

The Heritage Initiative



Many WATERS Many STORIES

One Special Place

Exploring our communities in the St. Croix River region
and their contributions to the American story

WHAT IS THE HERITAGE INITIATIVE?

The Heritage Initiative is a broad community project asking our neighbors in Minnesota and Wisconsin's St. Croix River region if a National Heritage Area would be a good fit for our area. The Initiative seeks to identify shared stories and special places, discuss benefits and challenges, and ultimately decide whether or not to pursue Heritage Area designation.

What is a National Heritage Area?

A National Heritage Area recognizes a region's important contributions to America's history and culture and celebrates its stories, conserves its special qualities, and helps promote economic growth. Heritage Areas are designated by Congress and are planned and managed by citizens, community leaders, and public and private organizations.

Where?

The Heritage Initiative study area includes 11 Minnesota and Wisconsin counties and communities along the St. Croix and Namekagon rivers, and the other major rivers and lakes that flow into them. Ultimately, the stories our region has to tell and the level of community interest would determine the boundaries of a Heritage Area.

Public Involvement

Community meetings around the region will start in early 2012. Beginning at the same time, you can visit the Heritage Initiative website at stcroixheritage.org to share your stories and participate in the discussion.

Other side: Ideas of what a Heritage Area
might look like in our region ►►



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IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES

The St. Croix Valley has a rich history and a vibrant cultural life. It's a great place to live and visit. Yet, our stories and attractions are far flung – from Hastings to Cable, from Prescott to Sandstone. What if we started to envision a future where our history is the basis for regional cooperation and economic growth?

Imagine a lumber heritage bike trail where families could journey from the forests of the Northwoods to the sites where lumber was cut, milled and distributed to power industrial development and help populate the western prairies. Picture a celebration of cultures, from Ojibwe and Dakota to the French or Scandinavian. Or perhaps a weekend tour of a landscape filled with historic barns and buildings, pristine rivers, lakes, and charming towns.

Now imagine the bike shops, restaurants and motels for travelers, and galleries and interpretive centers that help to tell the story. And imagine work for craftsmen and artists who restore and celebrate our past. These types of projects, and many others, are some of the many ways that National Heritage Areas across the country help residents and visitors celebrate their culture and history, ultimately benefiting their regional economies.

Partners and Participants

The Heritage Initiative is facilitated by the St. Croix Valley Foundation and led by a task force made up of citizens from throughout the region. Participants on the task force represent a wide array of interests, including nonprofit, business and public entities.

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stcroixheritage.org

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