

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

OHIO & ERIE NATIONAL HERITAGE CANALWAY



Ohio and Erie National Heritage Canalway

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When there is a project to be completed in the **Ohio and Erie National Heritage Canalway** in Ohio, there is never a lack of civic engagement to get the job done. One such example is the recent landscaping at the grounds of the historic Richard Howe House by Dominion employees, Project EverGreen and volunteers.

Project EverGreen, a national non-profit group, brought together landscaping companies to create a design to control erosion and to beautify the grounds. Employees from Edenscape and Impact Landscaping worked to create dry beds and planted over 100 trees and perennial plants.

Dominion employees completed the kiosk area, laid a brick sidewalk, built an amphitheater, painted railing and retaining walls along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail, built retaining walls around trees, and prepared the ground for the final phase of landscaping. Dominion employees have given an estimated \$350,000 worth of in-kind contributions and 200,000 hours to projects along the canalway from Cleveland to New Philadelphia the past 10 years.

The success of the heritage area to build civic engagement and pride of place has resulted in strategic community partnerships that continue to shape the preservation, growth and economic vitality of the canalway.

The ability of heritage areas to engage community volunteers not only lessens overall project costs, it also instills pride of place and local ownership.

The success of NHAs to build civic engagement has resulted in strategic community partnerships.



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GULLAH GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR



As a shining example of the effectiveness of grassroots involvement in the creation, planning and success of National Heritage Areas, the **Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor** Commission has utilized civic engagement wholeheartedly to develop its Foundation Statements and fine-tune its General Management Plan. The Commission was organized in 2007 and in February 2009 it began to solicit public opinion on the development of this four-state National Heritage Area through a series of in-depth and comprehensive public meetings and special events.

Gullah Geechee National Heritage Corridor

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A total of 21 public meetings were held throughout South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and North Carolina. Thousands participated and more than 1,500 formal comments were received. These comments focused on stories related to the cultural traditions, heritage and resources of the Gullah Geechee people and served as the litmus test for developing two of its three Preliminary Alternatives for the management plan.

In addition to public meetings, the Commission held meetings in each of the Area's designated states to foster initial partner programs with congressional delegations and government agencies. Through civic engagement, Commissioners gathered vital information to lay the foundation for the development and long-term success of the program.

The inherent nature of the National Heritage Area Program lends itself to meeting needs identified by and for the local people. As with any successful community-based initiative, grassroots involvement builds a strong, viable and sustainable product. The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor met the challenge of engaging the citizens of the four-state program and is committed to continued public involvement.

