



Canal Quarters Interpretive Program

Maryland
Public Scoping - March 2013

Scoping Newsletter

Environmental Assessment for the Canal Quarters Interpretive Program

The National Park Service (NPS) is evaluating the expansion of the Canal Quarters Interpretive Program (CQIP) at the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and other laws, regulations, and policies, the National Park Service is initiating work on an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate potential impacts of the proposed project to the natural, cultural, and human environment. The EA will evaluate the program and consider alternatives to elevate the interpretation of the Park's historical buildings. Comments received during the public scoping period will help formulate the EA.

Background

During its operation (1828-1924), the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal provided jobs and opportunities for people throughout the Potomac River Valley. Today, the canal's remnants convey this transportation system's important role in many aspects of American history.

The canal meets National Historic Register criterion A for its association with commercial transportation development in nineteenth

and twentieth century America.

Fifty-seven lockhouses were located along the length of the C&O Canal, which provided shelter for lock keepers and their families while they tended the canal's 74 locks. Canal communities emerged along busy sections of the canal, serving as intermediaries between boatmen and local farmers.

Forty-four historic buildings are evaluated in this document, including 22 of the 26 remaining lockhouses. The CQIP aims to open these buildings to visitors for a unique experience, and bring life and purpose back to these buildings.



Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to evaluate the expansion of the C&O Canal Quarters Interpretive Program (CQIP) pilot project at Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal) in Montgomery, Frederick, Washington, and Allegany Counties, Maryland to support the park's mission; provide visitors with additional recreational and interpretive experiences; and provide further preservation of the Park's historic structures. This action is needed because the project:

- Seeks to elevate the interpretation of its historic buildings and associated structures.
- Is a unique interpretive program that allows visitors to stay overnight in a historic building.
- Preserves historic structures throughout the the canal



Lockhouse 49



Lockhouse 22

Pilot Program

Work for the CQIP pilot project began in December 2008. In November 2009, three historic lockhouses were open to the public for overnight interpretive stays, thereby launching the pilot phase of the CQIP. Park staff looked to create an innovative interpretive program around the park's historic structures, while ensuring their preservation.

The NPS entered into a formal agreement with the C&O Canal Trust (Trust), the park's primary partner, in June 2009 to complete a three year pilot program. This agreement provides that the park will perform preservation

maintenance on seven historic buildings and develop interpretive material for the buildings. The Trust provides period-appropriate furnishings and administer the program. The purpose of the pilot project is to gather data for this EA.

Lockhouses 6, 22, and 49 opened for public registration November 2009. Lockhouses 10, 25, and 28 opened in 2011. Lockhouse 6 (MP 5.4) near Brookmont, Maryland, interprets the 1950's Conservation Movement and the creation of the park. It is furnished in the 1950s period. Lockhouse 10 (MP 8.87) is furnished and interpreted to the 1930's and the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps on the canal. Lockhouse 22 (MP19.64) at Pennyfield interprets the canal's engineering history and is furnished for the 1830s.

Lockhouse 25 (MP 30.84) interprets the 1860's and the canal's involvement in the Civil War. Lockhouse 28 (MP 48.93), near Point of Rocks, MD interprets the 1840's focusing on the competition between the canal and the B&O Railroad. Lockhouse 49 (MP 108.72) in Four Locks interprets the canal community and is furnished for the turn of the twentieth century. No new utilities were added to any of the buildings. Only Lockhouse 6 and 10 are full-service, meaning they have indoor plumbing and electricity. Lockhouse 49 only has electricity. Lockhouse 22, 25, and 28 have been termed "stone tents," meaning they are without electricity or water.



Lockhouse 22
Preservation Maintenance



Lockhouse 22

Furnishings and Interpretive Media at Lockhouse 22



Lockhouse 22

Interpretive Media at all Canal Quarters Interpretation Program Buildings



NPS Photo



NPS Photo

Project Location





Canal Quarters

- Potential CQIP Buildings
- Park Mileposts
- Park Boundary
- State of Maryland
- District of Columbia
- State of Virginia
- State of West Virginia
- State of Pennsylvania



1:200,000

0 3.25 6.5 13 Miles

Preliminary Resources and Impact Topics

Initial internal discussions by NPS identified a number of physical, biological, cultural, socioeconomic, and operational resources that potentially could be affected by the Canal Quarters Interpretive Program. The following resources and impact topics will be considered in the EA:

- Geology
- Soil
- Surface Water
- Floodplains
- Vegetation
- Wetlands
- Wildlife and Aquatic Life
- Scenic Watershed
- Archaeological Resources
- Cultural Landscape/Resources
- Visitor Use Experience
- Park Operations
- Public Safety
- Socioeconomic Environment
- Endangered and Threatened Species
- Interpretation



Potential Alternatives

NEPA requires the development of potential alternatives for proposed projects. These alternatives are developed as a result of project scoping by the public, affected agencies, and NPS. The alternatives are then evaluated within the EA document for their potential impacts on the environment and park resources and values.

All EAs need to include a “No Action” alternative. This alternative also serves as the baseline for the other alternatives used in the evaluation. The No Action alternative, for this proposed project, is the status quo. The CQIP will continue as it has been outlined in its Cooperative Agreement, but it will not expand to other buildings.

We are interested in whether the Department of Interior/National Park Service should expand the Canal Quarters Program and what alternatives you feel should be considered within the environmental assessment.

Public Scoping Meeting

Public scoping meetings will be held in two locations, one in Potomac, Maryland and one in Hancock, Maryland. The scoping meetings will be held in a “Formal Presentation” format. Doors will be open at 7:00 p.m. NPS and planning staff will be on hand to visit with you and answer questions. The locations, times, and dates are presented below:

March 19, 2013
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Veterans of Foreign Wars
11511 MacArthur Boulevard
Potomac, MD 20854

March 21, 2013
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Hancock Town Hall
126 West High Street
Hancock, MD 21750

Environmental Assessment Process Overview

Project milestones to include:

Public scoping period	March 7 - April 21, 2013
Public scoping meeting	March 19 and 21, 2013
Analysis of scoping comments	Spring 2013
Preparation of EA	Summer 2013
Public review of EA	Fall 2013
Analysis of public comments	Winter 2013
Preparation of decision document	Winter 2014
Announcement of decision on proposal	Spring 2014





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Public Scoping Period

The NPS is conducting a 45-day public scoping period to solicit public comments on this proposal. During this scoping period, the public is invited to identify any issues or concerns they might have with the proposed project so the National Park Service can appropriately consider them in the EA. The NPS prefers that you submit comments electronically at the National Park Service's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website (<http://park-planning.nps.gov>). Written comments may be mailed to:

Superintendent
C&O Canal National Historical Park
1850 Dual Highway, Suite 100
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Only written comments will be considered. Please submit your written scoping comments by **April 21, 2013**. Once the EA is developed, it will be made available for public review for a 45-day period. If you wish to be added to the park's mailing list for this or other announcements, please be sure to indicate that in your response.

Included for your convenience is a form on page 9-10 of this booklet, which may be left with us tonight or may be mailed in later.



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Please feel free to use this comment form regarding this project for your comments and suggestions. You may drop this off with us as you leave, or mail them later to the address listed on page 8.

PLEASE PRINT

Your Name _____

Organization you represent (if any) _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, Zipcode _____

If you would like us to notify you when the Draft EA is available, please let us know how to contact you:

Email: _____

Comments, suggestions that will help us with the scope of the Environmental Assessment:

1. What are your views on the Canal Quarters Interpretive Program?



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2. What other reasonable alternatives or issues do you think should be addressed?

[illegible]

3. Other Comments

NOTES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
C&O Canal National Historical Park
Park Superintendent
1850 Dual Highway Suite 100
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

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Chesapeake and Ohio Canal
National Historical Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



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The Superintendent has announced a 45-day public scoping period to solicity public comments on this proposal. During this scoping period, the public is invited to identify any additional alternatives, issues, or concerns they might have with the proposed project so the National Park Service can appropriately consider them in the EA. Only written comments can be accepted.

You may submit comments electronically at the National Park Service's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov>). Written comments may be mailed to: National Park Service, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, Park Superintendent, 1850 Dual Highway Suite 100, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.

Mailed comments must be postmarked by April 21, 2013 to receive consideration.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Once the EA is developed, it will be made available for public review for a 45-day period. If you wish to be added to the park's mailing list for this or other announcements, please be sure to indicate that in your response.