

Committee on Resources

Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands

Testimony

Statement of
Charlene Perkins Cutler,
Executive Director, Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc.

to

**The Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, House Committee on Resources, Concerning
H.R. 1619, The Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Reauthorization
Act of 1999.**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on H.R. 1619, The Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Reauthorization Act of 1999. I am the executive director of Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc., the nonprofit designated management entity for the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor.

I ask that our report, *A Report to Congress, June 1999, Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor*, be entered into the record of this subcommittee in its entirety, including the Addenda package.

To summarize that document, I am pleased to say that Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor Inc. has been successful in its work to date to fulfill the intent of Public Law 103-449, the responsibility given to us by the Governor of the State of Connecticut, and the visions and goals of the Management Plan.

- The Management Plan, Implementation Plan and Action Plan have been completed in a timely and efficient manner, producing truly useable documents. The Interpretive Plan is being developed this year.
- QSHC, Inc. has consistently met the required match on the federal appropriation.
- QSHC, Inc. has proven to have a consistent ability to develop and foster partnerships with federal, state, regional, municipal, business and private entities, and to be a catalyst that maximizes scarce resources.
- QSHC, Inc. is the largest, successful regional entity in Connecticut.
- Direct cash awards to local projects have resulted in a 10:1 return on investment.
- According to the FY98 audit, 85% of QSHC, Inc. expenditures go directly into programming.

Why should the Heritage Corridor be reauthorized, its boundaries expanded and its funding increased?

- The track record of the Heritage Corridor is consistent, successful and economically sound.
- Through expansion, the union of communities with related and shared natural historical, cultural and scenic resources aid in developing and implementing a complete regional interpretation by making sense of the way the land reads.
- The Heritage Corridor is one of 18 nationwide: 13 of those are presently authorized for funding of at least \$1 million. QSHC, Inc. has matched its federal appropriation of \$200,000 with \$2.4 million in FY98, clearly indicating its ability to meet the greater match required. Furthermore, it has shown prudent and productive use of federal dollars.
- The Heritage Corridor is well regarded as a positive, non-political, action-oriented, grassroots organization that can get the work done in a manner constituent's support.

I am pleased to answer any question the Subcommittee may have. This concludes my prepared testimony.

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