (for instance, the inherent difficulty in convening meetings with stakeholders from throughout the Corridor, and the challenge of establishing and maintaining a meaningful staff presence across such a sizeable area);
- differing priorities and competition between different regions, counties, and municipalities;
- the time required to achieve meaningful results in such a large area, especially across all aspects of the Corridor's broad purposes, vision, and mission.

Multiple recreational opportunities attract visitors to Hugh Moore Park in Easton.



As a counterbalance to these challenges, the Corridor's size offers a variety of strengths from the greater energy, capacity, funding, and political clout that are available through a large regional initiative relative to a smaller one.

The anthracite coal theme offers a potential opportunity for the D&L initiative to link thematically with sites and organizations in the adjacent Lackawanna and Schuylkill national heritage areas, the Steamtown National Historic Site, and other nearby areas (e.g., the Morris Canal across the Delaware River in New Jersey) that are also associated with the anthracite story. While such collaboration could heighten some of the challenges mentioned above, it could enhance the overall interpretation of the story and reinforce some strengths associated with working at a large regional scale. (See chapter 8 for further discussion.)

### C. Management Entity

Overall, it appears that the Commission has been quite effective in its role as the Corridor's management entity, providing coordination and leadership that transcend political boundaries and span the broad scope of activities. Working with diverse public and private partners, and in recent years with its operating partner D&L, Inc., the Commission and its staff have been instrumental to the substantial progress toward Corridor goals and the leveraging of public investments that have occurred over the lifetime of the initiative.

(See chapter 4.) With this record of accomplishment and a perceived high level of professionalism, the Commission and staff have earned widespread respect among their partners and have helped to establish the D&L initiative as a leader in the heritage area movement, both in Pennsylvania and nationwide.

With the management partnership that now exists between the Commission and D&L, Inc., the Corridor initiative effectively has a joint management entity. Having the two organizations working in tandem has created a rather complicated administrative arrangement, but the process of getting the nonprofit up and running and coordinating its relationship with the Commission appears to have been fairly smooth. Most importantly, the combination of the two organizations has provided the Corridor initiative with the strengths and opportunities offered by each.

The Commission's federal standing provides stature, clout, credibility, and leveraging ability. Commissioners, staff, and partners note the importance of these attributes to such critical functions as securing funding, obtaining access to and having influence with key players (e.g., decision makers and regulatory agencies), and providing a widely accepted forum that brings diverse partners together. Also, with its legislatively specified representation of key interests, its evenhanded leadership, and its Corridor-wide

perspective, the Commission is seen as having an unusual and valuable degree of impartiality that helps to balance more narrowly defined interests.

Meanwhile, as a nonprofit organization, D&L, Inc., is less bureaucratic than the Commission and provides the Corridor initiative with enhanced flexibility and nimbleness in a number of areas, including:

- stakeholder representation (because the composition of the board is at the discretion of its members and not directed by legislation);
- fundraising capacity (because it is more readily able to access private support from individuals, corporations, and foundations and to generate revenue from sources such as real estate investments);
- staffing (because it is not bound by federal hiring procedures or personnel policies);
- longevity (because there is not the specter of a legislated sunset).

Together, the Commission and the board of D&L, Inc., provide more opportunities for the direct involvement of diverse stakeholder interests in the management structure than either could provide on its own. However, the com-

bined membership of both is not overly large given the broad geographic and disciplinary scope of the Corridor initiative.

While these strengths are considerable, the Commission and D&L, Inc., do have certain challenges and limitations. In particular, the Commission has struggled throughout its existence with what has been widely perceived to be a trying, time-consuming, and politically challenging appointment process through the federal government. The frustrations associated with this process have led many commissioners and some staff members to question whether the benefits of having a federal Commission are worth that effort. The Commission also has had difficulties with other administrative aspects of its federal status (for instance, regarding financial management and staffing), but these difficulties have eased as D&L, Inc., has taken on more responsibilities and other adjustments have been made. With respect to challenges associated with D&L, Inc., there is the potential for competition for funding and/or programming with other nonprofits that are working toward Corridor goals. Such competition, whether real or perceived, may be threatening to those other nonprofits, and could make it more difficult to build and sustain effective partnerships with them.



The shape of Bear Mountain provided the inspiration for naming Mauch Chunk.

The staff that serves the Commission and D&L, Inc., has clearly been an important factor in the success of the initiative thus far. The staff is hard-working, and has a number of attributes that are well-suited to the challenges presented by the Corridor initiative's broad mandate and partnership approach. These include an extensive knowledge of the Corridor, good relationships with key players, technical expertise, political savvy, energy, commitment, opportunism, skill at building connections across the diverse aspects of Corridor's vision and mission, and the ability to do a lot with limited resources. Also, the staff has grown very adept at capitalizing on leverage opportunities. In general, the staff's ability to navigate the highly complex, dynamic partnership system and integrate state and federal initiatives with the needs of other partners is one of the Corridor initiative's greatest current strengths.

The most significant limitation associated with the staff appears to be its small size relative to the geographic scale of the Corridor, the breadth of its mandate, and the number of existing and potential partners. Corridor participants generally acknowledge that the staff is stretched thin, although opinions vary about whether this is a priority for action or how best to address it.

Two other important factors in the D&L's success to date have been the consistently strong composition of the Commission and the board of D&L, Inc., and the sustained participation by a number of key individuals (including certain commissioners, board members, and staff) who have provided continuity and institutional knowledge. With respect to composition, in addition to ensuring the representation of key stakeholders as directed by the authorizing legislation, the Commission has had an effective mix of members with diverse and complementary skills, perspectives, and connections. The board of D&L, Inc., is similarly strong, and has expanded the circle of well-qualified individuals that are now involved in Corridor management. The sustained involvement of key individuals has had important benefits for partnership-building, leveraging, working effectively with key officials, maintaining a focus on the Corridor mandate, and learning from experience. The downside is that the Corridor initiative has become somewhat dependent on a handful of key individuals who will not be involved forever. With these factors in mind, it will be important for the Commission and D&L, Inc., to continue to recruit and nurture new leaders with the neces-

sary qualifications to help carry the initiative forward and build on past accomplishments.

## **D. Partners**

Involving a wide range of partners from the public and private sectors is a fundamental aspect of the heritage area model, and much of the D&L initiative's success to date has been due to the committed participation over time of many different organizations and individuals. Although relationships with certain partners have varied over the lifetime of the initiative, overall the D&L partnership appears to have functioned well and achieved far more than any of the partner entities or Corridor management could have achieved alone. The involvement of key partners in the D&L is examined further below, organized according to the different partner categories identified in chapter 3.

### **1. State government**

As the lead state agency for the D&L initiative, DCNR has been a critical anchoring connection.<sup>1</sup> Each facet of DCNR's involvement in the Corridor has contributed significantly to the accomplishments to date: its financial and other support through the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program, its management of Lehigh Gorge and Delaware Canal state parks, its technical assistance and grant programs for conservation and recreation initiatives, and its participation as a member of the Commission. DCNR has also played an important coordinating and catalytic role with other state agencies and partners. The agency's support for the Corridor initiative has been consistently strong, both from a funding standpoint and with respect to its working relationships. This is in part due to the sustained involvement of key staff members who understand and endorse the breadth of the Corridor mandate, and who have consistently worked within the system to further its success. Also, there is a fundamental alignment between many of DCNR's statewide priorities (as articulated most recently in its 2004 action agenda entitled "Shaping a Sustainable Pennsylvania") and those of the Corridor initiative. This includes a mutual emphasis on landscape-scale conservation, partnerships with the public and private sectors on planning and implementation, and promotion of compatible economic development and community well-being.

While DCNR's involvement is widely acknowledged by Corridor participants to have been overwhelmingly positive, a few considerations

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<sup>1</sup>Prior to DCNR's establishment in 1995, the Department of Community Affairs played a similar anchoring role on behalf of the state. DCA's support was instrumental in the Corridor initiative's formative stages leading up to and following its national designation.



Restored features enhance Delaware Canal State Park.

have been raised that are worth noting in light of its important role. First, there is concern that DCNR's support may not be assured in the future after key staff retire. Also, there is a perception of some internal competition between the Heritage Parks Program and other aspects of DCNR's operations, and a sense that some in DCNR do not fully recognize or understand the complementarity between heritage parks and the rest of DCNR's mission. These concerns are heightened by the lack of an underlying legislative framework for the state's Heritage Parks Program. In addition, like all government agencies DCNR's priorities continue to evolve, most recently with less emphasis being placed on the integrated approach of heritage development and more on open space, greenways, and trails. Given DCNR's anchoring role, such policy changes have implications for the Corridor partnership and its own priorities and strategies. On a more technical level, some Corridor participants noted the complexity of certain DCNR grant processes (such as the Community Conservation Partnership Program, or "C2P2"), which has discouraged some partners from seeking funding through these mechanisms.

Other state agencies have also made important contributions to the Corridor initiative. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and the Department of Community and Economic Development have participated in Corridor management through their seats on the Commission since its establishment, and each has been actively involved in various on-the-ground activities. (One good example is the Corridor Market Towns program, which, as described in chapter 4, has received essential financial and technical support from DCED and is seen as a model for other areas across the state.) Also, PennDOT has provided substantial funding and staff support to a variety of transportation-related projects that have furthered Corridor goals. At a broader level, Corridor participants suggest that the involvement of multiple state agencies (those mentioned above as well as others that have played somewhat lesser roles) creates opportunities for synergy and integration that extend beyond the normal purview of each agency individually, with the possibility of more substantial positive outcomes as a result.



Canal and river flow side-by-side through the Lehigh Valley.

There also have been challenges and unfulfilled opportunities associated with the involvement of other state agencies in the Corridor initiative. Some participants hope for PHMC to play a greater leadership role given the close alignment between PHMC's mission and many aspects of the Corridor initiative's mandate and activities. Also, there is a perception that there may be a need and an opportunity to more fully engage DCED in Corridor activities, and to further reinforce the importance of the economic development and community revitalization component of the Corridor mandate. Some participants cite challenges in working with the complexity of PennDOT programs, which in certain instances has contributed to lost momentum and diminished confidence regarding promising projects. For instance, the broader scope of transportation enhancement programs since the early 1990s has provided Corridor partners with an expanded opportunity to complete the D&L Trail. While PennDOT has been supportive of this vision and generous with transportation enhancement funding, the complexities of the TE program and differences in working with three independent district offices are confusing and sometimes frustrating. Also, the lack of a

statewide wayfinding system has prevented the D&L partnership from implementing a Corridor-wide wayfinding system.

More generally, there is no explicit consultation and consistency requirement for state agencies similar to that required for federal agencies. Establishing such a requirement could be a helpful means for ensuring that all state actions are in keeping with Corridor goals.

## 2. Federal government

As has been the case with DCNR at the state level, the NPS has been the critical anchoring connection for the D&L initiative at the federal level dating back to before its national designation. The Corridor's connection to the NPS provides stature, credibility, and a valuable association with the widely recognized and respected NPS "brand." The NPS affiliation reinforces the national significance of the D&L region and its story in the eyes of partners, residents, and visitors. Meanwhile, NPS staff assistance has provided important technical expertise and capacity, particularly for the Corridor's early planning and subsequent interpretive activities. Federal funding provided through the NPS Heritage

Partnership Programs has been critical for Corridor operations and management plan implementation. This funding, and NPS involvement more generally, is seen as an important factor in leveraging support and participation by others. The impact of NPS involvement in the Corridor has been amplified because its contributions have been complemented by the strong, sustained support provided by DCNR.

However, it should be noted that NPS support for the Corridor and its working relationships with the Commission and other partners have varied over time. Many study participants recounted their frustration at various times in the Corridor's history with certain aspects of NPS administration, including personnel procedures and requirements and the administration of federal funds for the Corridor. The Commission has sought to alleviate these problems by conducting personnel management initially through a nonprofit Corridor partner and now D&L, Inc., and by asking the General Services Administration to administer the Corridor's federal funds. In addition, some aspects of the interpretive assistance provided by NPS personnel who worked with the Corridor initiative were not always embraced by the more established partners. For instance, some

Corridor participants noted what they perceived to be inflexibility regarding issues of Corridor/partner identity and a resistance to the interpretive standards of others if they differed from those of NPS. While this issue was related in part to the involvement of NPS personnel, it is important to note that it was also tied to the broader challenge inherent in integrating the long-standing approaches of established partner organizations with the newer overarching programs of the Corridor initiative.

Other federal agencies have made important contributions with commitments of substantial funding and other assistance to Corridor projects—for instance, the Environmental Protection Agency's involvement in clean-up and mitigation of the Superfund site at Lehigh Gap (as described in chapter 4), the Army Corps of Engineers' support for interpretive signage on the Wyoming Valley Levee Trail (also described in chapter 4), and the Federal Highway Administration's funding for a variety of transportation projects under the TEA-21 program.<sup>2</sup> However, there appears to have been less engagement of other federal agencies as compared to similar situations elsewhere. Some Corridor partners note that there have been challenges in working with federal agencies.



Stewardship leads to opportunity and prosperity: an underutilized historic theater in Bristol is re-developed for mixed use.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter 4, footnote 5 on page 26 for an explanation of the TEA-21 program.



Residents can again enjoy paddling the peaceful Lehigh Canal.

Regardless, there may be value in working to cultivate relationships with key staff from relevant federal agencies (including those mentioned above and possibly the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Geological Survey) to open opportunities for future collaboration toward Corridor goals.

It is also important to note that, although the Commission has used it relatively infrequently, the consultation and consistency requirement for all federal agencies in the Corridor's authorizing legislation is an important tool for ensuring that all federal actions are in keeping with Corridor goals.

### **3. Municipal and county government**

The five counties and dozens of municipalities within the Corridor have been essential to the success of the initiative to date. Much of the work toward Corridor goals occurs at the local level, and the counties and municipalities provide vital on-the-ground capacity for managing and maintaining key resources, such as parks that encompass significant parts of the spine. Local and county governments have also contributed important financial and political support, and their investments have helped to leverage additional contributions from others. The multitude of local jurisdictions in the

Corridor makes it challenging for Corridor management to be consistently aware of and responsive to the needs and circumstances of each municipality. It is difficult to build and sustain effective relationships with so many different entities, particularly given the frequent turnover among elected officials and staff at the local level. In addition, many municipalities have very limited resources in terms of funding and staff and intense competing demands. There is often considerable competition and a lack of communication even among neighboring municipalities and among regions within the Corridor. These factors combine to present a significant challenge to developing and sustaining a consistent, effective local stewardship strategy across the Corridor. Among other things, time, patience, and sustained attention will be crucial to achieving further success at the local level.

### **4. Nongovernmental partners**

Nongovernmental partners in the D&L region (including nonprofit organizations, businesses, and local citizens) have been an indispensable component of the Corridor partnership system and its accomplishments thus far. They complement and enhance the work of the Commission, D&L, Inc., and governmental partners, and provide crucial energy, capacity, financial resources,

other support (such as volunteers), and advocacy on behalf of Corridor goals and initiatives.

The capacity of the D&L's nonprofit partners varies widely. Some are well-established and financially stable, with sufficient staff to pursue their missions effectively while also contributing toward Corridor goals; others struggle on a shoestring and are less able to make a significant impact. This variability in capacity requires Corridor staff to be adaptable in working with different organizations. Many Corridor participants agree on the need for additional attention to building partner capacity and leadership.

The sheer abundance of existing and potential nongovernmental partners presents an ongoing challenge to Corridor management in establishing and sustaining effective relationships. Given the Corridor's size and the breadth of its mandate, there will always be more potential nongovernmental partners than could become engaged in Corridor activities.

### **E. Funding and Other Forms of Support**

The substantial and sustained contributions of funding and other support from diverse public and private sources has been a fundamental strength of the D&L initiative and a significant reason for its success to date. The degree of state support, particularly through DCNR but also from other agencies, is noteworthy relative to that provided to similar initiatives elsewhere in the country.

The substantial federal funds appropriated through the NPS Heritage Partnership Programs and state funds appropriated through the DCNR Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program have been essential in supporting the operations of the Commission (and now D&L, Inc.), and advancing specific activities related to management plan implementation. By supporting both of these indispensable aspects of the Corridor initiative, the NPS and DCNR funds have been invaluable in helping to leverage substantial contributions (both financial and non-financial) from other partners. In many instances, a comparatively small investment of NPS and/or DCNR funds for visioning, scoping, planning, or staff support has resulted in contributions many times larger from other sources. (See chapters 4 and 6 for further discussion of this leverage.)

However, neither of these essential funding sources is assured year-to-year or over the longer term. This is due to the lack at both state and federal levels of (1) secure "base" funding for the D&L initiative itself, and (2) broader legislative authorization for the heritage area programs.

This absence of secure, relatively predictable funding presents challenges, both for year-to-year activities and for longer-term considerations such as strategic planning, implementation of multiyear projects, and staff retention.

Another important aspect of the NPS and DCNR funding is that they work in complementary ways. With the exception of its grants for heritage park management, DCNR funding through the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program is more restrictive than NPS funding because it is awarded for specific implementation projects and programs. In contrast, the NPS funding can be used for whatever purposes the Commission deems necessary. Thus, when looking to support a particular project or program, Corridor management typically considers PHPP funding first and then uses the more flexible NPS funding to fill in financing gaps, cover expenses that are restricted under PHPP policies, or support projects that the PHPP does not fund. Many projects ultimately rely on a combination of funding from both sources to get started and to leverage support from other sources.

The Commission's ability and commitment to redistribute to partners substantial amounts of the funding it receives through its grants programs has been important in the success of the Corridor initiative to date. As described in chapter 4, these grants have helped to support a wide array of on-the-ground projects that have contributed directly to the fulfillment of Corridor goals. In many cases, the grants have also helped to build the capacity of partner organizations, and to draw new partners into the initiative.

With respect to private funding sources, the Commission has had limited success in obtaining support from foundations, corporations, and individuals. Corridor participants suggest that this has been due mostly to a general reluctance on the part of these potential funders to give to a federal/governmental entity (i.e., the Commission), and in some cases to specific policies restricting donations to public entities. With the creation of the nonprofit D&L, Inc., the Corridor initiative is now better positioned to seek these sources, which could provide an important complement to existing funds. The nonprofit also offers the potential for revenue generation for Corridor activities through other mechanisms, such as real estate investments. In pursuing funding from these sources in the future, D&L, Inc., may want to look for opportunities to partner with other Corridor nonprofits as a way of reducing the likelihood of becoming a threat to them.



Many Corridor communities exhibit pedestrian friendly amenities that respect local history.

# Chapter 6

## *Evaluating the D&L Partnership System: The Partner Perspective*

This chapter focuses on understanding how the D&L partnership system operates from the perspective of Corridor partners. In other words, how do Corridor partners work with the Commission, D&L, Inc., and Corridor staff to deliver the accomplishments described in chapter 4? In what ways do Corridor programs, activities, and investments have an impact on partners (i.e., organizations and communities) in the D&L region? Are there opportunities for strengthening or improving the D&L partnership system in the future?

To explore these issues, the sustainability study team conducted research designed to understand how the Corridor initiative works from the perspective of D&L partners. Thirty partners were interviewed, including representatives from the business community, municipal governments, state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community leadership. Some of these partners have been connected with the Corridor initiative for many years, while others are new. The interviews were done in a highly confidential manner.<sup>1</sup>

In the discussion that follows, the findings are presented in two broad categories: perceived strengths and perceived challenges.

### **A. Perceived Strengths**

Analysis of interview data revealed four interconnected themes that characterize the perceived strengths of the Corridor partnership: (1) shared heritage: linking people to place; (2) collaborative framework; (3) anchoring connections; and (4) building a partner network. Collectively, these themes identify and explain the process by which the D&L partnership system works from the perspective of Corridor partners. Each theme is defined by three subthemes that articulate the different dimensions associated with each theme. It is important to note that the themes and their subthemes are interwoven tightly together.

#### **1. Shared heritage: linking people to place**

The notion of shared heritage serves to link people to place in the D&L region. In this way, shared heritage is an important organizing concept for the Corridor initiative's investments and

programming. This theme is defined by the following subthemes: (a) a story to tell, (b) thematic boundaries, and (c) a context for civic and community engagement.

#### **a. A story to tell**

Corridor partners emphasized the importance of preserving and telling the D&L heritage story. The story describes the rise, decline, and subsequent legacy of the Industrial Revolution in the D&L region. It acknowledges the impacts that this experience has had on the region's human and natural communities, while creating a meaningful context for Corridor programs and activities. One Corridor partner said it this way:

*Well, we're the result of the Industrial Revolution... The pollution that damaged the mountainsides was a direct result of the zinc smelting. And we're [now] dealing with the aftermath in terms of the pollution. But, we have worked hard to spotlight all of the positive things that the zinc companies did for our communities as well. So we're helping to tell that historical story and our current place in it, and that's extremely vital to what we're doing.*

For some partners, the Corridor's heritage story links geographically dispersed communities together. In this way, the story has the potential to serve as a platform for collaboration between communities and municipalities. For many partners, Corridor activities create the impetus for collaboration by providing a regional and integrated perspective:

*Well, I think the D&L<sup>2</sup> has awakened the area to the cultural, historic, and natural resources that are here. And as a result, they have had a tremendous impact. Without the Corridor, there would be far less happening in those areas... There are historical societies and there are organizations like ours that would still be doing things, but without the D&L, they would be on a lesser scale and also not connected in any way with each other. The D&L has brought it all together, so to speak.*

Several partners underscored the value in working with the Corridor initiative because of its ability to connect the story to local resources. In this sense, the story helps to create community development opportunities by giving meaning

<sup>1</sup> See appendix B for a full discussion of the research methodologies employed in this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> In this chapter only, "D&L" and "Corridor" are used in a generic way to refer to the Corridor initiative and staff, reflecting local and partner terminology.



Shad, striped bass and trout lure fishermen to the Delaware River.

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*No other organization has the ability to transcend boundaries right now the way that the D&L does. And because the Corridor's boundaries are thematic rather than political, it really is a very powerful tool for organizing these [efforts].*

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and texture to manufacturing infrastructure that may not otherwise be economically viable. One study participant described it like this:

*We're selling heritage—the concepts of heritage, history, and legacy. [This project] will transform our heritage into something that works for us, while respecting and valuing what it had been in the past. We'll be perpetuating the whole heritage aspect [of this place] through the restoration and redevelopment of this site.*

#### **b. Thematic boundaries**

Many partners emphasized the fact that the D&L's heritage and key interpretive themes transcend existing political and administrative boundaries. This encourages diverse partnerships across a wide spectrum of organizations because Corridor goals and activities reflect thematic interests rather than political agendas. As a result, Corridor management has become a relevant partner to a variety of nonprofit, business, and governmental entities because of its thematic focus. One Corridor partner explained it in these terms:

*No other organization has the ability to transcend boundaries right now the way that the D&L does. And because the Corridor's boundaries are thematic rather than political, it really is a very powerful tool for organizing these [efforts].*

For other partners, the thematic focus of Corridor programs and investments is instrumental in creating the necessary momentum for change. Some study participants described the direct ways that heritage can help build “political will” with community residents:

*To preserve what you have, you need hooks. We certainly want to take advantage of our history and not lose it. It kind of brings people together because everybody that's from this area has that same basic past. I believe one of the ways to get consensus...is look for places where people can agree, and build on that. “Heritage” is one of those places, and working with the D&L has helped me to understand the strength of this approach. Rather than [focusing on] what makes you different from me (i.e., Palmerton's a lot different [from] Slatington, which is a lot different [from] White Haven), we must realize that we've all got the Lehigh [region]. Building on that creates cooperation and a team spirit.*

The notion of shared heritage underpins and connects the complex mosaic of natural, cultural, and historic resources throughout the D&L region. For some, heritage provides a vehicle for

linking people to place. Others use heritage as the organizing principle for defining D&L resources in a regionally distinct way. One study participant described it like this:

*Well, I think [heritage is] the key thread that ties this whole regional approach together. It really is. The most common element that we have is our heritage and our culture, and there are significant resources all up and down the D&L National Heritage Corridor that connect those.*

#### **c. A context for civic and community engagement**

Heritage can play an important role in engaging communities throughout the D&L region. Several partners described how working with the Corridor initiative on a heritage-based agenda has helped to link the shared experiences of the past with a vision for community revitalization and development. One local official described how the D&L has done an exceptional job of creating the idea that there “is something much bigger” than simply an old canal “wandering through town.” This is especially important given the significant economic transformation that many of the communities in the region now face. A state official explained it in these terms:

*Well, I use heritage as a form of community revitalization and economic development. When the coal mines closed, all we were left with was a scarred landscape and all the jobs were gone. It was very difficult to attract a CEO into a region where your landscape has been literally deep mined and strip mined, and all of those holes were left unattended. It was very difficult to get a second look, and that's where the D&L has helped so much in the revitalization efforts. We have been working with the federal and state governments to get a lot of these abandoned mines filled, rehabilitated, and reclaimed in conjunction with trying to redevelop the downtown communities. With the D&L's expertise and help, we've come a long way. Today a lot of these communities look a thousand percent better.*

For other partners, heritage serves as a vehicle for engaging culturally diverse communities around a common set of goals. Working with the Corridor initiative has helped to identify the common ground that is essential for implementing community-based efforts. One local leader reflected on it like this:

*I use heritage a lot to leverage good feelings about the community, and when I say “heritage,” I include the D&L in my thinking. Heritage has important value for the community and what we*



Hugh Moore Park maintains a historic locktender's house, a reminder of the days when the Lehigh Canal was a working canal.

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*I use heritage a lot to leverage good feelings about the community, and when I say “heritage,” I include the D&L in my thinking. Talking about our heritage...gets results.*

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*have here is just outstanding – it includes Lebanese, Italian, African American, Jewish, Scotch, and Irish influences, to name a few . So we all use that. We like to talk about that because it gives people value in their lives, we believe, and it gets people empowered. I also believe [that understanding] heritage is part of the process for improving neighborhoods. Talking about our heritage not only engages community members in conversation, it gets results on the street when they know that they're helping to improve and protect the heritage of our community.*

Some study participants described how working with Corridor programs and staff has helped to connect “young people to our past.” Other study participants noted that the “historical and regional context” provided by Corridor programming was essential in creating energy for large-scale, ecological restoration activities. Ultimately, heritage may be about fostering a sense of pride and place. The Corridor initiative can play an increasingly vital role in the D&L region by telling the story of this landscape. One long-time Corridor partner reflected on it like this:

*Well, [heritage] is a strong way of connecting the residents of a community to the resources by telling the story. In the anthracite region it's a sense of pride. There are so many negatives associated with the scarring of the landscape and the historical abuse of immigrant populations as they came into this country to find work. But [heritage is] a way of connecting the history of individuals and their families and their ethnicity to the region to tell the story, which makes it extremely compelling. It benefits not only the residents of an area, but connects the story to families, friends, and visitors.*

## 2. Collaborative framework

Interview data suggest that the Corridor initiative serves as a framework for collaboration. This framework provides the opportunity and mechanism for different organizations to develop partnerships in the D&L region. This theme is defined by the following subthemes: (a) a shared mission; (b) cultivating partnerships; and (c) vision and leadership.

### a. A shared mission

Much of the Corridor initiative's value lies in its ability to engage a diverse set of partners in developing a shared mission for the region. In doing so, Corridor staff have helped residents find areas of mutual interest while facilitating dialogue between town officials, the business community, nonprofit organizations, state and federal government agencies, and a host of other partners. Study participants use words like

“facilitator,” “connector,” “networker,” and “nucleus” when describing the Corridor in this capacity. One local official explained the Corridor's impact like this:

*Working with the D&L has broadened my horizons. They have made me look at things that I knew I wasn't good at, and sometimes you tend to stay away from those. If you know somebody next door that's good at something that you're not, it affects you. Likewise, working with the D&L has affected me by broadening my horizons and giving me other things to look at and think about.*

In many instances, participation in this dialogue encourages organizations to redefine or readjust their ways of working. There are numerous examples in the interview data where study participants talk about ways in which Corridor programs have “broadened” their perspective. While individual organizations, businesses, and government agencies may still pursue their own objectives, these stakeholders are beginning to recognize the strategic advantages in working across multiple interests. One study participant reflected on it like this:

*Initially I was somewhat resistant to the federal government coming in...I thought it was just another fire drill. This type of thing had happened so often in the past. Now, after nearly 20 years, they're still providing the service and the support that we thought should come out of this [kind of] program, but so often doesn't. So, I've grown to appreciate them much more. I've grown to understand what they can do for us, and what we can do for them. And the partnership has grown as a result. We're now attacking some of these long-term issues from multiple angles and we're moving in the same direction. I have come to embrace the Corridor and I know what they can do for us. We now offer help to them wherever we can.*

Over time, these kinds of collaborative relationships may alter the way in which organizations and community leaders think about the future of the D&L region. For many study participants, their vision is now an inclusive, partnership-based approach that integrates economic revitalization, community development, and natural and cultural resource stewardship:

*I think what's important about the D&L is that it's taken the focus of the region and integrated all of the things that are important. They're able to bring the necessary players together (e.g., DCED, DCNR). They're able to bring more people to invest in it, which I believe at the end of the day makes people better stewards. People want to bike, walk,*

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

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*jog, hike, work, and live in an environment that's restored and friendly. All of us want things that are old to be new again, and [when] we get invested in that, hopefully we become better stewards.*

#### **b. Cultivating partnerships**

The Corridor initiative is unique in the D&L region, and the combination of its regional focus and integrated approach creates opportunities for robust partnerships. A number of study participants noted that having an entity (i.e., the Commission and now also D&L, Inc.) dedicated specifically to partnership building has been very effective. For some organizations, working with Corridor management has enhanced their ability to work in partnership while empowering them to think boldly:

*The D&L opened up a wider world of opportunity. [Working with] the D&L allows you to be more daring and creates the proper nest, or environment, for partnership building. The opportunities [created] by the Corridor allow you to think more expansively. You can be more daring, bigger, and better than what you could have been [on your own].*

For some partners, Corridor programs simply provide coordination in what otherwise might be an overwhelming and fragmented organizational environment. This provides smaller partners with the opportunity to connect their efforts with broader Corridor goals and initiatives. One study participant described the impact on her work this way:

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

Over time, Corridor programs and activities help build trust within a large and diverse partner community. As levels of trust increase, relationships that initially developed around specific projects evolve into long-term, strategic connections that integrate local goals into a region-wide vision. One study participant reflected on his connection to the Corridor like this:

*Initially we were not quite sure what their role was, but as we got to know them we gained a better understanding. Our trust level has increased dramatically and with that, of course, you get better communication and great interpersonal relationships. And then you start building on that, and it extends, certainly not only to our organization, but [also] to the other organizations in the area. So now I think of it as a partnership and a coopera-*

*tive relationship. Our project is only part of the whole effort, so, as much as we can, we support their initiatives on community-wide and region-wide levels.*

#### **c. Vision and leadership**

Nearly every study participant noted the role that the D&L staff plays in the Corridor initiative. Many study participants used words like “vision” and “leadership” when discussing the contributions of the Corridor staff to programs and projects. There is a strong sense among study participants that individuals on the Corridor staff “make a difference.” One study participant described the impact on his organization like this:

*It was unheard of to do what they did, and it was really thinking outside the box. Our organization, as much as we want to do that, doesn't always do so. However, working with the Corridor forced us because of their strong desire and push to do it. Knowing that the Corridor staff has the ability to [think creatively] really forced us to think outside the box.*

For other study participants, the Corridor staff serves as a kind of “critical friend,” providing vision and leadership during the formative stages of specific projects. This type of feedback not only improves project outcomes, but also builds trust while reinforcing the important role that community-based efforts play in the Corridor's regional mission. One study participant described the process like this:

*I don't think I realized the importance of the role that they would play in helping us to develop our project. Because of their initiative, talent, and great people, they have really generated an awful lot [of energy] for us. I didn't expect that. In the beginning, I wasn't sure how we would be a part of their big puzzle, and I didn't even know what I was doing. But now this partnership has developed, which allows me to call them at any time and say, “What about this?” or “We're trying to accomplish this, what do you think of it?” It's just great rapport that we have.*

Perhaps most importantly, Corridor staff help navigate a complex sea of state, federal, nonprofit, and private entities for many partners. One local official described the Corridor's role as providing “gentle guidance.” Another local leader explained that the Corridor's commitment to a “transparent process” was essential for sustaining their joint efforts. Study findings like these suggest that working successfully in multi-dimensional partnership environments requires

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*They've brought together various state and federal agencies to provide assistance to the smaller municipalities and regions that would not otherwise have the capacity, knowledge, or networking to tap into [existing state and federal] resources.*

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a special kind of organizational culture and leadership philosophy. Another local official described it this way:

*Well, with my long past in working with different government agencies, it's easy for me to be negative at times. However, working with the D&L was very positive for me personally. And that's probably because of the individuals involved at all levels of their organization. They're willing to help. If there's something that has to be explored or looked into, you know they get it done. In this regard, they have exceeded my expectations. Sometimes when you have to work through the bureaucratic maze of government, you feel like a little mouse running around a maze. It can be tough. In this case, much of that maze was real simple because they had a path.*

### **3. Utilizing the Corridor's anchoring connections**

As discussed in chapter 5, the Corridor initiative is anchored by relationships with key state and federal entities (specifically DCNR and NPS). Interview data indicate that these anchoring connections are essential. They enable the Corridor initiative to connect levels of government and leverage additional investments throughout the D&L region, while serving as important cornerstones for the public/private partnership that defines the Corridor initiative. This theme is defined by the following sub-themes: (a) integrated synergy; (b) branding and credibility; and (c) a catalyst for leverage.

#### **a. Integrated synergy**

The Corridor management's ability to work between various levels of government is precisely what enables communities to play meaningful roles in the Corridor partnership system. In this way, the Corridor creates opportunities for integrating agency (state and/or federal) initiatives with municipal and community needs. One state official explained it like this:

*They've brought together various state and federal agencies to provide assistance to the smaller municipalities and regions that would not otherwise have the capacity, knowledge, or networking to tap into [existing state and federal] resources. The Corridor has had tremendous impact in these small communities in terms of development dollars and capacity building.*

Numerous study participants identified the Corridor staff's commitment to partnership building as an essential element of successful projects. Complex revitalization and restoration initiatives typically require significant public/private investment and involvement. In this way, the

Corridor's relationships with key state and federal entities serve as important building blocks for strong public/private partnerships. One study participant described it this way:

*The Corridor staff brings a lot of expertise to the table, and the current leadership there is very good. They have been finding partners for various programs, in part because of their relationships with Pennsylvania state government agencies like DCNR. Folks at the Corridor know the people to reach out to—whether it's the National Park Service or someone else—as partners for various programs. And, in my mind, that's the biggest strength of the D&L. I think that they have a very strong record of actually partnering and matching, dollar for dollar, federal dollars to other sources of money. Their ability to attract additional dollars to match federal money raises eyebrows.*

The Corridor staff's ability to craft and sustain public/private partnerships has been a valuable resource for many partners. One study participant noted that other organizations in the D&L region do not “speak the language” of local or state government. Other study participants used the term “synergy” when describing Corridor management's ability to marshal public and private interests in an integrated way. The vast majority of study participants felt that no other entity in the region could be more effective than the Corridor in linking community needs with state and federal initiatives. One local official described it using these terms:

*I don't see a group that could play a better role. I think the D&L can cut across [multiple sectors of government] because they don't have a political agenda. I don't see the D&L as a partisan entity, and I think that's a big advantage. Government agencies usually say, “I'm with the government, I'm here to help you,” and most times that gets a laugh. But when they [the D&L] start talking, nobody's laughing.*

#### **b. Branding and credibility**

Many study participants commented on the value that state and federal heritage designations bring to the region as well as to their specific organizational objectives. In this way, relationships with key state and federal entities reinforce the branding and credibility already associated with Corridor activities. One member of the business community described it in these terms:

*The fact that the National Park Service has been involved in the creation and management of the Corridor has helped to add legitimacy to the individual projects that we have undertaken...The*

*designations [also] give us a certain level of credibility. Being able to say that this is a national heritage corridor and that the story of our community is of national import has put our history into a larger context. And it says that this context is important enough to the history of the state, and the nation, that you need to pay attention.*

For other partners, the designations underscore the Corridor region's heritage-based identity and brand. One community partner likened heritage corridor designation to having an "extra gold star." Another partner referred to it like this:

*Our community sits between several major destinations, and, while we have a rich industrial history, we have never been known as a tourism destination. It gives us an opportunity to have a theme, and it gives us an opportunity to be associated with some of the other, better known destinations in the region.*

The value of heritage designation means different things to different partners. Despite these differences, most partners interviewed felt that the state and federal designations communicate that Corridor programs, activities, and objectives add value to the region. One community partner reflected on it like this:

*Members of the D&L staff have participated in numerous meetings where we've had people from different bureaus in the state, local politicians, and folks from business and industry. The Corridor has been very valuable as an external source that has validated our place in history. The D&L National Heritage Corridor is recognized and respected, and their support is powerful. Their support has really helped validate us.*

### **c. A catalyst for leverage**

There is a strong sense among study participants that Corridor investments and activities have leveraged resources throughout the D&L region.<sup>3</sup> As noted in chapter 5, DCNR and NPS anchor the Corridor initiative in part by providing flexible funding that can be applied to a range of Corridor needs. In many instances, Corridor management is able to direct these funds in ways that have attracted substantial amounts of additional monies. This kind of direct, financial leverage happens because Corridor investments enable preliminary visioning, scoping, planning, and staff support. These investments serve as the foundation for building robust public/private partnerships that, in turn,

leverage additional resources. One member of the business community described the process like this:

*The D&L was able to come in and provide the seed money to start the planning [for this project]. This allowed the local community to work with planners and professionals to begin to look at how we could pull this project together. Ultimately, through the D&L's facilitation, this project tied this site's natural and historic resources together. Once that happened, we were able to bring in other partners. The initial D&L contribution of \$5,000 leveraged a \$400,000 public investment from other federal sources, which ultimately leveraged a \$10,000,000 private development. So, dollar for dollar, there's no greater ratio in terms of leveraging. The D&L's a good entity to work with because they understand the importance of bringing all those people together.*

Along with leveraging financial resources, Corridor programs can also leverage non-financial investments (such as in-kind contributions and volunteer support) and ideas throughout the D&L partnership system. While it is difficult to quantify, this kind of leverage is important because it creates opportunities for new partnerships and projects while generating momentum for moving existing initiatives forward:

*Although the Two Rivers project wasn't all Corridor money, it was the Corridor's idea that basically was the catalyst. That's probably the biggest thing that happened, and I think it made everybody else aware of what [resources] we have.*

Finally, Corridor activities help to build "organizational capital" within the D&L partnership system. Many study participants noted that their initial experience in working with the Corridor exceeded their expectations. As a result, these organizations are more likely to work in partnership towards Corridor goals in the future. One study participant described it this way:

*Our first joint project wasn't very sexy in terms of preservation, but it was very important because it addressed many issues in the borough. This project also created a good story, which allowed me to pursue [heritage preservation] projects in other communities. Ultimately, my successful relationship with the D&L springboarded other opportunities down the road. For example, right now, our company is trying to purchase an old powerhouse building that was built back in the late 1800s. It's*

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<sup>3</sup>The perceptions of respondents regarding the extent to which Corridor investments have leveraged additional financial resources are supported by additional study data on this topic. See chapter 4 for a discussion of financial leverage in the D&L partnership system.

Immersion Days—the hands-on way for kids to learn about canal life.



*literally located on the Delaware Canal... We want to preserve it, enhance it, and make the canal part of that development. I doubt I'd be thinking that as strongly today if not for my relationship with the D&L initiative.*

#### **4. Building a partner network**

Many Corridor activities and investments have been directed at building a network of partners. The Corridor initiative's ability to achieve its long-term goals depends significantly on the strength and effectiveness of this partner network. This theme is defined by the following subthemes: (a) partner capacity; (b) partnership system navigator; and (c) key network factors

##### **a. Partner capacity**

According to many study participants, Corridor programs play important roles in building the capacity of partner organizations. Capacity building can come in many forms. For some organizations, capacity refers to their actual abil-

ity to do project work. One study participant described the impact that Corridor efforts had on his organization's ability to do work like this:

*I want to be truthful about this—I don't want to over-praise them because you're doing an assessment. But my gut feeling is that [the Corridor is] probably essential as far as networking throughout this region. Had they not been here, we would not have accomplished some of the things that we have. I really feel that way. They've provided support where we've been unable to complete a project. In one of our projects, they've provided us with some help, relief, and they've been able to take on a portion of the work that we would otherwise have been unable to accomplish. They were the "go-to" people here, and they really came through in that respect.*

For other organizations, capacity building refers to efforts aimed at improving organizational management and operations. Many partner organizations are small nonprofits that may lack

## Roles Played by Corridor Management

Advocate  
Capacity builder  
Opportunity creator  
Catalyst  
Communicator  
Convener  
Connector  
Consensus builder  
Coordinator  
Credibility broker  
Critical friend  
Direct investor  
Empowerer  
Facilitator  
Framework (or organizing concept) provider  
General resource provider  
Glue  
Inspiration provider  
Idea generator  
Information provider  
Knowledge provider  
Leverager  
Networker  
Navigator  
Nucleus  
Partner  
Planner  
Promoter  
Sounding board  
Strategist  
Supporter  
Technical assistance provider  
Teacher  
Vision holder

professional experience, savvy, and training in securing and managing grant funding. For these partners, Corridor activities have helped increase their capacity to be more effective partners:

*There were many small coal region towns as well as communities along the entire Corridor that really didn't have the ability or wherewithal to aggressively go after grant funding and conduct visioning sessions... We didn't have anybody in place, on a day-to-day basis, that could manage, facilitate, and coordinate all that's necessary to make community revitalization happen. And that's where the Corridor Market Towns initiative came from. The D&L assigns two individuals that go around to these communities to help write grants, do studies and visioning, and all of the other things that create [the capacity for] community revitalization.*

The strength and effectiveness of the Corridor partner network depends significantly on the stability of individual partner organizations, and on their ability to deliver results. In this way, building the capacity of individual organizations can strengthen and improve the network over time. This, in turn, may increase the likelihood of realizing long-term Corridor goals and objectives. One local government official put it this way:

*Ultimately the municipalities need to have the knowledge and the financial capacity to execute their part of the development. The D&L has been very helpful in both of those areas. They're showing the municipalities how to build and maintain capacity, while providing some money to get started.*

### b. Partnership system navigator

Corridor activities have helped to link a complex network of partners in the D&L region. The network is the primary instrument for achieving integrated resource stewardship and community development goals. Many study participants used terms like “facilitator,” “incubator,” and “connector” when describing D&L management’s role in the network. Others described it as “agenda setter,” “advocate,” “critical friend,” or “strategist.” (See sidebar for the 34 terms used by partners to describe the roles played by Corridor management.) Some partners rely on the Corridor for seed funding or technical assistance, while others use it as a source of information, a marketing tool, or as a link to state and federal policy makers. The point is that different partners are connected in different ways at different times in a highly dynamic system.

Interview data suggest that, as an organization in this system, Corridor management functions as the “system navigator,” serving as the primary entity that facilitates, coordinates, and guides

network activity. As noted earlier, nearly every study participant indicated that at the present time no other organization in the region is capable of replacing the Corridor in this capacity. One study participant made the point in this way:

*Based on what I see, they're willing to talk to anyone and work with anyone. We were an extremely unique partnership and I know that they have others out there as well... I think the D&L can be a great facilitator in forging those types of relationships.*

### c. Key network factors

Analysis of study data also suggests that three key factors are essential for growing and sustaining the D&L partner network into the future. First, each study participant referenced *time* as critical. It takes time for partner organizations to build sufficient trust to engage in partnerships. It takes time for new organizations to build enough capacity to be active in the network. It takes time for more “traditional,” established organizations to see value in working across areas of interest. And it takes time to integrate resource conservation objectives with community and economic development goals.

Next, the ability to identify and secure *sustainable sources of funding* surfaced as a key factor for many study participants. The reasons for this are obvious—funding affects partner organizations’ staff size, training and equipment budgets, and ability to make long-term project commitments. The constant pressure to secure funding may limit the effectiveness of some organizations in the network because it is very labor intensive, thereby pulling limited staff resources away from project work.

Finally, the ability to *navigate the system* surfaced as a third key factor. As discussed earlier, Corridor management plays a multitude of roles in a complex and dynamic network system. The ability to successfully navigate this type of system is critical—failing to do so in the right way at the right time for the right partner can greatly reduce the ability of the partner network to accomplish Corridor goals and objectives.

## B. Perceived Challenges

Analysis of interview data revealed five issues that are perceived by Corridor partners as the primary challenges facing the D&L initiative: (1) the spine, (2) partner capacity, (3) Corridor geography and size, (4) institutional barriers, and (5) network redundancy. The remainder of this chapter discusses these issues.

### i. The spine

Several study participants expressed concern

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*Based on what I see, they're willing to talk to anyone and work with anyone. We were an extremely unique partnership and I know that they have others out there as well...I think the D&L can be a great facilitator in forging those types of relationships.*

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over what they perceived to be a lack of progress toward completing the spine (the recreational trail that connects the entire length of the Corridor along the canals). For some of these partners, the Corridor represents primarily a recreational resource, and their involvement in the D&L partnership system is defined around recreation-related issues. Completion of the trail is essential for these Corridor partners because it will physically link the entire Corridor and enable them to market a unique, heritage-based recreational experience. One study participant described it in these terms:

*If the spine was a completed entity, we could talk more about [heritage tourism]. We can't talk too much about the Crayola factory or other things down in Allentown because to get there you've got to get off the spine and in the car and drive there. I don't see in my mind how to market this thing because it's incomplete. If the spine was done, we could draw a big picture and say, "Hey, you can visit this whole area, and you can see this, this, and this," and we'd have connections between the Lehigh Valley, the Poconos, [and] the other counties.*

## **2. Capacity of Corridor partners**

A number of study participants noted that, as Corridor partners, their organizations often lack the capacity for the growing workload of the D&L partnership. While study findings suggest that many Corridor programs have helped to address this issue, partner capacity continues to be perceived as a significant challenge of the current D&L partnership system. One partner explained it like this:

*We're just a little organization. We have great support but we're all volunteers. Nobody gets paid one penny. I put in nearly a thousand volunteer hours a year, and managing this is getting to be a full-time job. It's getting to be a big problem.*

## **3. Corridor geography and size**

Several study participants referenced Corridor size and geography as challenges for the D&L partnership system. For some, interpreting the Corridor's story and linking Corridor themes in a consistent way across such a large landscape has proven difficult. For others, the sheer size of the area means that it will take more time, energy, investment, and organizational capacity to achieve long-term Corridor goals and objectives. The delaying of key projects can pressure the D&L partnership system in undesirable ways. One study participant reflected on it like this:

*What seems to be a challenge that we all face, is that sometimes it takes so long to get things done. And that's frustrating. We'd like to see things happen or*

*we think they should happen faster, so we can point to results and let people enjoy the product.*

## **4. Institutional barriers**

A number of study participants reported that institutional barriers can impede the work of the Corridor initiative in significant ways. Some study participants expressed dismay at the amount of "red tape" and "paperwork" associated with certain projects. Other study participants felt that not all of the government agencies play the role that they are potentially positioned to play or share a commitment to seeing Corridor projects succeed. Like the issues of geography and size (discussed above), institutional barriers can put pressure on the Corridor partnership system by delaying key projects and alienating Corridor partners. One local leader put it in these terms:

*We've got a project that took us a long time to develop, and now it's taking a significant amount of time to build because the requirements that the funding agency placed upon us have strung this out more than anybody would have imagined. And this, of course, is difficult to explain to the public or [other key partners]. We've either built the project or we haven't. I can tell folks that we're getting closer, but my explanation doesn't have any meaning for them.*

## **5. Network redundancy**

Several study participants suggested that there may be opportunities for closer relationships among current Corridor partners. Some partners fear that as D&L, Inc., takes on a greater role, it may compete with existing partners for already scarce resources. Other partners noted convergence in terms of mission, purpose, and focus among several organizations in the current Corridor partnership system. Although some redundancy may provide stability to the partnership system, the challenge is to develop sufficient redundancy for stability while not duplicating efforts or competing for resources. One partner explained it like this:

*I'm very keen on the idea that there may be [an opportunity for] a closer partnership between our organizations. Each organization does somewhat different things, but they're related. I think in terms of programs and planning, we could be doing a lot more together. There's a natural complement that might merit exploring a merger of the two organizations... [Although] we each do different but related things, we might be a lot stronger doing them together.*



Historic suspension bridges in Bucks County link communities and trails.

## SECTION III: THE FUTURE OF THE D&L CORRIDOR

### Chapter 7

#### *Identifying Critical Ingredients for Sustained Success*

Earlier chapters of this report describe Corridor accomplishments and leverage, examine the existing management framework, and discuss the strengths and challenges of the D&L partnership system from the perspective of Corridor partners. Building on the findings from these components, this chapter identifies critical ingredients for sustaining and enhancing the D&L partnership system in the future. These ingredients represent a diverse array of inputs and processes that interact with and support each other to make possible the accomplishments and outcomes of the Corridor initiative. Put another

way, these ingredients act in concert to create success and sustain the partnership work in the Corridor. It is important to note that while most of the ingredients are already in place, not all are yet fully realized (e.g., secure, sustainable funding). The critical ingredients are divided into four categories:

- structuring the partnership system
- guiding the partnership system
- cultivating the partnership system
- considering time in the partnership system

### A. Structuring the Partnership System

The *anchoring state and federal government connections* provided by the DCNR and the NPS are extremely important to the stability and sustainability of the D&L partnership system. These two partners have played critical and complementary roles in the Corridor partnership for a long time—the DCNR since it was formed in 1993 and the NPS since the Corridor’s formative stages. They provide credibility and reinforce the importance of the Corridor initiative for partners and communities. Other state and federal agencies play important roles in project support and implementation. Working in tandem with the anchoring agencies and the other agencies is an effective *management entity* that is charged with “stewarding” the mission. Public- and private-sector partners, other stakeholders, communities, and local residents perceive this entity as *evenhanded and nonpartisan*, possessing *clout and credibility* and inspiring *respect*. Another vital component of the system is the *network of partners* who must have *sufficient capacity to carry out projects and take on leadership roles* over time. Other critical structural ingredients include *secure, stable funding from diverse sources* and the *ability to leverage funds, resources, and ideas*. It is important to note that the ability to leverage derives primarily from the funding and participation of the two anchoring state and federal partners.

### B. Guiding the Partnership System

The Corridor’s *broad, integrated vision* provides an overarching framework for collaboration that welcomes the diversity of D&L partners. Reinforcing the vision is the *management plan* that supports Corridor goals and is relevant to community and stakeholder concerns. The region’s *shared heritage* acts as an organizing concept for collaboration and provides a common platform for project action. Tied to the notion of heritage is the *compelling regional story* that connects local resources, links people and communities, and provides a further basis for collaboration. Also important are *Corridor goals and boundaries that reflect thematic interests* rather than political agendas or constraints. These allow the Corridor to be relevant to diverse partners and facilitate bringing the necessary players together. The personal *vision and leadership* provided by the Commission, D&L, Inc., and Corridor staff help to create a partnership culture that values collaboration. A number of *key leadership characteristics are also necessary*, including creativity and “outside the box” thinking, entrepreneurialism and a willingness to take risks, patience, mentoring skills, integrity, and collaborative leadership skills.

### C. Cultivating the Partnership System

It is essential to establish collaborative processes that enhance and reinvigorate the partnership system. Such processes include *meaningful community engagement* on an ongoing basis, continually *telling the story* and *promoting the vision* in ways that connect people and communities across the Corridor, and *responsiveness to local needs and priorities*. Operating with an *open, inclusive, collaborative approach* is essential. This involves effective listening and communication; sincerity, honesty, respect, patience, and trust; shared responsibility and transparent and flexible operations; and a willingness to try new approaches. Over time, with good collaborative processes, partner organizations redefine their goals and ways of working to *align with the Corridor goals and vision*. Finally, a *commitment to learning and to implementing the learning* helps to hone the dynamic partnership system as it evolves and matures.

### D. Considering Time in the Partnership System

It takes time for a system as complex as the D&L partnership to evolve and mature and for partnership-building to bear fruit. It takes time to build a strong, sustainable system because partner capacity varies and partner relationships rely on trust and effective communication for successful collaboration. It also takes time to integrate resource conservation with community and economic development goals. With an ambitious agenda such as that encompassed by the Corridor vision, there is of necessity a strategic sequencing to projects, with early projects catalyzing or setting the stage for later ones. (For example, “Visually and Graphically Speaking,” a program that created a graphic identity and interpretation system, was a necessary precursor to later efforts to develop wayfinding and interpretive signage within the Corridor.)

As accomplishments are achieved and the relationships in the partnership system become more robust, partners may be able to take on more challenging, complex efforts—in essence, the bar can be raised higher with time. As the partnership system matures, there is a need for increased specialization, technical expertise, and capacity building in order to sustain partner energy and momentum in general. In addition, the nature of the relationship between partners and Corridor management may change. Partners may be able to take on greater leadership responsibility over time, which can open the door to further learning and to strengthening of the partnership system.



Bucolic rural landscapes can be found throughout the Corridor.

# Chapter 8

## *Management Options and Opportunities*

In anticipation of the approaching sunset of the D&L Corridor’s existing federally authorized management framework, this chapter explores possible future options for the management structure. These options have emerged from several complementary parts of the sustainability study process, including the examination of strengths and challenges of the existing framework, meetings and conversations with Corridor participants and outside experts, consideration of relevant partnership models in the conservation field and other disciplines, and the study team’s identification of critical ingredients for sustained success of the Corridor partnership system (as presented in the previous chapter).

The management options fall into three categories related to:

- the Corridor’s management entity;
- additional state, county, and municipal government involvement, with leadership by DCNR;
- additional National Park Service involvement.

Each of these categories addresses an important component of the Corridor’s overall management framework, and together they encompass the primary anchoring connections that are essential for success. Because of their mutual importance, some combination of ideas from each category may ultimately best meet the Corridor’s unique circumstances and needs.

The study team is not recommending any specific option or combination of options, but instead is presenting a range of possibilities for the Commission, D&L, Inc., and other Corridor participants to consider as they structure a management framework for the future.

### **A. Management Entity Options**

At the center of the management framework is the management entity that is assigned responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the management plan and for receiving and disbursing public funding dedicated to the initiative. With the Commission’s federal authorization due to expire in 2007, there are several options for the management entity in the Corridor’s next phase. Note that the options in this category are mutually exclusive—that is, two or more of them would not be pursued simultaneously.

The first four of the options below would involve federal legislation that renews authorization of a management entity for the Corridor, and presumably would be accompanied by the reauthorization and subsequent appropriation of continued federal funding for the Corridor through the NPS Heritage Partnership Programs budget. This funding would help support the operation of the designated management entity and the implementation of the management plan. Continued federal funding could be authorized for a limited period (e.g., an additional 10 years) or could be made permanent.

#### **A.1. Continue the current management partnership**

The Commission could be reauthorized as the Corridor’s federal management entity, and could continue its operating partnership with D&L, Inc. This would sustain the strengths that the Commission itself offers (e.g., credibility and clout as a federal entity, legislated representation of key interests), but would perpetuate its associated challenges (e.g., a cumbersome appointment process). Similarly, it would sustain the strengths that the Commission and D&L, Inc., offer together (e.g., greater flexibility for fundraising and revenue generation, broader opportunities for formal stakeholder representation on the Commission and the nonprofit’s board than through either individually), but would perpetuate the complexities associated with having the two entities operating in parallel.

#### **A.2. Shift to D&L, Inc., only**

D&L, Inc., could be authorized as the Corridor’s federal management entity, replacing the Commission after its expiration. This approach, with a nonprofit organization as the designated management entity, would be consistent with the majority of existing national heritage areas. Relative to the current situation, shifting management to D&L, Inc., alone would reduce administrative and bureaucratic hurdles, simplify the management structure, and make it more nimble. However, without the Commission there would be fewer opportunities for direct stakeholder involvement in the management entity, and other nonprofits in the Corridor could view D&L, Inc., as a greater competitor for funding and programming. Furthermore, some Corridor participants have expressed concern that D&L, Inc., would have less stature and clout with the National Park Service and other federal and

state agencies than the Commission, and could be somewhat more vulnerable than the Commission to temporary interruptions in federal funding during budget impasses.<sup>1</sup>

### **A.3. Shift to D&L, Inc., and create a new legislatively established partnership committee**

D&L, Inc., could be authorized as the Corridor's federal management entity, and the current Commission could be replaced with a new representative body established through federal legislation to complement D&L, Inc. Unlike the Commission, the new federal body would not have direct management and financial responsibilities. Its primary functions would be to:

- sustain a legislated mechanism for bringing key Corridor stakeholders together (including governmental and private sector interests);
- provide sustained federal stature and clout;
- advise and support D&L, Inc., in coordinating the Corridor initiative.<sup>2</sup>

This approach would offer most of the advantages of option A.2 and fewer limitations. The new federal body would be subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act and to similar administrative requirements as the current Commission (for instance, the federal appointment process), but the consequences for the Corridor initiative likely would be reduced with the new body having no financial and management responsibilities.<sup>3</sup>

### **A.4. Shift to D&L, Inc., and create a new advisory council through administrative action**

D&L, Inc., could be authorized as the Corridor's federal management entity, and its board could create a new advisory body to provide an additional, formal mechanism for broader stakeholder participation after the Commission's expiration. Since this new body would be advisory to the nonprofit rather than to a federal agency, and since it would be established administratively rather than legislatively, this approach would avoid the bureaucratic hurdles associated with federal advisory committees and with commissions and other entities established through federal legislation. This option also would offer similar advantages to those described above for option A.2. However, it would not address some of the vulnerabilities

identified for that option, such as the possible perception of increased competition on the part of other Corridor nonprofits and a reduction in stature and clout relative to the Commission.<sup>4</sup>

### **A.5. Move forward without a federally authorized management entity and dedicated federal funding**

Under this option, the Commission would expire and federal authorization and support for Corridor operations would cease. Although there would be no new federal authorization, individual organizations and partner networks would presumably continue to work toward Corridor goals, with D&L, Inc., likely playing a lead role in coordinating Corridor-wide activities and ongoing implementation of the management plan. The national heritage corridor designation is permanent and thus would remain, and the state's heritage park designation and significant support to the Corridor would not necessarily change. While federal funding through the NPS Heritage Partnership Programs budget would end, other federal funding (e.g., through transportation and environmental restoration programs) could continue to be available for relevant activities, and limited technical assistance from the NPS could be available on a competitive basis through programs such as the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program.

Nonetheless, this scenario would be a significant setback for the Corridor initiative, and in all likelihood would substantially slow the progress toward achieving its broad mandate. Without federal authorization, D&L, Inc., and the partnership overall could have reduced stature, clout, and credibility with government agencies and other stakeholders. Perhaps more importantly, the loss of dedicated federal funding would leave a substantial void—both in direct terms for Corridor operations and management plan implementation, and indirectly in leveraging support from others. D&L, Inc., would likely need to scale back its staff and focus only on core priorities. This would leave some parts of the Corridor and the partner network without the support they now receive, and could result in some partners (e.g., those with lesser capacity) having to reduce or eliminate their work toward Corridor goals. The fact that the Corridor initiative is well-established and D&L, Inc., is fully functional could help to soften the blow of this

<sup>1</sup> If D&L, Inc., is federally authorized to become the management entity, consideration should be given to the authorities and requirements to be transferred from the Commission to D&L, Inc. (for example, the authority to receive and disburse federal funds, and the requirement in Section 11 of the Corridor's original authorizing legislation that federal entities must consult and cooperate with the Commission regarding any activities affecting the purposes of the Corridor).

<sup>2</sup> Although this new body would be considered an "advisory committee" in federal terminology, its functions would be broader and therefore some other title might be more appropriate (e.g., "Corridor partnership committee").

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 1.

scenario, but it is questionable whether or when the Corridor partnership might fully recover.

## **B. Options for Additional State, County, and Municipal Government Involvement, with Leadership by DCNR**

From each of the sustainability study's analytic lenses, it is evident that much of the Corridor initiative's success is due to the substantial involvement and support of the state, the five counties, and the multitude of municipal governments. As discussed in chapters 5 and 6, the involvement of DCNR, in particular, is clearly an anchoring connection that has been critical to the accomplishments to date. Although these partners have already made significant contributions, two options emerged during the study that would further cement their involvement in the Corridor initiative. These options offer opportunities to advance statewide priorities articulated in 2005 by DCNR ("Shaping a Sustainable Pennsylvania: DCNR's Blueprint for Action") and the Governor's Economic Development Cabinet ("Keystone Principles for Growth, Investment, and Resource Conservation"). The two options could be pursued simultaneously, and either or both could be combined with options from the two other categories in this chapter.

### **B.1. Establish an intergovernmental partnership agreement for the Corridor**

To date, the Commission has served as the formal mechanism through which key state, county, and local governmental bodies (among others) have participated in the management of the Corridor initiative. Regardless of whether the Commission expires or is reauthorized, it may be beneficial to create a formal partnership agreement to further bind these interests together and solidify their commitment to the Corridor. This agreement could be established administratively or through state legislation, and would identify the ongoing roles and responsibilities of the participating agencies in supporting and working with the Corridor initiative.

At a minimum, the agreement would likely need to include those state agencies that have been most involved in Corridor activities (i.e., DCNR, PHMC, DCED, and PennDOT), possibly other state agencies connected with the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program (including the Department of Education, Council on the Arts,

and Center for Rural Pennsylvania), and the five counties. Municipal governments could also be involved, although their sheer number could present a challenge in keeping the agreement from becoming unwieldy. Because DCNR has lead responsibility for the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program and landscape conservation projects statewide and has long played a key anchoring role in the Corridor, it would be well positioned to lead the implementation of this option. DCNR leadership likely would be essential for securing the involvement of others, and for the effectiveness of the agreement overall.<sup>5</sup>

### **B.2. Establish a new management agreement, and possibly a new state designation, for the spine of the Corridor**

With the Corridor's spine now almost entirely under public control, it may be desirable to establish a formal agreement or compact between the state, the counties, and the relevant municipalities for managing and maintaining the spine. This agreement could provide a mechanism to solidify the commitment of the various parties, identify sources of support for management, and develop baseline standards for management and maintenance. In light of DCNR's ownership and management of roughly half the spine (in Lehigh Gorge and Delaware Canal state parks), its heightened emphasis on outdoor recreation and related community and economic revitalization, and its diverse technical and financial assistance programs, it would seem both appropriate and desirable for DCNR to assume a strong leadership role in developing and implementing such an agreement.<sup>6</sup>

While this type of management agreement or compact could be developed independently, it also could be authorized in conjunction with a new state designation focused on the spine that would reflect its unique partnership arrangement for ownership and management (for instance, a "state partnership park"). This would help to further elevate the profile of the spine and its associated resources, and could further solidify the state's commitment to the management partnership.

## **C. Options for Additional National Park Service Involvement**

There is a strong sense among many Corridor participants that a broader, sustained affiliation

<sup>5</sup> While the description of the intergovernmental agreement is oriented toward state, county, and possibly municipal participation, it could be expanded to include relevant federal agencies as well (such as the National Park Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Army Corps of Engineers). Expanding the membership could complicate the establishment and implementation of the agreement, but could benefit the Corridor initiative over time.

<sup>6</sup> The Pennsylvania Economy League is currently investigating possible models and considerations for this type of agreement or compact as part of a broader contract with the Commission and D&L, Inc.

with the National Park Service is needed in some form, both for the credibility and branding it can provide and for the technical expertise, additional capacity, and other contributions that the NPS could potentially offer. Moreover, those participants believe that sustained NPS involvement is justified by the Corridor's national significance, which was confirmed by the congressional decision to give the D&L region its national designation in 1988.

There are a number of possible forms that additional NPS involvement might take in the future, some more modest and straightforward and others more involved. The first four options could be achieved administratively, while the fifth would require legislation. Two or more of these options could be pursued simultaneously, and any could be combined with options from the previous categories.

### **C.1. Use available tools more broadly to convey the NPS affiliation and brand**

Because national heritage areas are under the umbrella of the National Park Service, they are able to use NPS public information tools to broaden awareness about their connection to the agency and the National Park System. Using these tools to display the connection to the NPS "brand" can help convey an area's significance to residents and visitors, heighten local pride, and stimulate increased visitation. Although the D&L Corridor initiative has made some use of these tools, there are several readily available opportunities for doing more in the future. Examples include:

- Using the NPS's distinctive arrowhead logo on Corridor marketing and interpretive materials;
- Developing a new Corridor brochure using the NPS's well-recognized "unigrid" format;
- Broadening awareness of the D&L's listing on the NPS's national heritage area website (<http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/>), and creating more linkages between that website and Corridor-specific websites.

### **C.2. Seek a stronger, more consistent relationship with the NPS Northeast Region**

Since its establishment, the Corridor initiative's primary link with the NPS has been through the Northeast Region office in Philadelphia. The existing cooperative agreement between the NPS, D&L, Inc., and the Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums provides a solid platform from which to advance the relationship between the Northeast Region and the Corridor initiative in the coming years. Examples of ways in which the relationship could be strengthened to mutual advantage include:

- Regular meetings (at least annually) between Corridor and NPS regional leaders;
- A sustained annual commitment by the regional office to provide technical assistance to specified Corridor projects through relevant NPS programs (e.g., the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program and the Preservation Assistance Program). This could be accomplished through a collaboratively developed annual work plan that would specify the nature and extent of the regional office's support;
- Staff exchanges to help foster mutual understanding of each other's needs, skills, and opportunities;
- Establishment of a dedicated NPS "circuit rider" for the Corridor, a relatively senior regional staff position assigned specifically to help the D&L management entity and Corridor partners navigate the NPS system and access federal funding, specific expertise, and other support. This position could be shared with the adjacent national heritage areas and possibly others in the Northeast Region that would benefit;
- Collaborative exploration of opportunities to draw on the experience of Corridor participants in addressing challenges that are increasingly important for the NPS (such as working successfully through partnerships, achieving meaningful conservation in lived-in landscapes, and developing effective landscape-scale interpretive programs).

### **C.3. Seek stronger relationships with nearby NPS units**

Unlike some national heritage areas, the D&L Corridor does not have an established national park unit within its borders. There may be opportunities to build closer relationships with nearby NPS units, which could help to broaden awareness of the Corridor's NPS connection while tangibly contributing to Corridor goals and furthering the NPS mission. Nearby NPS units and examples of potential collaborative opportunities include the following:

- Steamtown National Historical Site (Scranton, Pennsylvania)—possible interpretive initiatives related to the anthracite coal transportation system;
- Appalachian National Scenic Trail (which crosses the Lehigh River and the Lehigh Canal at Lehigh Gap near Palmerton, Pennsylvania)—possible initiatives related to community outreach and engagement, and the development of side trails;
- Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (adjacent to the northeasternmost corner of Northampton County, along the



Colonial Moravian technological ingenuity created America's first industrial park in Bethlehem.

Pennsylvania/New Jersey border)—possible conservation and interpretation initiatives related to watershed concepts and issues.

#### C.4. Pursue renewed NPS interpretive support

Many Corridor participants believe that further interpretive assistance from NPS could be very helpful in advancing the Corridor initiative, and suggest that such a role would be appropriate for NPS given its widely recognized expertise in this area and its past assistance with interpretive efforts in the Corridor. Further NPS interpretive support could be focused on providing:

- greater Corridor-wide interpretive cohesion through assistance to partners that are associated with the Corridor's story (such as historic sites, parks, museums, and local communities);
- an on-the-ground, uniformed NPS interpretive presence in the Corridor.<sup>7</sup>

Also, there may be an opportunity to obtain NPS support for a collaborative project exploring the challenges involved in achieving effective interpretation in large-scale initiatives. Such a project could be undertaken in conjunction with other national heritage areas (those adjacent to the D&L Corridor or others further removed) and/or other large-scale NPS initiatives with significant interpretive components (such as the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program and the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program).

#### C.5. Seek authorization of a “special resource study” to explore potential permanent NPS involvement and additional federal designations

A number of ideas emerged during this study

that relate to the possibility of a permanent NPS presence in the Corridor and to other NPS-associated designations beyond the “national heritage corridor” title. These ideas would require further consideration through a congressionally authorized special resource study, followed by additional federal authorizing legislation if a permanent NPS presence or further designation is deemed appropriate and desirable.

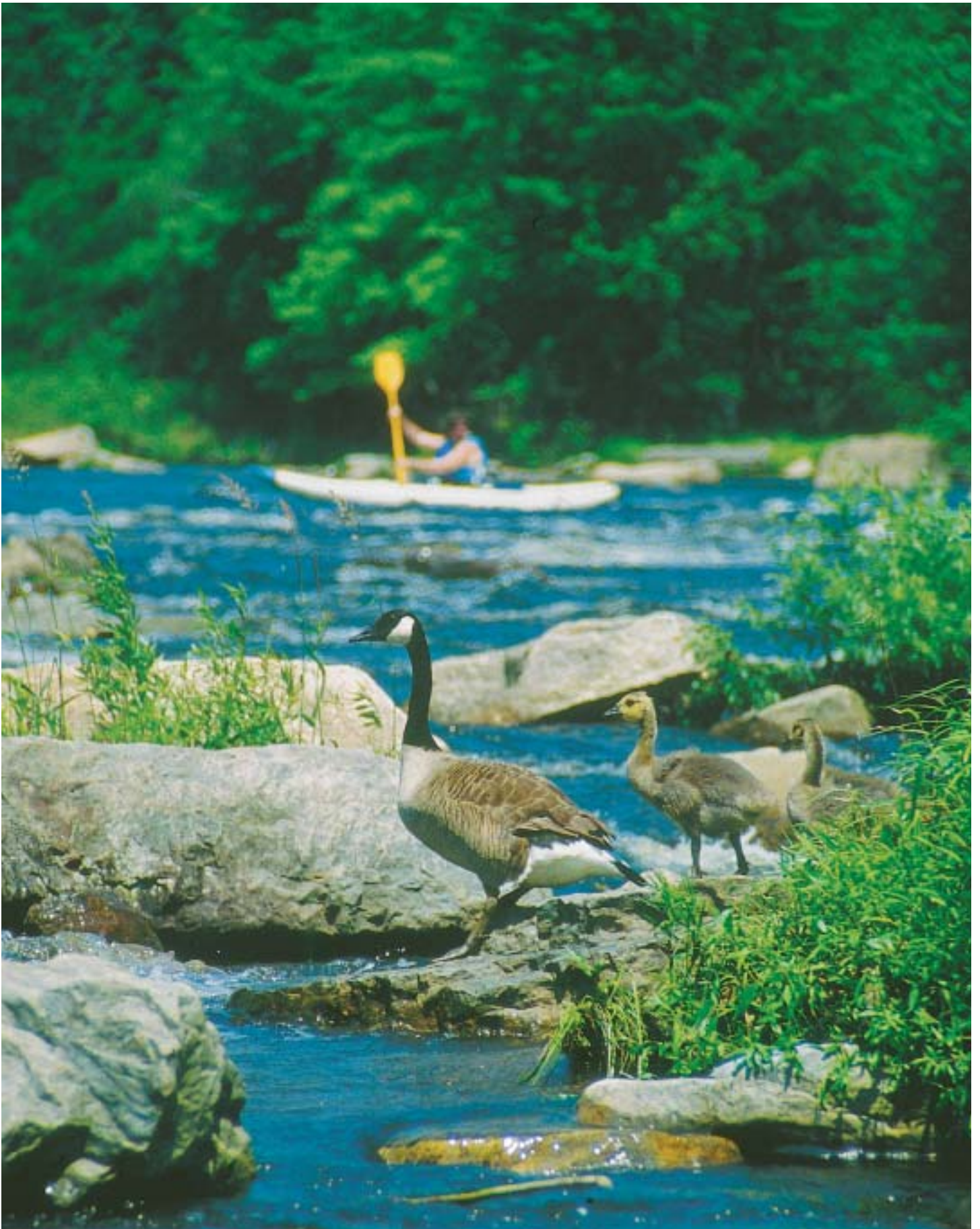
The NPS would conduct the study through an open and participatory public process, in consultation and collaboration with the Corridor's management entity and key partners. There would be a variety of opportunities for input and thorough consideration of questions, concerns, or suggestions that might be raised. The study would conclude with a recommendation by the NPS to the president and Congress. Congress would then decide whether to authorize, through subsequent legislation, the actual implementation of any of the ideas explored during the study.

Examples of ideas for further NPS involvement that could be considered in a special resource study include:

- Designation of the D&L Trail as a national historic trail (as recommended in the Corridor's 1993 Management Action Plan);
- Establishment of a permanent NPS site or sites in the Corridor;
- An additional national designation to further highlight the area's significance and solidify a permanent connection with the NPS;
- Consideration of broader opportunities related to the anthracite coal story (for instance, possible linkages with the adjacent national heritage areas and other appropriate sites nearby, and/or potential establishment of a permanent NPS program tied to the anthracite story).

There likely are different ways that each of these ideas could be crafted to best meet the needs and circumstances of the D&L Corridor, and the special resource study would provide an opportunity to do so in greater detail. While the specifics of potential NPS involvement would be examined during the study process, the general emphasis would be to explore ideas involving a partnership approach that might not involve NPS ownership and management. Also, the ideas listed above would not necessarily be mutually exclusive, and the merits of possible combinations could be examined as part of the special resource study.

<sup>7</sup> Using part-time or seasonal staff could reduce the costs of uniformed personnel. Seasonal staff hired through the Student Conservation Association have proven to be cost-effective in other NPS areas.



The Delaware and Lehigh River corridors are natural transportation routes.

# Chapter 9

## *Other Options and Opportunities for the Future*

In addition to the management options presented in the previous chapter, the project team identified a number of other options and opportunities that Corridor management could pursue to enhance and sustain the D&L partnership system. These fall into three categories:

- investment by the management entity;
- enhancing partnerships;
- operations.

Many of the options and opportunities are inter-related, so it is likely that some combination of options will best address the Corridor's needs. As with the management options in chapter 8, the study team is not recommending any specific option(s), but is presenting an array for consideration. Following the discussion on the three categories of options, the final section in this chapter addresses the subject of funding considerations.

There are several things to note regarding the options below. First, the study team acknowledges that Corridor management is already working in some of these areas (e.g., building partner capacity). However, placing greater emphasis on this work could strengthen the partnership system as described in chapter 7 and enhance the overall success of the Corridor initiative. Also, decisions made by Corridor management among these options represent trade-offs in terms of the allocation of limited staff and financial resources. Similarly, action on any of the opportunities below may have a bearing on the management options discussed in the previous chapter, and vice versa.

### **A. Options and Opportunities for Investment by the Management Entity**

In deciding how to allocate its funding in the coming years, D&L management may wish to consider the following:

#### **A.1. Begin a new strategic planning process**

With substantial progress made in addressing the actions identified in the management plan, a new strategic plan would complement (not replace) the existing management plan by identifying strategies to most effectively tackle the work that remains to be done. This new plan would help guide the future investment of Corridor staff and funding, identify highest priorities, meet the current needs of the partner network, and take advantage of new opportunities. A strategic

planning process would offer an opportunity to engage communities and partners, both existing and potential, in providing ideas for making the partnership more effective. It could also help identify opportunities for closer relationships between D&L, Inc., and key nonprofit partners. The sustainability study findings can help inform the planning process, and the decisions made regarding the management options would undoubtedly influence the direction of the strategic plan. Many of the ideas that follow would be appropriate for further consideration within a strategic planning process if one is initiated.

#### **A.2. Place greater emphasis on building the capacity of nonprofit and local government partners**

The long-term success and sustainability of the Corridor initiative relies upon a strong network of partners who can step up to the plate, shoulder greater leadership responsibilities, and implement the shared agenda. For this to happen, capacity building must become an even greater investment priority, through such means as leadership training, a mentoring program to share best practices among Corridor partners, and further efforts to help partners secure the support, staffing, and expertise they need.

#### **A.3. Make further use of the region's shared heritage to bind the Corridor together**

As discussed in chapter 6, the heritage that is shared throughout the D&L region transcends the Corridor's geographical divides. It is important for the strength and resiliency of the partner network—and ultimately the long-term sustainability of the overall Corridor initiative—that this shared heritage is used effectively as an organizing principle and a platform for collaborative action. A key role for Corridor management is to continue building awareness of the region's shared heritage and story so that an even wider array of partners come to see their missions as relevant to each other and connected through the broader regional story.

#### **A.4. Develop a strategic interpretive plan to identify the most important aspects of the Corridor story and to set interpretive priorities**

The interpretation and education plan of June 1999, developed by the NPS interpreter assigned for several years to the D&L Corridor, is an important tool in helping to understand and

interpret the many stories of the D&L Corridor. It is quite comprehensive and detailed, and, for some partners, rather overwhelming. There appears to be a need to complement this document with a targeted strategy that identifies interpretation priorities and the most important aspects of the story to tell Corridor-wide. Together, the existing plan and a new strategic interpretation plan could provide Corridor staff and partners with a stronger foundation for building the broader regional awareness of a shared heritage envisioned in the previous paragraph.

#### **A.5. Foster broader involvement of diverse stakeholders in Corridor activities**

Maintaining a vibrant partner network is essential to sustaining the Corridor initiative, and this depends in part upon Corridor management engaging with the range of Corridor stakeholders and the general public on an ongoing basis. While Corridor management has strong relations with many stakeholders, additional outreach to local governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and others would help to broaden and diversify the overall partnership and enhance its ability to achieve Corridor goals. Developing a strategy for further engagement of diverse stakeholders in Corridor activities would be an important aspect of the strategic planning process described in option A.1 above.

#### **A.6. Place greater emphasis on public relations and marketing**

Although the Corridor initiative is well known in some circles within the D&L region, and certain activities such as “Miles of Mules” have generated considerable publicity and awareness, Corridor management should consider further efforts to increase the initiative’s profile in the region. Making greater use of NPS communication tools (see chapter 8) and developing a strategic interpretive plan (as described above) are two examples of possible approaches. These and other strategies can help to build a broader understanding of what the Corridor partnership is trying to achieve, what it has accomplished to date, and how all of this is connected with the priorities of local, state, and federal government and other partners. This, in turn, could help to generate greater support for the Corridor initiative and attract new partners.

#### **A.7. Emphasize the Corridor initiative as a driver of economic development and community revitalization**

There is some recognition that the accomplishments of the Corridor partnership have enhanced the region’s economy and quality of life and may help draw new businesses and residents to the area. However, many Corridor par-

ticipants believe more should be done to highlight this aspect of the partnership’s work, both because of its intrinsic value and because it can help to leverage further involvement of businesses and economically oriented public agencies at all levels of government. Some of the options described above (such as enhanced marketing and developing a strategic interpretive plan) could be used in part to emphasize how the Corridor contributes to economic development and community revitalization across the region.

#### **A.8. Highlight ways in which Corridor activities are consistent with and contribute to state and federal priorities**

For example, D&L programs are very much in line with the objectives of the Governor’s “Keystone Principles for Growth, Investment, and Resource Conservation” and DCNR’s “Shaping a Sustainable Pennsylvania.” Demonstrating more clearly how D&L programs help to further such objectives could help to solidify support for the Corridor initiative and open new opportunities with governmental partners.

#### **A.9. Expand in-house capacity to meet the increasing range of demands**

As discussed in chapter 5, there is a general sense that Corridor staff are spread thin at a time when demands are increasing. While there are differing opinions about whether or how to respond to this situation, it seems appropriate for Corridor management to weigh the merits of some level of staff expansion. This could include hiring staff for fundraising and development to increase the funding base for the Corridor partnership, or for grant-writing, technical, and other assistance to partners. (See box on page 71 for ideas related to funding opportunities.)

### **B. Options and Opportunities for Enhancing Partnerships**

The accomplishments of the D&L Corridor are based on partnerships. There is inevitably an ebb and flow in the makeup of the partner network as organizations evolve and as projects are initiated, completed, or become more complex. Within this dynamic context and to the extent possible in light of other considerations, Corridor management should continue to seek to expand and enhance the partner network and to build the capacity of partners to assume greater leadership responsibilities. In looking to the future, Corridor management may want to consider initiating a strategic assessment of its partnerships to determine if there is redundancy in mission and effort, a thought that was raised in several partner interviews. A certain amount of redundancy can provide stability, but too much could be inefficient and could lead to



Scout groups volunteer at the Wildlife Information Center, where the D&L and Appalachian Trails intersect.

counterproductive competition. Further analysis of the partner network could uncover the different dimensions of connectivity within the network as well as the degree of similarity in missions.<sup>1</sup> This information could provide the basis for strengthening key existing partnerships and developing new partnerships to address gaps in the network. Such an assessment of partnerships could be included in a broader strategic planning process, as discussed earlier.

In addition to the general idea of a strategic assessment of key partnerships, more specific options and opportunities related to partnerships that surfaced during the sustainability study include:

**B.1. Strengthen partnerships with DCED and tourism entities**

This could be tied to efforts to place greater emphasis on economic development and com-

munity revitalization, as discussed in option A.7 above.

**B.2. Pursue closer partnerships with agencies (state and federal) that have not been deeply involved in the Corridor initiative**

The Corridor might benefit from the greater involvement of state agencies such as the Pennsylvania Historical and Museums Commission and PennDOT, and federal agencies such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Army Corps of Engineers, and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

**B.3. Pursue further partnerships with academic institutions**

This could include larger projects undertaken through a cooperative agreement with Lehigh University and state and community colleges within the Corridor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Maryann M. Durland and Kimberly A. Fredericks, eds, "Social Network Analysis in Program Evaluation," *New Directions for Evaluation* 107 (2005).

<sup>2</sup> As an example, the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area and Montgomery County Community College are partnering to develop a comprehensive curriculum on national heritage areas that will include conservation, historic preservation, recreation, community revitalization, and heritage tourism.



New housing development is changing the landscape in Bucks County.

#### **B.4. Evaluate partnership opportunities with like-minded organizations and initiatives in adjacent regions**

Corridor participants suggested the Morris Canal in New Jersey and the Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River as potential partners.

### **C. Options and Opportunities Related to Operations**

Some of the options and opportunities related to Corridor management's operations are temporary in nature while others are more long-term considerations. The latter could be considered within a strategic planning process.

#### **C.1. Consider the merits of concentrating more staff attention on completing the D&L Trail and the spine**

As discussed in chapter 6, some partners view the Corridor as a recreational resource, and as

long as the trail is incomplete, they do not view the Corridor initiative as successful. While this may be in part a message "gap" that can be addressed with greater attention to marketing and highlighting the region's shared heritage, it remains a challenge that needs to be considered. If the overall capacity of Corridor management and staff can be increased, additional attention on the spine might not need to come at the expense of other priorities.

#### **C.2. Consider decentralizing staff in strategic locations**

Some participants see the Corridor as too large and diverse for individual staff to cover its entirety for any given program area. Having staff "closer to the ground" would enable them to build stronger local relationships. One possibility would be to have staff located in each of the Corridor's major regions (i.e., north, central, and south).

### **C.3. Consider the composition of the D&L, Inc., board**

In looking ahead to the possible termination of the Commission and a transition to D&L, Inc., as the management entity, the Commission and board may want to think about the board's composition. This would be especially important if the Commission expires and no new representative entity is created. Considerations could include board size, the degree to which it is representative of key stakeholder interests, and whether other attributes are needed among its membership (e.g., additional expertise, connections, access to funding).

### **C.4. In the case of Commission expiration, consider a temporary "transition committee" for D&L, Inc., to provide institutional knowledge**

Although the Commission and the board have been co-managing the Corridor initiative for the past two years, there could still be benefit in appointing a temporary committee made up of past and current Commission members and other past key players to advise the board for a specified period of time if the Commission expires.

### **C.5. Introduce a process for succession planning in anticipation of the retirement of key individuals**

With the anticipated retirement of key participants both within the Corridor management and among some key partners, D&L management might want to consider how best to ensure the transfer of institutional knowledge and sustain

the smooth functioning of the Corridor's ongoing initiatives and partner relationships. This is especially important with a partnership-based initiative in which much of the success of the effort relies upon good interpersonal relations.

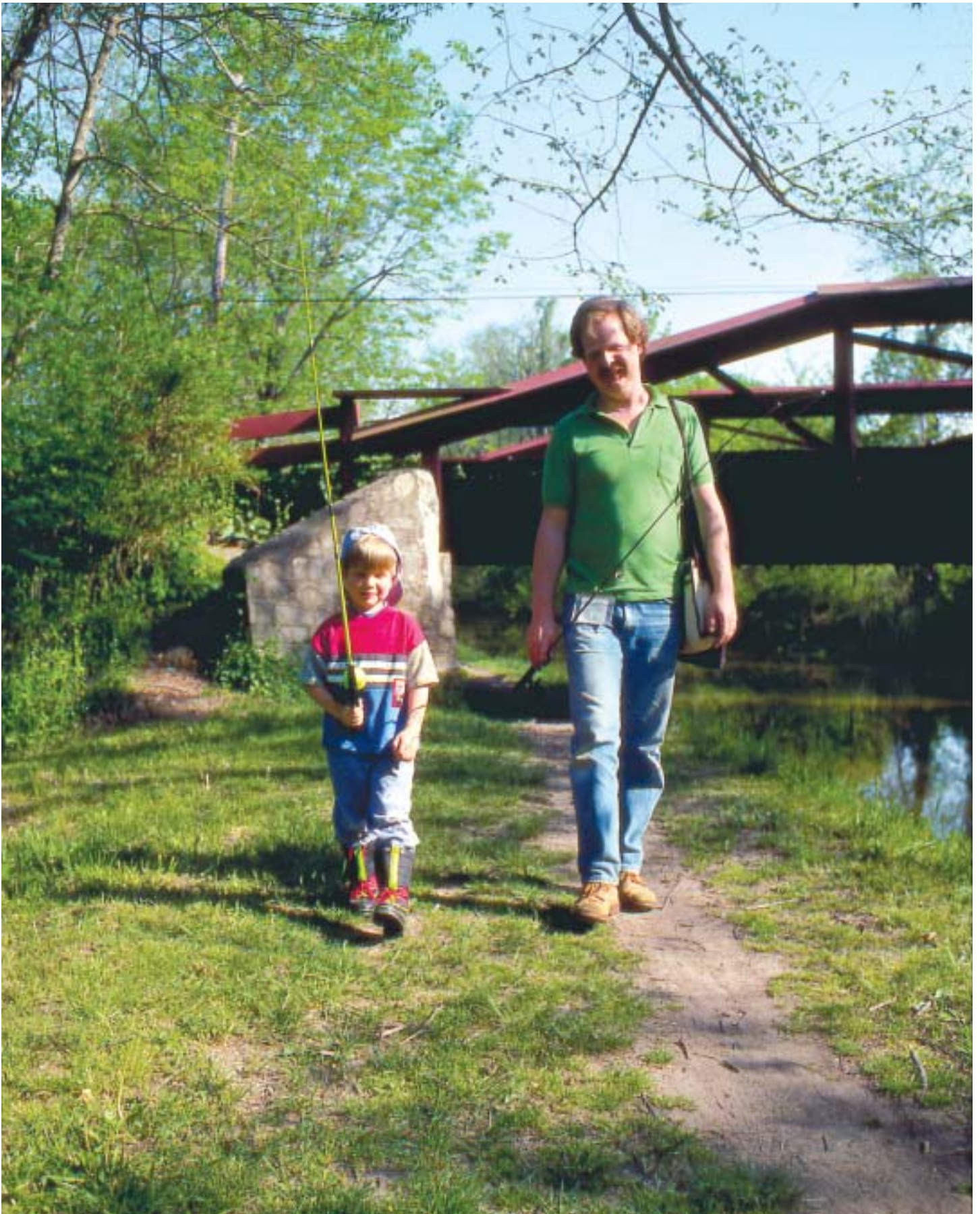
### **D. Funding Considerations**

As discussed elsewhere in this report, the financial investments by the state through the DCNR Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program and by the federal government through the NPS Heritage Partnership Programs have been essential to the progress made to date by the D&L Corridor partnership. Although these investments have created an impressive record of leverage (see charts on page 19), the existing funding arrangement is not ideal. The lack of assurance and predictability from year to year puts this leveraging capacity at risk, and impedes strategic planning and implementation of multiyear projects. For the Corridor initiative to meet its full potential there is a need to secure sustainable funding, ideally from a diversified base. One step that Corridor management could take to increase fundraising capacity is to hire development staff, as mentioned in option A.9 above. Other ideas of possible funding opportunities that emerged during the study are listed in the box below.

These ideas would require further consideration to determine which might be best suited to the circumstances of the D&L initiative.

#### **Potential opportunities to expand funding sources**

- Pursue greater support from corporations, foundations, and individuals
- Establish corporate sponsorships for the D&L Trail (e.g., bridges, trailheads)
- Investigate opportunities for funding economic development projects near gaming sites through revenues from Pennsylvania's new gaming legislation, which includes a provision for multi-county cooperative applications and initiatives
- Investigate funding opportunities through state and regional authorities, tax credits, and other public funding sources (e.g., new market tax credits through the Pennsylvania Housing and Finance Agency, Multiuse Financing Facilities Investment)
- Pursue opportunities to generate earned income in partnership with others, such as rent from rehabilitated structures (as has been done successfully in Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area)
- Pursue funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and/or Department of Energy for educational centers (e.g., extending the EPA partnership in Lehigh Gorge to include the planned educational center, as described on page 33)



The recreational benefits of the Delaware Canal are enjoyed by visitors and residents alike.

# Chapter 10

## *Closing Thoughts*

By effectively utilizing a collaborative approach to landscape conservation that relies on the active participation of partners from both the public and private sectors, the D&L partnership has become a model within and outside the region and has contributed to the evolution of heritage area programs at the state and federal levels. The initiative has fostered preservation of the region's heritage through hundreds of projects and partnerships, broadened awareness of the economic benefits and enhanced quality-of-life that protecting heritage resources can provide, and leveraged millions of dollars from public and private sources. The support and leadership of local people and the long-standing commitment by the state since before the Corridor's national designation have enabled the D&L partnership to mature and prosper. Yet while the initiative has addressed much of the broad mandate from Congress articulated in its management plan, there are still miles of trails to establish and maintain, resources and stories to discover and interpret, new partners to engage, and more residents to inspire. Engaging the public and new leaders in the Corridor partnership and fostering broader local stewardship of the Corridor's resources will be a continual challenge. This report establishes a benchmark that will allow Corridor management to chart its future progress in terms of programs and partnerships.

The Corridor initiative's work in building a diverse partner network to achieve its multifaceted mandate is impressive, but considerable work still remains to be done. As D&L management deliberates on the future of the Corridor, it will need to consider how best to reinforce the partnership system and employ it most effectively in order to build on past accomplishments. One key consideration in this effort will be to determine how to secure the vital anchoring connections provided by DCNR and NPS.

Furthermore, the D&L initiative will continue to face an ever-changing array of partners within and outside the Corridor. Changes in the priorities, leadership, politics, capacity, and budgets of both public and private partners will shift the dynamics of relationships, creating new challenges and opportunities. These shifts will test the strength of the partnership system and the ability of Corridor management to guide it with flexibility and creativity. Successfully navigating and responding to change will be essential for the Corridor initiative to continue to thrive over time. The complexity and dynamic nature of this partnership system highlights the need for continued organizational learning and adaptive management.

In the bigger picture, developing a deeper understanding of the D&L initiative's collaborative, network-based approach is relevant to the future of this heritage area and other regional landscape conservation initiatives. The D&L Corridor's experience can also inform the application of the emerging "governing by network" concept in a variety of disciplines, and can help in identifying essential roles for governmental partners and other critical ingredients for success that may cut across disciplinary boundaries.<sup>1</sup> In the end, a better understanding of the D&L initiative will help inform the developing practice of conserving lived-in landscapes far beyond the D&L Corridor boundaries, both within and outside of designated heritage areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Network governance represents an increasingly popular model of program delivery and policy implementation. This topic is currently receiving considerable attention in the public policy/administration literature, and numerous authors have identified the need to conduct additional research on this topic. For example, see Stephen Goldsmith and William D. Eggers, *Governing by Network* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2004); Maarten A. Hajer and Hendrik Wagenaar, eds., *Deliberative Policy Analysis: Understanding Governance in the Network Society* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and *The American Review of Public Administration* 36, no. 1 (March 2006).

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# Glossary of Terms

**Board:** The governing body of the nonprofit Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc., composed of members of the Commission and other key stakeholders.

**Commission:** The federally appointed management entity that coordinates the overall effort within the corridor. Established in the 1988 enabling legislation, the Commission is responsible for implementing the Corridor's management plan.

**Corridor (or D&L):** Refers to the physical place on the ground; the geographic area that was broadly defined at the time of designation in 1988 and further clarified in the 1993 Management Action Plan. Also used locally by partners and others to refer to the entire endeavor; in this latter case (primarily in chapter 6), is synonymous with "Corridor (or D&L) partnership" and "Corridor (or D&L) management."

**Corridor (or D&L) initiative:** The collective body of activities and projects undertaken to implement the management plan, and the people and organizations that carry them out. Also referred to as "Corridor (or D&L) partnership."

**Corridor (or D&L) management:** The partnership between the Commission, D&L, Inc., and the Corridor staff. More technically referred to as the "management entity."

**Corridor (or partner) network:** The diverse array of public and private organizations and individuals that are working with the Commission and D&L, Inc., to carry out activities and projects to achieve Corridor goals.

**Corridor (or D&L) partner:** Any public or private organization, institution, agency, or individual that collaborates with the Commission, board, and staff on specific initiatives that help implement the management plan; includes both formal partners (i.e., those who collaborate through cooperative agreements) and informal partners (i.e., those who contribute to Corridor goals without a formal agreement, such as a developer who renovates a historic mill for reuse).

**Corridor (or D&L) partnership:** See Corridor initiative.

**Corridor (or D&L) partnership system:** The overall array of inputs (federal designation, public funding, etc.), participants, and processes that interact as a system to achieve accomplishments within the Corridor.

**Corridor (or D&L) program(s):** Specific activities, projects, or investments of the Corridor initiative.

**Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc. (D&L, Inc.):** The nonprofit organization created in 2002 to work with the Commission and the partner network to implement the 1993 Management Action Plan.

**Leverage:** Used as a noun, the funds or non-financial investments that are committed to the Corridor initiative as a result of a primary investment of funds. Also used as a verb, in which case it refers to the process of obtaining financial or non-financial commitments to the Corridor initiative.

**Management Action Plan:** The guiding document for the Corridor, completed in 1993 through a participatory process spearheaded by the Commission. Articulates a broad, integrated vision for the future of the Corridor, and lays out a detailed range of actions to achieve the vision. Also referred to as "management plan."

**Management entity:** Technically, the specific body authorized through federal legislation to carry out Corridor coordination and management; at the present time, the Commission. However, in the case of the D&L Corridor, "management entity" is understood to include D&L, Inc., and the staff that serves both organizations. Also referred to as "Corridor management."

**Management framework:** Collectively encompasses the Commission, board, staff, partners, purpose and vision, geographic scope, and funding and other support for the Corridor,

as well as the authorities granted to the Commission in order to carry out its mandate. Sometimes used interchangeably with "management structure," although "management framework" (the term used in the authorizing legislation) is preferred.

**Sustainability:** For the purposes of this report, refers to the strategy, framework, and resources necessary for achieving the stated purpose and goals of the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor.

**Sustainability study:** The technical assistance project conducted by the NPS Conservation Study Institute to assess the progress made toward Corridor goals since 1988, evaluate how the Corridor partnership works, and examine options and opportunities for the future.

## Acronyms Used

### State Agencies

**DCA:** Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs  
**DCED:** Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development  
**DCNR:** Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
**PennDOT:** Pennsylvania Department of Transportation  
**PHMC:** Pennsylvania Historical and Museums Commission  
**PHPP:** Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program

### Other

**CMT:** Corridor Market Towns initiative  
**D&L:** Delaware & Lehigh  
**EPA:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
**HUD:** U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
**MAC:** The D&L Corridor's Municipal Assistance to Conservation program  
**MAP:** D&L Corridor's Management Action Plan of 1993  
**NPS:** National Park Service  
**TE funding:** Transportation enhancements funding, provided to each state annually as part of the Surface Transportation Program appropriation from the Federal Highway Administration  
**TEA-21:** Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-first Century  
**VGS:** The D&L Corridor's Visually and Graphically Speaking program

Donald M. Bernhard, chair  
Clifford C. David, Jr., vice-  
chair  
Annie Sanders, secretary  
J. Steven Humphrey, treasurer  
Mary Bomar, regional direc-  
tor, Northeast Region, NPS  
Frederic H. Brock  
Charles W. Derr  
Michael DiBerardinis, DCNR  
William Mitchell  
Elizabeth K. Orlemann  
F. Charles Petrillo  
Mickey Rowley, DCED  
Susan H. Taylor  
Donna Williams, PHMC

*Ex-Officio Agency*

*Representatives:*

Cindy Campbell, DCED  
Dennis J. DeMara, DCNR  
Joe DiBello, NPS  
Peter Samuel, NPS

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## Acknowledgments

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We are indebted to the D&L staff who shared how they approach their work and envision the future, and who gave so willingly of their time in providing both context and information for this study. We especially appreciate the contributions of Allen Sachse and Elissa Marsden, who provided invaluable guidance and knowledge throughout the study and who were always thoughtful and often inspirational. A special thanks to Bill Mineo, Rayne Schnabel, Sherry Acevedo, and Cindy Young who consistently answered our inquiries with patience and promptness, and provided gracious assistance.

Many Corridor partners welcomed us, provided us with behind-the-scenes tours, and contributed to study discussions. We are especially grateful to those partners who shared their reflections and perspectives during interviews and during the management focus groups—your input provided a wealth of ideas. Thank you to our meeting hosts at the Heritage

Conservancy, Lehigh University, City of Bethlehem, and City of Palmerton, and to the staff of the Pennsylvania Economy League for their contributions.

To those early leaders who inspired the creation of the Corridor, thank you for sharing your perspectives on how the Corridor came to be. We also extend our sincere thanks to those people who served as project advisors and gave of their time in various ways to share their knowledge and perspectives. To DCNR representatives Larry Williamson and Dennis DeMara, your insights were invaluable, particularly in helping us understand the past, present, and future of the Commonwealth's relationship to the D&L and the heritage parks system. We are grateful to Bob McIntosh, John Maounis, Brenda Barrett, and Glenn Eugster of the National Park Service for providing advice and guidance throughout the study. Your insights and feedback contributed greatly to the articulation of key concepts in this report.

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## The D&L Sustainability Study Team

The study process was very much a team activity. All members participated actively in study design, implementation, analysis, and report preparation. Within this overall approach, individual team members had lead responsibility for the following:

Suzanne Copping (assistant coordinator, National Heritage Areas, National Park Service; cooperater): study coordination; documentation of accomplishments, investments, and leverage; retrospective and national context; support materials for final report  
Philip Huffman (cooperater): description and analysis of the existing management framework and management options

Daniel Laven (doctoral candidate, University of Vermont, and Conservation Study Institute fellow): evaluation of the partnership system from the partner perspective  
Nora Mitchell (director, Conservation Study Institute and member of the Project Management Committee): project scope, national context, regional coordination, financial management, and report review and editing  
Jacquelyn Tuxill (director of partnership programs, Conservation Study Institute; cooperater): description of critical ingredients, background and context, preparation of interim report and executive summary, final report coordination

## Project Advisors

Michael Creasey (superintendent, Lowell National Historical Park)  
Dennis DeMara (heritage parks district supervisor for eastern region, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources)  
Joe DiBello (manager, Partnership Programs, Northeast Region, National Park Service)

Deirdre Gibson (chief of planning and natural resources, Valley Forge National Historical Park)  
Randall Mason (associate professor of architecture, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation School of Design, University of Pennsylvania)  
Kurt Zwikl (executive director, Schuylkill River National Heritage Area)

## Project Management Committee

Brenda Barrett (national coordinator for heritage areas, National Park Service)  
Allen Sachse (executive director, Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor)  
Nora Mitchell (director, Conservation Study Institute)

# Appendix A

## D&L Sustainability Study Methodology

In conducting the D&L Sustainability Study, the project team employed a range of methods, as discussed generally on page --- of this report. The discussion below provides more details on the methods used to obtain the data reported in chapters 2.B, 4, 5, and 6.

### 1. Methods for Chapter 2.B

The historical narrative in chapter 2.B is based on interviews with four individuals, selected in consultation with D&L staff. They are representative of the diverse perspectives and experiences of organizations and individuals who played leadership roles in the D&L Corridor's formative years, including the NPS, Congress, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and local leaders. The interviews were semi-structured and retrospective in nature, asking participants to identify and describe significant moments leading up to and immediately following the Corridor's designation by Congress in 1988. Although discussion topics were identified and shared with the interviewees prior to the interviews, the questions asked varied according to the roles that the individuals had played in the Corridor's formation. The discussions probed the chronology of events, the thinking at the time about conservation of the canal network, key factors that may have led to the designation, and participants' perspectives on the future of the Corridor.

### 2. Methods for Chapter 4

Chapter 4 documents the Corridor partnership's progress as well as investments and leverage. The study team used a three-step approach to assess progress as accurately as possible, while acknowledging some inherent limitations to the comprehensive evaluation of accomplishments. For example, for 18 years the partnership has invested in many projects with differing levels of reporting associated with each. It was difficult to document early projects and programs with the same degree of accuracy as current programs. It was not within the scope of this study to develop a methodology to account for varying amounts of investment and impact associated with D&L Corridor actions; therefore, the inventory of activities (see appendix B) reports progress on actions that reflect varying degrees of investment and impact.

Step one involved assessing progress as it related to the 1993 Management Action Plan. D&L staff reviewed and rated each of the 175 actions described in the management plan according to their level of completion as of fall 2005. Once the actions were rated, the study team compiled and analyzed the information using a spreadsheet. These results are reported in appendix B, table 1. The study team also created an inventory of D&L programs and projects that address management plan actions (see appendix B, table 2). Documents that informed the inventory included the 1993 Management Action Plan, issues of the "Along the Corridor" newsletter, internal financial and project documents, and reports produced by the D&L staff for partners. The D&L staff also provided information on early and undocumented activities and reviewed the study team's inventory for accuracy.

In step two, in order to understand and report on how the Corridor activities and the roles played by staff and partners have evolved over time, the study team developed criteria for selecting projects that highlight the Corridor's work. The D&L staff assisted the team in selecting the programs and projects that are highlighted in chapter 4. Selection criteria included:

- geographic distribution;
- projects that address multiple categories of management plan actions;
- quantifiable financial leverage;
- resource-oriented quantifiable impacts (on buildings, people, businesses, etc.);
- projects that span the lifetime of the Corridor initiative;
- evidence of "catalytic impacts" (i.e., influence on subsequent projects).

Finally, to evaluate PHPP and NPS investment and leverage in the Corridor initiative, the study team gathered written documentation from D&L staff on the overall financial investments of these two partners, and the matching funding that was leveraged for projects and programs in which D&L management has been directly involved financially and administratively since designation. Data were gathered from internal financial records that have been maintained since the heritage area's establishment and from annual and periodic reports on the leveraging impact of D&L programs.

### 3. Methods for Chapter 5

In analyzing the Corridor initiative's existing management framework, the study team drew on three primary sources of information. First, team members gained an understanding of the framework through review of key documents (e.g., authorizing legislation, management plan, bylaws of the Commission and D&L, Inc.). Second, team members held semi-structured, individual conversations with commissioners, board members of D&L, Inc., and senior Corridor staff. Participants in these conversations were selected in consultation with Corridor staff. The conversations addressed a range of relevant topics, such as the role and function of the Commission and D&L, Inc., the involvement of key partners, and the scope of the Corridor initiative. Two focus group dialogues facilitated by team members provided the third key source of information. The first of these meetings involved more than 20 individuals identified in consultation with Corridor staff; among them were commissioners, board members, staff, key partners, sustainability study advisors, and outside experts. The second meeting was held in conjunction with a joint meeting of the Commission and the D&L, Inc., board, and included approximately 15 commissioners, board members, and staff. Discussions during the two meetings covered issues related to the past and future of the management framework, including aspects that have worked well and others that could be improved, and how partnerships with key players (e.g., DCNR, NPS, other state and federal agencies, county and municipal governments, nonprofit organizations) might be strengthened.

The study team then analyzed the data obtained through these efforts to identify what appear to be the most significant strengths and challenges of the management framework. Preliminary findings were refined through an iterative process of discussion and further analysis both within the team and through additional dialogue with commissioners, board members, and Corridor staff. Throughout this process, the team also drew upon its knowledge of management structures from other national heritage areas and partnership initiatives as a comparative backdrop for analyzing the D&L's framework.

### 4. Methods for Chapter 6

The study team employed a "process evaluation" approach for the research described in chapter 6. Process evaluation refers to a specific type of evaluation research designed to examine the ways in which complex programs function.<sup>1</sup> Such studies are particularly helpful in facilitating policy learning and adaptive management (i.e., helping programs improve their operations), and represent good examples of research informing management.<sup>2</sup> This study builds on previous evaluation research conducted at other national heritage areas.<sup>3</sup>

#### a. Research Methods

The research described in this chapter was conducted in two stages. The first stage was designed to identify what Corridor partners perceive as the strengths and challenges of the current D&L partnership system. Between August and November 2005, a total of 30 open-ended interviews with key partners were conducted by telephone. The complexity of the Corridor initiative and the partner network suggested that a purposeful sampling design would be most appropriate,<sup>4</sup> and care was taken to invite a diversity of Corridor partners to participate. With the consent of each respondent, all interviews were recorded and transcribed (see consent form and interview protocol in the sections that immediately follow). Interviews lasted approximately one hour and yielded transcripts ranging from 8 to 30 pages. Data were analyzed using a content analysis for themes and patterns across the 30 respondents.<sup>5</sup> Collectively, these themes and patterns identify the strengths and challenges that study participants associate with the current D&L partnership system. This stage of research was very much an iterative process involving stakeholders and the study team.<sup>6</sup>

The second stage was designed to better understand the structure of the D&L partnership system. Along with data obtained from the 30 open-ended interviews, an additional 39 Corridor partners were asked only the fourth question from the interview protocol (see section c below). These interviews were also conducted by telephone and lasted approximately 15 minutes. Once coded, these data were analyzed using a quantitative form of "social network analysis." Social network analysis is a method designed to understand relationships between organizations and/or individuals. There is increasing interest in using network theory and analysis in evaluations

<sup>1</sup> Carol Weiss, *Evaluation*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Darlene Russ-Eft and Hallie Preskill, *Evaluation in Organizations: A Systematic Approach to Enhancing Learning, Performance, and Change* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> Jacquelyn Tuxill, et al., *Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future* (Woodstock, VT: Conservation Study Institute, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Source Book* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> Michael Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002).

<sup>6</sup> Michael Patton, *Utilization-focused Evaluation: The New Century Text* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997).

of community-based, collaborative programs.<sup>7</sup> Study findings from this analysis informed the description of D&L partnership system strengths and challenges.

## b. Consent Form

At the beginning of each telephone interview, the consent form below was read to the study participant, and consent to conduct the interview was obtained prior to proceeding with the interview:

At the request of the Corridor Commission, the National Park Service is conducting a study to learn more about the Delaware and Lehigh (D&L) National Heritage Corridor. The D&L is affiliated with the National Park Service, and the purpose of this study is to learn how the D&L National Heritage Corridor actually works and to document the impact of the Corridor on the D&L region. Study findings will be used to inform future management of the Corridor as well as contribute to development of the National Park Service's Heritage Areas Program.

As a result of your experience with the Corridor, you are in a unique position to describe what the program does and how it affects organizations like yours within the Corridor. And that's what the interview is about: your experiences with the D&L National Heritage Corridor and your thoughts about your experiences.

A total of 30 people will be interviewed and these responses will be combined for the study.<sup>8</sup> No individual or organization names will appear in the written report or presentations. If you have any questions during the interview, please feel free to ask. Or, if there's anything you do not wish to answer, just say so. Again, the purpose of the interview is to get your insights into how the program operates and how it affects organizations in the region.

Finally, I am requesting your permission to record the interview. It is very important to capture your words exactly as you say them. The interview will remain confidential—your name and/or your organization will be removed from the transcript and replaced by a numbered code that will be kept in a confidential manner and locked in a secure place. Once the interview has been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed. You will also receive a draft copy of the study findings for your review. Furthermore, the Paperwork Reduction Act requires approval of all federal government surveys by the Office of Management and Budget. This survey has been approved under this act. The Office of Management and Budget control number and expiration date are available at your request. Additional information about this survey and its approval is available at your request. The interview will last about 40 minutes and, again, all of your answers are voluntary and confidential. If at any time during the interview you would like me to turn the tape off, please let me know and I will do so. May I use the tape recorder?

Any questions before we begin?

## c. Interview Protocol

The protocol below was used to guide the semi-structured interviews that provided the data for the analysis in chapter 6:

*The first part of this interview is designed to help me learn about your current relationship with the Corridor Commission. By "Corridor Commission," I am referring to the group that manages the Delaware and Lehigh (D&L) National Heritage Corridor.*

1. In what ways are you now connected or do you currently work with the D&L Corridor?
  - (a) Provides funding directly?
  - (b) Helps your organization to leverage funding from other sources?
  - (c) Provides relevant information and good ideas?
  - (d) Provides access to other potential partners (network conduit)?
  - (e) Increase organizational capacity?
  - (f) Provides additional credibility?
  - (g) Role of leadership?
  - (h) What other roles could the Commission play in the future that could be particularly helpful?
4. Which other organizations, or people, do you work with in the Corridor region?
  - (a) What do you get from this relationship (content of relationship)?
  - (b) How strong is this relationship (intensity)?
  - (c) Which direction do these resources flow (directionality)?
  - (d) How often do these exchanges take place (frequency)?
  - (e) How has this relationship changed over time (temporal change)?

5. How has, if at all, your relationship with the D&L Corridor impacted the way you work?

- (a) Creates a shared understanding of opportunities and challenges in the Corridor region
- (b) Other unintended consequences? By unintended consequences, I am referring to impacts that you didn't expect, or intend from this relationship. These can be either positive, negative, or neutral.

6. What formal, or informal, criteria do you use to evaluate the effectiveness of this relationship?

7. What factors influence you to continue to maintain this relationship?

8. What could the D&L Corridor do to improve this relationship in the future?

*The next series of questions will help me to understand how you/your organization function in the D&L Corridor region.*

9. What are your organizational goals/mission for the D&L Corridor region?
10. What specific factors, if any, would increase the likelihood of achieving these goals? What specific factors would decrease the likelihood of achieving these goals?
11. How do you/your organization measure your effectiveness in achieving these goals?

*This is the last section of the interview, and the questions are more general and reflective in nature. This is an opportunity for me to learn from you, in broad terms, about the impact of the heritage corridor program in the D&L region. Are you ready?*

12. In your opinion, over the life of the D&L Corridor (the last 18 years), what impact has the Commission had on the following issues:

- (a) Conservation and restoration of natural, cultural, and historic resources?
- (b) Creation of heritage-based tourism and recreation opportunities?
- (c) Community development within the Delaware and Lehigh Corridor?
- (d) Created partnership opportunities?

13. How, from your perspective, has the D&L Corridor staff integrated these multiple goals?

14. How, if at all, does heritage corridor designation (state or federal) affect the way in which you work? For example, does this designation change your/or your organization's strategic thinking or long-term planning? How does this designation change the way in which you/your organization prioritize objectives?

15. I'm interested in learning how various organizations in the D&L Corridor region have been influenced by the concept of "D&L heritage." By D&L heritage, I am referring to the industrial history and its legacy to this five-county region. What role does D&L heritage play in your work?

16. What is your/your organization's vision for the D&L Corridor region in the future? What else, from your perspective, needs to be done in the region to achieve this vision?

17. What do you think the role of the D & L Corridor should be in realizing that vision?

18. As we think about how to move forward with this work in the D&L Corridor region, do you see any other organizations (existing or potential) that could play that role as or more effectively than the D&L Corridor?

19. In the future, which other people, or organizations, would you like to partner with in the D&L Corridor region but have yet to do so?

20. In your opinion, what has prevented these partnerships from occurring thus far?

21. That covers everything I wanted to ask. Is there any additional information you would like to provide?

*Thank you so much for your valuable time. I really appreciate it.*

<sup>7</sup> C. Maryann M. Durland and Kimberly A. Fredericks, eds., "Social Network Analysis in Program Evaluation," *New Directions for Evaluation* 107 (Fall 2005).

<sup>8</sup> An additional 39 respondents were only asked question #4 of the interview protocol

# Appendix B

## Progress and Accomplishments in the D&L Corridor

### 1. Progress toward Implementing Actions in the Management Plan

Progress made toward implementing actions outlined in the 1993 Management Action Plan (MAP) is depicted here according to action category,<sup>1</sup> level of completion as of 2005,<sup>2</sup> and primary region of impact. The northern region encompasses Luzerne and Carbon counties and the Wyoming Valley, the central region includes Lehigh and Northampton counties and the Lehigh Valley, and the southern region includes Bucks County and the Delaware Valley, Delaware River, and Delaware Canal. The methodology used to gather the information in this appendix is described in appendix A.

Action Category	Action Status	Region
<b>Navigating</b>	Completed:	7
	Ongoing:	11
	Underway:	12
	No Action:	10
	<b>Total Actions :</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Understanding</b>	Completed:	22
	Ongoing:	20
	Underway:	14
	No Action:	6
	<b>Total Actions:</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Conserving</b>	Completed:	5
	Ongoing:	26
	Underway:	11
	No Action:	11
	<b>Total Actions:</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Enriching</b>	Completed:	6
	Ongoing:	10
	Underway:	2
	No Action:	2
	<b>Total Actions:</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Total MAP Actions:</b>	<b>175</b>	

Figure B.1. Progress toward implementing actions outlined in the management plan

### 2. Activities in the D&L Corridor That Address Management Plan Actions

The following provides an extensive though not comprehensive inventory of the D&L initiative's projects and programs, organized by region and management plan action category. Many activities that have occurred in one region address Corridor-wide management plan actions. Many activities also bridge multiple action categories.

#### NORTH

##### NAVIGATING

D&L Bridge Feasibility Study, Jim Thorpe to Lehigh Gorge  
D&L Trail Final Design, Carbon County

Lehigh Canal Acquisition and Improvements, Carbon County  
Lehigh River Water Trail  
Lehigh-to-Susquehanna Trail Acquisition, White Haven  
Nesquehoning Trestle  
Packerton Yards Concept Plan  
Panther Valley Trail Feasibility  
White Haven Acquisition, Lehigh Gorge State Park

##### UNDERSTANDING

Audubon Auto Tour  
Coaldale DCED Grant  
D&L/Schuylkill River National Heritage Area Linkages Study  
Dennison House  
Eckley Miners' Village Exhibits  
Lehigh Canal Improvements and Signage  
Lehigh Gorge State Park Signage  
Molly McGuire Auto Tour Booklet (with Schuylkill River National Heritage Area)  
No. 9 Mine Planning and Exhibits  
Panther Valley Auto Tour  
White Haven Visitor Services  
Wyoming Valley Levee Trail Book

##### CONSERVING

Ashley Planes  
Blue Coal Records  
Dennison House  
Dorrance Fans Relocation  
Eckley Miners' Village Rehabilitation Study  
Huber Breaker Park Feasibility Study  
Luzerne County Natural Areas Inventory  
No. 9 Mine Motor Barn Construction  
Old Mauch Chunk Landing Roof Restoration  
Rails-to-Trails Feasibility Study: Panther Valley Trail  
Sweetland Homestead  
Weissport Acquisition  
White Haven Engine House

##### ENRICHING

Corridor Market Towns Initiative  
Corridor Market Towns Façade Improvements  
Heritage Study and Visitor Services Improvements  
Jim Thorpe Exhibits/Signage  
Lehigh High School Restoration and Improvements  
No. 9 Mine Study  
Palmerton Streetscape  
Susquehanna River Landing, Irem Temple  
Switchback Gravity Railroad Trail Master Plan  
Switchback Gravity Railroad Trail Improvements and Signage  
Wilkes-Barre Redevelopment Project  
Wyoming Valley Reach Landing

##### CENTRAL

##### NAVIGATING

Lehigh Canal Project, Allentown  
Lehigh Canal Project, Bethlehem  
Lehigh Canal Project, Catasauqua  
Lehigh County Rail-Trail Acquisition  
Lehigh Navigational Trail Design and Planning  
Slatington-Northern Lehigh Slate Trail  
Walnutport Pavilion and Trail Improvements

##### UNDERSTANDING

Lehigh Landing Exhibits  
Lehigh Valley Heritage Center D&L Exhibits  
National Canal Museum Interactive Exhibits

<sup>1</sup> The action category refers to the four priority areas used to organize the actions in the management plan: (1) navigating the Corridor: providing physical connections, (2) understanding the Corridor: creating an interpretive system, (3) conserving the Corridor: protecting key resources, and (4) enriching the Corridor: capitalizing on heritage development.

<sup>2</sup> Actions were rated "completed," "ongoing" (i.e., actions that have no anticipated completion date), "underway" (i.e., actions that have a proposed completion date or product), or "no action."

National Canal Museum Play, *My Name is Jeremiah*  
 Pennsylvania Longrifle Association Exhibits and Cabinetry  
 River Environmental Education Center and Exhibits, Delaware Canal State Park  
 Sigal Building Design  
 Bachmann Tavern  
 Bieber Spring House Rehabilitation  
 Canal Boat Restoration, Easton  
 Canal Lock #32 Plan and Stabilization  
 Catasauqua Creek/Lehigh Canal Stabilization  
 Deily Coal Yard, Catasauqua  
 Easton Façade Restoration  
 Henry Homestead Complex, Jacobsburg High School Environmental Education Center  
 Hugh Moore Park Master Site Plan  
 Ice House Restoration, Bethlehem  
 Lehigh Canal Acquisition and Improvements, Walnutport  
 Nain House Study and Restoration  
 Restoration of Locks 47/48, Hugh Moore Park  
 Saylor Park Cement Industry Museum, Coplay  
 Spring House Renovations, Leni Lenape High School  
 Steel Stax Project, Bethlehem Steel Works  
 Wildlife Information Center Lehigh Gap Refuge Initiative  
 Williams Township Agricultural Conservation Plan  
 Bethlehem Architectural Lighting  
 Corridor Market Towns Façade Improvements  
 Lehigh Landing Visitor Center  
 Lehigh Valley Greenway Initiative  
 National Canal Museum Feasibility Study  
 Two Rivers Landing  
 Two Rivers Landing Exhibits

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## **SOUTH**

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### **NAVIGATING**

Brock Creek Corridor, Yardley Borough  
 CSX and Amtrak Tunnel  
 Cultural Canal Walk, New Hope  
 D&L Trail Tyburn Road Detour  
 Delaware Canal, Bristol  
 Lagoon Restoration, Bristol Borough  
 Levittown Shopping Center  
 Lock #11 Restoration and Preservation  
 Lock #4 Stabilization  
 Pedestrian Bridge over Route 13

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### **UNDERSTANDING**

Bucks County Audubon Society Visitor Center  
 Delaware Canal State Park Signage  
 Lock #11 Interpretive Signage  
 New Hope Signage  
 Washington Crossing Exhibits  
 Watershed Interpretive Exhibits, Honey Hollow Environmental Education Center

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### **CONSERVING**

Barn at Elm Lowne  
 Bristol Marsh Preservation and Interpretation  
 Canal Towns Historic Districts Study, Bucks County  
 Durham Mine Bat  
 Graystones Land Acquisition  
 Ground Hog Lock 22/23  
 Natural Areas Inventory/Open Space Preservation Plan  
 New Hope Lock House  
 Tohickon Aqueduct, Delaware Canal State Park

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### **ENRICHING**

Bridge Street Parking Facility, New Hope  
 Bristol Canal Visitor Center  
 Canal's End Reach Visitor Center Feasibility Study  
 Conservation Enterprise Program  
 Delaware Canal and Train Station, Bristol  
 Delaware Canal-Spurline Park Linkage Trail, Bristol  
 Mercer Museum Outreach Study, Lower Bucks  
 Morrisville Waterworks Complex  
 New Hope Visitors Center

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## **CORRIDOR-WIDE**

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### **NAVIGATING**

D&L Drive Enhancements  
 D&L TRAIL (Trails, Recreation, Access, Interpretation, Linkages) Program  
 D&L Trail Guide, The Stone Coal Way  
 D&L Trail Plan and Design  
 D&L Trail Tenders  
 D&L Water Trail  
 Inventory and Assessment of the Trail System  
 NPS Trail Workbook

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### **UNDERSTANDING**

Corridor and Reach Maps  
 Corridor Directional Signage  
 Corridor Exhibit Plan  
 Corridor Interpretation and Education Plan  
 Corridor Map and Brochure  
 Education Partnership  
 Interactive Orientation Kiosks Development  
 Visually and Graphically Speaking Implementation  
 Visually and Graphically Speaking Plan  
 Visually Speaking, Additional Elements  
 Web-Accessible Information on D&L National Heritage Corridor

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### **CONSERVING**

Greenway Linkage Study  
 Municipal Assistance for Conservation  
 Pennsylvania Greenway Sojourn  
 Shaping the D&L Drive

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### **ENRICHING**

Corridor Market Towns Student Internships  
 D&L Consultant, Adjunct Historian  
 D&L Trail Partnership Study  
 DCNR Circuit Rider Grant, Trail Manager  
 Economic Indicators Study  
 Lehigh University Community Fellows Program  
 Mapping to Inform Decision Making  
 Miles of Mules  
 Old House Road Show  
 Pennsylvania Heritage Tourism Development Plan  
 Preservation Pennsylvania/Allentown Preservation League  
 Trail Internships with Student Conservation Association  
 World Canal Conference Planning

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## **Figure B.2. Projects and programs that address management plan actions**





**Northeast Region**  
**National Park Service**  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut St., 5th Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
215-597-7385  
[www.nps.gov/phso/](http://www.nps.gov/phso/)

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802-457-3368  
[www.nps.gov/csi/](http://www.nps.gov/csi/)

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