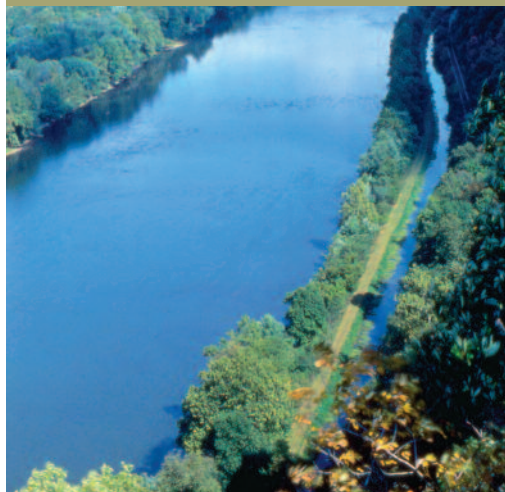


Strengthening Our Partnerships Enhancing Our Volunteerism



Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.
Progress Report 2008



Letter from the Chair

2008 was an exciting year for the D&L, marking not only the start of our third decade but also our first full year as a non-profit entity. We began the year with high hopes that the dedication of our partners, affiliates, staff members, and volunteers would enable significant progress on the fulfillment of our goals for the year; I'm happy to report that our ever-expanding network of supporters rose to the challenge.

As you know, construction and restoration of the D&L Trail is of vital importance to our mission. Any agency responsible for the preservation of a common heritage would be fortunate to have such a tangible, clear metaphor for connection and community. This year we set out to build, improve, and connect as much of the trail as possible, and I'm thrilled by just how far we've come.

Several other accomplishments from 2008 stand out as well. We celebrated our 20th anniversary with a very special National Trails Day, dedicated the "recycled" bridge in White Haven, and started construction on an improved Weissport trailhead. We also saw our all-volunteer team of "Trail Tenders" take on ambitious cleanup projects on Sand Island, at Lock 43, and elsewhere, giving generously of their time in the service of a larger goal.

Finally, the D&L staff deserves recognition for their creativity, innovation, and hard work facilitating new and ongoing initiatives such as the "Tales of the Towpath" curriculum and other projects that move our mission forward while keeping a careful eye on the importance of the past.

It's no secret that the D&L—or any organization for that matter—cannot exist alone. As these examples show, we are at our best when we inspire our partners and supporters to join in our efforts. Moreover, if we hope to continue reaching our goals, we must work to build new partnerships just as we create connections along the Trail. *All* of these partnerships are important, for without assistance from our extended family of supporters and volunteers, we could not achieve what we do.

While we look forward to continuing all of the important work that lies ahead, we also acknowledge some uncertainty surrounding a challenge the D&L is facing, the upcoming Congressional decision regarding our reauthorization. We've spent a good deal of time, energy, and resources to properly position our organization. Reauthorization will mean recognition for all of the work we've done, financial stability, and validation of our collective efforts, and we hope to share good news with you early in 2009.

In their letter last year, Chairmen Donald Bernhard and William Mitchell expressed their hope that 2008 would be remembered as a year in which the D&L moved from planning and discussion to implementation and action. I invite you to look through this year's report and judge for yourself just how far we've come, and then join us for another year of partnership and progress in 2009!

Judy Borger

Chair, Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.



Beyond the Horizon

Planning for the future is a top priority for the D&L. Throughout 2009, we will be offering many new ways for individuals and businesses to become even more involved with our communities. This fundraising initiative, which includes membership opportunities, will open the door for friends of the D&L to support our mission.

Among our goals for the planning process, we will seek to create ways to strengthen our relationships with our partners, including the National Park Service, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Department of Community and Economic Development, as well as other state and federal agencies.

We will hold our first annual partnership dinner to recognize individuals and special projects throughout the

Corridor—watch your mail for a save-the-date notice—and other new events in and around the Corridor, including a signature event coming in 2010.

At every step along the way, you can be assured that our plans will be crafted with the Corridor's integrity foremost in mind. We will sharpen our focus on interpretive and educational initiatives and activities to build and promote the Trail; we will also create programs to complement those that have enabled us to accomplish so much.

Look for updates in our newsletters as we begin to roll out the development plan, focus on goals, and celebrate this important and exciting new process!

D&L Trail: *Year in Review*

The D&L's "platinum anniversary" year—its 20th—was highlighted by major accomplishments in trail construction and volunteerism. The year's keynote event was celebrated on June 7th, National Trails Day, when the public took part in trail and community programs from Slatington to Bristol.

The early June heat and humidity were oppressive, but dozens of visitors turned out to learn about the D&L and witness the unveiling of new directional "blade" signs installed along the D&L Trail in Bristol, New Hope, Morrisville, Walnutport, Slatington, Bethlehem, and Freemansburg. The blades provide trail users with information on point-to-point mileage, trail safety and trail restrictions, and access to D&L link trails and Lehigh River boat launch sites. Trail Tenders spent much of National Trails Day installing the D&L's first mile markers along portions of the trail in Northampton, Lehigh and Carbon counties.

National Trails Day afforded a great opportunity for the D&L to interface with local partners, trail users, and local media. Plans are underway for more activities on National Trails Day 2009.



Trail Construction

With the help of a committed network of partners and volunteers, the D&L Trail continued to take shape in 2008. Noteworthy improvements were made in every county in the Heritage Corridor.

In **Carbon County**, state representative Keith McCall (D-Carbon) helped the D&L secure a Federal Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA) grant totaling \$650,000, which funded 2.7 miles of trail resurfacing north of the Weissport Trailhead, as well as extensive trailhead improvements

scheduled for completion in 2009. The improvements include an expanded parking lot, a stone-and-wood pavilion with picnic tables, benches and bike racks for local residents and trail users. The grant also provided funding for sections of wooden fencing that will be installed on the west (river) side of the trail, next to the newly resurfaced trail segment.

Efforts continue to secure an easement through privately held land north of Jim Thorpe, adjacent to the Nesquehoning Trestle. When acquired, this piece of land will link downtown Jim Thorpe to the trestle, which in turn will carry the D&L Trail into Lehigh Gorge State Park near Glen Onoko. From Glen Onoko, the trail is continuous through the park for 26 miles to White Haven.

Elsewhere in Carbon County, East Penn Township installed gates and benches along approximately three miles of the D&L Trail inside township borders. This stretch of trail leads south into Lehigh County through spectacular scenery in Lehigh Gap.

In Luzerne County, U.S. Representative Paul Kanjorski joined D&L Chair Judy Borger, D&L President Allen Sachse, and others on August 22 to dedicate a “recycled” bridge that spans the active Reading and Northern Railroad in Dennison Township. The completion of the bridge effectively opened 6.5 miles of continuous trail from the northern border of Lehigh Gorge State Park into some very “back-woods” and beautiful areas of Luzerne County.

In White Haven, the D&L sponsored the installation of ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant sidewalk on a section of Main Street. The sidewalk provides an important

connection between the north and south ends of town and is another step toward the completion of the D&L Trail in the borough. White Haven’s short section of trail is the only

break in Lehigh Gorge State Park’s portion of the trail between Glen Onoko in Carbon County and Middleburg Road in Dennison Township, Luzerne County.

In Lehigh County, an effective partnership among Lehigh Valley Greenways, Lehigh County, Lehigh Gap Nature Center, and the D&L

resulted in the construction of 0.6 miles of trail that completed a 2.3-mile section from Main Street in Slatington to the Lehigh-Carbon county border at Lehigh Gap. The construction project also included the building of a trailhead just south of Lehigh Gap

Nature Center. The project was completed from design to dedication in little more than a year.

Lehigh County made significant progress in resolving property issues that have hindered the building of trail linkages

between Slatington and Whitehall Township. In 2009, Lehigh Valley Greenways, Lehigh County, and the D&L will partner on the design of 9.2 miles of trail in the county. In addition, a portion of the trail north of Route 329 in Whitehall and North Whitehall Townships will receive surfacing.

In Northampton County, efforts

continue to settle a deed issue that is stalling the resurfacing of the D&L Trail through the Borough of Freemansburg. Once the deed issue is resolved, construction of the trail through Freemansburg will go out for bid.



In **Bucks County**, the D&L is replacing and upgrading signage in Delaware Canal State Park, according to the D&L's "Visually Speaking" graphics specifications. Discussions continue with Bucks County partners on design concepts that will allow the D&L Trail to cross Route 13 and pass under an active rail line near Levittown.

Trail Tenders

The D&L Trail Tenders had a busy year. In addition to attending more than 20 cleanups in Northampton, Lehigh, Carbon, and Luzerne counties, the Trail Tenders finished a long-term reclamation project in Bethlehem and began a second one at the city's border with Freemansburg.

Much of the year's work focused on the Lehigh Valley Chapter's Sand Island project in Bethlehem and their work at Lock 43 near the Bethlehem/Freemansburg border. Members worked more than 15 months to reclaim the Sand Island site from invasive vegetation and restore it with native plants that grew in the area prior to the building of the canal. Additional volunteer help came from local church and civic organizations, Boy and Girl Scouts, and Liberty High School students under the direction of teacher Karen Dolan.

The City of Bethlehem was a valuable municipal partner in the project, providing equipment and personnel to assist with aspects of the project that were beyond the capabilities of the Trail Tenders. Bethlehem also donated more than 10 cubic yards of compost to help "kick start" the native plants and 30 cubic yards of wood chips to fill a 250-foot trail that meanders through the site's new native plant colonies.

"The Trail Tenders provide an extremely valuable service, and I'm grateful and delighted that they're showing so much interest in their work on Sand Island," said Ralph Carp, Bethlehem's Director of Parks & Public Property. "They're doing all the hard, grubby work that I don't have the time or manpower to tackle."

In addition to planting native species, Trail Tenders also constructed two sets of steps and a picnic table, and built

the 250-foot native plant trail. Jordan Laliberte of Emmaus, a local Eagle Scout candidate, built three resting benches for site visitors and trail users. The project was funded by a \$5,000 Lehigh Valley Greenways Initiative grant and matching funds from the D&L.

Lehigh Valley Greenways

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania DCNR Secretary DiBerardinis' 3rd annual tour of the Lehigh Valley Greenways initiative awarded \$500,000 in grants to various

partners for land conservation, education, and trail construction. In addition, the D&L received a total of \$600,000 for Lehigh Valley Greenways Implementation Block Grant Phases IV and V from DCNR, which will be used to administer grants to local partners for conservation and greenway projects.

The first "Creating Sustainable Community Parks Conference" drew

an overwhelming attendance of 164 participants, including representatives from 20 sponsors and exhibitors and 50 municipalities in northeastern PA.

A 32-region trail connection study was completed to link the City of Easton to the Blue Mountain and Martins Jacoby Watershed trail sections. Municipal officials in the Lehigh Valley were educated in trail planning and development, natural resource-based ordinances, Environmental Advisory Council creation and implementation, sustainability, and Better Models for Development. D&L assisted with the PPL Corporation donation of 15.9 acres to Bushkill Township to create a 6-mile rail-trail along a former railroad right-of-way to connect Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center to the Blue Mountain, which is currently in the survey-and-design phase of the first 2.5 miles. Six riparian restoration projects were completed along the Bushkill- and Martins creeks for a total cost of \$75,000 to restore the buffer with native plants, trees, and shrubs.



Raising Awareness: *Building the Network*

In an effort to advance community offerings within the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, we have developed partnerships with key consulting designers and the Convention and Visitor Bureaus in Bucks and Luzerne counties, the Pocono Mountains, and Lehigh Valley. Through these partnerships, we made great strides in raising awareness of our mission in 2008.

An important part of any successful marketing campaign is the creation of a single, cohesive image that draws the public's attention. With the help of our convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs), the D&L developed a dynamic online image through Scheffey Integrated Marketing. In 2008, a facelift, consistent with the D&L's cohesive image, helped generate new interest in www.delawareandlehigh.org.

As a result of updating our Web site landing page, adding easier navigation tools for visitors, and building interactive features with a blog for social networking, news, events, and trail updates, traffic to www.delawareandlehigh.org doubled over the past year.

Vice President of Heritage Programs Elissa Thorne oversees the site; Sandy Duda and Silas Chamberlain post events, add trail news, and update partner information daily to keep the site fresh and informative.

Along with our revamped on-line presence, we've pursued additional means of promotion to raise public awareness of the Corridor and its heritage, including:

The NPS Connection: As a National Heritage Area and leader in preserving our regional resources for future generations, we collaborated with Workhorse Design to develop a concise new trail brochure that integrates the D&L with the highly recognized National Park Service "Arrowhead" insignia, the nation's premier symbol for conservation.

Corridor Map & Brochure: A second, newly expanded D&L National Heritage Corridor brochure provides an overview of the D&L Trail and its history. This brochure also includes descriptions of the many towns, attractions, and parks found throughout the various regions of the Corridor, along with a detailed map of the area. Distribution of brochures takes place in concert with our CVB and tourism partners.

Reaching New Visitors: Three print advertisements were placed in *Preservation* magazine. This national publication has a circulation of 500,000 readers who enjoy traveling to historic destinations. In an effort to increase awareness and inspire visitors to explore the Corridor, the ad campaign featured locations that convey our area's beauty, charm, and heritage of craftsmanship.

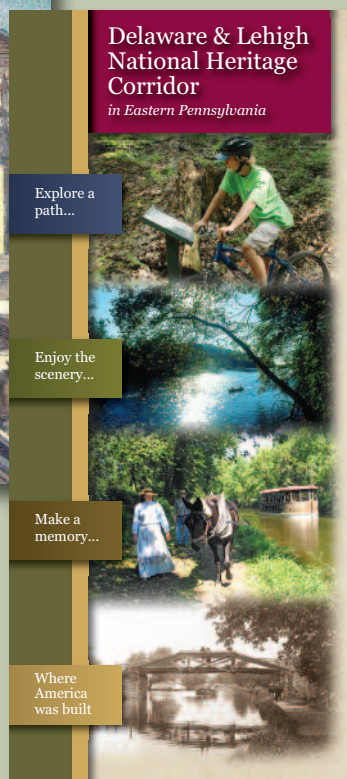
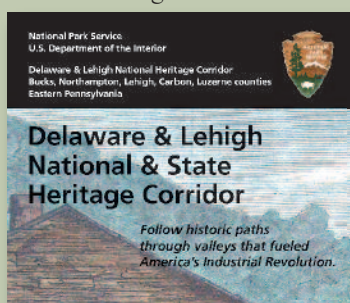
Participation in Area Events: The D&L partnered with the No. 9 Coal Mine and Museum during the inaugural "Coal Miners' Heritage Festival" on July 13, 2008. This celebration in Lansford centered on the region's anthracite-related history. The D&L sponsored half-price admission for the first 200 attendees to tour the mine and museum. Staff members greeted visitors, promoted the Corridor, and distributed 20th Anniversary souvenirs.



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At the annual Mauch Chunk Lake Bluegrass & Anthracite Heritage Festival on September 20, 2008, D&L representatives participated in festivities that featured exhibits by local organizations, bluegrass music, historical displays, great food, and outdoor recreation.

October 19, 2008 marked the annual "Walnutport Canal Festival." In addition to distributing information at the D&L booth about local trail development activities, staff members took part in this annual celebration of canal heritage with music, crafts, historical exhibits, reenactments, recreation on the canal, and autumn foliage.



Artisan Trail Studio Tour Weekend:

Lovers of crafts and fine art interacted with numerous talented artists at 23 different sites during the first Delaware & Lehigh "Artisan Trail Studio Tour Weekend," held October 18th and 19th in the Lehigh Valley, Jim Thorpe, and Stroudsburg. Over 350 visitors viewed and purchased original pieces of jewelry, stained glass, sculptures, and other arts and crafts.

The successful turnout was due in part to D&L's promotional efforts in local media. Nearly all of the participating galleries reported an



increase in traffic over the weekend, and visitors purchased more than \$3,000 in local artwork. Several of the artists also donated pieces that were raffled off the following weekend.

The Studio Tour was a joint initiative between the D&L and the Lehigh Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Pocono Arts Council, Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau, and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Here at Home: *Landmark Towns*

Landmark Towns of Bucks County, a regional economic development initiative among the four riverfront boroughs of Bristol, Morrisville, Yardley, and New Hope, made great strides in 2008. In addition to welcoming a new coordinator, the Landmark Towns team advanced a number of key projects and partnerships that will enable even further progress in 2009.

Donna Boone, who stepped into the role of regional main street coordinator in March 2008, kicked off the working phase of the Landmark Towns effort. Donna comes to us fresh from her tenure as executive director of Main Street Burlington NJ, where she oversaw the introduction of 40 new businesses and the creation of more than 100 new job opportunities. Funding for Landmark Towns comes from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, as well as the four participating towns.

Transportation

Community Development Initiative

Made possible through funding from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the Bucks County Conference and Visitors Bureau, this three-part effort will continue throughout the coming year and beyond. The first part seeks to identify and promote "catalytic projects," economic development linkages that enhance connectivity between communities. The second part of the initiative

looks at ways to enhance infrastructure projects such as bicycle trails, rail connections, and driving routes. Finally, a third part is building on "Visually Speaking," the D&L's environmental graphics and design guidelines, to improve wayfinding and interpretive opportunities.

Other plans in the Landmark Towns include façade improvements, marketing projects such as "Shop Local," and the "Tree Vitalize" program to improve local streetscapes. "Tree

Vitalize" leverages the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and other agencies and has already provided 65 new trees in Yardley and Morrisville. Moreover, a focus on transitional marketing aims to build on the collective excitement that already exists in these four Landmark Towns to help reinvigorate interest in the downtown areas.

"Despite the downturn in the economy," Donna

says, "people are still excited about what these towns have to offer." Indeed, that excitement is evidenced by the creation of an intergovernmental agreement that has already laid the foundation for linkages between the four communities. Considering that few multi-municipal efforts reach that stage, Donna and the D&L will have ample opportunity to build on the nearly two years of planning already devoted to this project.



Tales of the Towpath: *An Educational Journey*

The “Tales of the Towpath” traveling trunks curriculum debuted as a pilot program in a number of elementary schools in the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor in 2008. It offers 4th- and 5th-grade students a unique educational opportunity to explore mid-19th century life along the Lehigh and Delaware canals and understand the canals’ importance in the birth of the American Industrial Revolution.

Developed by the D&L’s Educational Advisory Team, the curriculum is centered on a storybook of the same name written by D&L Outreach Coordinator, Dennis Scholl. The book follows the life of a young Irish boy—Finn Gorman—whose father takes his family to America in 1846 and eventually becomes a canal boat captain. Young Finn’s adventures lead readers on a journey into the Corridor’s past when anthracite coal was fueling unbridled industrial and economic growth.

The curriculum is unusual in that it evolves entirely from the storybook. Teachers receive a manual with standardized lessons that address language arts, math, science, geography, social studies, art, music, and family and consumer science. The manual also includes an annotated teacher’s version of the storybook, a book glossary, extensive historical resources previously written for the D&L, and a list of Corridor field trip opportunities related to the book.

Augmenting the printed curriculum materials, which include student copies of the storybook, is a variety of 19th-century hands-on reproductions such as facsimile books, boy’s and girl’s clothing, toys and games characteristic of the era, rocks and minerals, and items that were part of canal life. Multimedia pieces further enhance the curriculum; DVDs show historical footage of operating canal boats and the Switchback Railroad, and music CDs recall songs of the period. Additional CDs contain the teacher’s manual and book illustrations in digital form.

The curriculum arrives at schools housed in period trunks designed by wood artist Michael Brolley and built by

Brolley’s Advanced Woodworking Class at Moravian Academy’s Upper School in Bethlehem. The trunks are modeled after ship trunks that immigrants often brought to America.

“We are giving the pilot teachers a lot of options,” Scholl says. “We want them to help us decide what works and what doesn’t, so we can refine the items that go into the trunks and create the best product possible.”

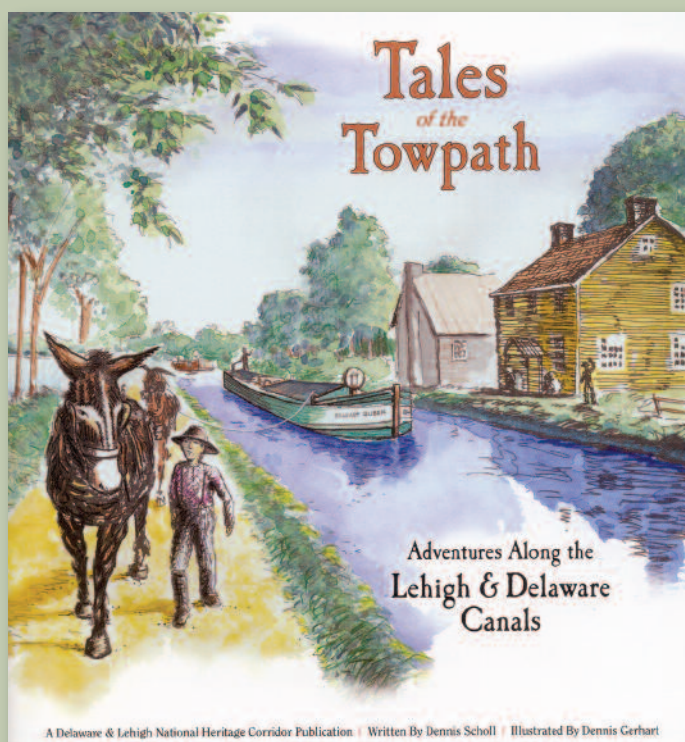
Schools from each of the Corridor’s five counties are participating in the pilot program. They include Freemansburg Elementary School, Bethlehem Area School District,

Northampton County; Sheridan and Jefferson elementary schools, Allentown School District, Lehigh County; Memorial Elementary School, Hanover Area School District, Luzerne County; Penn-Kidder Campus, Jim Thorpe School District, Carbon County; and five elementary schools in the Council Rock School District, Bucks County.

Pilot teachers trained with the EAT last summer and received six Act 48 professional development hours. Their feedback is critical to the development of the project. Each teacher is responsible for maintaining a daily Action Research

Diary, in which they record their experiences and observations. Teachers also are required to attend an individual follow-up meeting with EAT representatives. The EAT will review all input and incorporate consensus opinions into the final version of the project, which will be distributed to interested public, private, parochial, and home schools in Fall of 2009.

Funding for the pilot program was made available through a grant from the Keystone Nazareth Charitable Foundation. Additional program funding was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, through Sen. Robert Wonderling; Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Luzerne Foundation; Sovereign Bankcorp; Sovereign Securities; Embassy Bank; Capital BlueCross; and the D&LNHC.



OSM/VISTA Initiative & Anthracite Heritage Alliance: *New Partners, New Progress*

On February 6, 2008, the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor convened a meeting with the Federal Office of Surface Mining (OSM), the AmeriCorps VISTA program, the Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team (ACCWT), and a number of local, regional and state heritage, watershed, and mine reclamation partners. Among them were two other National Heritage Areas—Schuylkill River National Heritage Area and Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority.

The purpose of the meeting was to explore the potential for using OSM/VISTA and ACCWT programs to increase efforts to cleanup acid mine drainage (AMD)-polluted streams, reclaim abandoned mine lands, help communities affected by these issues, and preserve the history and culture of the anthracite region.

The five goals of the OSM/VISTA program are:

1. Build the capacity of local watershed organizations;
2. Monitor water quality and watershed research;
3. Enhance community awareness through education and outreach;
4. Promote community revitalization through heritage development and celebrations; and
5. Enable professional development for the volunteers in environmental and community development.

Everyone who attended the meeting felt the federal programs represent a great opportunity to put more emphasis on these issues. Dr. Alan Comp of the OSM/VISTA program offered to provide up to nine OSM/VISTA volunteers to serve throughout the anthracite region; local and regional partners serve as co-sponsors of each volunteer.

The D&L agreed to coordinate the new initiative, which is known as the “Anthracite Heritage Alliance” (AHA), the first regional initiative of its type anywhere. D&L staff member Dale Freudenberger is serving as the AHA Coordinator and oversees the OSM/VISTA program.

By the end of 2009, eight OSM/VISTA volunteers will be serving in the region. Dorian Roffe-Hammond will be based in the D&L Corridor office in Lehighton and will serve as the VISTA Coordinator in the region.

As OSM/VISTA continue working on watershed and mine reclamation issues, AHA partners will further discussions on preservation of the anthracite region’s historical and cultural treasures.

It is our hope that the regional work of this new partnership will soon become a model for other areas in Appalachia.



Financials

D&L NHC 2008 Projects

Project Name	Funding Source	Amount
Pennsylvania Heritage Areas Program		
Landmark Town, Trail Towns and Market Towns	DCNR	\$60,000
	Local	\$60,000
D&L Drive Along the Delaware River	DCNR	\$40,000
	Local	\$10,000
Trail Design – Northampton to Catasauqua	DCNR	\$160,000
Partnership Challenge Grants	DCNR	\$8,000
	Private	\$8,000
Lehigh Valley Greenways Initiative		
Project Coordination	DCNR	\$48,000
	D&L Operations	\$15,000
Education and Outreach	DCNR	\$10,000
	Local	\$10,000
Conservation Assistance for Preservation (CAP)	DCNR	\$32,000
	Local	\$32,000
City of Bethlehem – Urban Forestry Program	DCNR	\$33,000
	Local	\$33,000
City of Bethlehem Wastewater Treatment Plant – Riparian Restoration	DCNR	\$20,000
	Local	\$20,000
South Whitehall Township – Jordan Greenway Trail Crossing Study	DCNR	\$9,750
	Local	\$9,750
Tatamy Borough – Tatamy Trail Enhancements	DCNR	\$2,500
	Local	\$2,500
City of Easton – Urban Forestry Program PHASE III	DCNR	\$33,000
	Local	\$33,000
City of Easton – Sullivan Park Wetlands Enhancements	DCNR	\$35,000
	Local	\$35,000
Washington Township – Slate Heritage Trail Amenities	DCNR	\$40,000
	Local	\$40,000
D&L NHC – Sand Island Native Plant Restoration	DCNR	\$5,000
	Heritage Partnership	\$5,000

Project Name	Funding Source	Amount
PA Environmental Council – GIS Course for Natural Resource Conservation	DCNR	\$13,850
	Local	\$13,850
Greenways Projects	DCNR	\$17,900
	Local	\$17,900
LVGI-Block Grant Phase V: Coordination, education, outreach activities and management	DCNR-Growing Greener	\$300,000
	Local/Private Match	\$300,000

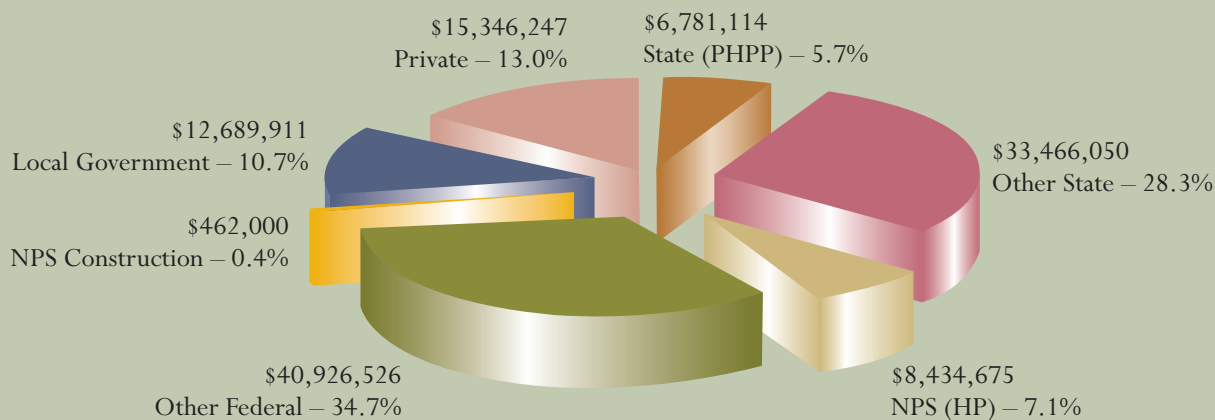
NPS-Heritage Partnership

Lehigh Canal – HAER	NPS-Heritage Partnership	\$40,000
	DCED	\$20,000
ACCWT/VISTA	NPS-Heritage Partnership	\$20,000
	Local	\$10,000
New Hope Canal Boat	NPS-Heritage Partnership	\$6,000
Illick's Mill	NPS-Heritage Partnership	\$6,100
	Local	\$25,000
Membership Plan	NPS-Heritage Partnership	\$9,000

DCED Grants

Tales of the Towpath Educational Program	DCED	\$10,000
	Private	\$16,000
Landmark Towns	DCED	\$45,000
	Local	\$30,000
Artisan Trail	DCED	\$10,000
	Private	\$10,000

Commission & Partnership Funding (\$117,644,523 Since Inception)



Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.

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Sherry L. Acevedo – Resource Conservation Specialist

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Dennis Scholl – Outreach Coordinator

Sandra Duda – Lehigh Office Assistant

Amey Senape – Historic Research Specialist

Steve Adams – Accounting Manager

Donna Boone – Regional Landmark Towns Coordinator

Robert Skulsky – Susquehanna Greenways Initiative Coordinator

Rolland "Rollie" Rhodomoyer – Canal & Trail Construction/Consultant

The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor fosters stewardship of historical, cultural and natural resources along the early canal and railroad systems that carried anthracite coal from mine to market in eastern Pennsylvania.

Main Office:

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.
2750 Hugh Moore Park Road
Easton PA 18042
610-923-3548
610-923-0537 (fax)

Carbon County Office:

110 North 3rd Street - Room 220
Lehigh PA 18235
610-377-4063
610-377-5023 (fax)

Bristol Office:

Landmark Towns of Bucks County
a project of the Delaware & Lehigh National
Heritage Corridor, Inc.
2 Canals End Road
Suite 204C
Bristol Borough, PA 19007
215-781-2605
215-781-2606 (fax)

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