

US/ICOMOS Symposium - Abstract

Title: *Building an International Movement: National Heritage Areas, the National Park Service and their International Partners*

Authors:

Suzanne Copping
National Heritage Areas Coordinator
National Park Service, Northeast Region
Chesapeake Bay Program Office
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 109
Annapolis, MD 21403
t. 410.295.3149 || f. 410.267.5777
suzanne_copping@nps.gov

Eleanor Mahoney
National Heritage Areas Program Assistant
National Park Service, Washington, D.C. Office
1201 "Eye" Street, NW 8TH Floor
Washington, DC 20005
t. 202.354.2268 || f. 202.371.6468
eleanor_mahoney@contractor.nps.gov

Abstract:

Throughout its nearly 100 year history, the National Park Service (NPS) has cultivated a rich history of international collaboration. Traditionally, this work has focused on nature parks, with a few exceptions, including NPS' relationship with the Italian Nature Conservation Service. The dynamic is shifting, however, with an increasing number of international connections developing between NPS partners and their international counterparts. Of particular note is the growth of initiatives spearheaded by National Heritage Areas - a partnership program of the NPS that aims to improve regional quality of life through the protection of nationally significant landscapes and cultural practices.

For example, the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership is coordinating efforts in Vermont, New York and Quebec to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's voyage; Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area is working with the state of Sinaloa, Mexico to designate Mazatlan as a World Heritage site; and the Alliance of National Heritage Areas recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Federation de Parcs Naturels Regionaux, a system of regional nature parks, to promote the sharing of best practices and technical expertise.

As these examples illustrate, National Heritage Areas provide enormous potential access to innovative international projects. As national parks address competing community interests and establish new ways to connect with the public leading to the 2016 Centennial, they can tap into international relationships which their NHA partners are already cultivating. This will expose the NPS to innovative management strategies -- and raise the profile of the NHAs' international efforts.