

Public Law 99-647  
99th Congress

## An Act

To establish the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor in  
Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Nov. 10, 1986

[S. 1374]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the  
United States of America in Congress assembled,*

## ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

SECTION 1. That for the purpose of preserving and interpreting for the educational and inspirational benefit of present and future generations the unique and significant contributions to our national heritage of certain historic and cultural lands, waterways and structures within the Blackstone River Valley in the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island there is hereby established the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (hereafter in this Act referred to as the "Corridor"). It is the purpose of this Act to provide a management framework to assist the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island and their units of local government in the development and implementation of integrated cultural, historical and land resource management programs in order to retain, enhance and interpret the significant values of the lands, waters and structures of the Corridor.

Conservation.  
Cultural  
programs.  
Public lands.  
Historic  
preservation.  
16 USC 46 note.

## BOUNDARIES AND ADMINISTRATION

SEC. 2. (a) BOUNDARIES.—The boundaries shall include those lands generally depicted on a map entitled Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, numbered BRV-80-80,000 and dated October 1986. The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the office of the Department of the Interior in Washington, DC and the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Departments of Environmental Management. The Secretary of the Interior (hereafter referred to as the "Secretary") shall publish in the Federal Register, as soon as practical after the date of enactment of this Act a detailed description and map of the boundaries established under this subsection.

Public  
information.  
District of  
Columbia.  
Federal  
Register,  
publication.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—The Corridor shall be administered in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR  
COMMISSION

SEC. 3. (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established a commission to be known as the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission (hereafter known as the "Commission") whose purpose shall be to assist Federal, State and local authorities in the development and implementation of an integrated resource management plan for those lands and waters as specified in section 2.

State and local  
governments.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Commission shall be composed of nineteen members appointed by the Secretary as follows:

(1) the Director of the National Park Service, *ex officio*, or a delegate;

(2) six individuals nominated by the Governors of Rhode Island and Massachusetts and appointed by the Secretary, who shall be the Department of Environmental Management Directors from Rhode Island and Massachusetts, the State Historic Preservation Officers from Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and the Department of Economic Development Directors from Massachusetts and Rhode Island;

(3) four representatives of local government from Massachusetts and four from Rhode Island nominated by the Governor of their State and appointed by the Secretary, to represent the interests of local government; and

(4) two individuals, nominated by the Governor of Massachusetts and two individuals nominated by the Governor of Rhode Island appointed by the Secretary, to represent other interests each Governor deems appropriate.

A vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(c) **TERMS.**—Members of the Commission shall be appointed for terms of three years.

(d) **COMPENSATION.**—Members of the Commission shall receive no pay on account of their service on the Commission, but while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission, members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in the Government service are allowed expenses under section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(e) **CHAIRPERSON.**—The chairperson of the Commission shall be elected by the members of the Commission.

(f) **QUORUM.**—(1) Ten members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may hold hearings.

(2) Any member of the Commission may vote by means of a signed proxy exercised by another member of the Commission, but any member so voting shall not be considered present for purposes of establishing a quorum.

(3) The affirmative vote of not less than ten members of the Commission shall be required to approve the budget of the Commission.

(g) **MEETINGS.**—The Commission shall meet at least quarterly at the call of the chairperson or ten of its members. Meetings of the Commission shall be subject to section 552b of title 5, United States Code (relating to open meetings).

#### STAFF OF THE COMMISSION

**SEC. 4. (a) STAFF.**—(1) The Commission shall have the power to appoint and fix the compensation of such staff as may be necessary to carry out its duties.

(2) Staff appointed by the Commission—

(A) shall be appointed subject to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service; and

(B) shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates.

(b) **EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.**—Subject to such rules as may be adopted by the Commission, the Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services to the same extent as is authorized by section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, but at rates determined by the Commission to be reasonable.

(c) **STAFF OF OTHER AGENCIES.**—(1) Upon request of the Commission, the head of any Federal agency may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of such agency to the Commission to assist the Commission in carrying out the Commission's duties.

(2) The Commission may accept the services of personnel detailed from the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island (and any political subdivision thereof) and may reimburse that State or political subdivision for those services.

#### POWERS OF COMMISSION

**SEC. 5. (a) HEARINGS.**—(1) The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out this Act, hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence, as the Commission considers appropriate.

(2) The Commission may not issue subpoenas or exercise any subpoena authority.

(b) **POWERS OF MEMBERS AND AGENTS.**—Any member or agent of the Commission, if so authorized by the Commission, may take any action which the Commission is authorized to take by this Act.

(c) **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES.**—The Administrator of General Services shall provide to the Commission, on a reimbursable basis, such administrative support services as the Commission may request.

(d) **MAILS.**—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the United States.

(e) **USE OF FUNDS TO OBTAIN MONEY.**—The Commission may use its funds to obtain money from any source under any program or law requiring the recipient of such money to make a contribution in order to receive such money.

(f) **GIFTS.**—(1) Except as provided in subsection (g)(2)(B), the Commission may, for purposes of carrying out its duties, seek, accept, and dispose of gifts, bequests, or donations of money, personal property, or services, received from any source.

(2) For purposes of section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, any gift to the Commission shall be deemed to be a gift to the United States.

26 USC 170.

(g) **ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY.**—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) and except with respect to any leasing of facilities under subsection (c), the Commission may not acquire any real property or interest in real property.

(2) Subject to paragraph (3), the Commission may acquire real property, or interests in real property, in the Corridor—

(A) by gift or devise; or

(B) by purchase from a willing seller with money which was given or bequeathed to the Commission on the condition that such money would be used to purchase real property, or interests in real property, in the Corridor.

(3) Any real property or interest in real property acquired by the Commission under paragraph (2) shall be conveyed by the Commission to an appropriate public or private land managing agency, as

determined by the Commission. Any such conveyance shall be made—

- (A) as soon as practicable after such acquisition;
- (B) without consideration; and
- (C) on the condition that the real property or interest in real property so conveyed is used for public purposes.

(h) **COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.**—For purposes of carrying out the plan, the Commission may enter into cooperative agreements with the State of Massachusetts and the State of Rhode Island, with any political subdivision of each State, or with any person. Any such cooperative agreement shall, at a minimum, establish procedures for providing notice to the Commission of any action proposed by the State of Massachusetts and the State of Rhode Island, such political subdivision, or such person which may affect the implementation of the plan.

(i) **ADVISORY GROUPS.**—The Commission may establish such advisory groups as the Commission deems necessary to ensure open communication with, and assistance from, the State of Massachusetts and the State of Rhode Island, political subdivisions of the State of Massachusetts and the State of Rhode Island, and interested persons.

#### DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

State and local  
governments.

**SEC. 6. (a) PREPARATION OF PLAN.**—Within one year after the Commission conducts its first meeting, it shall submit a Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan to the Secretary and the Governors of Massachusetts and Rhode Island for review and approval for ninety days. The plan shall be based on existing State plans, but shall coordinate those plans and present a unified historic preservation and interpretation plan for the Corridor. The plan shall—

(1) provide an inventory which includes any property in the Corridor which should be preserved, restored, managed, developed, maintained, or acquired because of its national historic or cultural significance;

(2) establish standards and criteria applicable to the construction, preservation, restoration, alteration, and use of all properties within the Corridor;

(3) develop an historic interpretation plan to interpret the history of the valley;

(4) contain policies for land use management which consider and detail the application of appropriate land and water management techniques, including but not limited to local zoning, use of easements and development of intergovernmental cooperative agreements, so as to protect the Corridor's historical, cultural, scenic and natural resources and enhance water quality of the Blackstone River in a manner consistent with supporting economic revitalization efforts;

(5) contain a coordination and consistency component which details the ways in which local, State and Federal programs may best be coordinated to promote the purposes of this Act; and

(6) contain a program for State and local government implementation of the plan.

(b) **APPROVAL OF THE PLAN.**—(1) No plan submitted to the Secretary under this section shall be approved unless the Secretary finds that the plan, if implemented, would adequately protect the

significant historical and cultural resources of the Corridor and consistent with such protection provide adequate and appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities and economic activities within the Corridor.

(2) In determining whether or not to approve the Plan, the Secretary shall consider whether:

(A) the Commission has afforded adequate opportunity, including public hearings, for public and governmental involvement in the preparation of the plan;

(B) he has received adequate assurances from appropriate State officials that the recommended implementation program identified in the plan will be initiated within a reasonable time after the date of approval of the plan and such program will ensure effective implementation of the State and local aspects of the plan.

(3) If the Secretary disapproves the plan, he shall advise the Commission in writing of the reasons therefore and shall indicate any recommendations for revisions. Following completion of any necessary revisions to the plan, the Secretary shall have forty-five days to either approve or disapprove the plan.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN.—(1) After review and approval of the plan by the Secretary and the Governors of Massachusetts and Rhode Island as provided in subsections (a) and (b) the Commission shall give priority to actions which assist in—

(A) preserving and interpreting the historic resources of the valley;

(B) completing State and local parks in the Corridor; and

(C) supporting public and private efforts in economic revitalization consistent with the goals of the Cultural Heritage Plan.

(2) Priority actions to be carried out under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) assisting the States in appropriate preservation treatment of the Blackstone Canal;

(B) assisting the States in designing, establishing, and maintaining visitor centers and other interpretive exhibits in the Corridor;

(C) encouraging private landowners adjacent to the canal or river to retain or reestablish, where possible, vegetative, or other buffers as specified in the State park plans;

(D) assisting in the enhancement of public awareness of an appreciation for the historical and architectural and geological resources and sites in the Corridor;

(E) assisting the State or any local government or any non-profit organization in the restoration of any historic building in the Corridor;

(F) encouraging, by appropriate means, enhanced economic and industrial development in the Corridor consistent with the goals of the plan;

(G) encouraging local governments to adopt land use policies consistent with the goals of the State park and the plan and to take actions to implement those policies; and

(H) ensuring that clear, consistent signs identifying access points and sites of interest is put in place.

State and local  
governments.



## TERMINATION OF COMMISSION

SEC. 7. (a) **TERMINATION.**—Except as provided in subsection (b), the Commission shall terminate on the day occurring five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **EXTENSION.**—The Commission may be extended for a period of not more than five years beginning on the day referred to in subsection (a) if, not later than one hundred and eighty days before such day—

(1) the Commission determines such extension is necessary in order to carry out the purpose of this Act;

(2) the Commission submits such proposed extension to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives and to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(3) the Governor of Massachusetts, the Governor of Rhode Island, and the Secretary each approve such extension.

## DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

SEC. 8. (a) **PURPOSE.**—To carry out the purpose of this Act, the Secretary shall assist the Commission in preparing the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan. Following approval of the plan as provided under section 6 (a) and (b) the Secretary shall assist the Commission to design and fabricate interpretive materials based on the plan including—

(A) guide brochures for exploring the heritage story of the valley by automobile, train, bicycle, boat, or foot;

(B) visitor displays (including video presentations) at several locations well distributed along the Corridor, including both indoor and outdoor displays; and

(C) a mobile display depicting the heritage story to be used in the park, public buildings, libraries, and schools.

(b) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary shall, upon request of the Commission, provide technical assistance to the Commission in the preparation of the plan and for implementing the plan as set out in section 6(c).

## DUTIES OF OTHER FEDERAL ENTITIES

SEC. 9. Any Federal entity conducting or supporting activities directly affecting the Corridor shall—

(1) consult with the Secretary and the Commission with respect to such activities;

(2) cooperate with the Secretary and the Commission in carrying out their duties under this Act and, to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate such activities with the carrying out of such duties; and

(3) to the maximum extent practicable, conduct or support such activities in a manner which the Commission determines will not have an adverse effect on the Corridor.

## AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 10. There is authorized to be appropriated annually to the Commission \$250,000 for the next five fiscal years to carry out the purposes of this Act; except that the Federal contribution to the

Commission shall not exceed 50 percent of the annual operating costs of the Commission.

Approved November 10, 1986.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 1374:

SENATE REPORTS: No. 99-488 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 132 (1986):

Oct. 8, considered and passed Senate.

Oct. 15, considered and passed House, amended.

Oct. 17, Senate concurred in House amendment.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 22 (1986):

Nov. 10, Presidential statement.