

## **Chapter 10 - Interpreting and Marketing the Canal**

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## Chapter 10 - Interpreting and Marketing the Canal

"... The spectacle was beautiful beyond measure . . . our city had been pouring forth its thousands and tens of thousands; Castle Garden, the Battery, and every avenue to the water, were thronged to a degree altogether beyond precedent. The ships and vessels in the harbor were filled, even to their riggings and tops."

William L. Stone,  
*Narrative of festivities observed in honor of the completion of the Grand Erie Canal, 1825*

The heritage, color and excitement of the Canal System are world-class assets of the Empire State. These qualities are the essential ingredients for formulating marketing and interpretive programs that will bespeak the greatness of New York State in years to come. The importance of marketing, promotion and interpretation cannot be understated. It is through this effort that the Canal System's existence, identity and uniqueness will be communicated widely, and positioned in the minds of residents, potential visitors, and investors as a viable, vital destination and resource.

Marketing and interpretation are complementary, mutually supportive programs. Most importantly, they increase the public's knowledge and enjoyment of the Canal's resources. Interpretation can also foster a sense of pride and ownership of the Canal System in state residents and in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors by communicating the concept and benefits of the Recreationway and emphasizing the underlying cooperative foundation of the Canal Recreationway Plan.

This chapter recommends and describes programs for interpretation and for tourism and recreation marketing of the Canal System that are supportive of and compatible with implementation of the Canal Recreationway Plan. While it is also recommended that a marketing strategy be developed to promote the Canal as an artery for commercial shipping, that

strategy is presented separately in Chapters 8 and 11.

### 10.1 INTERPRETATION

New York State's canals had a tremendous impact on the cultural, transportation and industrial development of adjacent communities, the state and the nation in the nineteenth century. They were an unprecedented engineering marvel, envisioned by entrepreneurs and inventors, and built by unskilled workers who contributed their labor and, sometimes, their lives. A wellspring of song, prose, poetry and folklore celebrated and lamented the lives of the people who worked, lived and traveled on the canals. In many communities, the negative impact of the decline in usage after World War II was as significant as had been the positive effects experienced in the Canal's heyday. This too is a story which should be told. But there is perhaps no other single asset in the nation that contributed more to our country's history and heritage.

#### *Planning Principles*

##### **Definition, Goals and Objectives of Interpretation**

Interpretation may be defined as means of enhancing a person's understanding of how natural and man-made resources impact cultural and societal development. Successful interpretive efforts provide and stimulate new insights and heightened perception of environmental influences on change and growth. Interpretation should be viewed as an ongoing, rather than static process, bringing to light the continuing potential to influence cultural changes through choices related to the perception and use of our resources.

Interpretive efforts should emphasize the system's historic and cultural significance and its potential to provide new benefits as a recreationway by focusing on realization of a variety of objectives including:

- Fostering a sense of pride and ownership of the Canal System in state residents and in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors by

spotlighting its role in the development of adjacent communities, the state and the nation.

- Communicating the concept and benefits of the Recreationway as a cultural, economic-revitalization, conservation, recreational and historic resource.
- Emphasizing the underlying cooperative foundation of the Canal Recreationway Plan by assembling a partnership to guide development of an Interpretive Plan.
- Stimulating tourism through enhancement and enrichment of the visitor experience.
- Using interpretation to bring national and international attention to the Canal by demonstrating the validity of its designation as a National Heritage Area or National Heritage Corridor.
- Providing a valuable public service through development, coordination and implementation of educational programs for young people which supplement local and state history curricula.
- Providing a mechanism for coordination and linkage of existing canal-related interpretive efforts, cultural facilities, historic sites, other attractions and special events.

### ***A Thematic Framework for Interpretation***

The geographic magnitude of the corridor and diversity of its resources and communities necessitates establishment of a thematic hierarchy to guide interpretation. Themes will be used to categorize subject matter related to the history and development of the Canal System as well as the cultural heritage of associated communities. These same themes are also applicable to interpretation of the present-day system and corridor.

The proposed hierarchy includes overriding themes within which sub-themes are defined. Themes and/or sub-themes may be assigned to systemwide elements, regions, communities and attractions. An attraction is a site-specific

resource or concentration of resources which exemplifies a specific theme or sub-theme.

Seven themes have been identified for systemwide interpretation, based on an assessment of resources and the dominant characteristics of the subject matter. These seven categories are further refined by delineating sub-themes. The major themes are considered to be comprehensive; sub-themes may be expanded as the Interpretive Plan is developed further. In the same manner, themes and sub-themes have been recommended for systemwide elements in the system's fifteen geographic regions, described in Chapter 4, whereas community and attraction theme identification will be driven by local input.

A presentation of the seven major themes and their sub-categories follows:

1. **Transportation:** The Canal System forms an extensive transportation network providing intermodal linkages both within and beyond the state's borders. Within the canal corridor, every mode of transportation has developed, taking advantage of the system's alignment and the availability of linkages for transporting goods and people.

A study of the engineering and construction of the Canal System's evolution demonstrates New York State's major contribution to the development of canals in America, which greatly facilitated the American Industrial Revolution and the immigration movement in the 19th century.

#### *Theme*

Transportation

#### *Sub-Themes*

History of Canals  
 The Transportation Network  
 Transportation Linkages  
 Roads and Highways  
 Canal Infrastructure  
 Water Transportation  
 Railroads

2. **Commerce and Industry:** The Canal System and its predecessors fueled the nation's transformation to an industrialized society. Raw materials and finished goods were transported to and from distant locations and markets, as well as throughout the canal corridor, enabling establishment of a thriving commercial economy which earned New York the title of "The Empire State." In contrast, the Canal System traveled through miles of farmland, and aided the growth of the world's oldest industry, agriculture, which became pre-eminent in New York's economy. Industries like Syracuse's extensive salt mining also helped finance the canal's construction. Canals were used, and continue to be used, to generate hydropower for a multitude of uses.

*Theme*

Commerce and Industry

*Sub-Themes*

Commercial Shipping  
 Agriculture/Farming  
 Hydropower  
 Shipbuilding  
 Railroad Industry  
 Viticulture/Wine Making  
 Consumer Goods  
 Textiles  
 Lumber  
 Commodities  
 Mining

3. **The Natural Environment:** The canal corridor contains a magnificent array of woodlands, rivers, valleys, wetlands, lakes and plains of extraordinary beauty. A plethora of fish, birds, animals and flora subsist on its land and in its waters. From prehistoric times some 12,000 years ago, human populations used these resources for sustenance, travel, building boats and homes, and making clothing and tools. As human evolution has progressed, use of these resources has changed and the need for conservation has emerged, but their importance to our culture remains. Their significance, both past and present, will be the focus of interpretation of the natural environment.

*Theme*

The Natural Environment

*Sub-Themes*

Natural History  
 Natural Waterways and Water Bodies  
 Flora and Fauna  
 Bioecology  
 Geology  
 Geography  
 Natural Resources and Human Evolution

4. **Cultural Heritage:** Human heritage and cultural development in the canal corridor can be traced from prehistoric times, through the present. Along the paths of these natural and man-made waterways, humanity grew and flourished. Today remnants of the oldest societies are scarce, but the legacies of early inhabitants remain. In contrast, surviving canal communities, historic and archeological sites, educational and religious institutions, literature, music and visual arts provide more tangible means to understand how culture blossomed, and society sometimes faltered. The stories of humankind, people's frailties and accomplishments, will be told through interpretation of human cultural heritage from prehistoric times to the present, and on through the future.

*Theme*

Cultural Heritage

*Sub-Themes*

Prehistoric Societies  
 Native Americans  
 European Settlement  
 Emigration  
 Immigration  
 The Women's Movement  
 Arts and Literature  
 Government  
 Canal Towns and Villages  
 Canal Cities  
 Education  
 Religion  
 Famous Americans  
 Archeology  
 Ethnicity

5. **Architecture:** The residences, institutions, and commercial and industrial structures in canal communities reflect a long history of architectural development and styles. For example, in Lockport one finds concentrations of cobblestone architecture typifying the canal builders' era, Albion is famous for cast iron fronts and a sandstone church spire, in Medina there are excellent examples of redstone architecture, in Waterford the stepped gable is prominent, and in the hamlet of Adam's Basin an 1827 canal tavern survives as a bed-and-breakfast. Great concentrations of industrial architecture may be found in the Mohawk Valley where industry thrived by using the Canal for power, to receive raw materials and to transport finished goods. New York State's tradition of encouraging preservation has ensured that many historic neighborhoods, districts and sites front the Canal, enriching the visual and cultural experience.

*Theme*

Architecture

*Sub-Themes*

Residential Architecture  
 Commercial Architecture  
 Institutional Architecture  
 Industrial Architecture

6. **Recreation:** The Canal System's traditional recreational opportunities include fishing, boating and swimming in its waters, summer homes and camps on its shores, and many other landside attractions including major sporting events in locations like Watkins Glen, and festivals and celebrations in canal communities. The recreation interpretive theme will focus on the impact of canal recreational opportunities on the quality of life, both past and present, as well as the economic benefits derived by canal communities.

*Theme*

Recreation

*Sub-Themes*

Boating  
 Fishing  
 Hunting

Resorts  
 Organized Recreation  
 Walking and Hiking  
 Winter Sports  
 Cycling  
 Water Sports  
 Wildlife Viewing

7. **Military History:** Many significant sites related to military history are found in the canal corridor, as waterways were the primary means of transporting soldiers, arms, supplies and munitions, and defenses were established to guard entry points from enemy attacks. French and Indian and Revolutionary War sites in the Champlain Valley and on Lake Ontario provide a means to interpret the history of our development as an emerging nation. Naval history is interpreted at the Urban Cultural Park in Whitehall. The War of 1812 influenced the construction of the original Canal System, as a better means of transporting munitions was desired by the military. Strategically placed forts in many locations along the Canal, like Fort Stanwix in the Mohawk Valley, facilitated population of the inner parts of the state. The impact of military history on cultural and economic development should be a major focus of interpretive efforts dealing with this subject.

*Theme:*

Military History

*Sub-Themes*

The American Revolution  
 French and Indian War  
 The War of 1812  
 Defense and Emigration  
 Naval History  
 The Civil War

***Thematic Canal Regions***

Interpretive categories for the fifteen Thematic Canal Regions of the Canal System should reflect dominant characteristics and attributes of those particular areas within the context of the system's interpretive framework. The seven major themes and sub-themes thereof may be assigned to geographic regions. Recommended themes and suggested subjects for interpretive

emphasis should be considered exemplary and may be expanded upon a more detailed analysis.

### **Region 1: Niagara Frontier**

*Recommended themes:* Natural Environment, Commerce and Industry, Lumber, Commodities, Native Americans, Emigration and Military History.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- The Niagara River.
- European emigration via the Canal, which helped populate the continent's interior.
- Influence of grain, flour and other commodity shipments from the Midwest on the growth of Buffalo and New York City.
- Native American life in the canal corridor, particularly the Erie and Seneca tribes, known as the "Keepers of the Western Door."
- The War of 1812 and Fort Niagara, which provided impetus to the movement to create the Canal System, enabling travel solely through US territory.
- The Tonawanda Twin Cities and their historic role as a lumber capital.

### **Region 2: Ontario Lake Plain**

*Recommended themes:* Natural Environment, Commerce and Industry, Agriculture, Architecture and Canal Infrastructure.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- The engineering accomplishment necessary for the Canal to cross the Niagara Escarpment, and the Town of Lockport canal complex.
- The City of Lockport, the Lockport Flight, and extant 1825 five-lock flight.
- Farming in the western New York canal communities.
- Export on the Canal of Medina sandstone to build many famous buildings worldwide.

- The discovery of gas in Gasport by Rensselaer/Troy Academy students on a canal outing in 1826.
- In the Village of Albion, the home of George Pullman, inventor of the railroad sleeping car, seen as a derivative of the canal packet boat. Cobblestone architecture and cast iron fronts.
- Brockport, home of Cyrus Hall McCormick, inventor of the reaper.

### **Region 3: Metropolitan Rochester**

*Recommended themes:* Commerce and Industry, Hydropower, Emigration, Commodities, Natural Environment and Canal Infrastructure.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- The impact of the Erie Canal on Rochester's population growth from 1825 on.
- Rochester's role in industrial and commercial growth in the state; significant historic industries including flour milling, clothing and shoe manufacture, and present-day industries such as photography, optics and reprographics.
- The Genesee River, and its junction with the Erie Canal in Rochester.
- Water power and its usage.
- Historic canal structures, such as the Genesee Aqueduct which now carries a highway.

### **Region 4: The Drumlins**

*Recommended themes:* History of Canals, Geography, Natural History, Canal Towns and Villages, Religion, and Agriculture.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- History of canals including the 1825, 1862 and current-day canals and canal structures.
- Glacially formed geography.
- Canal communities with National-Register-listed canal-related sites, particularly in the

villages of Pittsford, Perinton, Fairport, Palmyra, and Lyons.

- The State Canal Park at Lock E-30, where the modern canal is adjacent to remains of the 1862 canal.
- Aqueduct Park near Lock 29 with the ruins of the Ganargua Creek Aqueduct and a Barge Canal hydroelectric building.
- Buildings and sites from the founding of the Mormon Church of Latter Day Saints in the village of Palmyra and Hill Cumorah, site of the annual Book of Mormon epic pageant.
- The Village of Newark, once known as "The Rose City" because of its rose garden industry, and the birthplace of the 19th-century spiritualist movement, which gave the name "Burned-Over District" to this region.

#### **Region 5: Cayuga-Seneca Canal**

*Recommended themes:* Women's Movement and Canal Infrastructure.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Cayuga-Seneca Canal infrastructure.
- The History of the Women's Movement: The Seneca Falls Urban Cultural Park, Women's Rights National Historic Park and the National Women's Hall of Fame represent a concentration of attractions.
- Van Cleef Lake and the double locks at the east entrance to the village of Seneca Falls.

#### **Region 6: The Finger Lakes**

*Recommended themes:* Recreation, Viticulture, Architecture, Commerce and Industry, Natural Environment, Education, and History of Canals.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Recreational activities including exceptional fishing, particularly for trout and bass, and boating on Cayuga and Seneca Lakes.
- Historic sites, museums, state parks, wineries and other attractions in Montour Falls,

Watkins Glen, Ithaca, and villages along Seneca and Cayuga Lakes.

- Wine-making and vineyards.
- Watkins Glen as the northern terminus of the 19th-century Chemung Canal, which extended New York's Canal System into the Susquehanna Valley.
- The City of Ithaca, its dramatic setting in a gorge overlooking Cayuga Lake, Cornell University and Ithaca College.
- The City of Geneva, known as the "Jewel of the Finger Lakes," its trout fishing, Hobart & William Smith Colleges.
- Glass Factory Bay, a historic manufacturing cove in the Town of Geneva.
- The southern anchor of the Canal System, the Village of Montour Falls, which was in the path of the Sullivan-Clinton Expedition; its natural environment and neo-classical architecture.

#### **Region 7: Fish and Wildlife Conservation Area**

*Recommended themes:* Natural Environment, Bioecology, Natural Resources and Human Evolution, Prehistoric Societies, Recreation, Canal Infrastructure, Canal Towns and Villages, and History of Canals.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Use, care and conservation of the natural environment.
- Montezuma Wetlands Complex.
- Howland Island, site of a State Wildlife Management Area; bass and northern pike fishing.
- Use of Montezuma wetlands by prehistoric man, as well as Native Americans.
- The struggle of canal builders to constrain the canal's course in a difficult terrain and resultant disturbance of the equilibrium of the sensitive marsh environment.

- Historic canals and canal structures in the region, including Lock 52 from the enlarged 1862 Canal, Richmond Aqueduct.
- The villages of Weedsport and Port Byron, original Erie Canalports.
- Utica Marsh State Wildlife Area.

### **Region 8: Gateway to the Great Lakes**

*Recommended themes:* Native Americans, Natural Waterways, Commerce and Industry, Commercial Shipping, Canal Cities, Recreation, Railroads, Water Transportation, History of Canals, Canal Infrastructure and Military History.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Onondaga Iroquois conception of this area as a central territory and utilization of waterways for transportation.
- Three Rivers Junction: the Seneca, Oneida and Oswego River sections join in the water-highway junction of the Canal; its historic role as a strategic passage for the fur trade and site of Jesuit, French, British and Loyalist events.
- In Syracuse, the Canal's role in the city's history and the area's salt mines, which helped finance the Canal; Onondaga Lake, used by the Canal as a waterway access to the city; historic canal features, such as the Mud Lock in Onondaga Lake Park. The Syracuse Urban Cultural Park and Erie Canal Museum are recommended as centers for interpretation, as well as the satellite interpretation planned for the Syracuse Canal Harbor.
- In Oswego, the state's central gateway to Canada through Lake Ontario; the canal infrastructure of dams, weirs, spillways, locks and bridges lining the channel to the immense lake, with Lock O-8 being particularly important as it was once the world's largest "siphon lock"; exceptional salmon fishing; commercial shipping and recreational boating center; military history, highlighting attractions such as the Fort

Ontario State Site, where the 1759-era stone Fort Ontario guards the historic harbor; Oswego as the Canal System's link to the St. Lawrence Seaway.

- Lake Ontario; its influence on commerce and industry and commercial shipping; its role as a transportation link; and the Port of Oswego.
- Historic canal structures along the Oswego Canal, including the three-story Barge Canal Lock Building and bascule bridge in the Village of Phoenix, and traces and remnants of the old hand-dug Oswego Canal near Fulton.
- The Oswego Canal's exceptional fishing and boating.
- The City of Fulton, a canal city which flourished as a manufacturing center with international barge traffic, still an important factory center today.
- Pathfinder Island, north of Fulton, site of the legendary battle between the Deerslayer and the Iroquois.
- Battle Island State Park, where Colonel John Bradstreet deflected an attempted ambush in the French and Indian War, July 3, 1758.

### **Region 9: Oneida Lake**

*Recommended themes:* Boating, Fishing, Resorts, and History of Canals.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- The region on and around Oneida Lake is the center of Syracuse's summer boating and fishing recreation area, and includes Sylvan Beach, a summer resort with many recreational activities including lake cruises, beaches, campgrounds and the Canal System's only rollercoaster.
- Old Erie Canal State Park, which follows the path of the 19th-century Canals between East Syracuse and the Erie Canal Village Museum on the west side of Rome, and includes a Canal Education Center; the Village of Canastota, with a Canal Museum and Canal District, home of many famous boxers and the International Boxing Hall of Fame; the

Village of Chittenango, site of the Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum and home of Frank Baum, creator of *The Wizard of Oz*; and the City of Oneida, geographic center of the state.

- Winter sports, including fishing, cross-country skiing and dog-sled racing.
- Three Mile Bay State Wildlife Management Area.
- Constantia and its fish hatchery.
- Schackelton Point, home of the Cornell University Biological Field Station.

### Region 10: Upper Mohawk Valley

*Recommended themes:* History of Canals, Commerce and Industry, Arts and Literature, The Transportation Network, Railroads, Military History, Natural Environment, and History of Canals.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Canal history and infrastructure as exemplified by the presence of canal features of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.
- The region's transportation network constituting the Canal, the Mohawk River, the railroad and the Thruway.
- Rome, site of the beginning of construction of the historic Erie Canal on July 4, 1817; home of the Erie Canal Village; Fort Stanwix National Park Service historic site and nearby railroad station.
- Utica, its harbor with an active canal maintenance yard, terminal, and a harbor lock; Utica Union Station, listed on the State and National Registers; recreational and cultural offerings including Stanley Theater, Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, a major regional art museum of European and American paintings, Children's Museum, and marinas; ethnic neighborhoods; Gateway to the Adirondack Region; Utica marshes and State Wildlife Management Area.
- Village of Frankfort, an industrial settlement and historic railroad center. The canalized

Mohawk River starts here and continues east to Herkimer.

- Village of Ilion, dominated by a massive late-19th-century Remington Arms factory which has visitor services and a museum. Archeological dig of original canal and locks.

### Region 11: Lower Mohawk Valley

*Recommended themes:* Transportation Networks, History of Canals, Commerce and Industry, Emigration, Geography, Military History, Roads and Highways, and Native Americans.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Village of Herkimer, Palatine settlement founded in 1725, known as German Flats, famous from Walter D. Edmonds' *Drums Along the Mohawk*; West Canada Creek's historical association with loyalist/patriot struggles in the American Revolution.
- Little Falls, the Canal's "Eye of the Needle," the narrowest point in the Mohawk Valley; site of pre-Erie Canal efforts and the most geographically constrained area of the Canal; close juxtaposition of the river, railroad, local roads and the Thruway.
- Industrial growth and transportation networks in Amsterdam; Guy Park State Historic Site.
- Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site: colonial Fort Hunter and Mohawk Iroquois occupation.

### Region 12: Eastern Gateway

*Recommended themes:* Natural Environment, Native Americans, Government, Commerce and Industry, Education, Arts and Literature, Transportation Networks, Canal Infrastructure, Water Transportation, Hydropower, Ship Building and European Settlement.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Native Americans who formed trading settlements in the early 17th century.

- European settlement, the result of the region's prime location as a trading center.
- The convergence of the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers.
- Role of the region's natural environment which both facilitated and impeded transportation, spurring canal construction.
- Hydropower and canals, particularly in Cohoes which had an extensive 19th-century power and transportation canal network.
- The region's role as a birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution.
- Troy's role as a 19th-century transportation center.
- Albany's role as a center of government and commerce, and the original Erie Canal's eastern terminus.
- The Waterford Flight of Locks, which routes the Canal around the spectacular Cohoes Falls.
- Educational and cultural institutions.
- The Urban Cultural Park Visitor Centers in Troy, Cohoes, Albany and Schenectady.
- Schenectady: 17th-century Dutch trading center; early locomotive manufacture; Thomas Edison's Machine Works, forerunner of a major electrical industry; pioneer radio and TV development.

### **Region 13: Upper Hudson River Valley**

*Recommended themes:* Military History, Natural Environment, Native Americans, Winter Sports, Industry

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Native American history of the Mahican, Iroquois and Mohawks.
- The Hudson River.
- Mechanicville, a historic lumber and paper-manufacturing city.
- The French and Indian War.

- The American Revolution; Saratoga Battlefield, site of the first American victory and a National Historical Park; Schuylerville with the Saratoga Monument and General Philip Schuyler House nearby.

### **Region 14: Champlain Canal**

*Recommended themes:* Military History, History of Canals, Canal Infrastructure, Transportation Linkages, Transportation Networks, Archeology, and Natural Environment.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- The Champlain Valley.
- Fort Edward, a French and Indian War center with a nationally significant archeological dig.
- Fort Ann, its historic locks at a National Register site; Canal, road and railroad in close juxtaposition.
- The Glens Falls Feeder Canal.
- Comstock, a 19th-century hamlet of Downing-style architecture; Great Meadows Correctional Facility.
- Whitehall, Gateway to Lake Champlain, Vermont and Canada; Naval History at the Urban Cultural Park/Skenesborough Museum in the Canal Terminal freight building; remnants of the "U.S.S. Ticonderoga."
- Linkage between Lake Champlain and the Canal System.

### **Region 15: Lake Champlain**

*Recommended themes:* Military History, Recreation, Transportation Linkages, Agriculture and Natural Environment.

Suggested subjects for interpretive emphasis:

- Lake Champlain as a national and international portal to New York State.
- Relationship between the waterway and the French and Indian and American Revolutionary War sites at Crown Point State

Historic Site, Fort Ticonderoga and battle sites in Plattsburgh.

- Fishing and boating opportunities.
- The natural environment.
- Hillside farms.

## 10.2 MARKETING THE CANAL SYSTEM FOR TOURISM AND RECREATION

The recommended plan for marketing and promoting the Canal System is based on several factors – the key market trends related to the Canal's overall tourism and recreation potential, an assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats characterizing the Canal's current market position, and the goals and objectives of the Canal Recreationway Plan. Based on this analysis, eight target user-markets have been identified and a specific plan for short- and long-term marketing actions is recommended. Finally, a strategy for expanding marketing partnerships is outlined.

In its totality, the marketing program for the Canal System is designed to (1) build on initial promotional efforts undertaken by the Canal Corporation in 1993 and 1994, (2) strategically integrate and further the goals and programs recommended in the Canal Recreationway Plan, and (3) stimulate economic development and private investment in canal-related development.

### *Key Market Trends*

Travel is expected to become the world's largest industry by the year 2000. Travel marketers predict a growth of three to four percent in leisure travel in 1995 over 1994 levels. This increment is in addition to the three-percent growth experienced in 1994. Americans took nearly 1.06 billion person-trips in 1993. A large portion of travelers used either auto, truck or recreational vehicles, stayed in hotels/motels and ventured more than 900 round-trip miles on the average trip. Most traveled for pleasure, visiting friends and family, outdoor recreation or

entertainment. More than half of all person-trips took place over a weekend or long weekend, and were classified as vacations. The average trip was 3.9 nights; for auto travelers, the average was 3.3 nights, while air travelers averaged 5.6 nights and 2,153 round-trip miles. Eight percent of all U.S. person-trips were to the Mid-Atlantic region comprised of New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Specific trends characterizing many of these person-trips indicate future growth potential in key segments that relate strongly to Canal System visitation and use. The following summary presents relevant market trends for segments that offer potential for the Canal.

- *Weekend or "Getaway" travel represents more than half of all person-trips taken.* Within this market segment, touring by automobile is by far the most popular mode of vacation travel, carrying 82 percent of all tourists. This trend is expected to continue to increase.
- *Family Travel has been the fastest growing travel segment in the 1990s, with 88.3 million adults taking at least one family vacation in 1992.* This figure increased by 12 percent in 1993, with 99.4 million such vacations. This trend is expected to continue for the next few years, with a projected growth rate of five to six percent. In 1992, 35 percent of vacationing families visited a city, 34 percent visited historical sites and 33 percent went to the beach.
- *Adventure Travel/Ecotourism/Agritourism, which includes travel offerings that involve active, outdoor recreational activities, is expected to grow 25 to 30 percent between now and the year 2000.* Nearly seven percent of U.S. travelers reported having taken at least one ecotourism trip in 1991. Nearly 33 percent of all travelers, or 35 million adults, said they were likely to take such a trip in the next three years.
- *The Mature Market will account for 22 percent of the U.S. population by the year 2000, and is expected to increase.* Short sightseeing excursions on tour boats, interpretation of historic sites, increased

access to other historic and educational attractions are expected to appeal to the mature market.

- *The Motorcoach/Group Tour Market contributes about \$600 million annually in New York State.* Growing interest is anticipated for tours that include activities such as lunch and dinner cruises, visiting historic sites and gaming. Along with New York City and Niagara Falls, Turning Stone Casino, operated in Verona by the Oneida Indian Nation, has become one of New York's top three motorcoach attractions in just one year.
- *Cruise Market consumer interest is at an all-time high, and a growth rate of eight percent is anticipated for 1994 travel, representing an additional 300,000-400,000 passenger trips.* This growth is expected to continue increasing at five to seven percent per year through the 1990's. Predictions for 1995 and beyond also include more exotic itineraries, enhanced dining facilities and more on-board activities for families.
- *International Markets indicate a six percent increase in visitor arrivals to the U.S. in 1991, with the largest increases originating in South America, Australia, and Canada.* In 1989, New York State attracted 22 million foreign arrivals. The majority of the foreign arrivals visited New York City and Niagara Falls.

### ***The Goals for Canal Marketing***

Based on the objectives of the Canal Recreationway Plan, and the preceding information, a set of four recommended goals have been formulated for marketing the Canal System for tourism and recreation:

- *Establish the NYS Canal System as a world-class tourism destination and recreational resource:* The focus of this effort is to build upon the Canal Corporation's current program to increase awareness of the Canal System as a destination and resource.
- *Build a solid base of tourism travel to, and recreational use of, the Canal System as a*

*year-round attraction and resource:* This will require influencing the selection of the Canal and its corridor as a vacation/recreation destination, and continuation of efforts to increase domestic, Canadian, and ultimately other international travel to the Canal System.

- *Encourage development of the Canal System's tourism and recreational products:* This can be achieved by supporting the continued expansion and development of tourism-related businesses and attractions along the Canal, and by increasing the number of canal-related festivals and events.
- *Increase the economic impact of Canal System tourism and recreation spending in the Canal System Corridor:* This can be achieved by increasing transient boaters' Canal System use and local boaters' duration of each use, extent of territory used and frequency of lockages.

### ***Target User Markets for Canal Tourism***

The universe of current and potential Canal System users can be organized into eight primary groups: local boaters, transient boaters, overnight cruise and sightseeing excursion-boat passengers, charter boaters, individual landside travelers, landside group tours, local/regional recreationalists, and special-interest travelers.

While all of these market segments share common needs, particularly the need for more and better information on the Canal System and its corridor, others require specific investment in services and facilities for their needs to be adequately met. This suggests that priorities should be established for the initial and long-term marketing program. It is recommended that this be done on the basis of the size of the potential market segment, the potential economic benefit to the Canal, and the implementation schedule for the completion of recreationway projects as outlined in Chapter 11. A summary description of each of the Canal's primary user groups follows:

- *Transient Boaters:* This group is mainly comprised of power boaters. Significant

potential exists both to expand the Canal System's share of this relatively affluent market and increase boaters' average spending and length of stay in communities along their way. This conclusion is supported by the 1990 Canadian experience where the Trent-Severn Canal captured more than ten percent of all transient boater trips within the Great Lakes market, as compared with only 3.5 percent for the NYS Canal System.

- *Local Boaters / Anglers / Paddle-Sports Enthusiasts:* Conservative estimates of the local boating market suggest it could increase by nearly 25 percent to 140,000 by 2000. There is an opportunity to encourage more local boaters to use the canals, spend longer periods of time on them, and travel farther, thus increasing their economic impact on the surrounding communities, and generating additional toll revenue for reinvestment in the system.

Niche segments within this group are anglers and "paddle-sports enthusiasts," non-motorized boaters who enjoy rowing, kayaking, canoeing, etc., who can be targeted as a complementary component to the power-boater marketing effort. Several events, including those sanctioned by local organizations, state or national governing bodies for fishing tournaments and paddle-sports competitions, currently use most parts of the Canal System. These events offer the potential for maximizing exposure for the Canal System as a venue for similar events, and generating economic impact in the corridor communities.

- *Cruise/Excursion-Boat Passengers:* The cruise market is one of the fastest-growing international travel segments. Within the cruise market, special-interest cruises, on smaller boats cruising to "off-the-beaten-path" destinations, are a small but growing niche market. Short excursions offered by a number of tour-boat operators, including sightseeing and dinner cruises, provide a natural entry point for landside visitors to experience the Canal System, and offer the potential to build enthusiasm for return trips and/or longer cruises.

- *Charter Boaters:* The chartering of self-captained boats (or "bare-boat charters") is a significant component of the Canal Recreationway Plan. Excellent initial efforts have been made to establish charter boating on the NYS Canal System. This is a key market segment which can be expanded and should be showcased as the opportunities afforded by early Canal Harbor projects are completed. Emphasis should be placed on familiarizing domestic markets with the charm and ease of the "European-style" bare-boat charter experience. In the longer term, as new charter/rental-boat centers are developed and more boats and/or more operators come on-line, it is a segment with significant potential.

- *Free Independent Travelers (FITs):* As the initial market study found, the potential market for land-based users on the Canal System is significantly larger than the potential water-based user market. Broadly speaking, the "Free Independent Traveler" (FIT) segment includes vacationers who drive from both New York and the surrounding states and provinces, as well as those in-bound via air to the major cities along the Canal System.

Sub-groups within this segment can be identified and targeted demographically and by special interest, and include families, seniors, couples, history buffs/antique hunters/nostalgia seekers and epicures/wine connoisseurs. New visitors should be targeted by highlighting selected aspects of the canal corridor that appeal to personal interests. Those already traveling to or through the corridor should be enticed to add canal-related experiences, such as boat excursions, visits to canal historic sites and canalside dining to their itineraries.

- *Motorcoach Tour Group Travelers:* The primary group audience is the motorcoach group-tour market, and can include domestic and international group tours arriving by air at New York City, Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Rochester, Albany, Syracuse, etc. According to data from SEA Travel and Tourism Research, there were approximately 58,000

passenger nights on scheduled motorcoach tours spent in towns and cities along or near the canals in 1992. This existing business can be tapped by canal-related attractions and serve as a base upon which to build more motorcoach/group-tour business by creating specific itineraries that include Canal Ports, boating centers, and attractions and sightseeing cruises.

- *Individual Outdoor Enthusiasts:* The Canals, adjacent lands and trails, and adjoining parks are significant recreational resources for local residents and visitors year-round for walking, hiking, bicycling, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, snowmobiling, horseback riding and picnicking. Improvements to infrastructure and signage and greater promotion of these improvements will enhance the potential to attract more visitors and lengthen their stays.
- *Outdoor Recreation Groups:* Organized group recreation – such as bike touring, hiking treks, and nature walks – represents an existing potential segment that should be encouraged to expand System use. Additionally, recreational vehicle (RV) groups represent another niche of this segment that should be targeted. As facilities, amenities and attractions are developed further, there is potential for packaging and promoting more recreation-oriented tours and activities along the Canal System.

### ***A Marketing Plan for the Canal***

A comprehensive marketing plan aimed at addressing tourism needs common to all markets and penetrating each of the suggested target markets has been developed. It includes a recommended short- and long-term strategy and specific supporting actions.

#### **Short-Term Canal Marketing (Years 1 - 5)**

The Canal Corporation should pursue an initial strategy to market the Canal System as a series of unique destination areas that are part of a larger whole. Focus should be on those sections of the Canal with the most highly developed

tourism infrastructure. Existing attractions should be packaged so as to appeal to one or more of each of the target markets' segments.

Destination areas should be organized according to the fifteen thematic regions identified in the Canal System and their land and waterside access. As Canal Harbor projects, Service Ports and Locks and Canalway Trail segments are developed, they should become new building blocks for this effort. In addition, local community projects and compatible private-sector hospitality and retail business initiatives can be expected to add diversity to the Canal System corridor's tourism and recreational product.

Specific tactics should market the Canal System as a whole by emphasizing the variety of vacation experiences and recreational opportunities it offers. The focus should be on different Canal System regions and attractions and resources within them, positioned within the larger I♥NY vacation regions. The proximity to major upstate New York destinations (Niagara Falls, Cooperstown, Lake Champlain, Lake Placid, Albany, etc.) should be emphasized as well as accessibility via all key tourism transportation modes. Particular emphasis should be placed on leveraging linkages between the Thruway and the Canal System.

Response to all promotional efforts should be monitored and evaluated annually. Success of marketing efforts should be based on market-segment penetration and return on marketing-program investment.

To implement this initial strategy, the following measures are recommended:

#### **1. Market Research**

The Canal Corporation should conduct market research among both transient and local boaters currently using the System to gather baseline data about them and their needs. Parallel research should be conducted among visitors to landside attractions (museums, historic sites,

restaurants, inns) and excursion and cruise-boat passengers.

Data gathered in early years will help establish a baseline and enable the Canal Corporation to target efforts. Annual data accumulation in subsequent years will allow measurement of marketing effectiveness. When profiles of current visitor/user bases have been developed, research samples should be expanded to include consumers who fit the profile but have not traveled to the Canal System, in order to obtain insights on how to entice them to do so.

## 2. Consumer Marketing

Research indicates that travel-purchase decisions (e.g., choice of destination, transportation and accommodations) are influenced by word of mouth from friends and family, travel agents, travel brochures and travel advertising. Accordingly, there is an immediate need to provide more and better information to prospective travelers to help them make the decision to travel the Canal System and corridor, and to guide and facilitate access to services, accommodations and attractions once there. Consumers information needs can be divided into three major categories – publications, signage, and information services.

- **Publications**

*Travel/Cruising Guide:* The highest priority is to research and produce a comprehensive "user-friendly" Canal System travel guide with information on waterside and landside access, boater services, accommodations, dining, attractions, tour-boat excursions, bicycle rentals, etc.

*Calendar of Events:* A comprehensive annual calendar of events, complementing the existing lure brochure, system maps and tour-boat brochure, should be developed for distribution through local marinas, Tourism promotion agencies and canal-related attractions, expositions, trade shows and canal events, as well as to media and through the toll-free information line.

*Bilingual Publications:* With Canadian transient boaters a primary target market,

bilingual (French/English) versions of the lure brochure, calendar of events, tour-boat brochure, system map and strip maps should be developed for distribution at entry locks, Canadian boat shows and through the travel trade and Canadian canal authorities.

*Child-Oriented Publications:* Given the significance of the family travel segment and its potential, separate materials for children should be developed to enhance and interpret their visits to the Canals, which will make canal visits more attractive to parents.

- **Signage**

*Signs:* A consistent, system-wide program of directional and identification signage to guide landside visitors and boaters should be developed.

*Information Kiosks:* Unstaffed information kiosks should be developed for Canal Harbor projects and key Service Ports and Locks to provide visitors/users with more detailed information about local services and attractions proximate to the Canal System.

- **Information and Fulfillment Services**

*Information Centers:* Staffed visitor information centers should be developed at key points along the canals to provide comprehensive state, regional and local tourism information.

*Fulfillment of Traveler Information Requests:* The service available through the Canal System's existing toll-free information number should be expanded to provide live-operator response to inquiries seven days a week during the navigation season, and navigation hours. The service should offer detailed attraction and event information and develop lists for distribution of promotional materials.

## 3. Public Relations

*Media Relations:* Public relations should continue to foster implied, third-party editorial endorsement of the Canal System's key messages, influence awareness, and affect consumers' vacation destination and recreation decisions. Publicity in selected

media helps promote the Canal System as an alluring destination and recreationway to both a broad audience of potential land-based vacationers and more specialized markets. Locally, along the System, it should be used to build use, support and enthusiasm, which generates positive word-of-mouth referrals to family and friends planning vacations or recreational activities.

The public-relations effort should publicize completion of new sections of Canalway Trail and trail facilities as they are finished, targeting local media as well as appropriate special-interest media and travel-trade publications. Ground-breakings and other key stages of each development project should be publicized locally. Local publicity should tie these individual projects to the system as a whole and to systemwide improvements.

The Canal Corporation should conduct at least two familiarization trips per year for selected media representatives, creating individual itineraries that focus on specific segments or interests.

*Consumer Expositions:* The Canal System should continue to be directly promoted to consumers at travel, boat and outdoor expositions. A display should be designed for these events that will entice display/booth visitation and convey compelling information about the appeal of travel on the Canal System and within the corridor.

*Audio/Visual Materials:* The existing promotional video should be updated and provided to tourism promotion agencies, local suppliers and Urban Cultural Parks along the corridor. It should also be used in marketing outreach to travel agents and tour operators, and at trade shows.

#### 4. Advertising

The level of funding available for Canal System marketing and promotion influences the nature of the promotional program. If resources allow for advertising and the ability to support response to such a campaign both in terms of technical support and collateral materials, a

targeted annual campaign should be considered to achieve the following objectives:

- Increase impact of the Canal System as a travel destination for boaters and nonboaters.
- Reach the target audience in surrounding canal population centers and key domestic and Canadian markets/regions where people will drive to the Canal (drive markets).
- Recognize current seasonal strengths of upstate New York tourism from May through November and concentrate placements in the spring and early summer months for vacation planning.
- Motivate consumers to inquire about more information on the Canal System.
- Create excitement among the businesses and attractions on the canals.

#### 5. Direct Marketing

Direct marketing opportunities should be developed further, including targeted mailings to owners of boats registered in nearby states and Canada. Purchase of mailing lists of subscribers to special-interest publications (such as *In-Boater*, *Soundings*, *Historic Traveler*, etc.) residing in regions within the Canal System's key geographic markets should be explored; and offers tailored to these audiences and other special-interest groups, such as hikers and bicyclists, should be developed.

#### 6. Promotions

Promotions such as competitions, point-of-sale, on-air or print sweepstakes or contests should be developed that benefit the Canal System as a whole. Guidelines for participation should be established, including presentation of the Canal System's key messages, use of the Canal System logo and promotional consideration (e.g., value of this exposure if it had been purchased).

#### 7. Promotional Coordination and Special Events

To ensure that canal-related events, festivals and attractions are included in promotional materials

and related activities, promotional efforts across the Canal System should be coordinated, and communication and cooperation with tourism promotion agencies maintained.

Organizers of existing canal festivals should be encouraged to coordinate scheduling and promote a more even distribution of events across the system, both geographically and temporally. New events and festivals should be encouraged in communities where little canal-related activity occurs.

#### 8. Trade Marketing

*Group Tour Manual:* A group tour manual should augment the travel/cruising guide for individual travelers and serve as a foundation for the development of special-interest travel packages for bikers, hikers, kayakers and other niche-market segments.

*Product Development:* Products commissionable to travel agents should be identified. The Canal Corporation should work with tourism promotion agencies and other entities along the Canal System to determine which attractions and accommodations in their areas are commissionable. Contacts with operators of bike and hiking tours and other group-touring and recreational activities should be established, and development of canal-themed tour products should be encouraged. Hospitality-industry suppliers, such as hotels, restaurants and attractions, should be encouraged to package canal-themed itineraries that can be offered to tour operators at industry marketplaces, trade shows, and individual meetings and sales calls.

*Conferences, Trade Shows and Marketplaces:* The Canal System should be promoted at key domestic travel and motorcoach/group tour trade shows and marketplaces (e.g. Tourism Industry Association of America, American Bus Association and National Tour Association conferences and marketplaces), including key Canadian venues.

*Industry Relations:* Familiarization trips for motorcoach and other tour operators should be developed to acquaint them with the attractions and accommodations along the system and encourage new tour product development.

#### 9. Cross-Promotion with the Thruway

The Canal System should exploit its inherent synergistic relationship with the Thruway system. This relationship can be leveraged to deliver compelling information about the canals to potential visitors already on the road and increase revenue from two of the state's key parallel transportation corridors.

Canal System promotional literature should be supplied to all toll plazas, food-and-fuel travel plazas, and staffed information centers on the Thruway system. Whether travelers elect to detour off the highway to sample their first canal experience or carry the Canal System information home from the Thruway for future trip planning, the important initial contact will have been made. All published materials, including maps, should reference key points of each system. In addition, efforts should be made to work with all map publishers to ensure that the Canal System is included and correctly identified.

A cross-training program should be developed for Canal and Thruway employees to expand their knowledge of both systems and the local tourism product to enable them to provide more informed and consistent assistance to visitors. Thruway toll collectors should be provided with an overview of the entire Canal System, nearby canal attractions, trails and waterside amenities. They should be kept apprised of plans for major Canal System development projects. Canal System employees should be aware of the importance of the Thruway system and the access it affords travelers to the Canal System, and be able to direct motorists to nearby Thruway interchanges and travel plazas.

Wherever possible, joint promotions that link car and boat travel or the Thruway and Canal

System should be pursued with current suppliers and Thruway contractors, such as Host Marriott, McDonald's, Mobil and Sunoco and other local, regional and national partners.

### Long-Term Canal Marketing (Years 6 - 15)

As the tourism and recreation infrastructure continues to develop, the strategy should continue to focus on marketing the entire system as a whole, but emphasis should be expanded to position the NYS Canal System as the preeminent canal experience in North America. Specific tactics should build on the activities initiated in the short term and expand the focus beyond North America. Linkages between the Thruway and the Canal System should continue to be leveraged in ways that increase exposure. Marketing efforts should continue to be evaluated based on market penetration and return on investment. Cooperative partnerships should be expanded to ensure that potential cooperative marketing opportunities are maximized and resources are used most effectively.

#### 1. *Market Research*

Annual research efforts should be expanded to include an assessment of the economic impact of travel in the canal corridor. This may be achieved by tracking visitor spending, assessing attitude and awareness, canvassing service providers for feedback, and monitoring the status of product development. An international component should be added to the on-going research program in the longer term.

#### 2. *Consumer Marketing*

- **Publications:**

*Specialized Canal Guides:* A series of specialized driving, boating, walking/hiking, biking guides with suggested itineraries and reference maps should be published.

*Foreign Language Publications:* Lure brochures, calendars of events, system maps and section maps should be translated into additional foreign languages (particularly German and Japanese), to facilitate attraction of international travelers.

- *Expanded Distribution Channels:* While continuing distribution of canal information through the existing network, the Canal Corporation should expand the distribution area for canal brochures, calendars of events and other materials to include points in the Hudson River corridor and New York City.

- **Signage:**

*Information Kiosks:* Information kiosks listing services and amenities available along the Canal System should be developed for all remaining lock sites.

- **Information and Fulfillment Services:**

*Information Centers:* As product develops and seasonality of Canal System use diminishes, staffed information centers operating year-round should be established at key locations.

*Fulfillment of Traveler Information Requests:* As usage of the 800 number increases, fulfillment services should be expanded to year-round, to keep pace with increased requests for information and maintain an effective database.

#### 3. *Public Relations*

*Media Relations:* The long-term media-relations campaign should continue to build on the success of preceding years' efforts with trade and consumer travel media. The Canal Corporation should continue to conduct regular trips for media representatives, travel agents and group tour operators, develop individual itineraries, and hold briefings for trade and consumer travel media on new products when appropriate.

The completion of the end-to-end Canalway Trail, each Harbor Center project and other canal projects should be publicized with national travel and specialty media, as well as local media along the canal corridors, building further awareness of the Canal System as an unified entity.

*Consumer Expositions:* The Canal System should expand its presence at key Canadian

and major eastern U.S. boat, outdoor and travel shows.

*Audio/Visual Materials:* The Canal Corporation should begin developing audiotape sets for transient boaters, motorists and hikers which contain historical information, canal stories and information about nearby attractions and services. These will complement the comprehensive travel guide. The tape sets should be made available for rental or sale at key gateway locks, Canal Harbors and visitor centers.

#### 4. Advertising

If funds permit, a full-scale media plan and advertising campaign for the Canal System should be developed to reach key prospects in priority target markets, based on research results and response to previous advertising placements. The advertising program should be expanded with the addition of television, direct-response coupons redeemable for Canal System Travel/Cruising Guides or other special interest materials, (such as specialized biking, hiking Canal System guides), and additional cooperative advertising by public and private-sector partners. The long-term objectives for advertising should include:

- An evaluation of the source of ad responses in order to determine publication response vitality and geographic skews and adjust future media plans accordingly.
- Continue focus on building awareness in primary markets/regions and tie into 15 regional themes.
- Develop, test and execute new ad concepts to keep messages and images fresh and relevant to product developments and enhancements.
- Institute advertising tracking studies and determine conversion rate from inquiries to actual bookings.
- Build broader impact through additional media vehicles such as local radio, and regional editions of national travel and general-interest publications.
- Expand awareness and impact in Canada and the remaining international market.

- Develop a cooperative program for tourism promotion agencies and local supplier tie-in to expand reach.
- Consider use of targeted television as funds permit.

#### 5. Direct Marketing

As tourism and recreation product is more evenly developed across the Canal System, offers should be developed and targeted to subscribers to mass-market consumer travel and general-interest publications such as *Conde Nast Traveler*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *Travel & Leisure*, etc.

#### 6. Special Events

A series of end-to-end events that reinforce the unity of the Canal System in the mind of the public should be developed. Examples of events include an antique boat regatta or a Canalway Trail bike rally from Lake Erie to the Hudson/Mohawk confluence.

A systemwide annual "signature" event, similar to the Clearwater Hudson River Revival should be developed, with appropriate corporate sponsorship and involvement. The NYS Department of Economic Development should be encouraged to designate a statewide "I♥NY Statewide Canal Festival" in the Year 2000, the 175th year of continuous navigation, focusing statewide attention on the Canal System.

As infrastructure improvement and development evolves, communities along the Canal System should be encouraged to extend local use of the canals beyond the May-November navigation season. Winter festivals, similar to those in Ottawa and Quebec, should be developed and promoted to attract winter-sports enthusiasts, especially cross-country skiers and ice skaters.

#### 7. Trade Marketing

*Product Development:* Efforts with the tourism promotion agencies should continue to encourage key canal-corridor lodging and dining facilities and the rating of attractions by recognized travel-industry information

suppliers such as the American Automobile Association.

*Conferences, Trade Shows and Marketplaces:* The Canal System should be promoted at international shows (e.g, World Travel Market in London, International Tourism Bourse in Berlin) in conjunction with the NYS Department of Economic Development and/or participating Tourism Promotion Agencies in the Canal Corridor.

*Promotions:* The Canal Corporation should establish partnerships with the private sector to distribute and promote special discount and added-value packages with travel agents, beginning in the Northeast.

*Industry Relations:* The Canal System slide and video presentations should be reviewed, revised as needed, and distributed to travel professionals (buyers) throughout the region and in key geographic target areas, to increase the potential for "cross-selling" the Canal System and canal-related attractions in the corridor.

#### 8. *Cross-Promotion with the Thruway*

Information kiosks should be developed for the Thruway system. A continuous video loop should be displayed at key Thruway travel plazas and interchanges, along with calendars of events, brochures and other Canal System information. Kiosks in the Canal System corridor should identify local canal-related sites and attractions and canal trails, in addition to travelers' services. Signage along the Canal can direct meandering motorists to the nearest Thruway entrance and nearby scenic roads.

#### **Expanding the Canal's Marketing Partnerships**

The Canal Corporation should work with the American Automobile Association (AAA) to develop and distribute New York State "TripTiks" with canal information, and seek ratings for canal-corridor accommodations, restaurants and other services. This will ensure listings in the popular AAA motorist guide books for appropriate New York State locations.

As applications of new communication technologies in the travel industry come on line, the Canal Corporation should ensure that destination messages are being delivered through these new channels, which are anticipated to grow in importance the coming years. For example, the Canal Corporation could work with companies such as Rand McNally to get Canal System information included in future releases of their TripMaker software for Windows, with Travel Companions International to add canal literature to its computer bulletin-board listing of 10,000 travel brochures, and with Magellan Systems to provide canal vacation information and the 800 number on their Traveler CD-ROM packages.

Other domestic and foreign canal systems represent a rich potential source of information and ideas as the development of New York's canals proceed. The exchange of information begun in 1994's symposium with representatives of the French canals should be continued and expanded. Dialogue with the French should be maintained, and the symposium should be considered an annual marketing event, with officials from other canals (Canadian, British, etc.) invited to participate.

Because of their proximity, the Canadian canals are also a logical choice for a more extensive marketing partnership with New York's waterways. The Canal Corporation should expand its partnership with Canadian canal authorities to distribute materials reciprocally, cross-promote systems and encourage boaters on both sides of the border to plan "loop" cruises through the two systems.

The Canal Corporation should continue its involvement in efforts to establish and promote the Hudson River Valley Greenway. The Hudson River is a vital link to the Canal System from points south, and its evolution as a destination region will impact and further enhance, and be enhanced by, the tourism and recreational potential of the Canal System.