



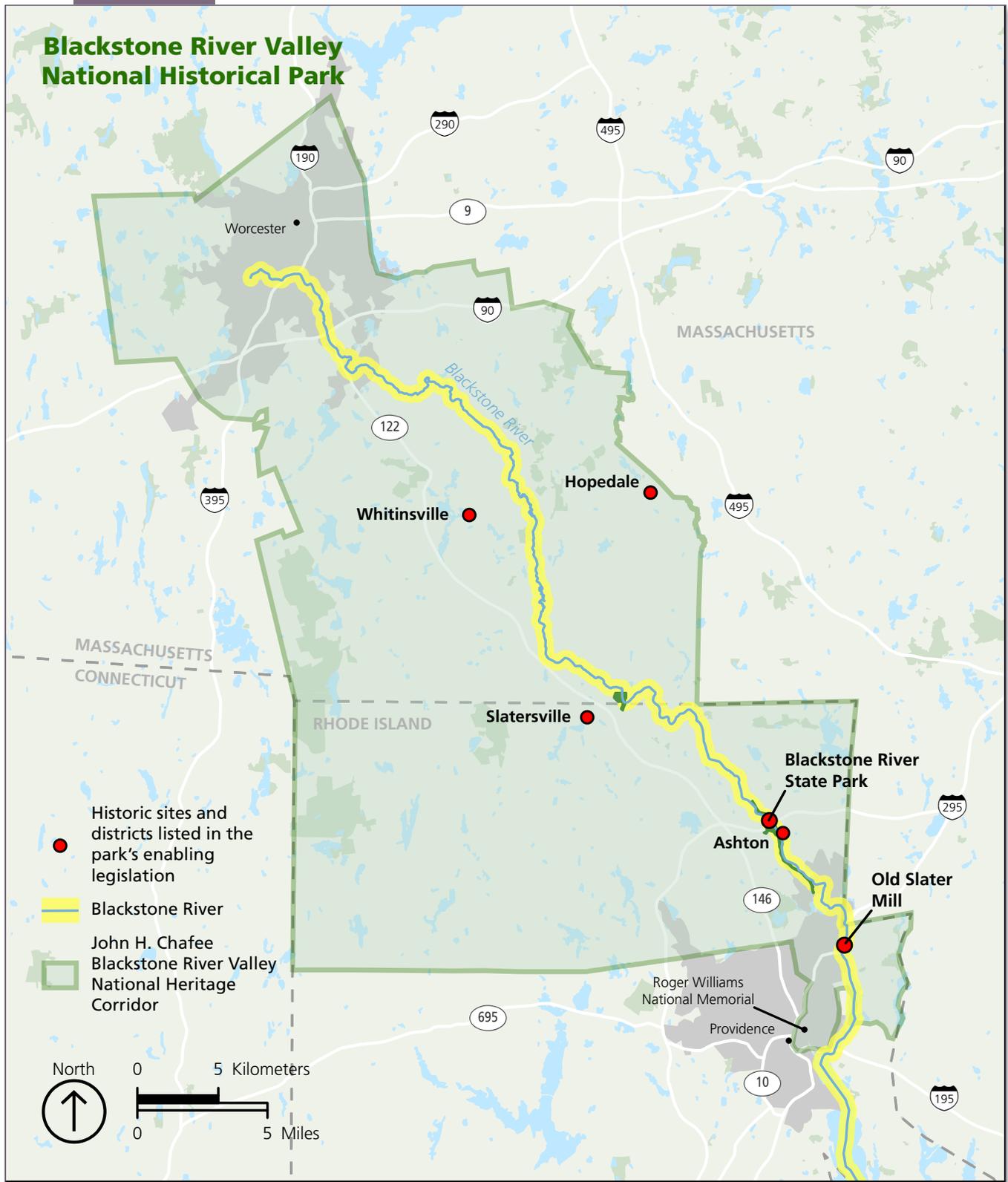
Foundation Document

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

Rhode Island and Massachusetts

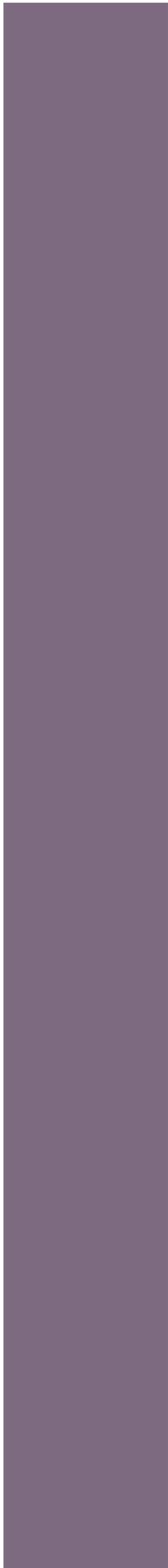
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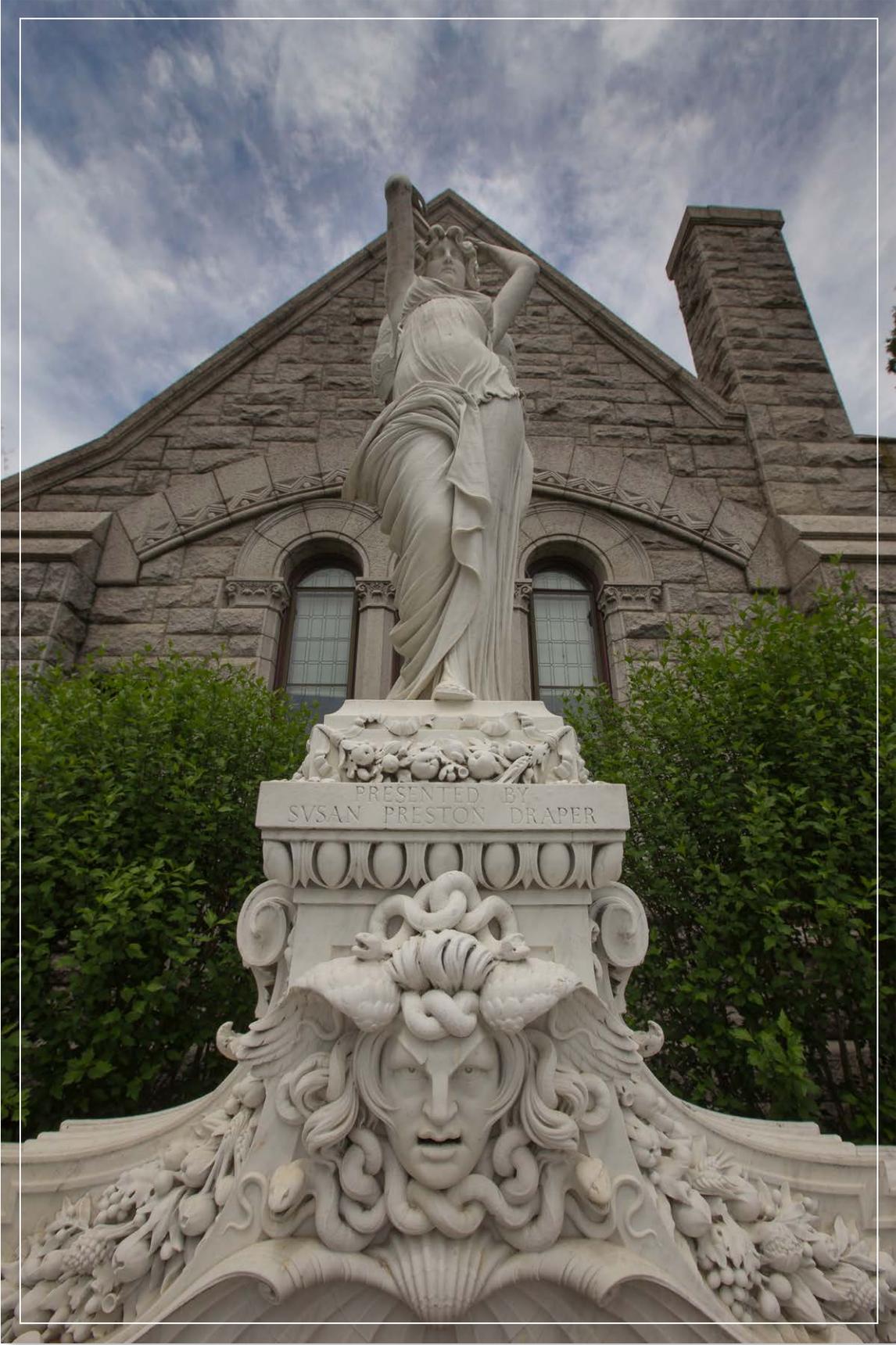




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Mission of the National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

The NPS core values are a framework in which the National Park Service accomplishes its mission. They express the manner in which, both individually and collectively, the National Park Service pursues its mission. The NPS core values are:

- **Shared stewardship:** We share a commitment to resource stewardship with the global preservation community.
- **Excellence:** We strive continually to learn and improve so that we may achieve the highest ideals of public service.
- **Integrity:** We deal honestly and fairly with the public and one another.
- **Tradition:** We are proud of it; we learn from it; we are not bound by it.
- **Respect:** We embrace each other's differences so that we may enrich the well-being of everyone.

The National Park Service is a bureau within the Department of the Interior. While numerous national park system units were created prior to 1916, it was not until August 25, 1916, that President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park Service Organic Act formally establishing the National Park Service.

The national park system continues to grow and comprises more than 400 park units covering more than 84 million acres in every state, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. These units include, but are not limited to, national parks, monuments, battlefields, military parks, historical parks, historic sites, lakeshores, seashores, recreation areas, scenic rivers and trails, and the White House. The variety and diversity of park units throughout the nation require a strong commitment to resource stewardship and management to ensure both the protection and enjoyment of these resources for future generations.



The arrowhead was authorized as the official National Park Service emblem by the Secretary of the Interior on July 20, 1951. The sequoia tree and bison represent vegetation and wildlife, the mountains and water represent scenic and recreational values, and the arrowhead represents historical and archeological values.

Introduction

Every unit of the national park system will have a foundational document to provide basic guidance for planning and management decisions—a foundation for planning and management. The core components of a foundation document include a brief description of the park as well as the park’s purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, other important resources and values, and interpretive themes. The foundation document also includes special mandates and administrative commitments, an assessment of planning and data needs that identifies planning issues, planning products to be developed, and the associated studies and data required for park planning. Along with the core components, the assessment provides a focus for park planning activities and establishes a baseline from which planning documents are developed.

A primary benefit of developing a foundation document is the opportunity to integrate and coordinate all kinds and levels of planning from a single, shared understanding of what is most important about the park. The process of developing a foundation document begins with gathering and integrating information about the park. Next, this information is refined and focused to determine what the most important attributes of the park are. The process of preparing a foundation document aids park managers, staff, and the public in identifying and clearly stating in one document the essential information that is necessary for park management to consider when determining future planning efforts, outlining key planning issues, and protecting resources and values that are integral to park purpose and identity.

While not included in this document, a park atlas is also part of a foundation project. The atlas is a series of maps compiled from available geographic information system (GIS) data on natural and cultural resources, visitor use patterns, facilities, and other topics. It serves as a GIS-based support tool for planning and park operations. The atlas is published as a (hard copy) paper product and as geospatial data for use in a web mapping environment. The park atlas for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park can be accessed online at: <http://insideparkatlas.nps.gov/>.



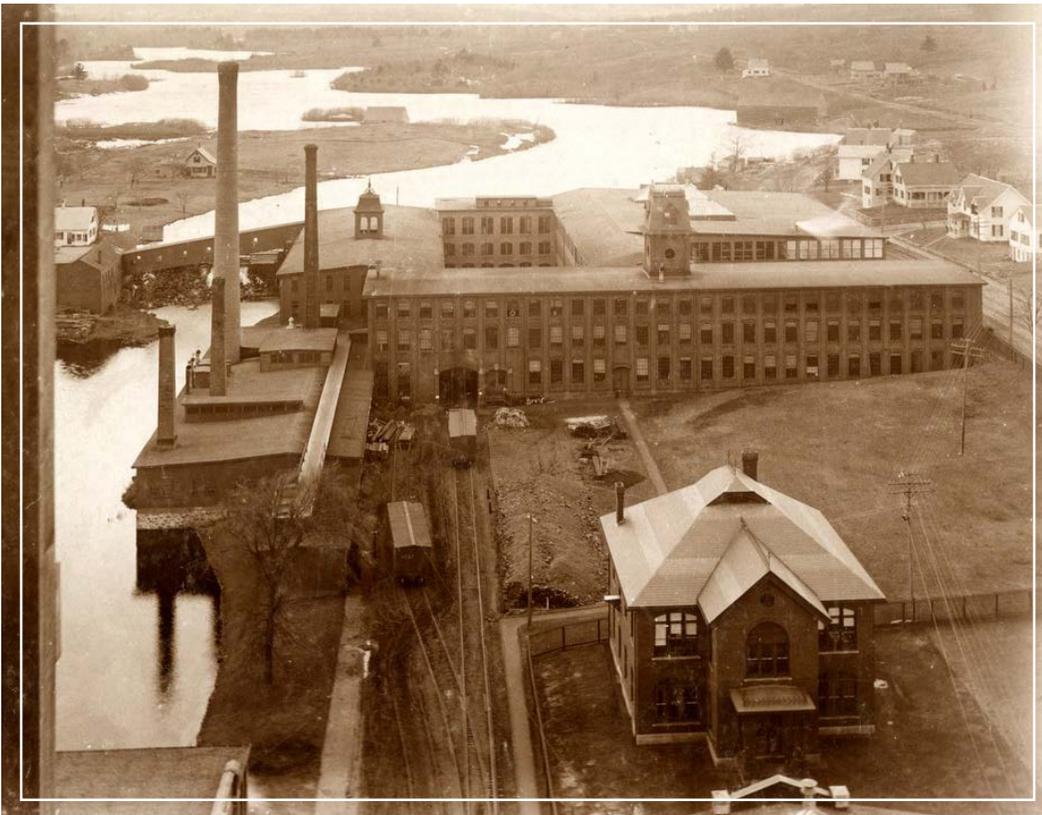
Part 1: Core Components

The core components of a foundation document include a brief description of the park, park purpose, significance statements, fundamental resources and values, other important resources and values, and interpretive themes. These components are core because they typically do not change over time. Core components are expected to be used in future planning and management efforts.

Brief Description of the Park

The Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park was established by Congress on December 19, 2014. The creation of the new national historical park followed the designation of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor in 1986. The park was created to help preserve, protect, and interpret nationally significant resources that exemplify the industrial heritage of the larger Blackstone River Valley. The national heritage corridor provides a broad context that is critical to understanding the region and its place in history. The new national historical park, with multiple partners, preserves resources and tells stories related to the birth of industry in America.

The Blackstone River Valley of Massachusetts and Rhode Island is significant as the first heavily industrialized region in the United States. In 1790, the forces of capital, ingenuity, mechanical know-how, skilled labor, and the power of the Blackstone River came together at Pawtucket, Rhode Island, when Samuel Slater successfully recreated the water-powered cotton-spinning machines he had worked on in England. The development of Slater Mill triggered a wave of industrialization and its significance is best viewed not just as the site of a single successful mechanical experiment, but as the event that sparked the transformation of the entire Blackstone River Valley into an industrialized landscape.





The story of the Blackstone River Valley began not in 1790, but thousands of years before when the Native Americans of the Nipmuc, Narragansett, and Wampanoag tribes settled there. They used the Blackstone River as a source of transportation as well as for fishing and drinking water. Their life was changed forever by the arrival of the valley’s first English settler, the Reverend William Blackstone, who arrived in what is now Cumberland, Rhode Island, in 1635. After 40 years of expansion, the English solidified their control over the region following their defeat of the three local Native American tribes during King Philip’s War in 1675–1676.

As the towns of the Blackstone River Valley recovered from the devastation of the war, they began to take greater advantage of the waterpower opportunities of the Blackstone River and its tributaries. Joseph Jenks, Jr. first settled Pawtucket in 1671 using the power of the falls to run an iron forge destroyed in the war. He rebuilt and established a small ironworking village there. By 1790, there were many skilled ironworkers in Pawtucket making a variety of tools and machinery, including David Wilkinson and his family. Those skilled mechanics played a critical role in helping Samuel Slater recreate the machines he had worked with in England.

A generation of machine builders trained at Slater-owned mills before going on to start their own textile mills. The constant tinkering by a variety of craftsmen led to a boom of innovation in the early decades of the 19th century and the origins of a tool and machine industry in the Blackstone River Valley. The Draper Corporation, making looms in Hopedale, Massachusetts, and the Whitin Machine Works, making carders and spinners in Whitinsville, Massachusetts, were two of the largest textile machinery producers in America. The innovations developed there went beyond 19th century textile-related industries and well into the 21st century, as mills across the Blackstone River Valley produced a diversity of items from barbed wire and monkey wrenches to steam engines and Mr. Potato Head.

Industrialization in the Blackstone River Valley goes beyond mills and machines. Those new mills needed workers and the Blackstone River Valley had a source of labor readily available. By the 1790s, most of the available farmland in southern New England had been settled and the existing family farms were too small to be subdivided any further. As the family farm was usually inherited by the eldest son, their younger siblings could choose to move west to find a new homestead, or to work in a mill for steady wages. Many chose mill life and the first generation of mill workers were recruited right off the farm. The change in lifestyle for these new mill workers was dramatic. Once in the mill, the rhythm of nature was replaced by the tolling of the factory bell. Time became a commodity, to be strictly measured and sold at a set rate. The artisan's skill or farmer's produce no longer had as much value as the sheer amount of time a worker was able to stand beside their tireless machine. They also had to adapt to the sudden shift from the quiet countryside to the hectic life in a mill village.

The operations of these new mill villages were based upon what became known as the Rhode Island System of Manufacture. The Slater family established the community of Slatersville in 1807, 15 miles northwest of Slater Mill, which became the blueprint for the later Rhode Island System mill villages. In general, these were small villages built by a single owner or limited partners. The mills themselves were small; a factor of both the limited power provided by the Blackstone River, as well as the amount of capital available for investment. Agents recruited entire families to work in the mills, with men, women, and children as young as six making up the workforce. The company provided housing for the workers as well as a company store for their needs. A form of corporate paternalism developed, as the mill owners provided what they thought their workers needed: housing, clothing, food, recreation, and a minimal education. Many workers yearned to have more control over their lives, to have more choices available to them, which led to the creation of some of the earliest labor unions.

As new and larger mills were constructed through the 1800s, new sources of labor were needed. Among the first new workers were Irish immigrants, many of whom had come to the area to help construct the Blackstone Canal. During the 1860s and 1870s, mill owners began to recruit French Canadians to leave their farms in Quebec, and more workers followed them from nations like Poland, Sweden, and Portugal. The arrival of these workers changed the face of the Blackstone River Valley in many ways. New languages filled the air as different cultures and traditions were added to the story of the valley.

The Industrial Revolution necessitated a transportation revolution. The earliest roads were the ancient Native American trails, which colonial settlers made wider and smoothed out to allow wagon travel. These were followed by turnpikes specifically built to connect population centers. Turnpikes and overland travel were surpassed by transportation via waterways with the opening of the Blackstone Canal in 1828, which enabled water access from Worcester to the port of Providence and beyond. The opening of the canal spurred a boom in mill construction along its route. The canal barges brought raw materials to the mills, and carried their finished goods to market. Farm goods and other items such as lumber and limestone also made their way downstream. The barges also carried supplies for the mill workers such as grain, flour, liquor, molasses, and salt.

The canal, though an improvement, was still flawed, and it was not until the coming of railroads that the Industrial Revolution exploded throughout the Blackstone River Valley and America. By 1835, rails connected Boston to both Worcester and Providence, and in 1847 the Providence and Worcester Railroad linked the towns of the Blackstone River Valley.



The cheaper, faster, and more reliable rail service, combined with the advances in steam power, led to the final era of mill development along the Blackstone River from the 1860s through 1910. New brick mills and villages popped up all over the valley, creating an integrated industrial network that spread from Providence to Worcester.

Just as Pawtucket was the confluence of several critical elements that began the Industrial Revolution in 1790, the Blackstone River Valley remained a place where people and ideas came together to spark innovations and ideas across many fields of thought. The Town of Hopedale, Massachusetts began as a religious commune looking to create an ideal community where the issues of abolition and pacifism were hotly debated. Ashton Village in Rhode Island opened as a cotton mill in 1867 and 100 years later produced the fiberglass cloth used to make the spacesuits for the Apollo moon missions.

The Blackstone River Valley remains a living landscape where these stories and resources can still be explored. Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park focuses on six distinct nodes that have been identified as the original and most highly developed expression of this larger, valley-wide industrial system. The historic sites and districts listed in the park's enabling legislation include the Old Slater Mill National Historic Landmark District, Blackstone River State Park, Slatersville Historic District, Ashton Historic District, Whitinsville Historic District, Hopedale Village Historic District, the Blackstone River and its tributaries, and the Blackstone Canal.

Consistent with the requirements of the enabling legislation, the National Park Service is in the process of determining the manageable park unit that will define the park boundary. The National Park Service will not own or manage the majority of the resources within the park boundary, but will instead work in partnership with others to provide for resource preservation and visitor enjoyment. The success of these partnerships is critical to the park's ability to meet its legislated purposes.

The park supports public programming and maintenance activities at partner-owned sites through formal agreements. The park is managed by an NPS superintendent who is also responsible for Roger Williams National Memorial in Providence, Rhode Island.



Park Purpose

The purpose statement identifies the specific reason(s) for establishment of a particular park. The purpose statement for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park was drafted through a careful analysis of its enabling legislation and the legislative history that influenced its development. The park was established when the enabling legislation adopted by Congress was signed into law on December 19, 2014 (see appendix A for enabling legislation). The purpose statement lays the foundation for understanding what is most important about the park.

The purpose of BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK is to preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant historical and cultural resources of the Blackstone River Valley including lands, waterways, and structures that exemplify our nation's industrial heritage, and to support and enhance the network of partners in the protection, management, and operation of related resources and facilities throughout the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.



Park Significance

Significance statements express why a park's resources and values are important enough to merit designation as a unit of the national park system. These statements are linked to the purpose of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Statements of significance describe the distinctive nature of the park and why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. They focus on the most important resources and values that will assist in park planning and management.

The following significance statements have been identified for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. (Please note that the sequence of the statements does not reflect the level of significance.)

- The historic structures and waterways woven throughout the urban and rural landscape of the Blackstone River Valley, particularly the survival of representative elements of entire 18th- and 19th-century production systems, are an outstanding example of an industrialized landscape developed over a period of 150 years. The national historical park is part of a larger cultural landscape that makes up Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. The corridor, approximately 600 square miles, provides the context in which the story of the American Industrial Revolution is told.
- Old Slater Mill, the first successful water-powered cotton-spinning mill in the United States, together with the hundreds of 19th-century factories and their associated mill villages located throughout the Blackstone River Valley, collectively illustrate the influence of Samuel Slater and the creation and evolution of the Rhode Island System of Manufacture, a dynamic force in American industrial history from 1790 to 1950.
- Slatersville was the first planned mill village in the United States and the first example of a Rhode Island System of Manufacture village. Its component parts and spatial organization, including housing, civic amenities, and commercial resources clustered around a factory and a power canal system, were duplicated throughout the Blackstone River Valley, and served as a model for industrial development across the nation. The Rhode Island System of Manufacture focused on hiring entire families to work in the mills, and usually had a single owner, or a small group of owners, as opposed to the corporate ownership and mill girl boarding house style of the Waltham System.
- The Blackstone River Valley has served as an incubator for technological innovation from the time Samuel Slater arrived in Rhode Island with ideas for a textile factory through today. Inventions designed and created within the Blackstone River Valley include the screw-cutting lathes of the Wilkinson machine shops in Pawtucket, the cotton-processing equipment developed by the Whitin Machine Works, and the Draper looms made in Hopedale used in textile mills across the nation. These and many other innovations from workshops across the Blackstone River Valley helped drive the industrialization of America.
- The Blackstone River and its tributaries powered mills and factories launching the industrialization of the nation. The Blackstone River Valley, with waterpower systems including dams, reservoirs, and power canals, became a "managed river network." These engineered resources that powered the mills continue to be one of the most visible elements of the Blackstone River Valley's industrial landscape, and now are part of the region's recreational resources.

Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values (FRVs) are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. Fundamental resources and values are closely related to a park's legislative purpose and are more specific than significance statements.

Fundamental resources and values help focus planning and management efforts on what is truly significant about the park. One of the most important responsibilities of NPS managers is to ensure the conservation and public enjoyment of those qualities that are essential (fundamental) to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. If fundamental resources and values are allowed to deteriorate, the park purpose and/or significance could be jeopardized.

The following fundamental resources and values have been identified for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

- **Old Slater Mill Complex.** In 1790, Samuel Slater, recently arrived from England, worked with local machinists and investors to replicate the Arkwright System from England at a site along the Blackstone River in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, establishing America's first successful water-powered cotton-spinning mill. Slater began his operation in a former wool fulling mill, where it remained for three years. In 1793, he constructed a new mill specifically for spinning cotton thread that is today considered to be America's earliest factory. Defining features of the Old Slater Mill Complex include: Slater Mill, Wilkinson Mill, Sylvanus Brown House, waterpower system, the smells and sounds of a working mill, machinery, and the collections. Slater Mill was designated a national historic landmark in 1966.



- **Mill Villages.** Mill villages in the Blackstone River Valley represent the characteristic physical expression of rural industrialization known as the Rhode Island System of Manufacture. Initially modeled on English precedents, the mill villages were centered on a mill and its infrastructure with family worker housing, commercial enterprises, and community amenities provided by the mill’s owners. Defining features of the mill villages include: the factory complex, housing for workers and managers, civic structures such as churches, schools, recreation facilities for workers, and stores. They also included waterpower elements such as the mill pond, waterpower canals, and water flow control gates. The villages also often featured company farms and were integrated with local farming communities. The Rhode Island System hired entire families to work in the mills, and usually had a single owner, or a small group of owners, as opposed to the corporate ownership and mill girl boarding house style of the Waltham System. The following mill villages are included within the anticipated park boundary “because of their particularly high level of physical integrity and completeness and for the outstanding visitor experience potential that they offer in terms of opportunities for education, interpretation, and further study.”
 - Slatersville (North Smithfield, RI, 1807)
 - Whitinsville (Northbridge, MA, 1809)
 - Hopedale (Hopedale, MA, 1841)
 - Ashton (Cumberland, RI, 1867)
- **Waterpower System.** Stretching from Providence, Rhode Island, north to Worcester, Massachusetts, the 46-mile-long Blackstone River forms the Valley’s “spine.” The Blackstone River supported the majority of the region’s water-powered mills, while its many tributaries—including the Branch, Mumford, and Mill Rivers—enabled industrialization to spread throughout the watershed. Defining features of the waterpower system include the Blackstone River, its major tributaries, impoundments, and waterpower structures.
- **Transportation Systems.** The young republic’s industrial development through the early Rhode Island System of Manufacture’s innovations would not have spread regionally or nationally without the interconnected transportation networks built along the Blackstone River including the road system, Blackstone Canal, railroad corridors, and related buildings and bridges. These transportation systems allowed for the expansion of industry across the region. This regionally scaled cultural landscape describes the evolution of the Blackstone River Valley’s development and nationally significant contributions to American industry and commerce.
- **Partnerships.** The National Park Service will not own and manage everything within the park boundary but will work in partnership to provide for the preservation of resources as well as visitor experience. Partners include the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, Inc., Old Slater Mill Association, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, mill village host communities, and non-profit organizations that own or manage thematically related historical, cultural, or natural resource sites.
- **Innovation and Enterprise.** Technological concepts brought from England to America by Samuel Slater initiated the American Industrial Revolution. Inventors such as David Wilkinson and John C. Whitin created new machinery throughout the Blackstone River Valley. Entrepreneurs such as Brown & Ives and Almy, Brown, & Slater, had the foresight to build a network of mills connected by a transportation system and created a demand for new machine-made textiles and products.

Other Important Resources and Values

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park contains other resources and values that are not fundamental to the purpose of the park and may be unrelated to its significance, but are important to consider in planning processes. These are referred to as “other important resources and values” (OIRV). These resources and values have been selected because they are important in the operation and management of the park and warrant special consideration in park planning.

The following other important resources and values have been identified for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

- **Recreational Opportunities.** The Blackstone River Valley has long provided a multitude of recreational opportunities to residents and visitors. The scenic Blackstone River Bikeway travels for 17 miles along its namesake river and historic towpaths through Rhode Island and Massachusetts, with the ultimate goal of connecting Providence, Rhode Island, with Worcester, Massachusetts. The story of the Blackstone River, its tributaries, and canal can be told from many vantage points, but perhaps the best way to experience its history and beauty is on the waterways via canoe, kayak, or excursion boat. The river and canal segments form a comprehensive and sometimes seamless exploration of the valley and its industrial heritage where visitors can discover the dams, canal locks, bridges, and other structures that tell the story of “America’s Hardest Working River.”
- **John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.** The resources of the national heritage corridor provide context for the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park located within the larger landscape. The overall context defines the relationship of the river to the mills to the mill villages to the farms with the Blackstone River as the spine connecting them all.

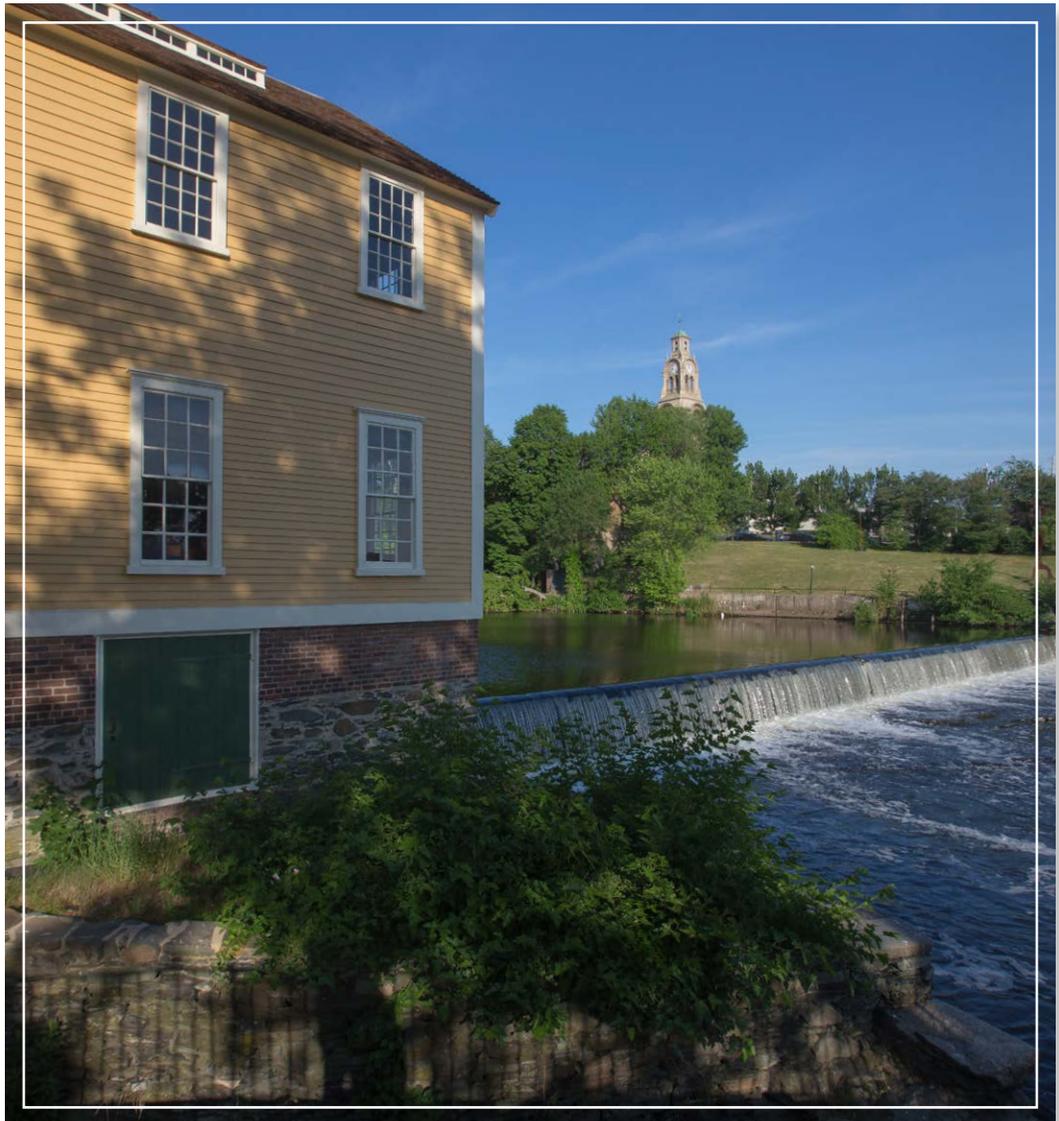


Related Resources

Related resources are not owned by the park. They may be part of the broader context or setting in which park resources exist, represent a thematic connection that would enhance the experience of visitors, or have close associations with park fundamental resources and the purpose of the park. The related resource represents a connection with the park that often reflects an area of mutual benefit or interest, and collaboration, between the park and owner/stakeholder.

The following related resources have been identified for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

- Thematically related units of the national park system include Lowell National Historical Park in Massachusetts and Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park in New Jersey.
- Archives and objects related to Samuel Slater, the Old Slater Mill, and early American industrialization in the collections of the Baker Library at Harvard University, the Smithsonian Institution, the Rhode Island Historical Society, American Antiquarian Society, the Worcester Historical Museum, Brown University, Massachusetts Historical Society, and many local historical societies.



Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from, and should reflect, park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all park significance statements and fundamental and other important resources and values.

Interpretive themes are an organizational tool that reveal and clarify meaning, concepts, contexts, and values represented by park resources. Sound themes are accurate and reflect current scholarship and science. They encourage exploration of the context in which events or natural processes occurred and the effects of those events and processes. Interpretive themes go beyond a mere description of the event or process to foster multiple opportunities to experience and consider the park and its resources. These themes help explain why a park story is relevant to people who may otherwise be unaware of connections they have to an event, time, or place associated with the park.

The following interpretive themes have been identified for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

- **Developing the American Economy.** Samuel Slater provided the catalyst for the first successful water-powered cotton-spinning mill in America. This led to the creation of the Rhode Island System of Manufacture—the first successful application of the factory system in the United States that spurred countless imitators and technological advances as industry spread nationwide. The mill villages of the Blackstone River Valley were a critical element of America’s cotton economy and continued to work through the mid-20th century.
- **Transforming the Environment.** The rise of industry completely transformed the Blackstone River Valley, creating an engineered landscape leveraging the existing features that remain evident today including the mill villages, farms, transportation systems, and the waterways that were harnessed into one integrated industrial network. Today, residents work to restore water quality in the Blackstone River watershed, repurpose historic structures, and take advantage of the recreational opportunities of the region.
- **Expressing Cultural Values.** The vast increase in demand for labor spurred by industrialization led to an influx of immigrants to the region. The diversity of these communities, along with the rise of organized labor and evolving political and socio-economic dynamics, made the Blackstone River Valley a laboratory for a number of significant social issues including abolition and women’s rights that are still relevant today.



Part 2: Dynamic Components

The dynamic components of a foundation document include special mandates and administrative commitments and an assessment of planning and data needs. These components are dynamic because they will change over time. New special mandates can be established and new administrative commitments made. As conditions and trends of fundamental and other important resources and values change over time, the analysis of planning and data needs will need to be revisited and revised, along with key issues. Therefore, this part of the foundation document will be updated accordingly.

Special Mandates and Administrative Commitments

Many management decisions for a park unit are directed or influenced by special mandates and administrative commitments with other federal agencies, state and local governments, utility companies, partnering organizations, and other entities. Special mandates are requirements specific to a park that must be fulfilled. Mandates can be expressed in enabling legislation, in separate legislation following the establishment of the park, or through a judicial process. They may expand on park purpose or introduce elements unrelated to the purpose of the park. Administrative commitments are, in general, agreements that have been reached through formal, documented processes, often through memorandums of agreement. Examples include easements, rights-of-way, arrangements for emergency service responses, etc. Special mandates and administrative commitments can support, in many cases, a network of partnerships that help fulfill the objectives of the park and facilitate working relationships with other organizations. They are an essential component of managing and planning for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park.

Special Mandates

The park's enabling legislation identifies the following mandates:

- Section (c)(4)(B) GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN: “the plan shall consider ways to use preexisting or planned visitor facilities and recreational opportunities developed in the National Heritage Corridor, including – (I) the Blackstone Valley Visitor Center, Pawtucket, Rhode Island; (II) the Captain Wilbur Kelly House, Blackstone River State Park, Lincoln, Rhode Island; (III) the Museum of Work and Culture, Woonsocket, Rhode Island; (IV) the River Bend Farm/Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, Uxbridge, Massachusetts; (V) the Worcester Blackstone Visitor Center, located at the former Washburn & Moen wire mill, Worcester, Massachusetts; (VI) the Route 295 Visitor Center adjacent to Blackstone River State Park; and (VII) the Blackstone River Bikeway.”
- Section (5) (B) MEMORIAL that “The Secretary shall display a memorial at an appropriate location in the Park that recognizes the role of John H. Chafee in preserving the resources of the Blackstone River Valley for the people of the United States.”

Administrative Commitments

For more information about the existing administrative commitments for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, please see appendix B.

Assessment of Planning and Data Needs

Once the core components of part 1 of the foundation document have been identified, it is important to gather and evaluate existing information about the park's fundamental and other important resources and values, and develop a full assessment of the park's planning and data needs. The assessment of planning and data needs section presents planning issues, the planning projects that will address these issues, and the associated information requirements for planning, such as resource inventories and data collection, including GIS data.

There are three sections in the assessment of planning and data needs:

1. analysis of fundamental and other important resources and values
2. identification of key issues and associated planning and data needs
3. identification of planning and data needs (including spatial mapping activities or GIS maps)

At the time this document was developed, the park unit was newly established and the fundamental resources and values, other important resources and values, and planning and data needs had not been analyzed. These sections will be revisited in a future update.

Identification of Key Issues and Associated Planning and Data Needs

This section considers key issues to be addressed in planning and management and therefore takes a broader view over the primary focus of part 1. A key issue focuses on a question that is important for a park. Key issues often raise questions regarding park purpose and significance and fundamental and other important resources and values. For example, a key issue may pertain to the potential for a fundamental or other important resource or value in a park to be detrimentally affected by discretionary management decisions. A key issue may also address crucial questions that are not directly related to purpose and significance, but which still affect them indirectly. Usually, a key issue is one that a future planning effort or data collection needs to address and requires a decision by NPS managers.

The following are key issues for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park and the associated planning and data needs to address them:

- **Develop a Parkwide Identity.** Though the National Park Service has had a presence in the Blackstone River Valley for more than 30 years through the work of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, the national historical park is relatively new. As such, there is a clear need to establish a distinct identity for the new national park unit. The new national historical park boundary will span two states along the length of the Blackstone River, its tributaries, and the Blackstone Canal, and encompass many different sites managed by numerous partners, offering a variety of educational and recreational opportunities. Creating a recognizable identity for the new national park will increase awareness for the new park and its nationally significant resources and will provide distinct access points for visitors.
 - *Associated high priority planning and data needs:* Communications plan, visitor use study, visitor experience plan, long-range interpretive plan, administrative history

- **Partnership Coordination.** While the National Park Service has had a presence in the Blackstone River Valley for many decades, the agency’s previous role and associated legislation and regulation are distinct from the role, legislation, and regulations guiding a national park. As a new unit of the national park system, Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is at the beginning stages of establishing partnerships, defining and developing visitor services, and creating interpretive media for the new park unit, building on the decades of prior interaction. Because the National Park Service will have a limited ownership and management stake in significant resources, active collaboration between the park, local residents and businesses, and partners is fundamental to the future success of the park. The Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park enabling legislation directs the park to “support and enhance the network of partners in the protection, improvement, management and operation of related resources and facilities throughout the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.”

Clear coordination strategies between the park and its partners are needed in order to nimbly address emerging issues and opportunities while efficiently leveraging the resources and strengths of partner organizations. Partnership parks function at their best when all partners are coordinated and oriented toward the core mission of the park, and when there is minimal duplication of efforts or competition among organizations. Currently, the park is challenged to create a partnership environment in which all partners understand how they fit into the overall management picture, are secure and feel valued in their role, and benefit from the efforts of their fellow partner organizations in the realization of their own missions.

- *Associated high priority planning and data needs:* Park partner action strategy

- **Define the Manageable Unit.** The establishing legislation for the park outlines criteria to define the manageable unit of the park, and the National Park Service will continue to work toward defining the manageable park unit. This work will include completing related administrative tasks such as easements, land transfers, and cooperative agreements. The National Park Service is also taking steps to complete the necessary elements to implement a new park, including working with partners to establish a park administrative headquarters within the anticipated park boundary.

- *Associated high priority planning and data needs:* General management plan, staffing plan

- **Visitor Experience and Education.** Expectations in new park units run high—especially expectations for public services and visitor experiences. As a partnership park, Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park works with partners and their existing programming and services, then identifies areas where the National Park Service can add value to and expand upon those experiences. Planning for these services and experiences will allow the park to make decisions and set priorities that help to strategically apportion limited NPS resources to their best advantage to do the most good in service to the public.

- *Associated high priority planning and data needs:* Visitor use study, visitor experience plan, park partner action strategy, long-range interpretive plan

- **Develop Park Resources to Meet Operational Needs.** The establishment of a new national park requires the thoughtful consideration of strategically investing limited resources in the development of the new park. This includes park staffing, administrative and visitor facilities, and visitor services. While the park has benefited both from the 30-plus-year presence of the National Park Service in the Blackstone River Valley, and its location near to the existing Roger Williams National Memorial and New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, work remains to be done to stand up this new park as an independent unit of the national park system.

The park is in the process of hiring a superintendent who will manage both the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park and the Roger Williams National Memorial. The park is also working with partners at the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management to create administrative space for NPS park staff at the state's existing facility on Interstate 295. As the park moves forward with establishing the manageable unit and park boundary, additional administrative and operational needs will be identified.

- *Associated high priority planning and data needs:* General management plan, staffing plan, cultural resource stewardship assessment, natural resource stewardship assessment, archeological overview and assessment, ethnographic overview and assessment



Part 3: Contributors

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park Staff

Chuck Arning, Park Ranger (Retired)
Joshua Bell, Park Ranger (Seasonal)
Joshua Boles, Chief of Interpretation
Tammy Boyd, Park Ranger (Seasonal)
Janine da Silva, Cultural Resource Specialist
Talya Housman, Intern (Former), Roger Williams National Memorial
Meghan Kish, Superintendent (Former)

Kevin Klyberg, Park Ranger
Dan McCarthy, Facilities Manager (Former)
John McNiff, Park Ranger, Roger Williams National Memorial
Mark Mello, Park Guide
Aneshia Savino, Administrative Assistant
Emma Schlam, Americorps VISTA Intern (Former)
Jennifer Smith, Superintendent (Acting)

NPS Region 1 Staff

Joanne Blacoe, Interpretive Planner, Region 1
William Eric Breitzkreutz, Chief, Historic Structure Research and Documentation, Region 1
David Goldstein, Tribal and Cultural Affairs, Region 1

Amanda Jones, Community Planner, Region 1
Lisa Kolakowsky Smith, Community Planner and Project Manager, Region 1
Robert Page, Director, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Region 1

Other NPS Staff

Pam Holtman, Quality Assurance Coordinator, WASO Park Planning and Special Studies
John Paul Jones, Visual Information Specialist, Denver Service Center – Planning Division

Nancy Shock, Foundation Coordinator, Denver Service Center – Planning Division
Phillip Viray, Publications Chief, Denver Service Center – Planning Division
Laura Watt, Contract Editor, Denver Service Center – Planning Division

Partners

R. Gary Bechtholdt, Planner, Town of Northbridge, Massachusetts
Sue Ciaramicoli, Chair, Local Historic District Study Committee, Town of Hopedale, Massachusetts
Megan DiPrete, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
Jeff Emidy, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, State of Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission
Tom Kravitz, Town Planner, North Smithfield, Rhode Island
Devon Kurtz, Executive Director, John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, Inc.

Paul Loether, State Historic Preservation Officer, State of Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission
Ted Sanderson, State Historic Preservation Officer (Retired), State of Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission
Jonathan Stevens, Planner, Town of Cumberland, Rhode Island
Lori Urso, Executive Director, Old Slater Mill Association
Harry Whitin, Chair, Board of Directors (Former), John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, Inc.

Appendixes

Appendix A: Enabling Legislation for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

One Hundred Thirteenth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Friday,
the third day of January, two thousand and fourteen*

An Act

To authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

SEC. 3031. BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to establish the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park—

- (1) to help preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant resources that exemplify the industrial heritage of the Blackstone River Valley for the benefit and inspiration of future generations;
- (2) to support the preservation, protection, and interpretation of the urban, rural, and agricultural landscape features (including the Blackstone River and Canal) of the region that provide an overarching context for the industrial heritage of the Blackstone River Valley;
- (3) to educate the public about—
 - (A) the nationally significant sites and districts that convey the industrial history of the Blackstone River Valley; and
 - (B) the significance of the Blackstone River Valley to the past and present of the United States; and
- (4) to support and enhance the network of partners in the protection, improvement, management, and operation of related resources and facilities throughout the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

- (1) NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR.—The term “National Heritage Corridor” means the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.
- (2) PARK.—The term “Park” means the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park established by subsection (c)(1).
- (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.
- (4) STATES.—The term “States” means—
 - (A) the State of Massachusetts; and
 - (B) the State of Rhode Island.

(c) BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.—

- (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the States a unit of the National Park System, to be known as the “Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park”.
- (2) HISTORIC SITES AND DISTRICTS.—The Park shall include—
 - (A) Blackstone River State Park; and
 - (B) the following resources, as described in Management Option 3 of the study entitled “Blackstone River Valley Special Resource Study—Study Report 2011”:

- (i) Old Slater Mill National Historic Landmark District.
 - (ii) Slatersville Historic District.
 - (iii) Ashton Historic District.
 - (iv) Whitinsville Historic District.
 - (v) Hopedale Village Historic District.
 - (vi) Blackstone River and the tributaries of Blackstone River.
 - (vii) Blackstone Canal.
- (3) ACQUISITION OF LAND; PARK BOUNDARY.—
- (A) LAND ACQUISITION.—
 - (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may acquire land or interests in land that are considered contributing historic resources in the historic sites and districts described in paragraph (2)(B) for inclusion in the Park boundary by donation, purchase from a willing seller with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange.
 - (ii) NO CONDEMNATION.—No land or interest in land may be acquired for the Park by condemnation.
 - (B) PARK BOUNDARY.—On a determination by the Secretary that a sufficient quantity of land or interests in land has been acquired to constitute a manageable park unit, the Secretary shall establish a boundary for the Park by publishing a boundary map in the Federal Register.
 - (C) OTHER RESOURCES.—The Secretary may include in the Park boundary any resources that are the subject of an agreement with the States or a subdivision of the States entered into under paragraph (4)(D).
 - (D) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.—On the acquisition of additional land or interests in land under subparagraph (A), or on entering an agreement under subparagraph (C), the boundary of the Park shall be adjusted to reflect the acquisition or agreement by publishing a Park boundary map in the Federal Register.
 - (E) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The maps referred to in this paragraph shall be available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.
 - (F) ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES.—The Secretary may acquire not more than 10 acres in Woonsocket, Rhode Island for the development of administrative, curatorial, maintenance, or visitor facilities for the Park.
 - (G) LIMITATION.—Land owned by the States or a political subdivision of the States may be acquired under this paragraph only by donation.
- (4) ADMINISTRATION.—
- (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer land within the boundary of the Park in accordance with—
 - (i) this subsection; and
 - (ii) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including—
 - (I) the National Park Service Organic Act (16 U.S.C. 1 et seq.); and
 - (II) the Act of August 21, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.).
 - (B) GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN.—
 - (i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this subsection, the Secretary shall prepare a general management plan for the Park—
 - (I) in consultation with the States and other interested parties; and
 - (II) in accordance with section 12(b) of the National Park System General Authorities Act (16 U.S.C. 1a–7(b)).
 - (ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall consider ways to use preexisting or planned visitor facilities and recreational opportunities developed in the National Heritage Corridor, including—
 - (I) the Blackstone Valley Visitor Center, Pawtucket, Rhode Island;
 - (II) the Captain Wilbur Kelly House, Blackstone River State Park, Lincoln, Rhode Island;
 - (III) the Museum of Work and Culture, Woonsocket, Rhode Island;
 - (IV) the River Bend Farm/Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, Uxbridge, Massachusetts;
 - (V) the Worcester Blackstone Visitor Center, located at the former Washburn & Moen wire mill facility, Worcester, Massachusetts;
 - (VI) the Route 295 Visitor Center adjacent to Blackstone River State Park; and
 - (VII) the Blackstone River Bikeway.
 - (C) RELATED SITES.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance, visitor services, interpretive tours, and educational programs to sites and resources in the National Heritage Corridor that are located outside the boundary of the Park and associated with the purposes for which the Park is established.

(D) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—To further the purposes of this subsection and notwithstanding chapter 63 of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with the States, political subdivisions of the States, nonprofit organizations (including the local coordinating entity for the National Heritage Corridor), and other interested parties—

(I) to provide technical assistance, interpretation, and educational programs in the historic sites and districts described in paragraph (2)(B); and

(II) subject to the availability of appropriations and clauses (ii) and (iii), to provide not more than 50 percent of the cost of any natural, historic, or cultural resource protection project in the Park that is consistent with the general management plan prepared under subparagraph (B).

(ii) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of the receipt of funds under clause (i)(II), the Secretary shall require that any Federal funds made available under a cooperative agreement entered into under this paragraph are to be matched on a 1-to-1 basis by non-Federal funds.

(iii) REIMBURSEMENT.—Any payment made by the Secretary under clause (i)(ii) shall be subject to an agreement that the conversion, use, or disposal of the project for purposes that are inconsistent with the purposes of this subsection, as determined by the Secretary, shall result in a right of the United States to reimbursement of the greater of—

(I) the amount provided by the Secretary to the project under clause (i)(II); or

(II) an amount equal to the increase in the value of the project that is attributable to the funds, as determined by the Secretary at the time of the conversion, use, or disposal.

(iv) PUBLIC ACCESS.—Any cooperative agreement entered into under this subparagraph shall provide for reasonable public access to the resources covered by the cooperative agreement.

(5) DEDICATION; MEMORIAL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Congress dedicates the Park to John H. Chafee, the former United States Senator from Rhode Island, in recognition of—

(i) the role of John H. Chafee in the preservation of the resources of the Blackstone River Valley and the heritage corridor that bears the name of John H. Chafee; and

(ii) the decades of the service of John H. Chafee to the people of Rhode Island and the United States.

(B) MEMORIAL.—The Secretary shall display a memorial at an appropriate location in the Park that recognizes the role of John H. Chafee in preserving the resources of the Blackstone River Valley for the people of the United States.

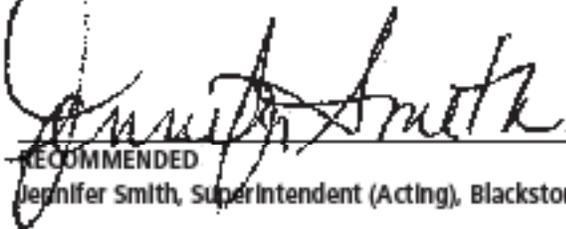
Appendix B: Inventory of Administrative Commitments

Name	Agreement Type	Start Date	Expiration Date	Stakeholders	Purpose
Slater Mill Deed	Fee Simple Deed	TBD	N/A	Old Slater Mill Association / Friends of Old Slater Mill	Codifies land transfer of Slater Mill campus from Old Slater Mill Association to the United States of America.
State of Rhode Island easement re: Blackstone River State Park	Easement	TBD	N/A	State of Rhode Island / Department of Environmental Management	Codifies joint land ownership of Blackstone River State Park between the United States of America and the State of Rhode Island.
State of Rhode Island / Department of Environmental Management	Cooperative Management Agreement	3/13/17	3/13/22	State of Rhode Island / Department of Environmental Management	Provides a mechanism for the parties to share resources as needed to fund projects related to the preservation and interpretation of Blackstone River Valley resources.
State of Rhode Island / Department of Environmental Management	Cooperative Management Agreement Amendment	10/19/18	3/13/22	State of Rhode Island / Department of Environmental Management	Codifies agreement re: NPS occupancy of a portion of the Interstate 295 visitor center to serve as the headquarters for Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park.
Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc.	Cooperative Agreement	4/24/15	9/30/20	Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc.	Allows for the two entities to enter into task agreements that support projects where the NPS has substantial involvement; allows for the transfer of funds.
North Smithfield, RI	Cooperative Agreement	10/13/16	9/30/21	North Smithfield, RI	Allows for the two entities to enter into task agreements that support projects where the NPS has substantial involvement; allows transfer of funds.
Cumberland, RI	General Agreement	10/11/18	10/11/23	Cumberland, RI	Codifies relationship between the two entities; does not allow for the transfer of funds.
Hopedale, MA	General Agreement	8/7/19	8/7/24	Hopedale, MA	Codifies relationship between the two entities; does not allow for the transfer of funds.
North Smithfield, RI	General Agreement	3/20/18	3/20/23	North Smithfield, RI	Codifies relationship between the two entities; does not allow for the transfer of funds.
Northbridge, MA	General Agreement	4/11/18	4/11/23	Northbridge, MA	Codifies relationship between the two entities; does not allow for the transfer of funds.

Region 1 Foundation Document Recommendation Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

February 2020

This Foundation Document has been prepared as a collaborative effort between park and regional staff and is recommended for approval by the Regional Director.


RECOMMENDED
Jennifer Smith, Superintendent (Acting), Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

2/25/2020

Date


APPROVED
Gay Vletzke, Regional Director, Region 1

26 February 2020

Date



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

BLRV 290/167294
March 2020

Foundation Document • Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

