



Talking Points for HeritageArea30

What is HeritageArea30th all about?

- On August 24, 1984, Congress created the first NHA, Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.
- We are using the week of August 24 – 30, 2014 to celebrate not only I & M Canal, but 30 years of National Heritage Area/National Park Service (NPS) partnership and National Heritage Area accomplishments.
- Join the celebration on social media at the NPS Heritage & Historic Preservation Facebook and Twitter sites – HHPreservItNPS.
- You can add to the discussion using #HeritageArea30.

What are we celebrating?

- There are 49 National Heritage Areas (NHAs) across the country that celebrate and preserve the nationally important history of this country – our industrial, military and cultural history and other defining stories that make us a unique country.
- The work of all 49 NHAs is benefiting local and regional communities.
- Across the country, NHA coordinating entities have worked to revive historic downtowns, preserve battlefields and rural sites, provide new and improved recreation opportunities, tell our nation's history in innovative ways, engage community members in stewardship activities, and conserve forgotten water ways and wetlands.

What exactly is a National Heritage Area?

- NHAs are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape.
- NHAs are lived-in landscapes. Consequently, NHA entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.

Who runs a National Heritage Area?

- NHAs are not “run” like National Park units.
- Instead, a designated coordinating or management entity works with community members and organizations to carry-out and support heritage area work.

How is it different from a National Park?

- A NHA is not a unit of the NPS, nor is any land owned or managed by the NPS as a result of the NHA designation.

What is the role of the National Park Service?

- The NPS provides financial and technical assistance to NHA coordinating entities.
- NPS is a partner and advisor, leaving decision-making authority in the hands of the coordinating entity and their partners.

How do communities benefit from National Heritage Area designation?

- NHAs leverage federal funds to carry-out diverse projects and programs – since these projects are identified by community members, businesses, and nonprofits organizations they directly reflect community desires.
- NHA projects and programs support jobs and sustain local communities through revitalization and heritage tourism.
- Some projects...
 - offer new or improvement amenities, such as trails, that allow people to enjoy natural and historic sites;
 - provide educational and volunteer opportunities for community members, which promote awareness, and foster interest in and stewardship of our resources; and
 - improve water quality and habitat for native species.
- Benefits of long-term NHA projects and programs include community pride, improved sense of place, and enhanced regional economies.

What about economic benefits?

- According to a 2013 economic impact report issued by the Alliance of National Heritage Areas and the NPS, 49 NHAs contribute \$12.9 Billion to the U.S. Economy on an annual basis, primarily through tourism.
- The study also found that the economic activity of 49 NHAs supports approximately 148,000 jobs.
- That study, including a description of the methodology, can be found on the NPS NHA program website at www.nps.gov/heritageareas.

Know the Answers to These Questions

How are you celebrating the NHA 30th?

- Share your social media info and event info, if applicable

Why does your National Heritage Area exist?

- Whose idea was it to create your National Heritage Area?
- Why is it nationally important?
- What types of resources exist within your boundary?

What do you do?

- What services does your coordinating entity provide?
- Who do you work with?
- What activities do you and your partners provide?

Why is your work important?

- What are some of your successes?
- What impact has these successes had (share stories, dollars you distribute for grants, numbers of program participants, etc.)?