

# NEWS

## From the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor



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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **D&L National Heritage Corridor Completes Merger With National Canal Museum**

**EASTON, Pa. (April 27)** – The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L) has completed a merger with Hugh Moore Historical Park & Museums, known locally as the National Canal Museum (NCM), significantly increasing the D&L's operational efficiency. The D&L will be the surviving entity under which the enterprises will operate. The NCM will function as a Signature Program of the D&L in the Emrick Technology Center in Easton's Hugh Moore Park.

The merger culminates a three-year transition during which the D&L operated the NCM under a management agreement. The transition allowed the D&L to integrate the management, finance, marketing, and development functions of the two organizations to create a solid operational foundation moving forward.

The D&L is one of 49 federally recognized National Heritage Areas in the nation and works to connect residents of, and visitors to, Bucks, Lehigh, Northampton, Carbon, and Luzerne counties to the industrial and transportation heritage of the region, to nature and the environment, to opportunities for health and wellness, and to economic development. The National Canal Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate, is a regional leader in educational programming and is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the story of the nationally significant transportation route created by the Delaware and Lehigh canals in the nineteenth century.

Together the D&L and NCM will expand the reach of the NCM's story, with traveling programming and exhibits at various locations throughout the D&L's five-county region and along the D&L Trail. Gaining the NCM will also serve as a catalyst toward connecting all 165 miles of the D&L Trail by 2020. "This is the culmination of discussions that began in early 2013 and has resulted in the region's best practice of strategic nonprofit management," said D&L Executive Director, Elissa Garofalo. "Together the D&L and the National Canal Museum are better and stronger than we were just a few years ago. Combining the museum's reach of 10,000 people annually with the D&L Trails' reach of over 280,000 people annually strengthens the D&L's ability to tell a nationally significant story and connect all 165 miles of the D&L Trail by 2020."

"By completing this merger, the D&L embraces the responsibility of sharing the remarkable story of the Delaware and Lehigh canals and their contributions to our nation's Industrial Revolution," said D&L Board of Directors Chair, Michael Drabenstott. "It's a story of innovation, ingenuity, and determination that has significant relevance today. It will be our honor to find innovative and compelling ways to bring this story to people along the entire corridor from Wilkes-Barre to Bristol."

The immediate benefits of the agreement include the D&L's hiring of a visitor services manager, to ensure a high quality of NCM visitor experience, start a bike rental program along the D&L Trail in Hugh Moore Park, and utilize a grant from the National Park Service to create traveling exhibits to take the National Canal Museum to communities along the Corridor.

*The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor ([delwareandlehigh.org](http://delwareandlehigh.org)) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that preserves historic pathway that carried coal and iron from Wilkes-Barre to Philadelphia. Today, the D&L Trail connects people to nature, culture, communities, recreation and our industrial heritage. It is headquartered in Easton, Pa.*

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