



In partnership with the National Park Service

Partner Program

For Canal-related
Museums and
Cultural Heritage Sites

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About the program

The Erie Canalway Partner Program is a program for canal-related museums and cultural heritage sites within the National Heritage Corridor. It is intended to advance the goals set forth in the Erie Canalway Preservation and Management Plan by facilitating coordinated and sustained collaboration between the commission and staff and canal-related sites.

Canal-related sites may apply to become *Erie Canalway Heritage Partners*, *Erie Canalway Affiliate Sites*, or *Erie Canalway Points of Interest* by filling out an application and signing a written affirmation of the Erie Canalway Preservation and Management Plan's vision and goals. This commitment will enable us to better pursue mutually beneficial strategies provided for in the Plan. In exchange, partners will be given priority for technical and financial assistance from the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor (ECNHC).

There is no fee for applying or participating in the Partner Program.

Program Objectives

- **Develop a more integrated system of historic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources** that collectively constitute the Corridor's national significance by connecting canal-related sites to each other and to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.
- Encourage Erie Canalway cultural sites to implement policies, projects, and programs that **advance the goals and objectives** of the Erie Canalway Preservation and Management Plan.
- Provide a mechanism for the ECNHC to **direct resources and technical assistance** from a variety of sources. Support will be directed through a Peer Support group inclusive of key people from NY State Agencies, non-profits, and other relevant providers, as well as professionals within communities and cultural sites.
- Create an environment of **mutual collaboration** that strengthens the visitor experience and heightens awareness of heritage sites and resources within the Corridor.

Information and Assistance

For more information or questions regarding your application, please contact:

Andy Kitzmann, Project Manager
Phone: (518) 237-7000, ext 201;
E-mail: andy_kitzmann@partner.nps.gov

Benefits of Partner Designation

Partner designation adds value to individual sites by signaling their connection to the nationally-significant heritage of the Corridor. “Connecting the dots” leads people from one site or community to another, thereby increasing visitation and multi-day excursions throughout the Corridor as a whole.

Resources and Training

Participation in the partner program will help to ensure that the right people from your organization have access to important information. The ECNHC funnels resources from state agencies, colleagues, non-profit organizations, and the National Park Service to sites throughout the Corridor. Partners also benefit from access to ECNHC resources, technical assistance, and training.

Networking and Information

Staying connected is a vital part of the Erie Canalway Partner Program. The program offers participation in a new Peer to Peer Network. This network provides support from peers who are working towards a common purpose, as well as access to a wide range of professionals who can provide expertise and guidance.

Marketing and Promotion

Partners benefit from opportunities to be included in ECNHC marketing and promotional materials and Canalway publications. Partners may use the Erie Canalway logo, subject to Erie Canalway graphic standards, to showcase their partner status. In addition, partners may take advantage of new templates and products for public outreach and promotion, e.g., templates for sample website text, press releases, window decals, and interpretive entry signs.

Partnership Opportunities

Historic, cultural, and natural resource sites located within the congressionally-designated boundaries of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor¹ are eligible to become partners in one of three program categories:

Erie Canalway Heritage Partner- Full service sites that are open to the public more than 1000 scheduled hours per year and actively interpret at least three ECNHC interpretive themes² are eligible.

Erie Canalway Affiliate Site- Sites that are open less frequently and/or have more limited services than an Erie Canalway Heritage Partner, such as county historical societies, house museums, and seasonal interpretive sites, are eligible. Affiliate Sites must be open more than 500 scheduled hours per year, have on-site staff or volunteers, and interpret at least two ECNHC themes on a regular basis. Affiliate Sites that want to work toward eligibility for Erie Canalway Heritage Partner status will be encouraged to do so.

Erie Canalway Point of Interest- Extant canal sites that do not have staff or services, but are safely accessible to the public and relate to one or more of ECNHC interpretive themes are eligible. An interpretive sign (wayside exhibit) or other agreed upon interpretive materials must be available to the public. A nonprofit, state agency or authority, or municipality must assume responsibility for the site and for participating as a partner. A single entity may register multiple sites as Points of Interest.

Partners must meet specific guidelines and criteria described in the next section.

¹ A map of the Corridor and list of communities within it can be found at: http://www.eriecanalway.org/explore_things-to-know_brochures-maps.htm

² Interpretive themes are listed in the Partner Program Application and in Chapter 6 of the Erie Canalway Preservation and Management Plan.

Site Criteria

	ERIE CANALWAY HERITAGE PARTNER	ERIE CANALWAY AFFILIATE	ERIE CANALWAY POINT OF INTEREST
Hours of Operation	Open to the public more than 1000 scheduled hours per year.	Open to the public at least 500 scheduled hours per year, including weekend hours and by arrangement.	No required hours of operation, or appointment based.
Facilities	Directional signs, in place, where appropriate, to ensure accessibility. Provide safe drinking water and public restrooms.	<i>Same as Heritage Partner</i>	Directional signs, in place, where appropriate, to ensure accessibility. Access is safe and well-maintained. On-site resources are protected and periodically inspected for vandalism, graffiti, or other problems.
Operations	Track visitation and provide periodic updates to ECNHC.	<i>Same as Heritage Partner</i>	Provide periodic updates to ECNHC. Visitation does not need to be tracked. Point of Interest does not need to be staffed, but must have a designated individual to act as the liaison to the Erie Canalway NHC.
Interpretation (e.g., exhibit, presentation, live interpretation, computer program, video, etc.)	Demonstrate current and ongoing interpretation and/or educational programs related to at least three of the ECNHC themes. <i>See Partner Program Application for information on interpretive themes.</i>	Demonstrate current and ongoing interpretation and/or educational programs related to two of the ECNHC themes. <i>See Partner Program Application for information on interpretive themes.</i>	Point of Interest must relate to at least one of the ECNHC interpretive themes. Sites may include canal-related structures, buildings, or remains, or replicas of former canal structures. Must have an interpretive sign or other agreed interpretive materials available to the public.
Management	Historical, natural and/or cultural resources (collection, landscape, structure or structures) must be managed in a manner consistent with professional preservation and interpretation standards through policies and procedures. ECNHC recognizes the Standards and Best Practices established by the American Association of Museums for museum ethics and collections management: http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/standards/index.cfm .	<i>Same as Heritage Partner</i>	A nonprofit, state agency or authority, or municipality must assume responsibility for the site and for participating as a partner. This entity must designate one or more individuals to serve as the liaison to the ECNHC and oversee partner status.

In addition, owners/managers of all participating Canalway Heritage Partners and Affiliate Sites are expected to:

- a) Designate one or more individuals who will serve as the liaison to the ECNHC, oversee Partner status, and communicate internally and externally about the program.
- b) Display Canalway Heritage Partner identification sign upon receipt from ECNHC. The site is encouraged to further display the site's connection to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor by:
 - Using the Erie Canalway logo on the site's website and linking with the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor;
 - Distributing Erie Canalway brochures, as appropriate to site/capacity.
- c) Collaborate with the ECNHC and other partner sites by cross promoting neighboring canal-related venues to boost connections between sites and encourage multiple visits. This may be accomplished by:
 - Providing brochures along with visitor information;
 - Providing web links and information regarding neighboring sites of interest;
 - Recommending neighboring sites when talking with visitors;
 - Recommending neighboring sites as part of public programs;
 - Encouraging staff/volunteers to visit neighboring sites so that they can become familiar with regional points of interest.

Neighboring venues may include: the Erie Canalway Trail, historic canal remnants (old locks, aqueducts, or bridges), parks and boat launches, locks, canal-related museums, murals, Passport to National Park sites, and other Erie Canalway Partner Sites.

- d) Provide interpretive training and capacity building opportunities for frontline staff, docents, and volunteers and consistently evaluate and improve effectiveness of both wayfinding and interpretive materials.
- e) Continue to protect the site's resources and educate the public about the need for protection of natural and cultural resources.
- f) Agree to obtain all necessary permits and comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Site Designation Process

Aspiring partner sites are encouraged to consult with ECNHC staff prior to applying to clarify their eligibility. Applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed by Erie Canalway staff and forwarded to a Partnership Panel for further review and recommendations for designation by the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission. The Commission will approve official site designation.

All partners will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they continue to meet Partner Program criteria. New designations will also be added periodically.

Review Panel and Conflict of Interest

In order to maintain the highest standards of fairness, Erie Canalway operates to avoid any possible conflict of interest. Any member of the review team, Partnership Panel, or Commission will abstain from deliberating or voting on any proposal in which he/she is connected through employment, service as an unpaid consultant, or as an officer or other representative.

Timeline for Site Designation

► **June 21, 2010**

Partner Site applications available

►► **August 6, 2010**

Deadline for applications: must be postmarked or received via e-mail no later than Friday, August 6, 2010

►►► **October 2010**

Designations announced

About the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

The United States Congress established the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor in December 2000. The legislation:

- applies to the entire New York State Canal System, including the 524 miles of navigable waterway still in use today as well as historic alignments, some no longer readily visible;
- includes all 234 municipalities linked by the Erie, Champlain, Cayuga-Seneca and Oswego Canals and Cayuga and Seneca Lakes;
- recognizes the crucial role the canals played in our nation's growth;
- affirms a national interest in preserving and promoting the Corridor for future generations through a variety of outreach activities;
- created the 27-member Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission, and charged it with developing and implementing a Preservation and Management Plan for the Corridor in concert with federal, state and local governments and other partners.

With the Congressional designation, the Erie Canalway joined a cadre of National Heritage Areas (including Corridors) acclaimed for their ability to build regional partnerships that blend heritage stewardship and development practices.

By virtue of its broad scope, federal resources, and the high level of visibility and credibility provided by the National Park Service and Congressional designation, the National Heritage Corridor offers an opportunity to bring new clarity, vision, and energy to an extensive existing planning and implementation infrastructure — an “umbrella” to help convene, coordinate, and catalyze existing and new collaborative efforts.

Preservation and Management Plan Goals and Objectives

Six key goals to guide the ECNHC's efforts to meet the spirit of its enabling legislation.

- 1. The Corridor's historic and distinctive sense of place will be widely expressed and consistently protected.*

Objectives

- Build public support for preservation
- Protect and enhance the canals and related resources
- Encourage investment in sustainable development
- Help Corridor communities plan for heritage development

2. *The Corridor’s natural resources will reflect the highest standards of environmental quality.*

Objectives

- Increase public awareness and support for conservation
- Encourage quality stewardship policies and practices

3. *The Corridor’s recreation opportunities will achieve maximum scope and diversity, in harmony with the protection of heritage resources.*

Objectives

- Increase access to and diversity of recreational opportunities
- Improve the quality of the Corridor experience
- Enhance connectivity between Corridor resources

4. *The Corridor’s current and future generations of residents and visitors will value and support preservation of its heritage.*

Objectives

- Develop a Corridor-wide thematic framework
- Integrate communities and sites into the larger Corridor story
- Improve educational and interpretive programs and media
- Extend awareness and interest beyond Corridor boundaries

5. *The Corridor’s economic growth and heritage development will be balanced and self-sustaining.*

Objectives

- Harness tourism and development to reinforce sense of place
- Increase local capacity to undertake heritage development
- Establish a unifying Corridor identity of place and quality of life
- Integrate a heritage-based perspective into every message

6. *The Corridor will be a “must-do” travel experience for regional, national and international visitors.*

Objectives

- Attract visitors to maximize economic impact
- Help develop a memorable Corridor tourism product
- Provide coordination and assistance to marketing efforts
- Communicate to stakeholders the benefits of heritage tourism