



# LAKES TO LOCKS PASSAGE

## THE GREAT NORTHEAST JOURNEY

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## 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

This year marks the tenth anniversary for Lakes to Locks Passage as a New York State Byway that is designated by the Federal Highway Administration as an "All-American Road." This Federal recognition is the "cream of the crop" of America's historic and recreational Byways, designed to promote the region to national and international markets. When we earned the prestigious designation in 2002, we immediately recognized the responsibility to establish an organization that could sustain our operations, deliver an outstanding traveler experience, and ensure that the byway resources are managed in a manner that addresses the promote vs. protect paradox of tourism.

To that end, the Lakes to Locks Passage collaboration with National Geographic has served as a catalyst for addressing all three of those issues. We have learned that partnerships are the key to sustainability. Over the past year, this dedicated Board and staff has worked to foster partnerships with elected officials, public agencies and the private sector to promote the region to a global marketplace. The interactive website allows us to create and deliver authentic and engaging travel experiences. Most importantly, we have seen how this program stimulates civic engagement and increased pride in our communities - essential for balancing economic development with resource stewardship.

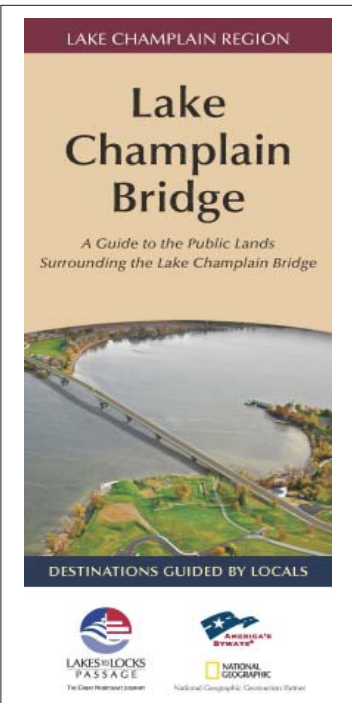
This year, our Board recognized that we are all at a critical juncture; fiscal and staff capacity are in short supply, while the needs for community development and resource conservation are at an all-time high. We believe that the organization fills a need in the region, we are committed to sustaining operations, and have identified several promising opportunities. Board members are currently working with staff to guide the organization's work efforts, and to implement strategies that benefit the entire region. Inside, you will find a summary of our accomplishments over the past ten years, as well as highlights of the past year's activities.

Many thanks to all of you who have supported Lakes to Locks Passage during this past year. We welcome and encourage your continued involvement as we continue to pursue our mission and vision, ensuring that Lakes to Locks Passage continues to be a great place to live!

Sincerely,

Randy Beach  
President

Marking the ten-year anniversary for Lakes to Locks Passage is a time to reflect, and recognize, all the effort that has been put forth by numerous individuals, organizations, public agencies, and elected officials. New York State has not only outstanding historic, natural, cultural and recreational resources, but also people who are willing to devote extensive time and effort to ensure that these resources, and the communities have been built from them, are here for future generations to enjoy. This retrospective features a few key activities that shaped Lakes to Locks Passage.



*We published a guide for bicyclists and pedestrians to enjoy the public lands surrounding the new Lake Champlain Bridge.*

The 1991 US/UK Countryside Stewardship Exchange was the catalyst for establishing Essex County's Champlain Valley Heritage Network and a grassroots economic revitalization program based upon the economic, natural and cultural resources. With initial funding from the Countryside Institute's Community Stewardship program, a part-time coordinator began to network town and tourism officials, museum and arts interests, chamber of commerce members and conservation and recreation groups in the eastern half of the county to address common goals for a shared future. The NYS Department of State's Environmental Protection Fund for Local Waterfront Revitalization initiated a two-county approach to addressing economic revitalization through the Essex and Clinton County Waterfront Revitalization Project. These efforts provided the model for the planning

approach for New York's Champlain Trail – a grassroots forum for voluntary inter-municipal planning and implementation of NYS Byway, waterfront and community revitalization programs.

In 1999, the New York communities in Clinton, Essex and Washington counties along Lake Champlain completed the CMP for the Champlain Trail as part of a plan for Lake Champlain Byways, a partnership with communities in the State of Vermont.

In early 2000, communities along the Champlain Canal in New York completed a CMP for the Champlain Canal Byway. In May 2000, the New York State Scenic Byways Advisory Board (NYSSBAB) recognized the strong grass-roots planning process and adopted the two plans. The NYSSBAB recommended the merger of the Champlain Canal Byway and the Champlain Trail to form one management organization for a single Byway.

One of the challenges that the byway planners faced was that there is almost too much "good stuff" happening in the region. The numerous national caliber historic and recreational resources had generated several initiatives for heritage tourism, and although none of them actually duplicated efforts, they tended to segment the interpretive story based on political or jurisdictional boundaries. Although resources and pieces of the interpretive story are well stewarded, the challenge remained to unify the "nation-building" saga. Byway planners wanted to establish an organizational structure, management strategy and regional forum to coordinate the existing initiatives to ensure there is no duplication of work. Most importantly, they wanted to establish a unified presentation to reduce confusion to the public. By using a continuous byway route, from the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, to the St. Lawrence River, the visitor experience can cross town, county, state and even national boundaries without interruption.

Through a series of facilitated workshops, a name, logo and tagline; the management structure; and goals for Lakes to Locks Passage were defined:

- Establish a unified identity for the region.
- Strengthen the grassroots partnership along the waterway
- Create a seamless program for interpretation.
- Improve economic development & marketing opportunities.
- Unify recreation & cultural heritage for a coordinated tourism product.

In 2002, the US Secretary of Transportation awarded Federal Highway Administration's All-American Road status to "Lakes to Locks Passage, The Great Northeast Journey" due to its outstanding historic and recreational assets. When we earned the prestigious designation in 2002, we immediately recognized the responsibility to establish an organization that could sustain our operations, deliver an outstanding traveler experience, and ensure that the byway resources are managed in a manner that addresses the promote vs. protect paradox of tourism. Over the past ten years we have used the 1999 CMP to guide strategic direction and prioritize projects that would not only help deliver a byway experience to the traveler, but also "make the region a great place to live."

## INFRASTRUCTURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

1991

US/UK Countryside Stewardship Exchange in Essex County served as a catalyst for the Champlain Valley Heritage Network and "community stewardship" as an economic engine

1997

Essex and Clinton Counties Waterfront Plan established a regional strategy for waterfront and community revitalization, serving as the basis for Byway planning. The 2010 update to the Waterfront and Byway Plans provides the "next generation" of projects to continue revitalization efforts

2000

Lake Champlain and Champlain Canal Byway Corridor Management Plans approved, NYS Scenic Byways recommended merger of corridors

2002

Lakes to Locks Passage created by merging byways along Lake Champlain, Lake George and Champlain Canal regions; Federal Highway Administration awarded premiere designation as an "All-American Road;" non-profit status established for management entity

# BUILDING *on* SUCCESSES

## NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM GRANT AWARDS

To that end, we have helped many communities secure Federal funding for capital improvements, interpretive programs, and marketing initiatives (see list of grant awards). These projects illustrate how strategic investments in existing organizations and facilities has created a byway experience worthy of national designation. Lakes to Locks Passage is committed to delivering an authentic, place-based tourism experience by connecting the historic, natural, cultural and recreational resources and fostering the development of 21st century technology and multimedia skills. The updated Corridor Management Plan for Lakes to Locks Passage is a “second generation” of planning for the byway. Through extensive community involvement and interpretive planning, two primary strategies guide current implementation efforts:

The **Lakes to Locks Passage Heritage Centers Strategy** creates a network of communities that are prepared to “meet and greet” the visitor through existing local museums and facilities that reflect the community culture. The strategy utilizes four key elements:

- Build pride in the communities.
- Stimulate civic engagement.
- Foster inter-municipal cooperation.
- Generate a local commitment to the stewardship of the intrinsic resources for future generations.



The **Lakes to Locks Passage Geotourism** collaboration with National Geographic is designed to establish Lakes to Locks Passage as a premiere destination for national and international travelers utilizing the branding “Lakes to Locks Passage, The Great Northeast Journey, Guided by Locals.” Implementation has three strategic goals:

- Establish a unified regional identity along the waterway.
- Deliver an authentic, place-based, multi-modal experience.
- Market the co-branded regional destination to national and international audiences.

1999

Village of Port Henry Iron Center Heritage Center \$49,600  
Essex Community Heritage Organization Heritage Center \$274,024  
Champlain Trail Unigrid for Interpretive Products \$24,000

2000

Champlain Trail Marketing Plan \$48,000  
Champlain Canal Marketing Plan \$14,000

2002

Town of Saratoga Pocket Parks \$115,000  
Warren County Planning Lake George Loop CMP \$30,000

2003

Town of Northumberland Hudson Crossing Interpretive Park \$45,200  
Lakes to Locks Passage Website and Guidebooks \$67,000  
Lakes to Locks Passage Organizational Support “Seed Grant” \$25,000  
Essex County Visitors Bureau Lake Champlain Visitor Center \$188,000

2004

Town of Plattsburgh Pedestrian and Bike Trail Design \$49,680  
Town of Chesterfield Visitor Interpretive Center \$280,700  
Lakes to Locks Passage Organizational Support “Seed Grant” \$25,000  
Essex County Historical Society Elizabethtown Heritage Center \$221,407  
Village of Granville Slate Valley Museum Heritage Center \$160,000

2005

Lakes to Locks Passage Corridor Management Plan Update \$64,000  
Lakes to Locks Passage Organizational Support “Seed Grant” \$25,000  
Champlain Valley Heritage Network Heritage Centers \$190,000

2006

Lakes to Locks Passage Organizational Support “Seed Grant” \$21,000  
Village of Rouses Point Gateway & Wayfinding Signage \$77,600  
Mountain Lake PBS French & Indian War Programming \$221,000

2007

Mountain Lake PBS Samuel de Champlain Programming \$221,000  
Lakes to Locks Passage Organizational Support “Seed Grant” \$25,000  
Town of Fort Edward Rogers Island Heritage Center \$224,800

2008

Lakes to Locks Passage Byway Ambassadors Program \$76,000  
Lakes to Locks Passage Byways Geotourism Initiative \$199,200

2009

Lakes to Locks Passage MultiMedia Marketing Campaign \$250,400  
Town of Northumberland Hudson Crossing Park Heritage Center \$250,320

2010

Champlain Canal Region Byway Interpretation Facilities \$194,400.00  
Hudson River Greenway Champlain Canal Trail Engineering \$200,000.00

2012

Lake Champlain Bridge Heritage Area Park planning and design \$85,000  
Saratoga-Washington Partnership Gateway Visitor Center \$350,000

## PROGRAMS AND PRODUCTS

2004

Lakes to Locks Passage marketing plan, graphic identity, visitor information and interpretation strategy developed

2005

Lakes to Locks Passage formal agreement for Quebec-New York cross-border tourism promotion; established first Gateway Visitor Center and Waypoint Community Heritage Centers

2008

Initiated work on IMLS Heritage Centers Sustainability Training; created first “Passage Minutes” and recognized potential for 21st century technology and multimedia products

2014

Target date for establishing all Gateway Visitor Centers; establish Ambassador training throughout region

2020

Target date for establishing all Waypoint Community Heritage Centers

**National Scenic Byway Program** In July 2012, Congress passed Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) to reauthorize Federal transportation funding. MAP-21 eliminates most discretionary funding programs, including National Scenic Byways. However, a new program called Transportation Alternatives will provide funding for a variety of projects, including the Recreational Trails, Safe Routes to Schools, and several previously eligible Byway activities. We are waiting to hear how FHWA and NYSDOT will implement MAP-21, but it appears that this program will be particularly valuable for furthering Lakes to Locks Passage multi-modal and recreational trails projects.

Janet continues to serve on the Board for the National Scenic Byway Foundation. The Foundation will continue to work with the Federal Highway Administration, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the American Recreation Coalition to shape the future management of the National Scenic Byway Program.

### SUMMARY OF FY 2011 GRANT ACTIVITIES

Two Lakes to Locks Passage projects have been awarded FY12 National Scenic Byways funding:

**Lakes to Locks Passage at Champlain Bridge** This project will conduct planning for the Lake Champlain Bridge Heritage Area Park and preparation of construction documents for landscaping and traffic-calming measures to restore the scenic character of the byway, NYS RT 185. The new Lake Champlain Bridge is an exceptional design, and with its pedestrian and bicycle facilities, simply walking or bicycling across the bridge has become an attraction in itself. We now have an opportunity to rethink how the bridge, highway and surrounding State-owned historic and recreational areas could function as a unified park with facilities that work together through coordinated operation and physical connections. \$85,000 Federal funds

**Historic Saratoga-Washington on the Hudson Partnership Canal Region Gateway Visitor Center** This project will allow Lakes to Locks Passage to establish a collaboration with Saratoga National Historical Park and the Historic Saratoga-Washington on the Hudson Partnership to establish and operate a gateway visitor center to one of America's most important historic landscapes, with trail improvements to encourage visitors to walk and bike along the byway to several historic and natural sites. The project will serve as the "southern anchor" for the byway; and as a destination in itself, interpretive panels and interactive exhibits will provide the "big picture" about the byway and an introduction to experiences that can be found in the Canal Region of Lakes to Locks Passage. \$350,000 Federal funds

Lakes to Locks Passage has supported grant applications and project awards for many communities and organizations over the past year. These programs implement the Lakes to Locks Passage vision for unifying the region and instituting quality-of-life improvements, community revitalization and economic development activities:

- Essex County Historical Society
- North Country Underground Railroad Association
- Rouses Point-Champlain Historical Society
- Historic Saratoga-Washington on the Hudson Partnership
- Open Space Institute
- Town of Moriah

Congratulations to all of the communities and organizations for their hard work and dedication!

### LAKES TO LOCKS PASSAGE, INC. FINANCIAL REPORT

	2011 Actual	2012 Budget
<b>Revenue</b>		
Balance forward	\$ 48,764	\$ 8,287
Community Contributions	13,885	4,850
Grants	166,904	467,695
Contracts	19,605	72,811
Other	1,865	1,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 251,023</b>	<b>\$ 554,643</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Payroll/Benefits	\$ 95,880	\$ 98,264
Consulting	118,621	413,032
Equipment/Supplies	629	3,312
Insurance & Accounting	8,486	7,400
Printing	5,363	750
Phone, Internet & Web	1,992	2,500
Travel	7,524	7,025
Rent	2,076	2,076
Workshops	1,265	5,500
All Other	900	3,017
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$242,736</b>	<b>\$542,876</b>

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Lakes to Locks Passage, Inc. is not a dues-based organization as we want to serve all of our community members, regardless of their ability to pay. Therefore we appeal to elected officials, partner organizations, foundations, corporations and individuals to support the organization to the extent that they are able. We are extremely grateful for the support we have received in the past year from the following sources:

- Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce
- Washington County Tourism
- Adirondack Regional Tourism Council
- Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
- Saratoga National Historical Park
- Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Amtrak
- NYS Canal Corporation
- Rensselaer County Tourism
- Saratoga & North Creek Railway
- Essex County
- Washington County



PROGRAM SUPPORT



Lakes to Locks Passage is supported by the NYS Department of Transportation's Scenic Byways Program, one of the best State Scenic Byway programs in the nation. The Department's management of the Byway grant program has allowed numerous non-profit groups and municipalities access funds for implementation of the Corridor Management Plan, and has provided matching funds to Lakes to Locks Passage projects that provide a statewide benefit to the Program. We deeply appreciate the Department's staff support that has encouraged, and supported, Lakes to Locks Passage to develop an innovative approach and commitment to the grassroots management of the Byway.

### 2012 ANNUAL MEETING SPONSOR



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