

NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR CRITERIA:  
THE HENNEPIN CANAL AS A CASE STUDY

An Abstract of  
a Thesis Presented to  
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by  
Gerald Alan Newton

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#### ABSTRACT

This study is an outgrowth of a personal interest in the Hennepin Canal. In order to preserve the canal from further degradation, an examination was made to determine if it possesses the necessary criteria needed to become a nationally recognized park.

After preliminary reviews of the nation's park classifications, a conclusion was made that established criteria for the park classes often did not exist but, instead, relied on previous designations. The purpose of this thesis then became to determine the criteria for the newest park classification, the national heritage corridor. After knowing its criteria, the Hennepin Canal could then be assessed to determine if this new classification could be applied to the canal. Thus, the format of the thesis had been determined.

First, a review of the nationally recognized parks was made. This included the 22 classifications within the National Park System and the 8 classifications used in the system's affiliated areas. Examining each classification led to the creation of general criteria necessary for any area to possess if it is to become a nationally recognized park. Next, the new classification, national heritage corridor, was examined. After a political review and a discussion of the first such designated area, a comparison between this classification and the other 30 classes was made. The comparison solidified the general criteria and allowed specific criteria to be determined; the specific criteria being those qualities existing only in the heritage corridor designations (or shared by few other classes).

Finally, the Hennepin Canal was studied to determine if it possesses the general and specific features necessary for national heritage corridor designation. After listing and locating these features on maps, a determination was made that the canal does adequately meet the established criteria necessary for the designation.