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James “Jim” Pepper
March 29, 2016

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My Narrative
The Administrative History of the National Heritage Areas Coordinating Office

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Legislation: Let's put the issue of systemic legislation in context. National Heritage Corridors emerged as grassroots. Therefore, it was not the orthodox, in the sense it was not an NPS-created program. President Reagan and Secretary James Watt had directed that there be no new national park legislation, different constituencies reacted differently when the concept of a nationwide system legislation was first broached.

First of all, the things about them that worked, worked because of local creativity and effort. Sometimes, as in my case, an area was lucky to have some supporters outside of the congressional sponsors and the local advocates, because at the Blackstone River Valley we had some in the NPS who encouraged and some even actually helped us.

But there were more who were suspicious of the ways National Heritage Corridors did not exactly follow the model of other "technical assistance" programs and did not follow some basic precepts of national parks. So, Congressman Bruce Vento, subcommittee chair, and his staff definitely delayed and obstructed when they could. At least at first, but much less so later.

At the other extreme, among conservative Republicans, and among some naysayers within the NPS, a generic or systemic legislative bill was seen as a way to control something that seemed to be getting out of control. For heritage areas that had been established, there was the approval of thinking this exciting effective and creative new way of building support for preservation would now be available to many. But provisions inserted in various forms of "organic" or systemic legislation either by conservative skeptics of the NPS or by strong NPS advocates often seemed to cut the very things that made the heritage corridors, or heritage areas, work. There were many inside NPS, such as Deny Galvin or John Debo or Marie Rush, who enthusiastically supported what made national heritage corridors work. But there were more in the NPS who looked for ways, not to ensure their success, but for ways of managing or controlling national heritage corridors. "Sideboards," one NPS officials called it.

Senator (Craig) Thomas and others, like Clifford P. Hansen and (Malcolm) Wallop, in the late 1990s had great criticism for the NPS yet were interested in traditional parks, perhaps because Yellowstone and Tetons were so important to them. They were often not so supportive of new park initiatives, IE: preservation initiatives, but in supporting the existing parks in their districts or as traditionally managed. I think Senator Thomas was either worried that heritage areas were going to go running away with the money, running away with the integrity, or wanted to avoid new preservation initiatives.

There was also a lot of stuff in the newspapers, especially the *New York Times*, using terms like "park barrel" instead of "pork barrel." This criticism was leveled, in particular, at the Southwest Pennsylvania Heritage Area. They were particularly strongly attacked in a series of newspaper articles, perhaps partly because ever since the "Arab Gate" scandal's inability to damage Congressman John Murtha this large project of "his" became another opportunity to get him. In many cases, I believe, this criticism of "park barrel" was as much a way to stop new preservation initiatives from the grass roots being supported by individual Members of Congress, as it was a way to prevent bogus spending. Some journalists, I believe, were encouraged by some people in

the NPS in Washington or staff on Capitol Hill to believe that any creative program that was not part of the officially proposed budget was bogus pork. Such people may fight for their budget just to fight for their budget, not because of the 'merits.' Of course, this is always a risk with anything emerging from public enthusiasm, highly competitive guardians in the NPS budget office or on appropriations committee staff will see any initiative NOT originating with them as illegitimate.

For example, the critics would pick at the heritage area concept. For example, Senator Thomas many times would object to matching money for heritage areas that came from other federal agencies. No one requires national park funding to be matched, but for some reason bringing together for preservation or heritage development's sake, funding from multiple federal agencies by local communities was seen as inappropriate. This line of attack is just a way of limiting the effectiveness of preservation, and wrong-headed, too, when you consider that the point of a heritage area was to get many agencies and local governments and the private sector to work together. One of the really special needs of heritage areas is that agencies at the various levels and even within the federal government and the private sector do not work well together. This makes it very hard for communities to preserve their most precious assets or their historic character, because of inconsistent action by multiple agencies. These critics would try to narrow the reach not only by blocking such funds that any other area in America had access to but would require local government officials to sign off on that may be an initiative that had nothing to do with local government, or in other cases require private landowner agreement, or in other cases some way narrow the definition of "match" or in-kind assistance. My sense was, if a community had access to say, federal HUD money, why should it (the community) not be allowed to leverage NPS funds for the sake of protection of the resources if that is what the community thought should be done and if the rules of that federal funding source allowed it? [Note: in one program where the NPS is required to come up with a match for federal lands transportation funding from the DOT, national parks are permitted to match DOT money with NPS project funds. So why not national heritage corridors and areas?

In a meeting with me in 1994 called by Laura Hudson of Senator (John Bennett) Johnston (D-LA) staff, that included Tom Williams and David Brooks of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources staff, Tom asked me forcefully why would the NPS want generic legislation anyway? He said the individual requests were coming up to the Hill without political antagonism because the sponsoring Members of the House and the Senate were the only ones affected. The staff knew the legislation was wanted by the local community and had already been vetted with both political parties and would pass. If NPS came in with a generic National Heritage Area bill people who had never heard of a heritage area were going to think the NPS had some secret plan to take over America and restrict private property rights. This would provoke all sorts of savings clauses and caveats added, e.g., private property, no zoning restrictions. It would be speaking to people's fears and limit the instrumentality of the bill. Notably, Senator Johnston quickly passed the national heritage area legislation pending for Louisiana, with appropriate provisions for that resource, because waiting to be included with the many other areas pending that did pass in 1996 would have led to the unhelpful restrictions those areas endured.

That's the reason we shouldn't want a (generic) bill. When you put people in a room, and they have to guess, and they come in suspicious anyway. They are going to come up with so many What Ifs. These "What Ifs" are things that never happen, just worst-case scenarios that easily become scare tactics. The what if nightmares are private property issues, money issues, who is it really affecting. Don't legislate based on empty speculation. Mike Lambe, brilliant head of the Legislative Office for NPS at that time, wanted to know what were the actual facts that created the need for the legislation, and what were the actual facts about who is going to be affected. I learned working with Mike Lambe that such impractical thinking is the death of good legislation.

Another motive for the "organic" or "generic" legislation, especially from advocates within the NPS Washington Office who had difficulty assuring agency support, is the hope that organic, systemic program authorizing legislation would protect heritage areas from those in the agency or appropriations staffs. But, of course, national heritage corridors and national heritage areas have been effective fighting for survival.

I think this generic legislation is a bad idea because of the inability of Congress to pass clean supportive organic legislation without needless clauses that hurt their effectiveness, and the tendency of NPS people in the Washington Office who have never themselves worked in a national heritage corridor or area also to propose "sideboards" and restrictions that undercut what makes them work.

Another unhelpful problem that has emerged from the Washington Office is the move to let local people do their own heritage area 'special resource plan,' or feasibility study. I think this was done to free up planning money for traditional parks, even though the huge congressional demand was to study the feasibility of new heritage area proposals. The NPS should do the feasibility studies. The Congress needs something they can use as criteria. They would not trust the heritage areas to say anything not complementary to themselves in a feasibility study. Congress used to be able to trust the NPS doing the studies. Congressional staff have explained to me without the NPS actually having done the study, as with a park study, they have no independent way of evaluating the proposal, or determining what makes the area "nationally distinctive." They tell me the local Member of Congress may claim some attribute as historically unique, and may believe it is, but only the NPS can be relied on to explain the national context from a neutral position.

I would continue to allow National Heritage Areas to be designated one at a time. Every national park has its own legislation.

Deny (Galvin) could put together a systemic organic legislation structure and framework that the NPS still basically uses for the free-standing heritage legislative bills. But what it misses is the other half of what makes heritage areas different from national park management, which is partnership behaviors. How do you work in partnership? How do you behave toward partners? How do you develop agendas? How do you encourage leadership by others, not yourself? Deny's legislation has not been passed but the criteria in it has been used for all the individual designation bills. How to work in partnership, or partnering behaviors, weren't part of the framework but were the heart of what makes them work or not work. If you pluck out these little pieces that make partnership behavior you are losing the magic.

For example, for the 2nd and 3rd national heritage corridors, at a crucial time, at the beginning, for the 2nd the NPS gave it all the support it needed. For the 3rd, senior regional staff structured it to withhold NPS support in ways the other region had behaved like a partner. This legacy of support, or withholding, was never forgotten at these two areas, even today.

What is the secret of national heritage corridors? People love the distinctive character and stories of the places they live in and NPS can add meaning to that, by telling and affirming the nationally significant story. More than anything, it is not the money the NPS brings to these areas, it is the designation of significance and the honor to the story that is the basis for everything else and lifts the area up. Let's root for our partners, not try to put legislation before the congress that they are just going to use to destroy us. Let's get the NPS back in the business of doing the heritage area studies. Let's make the criteria bases on place not event.

NPS attitudes: Director Jim Ridenour was concerned about new national park sites with weak studies that, he felt, did not justify the areas as equal national parks. He did not like congressional initiatives to add parks, and said they were "thinning the blood," and questioned the qualifications. This he said could compromise funding to existing parks and programs. In fact, the NPS budget is so small it is not even to a 'rounding' budget adjustment. I believe, based on communications with him, that he believed the budgetary argument, but I believe it is a rationalization of the Reagan-Bush administration opposition to new park preservation, and parallels feelings among conservatives in the congress, and some in the NPS. I think Ridenour is a good man, but who accepted the Administration's determination that park funding would stop growing as it had in the 1970s. Mr. Ridenour was the first Director to support national heritage areas as a system, because I believe he liked the heritage areas because they weren't new parks. And also, under the Galvin program, unlike the funding that had gone to SWPA, the funds in the Galvin plan per area per year would be limited. Therefore, the funds were far less than parks and even new parks, that for the most part receive very small funding. His concern was that they (Congress) were letting places become parks without proper criteria and recommended a much more exacting or restrictive planning program.

Sometimes, some NPS staff are susceptible to believing only NPS recommendations for new parks and NPS recommendations for budget should be approved by Congress, and many people on Capitol Hill have suggested this is a holier than thou attitude. Most of the time, it is a professional attitude that areas that meet the criteria for parklands should make up the NP System. But sometimes the NPS Theme Studies have been shown to be incomplete. For example, when I worked on the national park area at Women's Rights, I learned that the NPS Theme Studies did not include Women's Rights as "nationally significant" theme. It is characteristic or was at the time the first national heritage corridor was established, that the NPS Theme Studies were incomplete in areas of social movements, art and music, industry and innovation, the history of tolerance and civil rights, and innovation and especially industrial development. Of course, the original national parks were located in scenic areas owned by the government, not living working landscapes. Working landscapes for the most part were not the pristine areas national parks were originally thought to represent. Obviously, these are enormously significant to the meaning and character of our nation, and rightly the backbone of the National Park System. But if this "Yellowstone Strategy" is the exclusive focus of NPS

preservation, then huge areas of vital national significance will never be included within the System.

When you go to Europe you can see regions of international distinction and character that also are places people live, places that show the whole range of the human built and natural environment in a landscape. America has such places, too. Heritage Corridors were seen as one way to recognize the significance of these places while developing a cooperative and completely voluntary preservation and interpretation plan that can be powered by the economic benefits to be gained by everyone working efficiently together to protect distinctive character and the best possible quality of life.

Coming into the NPS just a year after I left college, I could understand that parks had to be managed in a certain way and didn't criticize that. There was a whole group of NPS staff, retired now, who came into their own professionally having to confront an active effort by people like James Watt to compromise the National Park System and the National Park Service. They were very sensitive to proposed changes, because of the threat that the traditional protections of parks were under attack and would be eroded if they did not fight every day to protect the parks. People that joined the park service because they believed in it and perpetuated those things would continue to be done the same way. To do something that was different than the original model may appear to be going against the tradition of Teddy Roosevelt, or Gifford Pinchot or John Muir, against the heroes and the mythos. Heritage areas were perceived by some sensitized by threats to be a threat. They were seen to avoid regulation and land ownership, and there is a reason to be concerned that parks not lose the authorities essential to their protection. But national heritage corridors and areas do not have to be seen as a threat to parks, because they are a strategy to build preservation programs on vital working landscapes that do not qualify as parks.

One of the largest problems the NPS has is it does not always pool the skills it has in many disciplines, to apply to the proper preservation challenge. We call this 'stovepiping.' What happens too often at the NPS is that they stovepipe skill sets and feel sometimes that sharing these skills undermines their program. We need more deliberate strategies to combine these skills, park operations and "external" program skills in particular. Heritage areas show how to do this.

A National Landmark has to be just as nationally significant as a National Park. I felt all the ways, both sides of it. I felt that there was something wonderful (about the early parks). But I had an experience in 1972 when I attended the Second World Parks conference and heard that there were different ways of doing things; like the European model where people actually lived in the parks.

The Report on Status of Planning and American Heritage Areas: Linda Neal invented the term American Heritage Area, which Deny, or perhaps actually Director Roger Kennedy, rejected. She was working on the Quinebaug which became the fourth National Heritage Area. Her idea was that areas that were not nationally significant, could be American Heritage Areas, perhaps without federal commissions or as much NPS participation as a National Heritage Corridor. Linda was the planner for the Wildcat Brook Wild and Scenic River, the first

"partnership" unit of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. She was also project manager at Blackstone River Valley and the lead for the feasibility/special resources study for a proposed Quinebaug-Shetucket in Connecticut. Heritage Corridors would be the nationally significant ones with greater NPS involvement in Linda's proposal for Quinebaug. As I understood it, a Member of Congress asked that the testimony be changed, to say the area is nationally significant and should be a National Heritage Corridor.

One of the reasons I got into supporting national heritage corridor was that I believed there was power in interpretation and recognition of significance to physically protect resources. I was unable to convince more talented managers to push this approach. The NPS people are largely a bunch of pragmatic people who want to know in advance that a strategy works. They don't want a theoretical discussion. But under President Reagan and James Watt there was an effort, largely successful, to our powers of regulation and land acquisition.

I felt there was a tendency that was consciously laid to turn NPS away from preservation and toward building facilities and expanding public use and weakening restrictions. I spent many hours with Ric Davidge, a Deputy Undersecretary under James Watt, and he would talk about deliberately trying to split the NPS cohesiveness and public support. Split the rangers out from everyone else in the Service to interpose science and planning as a mechanism to limit the political power of the rangers. Reduce the number of Ranger divisions, cutting them nearly in two. Shifting Resource Management away from operations and toward science. Get rid of land acquisition in favor of easements or "land protection plans."

A lot of the people then in charge of the Department of the Interior over the NPS were the same people we had just beaten in Congress on the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 P.L.96-487, under the Carter administration. They were still angry with the NPS and were determined to restrict what they considered to be its pro-preservation bias. Secretary Watt called for a facilities maintenance program in lieu of preservation and new area studies. Secretary Watt moved against the legislation mandating 12 new park studies a year and directed that NPS would oppose all new legislation to establish new parks. Even though the NPS had the authority to acquire park land inside parks it became nearly politically impossible to do so. That was the political environment leading to National Heritage Corridors: regulation was frustrated, land acquisition was stifled, new parks were stopped. Many of the traditional preservation tools were becoming less and less available and effective.

Heritage Areas and National Park Service: Heritage corridors were a preservation and interpretive strategy that could work without regulation, without land acquisition, without park facilities maintenance, without large staff, but with public support and pride.

The positive way to look at this is, here is a way to talk to people about what they care about. This is a way to speak to Americans about what the NPS mission is. America, that is what we are about. Heritage Corridors were designed to be positive amid all the negativism, to permit the NPS to cheer for local preservation efforts, and to lend their technical assistance skills to raise the level and prominence of these local efforts

The key thing for everybody to realize is that when you really look at the history of these programs, they have deep roots in all aspects of NPS management. There is nothing about them that is strange and nothing either that steals from the NPS mission, in fact the National Heritage Areas feed the political energy the American people provide to the parks and National Park Service. There is a lot of traditional NPS DNA in the concepts behind the National Heritage Corridors.

I believe most of the objections from NPS traditionalists toward the heritage areas may be nothing more than a confusion of the fundamental strategies of the NPS with just the day-to-day tactics, such as the difference between NPS physically owning the land vs the land being owned and preserved by partners. You can adapt the traditional methods to modern opportunities without sacrificing the mission of the Service. Even in the time of my own career I have seen circumstances evolve in many NPS programs, but the mission remains the same.

For example, I had worked for the NPS under Tommy Gilbert, Chief Division of Environmental Interpretation. This was an important initiative of Director George Hartzog who believed in the power of interpretation and education to improve the environment. He believed in the 'Web of Life' and that all parks and all people are all connected by the ecosystem, by this Web of Life. Many believe Hartzog to have been the greatest or certainly one of the greatest Directors. This Hartzog concept of the interpretation of the interrelatedness of parks and the larger world was an important concept that was incorporated directly into heritage areas. Clearly there are plenty of land management agencies. The NPS is the land management agency *that tells the story*. The educational side of the NPS has the great sense of the significance of the storytelling. Heritage areas came up at a time when people were closing the doors on many of the different traditional ways that government could manage and control activities that damaged the environment. There was a clear war against environmental protection, but National Heritage Corridors offered a way to celebrate the American environment, rather than being on the losing side of issues like the Snail Darter.

Another transformational moment the Second World Conference on National Parks. There were workshops for world delegates in environmental interpretation. The NPS came with the idea of a pristine environment. We had the best. George Hartzog (NPS Director) in a visionary way had a logo thing he wore, not the arrowhead, but the web of life. The notion that all these things were interconnected; social, cultural, urban, country. The Yellowstone Ideal, but much broader, it would apply to the entire human environment. Parks, as Bill Brown said at the time, were "Islands of Hope. But from other countries came delegates to the conference bringing ideas of people living in the parks, of preservation strategies for living landscapes as parks.

Freeman Tilden, the father of NPS interpretation, also was essential to the thinking that led to National Heritage Corridors and areas. He taught that you interpreted not didactically but began with the visitor, where the visitor was not where you were. The NPS by the 1970s was expanding the idea of what a park could be. George Hartzog started some things like "Summer in the Parks." I think the ideas came out of the Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King and Yosemite riots. Parks should be for more than the traditional white family of 4 in a station wagon. As directed under the Reagan Administration, the NPS opposed every single park establishment legislation there was. I had heard on the Hill, when I met with people there, that

our program gave Congress no guidance. If you are against every bill, then as far as the Congress is concerned you are against nothing. For then, they have no guidance from the professional opinion of the NPS. So why not support ever park bill?

If there was a crucial person who tried to bring all these threads together it was Deny Galvin. He had an exacting sense of project development and appropriations, and also a sense of place and celebration. He could see the relationship of food and music and understood that it all came out of this soup of culture and meaning for people and that places had these sorts of quasi-religious connotations and people were and are anchored to them. He understood the value of the untold story, the value of working people to the history of the United States. Not the most extraordinary or unique example of America, but the "real" America that 200 years from now the future would most want to know about. The NPS National Heritage Areas grew from that.

The heritage areas were offering to work with businesses for the good of conservation so why not support them?

Deny Galvin said National Heritage Areas were a technical assistance vehicle. There is a broad array of NPS technical skills. The right skills could be provided as needed by each landscape and its communities, in a way just as Freeman Tilden said Interpretation should be. All these people with all these skillsets can actually be that little difference needed to make a community successful. There is no reason why the expertise of the NPS can't be available to the communities. And that is what the heritage areas do. However great the NPS is, it can never overcome the suspicion that some people have of the government.

It is not always understood by traditionalists that you can protect these places by telling the story of the place and showing how the historic resources are needed to tell that story. You can tell that story through tourism, and tourism can be a motive to protect those essential places. The constituency are the American people who live in the area and love the place. What the technical assistance can do is help position the local strategy, so that the highest traditions of the NPS are followed, so that real resources are protected. And, protected in a way that speaks to the mission of the NPS and its various programs.

The issue of economic development was one of the things that divided us (NPS from heritage area leaders). Some claimed they were about economic development, not about preservation. But people have tried incorrectly to say the same thing about parks. For example, Senator (Ted) Kennedy – and many, many Members of Congress over time -- I don't think ever voted for a park where he didn't say something about the jobs that would be created.

Another element of national heritage areas and corridors that comes from the traditional NPS is planning. Deny Galvin again is an example of the widespread belief in the NPS in planning. He believes the NPS plans, but especially, implements its plans. Planning is a big part of the NPS and something that people really needed. Community planning is a centerpiece of national heritage areas.

In America too often at the community level we don't do planning we do permitting. Pitting the environmental sector and the business sector against each other. This is flipped in the national

heritage area model I saw at Blackstone River Valley. If the environmental advocates and the business community work together to come up with a mutual plan -- and confront the government with a solution instead of allowing the government to be the referee -- it allows wonderful and beautiful things to happen. Not choosing sides, to undermine each other, but working together

By celebrating resources and stories there does not have to be a fight in the NPS between use and preservation. Jerry Rogers – who really got it – the former Associate Director for Cultural Resources for the National Park Service used to believe in what he called a “service” government. He felt in fact that you can make it your job to find ways to enable local people. The National Heritage Areas became a part of that.

The other thing the NPS can offer from its traditions is telling the story. We have been saying for years that we believe in interpretation. We have been defunding interpretation for years. What the American people want is the story. I think the NPS is unwilling to use its spiritual authority with the American people that comes from interpretation. But I think that people care about these places and if we use our interpretive skills to talk about why places are important, they will protect them.

The public who is armed with knowing why a place is important can protect it better than anything else. This is another fundamental strategy of national heritage areas that emerges from NPS traditions. It can be too easy to slip into believing our power comes from control, but as Freeman Tilden taught us, it really doesn't.

National Heritage Areas and economic development: The reason the National Heritage Areas initiative is in the NPS is because it is based on preservation and interpretation. Sometimes economic development and tourism and preservation can mean the same thing. Sometimes the words divide us. The words are different, but the methodology may be the same. Successful communities require good environmental sustainability and good jobs. When we would talk about a place to be preserved and interpreted it was the same place that was useful for economic development. Sometimes ecology and economics are virtually the same thing. If preservation is what enables tourism, and if great landscape-wide collaboration among communities is what enables successful grant applications and bringing in or retaining good businesses as good neighbors, then you have synergy. Historic preservation has economic benefit in the first place because of the jobs, but if it also takes a neglected and decaying historic structure and makes it into a successful residential property, that is a big boost to the economy.

Mary Means, who started the Main Street program for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and several of the heritage areas after the “sideboards” schism, began to emphasize heritage development more than preservation. Randy Cooley and Alvin Rosenbaum of the SWPA project were the major advocates for this narrative. I was never sure that in fact it meant in reality less actual preservation. I did feel SWPA emphasized tourism more than preservation of historic structures, but perhaps that was simply a function of the huge size of the area, and the unhealthy make-up of the membership of the SWPA board. But if in fact there is drifting from the preservation and interpretation foundation, that would be a fundamental problem. The role of the NPS is not to be a development agency.

The reason heritage areas are lodged in the NPS is because the national heritage areas are about preservation strategy. Does that mean that economic development could not also be going on? No, but you had to do it in a way that was mutually supportive – synergistic -- and supports or at least is consistent with the preservation and interpretation model. I think people don't mind if their places are fixed up and think it looks nice, but they want them to be real.

Another point of contention with NPS tactical tradition, I think confused with the fundamental Mission, was raised by some of the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance program. RTCA is one of the really special, most successful partnership programs within the NPS. Among heritage areas with a strong tie to the NPS, there is a lot of DNA from the RTCA program in the heritage assistance from the NPS. The model for RTCA is for three years of assistance, and then you are out. Heritage areas often use RTCA planning and civic engagement practices, but rather than 3 years, a heritage area – as nationally distinctive – is permanent. In that respect it is more like a park even though the engagement tactics are more like RTCA. But it is like RTCA in this sense: Heritage areas are a strategy. You in effect have a framework which is training people that the historic sites that they love can in fact be preserved as part of a living economy, or it is a framework to bring together the people necessary to keep the river clean. We have already discussed that interpretation is both telling great stories for the public interest in the stories and the education value, but also because interpretation helps to preserve resources. In the heritage areas the community learns partnership behavior which the NPS doesn't have.

What makes a successful heritage area: What is the Story? What are the places that tell that story? Who wants to tell the story and save those places? That's the first circle of commitment. Some are federal people and a whole lot of them are not federal people. What drives National heritage Areas and why they work is because people care about the places they live. They felt strongly that the places they lived were important. Like the people who are still grieved about what happened in the Smokeys. Director Roger Kennedy would say, “Place is space and memory. “It is the notion that you get all the human experience. National Heritage Areas create a framework where people can work together for common goals. You don't get to just walk away and make a decision with no one else in the room.

The boundaries of parks go right through the natural resource that are the real natural park. The heritage areas incorporate the story within a larger boundary. In the Yellowstone you have a gate to close and in historic places around the country have the red velvet rope. You have these isolated history places, the mansion on the hill concept of historic preservation, where it is supposed to represent a whole history. Formerly preservation work was done by the wealthy who bought a property and donated it to the government. A sense of elite about what the government was supposed to do. Not the sense of partnership we have today.

The heritage areas are getting people from different walks of life to help people solve problems. The skill sets of all these different disciplines working together. If you get them talking to each other they achieve the 80 80 80 rule: 80% of the people, 80% of the time can agree on 80% of the program.

People have the power to tell Congress what they care about. What people from NHA know how to do is to articulate their needs to the Congress and leverage private money with a little bit of federal money. NPS learned from heritage areas that the cure of politics is more politics, not less politics.

We have already demonstrated in heritage areas that using the power of pride, the sense of place, of ceremony, is a way to rehabilitate it right. There is an appetite in America for conservation and authenticity. If you speak to people about what they care about then it is their concern. They can learn by working locally and instead of permitting, learn how to plan the integration of cultural and landscape conservation. The power of heritage areas comes from joy, humanity, celebration, and feelings.

NPS is not preserving the heritage, the people are doing it. Let's help with the planning so they can do it. From a weekend charrette you have a funding proposal, and it costs nothing but 16 hours of time. That ownership became important. Suddenly communities find that their dreams are coming true. The future can be more than one thing and the local people can choose. They can get the groups in a room. People come together, they formulate and plan and then scatter to get the work done. The people who they thought in the community were their enemies were not. They begin to see that planning alone is important and they can choose their future. They can find common ground with others in the community. The agenda setting in these communities is incredibly powerful. Inside and outside the NPS if you can put it on a list the things get done.

Funding: We never had enough technical assistance money. The technical assistance money was taken away from the NPS and I thought that was wrong. You can blame me for it though. I was in the middle of it. It was in discussions on the Shenandoah Battlefields.

In 2001 there was a little bit of money for Brenda Barrett. Brenda once told me there wasn't enough money in the budget for her to have health insurance. It was so circumscribed it was ridiculous. They need enough money from the NPS to get the studies done, to help people tell their story. The heritage areas got money put in their budgets regardless of what their (NPS) criteria or concerns were, whether the NPS asked for it or not. All that did was teach the heritage areas that they didn't need the NPS Coordinating office. The Washington office thought that the heritage areas were playing them.

Deny actually put the heritage areas in the Federal budget submission in the early Clinton Administration. Every year we had to try and come up with money. He has said that these (National Heritage Areas) are the funding that stay in the budget.

The heritage areas group offered to split evenly all funding so new and old heritage areas are not pitted against each other. This would allow new areas to receive funding at a critical time and successful areas would not be deauthorized when they have demonstrated effective use and leverage of federal resources. Unfortunately, this did not happen. I believe this would not be as good a system as funding based on the merits and the goals of each statute for each area, but it would get us out of a problem undermining the entire program.

Have funding for National Heritage Areas based on the achievements of the goals that are based on the purposes of the area. Take care of those things and root for them and they will root for you. And if NPS doesn't have the money to give them (the heritage areas), I would say the way to lead is to praise them for what they are doing right.

Creation of the Illinois and Michigan Heritage Corridor: I began to work on the I&M HC legislation as a Legislative Affairs Specialist. We were told to oppose, and we did.

Jerry Adelman came up with the original idea to call it the National Heritage Corridor. Jerry comes into town with ways that corporations could set aside their lands and create a Greenway. I don't know to what extent he was thinking in terms of something I cared a lot about, biodiversity. Adelman came in with this program which included all the things I had learned from my environmental interpretation days, in Alaska about people and places.

Senator (Charles) Percy was in a tight race in Illinois and Governor (James) Thompson, called Secretary Watt and told him NPS needed to get the I&M designated as it had become politically contentious.

(Secretary) Watt said, okay we would have this thing (I&M HC). While on the Hill with Ray Arnett I had to rewrite the NPS statement to say okay we would support and why. When we went into the hearing for I&MHC in 1984 we saw each heritage area as a free-standing entity. No idea of a system. There is a huge desire to see them as a system. Yes, you want to have professional standards. You don't want to fund every huckster.

Adelman came in with the I&M HC bill with a sunset clause. It doesn't mean that Congress is going to turn their back on it at that point. No one ever believed that it would ever sunset. Most people in NPS thought that meant after that time the heritage area would be kicked out and they wouldn't have to deal with it after that.

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor: Boyd Evison, Alaska Regional Director, came to me and suggested I try for the Blackstone (executive director) job: "this job has your name all over it." I was told by Charlie Clapper, Associate Regional Director North Atlantic Region, who also sat on the Blackstone Commission for the North Atlantic Regional Director Herb Cables that if a NPS person got the job they would still be in the NPS.

Linda Neal had this thing she called the Blackstone Gorge strategy. Blackstone has tiny little boutique mills. A characteristic that makes the area unique is that the same men built the barns, mills, and churches so they have the same defining features. Linda's idea for the Blackstone Gorge was to cluster the resources together. The story is about the watershed and history of development, it is a microcosm of American's use of the land, sustainable and unsustainable economic development. Linda was the strategic brain behind Blackstone. She brought the state preservationists and the NPS interpreters to the Blackstone Gorge to tell the whole story. There were more than 10,000 historic buildings in the Blackstone valley. That is what made it significant, the volume.

There are places in Blackstone where the Irish workmen hammered through granite building the canal and died and no one knows who they were nor where they are buried. So, what's the real America? I am delighted that they have preserved Yellowstone. It is transformative. But, as one NPS leader said, "All we have in NPS is freaks." What about the real America? The real place is the story. That is what National Heritage Areas are.

Rolf Diamant's team worked on the feasibility study, and he said that we needed canoes in the river. I thought that was crazy, but he was right. What Rolf understood that I did not was that the river connected the places, and recreation would bring appreciation for a clean river as well.

What we are talking about is pride. Some person in an NPS uniform that they respect that comes and tells them why their area is special, and they will do the rest. The advantage of having the Blackstone people treat me like a NPS person that would come and go is that then it is not about me but about them. What the people of the Blackstone area really needed from me was my knowledge of how to work inside government agencies. People didn't know how to talk to their member of Congress or the business community. They automatically thought the business interests were the enemy of environmental causes. When environmentalists and businesspeople work together, they can proactively design solutions. I found over and over again they wanted to be able to do something so that they could speak to the commerce and the environment. What the NPS could do was to speak to the national significance.

A congressional staffer told me that he would consider his job a success if the Blackstone Valley NHA died because Blackstone convinced people that heritage areas worked and had been reauthorized several times and showed to others what could be done. Senators Kennedy and Chaffee, though, were really supportive. They added area and time each time the Blackstone legislation came up.

After I left, all the technical assistance money was assigned to the heritage areas, so they became the unified funding source. What was lost by that is that the NPS lost influence on the program.

My experience is that all the problems in the heritage area were the successes. That we had two states was an asset; that we had to clean up a polluted river was a good thing; that we had so many jobless people, that we had environmentalists who thought no one ever heard their concerns. We had no trouble applying the best practices of all the different fields. You could have a clean river, good environmental controls, good historic preservation practices. You could also protect the story.

I hear from people at Blackstone that they are no longer working in the community at large but spending their money funding each other. I hear that the people who are not in that money sharing coven are feeling like they are not included. Baltimore National Heritage Area had done the same thing. If it is true that they are just funding each other it is going to die.

April 28-30, 1997 Heritage Areas workshop: "National Heritage Area Planning and Implementation Workshop" in Annapolis co-sponsored by NPS and National Trust for Historic Preservation: That was an unsuccessful meeting. There were some personally hurt feelings by two of the NPS and two of the heritage area leaders going into the meeting. Deny (Galvin),

purely positive and seen by all as above silly provoked conflicts, advocated a generic legislative template based on that for the Rivers and Trails. I was in favor of it then, I'm not now. Many people there were not NPS, and the feeling was, "What are they doing to us?" Randy Cooley defined himself as not the NPS and said NPS staff leaders at the meeting had made deliberate efforts to compromise his area's success and urged we could take the program away from the NPS. (Later Randy promoted the idea that all areas should as he did switch to GSA oversight.) I was advocating that we needed a group where we could all – inclusive of both NPS and all the heritage corridors and heritage partnerships – could work together. Deny gave a happy talk and said we were all going to do great things together, and it appeared the coalescence would happen. Kate (Stevenson) spoke about the need for sideboards, and there was grumbling about the NPS just there to tell them what to do.

The statement by the new heritage area program managers that the role of the NPS needed to play was to make sure there were "sideboards" for the Heritage Areas. What the NPS knew about partnership behaviors should have taught us that was the point where we needed to be showing enthusiasm for the astonishing political accomplishments of the newly designated National Heritage Areas and asking them to share with the NPS some of their magic. "Sideboards" is the last thing we needed for that meeting. We needed to say we would do everything we can to support their efforts to preserve and interpret nationally distinctive places. We needed to say we would do all we could to empower or assist the people who want to do preservation. The tendency is to make sure that it is structured and controlled enough so that you don't get embarrassed. It turned out there was a previous history and a lot of baggage between Southwest Pennsylvania and the NPS managers. That was in no way an archetype for anyone else, what they needed, or what they expected. Instead of the model I had experience of support and enthusiasm, it needlessly set off a chain of contention that did no good for resources or interpretation.

The controlling model presumes you have the power and pick who to share it with and how to share it. While the occasion demanded partnership behaviors.

In this case the power was being brought to the table by the constituents for the huge swath of America just designated as National Heritage Areas. Since 1972 the NPS had been under restraint (other than Alaska which was following a designated pathway and was a trade-off for transferring even more land to the State and Native communities). The heritage area advocates burst right through that. What you learn is that partnership, real partnership where the partners bring the power, is opportunistic. It is not like other so-called partnership programs, like a grant program or the Tax Act program, where in fact you are making all the decisions. Real partnership is collaborative, and the tone of the relationship is collaborative.

We were in a huddle all talking about beginning the organization, and how we should work together and get past this sort of thing, and we need each other. The fallback was that the heritage areas set up their own Alliance of National Heritage Areas and the NPS was not in it. I chose (at first) not to be on the board (of the Alliance) because I thought it would be a conflict of interest. Glenn Eugster from the NPS however was on the board. You could watch the energy of the meeting just leaking out. I did not join (the Alliance) that day but did the next year (as the executive director of the Blackstone NHA). It was good in the sense that the National Heritage

Areas began to work together. They were not really linked together previously as they worked in such various places. All of them were wonderful people who could do good things. We went out of that room (at the Annapolis meeting) instead of united, divided. And that's what happened. There was a lack of trust (between NPS and the heritage areas) in the meetings that followed.

Federal Commissions: The President (Ronald Reagan), when he did the signing for Blackstone, said that there might be a conflict of interest with several ex-officio members of the federal commission sometimes acting as chair of the commission. But they could recuse themselves. The genius of the legislation of the early heritage areas, as congress designated, was that there is a consistency of interest.

The people of the State DEM, the local town official, the representative from the school systems, the representative from the tourism industry, or environmental clean water advocates have a consistent interest in the achievement of the congressional purposes of the areas. More and more, the program offices and especially the Solicitors are trying to make a distinction between the work of the public servants in managing the public's programs, and the people of the United States that actually own the authorized partners or federal commissions. The NPS and federal heritage corridor staff are public servants, and have a consistency of interest, not a conflict of interest. That is the point of the federal corridor commissions, to bring together multiple partners as operating commission operators, to work consistently.

There is a diversity of opinion on the contribution of using the federal commission model. I would like to see that there still are federal commissions. They don't all need to all become federal commissions. The federal commission is a framework so people can get together and talk. A way to put together planning. It creates a network of communication among people who can get the ear of those who can do something. They can stand up to the government officials.

Understandings: I think it is a mistake for the National Heritage Areas to try and aggregate all the money with themselves. NPS then loses interest and enthusiasm and creative input on the program. It becomes a pass-through, which would be fatal to higher funding levels in the future. With real colleagues working for common goals on specific projects inside the NPS, there would be a built-in constituency of deeply knowledgeable and skilled NPS advocates, rather than unexperienced program managers.

Congress was interested in the conservation aspect of NHA not just economic development.

NPS can help the heritage areas do what they want to do and achieve their goals and they become the heroes. Heritage areas are a framework and a strategy for preserving resources. Then the economic development issue is not important because it is needed for the conservation. There does not have to be a war between economic development and conservation. Economic activity never has to be in competition with preservation. In a planning environment people have the same goals, a clean, safe place where they can live and recreate.

What the heritage areas movement was about was solving problems. Not showing that environmentalism didn't work.

The difference between government intrusion and government assistance is who’s asking for it. It’s no difference in the caliber of the work. And it brings the kind of love that funds these agencies.

We learned in the NPS over years that you just can’t draw a line and conserve the ecosystem.

The NPS needs to be bipartisan. The NPS becoming more and more aligned with the Democratic Party is a dangerous thing. There is a huge misunderstanding about these things. It has to be explained at all sides. We are not going to give up the core mission of the NPS.

People always think it is quicker to be in charge, but it is actually longer to get everyone working on the goals. It ends up being faster to empower all stakeholders. You don’t have people attacking you from all sides.

I found myself, unfortunately, extremely angry that unlike the regional officers I was used to working with, so many of our Washington officers were so politically unsophisticated. I do not do well when I am disappointed and angry at colleagues when I expect that from such smart people a much higher level of understanding. They did not realize that they got less power by passive-aggressive behaviors, than if they trusted – had a leap of faith – in the public’s appetite for preservation and authenticity, trusted the citizen to preserve programs and places in their own way.

You can find common ground, but you need to not have someone stand in front of the room telling them how it was going to be by people who created the ideas in a vacuum. If we think we can create a system that is going to be so prescriptive it will not work.

I think the vocabulary of preservation is important.

The way to help NPS and heritage areas staff communicate is rotating people on a career bases through different programs. Park rangers or cultural resource managers people or interpreters should rotate into parks for a while. Heritage area people should rotate into parks. If the park rangers could learn what the RTCA people have learned about putting together charrettes, visioning sessions, identify the roles of the different players all the things that so many of the parks don’t want to work with. It’s astonishing the power and energy that emerges when you can work that way.

A heritage area can be better than a NP if that is what the resources require. A National Heritage Area may be the right thing in that place. There is no hierarchy of value. I thought that National Heritage Areas are the same as National Parks with the same goals as the parks but are places where people live.

The problem with the heritage areas is, they can be insular. For example, several of them think they are the birthplace of the American industrial revolution. In fact, there was no one birthplace of the American industrial revolution. The mission is to tell America’s story, preserve America’s

places. Help those communities outside the parks to get their plan done. They can tell their story about what matters.

I don't think it is a bad idea for National Heritage Areas to attract money from every source they can find. It should be allowed to unleash money so that people can preserve something. The things that were actually achieved are that they got money and they are still surviving and having significant people like Deny Galvin support and sponsor them.

If you don't allow people to be heritage areas where they have a future and get to work with the NPS in a successful way then they are going to want to be a park, something that may not be a good fit, and which will be a drain on the other activities. The built environments are changing, and parks are not the perfect tool in all those places. Heritage areas can be.

The NPS has learned a lot from the various programs they have. Neither the partnerships programs nor the NPS have benefited enough right now from each other's strengths. The heritage areas have skills that the NPS needs. Every agency is having more and more difficulty working with the public, and heritage areas can teach us that.