

CHAPTER 10 • COMMUNITY PLANNING & REVITALIZATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

10.1 Introduction 4

10.2 Goals 4

10.3 Approach 5

ACTION: In designing the “Partner Development” program described in Chapter 11, reinforce the protection and enhancement of natural resources, opportunities for outdoor recreation, and community revitalization by encouraging partners to develop multi-faceted projects that meet the needs of the heritage area and the sustainability of New Jersey’s quality of life. 6

10.4 Protecting the Special Qualities of New Jersey’s Landscapes 6

10.4.1 Recognition 6

ACTION: Encourage community and private-owner pursuit of recognition programs for special resources by publicizing the availability of such programs. 7

10.4.2 Planning in New Jersey 7

ACTION: Support the establishment and use of land development concepts, processes, and design forms as identified in the statewide land use plan to preserve open space, prevent sprawl, and preserve and enhance the scenic qualities of the landscape. 8

ACTION: Work with New Jersey’s Department of Community Affairs, ANJEC, and other land use advocacy organizations on model language and case examples for municipal and county master plans directly addressing the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area. 8

ACTION: Recognize the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area and related parks, trails, sites, and resources in each municipality’s comprehensive plan to demonstrate the significant public benefit and establish a conservation purpose for the scenic and historic qualities of the open space lands and historic resources associated with the heritage area. 8

ACTION: Support county and local governmental policies, regulations, programs, and initiatives that preserve and encourage the appropriate management of natural and cultural resources. 8

ACTION: In the Association’s encouragement of heritage area programming, require threshold levels of planning and provide support in achieving excellent planning. 8

10.4.3 Garden State Preservation Trust Programs 9

Green Acres 9

ACTION: Working with NJDEP, NJDCA, ANJEC, and others, identify examples where local open space funding has supported the acquisition and/or public access to lands related to historic resources from the Revolutionary Era. 10

ACTION: Working with NJDEP, NJDCA, ANJEC, and others, encourage counties and municipalities to amend their Open Space and Recreation Plans to enable protection of and public access to lands related to historic resources from the Revolutionary Era. 10

Farmland Preservation 10

ACTION: The identification of historic landscapes that are also worthy of protection as important farmland should be a high priority as landscapes in general are inventoried and studied. Opportunities should be explored for planning and funding the protection of these “double duty” areas as a high priority for action by government and nonprofit heritage-area partners. 11

ACTION: Working with the NJ Department of Agriculture, the State Agriculture Development Committee, and others, identify examples where farmland funding has supported the acquisition and/or public access to lands related to historic resources from the Revolutionary Era. 11

ACTION: Working with NJDEP, NJDCA, ANJEC, and others, encourage counties and municipalities to undertake or amend Farmland Protection Plans, considering protection of lands related to historic resources from the Revolutionary Era as an added element during such planning. 11

ACTION: Collaborate with New Jersey's two regional Resource Conservation & Development Councils (described in Chapter 3, Existing Conditions) to identify farmland protection and agri-tourism projects compatible with Crossroads goals. 11

10.4.4 Planning for Protecting Wildlife Habitat and Biodiversity 11

ACTION: The overlap of historic landscapes with wildlife habitat should be assumed in dealing with historic landscapes. As historic landscapes are identified and studied, opportunities should be explored for planning and funding the protection of these "double duty" areas as a high priority for action by government and nonprofit heritage-area partners. 12

ACTION: Support state and regional planning and programs for the preservation and enhancement of natural resources. 12

10.4.5 Water Resources 12

ACTION: The identification of historic landscapes related to water resources should be a high priority as landscapes in general are inventoried and studied. Opportunities should be explored for planning and funding the protection of these "double duty" areas as a high priority for action by government and nonprofit heritage-area partners. 13

ACTION: Support federal, state, and local programs and initiatives that will improve and maintain water quality within the region's wetlands, lakes, streams, rivers, and bays. 13

10.4.6 Empowering and Coordinating with Partners 13

ACTION: Hold annual consultations with county and municipal planning officials and conservation and recreation groups to coordinate and prioritize efforts for inventorying and protecting important land and water resources with important relationships to Revolutionary Era sites and events. 13

ACTION: Collaborate with non-profit organizations, friends groups, and advocacy groups to promote the preservation, enhancement, and appropriate management of natural resources and landscapes within the heritage area. 13

ACTION: Collaborate with agencies at the federal, state, and local levels managing publicly owned properties with significant natural resources areas within the heritage area to promote landscape connectivity, healthy ecosystems, best management practices, appropriate recreation, and interpretation. 13

10.5 Linkages and Recreation 14

ACTION: Recognize the use of alternative modes of transportation in the conceptualization and implementation of heritage area programs. 14

10.5.1 Trails 14

ACTION: Participate in state leadership efforts to improve funding, policies, interagency coordination, and promotion of trails. Reach out to the New Jersey Trails Council as a key partner in this endeavor. 14

ACTION: Encourage communities and conservation groups to expand trails and trail access points, focusing organizational energies (1) on achieving greater protection and development of trails through historic landscape areas, and (2) connecting legacy communities with nearby sites where Revolutionary Era events are (or could be) interpreted. 14

ACTION: Collaborate with community groups in the process of developing trails and greenways to identify and pursue funding opportunities for trail and greenway facilities where they overlap with heritage area interpretive opportunities. 15

ACTION: Identify opportunities for bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian, and boaters to tour the heritage area and learn about New Jersey's Revolutionary War heritage. 15

Chapter 10 • Crossroads Conservation, Recreation, and Community Revitalization
* February, 2011 DRAFT *

ACTION: Support the development of multi-use and water trails to enrich linkages among Revolutionary Era sites. 15

10.5.2 Byways and Touring Routes 15

New Jersey's Scenic Byways 15

ACTION: Recognize scenic routes and byways within the heritage area, and for roads believed to qualify, pursue designation as state or national scenic byways as part of FHWA's America's Byways program. 17

Other Potential Driving Routes 17

Incorporating Trails into a Touring System 18

ACTION: Support the development of multi-use and water trails to enrich linkages among Revolutionary Era sites. 19

10.5.3 Establishing and Managing Touring Routes 19

What Is a Well-managed Touring route? 19

ACTION: Develop a special program to recognize and manage "touring routes" – including both driving routes and trails – that provide important physical linkages for interpreting storylines and selected topics relating to Crossroads interpretive themes. 22

10.6 Wayfinding 22

10.6.1 Getting to the Heritage Area 23

10.6.2 Knowing Where You Are Within the Heritage Area 24

10.6.3 Finding Gateways and Primary Destinations 24

10.6.4 Itinerary-based Touring Routes 24

10.6.5 Finding Other Interpretive Sites 24

10.7 Community Revitalization 25

ACTION: Support economic revitalization strategies and infrastructure improvements within urban and developed areas that strengthen downtown cores, stabilize neighborhoods, and enhance streetscape and community character. 25

ACTION: Recognize energy conservation and sustainability within heritage area communities and demonstrate commitment to these principles through the actions undertaken and supported by the heritage area. 25

ACTION: Support the arts, including public art and commemorations, in legacy and visitor service communities. 25

ACTION: Support public festivals and events in legacy and visitor service communities. 26

SIDEBAR: Creating a Wayfinding System for New Jersey 26

Chapter 10 • Community Planning & Revitalization

10.1 Introduction

This chapter is about reaching out to communities throughout the heritage area and actively supporting policies, programs, and initiatives that strengthen community character and enhance quality of life. It addresses the key roles of landscape conservation and scenic byways, support for recreational initiatives, and protection of natural resources. Work described here is central to the ultimate benefit and value of the heritage area initiative, as it relates community heritage and identity directly to community well-being.

Chapter 9, Crossroads Preservation, provides an in-depth review of historic preservation issues to be addressed by the heritage area. It emphasizes preservation and stewardship of the physical presence of the Revolutionary Era, including buildings, historic communities, archeological sites, and commemorative markers and monuments. This chapter identifies other resource protection activities to add to that focus, including the preservation of landscapes and natural resources.

The federal legislation establishing the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area repeatedly refers to resource protection. It affirms that the feasibility study preceding the legislation demonstrates the existence of “a sufficient assemblage of nationally distinctive cultural, historic, and natural resources necessary to establish the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area.” Among criteria set forth for the Secretary of the Interior’s approval of the plan is this statement: “the resource protection and interpretation strategies in the management plan would adequately protect the cultural, historic, and natural resources of the Heritage Area.”

The legislation anticipates that the heritage area will result in “programs and projects that recognize, protect, and enhance important resource values” and sets forth numerous standards for this, including a requirement that the plan address “comprehensive policies, strategies, and recommendations for conservation, funding, management, and development of the heritage area,” “take into consideration existing state, county, and local plans,” and list “recommendations of policies and strategies for resource management that result in application of appropriate land and water management techniques.”

10.2 Goals

Chapter 2 sets forth the full list of goals and strategies developed for the plan. The goals related to this chapter are:

Goal 2.A: Advocate for and facilitate the management, preservation, enhancement, protection, and interpretation of historic and cultural resources associated with the American Revolution in New Jersey for the educational and inspirational benefit of future generations.

- Goal 3.A: Work with municipal governments to guide land use and promote compatible forms of economic development in a manner that is sensitive to the heritage area's natural, recreational, and scenic resources and sensitive to nationally significant Revolutionary War era historic resources and landscapes.
- Goal 3.B: Advocate for and facilitate the conservation, enhancement, and appropriate management of natural resources within the heritage area in order to support interpretation and appreciation of the history of the American Revolution in New Jersey, enhance quality of life for residents, and ensure a high-quality visitor experience.
- Goal 3.C: Support the development and use of recreational opportunities within the heritage area consistent with heritage area educational and interpretive strategies.
- Goal 3.D: Support the preservation and enhancement of scenic landscapes, communities, and resources within the heritage area in order to support interpretation and appreciation of the history of the American Revolution in New Jersey and ensure a high-quality visitor experience.

10.3 Approach

As detailed further below, New Jersey has excellent planning programs, excellent plans, and considerable funding for the protection of special resources. This is true even in at a time of serious cutbacks at the state government level. The thrust of actions in this chapter relating to resource protection is to encourage further inventorying and study to identify historic landscapes, the surroundings of historic sites, and critical linkages, and then to cement their identification as important for protection through recognition and local planning.

This chapter also addresses community revitalization. Strategically, this management plan recognizes that interpretation activities should drive implementation, to achieve visibility, visitation increases, and popular support as swiftly as possible, as argued in Chapter 7, Crossroads Presentation, and Chapter 11, Management and Implementation. There is a certain advantage to such focus on interpretation, but there is a certain danger as well – that longer term, more sites will be lost to neglect, lack of funding, or worse, and the visitor experience in many communities will not improve. Attention to economic revitalization (including historic preservation as detailed in Chapter 9, Crossroads Preservation) must go hand in hand with interpretation.

The alternative chosen for this management plan is “interpreting Revolutionary War resources for residents.” Accordingly, the expansion of interpretation and attention to visibility and presentation are expected to drive implementation. That said, however, the issues addressed in this chapter have been the concern of New Jersey residents for many years. Voters year after year have strongly supported major state investments in programs that have provided greatly for New Jersey's quality of life. Crossroads can and should build on this investment and goodwill by asking that its programs address multiple benefits.

ACTION: In designing the “Partner Development” program described in Chapter 11, reinforce the protection and enhancement of natural resources, opportunities for outdoor recreation, and community revitalization by encouraging partners to develop multi-faceted projects that meet the needs of the heritage area and the sustainability of New Jersey’s quality of life.

10.4 Protecting the Special Qualities of New Jersey’s Landscapes

New Jersey has strongly protected open space, farmland, and historic sites through land conservation and grant programs at the statewide level. Chapter 3, Affected Environment, describes both the resources in the heritage area that should be protected and the programs that are possible in seeking not only protection, but enhancement. Important resources for protection include:

- Landscape areas that retain overall integrity to the period of the American Revolution within the heritage area.
- Natural areas, sites, and resources that are particularly significant to the story of the American Revolution and that have the potential to support interpretation in association with other interpretive sites and attractions.
- Scenic and historic road linkages that can convey heritage area themes and storylines and connect historic attractions, sites, and communities.

Chapter 9, Crossroads Preservation, encourages in-depth inventorying for Revolutionary Era historic resources as a part of a comprehensive approach to protecting these resources. As such inventorying proceeds, and as local comprehensive and open space plans are updated routinely, planners should be encouraged to search for and fully evaluate Revolutionary Era resources. The natural areas, sites, and resources that support the stories and themes of that era are not completely understood and known. This includes the surroundings of known historic sites, which are often evaluated simply up to their property lines, with a focus on structures rather than landscape context. The GIS data-sharing system described in Chapter 9 should include information about existing protected lands and the intrinsic qualities of landscapes and contexts of historic structures for use in local development review and future state and federal review of state and federally funded projects.

10.4.1 Recognition

“Recognition” as used here means official designations to participate in programs that extend benefits to the recognized resource. It is a word generally used interchangeably with “designation,” but there is an important, though subtle difference. Recognition programs specifically promise to promote a resource, or, like the National Register for Historic Places or Important Bird Area, is so widely understood to be an honor that the resource gains promotion simply by being listed. Designation programs may be more local and regulatory in nature – as in the designation of a local historic district under New Jersey’s historic preservation law, discussed in Chapter 9, Crossroads Preservation.

The benefit of recognition is that in order to achieve it, jurisdictions or owners will take on tasks applying or meeting criteria that they might not otherwise tackle. National Register nominations are hard work, for example, requiring historical research. Designation as a “Tree City USA” requires a jurisdiction (of any size) to have a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, a community forestry program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita, and an Arbor Day observance with official proclamation.

Sometimes recognition is the first rung on a ladder to benefits. The Preserve America program described in Chapter 9, Crossroads Preservation, requires substantial upfront preservation achievements before a community may apply. Once the community has achieved this recognition, it is permitted to apply for federal matching grants.

Although not all programs discussed here protect Revolutionary War resources *per se*, they enhance quality of life and community pride, and can help in the overall Crossroads goal of improving the visitor experience. In addition to the National Register, Certified Local Government, and Preserve America programs described in Chapter 9, programs for communities and conservation groups to consider include:

- Important Bird Area recognition, promoted in the U.S. by the National Audubon Society, is part of a global effort to identify and conserve areas that are vital to birds and other biodiversity (<http://web4.audubon.org/bird/iba/>)
- The Tree City USA[®] program, sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters, provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for urban and community forestry programs in thousands of American towns and cities (<http://www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/about.cfm>)
- The National Wildlife Federation’s Certified Wildlife Habitat[™] encourages and recognizes private and public sites that are “gardening for wildlife” (<http://www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Outdoor-Activities/Garden-for-Wildlife.aspx>)

The Crossroads Association should also create recognition programs for “legacy communities” and “visitor services communities” as described later in Chapter 9.

ACTION: Encourage community and private-owner pursuit of recognition programs for special resources by publicizing the availability of such programs.

10.4.2 Planning in New Jersey

New Jersey’s support for community planning is considerable, although from locality to locality the level of public participation and quality of the result can vary. Chapter 9, Crossroads Preservation, addresses the need to incorporate Crossroads interests in municipal historic preservation planning and ordinances, following the statewide historic preservation plan. Crossroads interests should also be addressed in two other critical local planning activities:

- Comprehensive planning, a requirement for all communities within a framework supplied by New Jersey’s State Development and Redevelopment Plan, under either New Jersey’s

Municipal Land Use Law or the County and Regional Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 40:27-2 et seq.

- Open space planning, a requirement for local jurisdictions to collect and spend local funds for open space and receive state funding. All jurisdictions in the heritage area have such plans, both county and municipal.

New Jersey's requirements for comprehensive planning (also called master planning) includes elements that address needs of communities that seek to support the goals of the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area, including land use, circulation, community facilities, recreation, conservation of natural resources, economic development planning, and historic preservation. (The plans are also required to address housing, utility service, solid waste, and recycling.) The required historic preservation plan element must indicate the location and significance of historic sites and historic districts; identify the standards used to assess worthiness for historic site or district identification; and analyze the impact of each component and element of the master plan on the preservation of historic sites and districts. The plan must also indicate the relationship of the master plan's proposed development of the municipality to the master plans of contiguous municipalities, the county, and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

ACTION: Support the establishment and use of land development concepts, processes, and design forms as identified in the statewide land use plan to preserve open space, prevent sprawl, and preserve and enhance the scenic qualities of the landscape.

ACTION: Work with New Jersey's Department of Community Affairs, ANJEC, and other land use advocacy organizations on model language and case examples for municipal and county master plans directly addressing the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area.

ACTION: Recognize the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area and related parks, trails, sites, and resources in each municipality's comprehensive plan to demonstrate the significant public benefit and establish a conservation purpose for the scenic and historic qualities of the open space lands and historic resources associated with the heritage area.

ACTION: Support county and local governmental policies, regulations, programs, and initiatives that preserve and encourage the appropriate management of natural and cultural resources.

ACTION: In the Association's encouragement of heritage area programming, require threshold levels of planning and provide support in achieving excellent planning.

In addition to state guidance and support for master planning and historic preservation, there are opportunities for communities to tie their planning into specific state-supported programs for open space, farmland protection, wildlife, and water resources. All of these can be adapted to support Crossroads goals for landscape and natural resource conservation along with the

preservation of historic sites, and protection of all of these kinds of special resources can be implemented with state, and sometimes federal, funding.

10.4.3 Garden State Preservation Trust Programs

The Garden State Preservation Trust (GSPT) is the financing authority that provides state funds to preserve forests and meadows, watersheds and wildlife habitats, parks and sports fields, working farms, agricultural landscapes, and historic structures. In more than 40 years, no statewide public referendum for farmland or open space preservation has been defeated. Most recently, New Jersey voters authorized \$24 million for the Garden State Preservation Trust under the Green Acres, Water Supply and Floodplain Protection, and Farmland and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2009. This funding can be leveraged into many more dollars for preservation and conservation through projects sponsored by counties, municipalities, and nonprofit conservation groups, who bring additional funds to the table. The funding from the GSPT flows through several state sources, including the New Jersey Historic Trust as described in Chapter 9, and Green Acres and the State Agricultural Development Committee described here.

Green Acres

Green Acres, New Jersey's nationally renowned funding program for the acquisition of open space and historic sites, has protected nearly 640,000 acres since its founding in 1961. Today, its stated mission is to "to achieve, in partnership with others, a system of interconnected open spaces whose protection will preserve and enhance New Jersey's natural environment and its historic, scenic, and recreational resources for public use and enjoyment." The program is guided by the *New Jersey State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (http://72.41.119.75/Library/SCORPs/NJ_SCORP_2008.pdf). The completion of this "SCORP" allows the state to tap funding available to states through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, among others. It documents that the state already has more than 1.2 million acres of protected land (26% of the state's land area), with a need to protect 700,000 acres more.

The Green Acres program supports both state and local land protection projects. At the state level, the State Acquisition Project Areas (<http://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres/currentstate.html>) includes a focus on the Crossroads of the American Revolution and on historic sites in general. The description of the focus on historic sites includes this statement (emphasis added): "By protecting and linking sites of historic significance and by *preserving swaths of adjoining buffer lands*, the history and *even the historic landscapes* of New Jersey can be preserved."

At the local level, Green Acres provides matching funds based on local governments' Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). In order to be eligible for these matching funds under the Green Acres Planning Incentive Program, which funds land acquisition for recreation and conservation purposes, counties and municipalities must collect an open space tax and have a Green Acres approved OSRP, passed as part of their master plans. (*Open Space and Recreation Plan Guidelines, 2010*, available at http://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres/pdf/osrpg_2010.pdf) Once an OSRP has been approved by the Green Acres Program, a local government can acquire lands identified in its OSRP without making multiple individual, site-specific applications for Green Acres funding to acquire those lands. As of April 2010, all 21 counties and 236

municipalities in New Jersey had passed an open space tax by voter referendum, many by large pluralities.

The taxes collected locally may be used following purposes, or any combination of these purposes, as determined by the local government:

- (a) Acquisition of lands for recreation and conservation purposes,
- (b) Development of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes,
- (c) Maintenance of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes,
- (d) Acquisition of farmland for farmland preservation purposes,
- (e) Preservation of historic properties, including the acquisition of such properties for historic preservation purposes, or
- (f) Payment of debt service on indebtedness issued or incurred by a local government for any of the purposes stated in (a), (b), (d) or (e).

Because spending of state matching funds is limited to (a) in the list above, “acquisition of lands for recreation and conservation purposes,” land identified for local acquisition that supports the protection of Revolutionary Era landscapes and sites should also be identified with recreation and conservation purposes in mind whenever possible. Local funds without state matching funds are not so limited; many communities have named their local programs after the full title of the state enabling legislation. Bergen County, for example, calls its program the “Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund.” Counties, in fact, typically make their funds available to match municipal funds raised in the same way as the state Green Acres program, but for most if not all purposes under the law enabling open space taxation.

ACTION: Working with NJDEP, NJDCA, ANJEC, and others, identify examples where local open space funding has supported the acquisition and/or public access to lands related to historic resources from the Revolutionary Era.

ACTION: Working with NJDEP, NJDCA, ANJEC, and others, encourage counties and municipalities to amend their Open Space and Recreation Plans to enable protection of and public access to lands related to historic resources from the Revolutionary Era.

Farmland Preservation

New Jersey’s Farmland Preservation Program is administered by the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), which coordinates with County Agriculture Development Boards, municipal governments, nonprofit organizations and landowners. In addition to the 700,000 acres cited above as desirable for protection for open space and recreation, the SADC has called for an additional 400,000 acres of farmland to be preserved in order to reach its target of 600,000 acres required to sustain agriculture as a viable industry in New Jersey. (SCORP, 67)

Since 2009, the SADC has required county and municipal Farmland Preservation Plans to obtain Garden State Preservation Trust funds administered by the SADC for farmland preservation. The SADC also runs a variety of specific programs including incentive grants to counties, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations. Farmland owners can sell development rights or entire farms, which are then restricted and resold, or make temporary, eight-year commitments to

preservation, which gains them access to other farm management benefits offered by the SADC. The SADC also accesses federal programs for land protection and soil and water conservation.

ACTION: Promote and support public and private land stewardship programs and initiatives with respect to conservation easements and other mechanisms that will help public and private owners preserve agricultural lands, strengthen the economic viability of agricultural uses, and promote best management practices on agricultural lands, focusing organizational energies on achieving greater protection for high-priority landscape areas.

ACTION: The identification of historic landscapes that are also worthy of protection as important farmland should be a high priority as landscapes in general are inventoried and studied. Opportunities should be explored for planning and funding the protection of these “double duty” areas as a high priority for action by government and nonprofit heritage-area partners.

ACTION: Working with the NJ Department of Agriculture, the State Agriculture Development Committee, and others, identify examples where farmland funding has supported the acquisition and/or public access to lands related to historic resources from the Revolutionary Era.

ACTION: Working with NJDEP, NJDCA, ANJEC, and others, encourage counties and municipalities to undertake or amend Farmland Protection Plans, considering protection of lands related to historic resources from the Revolutionary Era as an added element during such planning.

ACTION: Collaborate with New Jersey’s two regional Resource Conservation & Development Councils (described in Chapter 3, Existing Conditions) to identify farmland protection and agri-tourism projects compatible with Crossroads goals.

10.4.4 Planning for Protecting Wildlife Habitat and Biodiversity

According to New Jersey’s SCORP, the state “is ecologically unique. Very different northern and southern plant and wildlife communities call the state home, making New Jersey’s ecosystems among the most complex and diverse in the nation. This biodiversity includes 2,134 known native plant species and close to 900 wildlife species. Approximately 1 million shorebirds and as many as 80,000 raptors make migratory stopovers here each year.”

Wildlife habitat protection is guided by New Jersey’s Wildlife Action Plan for Wildlife of Greatest Conservation Need (2008; http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/ensp/wap/pdf/wap_draft.pdf). A critical action called for in the plan is to integrate wildlife management with other management plans. It also calls for improving study and designation of Important Bird Areas, in part to address the needs of migratory birds in the Atlantic Flyway, in collaboration with the National Audubon Society.

In 1994, the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife’s (DFW) Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) adopted a unique landscape-level approach to imperiled species

conservation by developing the Landscape Project. The goal of the project is to protect New Jersey's biological diversity by maintaining and enhancing imperiled wildlife populations within healthy, functioning ecosystems. Although this program does not offer funding, it does offer valuable information as the basis for local planning.

As described in *New Jersey's Landscape Project Version 2.1*, the Landscape Project focuses on the big picture, and not just on individual locations of imperiled species as those areas become threatened. The Landscape Project identifies critical wildlife areas to be preserved in order to ensure the conservation and recovery of New Jersey's imperiled wildlife for future generations through geographic information system (GIS) technology. The Landscape Project's information is readily accessible and can be integrated with the planning, protection and land management programs at every level of government — federal, state, county and municipal — and is available for use by non-governmental organizations and private landowners.

Landscape maps and overlays provide a basis for such local planning as the development of local habitat protection ordinances, zoning to protect critical wildlife areas, management guidelines for imperiled species conservation on public and private lands, and land acquisition projects. Most importantly, the critical area information provided by the Landscape Project can be used for planning purposes before such actions as proposed development, resource extraction (eg. timber harvests) or conservation measures occur. As the program's description states, "Such planning with accurate, and legally and scientifically sound information will result in less conflict. Less time will be wasted, and less money spent, attempting to resolve after-the-fact endangered and threatened species issues."

ACTION: The overlap of historic landscapes with wildlife habitat should be assumed in dealing with historic landscapes. As historic landscapes are identified and studied, opportunities should be explored for planning and funding the protection of these "double duty" areas as a high priority for action by government and nonprofit heritage-area partners.

ACTION: Support state and regional planning and programs for the preservation and enhancement of natural resources.

10.4.5 Water Resources

"The State has long recognized the importance of protecting rivers, streams, lakes, reservoirs, wetlands and associated buffers, and coastal waters. These lands protect ecological resources and water quality, provide water based recreational opportunities, and serve as linear open space linkages....While the protection of water resources through land preservation has been a goal of the Green Acres Program since its inception, the new legislation further focuses Green Acres preservation efforts on lands that protect important water resources," says New Jersey's SCORP (31).

The SCORP also explains that as a result of Public Law 2002, Chapter 76, the Green Acres State Land Acquisition Program "has revised the ranking system used to evaluate state land projects based on water resource features, biodiversity, and other natural resources. The new ranking

system assigns three times the weight for water resource lands and two times the weight for flood prone areas as compared to other priority criteria.” (31)

In addition to Garden State Trust funds, there are other possibilities. There is special funding through the Environmental Infrastructure Funding Program, which is administered by the NJDEP, as explained in Chapter 3, Existing Conditions. “Headwaters, stream corridors, wetlands, watershed protection, and aquifer recharge areas are among the types of land that would qualify. While lands purchased through the EIFP cannot be developed, they may be used for passive recreational activities such as hiking, fishing, and horseback riding. A conservation easement on funded parcels assures that the water quality benefits are preserved.” (SCORP, 32) The New Jersey Water Supply Authority also partners with local governments and nonprofit conservation organizations in protecting the watersheds that the Authority relies upon for its water supply, in the basins of the Raritan and Manasquan rivers, and the Delaware & Raritan Canal and its tributaries.

ACTION: The identification of historic landscapes related to water resources should be a high priority as landscapes in general are inventoried and studied. Opportunities should be explored for planning and funding the protection of these “double duty” areas as a high priority for action by government and nonprofit heritage-area partners.

ACTION: Support federal, state, and local programs and initiatives that will improve and maintain water quality within the region’s wetlands, lakes, streams, rivers, and bays.

10.4.6 Empowering and Coordinating with Partners

As described in detail in Chapter 9, Crossroads Preservation, collaboration with local, county, regional, and state partners is a critical element in pursuing resource planning and protection in the heritage area. Important state level partners are those discussed in the preceding section; they are also identified in Chapter 3, Existing Conditions, along with regional and statewide nonprofit organizations focusing on landscape conservation issues and supporting outdoor recreational access.

ACTION: Hold annual consultations with county and municipal planning officials and conservation and recreation groups to coordinate and prioritize efforts for inventorying and protecting important land and water resources with important relationships to Revolutionary Era sites and events.

ACTION: Collaborate with non-profit organizations, friends groups, and advocacy groups to promote the preservation, enhancement, and appropriate management of natural resources and landscapes within the heritage area.

ACTION: Collaborate with agencies at the federal, state, and local levels managing publicly owned properties with significant natural resources areas within the heritage area to promote landscape connectivity, healthy ecosystems, best management practices, appropriate recreation, and interpretation.

10.5 Linkages and Recreation

Opportunities for outdoor recreation are an important community amenity and support the visitor experience. These can include trail networks and local touring routes linking communities, interpretation of the Revolutionary Era in parks and along trails, and family-oriented community-building activities in public parks and elsewhere supporting public dialogue and interpretation of community identity. Public events such as marathons and bicycle races should be encouraged, adopting Crossroads interpretive themes and goals for public education as appropriate. Such events offer entertaining activities for visitors and residents, and support community revitalization.

ACTION: Recognize the use of alternative modes of transportation in the conceptualization and implementation of heritage area programs.

10.5.1 Trails

Within New Jersey, there are more than 2,000 miles of marked or mapped trails on public lands and waterways suitable for canoeing and kayaking as of 2008, according to New Jersey's Green Acres program, writing in the SCORP (27). Trail planning is a key element of New Jersey's outdoor recreation planning, led by a *New Jersey Trails Plan* (updated 2009; http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/trail_plan.htm).

Along with its extensive network of trails, New Jersey has a rich history of trail planning and development. The 2009 plan calls expanding trail development potential through unused rail and utility rights of way, publicly preserved open space, private lands, and water trails; and the inclusion of trail planning in plans for development/redevelopment, transit, and farmland preservation. A critical concept is focus on continuity, meaning efforts to connect neighborhoods and communities and to connect residential areas with community destinations (parks, trails, and schools – the latter through the use of funding from the state's Safe Routes to School Program). The plan also calls for the development of funding incentives for multi-jurisdictional trails; increasing the share of New Jersey's federal Transportation Enhancement Program funding devoted to trail development; and ensuring that trails are eligible for funding through corporate business taxes approved for recreation facility development, among other options for enhancing funds available for trail planning and development. Finally, the plan recommends establishing an Interagency Trails Council to coordinate regulatory review of trail policies and to advise the legislature; and revitalizing the State Trails System as the centerpiece of the New Jersey Trails Program, including an increase in the number of designated trails.

ACTION: Participate in state leadership efforts to improve funding, policies, interagency coordination, and promotion of trails. Reach out to the New Jersey Trails Council as a key partner in this endeavor.

ACTION: Encourage communities and conservation groups to expand trails and trail access points, focusing organizational energies (1) on achieving greater protection and development of trails through historic landscape areas, and (2) connecting legacy

communities with nearby sites where Revolutionary Era events are (or could be) interpreted.

ACTION: Collaborate with community groups in the process of developing trails and greenways to identify and pursue funding opportunities for trail and greenway facilities where they overlap with heritage area interpretive opportunities.

ACTION: Identify opportunities for bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian, and boaters to tour the heritage area and learn about New Jersey's Revolutionary War heritage.

ACTION: Support the development of multi-use and water trails to enrich linkages among Revolutionary Era sites.

10.5.2 Byways and Touring Routes

Byways and touring routes are key elements of the interpretive plan in Chapter 7, Crossroads Presentation. That plan recommends development of touring routes linking communities and interpretive sites within storyline and themed presentations, and developing guidelines for management of the routes and the historic and scenic landscapes to be seen along the way.

Byways and routes, existing and proposed, are shown on the Existing and Planned Touring Routes map, Figure 3-4. Scenic byways and birding and wildlife trails are existing vehicular touring routes that take visitors through some of the most scenic and naturally rich parts of the state. In addition, several significant routes used by both armies and the battles in which they confronted one another, shown in the Revolutionary War Landscape map, Figure 3-1, offer potential touring routes, and trails planned across the state can add to the touring experience with alternatives to driving. The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route (W3R) is already designated as a National Historic Trail and should be coordinated with Crossroads presentation.

New Jersey's Scenic Byways

New Jersey has an official scenic byway program that seeks to “highlight transportation corridors that have outstanding scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historic or archaeological significance. They represent the uniqueness and diversity of the state and together the byways tell stories about New Jersey's history, heritage, recreational opportunities, and beauty.”

(<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/scenic/>)

As the program notes on New Jersey's web site, to be a scenic byway, a state road must be a transportation corridor that is regionally significant and “should represent the uniqueness and diversity of the state with a unifying theme that tells a story about New Jersey's heritage, recreational opportunities, history and beauty. Roads that have a variety of scenic or interesting features with no relationship to each other do not create an overall sense of the road's character, history, or culture and therefore should not be considered for the scenic byway designation.”

The heritage area encompasses both of New Jersey's National Scenic Byways, the Millstone Valley Byway and the Delaware River Scenic Byway, and two other New Jersey state-designated byways. All are described in Chapter 3, Existing Conditions, as follows:

- **Delaware River National Scenic Byway** runs 33 miles along the Delaware River from Trenton north to Frenchtown. The byway offers “a firsthand experience of the Delaware River’s formative power, which shaped the cliffs and lowlands of the valley, influenced the settlement patterns of our historic river towns, and even played a critical role in America’s Revolutionary War, as memorialized at Washington Crossing State Park.”¹
- **Millstone Valley National Scenic Byway** is located in the narrow Millstone River valley of north central New Jersey. The route forms a loop drive along the west side of the Millstone River and the east side of the D&R Canal. Travel along the Byway offers a glimpse into the past where major troop movements and military campaigns greatly influenced the outcome of the American Revolution.
- **Palisades Interstate Parkway Scenic Byway** is a State Scenic Byway located in the northeast corner of the Crossroads Heritage Area. The Parkway offers a scenic 42-mile tour from the New Jersey side of the George Washington Bridge from Fort Lee north to Bear Mountain State Park in New York with breathtaking views of the Palisades, the Hudson River and the New York City skyline along the way.
- **Upper Freehold Historic Farmland Byway** is a State Scenic Byway in Monmouth County that exposes visitors to the area’s unique agricultural, historical, environmental and cultural traditions. The route passes through historic Allentown founded in 1706, across the old iron bridge at Crosswicks Creek, and past several sites involved in the Revolutionary War.

The benefits of New Jersey scenic byway designation include both recognition and better access to funding. Scenic byways are marketed through the NJDOT byway website (<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/scenic/byways.shtm>), and have access to the National Scenic Byway Program web site if they choose to participate (), regardless of whether or not they are a nationally designated byway. Any state-designated scenic byway qualifies that route for access to federal funding through the National Scenic Byway Program. Initial funds through the program can be utilized to prepare a corridor management plan, which is required for potential designation of the route as a National Scenic Byway (or All-American Road, a higher designation that recognizes byways that have nationally significant qualities and are considered “destinations unto themselves”). Federal funds from the program may also be used for resource protection, the development of visitor facilities, byway related safety improvements, access to byway-related recreational opportunities, and byway-related interpretive information, as well as marketing for the byway. Currently, with the exception of preparing corridor management plans, nationally designated byways are more likely to be funded through this program than state-designated byways (although this is not a hard and fast rule). A well-managed, nationally designated byway will help its communities manage and if desired, increase visitation, lengthen visitor stays, and increase economic activities for heritage-tourism related businesses.

¹ Federal Highway Administration, America’s Byways Program. Accessed online January 13, 2010, at <http://www.byways.org/explore/byways/2463/index.html>

ACTION: Recognize scenic routes and byways within the heritage area, and for roads believed to qualify, pursue designation as state or national scenic byways as part of FHWA’s America’s Byways program.

Other Potential Driving Routes

For the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area, roads that may not qualify for byway status but which link a variety of Revolutionary Era communities, sites, and other places where stories of the American Revolution can be told could be recognized, mapped, and promoted as “touring routes” under a program established specifically for the heritage area. Such roadways provide the canvas for themed itineraries to support the interpretive experience (itineraries are defined as plans for journeys listing and mapping different places in the order in which it is recommended that they be visited).

Although not currently designated as official touring routes, several Revolutionary War routes and Colonial-era routes, shown on [Figure 3-1] are also potential routes for touring the heritage area by car, connecting many of the key Revolutionary War sites critical to telling the Crossroads stories. These include the various routes of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route, designated as a National Historic Trail and now in an early planning phase. There are also other historic military routes associated with major Revolutionary War events, documented by local historians and Revolutionary War enthusiasts. Routes others have identified are associated with:

- The retreat across the Jerseys from Fort Lee to Trenton;
- Washington’s march from the Delaware crossing to Trenton;
- Washington’s march from Trenton to Princeton;
- Washington’s march from Princeton to Morristown; and
- British and American routes to and from the Battle of Monmouth.

Research discussed in Chapters 3 (Existing Conditions), 8 (Research and Education) and 9 (Crossroads Preservation) should lead to a Crossroads inventory of Revolutionary Era resources, documented with local partners’ participation. Such inventorying can do double duty in supporting identification of potential touring routes, which then must be evaluated for use as routes promoted to visitors.

The 300-mile New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail, designated by Congress in 1988, interprets New Jersey’s maritime history, coastal habitats and wildlife migrations and is operated as “an affiliated area” of the National Park System. The coastal trail includes a number of important Revolutionary Era sites that are not encompassed by the heritage area. Although the Coastal Heritage Trail and Crossroads Heritage Area do not overlap, they do share a mission to promote heritage tourism and resource protection within New Jersey. A partnership between the two organizations would provide a link for continuous heritage tourism routes and visitor services throughout New Jersey’s rich landscape of cultural and natural heritage.

New Jersey also has a Birding & Wildlife Trails program developed by the Audubon Society to expose a broader audience to the abundant wildlife in the small state (see <http://www.njwildlifetrails.org/>). The program includes two sets of published trail networks

(driving tours) that include several named segments in the heritage area, the Meadowlands Trails and the Skylands Trails. Skylands Trails meander through Hunterdon County, including the *Hunterdon's Highlands*, *Discover Diversity*, *Reservoir of Riches*, *Delaware River*, and *Amwell Valley Trails*. The *Family*, *Independent Naturalist*, and *Meet Me in the Meadowlands Trails* in the Meadowlands Trails network pass through the heritage area in Bergen and Hudson Counties. These touring routes may offer possible routes along roadways of interest to the American Revolution and should be carefully analyzed for the potential benefits of overlap.

Incorporating Trails into a Touring System

In addition to vehicular routes, [Map 3-?] shows several multi-use trails for walkers, hikers, and bicyclists that can add to non-driving options to the touring experience. Although trails are fairly well-distributed throughout the heritage area, many are still in the development stage or lack connections to other existing trails. Others that are complete and readily accessible are more suitable for recreation and local linkages instead of incorporation into a larger, touring system. Completing the potential trails and establishing connections between existing trails, as described in a section above, would provide greater access to the heritage area for multi-use trail users and encourage greater visitation overall. The longer and more prominent trails in the heritage area (or portions as they are completed) are well suited for incorporation into a touring system:

- **The Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park**, a 70-mile corridor straddling the D&R Canal and a popular recreation destination for canoeing, jogging, hiking, bicycling, fishing and horseback riding.
- **The East Coast Greenway**, a multi-use recreational trail linking 25 major cities from Florida to Maine and covering 94 miles in New Jersey. Extending from Hoboken southwest through Newark, New Brunswick, and Princeton to Trenton, the Greenway travels through the heart of the heritage area, following the Delaware & Raritan Canal from New Brunswick southward. Currently, 53 percent of the route in New Jersey is on automobile-free paths, and of the remaining route, about 16 percent is in development to become off-road over the next few years²;
- **The Delaware River Heritage Trail**, under development by the Delaware River Greenway Partnership, as a 60-mile, land-based walking and bicycle trail that will link river communities and state lands. Interpretive displays along the way will convey the natural and cultural history of the region. Once completed, the trail will extend from the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge at Philadelphia in the south to Trenton and Morrisville, PA to the north; and
- **The Delaware River Water Trail**, planned to extend 200 miles starting from the headwaters of the Delaware River in Hancock, NY. The heritage area's share of this water trail includes the river's lower segment starting well below the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, the most populated section, extending to the tidal waters

² New Jersey Department of Transportation. New Jersey East Coast Greenway Multi-Use Trail Guide. Accessed online on March 23, 2010, at <http://www.greenway.org/nj.php>

near Trenton. Most of the shoreline along this stretch is private; however, forested islands and rocky bluffs form scenic vistas from the water. On land, numerous historic towns and small cities create a rich cultural landscape.³

ACTION: Support the development of multi-use and water trails to enrich linkages among Revolutionary Era sites.

10.5.3 Establishing and Managing Touring Routes

As noted above, a touring route that is well-managed will have a greater chance of increasing visitation (both the number and diversity of visitors), lengthening visitor stays, and increasing heritage-tourism-related economic activity for the communities through which it passes (primarily food, lodging and related retail activities).

What Is a Well-managed Touring route?

First of all, a well-managed touring route is one in which the communities through which it passes have collaborated to establish a distinct identity and a clear and compelling reason to visit.

Second, a well-managed touring route is one in which the communities through which it passes have collaborated to preserve and enhance the qualities of the points of interest and visitor attractions.

Third, a well-managed touring route is one in which the communities through which it passes have collaborated to ensure that the experience of getting from one place to the next is just as interesting and enjoyable as being at each of the places along the route.

Collaboration does not necessarily require that a new organization is needed to manage that route, just that the responsibilities are clearly assigned and understood. For example the responsibility for creating and establishing a distinct identity will be a prime responsibility of the Crossroads Association; a given touring route can simply adapt the Association's guidance to the specific needs of the route. The responsibility for collaboration on preservation and enhancement of the points of interest (including coordination of interpretation) might be done through an ad hoc group of site managers and volunteers who meet periodically to agree on a coordinated program for preservation and enhancement. Responsibility for the route might be accomplished by the local or state transportation offices as long as there is an agreed-upon plan for them to follow. A corridor management plan can serve as the basis for all such collaborative activities, outlining a blueprint for partners' actions.

The types of enhancements that might be necessary will obviously vary by route, but at a minimum, each route should plan for:

- Enhancements that make the route more of an identifiable tourism product, giving those visitors that need it some reassurance that they will have a pleasant, educational, and enjoyable experience. This might include such things as directional signage, visitor

³ Delaware River Greenway Partnership. Accessed online March 23, 2010, at <http://www.delrivgreenway.org/content/Welcome%21/Welcome%21%20Index.html>

information kiosks, and signs to identify sites, all coordinated with a distinct visual and graphic identity.

- Enhancements needed for the sites themselves, to ensure that they are friendly and accessible to visitors – including actions that may help to reduce or mitigate any visual intrusions that detract from the visitor experience.
- A coordinated and fresh interpretive presentation, needed to achieve any economic (or educational) goals associated with a touring route.
- Enhancements to the route itself – finding ways to gradually improve the visual quality of the route over time (such as streetscape projects, beautification, and tree planting) and to add such safety-related measures as traffic calming and installations to protect pedestrians.

By collaborating on the marketing, preservation and enhancement of the route, communities can share resources and gain leverage through greater efficiencies, making it easier to raise the necessary matching funds to implement the needed management actions.

The degree to which the touring route should be managed can help a group determine if that route should pursue designation as a scenic byway or to focus their limited efforts on establishing a heritage touring route. While a heritage touring route with less aggressive management may not generate as much economic activity, it will generate awareness and interest in the preservation and interpretation of the heritage touring resources.

There are three distinct phases of developing a managed touring route: an establishment phase, a development phase, and a sustaining phase.

Creating a Touring Route: Establishment Phase

The first task is to determine an appropriate route and establish the chosen route's identity. Here are basic steps:

1. Inventory the intrinsic qualities of the general area to determine what opportunities are available for telling a compelling story about the area's Revolutionary War history. Chapter 7, Crossroads Presentation, identifies the primary themes and storylines, and sites that are currently available to tell those stories.
2. Next consider how best to link those sites so that the travel experience is just as enjoyable as the experience of visiting the sites themselves. Care should be taken to define a primary corridor, or spine, from which routes to the various sites can be signed (if needed). The route should be linear with anchoring sites at each end have a full range of services and amenities for visitors to access along the way.
3. Itineraries should then be developed for the route. These should include experiences that range from a couple of hours to an entire weekend.
4. Once a route is established with destinations and an itinerary, then an initial transportation study should be developed. This should be done by a qualified transportation planner or traffic engineer who can identify any highway safety issues

associated with introducing a more casual driver into the mix of commuting and local traffic that already takes place along that route. In some instances, the results of that analysis may suggest a refinement of the route to avoid highly congested areas, complex turning movements, or areas with high crash rates. In addition, the touring route should be examined for how it can be utilized by pedestrians and bicyclists, or how mass transit or trails might be incorporated. A multi-modal touring route will reach a greater audience and offer an opportunity to link the touring route with the overall livability of the community.

5. An analysis of the route should then be undertaken to determine if there are any planned or programmed projects underway that may have an impact on the travel experience such as major, multi-year roadway construction projects or large-scale development projects that may alter the quality of the travel experience. No one wants to travel through a construction zone as part of a leisure travel experience. The route should be refined to avoid these areas (at least on an interim basis during a construction period).
6. Long-term comprehensive plans should also be reviewed to determine future land use along the route to make sure that the resources being featured along the travel route will not be adversely affected by changes in land use. Heritage visitors will not return to an area or will not recommend the area to friends and colleagues if the experience is not authentic or if the experience is somehow compromised by incompatible land uses. The route should be refined to avoid these areas.
7. Once the route has been identified, itineraries established, traffic and safety issues addressed, and threats and vulnerabilities understood, then the route is ready to be marketed and promoted.

Managing a Touring Route: Development Phase

Once established, a touring route will need to be managed. The primary management needs for a touring route include:

- A corridor plan that clearly spells out the actions needed to manage the route over time. If State Scenic Byway or National Scenic Byway designation is desired, this corridor management plan should meet requirements for these designations, for the New Jersey Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- Endorsements and recognition for the touring route to establish and maintain its credibility as a great place to visit, including making application to the New Jersey and/or Federal Highway Administration for State or National Scenic Byway designation, if desired,
- Asking property owners, utility companies, highway departments, and others with management responsibility for the travel route to consider the goals of the touring route and work to proactively conserve and enhance the qualities of that route as part of their daily management and stewardship activities. Such partners should be brought into the planning and decision-making on designation.

- Coordinating conservation and preservation actions among local and regional organizations and agencies to ensure that the touring route retains its qualities over time. Such partners should also be brought into corridor management planning.
- Pursuit of outside funding to implement the plan recommendations, focusing on the high priority recommendations.
- Organizing events and activities associated with the touring route and working with other groups to coordinate events and activities taking place along the touring route. Crossroads as a whole will be encouraging more events, and will be a helpful source of ideas and connections.
- Promotion of the touring route as a heritage- or nature-based tourism destination as part of the Crossroads local, regional and national marketing and promotion efforts, as appropriate to the capacity of the touring route.
- Identifying the primary point of contact for information about the touring route.
- Working with municipal and non-profit organizations to promote volunteer opportunities along the touring route, especially for maintenance and upkeep of the right-of-way and any roadside pull-offs or outdoor interpretive exhibits as identified in the corridor management plan.

Managing a Touring Route: Sustaining Phase

In advance of the plan being fully implemented, a new phase needs to be considered by the collaborating parties: that of how to sustain the route over time. This may include:

- Finding ways to make the touring route more interesting and exciting by developing a plan to refresh interpretive exhibits and developing associated programming and events along the touring route.
- Finding ways to link potential enhancements to the touring route with existing enhancement plans in the community for mutual benefit of all.
- Finding ways to finance ambitious interpretation, programming, and enhancements over time.

ACTION: Develop a special program to recognize and manage “touring routes” – including both driving routes and trails – that provide important physical linkages for interpreting storylines and selected topics relating to Crossroads interpretive themes.

10.6 Wayfinding

Efforts to establish a coordinated wayfinding system for the State of New Jersey have been spearheaded through Celebrate NJ!, a non-profit organization, which recognized this need to organize and promote the assets of New Jersey, and began championing a seamless, systematic statewide wayfinding system.

Celebrate NJ! has developed a wayfinding master plan, the New Jersey Wayfinding Plan, that outlines a set of key principles for wayfinding in the state (see sidebar):

- Identifying and consistently marking entry points with Gateway signage that includes wayfinding zones that orient travelers to their position within the state;

- Establishing statewide wayfinding zones based on geography and context with unique, easily recognizable icons that unify and identify each zone;
- Linking county and local signage with TODS signage (Tourist Oriented Directional Signs – the blue, rectangular signs on state highways) and using them primarily to promote New Jersey’s attractions (consistent with the original intent of the TODS program); and
- Linking all forms of mobility (e.g., public transit, bicycle paths, cars, park and ride lots) with vehicular travel.

Crossroads incorporates a very large portion of New Jersey and perhaps provides the greatest test as to whether or not a wayfinding system can work at the statewide level. Crossroads includes portions of all six of the wayfinding zones: Skylands, Capitol, South Jersey, North Jersey, Shore and Southern Shore. Crossroads also presents wayfinding needs for all of the five of the levels defined in the Celebrate NJ! plan: Interstate highway signage, signage along state and county roadways, local wayfinding programs, information hubs, and electronic web-based media.

For Crossroads, the primary wayfinding strategies should focus on the following important needs:

- Establishing a means of directing visitors from the interstate system to gateways or primary destinations;
- Using the wayfinding system to establish a physical presence as part of its overall visual and graphic identity; and
- Provide visitors with the appropriate levels of information that allows them to navigate from one destination site to the next or along a specified heritage route.

Visitors usually come in two flavors. The first group comprises those wanting simply to explore on their own without the interference of physical signs pointing them in the preferred direction. This group usually wants to know “what is near me now that I might be interested in” and their navigational needs are usually met by mobile technology and applications (GPS devices, smart phones, and web-based services). The second group consists of visitors who need reassurance that they are headed in the right direction and that someone is helping them get to the place they want to go, and to find the best places along the way. They will often follow itineraries directly and will want to know how long it will take to get there.

The following describes the recommended structure for a wayfinding system that is designed to help visitors first to understand that they are located in an area that is part of the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area; and, second to ensure they can find those primary gateway sites and other destinations that will give them more information about how to explore the area in more detail.

10.6.1 Getting to the Heritage Area

The first goal of wayfinding for the Heritage Area is to utilize the wayfinding system to help establish a distinct visual and graphic identity. One of the first opportunities to do that is to announce to the visitor that they are in the heritage area and that they should get off at the next exit. This is consistent with the New Jersey Wayfinding Plan’s Level 1 wayfinding system – associated with the interstate highways. The FHWA’s Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) provides little guidance on what is

allowed on interstates with this regard and it is primarily related to smaller signs associated with crossing a river.

According to MUTCD, section 2M.09

Destination guide signs with a white legend and border on a brown background may be posted at the first point where an access or crossroad intersects a highway where recreational or cultural interest areas are a significant destination along conventional roads, expressways, or freeways. Supplemental guide signs with a white legend and border on a brown background may be used along conventional roads, expressways, or freeways to direct road users to recreational or cultural interest areas. Where access or crossroads lead exclusively to the recreational or cultural interest area, the advance guide sign and the exit direction sign may have a white legend and border on a brown background.

10.6.2 Knowing Where You Are Within the Heritage Area

The New Jersey Wayfinding Plan recommends a distinct graphic identity for each of the tourism areas across the entire state. Crossroads overlaps with all six of these areas as noted above. Crossroads wayfinding system should organize itself according to the six wayfinding areas. This will reinforce the goals of the state system, yet take nothing away from the visual or graphic identity of Heritage Area itself. The Heritage Area should organize its navigation information – whether through technology assisted mobile applications or through print media and signs – according to these six areas.

10.6.3 Finding Gateways and Primary Destinations

The second level of hierarchy is to link the heritage area visitor from the expressways and primary routes noted above to the gateway sites (and any visitor centers as appropriate) associated with each tourism area or corridor. The goal would be to establish primary visitor points of contact for each area or sub area where local visitor information and itineraries can be obtained. The gateway sites and/or visitor centers would have a complete wayfinding system (including both directional route marking and confirmational signs) to guide visitors and reassure them that they are heading to the right location. This primary wayfinding system should utilize standard MUTCD guidance and incorporate a unique logo identifying the heritage area that is suitable for highway use at expressway speeds. (Note: the logo is a part of an overall branding effort described in Chapter 7, Crossroads Presentation.)

10.6.4 Itinerary-based Touring Routes

The third level of hierarchy is the itinerary-based touring routes themselves. These routes would not be signed unless designated as a state- or national scenic byway. Instead, visitors would find their way along these routes with tear-off maps received at the gateway sites and other locations, or via web-, mobile phone-, and/or gps-based navigation systems.

10.6.5 Finding Other Interpretive Sites

Ultimately, all Crossroads interpretive sites should have signs that mark their sites and confirm to the visitor that these sites are part of the intended Crossroads presentation. Such signs should be visible from the road; while it is expected that each will be unique, over time, as signs are installed or replaced, Crossroads branding should be incorporated. Visitors arriving at the site should be able to access site information, including opening hours and/or a telephone number if the site is closed but could be opened on request (short notice or not). For sites that cannot be open on a regular basis, see Chapter 7 for advice on installing outdoor interpretive exhibits to enhance the visitor experience. For touring routes in particular, planning for such outdoor interpretive experiences can be incorporated into the corridor management plan.

ACTION: Design and implement a wayfinding system, partnering with NJDOT, [office of tourism], and Celebrate NJ! to initiate the program and carry it out over time.

10.7 Community Revitalization

Underlying all heritage area efforts is the goal of having a material, positive impact on residents' quality of life. Community revitalization can stem from interpretive programming, historic preservation and other resource stewardship initiatives, and work to enhance the visitor experience. To reinforce Crossroads program's impacts and strengthen community character, excellent community planning and best practices at the local municipal level are essential.

Crossroads should collaborate with county, regional, state, and nonprofit planning entities to provide incentives and technical assistance at the local level. Individual communities within the heritage area should be encouraged to develop comprehensive revitalization programs emphasizing historic preservation, open space and landscape conservation, community parks and access to outdoor recreation opportunities (especially trails), and energy conservation and sustainable systems (lowering energy use, managing stormwater, and improving water quality).

Chapter 9, Section 9.4.2, defines "legacy communities" as communities that existed within the heritage area at the time of the Revolution. "Visitor service communities" are those communities within or close to the heritage area that have appealing historic character and are capable of providing high quality services to heritage travelers. That chapter also lays out a program for recognizing these communities in order for the Association and partners to collaborate in providing targeted services (Section 9.8.7), including enhanced interpretation for legacy communities willing to act as "gateways" to interpretation in their regions. The chapter also covers Main Street, a key approach developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in revitalizing small downtown business districts.

These approaches constitute the primary means by which the Association and heritage area partners can support community revitalization efforts. In addition, support for the arts, including public art and commemorations, and public festivals and events can inject liveliness into small communities and should be encouraged.

ACTION: Support economic revitalization strategies and infrastructure improvements within urban and developed areas that strengthen downtown cores, stabilize neighborhoods, and enhance streetscape and community character.

ACTION: Recognize energy conservation and sustainability within heritage area communities and demonstrate commitment to these principles through the actions undertaken and supported by the heritage area.

ACTION: Support the arts, including public art and commemorations, in legacy and visitor service communities.

ACTION: Support public festivals and events in legacy and visitor service communities.

++++
SIDEBAR: Creating a Wayfinding System for New Jersey

Celebrate NJ! is a nonprofit organization founded in 2006 that “seeks to promote the best of New Jersey,” and has tackled the challenge of creating a unique wayfinding system for the nation’s most densely populated state. Here is how CNJ! explains the proposal, which has earned the endorsement of NJDOT, Crossroads of the American Revolution Association, and many others. For more information, see <http://www.celebratenj.org/community-initiatives/nj-wayfinding-initiative/>.

What is Wayfinding?

When signage works, it helps us move with confidence in unfamiliar locations. Because state, county and local authorities do not coordinate signage in New Jersey, it’s often easy to lose the trail when trying to find a particular point of interest. The exception may be hospitals-the big, blue “H” is universally understood as the Wayfinding symbol for a hospital, and in most cases these signs lead you right to the Emergency Room door.

A successful Wayfinding program has the potential for making all our important points of interest as easy to find as a hospital without creating unnecessary and confusing sign clutter.

Why is Wayfinding important?

A good Wayfinding program not only reduces the frustration of traveling in unfamiliar neighborhoods, it also enhances pride in our sense of place by reminding us of the sites which give character to our surroundings. It makes business sense too. Tourism is a \$35 billion industry in New Jersey. Neighboring states have already begun to enhance Wayfinding to support their own tourism. New Jersey needs to keep pace and be competitive.

New Jersey Deserves the Best

A first-class Wayfinding program creates signage that:

1. Enhances safety and reduces sign proliferation
2. Has symbols that are language independent
3. Reflects the environment the icons must function in
4. Accurately interprets the message
5. Is recognizable from a distance without reading words
6. Encapsulates the power of obvious symbols
7. Creates a unifying element and amplifies a sense of place
8. Uses symbols that are timeless
9. Interfaces easily with GPS in cars and cell phones

Why not just adopt a program from some other state?

New Jersey has some unique challenges. Many of New Jersey’s recreational areas, cultural sites, historic venues, and other attractions (e.g., farmer’s markets, zoos, botanical gardens and parks, marinas, resorts, ski areas, wineries) are not directly accessible from major highways. The

current state directional signage program is a template used in 17 other states. Since Colonial times, New Jersey has been the most densely populated and culturally diverse state in the nation with a tradition of Home Rule. A successful Wayfinding program in New Jersey would involve not just sites within a short distance of state highway crossroads, but “tiered” signage that directs a person from federal, state, county or local roads to a destination.

+++++