EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission was established by Congress in 1986 to preserve, protect and interpret the historical, natural, recreational and cultural resources of the Blackstone River Valley. This Valley, is the heart of the American Industrial Revolution, where America's migration from farms to factories began with Samuel Slater's "Slater Mill" in Pawtucket, RI.

This bi-state region, consisting of twenty four communities, was studied by Commission staff, to determine the potential for additional regional trail/greenway opportunities.

In a series of regional public meetings, held in the spring of 2002, citizens were invited to express their interest in, and ideas about, new trail and greenway opportunities.

For the purposes of prioritizing projects in this study, the study area was divided into three sub-regions: North, Central and South.

To develop sub-regional priorities, the study analyzed the input gathered from the public meetings as well as additional information gathered by Commission staff. Priorities were determined based upon the following criteria: level of community support, regional aspect of project, recreational and historical significance and ability to connect existing recreational or heritage infrastructure.

Priorities were identified and recommendations made regarding the development of eighteen proposed trail/greenway opportunities (Vision Map).

Trail & Greenway Development Priorities

Overall, the first priority for the National Heritage Corridor is to complete the Blackstone River Bikeway from Worcester to Providence. The second priority is to continue to support the development and extension of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail toward the Franklin State Forest and Willimantic, CT. The remaining trail/greenway opportunities are prioritized by sub-region.

North Sub-region:
(Leicester, Worcester, Millbury, Grafton, Upton, Sutton, Northbridge)

Priority #

1. Lake Manchaug Greenway & Wildlife Corridor (trail # 10 on map 3)
2. Blackstone Broad Meadow Brook Trail (Sagatabscot Ridge) (trail # 3 on map 1)
3. Middle River Park and Greenway (trail # 4 on map 1)
4. Grafton Loop Trail (trail # 5 on map 2)
5. Grafton & Upton Rail Trail (trail # 6 on map 2)
6. Tetasset-East Side Trail Connector (trail # 2 on map 1)
7. Millbury Branch Rail Trail (trail # 8 on map 1)

8. Mumford River Walk Extension (trail # 11 on map 3)
9. Midstate-Worcester Connector Trail (trail # 1 on map 1)
10. Dearing Estate Trailhead Access Project (trail # 9 on map 1)

Central Sub-region:
(Douglas, Uxbridge, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville, Blackstone, Woonsocket)

Priority #

1. Grand Trunk Rail Trail (trail # 12 on map 3&4)
2. Lookout Rock-G&U Rail Trail Connector (trail # 7 on map 2&3)
3. Daniels Farm Trail (trail # 18 on map 4)
4. Drumlin Trail (trail # 17 on map 4)

South Sub-region:
(Burrillville, Glocester, North Smithfield, Smithfield, Cumberland, Lincoln, Central Falls, Pawtucket)

Priority #

1. Woonasquatucket River / Northwest Bikeway (trail # 13 on map 5)
2. Louisquisett Trolley Line Trail (trail # 14 on map 5&6)
3. Warner Trail Extension (trail # 16 on map 6)
4. Blackstone River Bikeway / I-295 Connector Trail (trail # 15 on map 6)

The information contained in this report describes the process by which each trail/greenway opportunity was identified, specifically describes and prioritizes each opportunity and recommends actions to accomplish the development of each proposed project.

This document will be used in determining future Commission investment in trail & greenway projects. In addition, this report will be distributed to federal, state, and local partnership organizations for guidance on related projects.

Blackstone River Valley Trail / Greenway Vision

- Blackstone River Bikeway
- Proposed Trail / Greenway
- Midstate / North-South Trail
- Southern New England Trunkline Trail

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BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY
National Heritage Corridor Commission