

V. BLUEWAY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The blueway concept, like the greenway concept, can be used as an innovative framework for local and regional planning and community development. With their roots in open space preservation and natural resource protection, the concepts have given hundreds of communities the opportunity to create multi-purpose public spaces that provide communities with a unique array of benefits. Blueways and greenways are adaptive planning frameworks in that they can easily be adjusted to meet the needs of their users as demand necessitates. Whether the primary goal is recreation, natural resource protection, historic preservation or cultural interpretation – or a combination of each – the frameworks can be used to plan for the long-term best use of designated land and water resources.

As communities begin to recognize local opportunities for blueway development, they will need to carefully consider a variety of planning issues and concerns and clarify their vision and goals for those areas. Site conditions, user demand, trail maintenance, safety, and respecting the rights and privacy of adjacent property owners are some of the factors that are expanded on below.

Navigability

In New York State, if a waterway is considered to be navigable, free passage along that waterway is open to the public. The issue of what constitutes a navigable waterway has been comprehensively addressed by the paddling advocacy group American Whitewater. Their research is quoted below, taken from the AmericanWhitewater.org.

The “New York Navigability Report,” reprinted from AmericanWhitewater.org:²⁰

Summary

The New York public right of navigation allows a range of vessels, including small boats and canoes, to navigate on New York's freshwater rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and other waterways that are navigable-in-fact. To qualify as navigable-in-fact, a waterway must provide practical utility to the public as a means of transportation; ability to support recreational use is one factor New York Courts consider in their determination.

State Test of Navigability

New York courts have noted on numerous occasions that the State of New York, in connection with the public trust doctrine, maintains an easement on navigable waterways in trust for the people of the state. New York Statutory law defines “Navigable

²⁰ AmericanWhitewater.org. “New York Navigability Report.” Last viewed online April 4, 2010 at <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Wiki/access:ny?>

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waters of the state” as “all lakes, rivers, streams and waters within the boundaries of the state and not privately owned, which are navigable-in-fact or upon which vessels are operated, except all tidewaters bordering on and lying within the boundaries of Nassau and Suffolk counties.”¹⁾ “Navigable in fact” is defined as “navigable in its natural or unimproved condition, affording a channel for useful commerce of a substantial and permanent character conducted in the customary mode of trade and travel on water. A theoretical or potential navigability or one that is temporary, precarious and unprofitable is not sufficient, but to be navigable-in-fact a lake or stream must have practical usefulness to the public as a highway for transportation.”²⁾

New York Courts have interpreted the statute in a manner consistent with the traditional common law rule: in order to be navigable-in-fact, a river must provide practical utility to the public as a means of transportation. Traditionally, transportation was defined narrowly, referring to a body of water's capacity for transporting commercial goods or materials to market. However, as social and economic conditions have evolved in New York, courts have broadened their interpretation of what activities satisfy the definition of transportation.³⁾ According to the Court of Appeals in *Adirondack League Club, Inc. v. Sierra Club*, the “paramount concern is the capacity of the river to transport, whether for trade or travel.”⁴⁾

Adirondack League Club, Inc. v. Sierra Club, decided in 1998 by the New York Court of Appeals, remains the most important decision on this subject. In determining whether kayakers and canoers on the South Branch of the Moose River had trespassed on a riparian owner's property, the court held that recreational use is part of the navigability analysis. Although the Court did not make a final judgment on whether the Moose River itself was navigable, the highest court in New York did take an important step in expanding the definition of what waterways qualify as navigable-in-fact.

In *Adirondack League Club*, however, the court did not discuss how much weight should be given to recreational use within the overall navigability test. Therefore, the issue remains somewhat open to debate. Courts have generally concluded that although the ability to sustain recreational use is a relevant factor when determining navigability, it is not the only or most important factor. Capacity to support transportation remains the paramount inquiry. In 1995, a New York State appeals court found that a pond was not navigable because there was no evidence of any historical use of the pond for commercial purposes, and the evidence of small boat and canoe recreational use on the pond was insufficient “to demonstrate that the pond has any capacity or suitability for commercial transportation.”⁵⁾

Even after the *Adirondack League Club* decision, New York courts have resisted the call to classify all waterways capable of recreational use as navigable-in-fact. In 2003, a New York court rejected the argument that the mere presence of motorized vessels on the Mariaville Lake was sufficient to have the lake classified as navigable.⁶⁾ The court noted that plaintiff failed to “demonstrate the extent of public access to the lake, the historical use of the lake by the general public and whether the lake was navigable in its natural state.”⁷⁾ The test requires that navigability be determined by the river “in its natural state and its ordinary volume” - in other words, the party seeking to prove navigability must demonstrate that the river has enough natural volume for a

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sufficiently long enough stretch of the year to make it useful for transportation.⁸⁾) Offering a single example of use was not itself sufficient.⁹⁾

Those seeking to use a waterway need not have it declared navigable-in-fact by a court. If a waterway is, in fact, substantially navigable for a considerable part of the year, one can ordinarily assume that it qualifies as legally “navigable-in-fact.” Moreover, the presence of some natural obstructions will not jeopardize a waterway's status as navigable.¹⁰⁾ Furthermore, because the presence of some obstructions is contemplated, the right to navigate includes the incidental privilege to make use, when absolutely necessary, of the bed and banks, including the right to portage on riparian lands.¹¹⁾ Any use of private banks or riverbeds that is not strictly incidental to the right to navigate, however, can give rise to an action for trespass.¹²⁾

Extent of Public Rights in Navigable and Non-Navigable Streams

The public maintains different sets of rights, depending on whether the stream is non-tidal and navigable-in-fact or tidal and navigable-in-law. For navigable-in-law waters, those in which the tide ebbs and flows, such as tidal waters, boundary waters and the Great Lakes, the public has a right to navigate and fish.¹³⁾ However, for non-tidal rivers, where the tide does not ebb and flow (classified as navigable-in-fact), the public may navigate the waters, but may not use them for other purposes; the landowners retain the “exclusive rights to the fisheries therein.”¹⁴⁾

Miscellaneous

The Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks prints a brochure discussing the common law right of public travel on New York's freshwater rivers, streams, lakes and other waterways that are navigable-in-fact. A copy of that brochure is available at <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/resources/repository/New.York.Navigation.pdf>.

For more information, go to: <http://www.protectadks.org/data/content/view/137/1/>.

In addition, there are ongoing efforts to pass legislation clarifying navigation rights in NY.²¹

References Used by American Whitewater in the above article:

- 1) N.Y. Nav. Law § 2[4] (2006).
- 2) N.Y. Nav. Law § 2[5] (2006).
- 3) Adirondack League Club, Inc. v. Sierra Club, 92 N.Y.2d 591, 603-04, N.E.2d 1192 (1998).
- 4) Id. at 603 (emphasis added).
- 5) Hanigan v. State of New York, 213 A.D.2d 80, 84, 629 N.Y.S.2d 509 (App. Div., 3rd. Dept. 1995).

²¹ See also NYS Dept. of State Legal Memorandum LU10, “The Right to Navigate on Inland Waterways – The Adirondack League Club Case.” Last viewed online 6/2/10 at <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/cnsl/lu10.htm>

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- 6) Mohawk Valley Ski Club, Inc. v. Town of Duansburg, 304 A.D.2d 881, 757 N.Y.S.2d 357 (App. Div., 3rd. Dept. 2003).
- 7) Id. at 360.
- 8) Id. (quoting Morgan v. King, 35 N.Y. 454 (N.Y. 1866
- 9) , 11) , 12) , 14) Id.
- 10) Adirondack League Club, Inc., 92 N.Y.2d at 607.
- 13) Douglaston Manor v. Bahrakis, 89 N.Y.2d 472, 678 N.E.2d 201 (N.Y. 1997).

Tort Liability

New York State’s recreational use statutes fall under Article 9, Title 1 of New York State Consolidated Laws General Obligations Law, “Obligations of Care – Conditions on Real Property.” The entirety of this law can be found in Appendix D of this report.

In summary, the law states that private property owners have no duty to keep their lands safe for individuals who may use it for recreational purposes (including boating and canoeing), regardless of whether the property is “Posted” or not. Even if a landowner does give express permission to enter their property for the purposes of recreational use, such permission does not imply any assurance that the property will be safe or hazard-free. Further, granting of permission does not imply that the property owner may assume responsibility or incur liability if an injury happens to occur. These statutes should not be interpreted to make exceptions for cases of gross negligence, misconduct or willful and wonton disregard by the property owner.

Even though state statutes indicate that private property owners are protected from liability in the majority of cases, fear of lawsuits remains a difficult barrier to overcome when attempting to convince private property owners to allow access on their lands. To that end, local blueway planners can help by disseminating factual information on the subject as well as act as local stewards of the corridor, providing assurances that any incidents that may occur will be addressed in a cooperative fashion. To this end, paddlers should always be instructed to respect private lands through any publicity materials that are produced (such as map guides or way-finding signage).

A useful summary of owner liability and state liability laws in the United States can be found at the American Whitewater website, online at <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Wiki/liability:start> .

Blueway Planning Considerations: A Step by Step Overview

The following outline is intended to provide a basic overview of the blueway planning framework. Because all blueways are different, the steps involved in planning a blueway system will vary depending on a variety of local circumstances, such as how well-established and well-managed the paddling corridor already is and how well-organized the primary blueway planners and champions are. Each corridor has a unique set of inherent opportunities and constraints that local advocates will have to identify and adapt to. Timing also comes into play, as various opportunities have a tendency to come and go relatively quickly. For example, public sources of funding are typically announced with only several months' notice, are often competitive in nature, and may not be re-apportioned in subsequent years. Or perhaps a strategic piece of property central to a blueway corridor's access plan may suddenly come up for sale, requiring swift and decisive action by blueway advocates in order to acquire it before it is taken off the market. For these reasons, local blueway advocates are advised to plan ahead for their corridor so that they may be well-positioned to move their vision forward.

Steps 1 and 2 have effectively been completed through the *Genesee – Finger Lakes Regional Blueway Analysis*:

Step 1: Opportunity Identification

The first step in water trail and blueway development is identifying the opportunity. Each lake, river and canal corridor outlined in this report represents such an opportunity. Each of these corridors is presently functioning as a public paddling destination to various degrees. While some corridors may be better-suited to function within an interconnected blueway system than others, every corridor – regardless of its characteristics – will require local champions to work tirelessly on the corridor's behalf to ensure that its fullest potential is realized. Identifying the opportunity for blueway development is therefore only an initial step in the planning process.

Step 2: Regional-Level Analysis

The regional-level analysis conducted through the *Genesee – Finger Lakes Regional Blueway Analysis* will facilitate the planning process by assisting local advocates with the characterization of their waterway of interest. Understanding how their local paddling corridor relates to other nearby corridors and the surrounding system will ideally put individual lake and river corridors and corridor segments on the fast-track to implementation.

Step 3: Local-Level Goal Establishment

This step involves establishing a vision and core concepts for your local blueway or water trail. The basic characteristics of the waterway have already been defined through this study. In most cases, local citizens and paddlers who are familiar with these waterways will be able to offer

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intuitive observations on this information and perhaps add further insight or clarification. Indeed, this step must involve the citizens and other stakeholders who are most passionate about the waterway.

At this point, local-level blueway planning will require home-grown advocates and champions to begin to fine-tune how their corridor can be best utilized. Some of the initial questions that these advocates should consider include:

- Why do you want to establish a blueway or water trail? What are your project principles and objectives?
- Define the character of the blueway/water trail. What can/could it offer its visitors?
 - Recreation, environmental protection/interpretation, historic/cultural preservation/interpretation, connectivity to other trails, etc.
- What makes your blueway/water trail a unique destination? Why should municipalities or other stakeholders want to become involved with your project?
- What types of trips can/should the trail support and generate? What logistics might be involved with various trip options?
 - Half day, overnight, combination therein, etc.?
- What are the major concerns regarding blueway development? Are there any safety issues? Can you foresee any user conflicts occurring or arising? How can these be addressed?
- What do you want the user to take away from their experience on your water trail?

Answers to many of these questions can be generated through informal meetings and conversations with other interested parties. If and when interest in the subject gains momentum, a special public meeting or “blueway summit” may be warranted in order to gather an array of stakeholders together to discuss basic concepts, opportunities, and possible directions that such an initiative might go in if undertaken in an official capacity. Special guests with professional backgrounds or experience in planning, environmental stewardship or paddling can be brought in to speak on the subject of blueways or on the corridor itself. Local business leaders and elected officials can be invited to listen and to speak on the subject.

Step 4: Identifying Partners and Generating Support

It will be very important to establish partnerships with key stakeholders such as local and county governments, community organizations (including watershed groups and other local environmental stewardship groups), state and federal agencies, property owners (including large-lot property owners, such as farmers, other businesses and utility companies), and local residents. Establishing partners early on can ease the burden of planning for your blueway; in addition, failure to reach out to all affected stakeholders can result in unwanted plan opposition and the loss of potential partners. Furthermore, while paddling is often perceived by enthusiasts as a relatively benign and care-free past time, increasing public access to areas that have been devoid of such access or otherwise isolated has the potential to raise concerns among traditional users of the resource. It will be important to address any such concerns in an open, sincere and direct fashion.

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While formal organization of a blueway advocacy group is an option, informal organizations can make significant progress during the initial planning phases. Establishing formal lines of communication through email and the internet will facilitate this process. Eventually one key individual or group should be identified as the primary advocate for blueway planning initiatives; this can be a special organization created for the specific purpose of blueway planning and management or a pre-existing organization (such as a local government, a watershed group, lake organization or a local outdoors club).

It is important to note that the timeframe of Steps 3 and 4 can vary significantly from place to place. Informal discussions on the future of a lake or river corridor can take place for many years before actual progress is achieved. In some instances, it simply takes the right mix of special individuals, motivation, and circumstance to jump-start a blueway planning initiative.

Local Partners

In addition, local officials should be made aware of any project planning that is occurring within their respective jurisdictions. Local and county planning departments and tourism promotion associations will also be able to offer insight and resources toward the development of a blueway or water trail. Highway department and parks department officials can be particularly helpful when it comes to planning for public access. Furthermore, it will be essential to involve public safety officials (county sheriff, other first responders) in the planning of blueway systems so that they can make planners aware of existing hazards and also be made aware of any risks that may develop as water access is improved.

Regional, State and Federal Partners

Planning for blueway systems cannot happen in a vacuum. Successful blueway systems will generally have a core group of local champions that were able to reach-out to key public and private partners for assistance and involve them in the process at the right time.

Key partners that should be considered in blueway planning efforts in the G/FLRPC region may include:

- US Army Corps of Engineers <http://www.usace.army.mil/Pages/default.aspx>
- US Fish and Wildlife Service <http://www.fws.gov/>
- US National Park Service
 - Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor <http://www.nps.gov/erie/index.htm>
 - Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program http://www.nps.gov/nrcr/programs/rtca/contactus/cu_apply.html
- New York State Department of State Division of Coastal Resources <http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/index.asp>
- New York State Canal Corporation <http://www.nyscanals.gov/>
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation <http://nysparks.state.ny.us/>

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- New York State Department of Transportation <https://www.nysdot.gov/index>
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation <http://www.dec.ny.gov/>
- Great Lakes Seaway Trail <http://www.seawaytrail.com/>
- Genesee Transportation Council <http://gtcmpo.org/>
- Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council <http://gflrpc.org/>

As public interest in blueway planning and development grows, partners should begin to consider how the blueway will be administered from the point of inception into the future. Further elaboration on the importance of blueway administration is offered below.

Step 5: Resource Identification

Available funding for the planning and implementation of blueway trails will vary significantly over time and can be particular to geographic locations. Significant funding for the planning and construction of blueway trails and associated recreational access has been provided by the New York State Department of State Division of Coastal Resources and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation through Title 11 of the New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF).²² Communities that lie adjacent to the New York State Canal System have been able to apply for trail development funds through the National Park Service Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor as well as through the New York State Canal Corporation. In addition, the NPS “Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program” offers competitive grant awards that can be used to fund staff support and other resources for urban, rural, and suburban communities to help applicants conserve rivers, preserve natural areas, and develop trails and greenways.²³

Local sources of funding – such as community endowments, not-for-profit agencies and land trusts – may also offer funds for feasibility planning, trail improvements and property acquisition, depending on the location and type of project. The Rochester Community Foundation, The Mendon Foundation, and the Kodak American Greenways Program are three other examples of funding programs that can be used and leveraged for local blueway planning and implementation; many others exist.

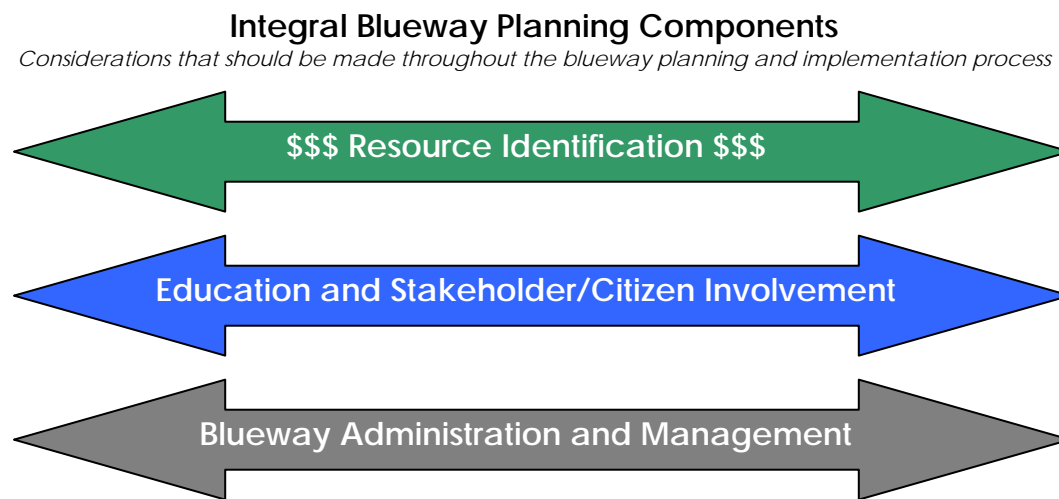
Depending on annual budgetary constraints, other public resources may be available at local and regional levels (in many cases from the agencies listed and described above). Municipal staff as well as staff at regional planning agencies like Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council can be contacted at any time to discuss what resources or sources of funding might be available for the planning and construction of a blueway in your community.

²² This project is sponsored in part through Title 11 of the NYS EPF.

²³ US National Park Service, “Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program.” Last viewed 4/20/10 online at http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/contactus/cu_apply.html

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Step 6: Corridor Feasibility Study

A feasibility study will evaluate the range of options that are present within the corridor and should begin to provide specific details for project implementation. Some capital will very likely be necessary in order to fund the study and acquire assistance from a professional planning and consulting firm or organization. ***Public involvement will be a critical component during this stage.***

Any feasibility study should include an implementation plan which offers a range of alternatives for blueway advocates, including ‘best or optimal uses’ for the trail in conjunction with practical implementation steps, noting that it may take time to realize the full potential of the corridor or blueway system and that implementation can occur in stages. Similarly, the study should prioritize critical, ‘first order’ needs that will help focus the next critical steps of the blueway planning and implementation process. All options should have general cost estimates and possible near-term funding sources so that blueway advocates can evaluate their range of options. Also note that detailed design plans and specifications for the construction of launch facilities or signage will require additional resources. Actions such as these actions fall under Step 6: Implementation.

A feasibility study should include the following elements:

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Evaluation of Maintenance and Management Options

Integral to the planning of water trails and blueway systems is the need to consider long-term management and maintenance of the system and the facilities that comprise it. Blueway trails are unlike most other public recreation facilities. Because they use a waterway as the primary anchor and course of movement, they will require a unique approach to management and maintenance. All trails – water and terrestrial – in general have a tendency to transcend municipal boundaries, making intermunicipal cooperation a necessary aspect of the planning process. In many cases, blueways will be most-effectively maintained under a framework of cooperative management, whereby a variety of public and private entities share responsibility for managing and maintaining the trail and its attributes.

Cooperative management refers to a framework that involves the sharing of knowledge, power, and responsibility in the management of a shared resource and allows various groups to capitalize upon each other's strengths and channel resources more efficiently. Entities may include private land owners, local municipalities, local non-profit or advocacy groups, and state and federal agencies. All management efforts should begin by seeking out key partners and involving them in the planning process. Cooperative management is generally reserved for unique resources which might span multiple boundaries or otherwise possess some unique quality that sets them apart from traditional public open space resources, like a park or historic site. It is an ideal and adaptive framework for managing a regional resource like a water trail. Further, the framework challenges local blueway advocates to justify the need for their trail and come face to face with the financial and logistical realities of trail management.

Key Questions to Consider:

- Who will be in charge of maintaining the trail and its associated facilities? What will be the costs?
- How will these management/maintenance functions be sustained financially over time?
- Identify key partners and the specific roles or functions that they will play

Channel maintenance will also be a constant concern for any local blueway management/maintenance team. River and stream corridors in particular can be dynamic entities which are subject to changing conditions over time. Additional key questions that planners must therefore consider include:

- At what point do barriers to water flow/navigation (downed limbs, log jams, etc.) constitute a hazard requiring intervention?
- To what extent should such barriers be considered “natural hazards” common to the trail/waterway?
- How much advance warning will paddlers require regarding such conditions?

Analysis of Way-Finding Measures and Trip Facilitation

Trip facilitation and way-finding work in conjunction with one another and are important considerations for blueway planners.

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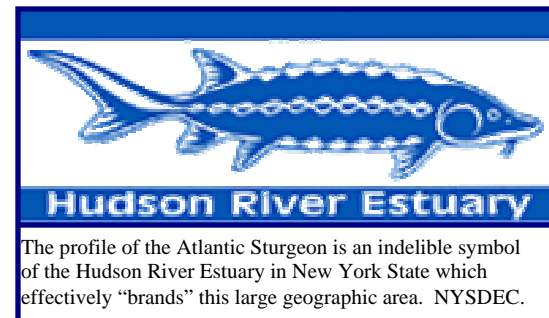
“Way-finding” refers specifically to directional signage and mapping which can be provided to paddlers in a variety of formats, including online, through paper pamphlets and guides or upon fixed-place kiosks. Signage is an extremely important consideration that should receive the full attention of blueway planners. Directional signage will play an important role in determining how “user-friendly” the blueway corridor is. Assuring that visitors are provided with clear and adequate means of orientation has a direct impact on personal safety and comfort. Further, signage presents an opportunity for local advocates to market and “brand” their blueway corridor and leave visitors with a memorable impression of their visit.

“Trip facilitation” refers to plans and actions that are intended to improve ease-of-travel for paddlers and increase trip options. It may include actions to improve access within and through the paddling corridor. Trip facilitation also includes actions that increase the knowledge and awareness of a paddlers’ surroundings. Providing paddlers with a general

historical/cultural overview of the corridor, a reasonable expectation of the time and distance it will take to travel between certain access points, what water conditions they can expect, where hazards are located, where accommodations and other facilities can be found, and other similar information will all facilitate one’s voyage on a blueway or water trail. By focusing on trip facilitation, blueway planners can increase the ease of travel and thereby increase the corridor’s popularity as a safe, accessible and fun destination. This, in turn, will encourage repeat visits.

When considering Trip Facilitation, blueway planners should consider questions such as:

- Can the waterway be separated into separate and distinct trip segments?
- What constitutes an appropriate trip distance and time?
- How will a paddler’s ability level affect their trip?
- What expectations should the paddler have in advance (amount of time on the water and distance they can expect to travel)? How should one’s trip expectations affect their level of preparedness?



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- What arrangements will the paddler need to make in order to get back to their vehicle?

As blueway planning efforts make progress, way finding and trip facilitation will become an important component of an overall marketing and promotion strategy for the blueway. These concepts will also play a role in maintaining a safe environment for visitors.

Suitability Analysis

Identifying the appropriate locations for blueway corridor access points, trip segments and rest areas should include a general analysis of the surrounding landscape to determine suitability. Suitability in this context refers the compatibility of a blueway corridor with the surrounding network of private and public lands. As a local blueway planning initiative begins along a corridor, one can generally assume that that corridor is already a known paddling destination and that recreational paddling is an acceptable activity there. Maintaining paddlers' welcome among local residents should be a primary concern. Locating access and other facilities to serve the corridor in an effective and respectful manner will be an important consideration in the blueway planning process. To this end, issues such as stream bank erosion, habitat maintenance and protection, parking, safety and maintaining the privacy of adjacent land owners will all need to be considered carefully.

A publication created by the US National Park Service *Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program* addresses this subject in great detail. *Logical Lasting Launches: Design Guidance for Canoe and Kayak Launches* (2004) is a 120 page document that details considerations for design, location and type of water bodies which are appropriate for 'logical, lasting' canoe and kayak launches.²⁴ The manual has four primary goals regarding canoe and kayak launches. According to the document, a logical, lasting launch is:

- Accessible to all paddlers
- Best-suited to the site
- Cost-effective and Durable
- Environment-friendly

In addition, the authors cite the need to consider the preservation of historic and cultural landscapes as well as aesthetics of the launch facility. Considerations will also have obvious differences and needs depending on the characteristics of the water body they are constructed on, which can range significantly, including tidal areas, lakes, rivers (whitewater, swift water and slack water), and canals (which can be busy navigation channels).

²⁴ US NPS. "Logical Lasting Launches: Design Guidance for Canoe and Kayak Launches." 2004. Last viewed online 4/20/10 at <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/helpfultools/launchguide.pdf>

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Marketing, Tourism Promotion and Economic Development

Blueways are more than recreational assets – they are key components to local, county and state tourism promotion and economic development. The positive economic impacts of outdoor recreation development are well-documented.²⁵ A blueway feasibility study should therefore explore how a blueway system will affect the local economy, who will use the blueway once it is created, and what will those users require in order to encourage their return. Local and county Tourism Promotion Agencies (TPAs) can offer important support and insight in the development of this important component. Issues such as “activity crossover”, unifying and targeting marketing strategies, and promoting and packaging the “product” are the issues that they will be able to offer critical information and insight on.

Step 7: Blueway Trail Implementation

While the above steps imply a straight-forward, linear progression toward eventual blueway and water trail implementation, it must be stated that there simply is no singular path that will take blueway trail planners to this final step. As stated above, there are a variety of ways to go about trail development and implementation; these methods will be heavily influenced by local circumstances. Most approaches, however, will be incremental in nature. A blueway should encompass a community-wide vision for a local waterway; fulfilling that vision is a goal that should occur in stages, taking measured steps toward goal realization. The process used to plan for and create a blueway or water trail will in many ways be as important as the final product itself.

The final primary considerations that blueway and water trail planners will need to make before realizing their goals include:

- Developing detailed landscape and construction designs for launch facilities and other trail accoutrements;
- Actual construction of those facilities;
- Continuous evaluation of the adequacy and performance of the facilities and of the trail itself.

Excellent guidance regarding the design and construction of durable launch facilities is available in the US NPS publication *Logical Lasting Launches: Design Guidance for Canoe and Kayak Launches* (see reference No. 21 on page 109). Suiting the facility to the location will be a critical component during the design process.

The final component – that of trail evaluation – will also be an important consideration which will facilitate proper management of the trail system over time. Successful blueways must adapt to changing conditions and be managed as a dynamic entity. Formal and informal user surveys and other similar analyses can be utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of the blueway system and its facilities, as well as the marketing and promotional efforts that are being used to publicize the trail.

²⁵ Reeder, Richard J. and Dennis M. Brown. “Recreation, Tourism, and Rural Well-Being. USDA Economic Research Report No. 7.” Last viewed online 5/20/10 at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err7/>

