

Calumet National Heritage Area Feasibility Update - No. 3

August 20, 2015

SAVE THE DATES!
16th Annual Calumet Heritage Conference
NHA Feasibility Study Public Comment Meetings
October 21 & 22
- and -
All Day Tour of the Calumet Region
October 24

For more information visit: [Calumet Heritage Partnership](#)

Welcome to the third issue of the Calumet National Heritage Area Feasibility Update. This newsletter provides updates on the progress of a Feasibility Study to establish a Calumet National Heritage Area. Additionally, it helps identify ways in which you can participate in the study process, and keep you abreast of related activities in the Calumet region. For further information about both the Feasibility Study and the Calumet Heritage Partnership visit the CHP website www.calumetheritage.org.



CALUMET SUMMIT SETS TONE FOR THE FUTURE

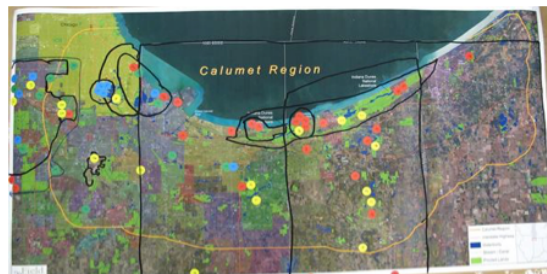
When the first Calumet Summit was held in 2000, its purpose was to identify and highlight the burgeoning scientific research activity and information gathering in and about the Calumet region. This year's Calumet Summit, held on May 12th and 13th at the South Shore Cultural Center in Chicago, received good media coverage from the [Times of](#)

[Northwest Indiana](#) and [Chicago's NPR station](#) and served to demonstrate how far we have come...[Read more](#)



NEW COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ON RECREATION AND HERITAGE

The fifth pair of Community Conversations was held on June 17th and 30th. The topic of these conversations was Recreation and Heritage in the Calumet Region. As noted by conversation facilitators Madeleine Tudor and Mario Longoni from Chicago's Field Museum...[Read more](#)



THE WORK OF THE THEMES TASK FORCE BEGINS

A report from Mike Longan, Task Force Co-Chair

The Themes Task Force of the Calumet National Heritage Area Feasibility Study met for the first time on Wednesday May 6, 2015 at Purdue University Calumet to begin to tackle the task of identifying themes that express the national significance of the Calumet region. The task force is being co-chaired by CHP board members Michael Longan, Sherry Meyer, and Tiffany Tolbert. Its membership includes a variety of experts on... [Read more](#)



A REMINDER: WHAT IS A NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA AND A FEASIBILITY STUDY?

A National Heritage Area is a place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape. National Heritage Areas are locally inspired, led, and managed efforts to bring national attention to an area. They are not National Parks... [Read more](#)



COMING EVENTS AND HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED WITH THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

CHP Board Meeting: The next board meeting of the Calumet Heritage Partnership will take place Thursday, August 27th. While this is a formal board meeting, all CHP members are welcome to attend. The meeting will be 6:30-8:30 PM, at the Southeast Environmental Task Force office ... [Find out more](#)

Calumet Summit sets tone for the future

When the first Calumet Summit was held in 2000, its purpose was to identify and highlight the burgeoning scientific research activity and information gathering in and about the Calumet region.

This year's Calumet Summit, held on May 12th and 13th at the South Shore Cultural Center in Chicago, served to demonstrate how far we have come in expanding our knowledge of the region and how all the work accomplished since the original Summit has resulted in an active community of scholars, activists, public officials, and ordinary citizens working together to promote and improve the region.



Table discussion at the recent Calumet Summit

The 2015 Summit was organized by the Calumet Stewardship Initiative, a partnership of more than 40 organizations that includes government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups that focus on land stewardship, environmental education and recreational opportunities. The two day Summit was attended by approximately 175 people, and consisted of presentations, panel discussions, networking, and table based dialogues organized around mapping.

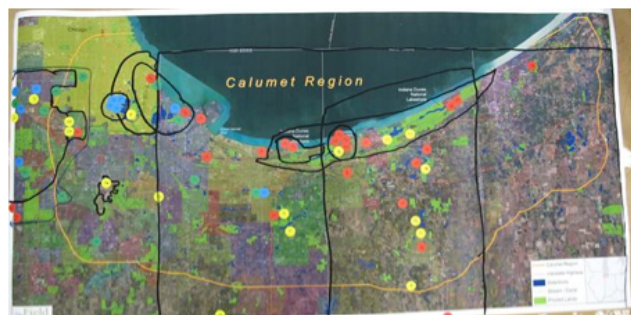
The Summit highlighted current work in the bi-state region and served to further the developing dialogue among individuals and organizations throughout the region. Topics covered included environmental education, stewardship, outdoor recreation, and themes of regional importance. To those of us focused on the creation of a Calumet National Heritage Area, the Summit provided an opportunity to relate current activities in the Calumet to developing themes that will define the Heritage Area. From this perspective the Summit became a major public event in the process of preparing the feasibility study required to obtain National Heritage Area status.

The Summit received good media coverage from both the [Times of Northwest Indiana](#) and [Chicago's NPR station, WBEZ](#).

New Community Conversations on Recreation and Culture

The fifth pair of Community Conversations took place on June 17th and 30th. The topic of these conversations was Recreation and Heritage in the Calumet Region.

As noted by conversation facilitators Madeleine Tudor and Mario Longoni from Chicago's Field Museum, the Calumet region has been long known as a



sportsman's paradise for the quality and quantity of its hunting and fishing opportunities. Even after 100 years of heavy industry and residential growth, it is still home to unique and extensive recreational options, from swimming at Calumet Park, to windsurfing at Wolf Lake, and biking from Mt. Baldy to Cowles Bog in the Indiana Dunes.

In late summer or early fall, another pair of Community Conversations about Ethnic and Cultural Heritage will take place in Indiana and Illinois. More detailed announcements with locations and times will be made soon.

The Community Conversations are being hosted by The Field Museum in collaboration with the Calumet Heritage Partnership to identify themes that can be used to interpret the region to residents and visitors. Insights from the conversations will inform the National Park Service Feasibility Study for a Calumet National Heritage Area. The conversations on recreation and heritage cover the fifth theme in the series of Community Conversations about how the region's heritage can help to build its future. Upcoming topics will include the region's cultural/ethnic resources.

For more information on the conversations visit the [Calumet Heritage website](#) or contact Madeleine Tudor (mtudor@fieldmuseum.org) at The Field Museum.

This project is supported with generous funding from ArcelorMittal, Nicor Gas and the Boeing Initiative for Conservation and Community at The Field Museum.

The Work of the Themes Task Force Begins

A report from Mike Longan, Task Force Co-Chair

The Themes Task Force of the Calumet National Heritage Area Feasibility Study met for the first time on Wednesday May 6, 2015 at Purdue University Calumet to begin to tackle the task of identifying themes that express the national significance of the Calumet region. The task force is being co-chaired by CHP board members Michael Longan, Sherry Meyer, and Tiffany Tolbert. Its membership includes a variety of experts on various facets of the region's heritage.



During the discussion a variety of preliminary themes began to emerge. The contrast among the region's industrial heritage and its stunning natural environment was perhaps the most immediately apparent set of themes. The region is the "birthplace of ecology" and of the integrated steel industry. As the "arsenal of democracy," producing steel during World War II, it replaced other regions as the nation's steel capital. The fact that the region still produces steel as well as the emergence of new industries that seek to find ways of creating more sustainable industry also makes the region unique.

The natural environment of the Lake Michigan Shore and the Indiana Dunes with its unique biodiversity, recreational opportunities, and natural beauty are also nationally significant; as has been the history of their preservation. Thus, this is a region also marked by significant citizen action where people have sought to preserve the environment, safeguard human health, and fight for the rights of workers, locally and internationally. The



region is unique in its ethnic and cultural diversity and its civil rights history. The Native American history of the region was also mentioned as being important.

Finally participants described the Calumet region variously as a crossroads, a hub, or a nexus both because transportation is a significant part of its heritage and because its uniqueness derives from the coming together of all of these elements. The first meeting was productive for getting oriented and brainstorming initial ideas. The Task Force

agreed to meet at the end of June to identify additional themes and to begin to narrow down a set of themes and begin to craft a statement of national significance. If you are interested in contributing to the work of the Themes Task Force please contact CHP President [Mark Bouman](#) or any of the committee co-chairs.

A Reminder: What is a National Heritage Area and a Feasibility Study?

A National Heritage Area is a place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape. National Heritage Areas are locally inspired, led, and managed efforts to bring national attention to an area. They are not National Parks and the Park Service does not own land or impose land use controls within them. But they can coordinate with existing parks.

The first step in creating a National Heritage Area is usually the preparation of a Feasibility Study conducted either by local stakeholders or the National Park Service. The Study catalogs the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational assets of the region, outlines the process by which the NHA will be managed, and demonstrates local participation in the development the study. The Feasibility Study is used to support legislation introduced to Congress. If approved, Congress designates the Heritage Area for 15 years and allocates some funding, and a management plan is drafted by the Heritage Area.



The webpage for the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area

Coming events and how you can get involved in the Feasibility Study

CHP Board Meeting:

The next board meeting of the Calumet Heritage Partnership will be Thursday, August 27th. While this is a formal board meeting, all CHP members are welcome to attend. The meeting will be held from 7-9 PM at the Southeast Environmental Task Force at 13300 S. Baltimore in Chicago. Please note that the location of board meetings alternate between sites in Indiana and Illinois. Locations will be announced in advance of the meetings.

If you are not already a CHP member, you can become one. Information on membership and on many aspects of the work of CHP and other groups in the Calumet region can be found by visiting the CHP website calumetheritage.org. Subsequent "updates" will inform you about meetings, hearings, and other events that will occur during the 18 month feasibility study process.



This project is sponsored by the Calumet Heritage Partnership and supported with generous funding from ArcelorMittal, Nicor Gas, and the Boeing Initiative for Conservation and Community at The Field Museum.

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