

Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) Management Plan Alternatives

Introduction

The IMCNHC planning process requires the exploration of different management alternatives by which the Canal Corridor Association (CCA) can achieve the purposes of the legislation. Three organizational models outlined here are based on the work of the IMCNHC steering committee, CCA board and staff, and consultants. These alternatives, their impacts, and the preferred alternative will be further discussed in the environmental assessment of the Plan. These alternatives were prepared and the environmental assessment will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Alternatives

Alternative 1: Continuation of Current Practices/No Action

Per the IMCNHC authorizing legislation, the Canal Corridor Association's board of directors has direct management and fiduciary responsibility for the IMCNHC. The board, president of CCA, and CCA staff will make all the decisions regarding the management of the Corridor and how the authorized federal dollars will be spent throughout the Corridor based on the vision, mission, guiding principles, goals and the other guidelines outlined in the IMCNHC plan.

The required local match of the federal investment will be raised through grants, donations, and fundraisers. The Canal Corridor Association's staff will work with other non-profit organizations and local, state, and federal governments to meet the goals outlined in the plan and implement the plan. The public will be invited to attend quarterly meetings as defined in the governing legislation to review the implementation of the plan.

Pros:

- This alternative is the simplest to implement.

Cons:

- The Canal Corridor Association alone will raise all local match funds.
 - There will be little synergy from work already being done by other organizations.
 - The process doesn't allow for inclusions of all groups/individuals throughout the Corridor.
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Alternative 2: IMCNHC Membership Model

Per the IMCNHC authorizing legislation, the Canal Corridor Association's board of directors has direct management and fiduciary responsibility for the IMCNHC. The CCA board of directors and staff will solicit sites/organizations to join an IMCNHC Network. Members will pay dues to the Canal Corridor Association. The dues will be used to meet the part of the federal match that is necessary to cover administrative costs.

CCA's board of directors will establish an IMCNHC Network committee and hire staff to manage the network and allocate funding/resources to members. The IMCNHC Network Committee will be composed of network members selected by the general population of network members and approved by the CCA board for two-year terms. Members, desiring funding for projects, programs, and activities which meet the goals outlined in the management plan, will write an application for 50% or less of the funding to the IMCNHC Network Committee. The Network Committee will select which projects; programs and activities will be funded based on the vision, mission, guiding principals and goals of the IMCNHC Plan. The Network Committee will determine which applications are appropriate, feasible, and sustainable and recommend them to the CCA board for final approval and recommendation.

Pros

- This organizational model is known and used by many groups.
- Those organizations with the capacity to implement the plan will raise the local match money to carry out the plan.
- The local match will be met by memberships and grant projects.

Cons

- Those organizations without the funds for dues will be left out. If the dues are set high then there will be potential members who will decide not to participate in the network for financial reasons.
 - This model favors the work of individual members over larger regional projects as any collaborative projects will need to be designed and organized by individual members for the collective good.
 - The model will only benefit the parts of the IMCNHC that are represented by members. This model will favor the larger, richer communities, organizations, and sites within the IMCNHC.
 - Staff will be needed to promote and generate membership.
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Alternative 3: IMCNHC Alliance Partner Model

Per the IMCNHC authorizing legislation, the Canal Corridor Association's board of directors has direct management and fiduciary responsibility for the IMCNHC. The board will establish a Corridor Committee to manage the implementation of the IMCNHC Plan for the corridor. The Corridor Committee will have five standing sub-committees: recreation, education/interpretation, heritage development/tourism, conservation/natural resources, and resource protection/historic preservation. In addition, ad hoc committees will be setup as the need arises. All sub-committees will be composed of individuals actively involved in the corridor selected for their interest and expertise.

The CCA Board, Corridor Committee and subcommittees will work together to develop, design, fund and implement projects which have the largest impact possible to meet the goals of the IMCNHC. These local, regional and collaborative projects will be based on the vision, mission, guiding principles, and goals of the IMCNHC.

In addition, CCA's board and staff, and the Corridor Committee will reach out to form an alliance with as many stakeholders, other organizations, and local units of governments within the IMNCHC, agencies of the State of Illinois, and federal agencies as possible. CCA will ask all potential alliance partners to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to work together towards common goals outlined in the IMCNHC Plan. All Alliance partners will be eligible to participate in the structure outlined below and the programs outlined in the IMCNHC Plan.

The business of the IMCNHC will be accomplished through the groups outlined below: (listed in alphabetical order)

CANAL ALLIANCE – those individuals and organizations that sign the pledge to work towards the vision and mission of the IMCNHC and abide by the guiding principles. All of the members of the groups below will be part of the CANAL ALLIANCE (Self selected from all stakeholders)

Canal Corridor Association (CCA) – local coordinating entity (Selected by Congress)

Canal owners/managers – those agencies that own and/or manage sections of the I&M Canal. The group must contain one or more representatives from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. (Cooperative Agreement Required)

Conservation Advocates – those individuals and organizations that advocate for conservation in the corridor (Self Selected Stakeholders)

Conservation Committee – a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the conservation advocates and conservation partners (Nominated from Conservation Advocates and Partners)

Conservation Partners – the organizations that own/manage the natural resources in the Corridor (Cooperative Agreement Required)

Corridor Committee – the committee that will report to the CCA Board and recommend annual work plans and budgets in accordance with the IMCNHC Plan (Selected initially by CCA from existing board, planning committee and subcommittees, once established will be recommended by existing committee for approval by CCA board)

Education/Interpretation Committee – a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the Storytelling Partners and Education Partners (Nominated from Storytelling Partners and Education Partners)

Education Partners – teachers and schools in all levels of education (Agreement Required)

Heritage Development/Tourism Committee - a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the Canal Tourism Alliance and tourism partners (Nominated from Tourism Alliance and Tourism Partners)

Investors – governments, foundations, corporations, and individuals who have given financial resources to match the federal investment (Self Selected Stakeholders, Investment Levels developed)

National Park Service (NPS) – national coordinating entity (Selected by Congress)

Recreation Advocates – those individuals and organizations that advocate for recreation in the corridor (Self Selected Stakeholders)

Recreation Committee – a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the recreation advocates and recreation partners (Nominated from Recreation Advocates and Partners)

Recreation Partners – the organizations that own/manage the recreational resources in the Corridor (Cooperative Agreement Required)

Resource Protection Committee - a subcommittee of the Corridor Committee selected from the Canal owners/managers, Special Places owners/managers, and Special Place Advocates (Nominated from the above mentioned groups)

Special Places Advocates – those individuals who volunteer their time to advocate for the natural, cultural, and historic resources of the corridor including the canal (Self Selected Stakeholders)

Special Places Partners – the owners/managers of heritage and cultural resources of the corridor (other than the canal) (Cooperative Agreement Required)

Storytelling Partners – the organizations and individuals that help tell the stories of the corridor (Self Selected, can be exhibit venues, programming organizations, individual lecturers, storytellers, performers) (Process of certification will be developed)

Tourism Alliance – a group of tourism officials from the State Bureau of Tourism and the regional tourism organizations currently designated by the State of Illinois with an interest in the IMCNHC

Tourism Partners – stakeholders who have an interest in the heritage development/ tourism development of the IMCNHC (Self Selected Stakeholders)

Pros:

- The organization of the IMCNHC will be inclusive, allowing the greatest opportunity for participation.
- The process will encourage collaborative regional projects.
- The process also allows for local projects, programs, and activities.

Cons:

- The organization of the IMCNHC will be complex.
 - Staff will be needed to coordinate all the people involved throughout the Corridor.
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To submit your comments regarding the Management Plan for the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, please use one of the following methods:

Online

(Preferred method)

<http://iandmcanal.wordpress.com/>

Mail

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