

U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# Western Reserve

## Heritage Feasibility Study





*Submitted by the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service*

*It becomes apparent*

*that in numbers, commercial importance, geographical extent—in all save mere formal organization—the Connecticut Western Reserve constitutes the equivalent of a State; while in its unity of purpose and power of influence it has unquestionably exercised in the affairs of the nation and in the broad interests of the people a sway such as few States, large or little, have equaled.*

“Ohio and Her Western Reserve” by Alfred Edward Mathews, 1902





# Executive Summary

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service, has prepared the *National Heritage Feasibility Study* to determine the feasibility and suitability of designating the Connecticut Western Reserve as a national heritage area. This study meets the requirements of the “Draft National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines” (NPS 2003) and the National Environmental Policy Act.

## Legislative History

Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to undertake a national heritage area feasibility study in Public Law 109-338 (Oct. 12, 2006) under Subtitle A. The section of the act requesting a study of the Western Reserve is found in Section 301. The purpose of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study is to determine if the area that encompasses the modern-day Ohio counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland meets the suitability and

feasibility requirements for designation as a National Heritage Area. A copy of the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act is found in Appendix A.

## The History of the Western Reserve

Marblehead, Norwalk, Avon, Danbury, and Kent. Town squares, village greens, and architecture. A New Englander driving through the Western Reserve in Ohio finds reminders of home around nearly every bend. And rightly so, for this area of the Northwest Territory once belonged to the Colony of Connecticut.

One of the original 13 colonies, Connecticut owned a ribbon of land west of its present-day boundary that included portions of New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. When the newly-formed federal government

promised forgiveness of state debt created by the Revolutionary War in exchange for this land, Connecticut relinquished rights to its western land, except for a 120-mile strip in northern Ohio that was “reserved” for other purposes.

Settled by New Englanders, primarily from Connecticut in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Western Reserve has been home



*The Western Reserve serves as the nation's town square.*

to generation after generation of domestic and international immigrants contributing new ideas and traditions to America. Choices in land use began with the first settlers who employed unique surveying methods, settlement patterns including town squares, and distinct architecture. Examples of this influence are prolific throughout the region.

## Western Reserve Heritage Themes

The Western Reserve contributes in substantial ways to our country's national heritage. It contains an assemblage of natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that make up a regionally distinctive landscape, and the rich and varied stories about the Western Reserve support a captivating set of themes connecting the people to the heritage resources of the region. The information was analyzed and one major theme and six distinct sub-categories emerged. The heritage area themes are listed below. A complete description can be found in Chapter 3.

The Western Reserve is *the nation's town square* and has been since the region's settlement soon after the Revolutionary War. Town squares are places where fresh ways of thinking are the norm. They are settings where people and institutions come together to discuss happenings, advocate for a better way, run their businesses, and build a sense of community.

The importance of the Western Reserve in shaping America is evident in six sub-themes that reveal how the Western Reserve both influenced national history as well as reflects (serves as a microcosm) the nation.

### *Migration*

Settled by New Englanders, primarily from Connecticut in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Western Reserve has been home to generation after generation of domestic and international immigrants bearing new ideas and traditions. This mixture of cultures and beliefs inspired new ways of thinking that gave rise to social acceptance and reform as those escaping persecution in their home countries sought a new way of life in America.

### *Transportation*

The Western Reserve helped connect the world. Canal boats, steamships, lake freighters, railroads, automobiles, Goodyear Airship, early aviation, and aerospace innovations—the Western Reserve has been at the hub of designing, manufacturing, and using vehicles and systems to transport people and goods; the Western Reserve was not just a site for use of technologies, but a site where innovations in design and manufacture occurred.

### *Industry*

The region's fertile, flat soils, and excellent transportation opportunities made the Western Reserve a natural area for agricultural production. The agricultural industry made the Western Reserve prosperous, and smokestack industries led to a regional, national, and international force. Innovations and prolific production in oil, iron, rubber, and steel steered the region to manufacturing prominence bringing people of the world to the Western Reserve. It was the spirit of the New England "Yankee," regarded by many as sharp, canny, and resourceful that began the industrial advances in the Western Reserve, a momentum that was continued by waves of skillful immigrants. This drive to make systems better, more efficient, and more profitable continues today as the region is an international center for progressive medical care and research, and polymer innovations.

### *Lake Erie*

Part of the largest freshwater system in the world, Lake Erie created the climate for the Western Reserve's dynamic cultural, and industrial history. Its influence on the weather and natural landscape is expressed through flourishing vineyards, nurseries, and orchards, while the natural features dictated where harbors and canals developed. Many settlers from Connecticut and foreign lands

settled first along the waterways, tapping into their resources and energy. These working waterways connected the Western Reserve to the world, providing transportation for people and ideas to and from the region, jobs, and a carrying route for raw materials and manufactured goods.

### *Land Use and Architecture*

Choices in land use began with the first Western Reserve settlers from New England. Their unique surveying methods and settlement patterns included town squares, patterns of land use, radiating roadways, five-mile-square townships, and distinct architecture. The civic buildings of the region, particularly those of heavy industrial periods, were a testament to the wealth generated during that time and—when built with private monies—to the philanthropic bent of the region’s leadership through time. Western Reserve era land use choices and architecture styles are found in almost every community.

### *Education and Social Reform*

Starting with the first settlers from Connecticut who brought with them deep faith, a practice of tithing, and Puritan beliefs, those within the Western Reserve have seldom been afraid to fight for their beliefs. We see evidence of this in widespread abolitionism and involvement in the Underground Railroad, women’s rights

movement, civil rights activity, and environmental action. These efforts were further strengthened by immigrants, many of whom arrived, in part, to escape persecution of their religious beliefs.

### **Study Findings**

The National Park Service concludes that though the Western Reserve meets six of the nine criteria for determining the suitability of an area as a National Heritage Area (and defined in the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act), and the Western Reserve contributes to our nation’s heritage, the area is not nationally distinctive and as such is not suitable for national designation.

### **Management Alternatives**

This feasibility study evaluates two alternatives—No Action (alternative 1) and Implementation of the Heritage Area Concept as a Regional Initiative (alternative 2). A third alternative (National Heritage Area Designation) was initially considered, but set aside after the area was not found to meet the criterion for national distinctiveness (Study Criterion A).



At this critical stage in its development, it is recommended that the Western Reserve implement the heritage area concept as a regional initiative, alternative 2. In order to further develop the Western Reserve as a regional effort, steps are recommended in Chapter 6 that will cultivate the community commitment and investment necessary to leverage the resources for the interpretation and development of the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the Western Reserve.

## Public Involvement

One of the foundations of all successful heritage areas is an informed and engaged community that is committed to the long-term sustainability of the regional project. A study team, working with the National Park Service, developed a transparent community engagement process that addressed the following objectives:

- Promote public understanding of heritage areas and how they are managed.
- Inform the public about the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study and how individuals can become involved in the process.
- Assess public support for the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area.
- Determine if there is local capacity and commitment to coordinate the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area.

In order to achieve these objectives, the study team developed a variety of diverse community engagement methods to involve the public in the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, including the creation of a Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Stakeholder Group, development of civic engagement tools including town hall meetings (public meetings), community and elected official leadership meetings, radio and cable television interviews, newspaper articles, flyers, Western Reserve newsletters, and articles in regional organizations' newsletters. In addition to traditional methods of public involvement, the study team incorporated a variety of social networking tools, including the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Facebook group, Twitter and an interactive web site at <http://westernreserve.ning.com>. Additional details of the public involvement process can be found in Chapter 2.

## Study Team Composition

Coordinating the public involvement portion of the process was a study team led by Rory Robinson and Andrea Irland with the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. Members of the study team included Dan Rice with the Ohio and Erie Canalway Coalition, Melinda Huntley with OSU

Sea Grant Extension and the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio National Scenic Byway, Jackie Barton with the Ohio Historical Society, and Sue Pridemore, Heritage Area Coordinator with the Midwest Regional National Park Service.

## *Vision of a Western Reserve Heritage Area*

The vision was crafted following input from citizens at Town Hall Gatherings, online discussions on a social media website, Stakeholder's group meetings, and leadership discussions.

*In the spirit of a town square, which so typifies its landscape, the Western Reserve continues the area's rich legacy of innovation and advocacy by serving as a catalyst, convener, and construct for regional engagement, resource protection, and interpretation of community resources and economic progress within northern Ohio.*



*The study team developed a variety of diverse community engagement methods to involve the public.*

*Photo by Jackie Barton*





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*Integrity of the Historic Resources (63)*

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**Study Criterion (G)** “...has a potential local coordinating entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments to develop a national heritage area consistent with continued local and State economic activity;” (67)

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**Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Stakeholder Committee**

Cathy Berg, *Ashland County Soil & Water District*

Rich Cochran, *President, Chief Executive Officer, Western Reserve Land Conservancy*

Tom Curtin, *Executive Director, Geauga County Park*

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Steve Hambley, *Commissioner, Medina County*

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Mark Winchell, *Director, Ashtabula County Convention & Visitors Bureau*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study was developed by the National Park Service in collaboration with the following organizations.*



# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### What is a Heritage Area?

**H**eritage areas are places where natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, significant landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. Through the conservation, interpretation, and promotion of these unique resources, stories, and traditions, communities experience increased community and economic development and improved quality of life for the citizens of the region. Heritage areas represent a significant advancement in conservation and historic preservation: large-scale, community-centered initiatives collaborating across political jurisdictions to protect significant landscapes and living cultures. Managed locally, heritage areas play vital roles in preserving the physical character, traditions, and stories of our country, reminding us of our national origins and destiny.

Through the cultivation of public and private partnerships, heritage areas provide regional

resource conservation strategies to celebrate the local heritage while building livable and sustainable communities. Working in collaboration and partnership with units of government, planning agencies, park agencies, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and foundations, heritage areas promote stewardship, leverage significant resources, and inspire greater pride in the region's heritage. As a regional planning tool, a designated heritage area provides a blueprint for achieving the balance between community and economic development and the conservation of significant historic, natural, and cultural resources. Coordinated and initiated at the local level, heritage areas do not come with rules and regulations, and they do not have any impact on existing local, state, or federal regulations. Nor do they impact private property rights.

Heritage areas can be developed through local, state, and national designations, depending on the organizational capacity and goals of a potential project. The key is to find the best strategy for

implementing regional resource conservation and enhancement strategy. The first National Heritage Area designated by Congress—The Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor—was designated in 1984 to celebrate the canal era in Illinois, and currently Congress has designated 49 National Heritage Areas across the country.



National Heritage Areas export the National Park Service's mission of resource conservation to urban and rural communities across the country. Key elements of all successful National Heritage Areas, or any heritage area for that matter, include an investment and commitment of local communities, the formation of diverse community partnerships, and the creation of an innovative and entrepreneurial approach to regional planning and development.

## Purpose of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study

The purpose of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study is to determine if the area that encompasses the modern-day Ohio counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland meets the suitability and feasibility requirements for designation as a National Heritage Area. This region encompasses the original boundaries of the Connecticut Western Reserve as surveyed beginning in 1796.

Led by Congressman Tim Ryan, Congress requested the study in Public Law 109-338 (Oct. 12, 2006) under Subtitle A.



The section of the act requesting a study of the Western Reserve is found in Section 301. Within the legislative act, Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service to oversee the study's development. Statute pertaining to the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study is found in Appendix A.

Using the National Park Service process for analyzing potential National Heritage Areas, the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study summarizes the geography of the study area and its historical, cultural, recreational, and natural resources. It also presents a fresh interpretive framework for understanding the national importance of the Western Reserve in shaping the nation through a truly American identity. In addition, the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study describes management alternatives and assesses the impact of proposed designation options.

The study provides an assessment as to whether the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area meets the nine criteria outlined in Public Law 109-338 for designation as a National Heritage Area. These criteria are provided in Figure 1 and form the basis of Chapter Five of this study.

## Environmental Compliance

This study complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which mandates all federal agencies to analyze impacts of major federal actions that have a significant effect on the environment. Guidance for addressing this act is set forth in National Park Service Director's Order 12 (DO-12), which outlines several options for meeting the requirements of the act, depending on the severity of the environmental impacts of the alternatives.



A “categorical exclusion for which no formal documentation is necessary” was selected as the most appropriate NEPA pathway for this feasibility study. The study is excluded from requiring an environmental assessment because it matches one of the categories that under normal circumstances has no potential for impacts to the human environment. The categorical exclusion selected states the following:

Legislative proposals of an administrative or technical nature — for example, changes in authorizations for appropriations; minor boundary changes and land transactions; proposals that would have primarily economic, social, individual, or institutional effects; and comments and reports on referrals of legislative proposals. (DO-12 Handbook, National Park Service 2005) Section 7.3 also recognizes that certain types of feasibility analysis may be needed before the NEPA process can begin.

The study matches this categorical exclusion because it was directed by Congress to determine if the Western Reserve meets the suitability and feasibility requirement for designation as a National Heritage Area. In essence, the study is a report on a legislative proposal. If Congress decides to designate the Western Reserve as a National Heritage Area, then a comprehensive management plan would be developed for the area. Whether an

## The Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act

Public Law 109-338; Oct. 12, 2006

The Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act authorized a study to examine the suitability and feasibility of establishing a National Heritage Area in the Western Reserve. The legislation specified that nine specific criteria must be met in order for the Western Reserve to be considered as a National Heritage Area. The legislation requires the National Park Service to determine whether the Study Area:

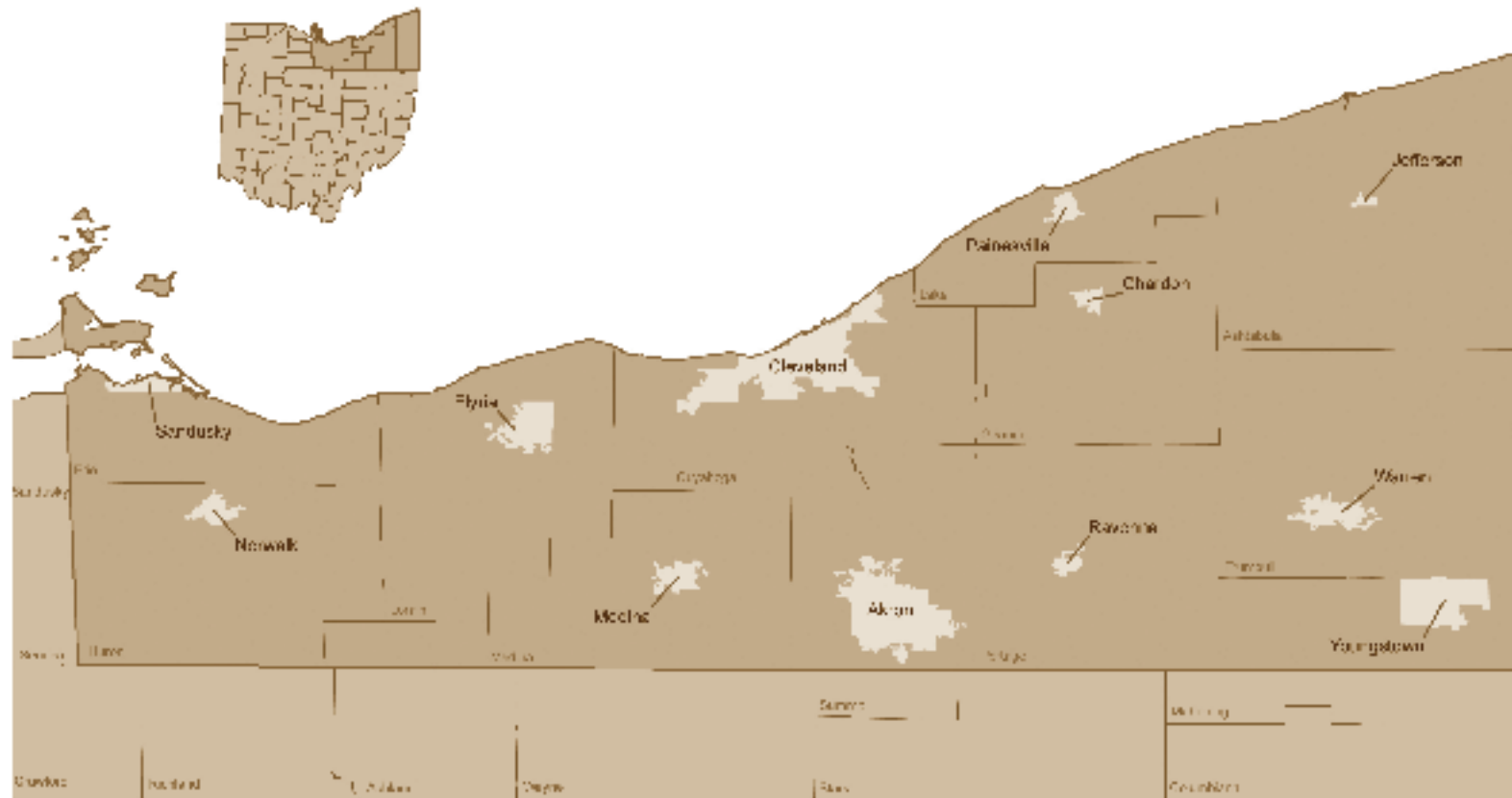
- (A) has an assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;
- (B) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folk life that are a valuable part of the national story;
- (C) provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic features;
- (D) provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;
- (E) contains resources important to the identified theme or themes of the Study Area that retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;
- (F) includes residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments that are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants, including the Federal Government, and have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area;
- (G) has a potential local coordinating entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments to develop a national heritage area consistent with continued local and State economic activity;
- (H) has a conceptual boundary map that is supported by the public; and
- (I) has potential or actual impact on private property located within or abutting the Study Area.

Figure 1 The Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act



OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Area



- Western Reserve
- County Seats
- County Boundaries

Map prepared by  
 Central Ohio Western Office  
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 Columbus, OH 43211  
 Phone: 614-233-2000  
 www.ohiohistory.org



September, 2007

Figure 2 Map of the Proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area

environmental assessment would be required will depend on the types of projects, programs, and other actions proposed in that plan.

## Boundaries of the Study Area

The study area was defined by Congress in the Western Reserve Heritage Areas Study Act (et120 STAT. 1846 PUBLIC LAW 109-338—OCT. 12, 2006) and reflects the original boundaries of the Western Reserve as surveyed beginning in 1796 (Please refer to Figure 2).

Western Reserve Heritage Areas Study Act  
... (c) BOUNDARIES OF THE STUDY  
AREA.—The Study Area shall be comprised  
of the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning,  
Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga,  
Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie,  
Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio.

## Vision of the Study Area

The vision of a regional heritage area celebrating the Western Reserve was crafted following input from citizens at Town Hall Gatherings, online discussions on a social media website, Stakeholder Group meetings and leadership discussions. Please note that in this context, citizens were specifically addressing the vision for National Heritage Area designation of the Western Reserve, so the language

included here assumes designation. These functions could represent visions should designation at any level occur—national, state, or local.

In the spirit of a town square, which so typifies its landscape, the Western Reserve continues the area’s rich legacy of innovation and advocacy by serving as a catalyst, convener, and construct for regional engagement, resource protection, and interpretation of community resources and economic progress within northern Ohio.

As a *catalyst*, the Western Reserve Heritage Area motivates and encourages awareness, discussion, and action, energizing partnerships and empowering existing organizations and individuals to develop solutions to regional problems and opportunities.

As a *convener*, the Western Reserve Heritage Area encourages people to come together. Distinct in their own customs and landscapes, Western Reserve communities and cultures are united by the common stories and ideals, steeped in tradition, that define the region—those of innovation, sustainability, and a desire to act on their beliefs. Bonding through similar modern cultures, heritage, and

landscapes, participants bridge differences and celebrate diversity.

As a *construct*, the Western Reserve Heritage Area goals and strategies are empowered through place, both physical and psychological. Linked by natural landscapes, heritage, and cultural commonalities, the Western Reserve prioritizes authenticity and sustainability. Through this common landscape, heritage, and culture, a Western Reserve Heritage Area provides a virtual space for civic engagement.

*“This history of the Western Reserve is much like a quilt—each segment with its own interest and intrigue but collectively illustrates an engaging cultural heritage that should be preserved and appreciated.”*

—Steve Madewell, Lake MetroParks

*“The Western Reserve is diverse, but unified; urban linked to rural; natural environments protected and connected; a place where the future is determined in the square. The mission is to continue to empower individuals to guide the public and civic institutions that govern our futures.”*

—Chris Thompson,

Fund for our Economic Future

*“The Western Reserve is a place that looks to the future while recognizing its past.”*  
—Dennis Mersky, Floyd Browne Group, Inc.

*“The Western Reserve has shaped the world in which we live and will continue to foster success, growth, and enlightenment for future generations.”*

—Mark Winchell, Ashtabula County  
Visitors Bureau

*“The Western Reserve Heritage Area would create a capacity to have town square dialogues, a modern view of a ‘virtual’ town square.”*

—citizen of the Western Reserve at  
Jefferson Town Hall Gathering

*(Additional information about the role of virtual town squares originated from the Walker Art Center’s Education and Community Programs Development document “Art and Civic Engagement: Mapping the Connections.”)*

## Goals for a Designated Western Reserve Heritage Area

Heritage areas are grassroots efforts, led by those living and working in a designated area’s communities. As such, goals for designation should evolve from the communities as well. To identify goals for designation, surveys were distributed at Town Hall Gatherings, and more than 72 people responded to the question about what benefits they hope to achieve with national designation. In order of importance as identified by residents of the Western Reserve, the goals for working united as a heritage area are as follows. Also included are several objectives for achieving these goals.

### Goal 1: Increase resource protection and conservation, including historic, cultural, natural, and recreational resources in your community.

- Enhance understanding of heritage areas and ways to leverage these regional collaborations to enhance quality of life for future generations
- Encourage and facilitate community-based plans and visions for retaining and restoring their unique intrinsic qualities
- Recognize excellence
- Support richer investigations of our heritage and lessons that can be applied today

### Goal 2: Enhance and promote economic development.

- Identify best practices where economies are successfully built upon a community’s assets
- Encourage exploration of ways goods and services can be enhanced and/or developed through recognition of place and its unique qualities
- Explore ways industry sectors can enhance and support one another throughout the region
- Enhance direct spending and tax revenues through providing quality experiences for visitors
- Support economic vibrancy by sharing a positive image of the region with the nation

### Goal 3: Enhance community pride and involvement in civic discussion.

- Facilitate town square discussions, supporting community gathering and facilitating discussions in communities where opportunities do not exist
- Empower citizens in civic, economic, and social issues
- Educate, in both formal and informal settings, about the significance of the Western Reserve as well as the role of citizens in shaping communities and their priorities
- Recognize local heroes who have made a difference

### Goal 4: Revitalize a neighborhood or district.

- Build capacity for community empowerment
- Investigate and support sustainable methods for adapting and re-using community assets

*“Celebration, Florida, has spent a lot of time and money in creating a sense of place built around community. We have these places around every bend.”*

—A Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study stakeholder group member





# Chapter 2

## Public Outreach and Involvement

### Process for Outreach and Public Involvement

One of the foundations common to all successful heritage areas is an informed and engaged community that is committed to the long-term sustainability of the regional project. Active participation and strong support from all facets of the community are essential to cultivating partnerships and collaborations. This support is particularly important to leverage resources for the conservation and interpretation of the natural, historic, and cultural resources. The Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Team developed a transparent community engagement process that addressed the following objectives:

- Promote public understanding of heritage areas and how they are managed.
- Inform members of the public about the Western Reserve Heritage Study and how they can become involved in the process.
- Assess public support for the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area.
- Determine if there is local capacity and commitment to coordinate a Western Reserve Heritage Area.

### *Stakeholder Committee*

In order to achieve these objectives, the study team developed a variety of diverse community engagement methods to involve the public in the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study. One of the first tasks was the creation of a Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Stakeholder Committee with representation throughout the 14-county region. Members of the committee included elected officials and representatives from regional nonprofit organizations, planning agencies, park agencies, community and economic development organizations, and historical organizations. Represented on the committee were many of the existing regional organizations within the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area, including the Western Reserve Historical Society, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, The Fund for our Economic Future, and the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition. Committee members met quarterly throughout the planning process and provided input and feedback regarding the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study.

### *Civic Engagement Tools*

A variety of community engagement methods was implemented throughout the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study process, including town hall meetings (public meetings), community and elected official leadership meetings, radio and cable television interviews, newspaper articles, flyers, Western Reserve Heritage newsletters, and articles in regional organizations' newsletters. In addition to traditional methods of public involvement, the study team incorporated a variety of social networking tools, including the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Facebook group, Twitter, and an interactive web site at <http://westernreserve.ning.com>. This website had 2,567 visitors and 92 users who registered as members to receive updates.

United States Congressman Tim Ryan met with members of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Stakeholder Committee and shared information about his vision for a proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area. Judy Billings from

Freedom Frontier National Heritage Area also spoke to committee members regarding her regions' experience in designation and management of a nationally-designated heritage area.



Town hall meetings were key community engagement methods.

### Town Hall Gatherings, Public Meetings, and Presentations

	Date	Location	Venue	Number	
<b>2009</b>	June 1	Peninsula	Cuyahoga Valley National Park (stakeholder committee)	30	
	August 27	Cleveland	Stakeholder Committee Meeting	15	
	September 30	Cleveland	Western Reserve Historical Society (historic interests)	35	
	September 30	Cleveland	Stakeholder Committee Meeting	20	
	November 4	Kirtland	Lake Metroparks Farmpark	25	
	November 4	Sandusky	Lake Erie Shores and Islands Welcome Center	23	
	November 5	Rootstown	NEOUCOM	27	
	December 2	Cleveland	Stakeholder Committee Meeting	12	
	<b>2010</b>	January 5	Canton	Adventures in NE Ohio	30
		January 7	Liberty	Liberty Township Trustee Meeting	40
January 27		Burton	Geauga County Historical Society	45	
January 28		Akron	Public Library	24	
February 2		Norwalk	Huron County Job & Family Services	10	
February 3		Painesville	Morley Library	20	
February 4		Amherst	Lorain County Visitors Bureau	20	
February 9		Cleveland	Positively Cleveland offices	15	
February 9		Cleveland	Cleveland Zoo (snow storm)	2	
February 10		Jefferson	Ashtabula County Courthouse	20	
February 11		Sandusky	Sandusky City Hall	15	
February 16		Ravenna	Reed Memorial Library	10	
February 17		Warren	Kent State Trumbull Campus	35	
February 18		Cleveland	Hale Farm (historic interests)	30	
February 22		Cleveland	Stakeholder Committee Meeting	12	
February 25		Medina	County Library	20	
March 21		Huron	Friends of Erie Metropark *	100	
March 31		Medina	Partners in Tourism Meeting	21	
April 20		Cleveland	Northeast Ohio Inter-museum Council	56	
April 22		Sandusky	Sandusky Rotary Presentation *	75	
April 27		Cleveland	Stakeholder Committee Meeting	15	
April 29		Geneva	Ashtabula Economic Development Summit *	200	
May 12		Ravenna	Portage County Regional Planning Commission	18	
June 15		Cleveland	Stakeholder Committee Meeting	15	
June 17		Ravenna	Reed Memorial Library	10	
June 21		Jefferson	Jefferson Historical Society	30	
June 22		Brecksville	Sleepy Hollow Golf Course	10	
June 23		Medina	County Library	14	
June 24		Huron	Public Library	40	
June 25		Akron	Ohio and Erie Canalway Coalition	12	
July 1	Youngstown	Eastgate Regional Council of Government	23		
July 22	Medina	Medina Breakfast Kiwanis *	25		
August 4	Wadsworth	Downtown Wadsworth Organization *	18		
August 10	Warren	Congressman Tim Ryan's Office	3		
September 8	Medina	Partners in Tourism Meeting *	18		
September 9	Norwalk	Norwalk Chamber Board Meeting	21		
September 15	Cleveland	Happy Days Visitors Center (tourism interests)	15		
September 15	Cleveland	Stakeholder Committee Meeting	12		
October 26	Akron	Summit County Mayors Association	19		

\* Presentations by stakeholder committee members and others that included a discussion of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study

**Total Number of Participants—1,305**

### *Special Interest Meetings*

Meetings were held with representatives of the region's tourism industry, as well as representatives of museums and historical societies. These meetings gathered specific information related to the study and perspectives about the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study.

### *Meetings in a Box*

The study team also developed a portable meeting-in-a-box presentation about the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area and the feasibility study process. This tool was provided to stakeholder committee members for their use in making presentations to service and civic organizations throughout the Western Reserve.

*“Our rich roots have  
been exposed, and our  
treasures unveiled.”*

### *Media*

Media releases were distributed prior to public meetings. These releases also generated additional feature article coverage. The following represent those media mentions the study team is aware of at this time:

*Tribune-Chronicle*, Warren  
WFMJ-TV, Youngstown  
WKBN-TV, Youngstown  
WYTV-TV, Youngstown  
*Youngstown Vindicator*  
*News-Herald*, Lake County  
*Akron Beacon Journal*  
*Cleveland Plain Dealer*  
*Chagrin Solon Sun*  
*West Side Leader*  
Ohio.com  
Cleveland State University *News from Cleveland*  
*Memory* newsletter  
VisitMedinaCounty.com newsletter  
Clevelandareahistory.com  
Medina County Public Access TV

Throughout the entire community engagement process, the study team received constructive input from citizens regarding the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the region and what they value about their community. Historically accurate input was also received on how to interpret and celebrate the unique heritage of the Western Reserve. This input is referenced throughout the

Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study to define guiding principles, values, goals, themes, and other criteria as defined by statute.

### **Guiding Principles**

Citizens throughout the Western Reserve share fundamental beliefs and values. The following guiding principles reflect those ideals identified by citizens during Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study town hall meetings, and they are principles any organization assuming coordination of a regional heritage area initiative should protect and follow.

These principles reflect what citizens believe designation of a Western Reserve Heritage Area could do and for what purpose, and they provide guidelines for how a coordinating entity might move forward. To better understand these principles, direct quotes from citizens supporting each value are also provided.

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area  
respects property rights.*

*“We value private property rights.”*

*“All landowners understand what is special. We have been able to protect land, agricultural heritage, natural areas, and scenic vistas due to successful homeowner programs, such as easements to land trusts.”*

*“Local government control is preserved.”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area encourages, honors, and celebrates authentic and diverse stories from multiple perspectives.*

*“We respect autonomy, but encourage collaboration, among communities.”*

*“We celebrate our differences. After all, it was our mix of cultures and people that created our specialness.”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area focuses on authentic and engaging experiences.*

*“There is authenticity. History is as history was. The story we share was created through research and expert historians.”*

*“There are living history experiences throughout the region, and our region is ‘living history.’”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area connects communities and people across the region.*

*“Integrated thinking is facilitated through ‘virtual’ Western Reserve town squares where we share ideas and best practices.”*

*“Our communities know one another’s history.”*

*“We work together as a region.”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area tells the region’s story and raises national awareness of its distinctive natural, cultural, and historic assets.*

*“People are aware of the impact this region had to industry and culture on a national level.”*

*“People know how to put the Western Reserve in the context of U.S. history.”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area invests in community engagement, education, and empowerment.*

*“We have re-invented ourselves through educating youth, hard work, and dedication.”*

*“Youth understand our roots.”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area sustains and grows sense of place.*

*“We value renewability, sustainability, and planned growth.”*

*“We’ve entered a new era. During the Industrial Era, we measured our growth by feet and the size of our physical footprints.”*

*“We have become leaders in recovering what communities have lost: cultures, historic sites, and natural resources.”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area values and protects its natural, cultural, and historic places and stories.*

*“There are contemporary uses of our resources that reflect historical use.”*

*“We’ve preserved the beauty of the land and our traditions.”*

*“Original characters of our communities are not only protected, but are restored.”*

*“Our agriculture is maintained.”*



*The Western Reserve Heritage Area considers future generations in everything we do.*

*“Our resources, stories, and heritage have been preserved for future generations.”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area believes sustainability, innovation, and appreciation of community resources fosters a strong regional economy.*

*“We are experiencing economic development and new industry.”*

*“Characteristic of our New England settlers, we are adventurous, opportunity-seeking, and have a strong work ethic.”*

*“We are a heritage and cultural tourism destination.”*

*“Our children stay here. There are many new jobs, and we have helped them to create opportunities. We’ve created an environment and quality of life that keeps people here.”*

*“Our economy is built on restoration of resources and not depletion of resources.”*

*“We have an innovative way of looking at economic activity that involves efficiency and integrated thinking.”*

*The Western Reserve Heritage Area fosters pride within its communities and across the region.*

*“We stand tall.”*

*“We believe we are unique and special.”*

*“People understand ‘There’s no place like home.’”*

# Chapter 3

## History of the Western Reserve

### Story of the Western Reserve

*By John Grabowski, Western Reserve Historical Society*

During the autumn, northern Ohio takes on the appearance of New England. The yellow and red foliage mimics that of Connecticut and Massachusetts and, in places, the built landscape mirrors those parts of the eastern seaboard. The centers of many small towns are anchored by town commons, often as not the site of the community's Congregational or Presbyterian Church.

This apparent mirage is not an illusion, but a reminder of the region's cultural foundation. It was once part of Connecticut known as that state's Western Reserve, and "Western Reserve" remains part of the name of a number of local agencies ranging from schools to businesses and social service agencies. Upon that foundation rests a broader, more complex subsequent history, for northern Ohio has evolved from rural to industrial, and its population consists of a global diversity of peoples unimaginable in late 18th-

century New England, the place and period that gave birth to the Western Reserve.

### *Birth of the Western Reserve*

The creation of the Connecticut Western Reserve was very much a part of the colonial and post-colonial speculative interest in the trans-Appalachian lands that characterized the 18th century. George Washington and other prominent Virginians had a keen interest in the development of the Ohio country. New Englanders also looked to acquire, sell, and settle lands in the West. Some historians point out that one of the major grievances the colonists had with Great Britain centered on the Proclamation Line of 1763, which prohibited expansion beyond the mountains. It, along with taxes, was a cause for the subsequent revolution.

When the Revolutionary War ended, a major issue facing the new government (under the Articles of Confederation) was the manner in which the lands west of the Appalachians would

be administered. The area technically belonged to the former colonies, as their royal charters or grants often noted that their lands extended from the Atlantic seaboard to the "South Sea." In all cases but one, the new government was able to secure the western colonial claims and then reconstitute those lands that lay north of the Ohio River as the Northwest Territory. The exception was Connecticut. It managed to "reserve" approximately 3,333,699 acres of its claim.

That Western Reserve began at the western border of Pennsylvania and stretched 120 miles further west. Its southern and northern borders were those of Connecticut, 41 degrees and 42 degrees, 2 minutes. Connecticut's success in holding on to this vast acreage stemmed from a legal issue that predated the Revolution. Some of the territory of New York and Pennsylvania impinged upon the strip of land that Connecticut claimed as a result of its original 1662 charter. This "loss" of land to New York and Pennsylvania provided the basis for Congress to accept the state's claim in 1786

(the fact that Virginia was also able to hold on to some portion of its western claims, as its Military Lands, provided a useful precedent). With that done, the state looked forward to marketing the land, but two issues needed to be solved first.

### *Roadblocks to Settlement*

The primary issue was Native American claims to the lands. While the native population in northern Ohio was not substantial in the late 1700s, the land was nonetheless not open for settlement. That matter came to partial closure in 1795, when the Treaty of Greenville extinguished Indian claims to lands east of the Cuyahoga River (the mouth of which would become the site of Cleveland.) This allowed Connecticut to bring the entire parcel to market, even though the western portions were not yet open for settlement (they would become available in 1805, when all remaining native claims were settled). The government of Connecticut did not, however, wish to sell the lands on a piecemeal basis. They sought a single buyer for the entire parcel, and finding one proved somewhat problematic.

Eventually a consortium of investors—35 purchasing groups comprising a total of 58 individuals—came together as the Connecticut Land Company to purchase the Western Reserve. They paid \$1,200,000, or roughly 40 cents per acre,



September 1826 map "Western Reserve Including the Fire Lands in Ohio" courtesy of The Ohio Historical Society

for the land, while the state held on to 500,000 acres in the far western section as the "Firelands," set aside for Connecticut citizens whose property had been burned by the British during the Revolution. While the transaction was now closed as far as the state was concerned, the investors faced a challenging process. They had bought the land on mortgage, speculating that they could pay

back what they had borrowed and make a profit as well by dividing the land into parcels and selling it in turn to settlers and other buyers. Neither the survey nor the sale of the land would prove easy.

### *Surveying the Purchase*

The investors' first step was to survey the lands east of the Cuyahoga River in order to prepare them

for sale. The company chose its general agent, Moses Cleaveland, to lead the first survey in 1796. He arrived at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River on Lake Erie on July 22. His surveyors named the settlement there in honor of Cleaveland (the spelling of its name was always ambiguous and would be shortened to its current form in 1835). He himself returned east in the autumn of that year, never to return. Indeed, very few members of the Connecticut Land Company chose to visit, let alone settle on, their properties—they viewed the enterprise purely as a business venture. However, as in the case of Cleaveland, various members of the company are memorialized by place names that still exist in the Western Reserve: for instance, Rootstown is named after Ephraim Root.

The surveying, which continued for several years, determined the landscape of the region more than the actual early settlement did. It divided the Western Reserve into 25 five-square mile-townships (the townships in the remainder of the Northwest Territory comprised 36-square-mile grids as specified by the Land Ordinance of 1785) that were, in turn, subdivided into smaller parcels. As communities were planned, they were laid out in the pattern of New England—a town square, surrounded by smaller lots for businesses, churches, and homes within the center of the community, and larger parcels for farming on the

outskirts. Today, Cleveland, the Western Reserve's largest city, still retains its central "Public Square" complete with a church and a courthouse.

### *Early Settlement*

Initial settlement in the Western Reserve was slow, much to the consternation of the investors. One, Oliver Phelps, narrowly escaped being sent to a debtors' prison. It was uncertain as to what entity actually had authority over the region. Was it the State of Connecticut or the federal government? Connecticut refused to handle governance of the area, and so eventually, in 1800, an act of Congress brought the region formally into the Northwest Territory. Additionally, the Connecticut Land Company made little provision for transport to the area or for schools and other amenities.

Pioneering individuals and families faced great hardships, and the Western Reserve had to compete against other regions to attract settlers. Western New York State, in particular, provided a more proximate location for New Englanders seeking better farmland. Finally, there were lingering concerns as to whether the British, ensconced in Canada just across the lake, might someday lay claim to the Ohio lands.

Nevertheless, settlers slowly made their way to the Western Reserve in gradually increasing numbers.

Many came from Connecticut, Vermont, and New York, with ancestral roots generally traceable to Great Britain. As they built communities, they gave substance through their churches, courthouses, and small town businesses to the "New England plans" created by the surveyors. The region was, in terms of religion, cultural mores, and economic interests, very much a clone of New England.

### *New Settlers from Foreign Soils*

Success would eventually alter, but never quite extinguish, this cultural foundation, and that success began to become evident in the years after the War of 1812. Although there was real fear of a British invasion during the conflict, the American victory finally removed the potential threat of a British takeover of the region. The end of the War of 1812 and the Napoleonic Wars in Europe also set in motion another factor that would change not only the Western Reserve but the entire United States. From 1820 to 1860, an estimated five million individuals emigrated from Europe to the United States and many, largely German and Irish, would come to northern Ohio.

During the same period, the attraction of northern Ohio grew with the creation of viable transportation links, both to the eastern seaboard and within the region and the state (Ohio having

been admitted as a state in 1803). Canals were key to regional growth. The completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 allowed easy access for goods and people across New York and thence by lake transport to the Western Reserve. Then, the completion of the Ohio and Erie Canal from Cleveland on Lake Erie, to Portsmouth on the Ohio River, placed the region on a transport route that stretched from the harbors of Europe to the Gulf of Mexico.

These events began a period of transformation for some areas of the Western Reserve. Towns located on the north-south route of the Ohio and Erie Canal grew, and their population diversified. Cleveland, the "capital" of the Western Reserve, had a population of 606 in 1820 and 43,417 four decades later. Once largely Protestant, the Western Reserve now had a growing number of Catholic and Jewish inhabitants. The advent of railroads in the 1850s served to accelerate change, and it also shifted patterns of settlement. Towns that had grown along the canal corridor now began to stagnate as traffic went to the railroads.

### *Signs of Social Reform Emerge*

The Civil War further catalyzed change in some areas of the Western Reserve. Given its New England roots, the region was strongly pro-union and anti-slavery. Some towns, such as Oberlin

and Hudson, were profoundly abolitionist, with the latter having been the home of John Brown for a time. After the Civil War, two Western Reserves evolved - one industrial and located on the lakefront or on major rail lines, and the other more rural and, to some extent, more homogeneous in population. By the 1920s, lakefront cities such as Ashtabula, Cleveland, and Lorain housed populations drawn from all parts of Europe and the American South and produced goods that reshaped life in America. Parts of the Western Reserve constituted one of the country's foremost centers of industrial production in 20th-century America. But, just beyond these areas, in towns including Stow, Tallmadge, Rootstown, Mesopotamia, and Kinsman, the region looked much the same as it had some 50 years earlier.

### *Modern Day Changes*

Within the past six decades, the Western Reserve of Ohio has changed again. The automobile and post-World War II suburbanization, along with new patterns of migration and immigration, has altered landscapes and lifestyles. One-time small towns such as Solon and Medina have become exurban communities—as in the former, the town square has all but been obliterated by the culture of the automobile, whereas in the latter town, the square survives and has become an icon for the preservation movement and an asset for the city.

Diversity of population and religion has increased throughout the region: small-town clinics employ doctors from India, and cities such as Cleveland and Akron celebrate their global heritage through museums, monuments, and multicultural festivals.

There are, however, two rather interesting trends stemming from these most recent changes. One is the growing fascination with all historical heritages in the region, whether they stem from its New England roots, from Europe or Asia, or from the cotton fields of Alabama. The other is the fact that never before has the Western Reserve been as viable in terms of regional identity as it is today.

The waterways, railways, and highways that served to bring a wide variety of peoples, cultures, and occupations into what some had called "New Connecticut," also created an internal connectivity that could not have been imagined by the members of the Connecticut Land Company. That connectivity is proving vital to the region's future.

### *Suggested Additional Readings*

Hatcher, Harlan. *The Western Reserve: The Story of New Connecticut in Ohio*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1991.

Wheeler, Robert (ed). *Visions of the Western Reserve: Public and Private Documents of Northeastern Ohio, 1750-1860*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2000.



## Western Reserve Themes and Subthemes

### *The Western Reserve: The Nation's Town Square*

Town squares appear throughout the Western Reserve, but there is a regional connectivity that goes beyond sharing an architectural and landscape feature. The Western Reserve has been, and continues to be, a microcosm of the nation. Serving as the meeting and mixing place for various cultures and types of people, the Western Reserve is an example of the power of diversity to create change. Progressive thinking and social change throughout the nation were put into action within the Western Reserve, including movements for abolitionism, women's rights, civil rights, labor laws, and environmental protection. Astounding inventions and business innovations in manufacturing, industry, and technology launched new commerce from starting points in the Western Reserve. Education and cultural advancements created and developed further within the region changed our American way.

From church spires to smokestacks, Western Reserve influences changed the nation. The forward-thinking nature of this place began with a focus on religion and expanded into industry, transportation, social reform, and many other

societal issues. Innovation and improvements were inspired by the rich mix of beliefs and experiences that resulted by the blending of different cultures – first from those cultures shared by those who settled the land from Connecticut and the East Coast. This blending of beliefs, thoughts, and ideas was further strengthened by waves of immigrants steeped in their own cultural experiences.

The Western Reserve is the nation's town square and has been since the region's creation soon after the Revolutionary War. Town squares are places

where fresh ways of thinking are the norm. They are settings where people and institutions come together to discuss happenings, advocate for a better way, run their businesses, and build a sense of community.

### **Stories from the Western Reserve**

The importance of the Western Reserve in shaping America is evident in six themes that reveal how the Western Reserve both influenced national history as well as reflects (serves as a microcosm) the nation. The Western Reserve's prominence in innovation and social reform can be seen and

### What is a Town Square?

Here's how residents of the Western Reserve defined a town square during Town Hall Gatherings to discuss the feasibility study.

*It's a place to get the latest news. It's kind of like yesterday's Internet.*

*It's a place to see and be seen.*

*It's a place where a community's need for green space was first recognized.*

*It's a social gathering place – a place to visit with friends and meet new people.*

*It's a place for protests.*

*It's a place that is "Open for Business."*

*It's a place where national issues are discussed – events, ideas, origins, impetus for growth.*

*It's the center of community activity.*

*It's a place where new ideas take root.*

Figure 3 Word from the Streets . . . What is a Town Square?

felt today. Examples where you can witness these stories are included below each theme. These stories are just samples of some of the places, people, and innovations that evolved from a land surveyed and settled by New Englanders, early settlers, and immigrants. These stories evolved from those attending public meetings. Following an initial round of public meetings, the themes were developed and presented to the public at a second round of public meetings.

### *Theme #1- Migration*

Settled by New Englanders in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Western Reserve has been home to generation after generation of distinct domestic and international immigrants bearing their own ideas and traditions. This mixing of cultures and beliefs has inspired new ways of thinking, new ideas, and social reforms. At the same time, many of the cultural elements of each immigrant group have been retained and become part of the region's cultural vernacular, creating in the Western Reserve a region that boasts vibrant ethnic communities and customs, unique foods, an extensive calendar of ethnic festivals, music, museums, art, and club activities. The melting pot also gave rise to social acceptance and reform as those escaping persecution in their home countries sought a way of life in America that would accept differences. Diversity gave rise to social acceptance and reform.

One strong and enjoyable example of the influence of migration on the region is food. It has been said that if you follow the food you will discover the culture. For many, whether it is the Polish pierogi, the Czech kolache, or the Italian pizzelle cookie, a tradition of home-cooked history continues today. Waves of Italian immigrants have fostered the development of excellent, locally owned and operated Italian restaurants throughout the urban areas of the Western Reserve. New immigrants have also brought their own food traditions; for example, Taiwanese immigrants operate the Happy Buddha Precious Temple, a vegetarian restaurant in Cleveland. Food traditions like these exist around the United States as a result of immigration, and the concentration and diversity of them in the Western Reserve make it a perfect illustration.

Music and art are also embodied in the history and current culture of the Western Reserve. Polka clubs and the presence of the “chicken dance” at weddings in the area both carry on a largely forgotten music type for many parts of the country. A rock-and-roll tradition helped Cleveland land the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and deejays from the area were instrumental in racial integration of radio programming nationwide.

There is much overlap among the subthemes. In migration, for example, education was often an important goal for many immigrant parents who wanted their children to be successful and well-educated citizens in their new home. Likewise, internal migrations of African-Americans helped give rise to the area's civil rights influences on the nation.

### **Places**

*Loghurst*, Canfield – Loghurst is an 1805 log home believed to be the oldest remaining log house in the Western Reserve and is operated by the Canfield Heritage Foundation.

*Hale Farm and Village*, Bath – An outdoor living history museum for more than 50 years, Hale Farm and Village provides all ages an opportunity to experience life on the Western Reserve frontier in the 19th century.

*Slavic Village*, Cleveland - Settlers from New England were first attracted to this area in 1796 by the fresh water and power provided by Mill Creek. Construction of the Ohio and Erie Canal in 1825 led to industrial and commercial growth. The arrival of heavy industry brought a large influx of Welsh, English, Scottish, and Irish immigrants. In the 1870s, Czech and Polish immigrants arrived, bringing their culture and religion to the area,

creating a neighborhood as rich in ethnic history as any in the United States.

*Western Reserve Historical Society Museum*, Cleveland – This not-for-profit educational institution preserves its collections, historic sites, and museums to inspire people to explore the Western Reserve history and culture. Its interpretation places the regional experience within the larger context of state, national, and global history. Today, it is the largest privately-supported regional historical society in the nation.

*Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage*, Cleveland - The Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage introduces visitors to the beauty and diversity of that heritage in the context of the American experience. It explores the lives of individuals and their families in terms of their social, cultural, economic, and scientific contributions to the region, the nation, and the world.

*Connecticut Land Company Office*, Warren - Now home to the Trumbull County Tourism Bureau, this building once served as the headquarters for the Connecticut Land Company where tracts of land were sold.

*Kilpi Hall*, Conneaut - Kilpi Hall, the home of the Conneaut Community Center for the Arts, is the

oldest original Finnish Hall in Northeast America. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it is where Finnish ancestors gathered to pray, laugh, sing, and dance.

### People

*Moses Cleaveland* led the first survey party to the Western Reserve from Connecticut.

*Rev. Heinrich Christian Schwan*, a German immigrant, introduced the first lighted Christmas tree in Cleveland in 1851 and helped spread the tradition across America.

*Hector Boiardi*, better known as Chef Boyardee, emigrated to the region from Italy and opened a Cleveland Restaurant. His sauce became nationally recognized and a multi-million dollar corporation.

*Bob Hope*, a British-born comedian and actor, moved to Cleveland in 1908 and later became known for his humanitarian efforts, particularly his support of U.S. Armed Forces and its USO shows.



## Geauga and Trumbull Counties Amish Communities

The Amish are a Christian separatist group that preserves a simple, self-sufficient way of life, avoiding modernization. They are easily identified by their traditional clothing without adornment, hats, and beards on married men. Their families tend to average about seven children. The home is the central place for gathering and fellowship in Amish communities. Church services, weddings, funerals, and social gatherings are all conducted at home. They do not allow electricity or telephones and rely on horse and buggy for travel. English is learned as a second language during school (Pennsylvania Dutch is the primary language for Amish), which runs through eighth grade.

Amish migration to Geauga and Trumbull counties began in the 1880s, creating the second largest Amish population in the state and the fourth largest population in the United States. There are about 60 Amish schools in Geauga County, serving an Amish population of more than 14,000. Their homes, horse and buggies, and simple attire are a visible part of life in Geauga County. Other elements of their culture that are evident to visitors include Amish shops for hardwood furniture, quilts, hand-oven baskets, baked goods, hand dipped candles & homemade soaps. Roadside stands also offer fresh produce and baked goods to visitors.

## Innovation and Ideals

*Food* – Regional markets, restaurants, and dinner tables express the diversity of those that settled the region. “Cheesedom” described Aurora and its surrounding communities in the 19th century as a major center of cheese production. Beginning in 1808, local producers began shipping their cheese elsewhere. With the influx of new immigrants came new traditions and foods, including Pierogi, Czech kolaches, Italian pizzelles, and Barberton chicken-Serbian Style.

A cookie table is an ethnic wedding tradition said to originate in Youngstown. In place of or in addition to a traditional wedding cake, a large table with cookies is commonly presented to guests at Western Reserve wedding receptions.

With its origins dating back to 1840, the West Side Market was dedicated in 1912. Its 137-foot tower has stood as a Cleveland landmark for nearly a century. Today the market is home to more than 100 vendors of great ethnic diversity.

*Music* – The Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of polka music. The Cleveland-Style polka has its roots in Slovenian folk music.

## Theme #2- Transportation

The Western Reserve connected itself to the nation; in the development of those systems, it connected the world. Canal boats, steamships, lake freighters, railroads, automobiles, Goodyear Airship, early aviation, and aerospace innovations—the Western Reserve has been at the hub of designing, manufacturing, and using the vehicles and systems that transport people and goods. The region was a heavy user of these technologies, illustrating similar industrialization and settlement patterns to those found elsewhere in America as a result of transportation technologies and routes. More importantly, it was the home of numerous innovations in the design and manufacture of the modes and methods of transportation.

The Western Reserve retains its historic role as a center of automobile and parts production



and design, as well as in the construction and movement of people and goods via transportation system. For example, the Lordstown General Motors plant increased the number of employees in 2010 to build components for the new Chevrolet Cruze. The region today has a rich heritage of trails and outdoor recreation, evidenced through a national park, the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail, and an extensive array of connected trails through metroparks systems. In the Towpath Trail, one can see a historical form of transportation giving way to a more modern priority.

Overlapping with other subthemes, the natural existence of Lake Erie and the region’s rivers created the basis for a water-based transportation system that eventually included canals. Today, water trails, boating, and ferries are a few of the systems that continue to be used. Railroads in particular fed the explosive growth of industry in this region; the region also spurred railroad growth as increased industry created a need to move products.

## Places

*Steamship WILLIAM G. MATHER*, Cleveland – The 1925-built MATHER, a restored 618-foot Great Lakes freighter, allows visitors to marvel at the “engineering firsts” that helped transform the Western Reserve into a great industrial center.

*Goodyear Airdock*, Akron – The Goodyear Airdock in Akron was constructed in 1929 by the Goodyear Zeppelin Corporation. With its construction, Akron became one of the centers for development and construction of lighter-than-air ships. In more recent years, the airdock has been used for construction of military blimps by Lockheed Martin.

*NASA John H. Glenn Research Center*, Cleveland – Established in 1941, this research center formed to develop and improve aircraft engines. The Flight Propulsion Research Laboratory now investigates all types of propulsion.

*NASA Plum Brook Station*, Sandusky – Plum Brook is a facility for full-systems testing of large flight-rated structures and propulsion systems.

*National Packard Museum*, Warren – The National Packard Museum preserves the Packard Legacy, recognizing Packard's influence on transportation and industrial history Packard automobiles introduced a number of innovations in its designs, including the modern steering wheel and standard 12-cylinder engines.

## People

*Alexander Winton* built the first diesel engine in the United States and developed a production schedule to make a group of cars according to a pattern. *Horatio Nelson Jackson* made the first cross-country automobile trip in 1903, in a Winton automobile.

*Garrett Morgan* invented the traffic signal, as well as the gas mask.

*Charles Goodyear* revolutionized transportation through the discovery of a process to convert rubber into usable materials.

*Franklin Augustus Seiberling* founded Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, created company housing to benefit workers, and co-founded the Lincoln Highway Association that built the first hard-surface road across America.

*Harvey Firestone* founded Firestone Tire and Rubber Company and was one of the first global producers of tires.



*Ransom Eli Olds* was a pioneer of the American automotive industry for whom both Oldsmobile and Reo brands were named.

*Alfred Kelley* "the father of the Ohio canal system," was born in Middlefield, Connecticut, on November 7, 1789, and moved to Cleveland in 1810 where he became the city's first mayor in 1815. He was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives in 1814 and served in state politics in some capacity for the rest of his life.

## Innovation and Ideals

The *Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail and Canalway National Scenic Byway* are nationally designated scenic byways.

The first tubeless automobile tire began to roll within the Western Reserve.

*The Soap Box Derby* is a youth racing program, and the World Championships are held in Akron every July. Cars competing in this event rely only on gravity to move.

The first padded bicycle seat in the world, known as the *Garford Saddle*, was produced by Garford Manufacturing Company in Elyria.

## Edison Birthplace, Milan

Unquestionably one of the most prolific inventors of all time, Thomas Alva Edison was born in Milan in 1847. Located on the Huron River and canal, and serving as the depot for a rich trade in wheat and supplies for inland families, Milan was not only the second largest wheat shipping port in the world, but also a major shipbuilding center. Edison was just seven years old when the family moved to Port Huron, Michigan. Edison visited his birthplace home in 1923 and was shocked to discover it was still lit by candles and lamps.

Best known for his invention of the electric light bulb in 1879, Edison held many other patents that changed our world. Some of his inventions include a vote recorder, stock ticker, phonograph, electric motor, and motion picture projector.

Edison's birthplace is open as a museum, and it is the only national Edison site to have family involvement in its operation.



### *Theme #3- Industry*

The earliest days of the Western Reserve were marked by a powerful agricultural industry that made the region prosperous. At one point, the region was one of the most prolific cheese- and maple syrup-making areas in the nation. Later, heavy “smokestack” industries led to the primacy of this area as a regional, national, and international force in business and manufacturing. Innovations and prolific production in oil, iron, rubber, and steel led the region to this manufacturing prominence from the Civil War through World War II, bringing the peoples of the world to the Western Reserve for jobs in factories and mills. These immigrants further enhanced innovations by bringing their unique knowledge and skills, such as furniture-making and clock-making.

It was the spirit of the New England “Yankee,” regarded by many as sharp, canny, and resourceful that began the industrial advances in the Western Reserve, a movement that continued by waves of skilled immigrants. This drive to make systems better, more efficient, and more profitable continues today as the region is an international center for progressive medical care and research, and polymer innovations.

The innovative spirit of work in the region also translated into the Western Reserve leading the

nation in innovations in labor structures and relationships, as well as in worker's rights. Important national struggles for worker's rights took place in Cleveland, Akron, Warren, and Youngstown, changing the face of industry for all Americans. The existence of strong industries led to the establishment of educational institutions of technology, design, and the arts to feed manufacturing and to augment the quality of life for workers.

### **Places**

*Wineries* – German immigrants, who came to the Western Reserve in the late 1800s, brought with them German winemaking techniques and found a microclimate influenced by Lake Erie that produced excellent grapes and wines. Wineries popped up from the Lake Erie Islands, near Sandusky, all the way east to the Pennsylvania border. This narrow strip became known as the “Lake Erie Grape Belt”, an area that is home to well over half of the grape acreage in Ohio.

*Youngstown Historic Center of Industry and Labor* – This museum tells the story of the impact of the iron and steel industries on Youngstown and other Western Reserve communities.

*Hopewell Furnace, Struthers* – Built in 1803, the Hopewell Cold-Blast Charcoal Furnace was the first furnace built in the State of Ohio. It was built

on Yellow Creek by James and Daniel Heaton near the present city of Struthers.

*Amherst Sandstone Center*, Amherst -- Beginning in 1847, Amherst developed and prospered around the sandstone industry and its associated quarries. Amherst sandstone is well known for its quality, durability, and rich texture, and it has been used for construction projects throughout the world.

*National Inventors Hall of Fame™*, Akron – This site honors the women and men responsible for the great technological advances that make human, social, and economic progress possible.


### People

*Thomas Alva Edison* held 1,093 U.S. patents including the incandescent light bulb, motion picture camera, printing telegraph, and cylinder phonograph.


*John D. Rockefeller* was an American oil magnate who revolutionized the petroleum industry.

*Halsey Taylor* invented the bubbling drinking fountain.

*Quincy Gilmore* invented improvements to the artificial heart.



*It was the spirit of the New England “Yankee,” regarded by many as sharp, canny, and resourceful that began the industrial advances in the Western Reserve ...*



*Lewis Miller* invented equipment that led to the modern-day combine harvester.

*Dr. Daniel B. Woods* was one of the first doctors in the west to use ether in surgical procedures.

*Platt Rogers Spencer* is the father of American handwriting who perfected the Spencerian Script influenced by nature and Lake Erie.

*Ferdinand Schumacher* founded a company that merged to become Quaker Oats Company.

*Ohio Columbus Barber* was known as the “American Match King” and helped form several companies including Diamond Match Company and Babcock and Wilcox Company.

### Innovation and Ideals

The first *whole-body x-ray scanner* was developed by Ohio Nuclear, Inc.

*United Rubber Workers Union* was founded in Akron.

*Salt* is mined under Lake Erie, and *Morton Salt* got its start in the Western Reserve.

*Countryside Initiative* is an innovative community-based food system that re-establishes farms within the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

*Medical breakthroughs* are vast and include the first near-total face transplant, surgical procedure to repair diseased heart valves, larynx transplants, and development of a new pacemaker to allow spinal cord injury patients to breathe with a ventilator.

*The American Society of Metals International* became an international society for materials professionals. Its International Geodesic Dome is a landmark in the world of technology.

An area of the Western Reserve is known as the “*polymer valley*” for its large number of plastics and rubber companies since the 1800s.

The *Sheffield Manual Labor Institute* was among the first that trained men and women of all races.

#### *Theme #4- Lake Erie*

Part of the largest freshwater system in the world, Lake Erie created the climate for the Western Reserve's dynamic cultural and industrial history. Its influence on the weather and natural landscape is evidenced by flourishing vineyards, nurseries, and orchards, while the natural features dictated where harbors and canals developed. These working waterways connected the Western Reserve to the world, providing transportation for people and ideas to and from the region, jobs, and a carrying route for raw materials and manufactured goods. The impact of industry on the lake and rivers also created change in the 1970s. The nation's environmental movement, The Clean Water Act, and the birth of the Environmental Protection Agency were sparked by grassroots efforts that followed media coverage of the "burning" of the Cuyahoga River when an oil slick upon the river ignited.

Focus on the lake continues to shift in value from viewing it as only a way to fuel an industrial engine to a recreational, scenic, and natural resource creating a quality of life few areas possess. Today, the lake's value as a recreational, scenic, and natural resource is becoming increasingly recognized. As water issues emerge in other areas of the United States, Lake Erie's importance as part of the vast freshwater Great Lakes system will increase as well.

Important research on Lake Erie and the Great Lakes is conducted within the region, with academic institutions cooperating and leading the way. Scenic and working lighthouses, shipwrecks, sportfishing, historic resort communities, and a history of tourism along the lakefront are important elements of the region's heritage and its identity today.

#### **Places**

*Ashtabula Harbor District* – With completion of the railroad in 1873, Ashtabula's harbor became a direct route to ship iron ore to the booming steel mills of Youngstown and Pittsburgh. Demand for labor in Ashtabula brought Swedish, Finnish, Irish, Italian, and other immigrants to the city. The harbor was one of the busiest ports on the Great Lakes. Now on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975, the district conveys the feeling of a characteristic late 19th century commercial street of structures ranging from the High Victorian Italianate through the Neo-Classical styles.

*Harbour Town 1837*, Vermilion - Once known as the "Village of Lake Captains," no other place in Ohio has so many beautifully maintained captains' homes in its historic district.

*Marine museums* in Fairport Harbor, Ashtabula, Vermilion and Sandusky celebrate the rich maritime history on Lake Erie

*The Ohio State University Stone Laboratory* is the oldest freshwater laboratory on the Great Lakes. More than 65 researchers from at least a dozen of our nation's academic institutions and agencies use Stone Laboratory as a base for solving Great Lakes issues such as aquatic invasive species, the Dead Zone, harmful algal blooms, and nutrient loading. Stone Laboratory also serves as an OSU island campus for undergraduate and graduate students, in addition to serving as a workshop site for high school and middle school students.

*Lake Erie lighthouses* are located in Conneaut, Fairport, Ashtabula, Lorain, Cleveland, Vermilion, Huron, Sandusky, Port Clinton, and Put-in-Bay. The Marblehead Lighthouse, built in 1822, is the oldest continuously operating lighthouse on the Great Lakes.

*Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial*, Put-in-Bay – This National Park Service site and memorial commemorates international peace and the Battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812.

Views of Lake Erie and access to its beaches and waters are found at several sites, including *state parks* in Geneva-on-the-Lake and Marblehead.

*Mentor Marsh*, Mentor - One of the largest natural marshes remaining along the Lake Erie shoreline,



Mentor Marsh is an important breeding and nursery area for wildlife that depend on Lake Erie.

*Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve*, Huron – Part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s network of estuarine research reserves, Old Woman Creek is the only one representing a Great Lakes freshwater estuary. Estuaries are a transition zone between land and water, resulting in a site with a variety of habitats including marshes and swamps, upland forests, open water, tributary streams, and barrier beach.

The *Lake Erie Islands* archipelago of South Bass, Kelleys, Middle, North, and Pelee islands are places of maritime commerce, military history, winemaking, quarrying, and tourism. Isolated from the mainland and accessible only by boat or

air, these islands retain a coastal charm and are becoming recognized for their natural treasures.

### People

*Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry* led U.S. naval forces to victory during the War of 1812’s Battle of Lake Erie, securing control of the lake and forcing British retreat.



*Commodore Perry*

*George Hulett* invented the Hulett ore unloader that revolutionized shipping on the Great Lakes.

*Samuel L. Mather* is credited with opening the rich iron ore resources of the Lake Superior region, bringing Cleveland to its position of supremacy in the iron industry.

*Benajah Wolcott* was one of the first settlers on the Marblehead Peninsula in 1809. On June 24 1822, he was appointed keeper of the newly completed Marblehead Lighthouse. Following his death 10 years later, his wife—Rachel Wolcott—became the first female lighthouse keeper on the Great Lakes.

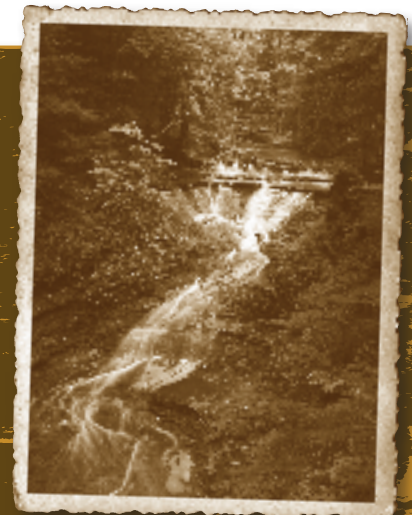
*Pierpont Edwards* founded the Toleration Party in Connecticut and became a U.S. federal judge. He was also one of the original members of the Connecticut Land Company, owning South Bass, Middle Bass, and Gibraltar islands. He and his agents began farming till after the War of 1812 when they began providing maritime resources and services.

## Tinkers Creek

Tinkers Creek is named for Joseph Tinker, who was the principal boatman for Moses Cleaveland’s survey crew. This 52-person work unit from Connecticut was charged with surveying the original Western Reserve. They didn’t finish the survey work entirely, and Tinker died in a boating accident while returning to New England.

Tinkers Creek is the largest tributary of the Cuyahoga River, draining parts of 24 different political jurisdictions, spanning Portage, Geauga, Summit, and Cuyahoga counties. At a total length of about 30 miles, Tinkers Creek has a drainage area of 96.4 square miles. Its waters eventually end up in Lake Erie, providing an example of how actions that impact water quality of tributaries contribute to the quality of Lake Erie waters as well. In a 2-mile stretch, the creek drops 220 feet through a steep gorge, producing waterfalls and cascades that provide pleasant viewing for visitors to the area.

Tinkers Creek State Nature Preserve includes almost 786 acres of rich peat, swamp, and marshland populated with diverse foliage and fauna. For example, nesting waterfowl, songbirds, Canada geese, wood ducks, beavers, whitetail deer, mink, raccoon, weasel, muskrat, fox, snapping turtles, water snakes, four-toed salamanders, and bullfrogs are commonly found within its boundaries.



*Photo by Miriam Poling*

## Innovation and Ideals

*Clean Water Act of 1972* – The publicity surrounding the water quality of Lake Erie and the Cuyahoga River publicity when it “caught fire” in 1969 served as a catalyst in passage of the Clean Water Act, the first laws to protect the nation’s waters and to eliminate pollution discharge into waterways.

Lake Erie is known as the “*Walleye Capital of the World*”, and it produces more fish for human consumption than the other four Great Lakes combined.

An emerging interest in *steelhead fishing* and increased access and water quality has led to the growth of steelhead fishing in the lake’s tributaries.

## Theme #5- Land Use and Architecture

Choices in land use began with the first surveying team sent to the Western Reserve from New England. Unique surveying methods resulted in settlement patterns that included town squares, radiating patterns of land use and roadways, and five-mile-square townships. As early settlers from New England arrived in the area, they brought distinct architectural patterns, examples of which are prolific through the region. Especially common in the early era were wood-frame and wood-sided buildings.

As increased immigration and industrialization occurred, architectural tastes were influenced by those of the world and country at large and by the increased availability of other building materials, such as stone and brick. Civic buildings of the region, particularly those of heavy industrial periods, are awe-inspiring examples of their architectural types, which include Richardsonian Romanesque, Beaux Arts, Greek Revival, and more. These structures are a testament to the wealth that generated in the Western Reserve and—when built with private monies—to the philanthropic bent of the region’s leadership through time. Many continue to serve their communities today as city halls, libraries, auditoriums, and theaters. The homes of financial giants, such as the Tudor Revival-style Stan Hywet Hall, illustrate the individual wealth that was generated and held here.

Not all structures are illustrations of magnitude and expenditure, however. Especially in areas with high immigration numbers, such as Youngstown, one finds smaller churches, clubs, and halls within ethnic communities that illustrated the groups’ shared culture. Historic neighborhoods range from high-style to vernacular, from industrial-era mansions lining the streets to small, wood-frame homes that cohesively portray their period of significance.

## Places

*Town squares*, such as those in Medina, Hudson, Canfield, Tallmadge, Mesopotamia, Cleveland, Milan, and many other Western Reserve communities, mirror the settlement patterns brought to the area by Connecticut settlers.

*Millionaire Row*, Warren - Historic Mahoning Avenue is where the local affluent – the “Who’s Who” of American industry, commerce, and politics – built and lived in stately homes and mansions that lined the street during the mid- to



late-1800s. Recognized as national treasures, many of these structures have been restored to their original grandeur. Today they are home to businesses, museums, offices, and private residences including the Sutliff Museum, an authentic recreation of the Victorian period, circa 1830-1900.

*Trumbull County Courthouse*, Warren – Completed in 1897, this building is a Richardson Romanesque design and features Ohio's largest common pleas courtroom.

*Sandusky* is home to one of the largest collections of historical limestone architecture in the country.

*Stambaugh Auditorium* is a Greco-Roman style building financed by a leading Youngstown businessman.

*Shandy Hall* is the oldest frame house in the Western Reserve to be preserved in its original form.

*Norwalk* is situated at the center of the Firelands, a subregion of the Western Reserve, and is an architecturally-diverse historic district.

### People

The *Van Sweringen* brothers built Cleveland's Terminal Tower, the second tallest building in the world when completed in 1930.

*Jonathan Goldsmith* was a master builder and a pioneer in the Greek Revival Style of architecture.

*Daniel Burnham* co-developed the 1903 Group Plan that included the Cleveland Mall, public green space, and the city's major civic and governmental buildings.

*J. Milton Dyer* was a prolific and prominent architect who designed many Cleveland buildings, including one of the country's first major exhibition halls.

*Ernest J. Bohn* became the "father" of public housing and introduced the first enabling legislation in Ohio. The first three public housing projects authorized and begun by the Public Works Administration were built in Cleveland in 1935-37.

### Innovation and Ideals

*Shaker Heights* was one of the country's first Garden City suburban planning projects.

Original records of the Connecticut Western Reserve Land Company show how settlement of the area was a "test bed" for *public land systems and surveying*.

## Medina Town Square

Typical of many cities and towns in the Western Reserve, Main Street Medina boasts a classic town square at the heart of its historic downtown commercial district. The city's Main Street website ([www.mainstreetmedina.com](http://www.mainstreetmedina.com)) describes its creation:

*Founded in 1818, one of the first things Medina's earliest settlers did was to clear away the huge trees and create a public park, or, as it was called in their native New England, a Town Commons or Village Green. Business and residential buildings quickly sprang up along the four streets surrounding the park. The community received a grant of land on the condition it become the county seat for Medina County.*

The Medina Public Square Historic District includes a central green space with a gazebo, surrounded by a courthouse, retail stores, restaurants, the convention and visitors bureau, various county, city and federal government buildings, historic churches, theaters, and a magnificent public library building. The Public Square Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and remains the heart of the community today, with events like summer concerts and special programs taking place there.



Land conservancies, metropark systems, and state and federal agencies have acquired and preserved *public spaces* for Western Reserve residents and visitors.

*Cemeteries and monuments* trace the region's heritage and wealth.

*Main street thoroughfares, town squares and downtown business districts* continue to be the center of community activity.

### *Theme #6 – Education and Social Reform*

Those within the Western Reserve have seldom been afraid to fight for their beliefs. We see evidence of this in widespread involvement in abolitionism, Underground Railroad, women's rights, civil rights, and environmental action advocated by citizens of the region. Harriet Taylor Upton led the early women's suffrage movement from here, Oberlin College had a racially integrated student body as early as 1835, and Case Western Reserve University has a Social Justice Institute that works to encourage civic discourse and engagement today.

A climate supportive of philanthropy has aided the region's ability to create change. The region provided the first public scholarships

## Sutliff Museum, Warren

The life and times of the Sutliff family are featured in this museum from pioneer times of the Western Reserve through the days of the Civil War to the height of the Victorian era.

The Sutliff brothers, Levi and Milton, were active in the area's abolition movement and played significant roles in the Underground Railroad. Levi's daughter, Phebe Temperance Sutliff, was a scholar and educator, teaching at the college level and eventually serving as the first woman president of Rockford (Illinois) College in the early 20th century. Upon returning to Ohio from Illinois, she was instrumental in many civic organizations in Warren, including forming educational programs for immigrants and serving as the first female board president of the Warren Public Library in 1938. She established and endowed the Sutliff Museum.

The Warren Library Association, through the Sutliff Museum, continues the Sutliff legacy of community service and education through programs such as the Underground Railroad Suitcase and lectures. Outside the doors of the museum is an Underground Railroad exhibit established by the Warren Library Association that provides a glimpse of the local anti-slavery sentiments from the 1820s to the 1850s. This exhibit has earned the Warren-Trumbull County Public Library (which houses both the exhibit and the Sutliff Museum) a Freedom Station designation by the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati.



for education. Industrial leaders paid for the construction of libraries, theaters, and other civic buildings. Today, the volume of community-based foundations is above the norm, evidencing a continued tendency to give.

For many, religion formed the foundation for active social reform and a giving spirit. Connecticut settlers brought with them faith, a practice of tithing, and Puritan beliefs. This

regional attention to matters of the spirit was strengthened by the arrival of new immigrants, many of whom were seeking to escape persecution based on their religious beliefs. One needs only to scan the horizon in a town of the Western Reserve to see the diversity and volume of churches that evidence the religious heritage of the region.

## Places

*John Brown Home*, Akron – The fight to end slavery in the United States was the driving force and passion of John Brown's life; here, one can see documentation of his life history, from his days of youth in his hometown of Akron in the 1830s, to his historic raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859.

*John Mercer Langston House*, Oberlin – A National Historic Landmark, this site was home to John Mercer Langston, abolitionist and U.S. Congressman, who was one of the first African-Americans elected to public office in the United States.

*William H. McGuffey Boyhood Home*, Warren – A National Historic Landmark, this site was home to William H. McGuffey, creator of the McGuffey Readers.

*Oberlin Heritage Center* – This award-winning museum complex includes three beautifully preserved historic sites including the Monroe House (1866), Jewett House (1884), and Schoolhouse (1836).

*Oberlin College* – This small Ohio college has an extraordinary, nationally significant history. It was a hotbed of abolitionism, women's activism, part of the Underground Railroad, and a leader in non-segregated higher education opportunities.

*Hubbard House Underground Railroad Museum* – Not only is this site an excellent example of Western Reserve architecture, but it was also used to shelter slaves moving along the "Underground Railroad." Written accounts list over 30 individuals seeking freedom stayed at the house at one time before boarding ships to Canada.

*Historic Kirtland and Kirtland Temple* – From 1831 to 1838, Kirtland was a bustling community



and headquarters of an energetic new religious movement under the leadership of Joseph Smith, Jr. Historic Kirtland tells the story of early members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

*Wellington* – In 1858, a runaway slave was seized by U.S. marshals in Oberlin and transported to Wellington for deportation to the south. Plans were thwarted when a massive crowd gathered in Wellington. The people involved were indicted for violation of the "Fugitive Law."

*Union Chapel*, Newbury—Residents built the Union Chapel when the Congregational Church across the street refused to allow James Garfield

to speak there, as they were concerned about the topic of his speech. Garfield, later the twentieth President of the United States, dedicated the small chapel to free speech. The South Newbury Woman's Suffrage Political Club, one of the oldest in the U.S., was organized there, and Louisa May Alcott and Susan B. Anthony are among those who have spoken at the chapel.

## People

*Toni Morrison* is a Nobel Prize and Pulitzer Peace Prize winning author.

*Joshua Reed Giddings* was an American statesman and abolitionist.

*Jay Cooke* was a wizard financier who developed the war bond system to aid union efforts during the Civil War.



*Jay Cooke*

*Harriet Taylor Upton* secured the National Women's Suffrage Association national headquarters in Warren and was active in politics in late 1800s.

*John Mercer Langston* was one of the first African-Americans elected to public office when elected as a town clerk in Ohio.

*Archibald Willard* painted *The Spirit of '76* in Wellington after seeing a patriotic parade pass through the town square.



*Betsy Mix* was president of the women-speaking-only Salem women's rights convention in 1850 and was an active abolitionist.

*Clarence Darrow* was an attorney during the Scopes-Monkey trial.

*Ransom Dunn* was an early evangelist who influenced abolitionists.

### **Innovation and Ideals**

First Community Charity Fund Community Chest was the first community charity fund and precursor to the *United Way*.

*Women's suffrage movement* was nationally headquartered in Warren.

The *Anti-Saloon League* was founded in Oberlin and became one of the nation's most powerful prohibition lobbying organizations.

*Alcoholics Anonymous* began in Akron.

*Easter Seals* began in Elyria as the National Society for Crippled Children.

The *Akron Plan* for church buildings was first used in 1872 and was popularized by architectural pattern books in the late 19th and early 20th century. The plan is typified by an auditorium worship space (the "rotunda") surrounded by connecting Sunday school classrooms spaces on one or two levels. The plan promotes efficiency of movement by congregants between worship and Sunday School.

*Abolitionism* and *Underground Railroad* movements were active throughout the Western Reserve.

The *open shelf library system* was founded in the Western Reserve.

The "burning" of the Cuyahoga River sparked the *national environmental movement*, the formation of the *Environmental Protection Agency*, and *passage of the 1972 Clean Water Act*.

## **Oberlin**

Oberlin has a long and vibrant history of involvement in key social issues facing the nation. Active in the Underground Railroad movement, the city has been called the "Town that Started the Civil War" for the uproar it raised when Oberlin residents and Oberlin College students traveled to nearby Wellington to free a man from slave catchers. Abolitionism was not the only issue tackled by residents of this campus community. Civil rights, temperance, prohibition, and women's rights all received a boost from this small community.

Oberlin College was the first in the nation to regularly enroll women alongside men; it was the first to graduate an African-American female. A sampling of the college's alumni demonstrate the unique role this community has played – John Mercer Langston who became the first African American elected to Congress from Virginia, Antoinette Brown who became the first ordained female minister in the United States, and Lucy Stone who helped organize the American Woman Suffrage Association.

The progressive Oberlin Heritage Center maintains three historic sites where visitors learn more about this community's celebrated past. This award-winning center provides guided tours, history walks, workshops, and programs.



# Chapter 4

## Resource Inventory

### Historical Resource Inventory

The National Park Service recognizes “nationally distinctive landscapes” as those containing regional and national stories and related natural, cultural, and historic resources that retain integrity. This connection between story and existing resources provides visitors and residents the ability to understand their own and the region’s heritage in the context of the nation’s heritage. The historical and cultural resources of the Western Reserve are significant and varied, and many retain the integrity required to show the historic importance of this area of Ohio.

The historical resources are, in fact, so rich in this region that the challenge lies not in identifying or inventorying what is available but rather in exemplifying the depth and breadth of what exists in a manageable inventory. The preceding chapters in this plan have described and classified numerous heritage sites, history museums, historic towns and cities, and other resources that fit within the themes of Western Reserve. This

section focuses on the breadth of heritage resources existent in the heritage area boundaries, evidenced by inventories and lists generated for purposes such as the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register of Historic Places “is the official list of the Nation’s historic places worthy of preservation” (<http://www.nps.gov/nr/about.htm>). Properties must be old enough (generally 50 years or older) and of national significance for their related stories, architecture, engineering, industry, or archaeology. In addition, enough historic fabric must remain to evidence that nationally significant element(s). The Western Reserve contains 1,005 National Register of Historic Places, including 17 National Historic Landmarks within the counties that comprise the heritage area. These landmarks include:

- Jay Cooke House, Gibraltar Island
- Johnson’s Island Civil War Prison, Marblehead
- NASA Spacecraft Propulsion Research Facility, Sandusky
- Thomas A. Edison Birthplace, Milan

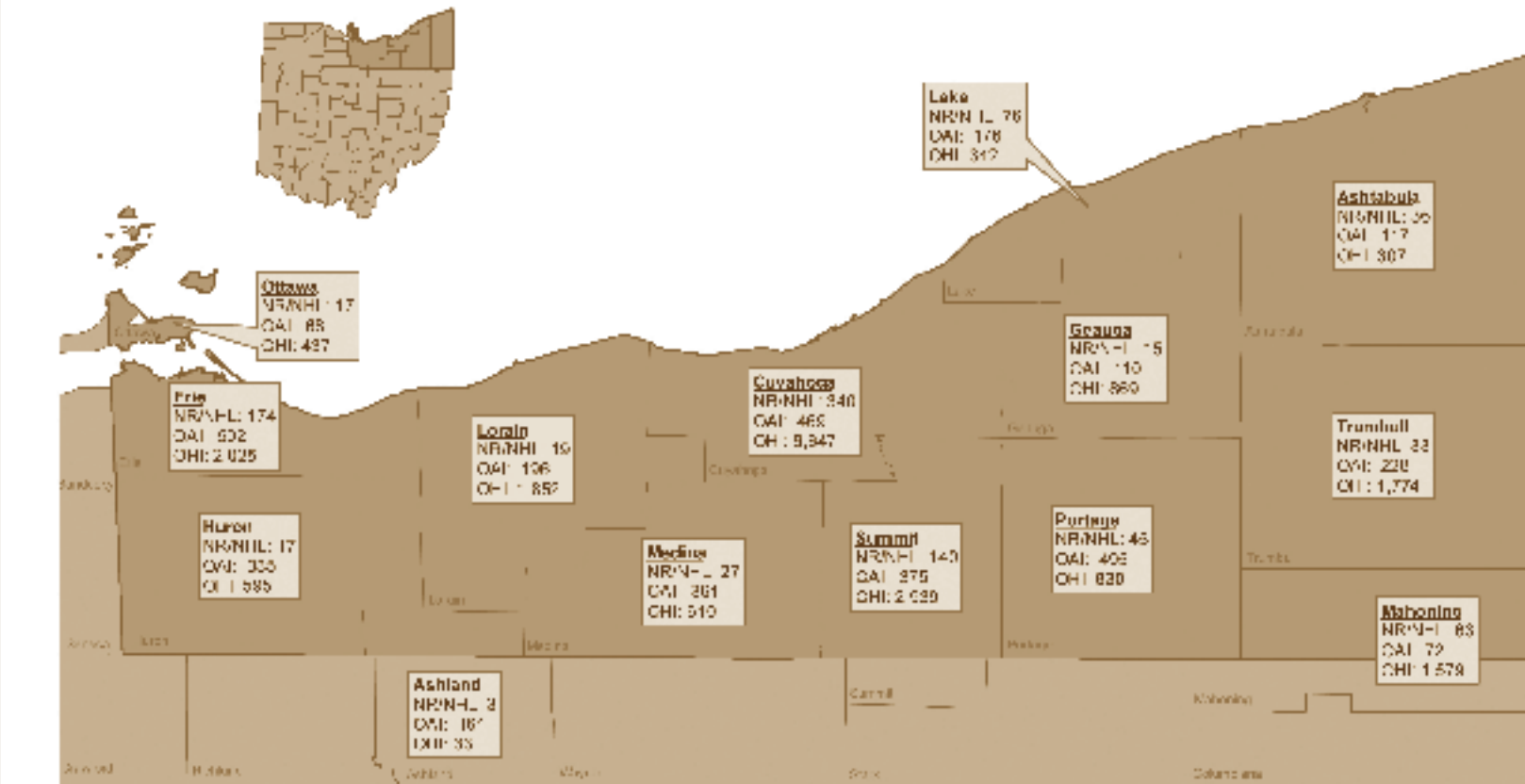
- Wilson Bruce Evans House, Oberlin
- John Mercer Langston House, Oberlin
- Oberlin College, Oberlin
- Stan Hywet Hall, Akron
- Ohio and Erie Canal
- NASA Zero Gravity Research Facility, Cleveland
- U.S.S. COD, Cleveland
- Cleveland Arcade, Cleveland
- Kirtland Temple, Kirtland
- James A. Garfield Home, Mentor
- William H. McGuffey Home, Coitsville
- Harriet Taylor Upton House, Warren
- Joshua Reed Giddings Law Office, Jefferson

The Ohio Historic Inventory is a listing of surveyed and reviewed structures, buildings, or objects that have some historic, architectural, or engineering interest. The inventory program was developed to serve as an accurate and continuing record of the architectural and historic properties currently existing in the state. The properties in the listing have not yet been determined to have national, state, or local significance, but they are



OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Area with Ohio Historic Preservation Office Inventories



- Western Reserve
- County Seats
- County Boundaries

Map produced by  
Ohio Historic Preservation Office  
7892 Verona Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43221  
Phone: 614-289-2000  
www.ohiohistory.org



Figure 4 National Register, National Historic Landmark, and Ohio Historic Inventory Sites



a pool of resources with merit. To be placed on the Ohio Historic Inventory, a property must be surveyed and described in an application that is submitted for review and acceptance by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. Criteria addressed on the form include category or theme, year built, architect or style, and condition of property, to name a few. There are 20,839 Ohio Historic Inventory listings within the Western Reserve.

The map to the left illustrates these National Register of Historic Places and Ohio Historic Inventory significant properties.

The telling of the region's story happens within and through many organizations—small, medium, and large—and in many communities.

These organizations are museums, historic sites, history collections at libraries, downtown/Main Street committees, and the like, and they are reflected in the constituency of the Ohio Local History Alliance. The directory of local history organizations for the counties encompassed by the Western Reserve lists more than 220 organizations of this kind. A list of these organizations is included in Appendix B.

### Cultural Resources Inventory

National and international events triggered waves of domestic and international migration into the Western Reserve since the initial land survey in 1796. Migrants to all areas of the Western Reserve—rural and eventually urban,

major metropolitan areas—transplanted traditions, beliefs, customs, food ways, and folk life from virtually every corner of the globe, including Europe, Africa, Asia, Russia, and other regions of the United States. These cultural traditions took root, and today continue to define the ever-changing character of the Western Reserve's rural and urban landscapes. Evidence of the diverse mix of ethnic influences survives throughout the region in places, neighborhoods, museums, festivals, street corners, restaurants, places of worship, fashion and architecture, historic sites, cemeteries, and social clubs.

#### Pre-1796

Several thousand years before the American Revolution and the onset of European settlement in the region, American Indians occupied the land. The story of prehistoric inhabitants and the history of American Indians in the Western Reserve through the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when treaties pushed what remained of the native tribes out of the region and opened the area up for European settlement, can be explored at various places throughout the Western Reserve, include the following:

- Cleveland Museum of Natural History
- Cuyahoga Valley National Park
- Firelands Archaeological Research Center, Firelands
- Lake County Indian Museum, Willoughby

### The Firelands Museum

Since 1857, the Firelands Historical Society in Norwalk has collected the stories and material culture of the historic Firelands of the Western Reserve. This half million-acre portion is located at the far west of the Western Reserve and was first called the Fire Sufferers Land. In 1792, Connecticut's legislature gave this tract of land to the citizens of nine towns—Norwalk, New Haven, East Haven, Greenwich, Danbury, Ridgefield, Groton, New London, and Fairfield—that were invaded and burned by the British during the American Revolution. Though the war ended in 1781, the land wasn't surveyed until 1808, resulting in most the original sufferers being gone or too old to travel. Early settlers were instead seekers of affordable land and milder winters.

When settlement took hold, agriculture was the primary industry. After the railroads were built, the Firelands also became known for manufacturing. It remains a mix of the two, and many of the towns still evidence New England heritage, architecture, and in some cases, Connecticut town names. Today, the public can visit the historical society to see the museum displays, conduct research, attend events, or conduct meetings.



These organizations discover, document, and conserve archaeological sites; conduct field, laboratory, statistical, and literature review activities; disseminate knowledge on the subject of archaeology; and engender an appreciation in the general public of the importance of archaeology in understanding the human history of the Lake Erie region.

### *1790-1860*

The Western Reserve is particularly rich in museums, historic sites, archives, and experiences that explore the early rural traditions and activities of migrant and immigrant groups that came to the area, including migrants from New England and New York primarily of English descent, and immigrants from England, Scotland, German states, and Ireland. During this period, about three-quarters of families living in the Western Reserve were engaged in agriculture. Within the last 15 years, the region has experienced a resurgence of interest in sustainability and locally grown foods, small farms, and a plethora of urban, suburban, and rural farmer's markets, a movement that makes the agrarian heritage of the region all the more relevant today, both regionally and nationally.

- **Hale Farm & Village, Bath** – This is an outdoor living history museum in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park that tells the story of the early settlement and

development of the Reserve. The museum uses 32 historic structures – houses, offices, barns, and a church – pastures, crop fields, historic gardens, a maple sugar bush, and early crafts and trades demonstrations, to tell the story of rural life during the 19th century.


- **Century Village, Burton** – This fully restored Western Reserve village is the jewel of the Geauga County Historical Society. Century Village consists of 22 historic buildings, including five historic homes, church, jail, and a one-room schoolhouse depicting pioneer life during the 19th century.
- **Strongsville Historical Society, Strongsville** – Located on two acres in the center of town, the Strongsville Historical Society and Village consists of four historic



*Hale Farm & Village*

homes, a general store, doll museum, academy, log cabin, and barn that span the era from 1816 to 1917. Exhibits of local and Ohio history feature artifacts from Strongsville's original founders, furnished period rooms and more.

- **Oberlin Heritage Center, Oberlin** – Three preserved historic sites tell powerful stories about this nationally significant community where people have done extraordinary things since the town and college were founded in 1833. Visitors learn about the Underground Railroad, student life, women's history, as well as the development of aluminum.
- **Donauschwaben German-American Cultural Center, Olmsted Township** – The Danube Swabians are Germans who settled along the rich farming lands of the Danube River Valley during the 18th century. The museum displays donations from members and friends including folk costumes, relics, furniture, tools, books, prints, and photographs.
- **Countryside Conservancy, Peninsula** – This small farm reclamation initiative in the Cuyahoga Valley is dedicated to reconnecting land, farming, food, and community, and is poised to help establish Northeast Ohio's farms and community markets as a leader in local food production.



*During this period, as the region's economy began to falter, it still managed to gather one of the most diverse groups of immigrants in its history.*

- **West Side Market, Cleveland** – The market dates to 1840, making it Cleveland's oldest publicly owned market. Today the market is home to more than 100 vendors of great ethnic diversity. Products include meats and fresh vegetables, fresh seafood, dairy, cheese products, and fresh flowers.
- **Lake Erie Fishing and Maritime Heritage** – Communities along the lakeshore have a long history of dependency on Lake Erie. These communities reflect their fishery and boating traditions.

### *1870-1914*

The most substantial and diverse migration to the Western Reserve occurred from 1870-1914 during which many Southern and Eastern Europeans came to the U.S., among them Poles, Italians, Slovenes, Slovaks, Jews, and Russians. This massive exodus was fostered by shortages of land in the

home countries, more liberal emigration policies, increased military conscription, and religious and political persecutions. Food, religious, and social customs of these ethnic groups in particular continued to define the cultural landscape of the Reserve throughout most of the 20th century.

- **Polish American Cultural Center, Cleveland** – The center is dedicated to the promotion of Polish culture, traditions, language, history, literature, arts, music, theater and education. The center provides an organizational structure for all who desire to be in touch with Polish heritage.
- **Little Italy, Cleveland** – Little Italy is an urban neighborhood that preserves the traditions of the area's Italian-American population. Restaurants, social clubs, churches, street scenes, festivals, and urban architecture reflect the region's large Italian population and a century of influencing the region.
- **Czech Cultural Center of Sokol Greater Cleveland, Cleveland** – The museum/library is located in historic Bohemian National Hall, built in 1897. The history of the Czech immigrants who built the hall and lived in the area is presented and on display are costumes, artifacts and photos. The gift shop offers garnet jewelry, pottery, books and toys imported from the Czech Republic.
- **The West-Side Irish American Club, Olmsted Township** – This social club preserves and promotes the area's rich Irish cultural heritage in song, dance, literature, sports, and traditions.
- **Cleveland Hungarian Heritage Museum, Cleveland** – The museum houses a collection of historical costumes, folk art, fine art, and items showcasing the history of Hungarian-Americans in Cleveland. The museum has an extensive library with more than 6,000 books, an archival section and a gift shop featuring decorative items, books and CDs.
- **Finnish Heritage Museum, Fairport Harbor** – Dedicated to preserve and perpetuate Finnish heritage and cultural traditions.
- **Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage, Beachwood** – Introduces visitors to the beauty and diversity of that heritage in the context of the American experience by promoting an understanding of Jewish history, religion, and culture and builds bridges of appreciation, tolerance, and understanding with those of other religions, races, cultures, and ethnic backgrounds, serving as an educational resource for Northeast Ohio's Jewish and general communities.

## 20th Century

During World Wars I and II, African Americans in increasing numbers migrated to the region from the South, drawn by opportunities to work in wartime industries. During the 1920s, the first cohesive group of Spanish-speaking immigrants from Mexico came to the area, drawn by manufacturing opportunities in the automotive industries. During this period, as the region's economy began to falter, it still managed to gather one of the most diverse groups of immigrants in its history. The relaxation of restrictions on Asian immigration brought Chinese, Koreans, Indians, and Pakistanis to the region, attracted initially by the area's colleges, and later by the growth of its medical and research industries. Cultural influences from these communities continue to define the region's cultural landscape, with food, festivals, religion, and political influences increasingly important to the region's cultural fabric, with a plethora of ethnic specialty food restaurants throughout the region, annual ethnic festivals, and places of worship present throughout the Reserve in all corners.

- **The Latino Heritage Festival** – An annual event that celebrates the rich Hispanic culture and its musical traditions at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum (Cleveland).



*Photo from the Sam Sheppard Collection of The Summit County Historical Society of Akron, Ohio*

- **Asiatown, Cleveland** – Cleveland's Asiatown, roughly bounded by Superior, Payne, East 29th and East 39th Streets, is small but colorful. Located just east of downtown, the neighborhood features interesting architecture, delicious and varied restaurants, and unique Asian shopping, social, cultural, and aid societies, as well as Chinese language schools.
- **African American Archives of the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland** – The Archives was established in 1970 as the Black History Archives Project. Its purpose is to collect, preserve and make accessible historic documents, memorabilia, art, and artifacts pertaining to African-American life, history and culture in Northeast Ohio and beyond. The collection includes manuscripts, photographs, microfilm, and newspaper collections from the Archives/Library of the Western Reserve Historical Society. The artifacts are specific to the African-American experience and cover a wide range of topics and categories of primary importance to the body of Black history.
- **The Akron Urban League, Akron** – The Akron Urban League seeks to improve the economic, cultural, social, educational, and recreational conditions affecting all citizens of Summit County, particularly African-Americans, other minorities,

and those most in need. As an affiliate of the National Urban League, it reaches nationwide audiences and partners with more than 100 affiliates making it a strong proponent for programs that can be replicated across the country.

## Natural and Recreational Resource Inventory

The natural resources of the Western Reserve are diverse and extensive, illustrating the environmental importance of this area. In relating the natural and recreational resources to the themes of the heritage area, a clear link to Lake Erie and its resulting natural environments, waterways, scenic views, trails, fertile soils, flora, and fauna can be made. This chapter provides an illustrative overview of those resources with references to more comprehensive listings or maps.

Today the landscape of the Western Reserve is the result of human use of the natural environment. This was, and still is, influenced by the geological formation of the region and the utilization and exploitation of the natural resources.

Deposits from ancient inland seas formed the bedrock that is the origin of oil, gas, salt, and coal. Shales, limestones, sandstones, and conglomerates of the Appalachian Plateau are

visible as bluffs along the many rivers that cut into these formations throughout the Western Reserve, especially the spectacular cliffs along Tinkers Creek Gorge National Natural Landmark. Many of the structures within the Western Reserve were built from locally quarried sandstone and limestone. Amherst sandstone, known for its quality, durability, and rich texture, has been used across our nation and throughout the world. Clay and shale were processed into brick, pottery, and tile at a number of facilities throughout the region. Layered rock salt that underlies the Western Reserve supplies the salt industries in Cleveland and Fairport Harbor.

Glaciers contoured the landscape of the Western Reserve. A continental drainage divide was defined by the retreating Wisconsin Glacier resulting in many of the rivers of the Western Reserve draining north to Lake Erie and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, while others drain south to the Ohio River. Natural lakes, most notably Lake Erie, are a feature of the glaciated landscape. A series of glacial lakes preceded Lake Erie, leaving behind a flat lake plain with ancient beach ridges.

Lake Erie is the southernmost, shallowest, and warmest of the Great Lakes. It is the 12th largest freshwater lake in the world. It provides shelter and nourishment to countless species, including

## Ashtabula Harbor

An active shipping and recreational port today, Ashtabula's story is similar to others along Lake Erie. Ships brought ore and influences from ports beyond to coastal communities, and then they left filled with coal and other goods, including ideas, from the Western Reserve and beyond. Immigrants arrived first for jobs at the dock, and then many found jobs with the railroads. Those from Sweden and Finland were most prominent in Ashtabula, but it is Western Reserve surveyor Moses Cleaveland who is deemed the city's founder when he surveyed the port in 1796.

When George Hulett, a Conneaut inventor, created the Hulett bucket to unload cargo faster, harbor business flourished. A Hulett bucket is preserved at Ashtabula Harbor, within walking distance from the Ashtabula Marina Museum with its panoramic views of the shipping docks and its impressive collection of Great Lakes memorabilia.

Spanning the Ashtabula River is the Bascule Lift Bridge, designed by the engineer who designed the Eiffel Tower elevator. "Mother Hubbard's Cupboard," also known as the Hubbard House, once harbored runaway slaves who walked less than a half mile to the family's warehouse along the river where they were quickly stowed aboard boats to Canada. The Hubbard House is open for tours. The inner harbor preserves much of the character of its early days with cobblestoned streets and ornate architecture.

11 million people who rely on it for drinking water every day. It is the most biologically productive of all the Great Lakes, producing more fish for human consumption than the other four lakes combined. Its fishery is economically important to communities throughout the region. Eleven major ports serve the nation and world from Lake Erie, and water provided by Lake Erie is used for waterborne commerce, navigation, manufacturing, and power production. Despite this industrial use, the lake is also of vital importance to the region's tourism and agricultural communities—two of its most important economic sectors.

The Western Reserve contains a variety of plants, animals, and natural habitats. Natural systems of forests, fens, kettle lake bogs, marshes, old fields, streams, and lakes are interspersed with cities, villages, orchards, and croplands. The region lies on a biological crossroads in the transition zone between the Appalachian Plateau to the east and the Central Lowlands to the west. The Portage Escarpment forms the boundary between these two provinces. The Western Reserve transects three regions: Lake Plains, Glaciated Plateau, and Unglaciated Plateau. The result of this convergence is a great diversity in plants and animals and a textbook example of forest communities and habitats.

Some of Ohio's larger mammals, almost eliminated by settlement, have made a strong comeback within the Western Reserve. Most noticeable in the area are beaver, coyote, and white tailed deer. Migratory birds, such as great blue herons, are returning to the region as water quality improves and habitat is preserved. A complete listing of 2300 species of vascular flora and 350 species of vertebrate fauna of Cuyahoga Valley National Park, representative of the Western Reserve, can be found in the Environmental Assessment of CVNRA, 1976.

The State of Ohio has identified 56 species of mammals, 200 species of breeding birds, 84 species and subspecies of amphibians and reptiles, 170 species of fish, 100 species of mollusks, and 20 species of crustaceans of interest as endangered, threatened, species of concern, special interest, extirpated, or extinct. Because of the landscape diversity of the Western Reserve, most of these species can or have been identified within the region's boundaries. Those within the Western Reserve often play an important role in protecting these species, such as the research efforts at Stone Laboratory on the Lake Erie watersnake that has led to increased populations and its proposed federal delisting.



Federal endangered and threatened species include the following species.

- Indiana myotis
- Piping plover
- Kirtland's warbler
- Copperbelly watersnake
- Lake Erie watersnake
- Scioto madtorn
- Fanshell
- Purple catspaw
- White catspaw
- Northern riffleshell
- Pink mucket
- Clubshell
- Hine's emerald dragonfly
- Karner blue butterfly
- Mitchell's satyr
- American burying beetle
- Paddlefish
- Wapiti
- Orange-footed pearly mussel
- Rough pigtoe
- Fat pocketbook
- Winged mapleleaf
- Cracking pearly mussel



Lake Erie watersnake

### *Parks and Recreation Sites*

There are approximately 1,415 parks, beaches, and trails within the boundaries of the Western Reserve. These include those owned and operated by counties, cities, state, townships, private organizations, nonprofit organizations, and regional park districts to name a few.

County park districts provide conservation, recreation, and education programs in valued open space in nearly every Western Reserve County. Many of these park districts are in the planning stages for acquiring and/or providing additional recreational and natural areas.

- Ashland County Park District has 10 parks
- Geauga Park District has 20 parks
- Portage Park District has 10 parks
- Metroparks, Serving Summit County include 16 parks
- Cleveland Metroparks include 16 parks
- Mill Creek Metroparks include 5 parks
- Erie MetroParks includes 12 parks
- Lorain County Metro Parks includes 22 parks
- Lake Metroparks includes 29 parks
- Medina County Parks District has 28 parks
- Ashtabula County Metroparks has 2 parks
- Trumbull County MetroParks has 4 parks.

### **State Parks**

The mission of Ohio's Department of Natural Resources parks program is "To enhance the quality of life through exceptional outdoor recreational experiences and sound resource management" (<http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/parks/resources/aboutus/tabid/90/Default.aspx>). The parks seek to provide fun, safe, and clean places for recreation and natural area enjoyment. There are more than 15 Ohio Department of Natural Resources parks in the Western Reserve. Some are waterfront properties, such as Headlands Beach,

Geneva, or Kelleys Island. Others are inland, such as Tinker's Creek, Findlay, or Mosquito Lake.

More than 20 state nature preserves are located within the Western Basin and protect a variety of landscapes and habitat, from shoreline to wetlands, forests to tributary floodplains. There are seven National Natural Landmarks within the region, including Tinkers Creek Gorge, Mantua Swamp, Glacial Grooves State Memorial, Mentor Marsh, Holden Natural Areas, White Pine Bog Forest, and Arthur B. Williams Memorial Woods.

### Cuyahoga Valley National Park

The Cuyahoga Valley National Park covers 33,000 acres along the banks of the Cuyahoga River. Twenty-two miles of the river wind through the Cuyahoga Valley at the heart of the park. The park includes a wide range of natural environments and resources:

- Cuyahoga River and its riparian habitat
- Deciduous mixed-mesophytic forests
- Wetland habitats
- Active agricultural lands



Northern cardinal

- Field habitats in stages of succession
- 900 plant species are found in the park
- 194 species of birds
- 91 aquatic macroinvertebrates
- 43 fish
- 32 mammals
- 22 amphibians
- 20 species of reptiles

This unique physical environment was formed at the convergence of two diverse geographic regions—the Appalachian Plateau and the Central Lowlands—and was modified by the comings and goings of multiple glaciations. In addition to the conservation purpose it serves, the park provides extensive recreation and solitude for Ohio's residents and visitors. Located just a short distance from Cleveland and Akron, it is a popular destination coupled with the Ohio & Erie Canalway (see below).

### Ohio & Erie Canalway

The Ohio & Erie Canalway is a National Heritage Area designated to help preserve and celebrate the rails, trails, landscapes, towns, and sites that grew up along the first 110 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal. The heritage area includes three modes of transportation/recreation:

- **Towpath Trail** – Along the path where mules hauled the canal's barges, runners, bikers, and hikers now enjoy more than 80 miles of multipurpose trail. Ultimately,

the Towpath will extend from Cleveland's Canal Basin Park, at the historic northern terminus of the canal, south to Dover and New Philadelphia in Tuscarawas County.

- **Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad** – The railroad serves passengers with excursion rail service through the Cuyahoga Valley National Park in authentic climate controlled coaches built circa 1940. Round-trip destinations include Peninsula, Hale Farm and Village, Quaker Square, Inventure Place, Akron's Northside, the Canal Visitor's Center, and Rockside Road.
- **The Ohio & Erie Canalway Byway** – This roadway takes drivers through the landscapes and settings that tell the stories of regional growth and development. Travelers find easy access to the Towpath trailheads and the Scenic Railroad passenger stations from the byway.



Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve  
Photo by Chad Djubek

### **Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve**

Old Woman Creek is the only Great Lakes freshwater estuary in the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. It is a rare example of a natural estuary. As a transition zone between land and water, the site contains a variety of habitats including marshes and swamps, upland forests, open water, tributary streams, and barrier beach. The Reserve supports a diverse assemblage of native plants and animals representative of freshwater estuaries. The Reserve is managed as a cooperative partnership between NOAA and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife. Old Woman Creek is also an Ohio State Nature Preserve. Wetlands and watershed research is conducted at the site, and a visitors center interprets the value of wetlands and Lake Erie.

### *Conserved Lands*

**The Nature Conservancy in Ohio** has worked since 1958 to protect more than 56,000 acres of natural lands in partnership with other organizations. Two of the six Nature Conservancy preserves that are open to the public are in the Western Reserve: Herrick Fen and Morgan Swamp.

**The Killbuck Watershed Land Trust** preserves more than 4,500 acres of farm land, forests, wetlands, and open spaces in Ashland, Coshocton, Holmes, Richland, Tuscarawas, and Wayne counties.

**The Gates Mills Land Conservancy** preserves the natural, recreational, and scenic resources of the Village of Gates Mills and the Chagrin River Valley by acquiring land and conservation easements. About 469 acres have been protected thus far.

**The Little Beaver Creek Land Foundation** preserves and protects the Little Beaver Creek watershed through land acquisition and conservation easements, citizen education, historic preservation, and other environmental management activities. To date, it has protected 4,343 acres.

**The Mahoning River Consortium** works to restore the environmental health of the Mahoning River and its surrounding landscapes. It also supports efforts to improve the social, recreational, and economic development occurring in the communities located along the river.



*Photo by David Liam Kyle, courtesy of Western Reserve Land Conservancy*

**The Lake Erie Islands Chapter of the Black Swamp Conservancy** encourages conservation and protection of natural and agricultural land on the Lake Erie Islands. Its efforts have protected in excess of 50 acres to date.

**The Western Reserve Land Conservancy** is a merged organization covering the region from Sandusky Bay to the Pennsylvania border and from Lake Erie to Wayne County. Since 2006, the Land Conservancy has preserved 13,402 acres through conservation easements, which are permanent legal covenants prohibiting certain changes to properties.

### *Scenic Rivers*

The five designated state scenic rivers in the Western Reserve include 219 miles of the region's streams and rivers. Ohio was the first in the United States to pass a scenic rivers act in 1968. The act created a statewide program to protect Ohio's remaining high quality streams that retain most of their natural characteristics. The river corridors are narrow and dynamic, linear natural systems (a few hundred feet wide but many miles long). Diverse and abundant plant and animal life is found within these corridors. The map below shows the location of the state's scenic rivers, including those in the Western Reserve:

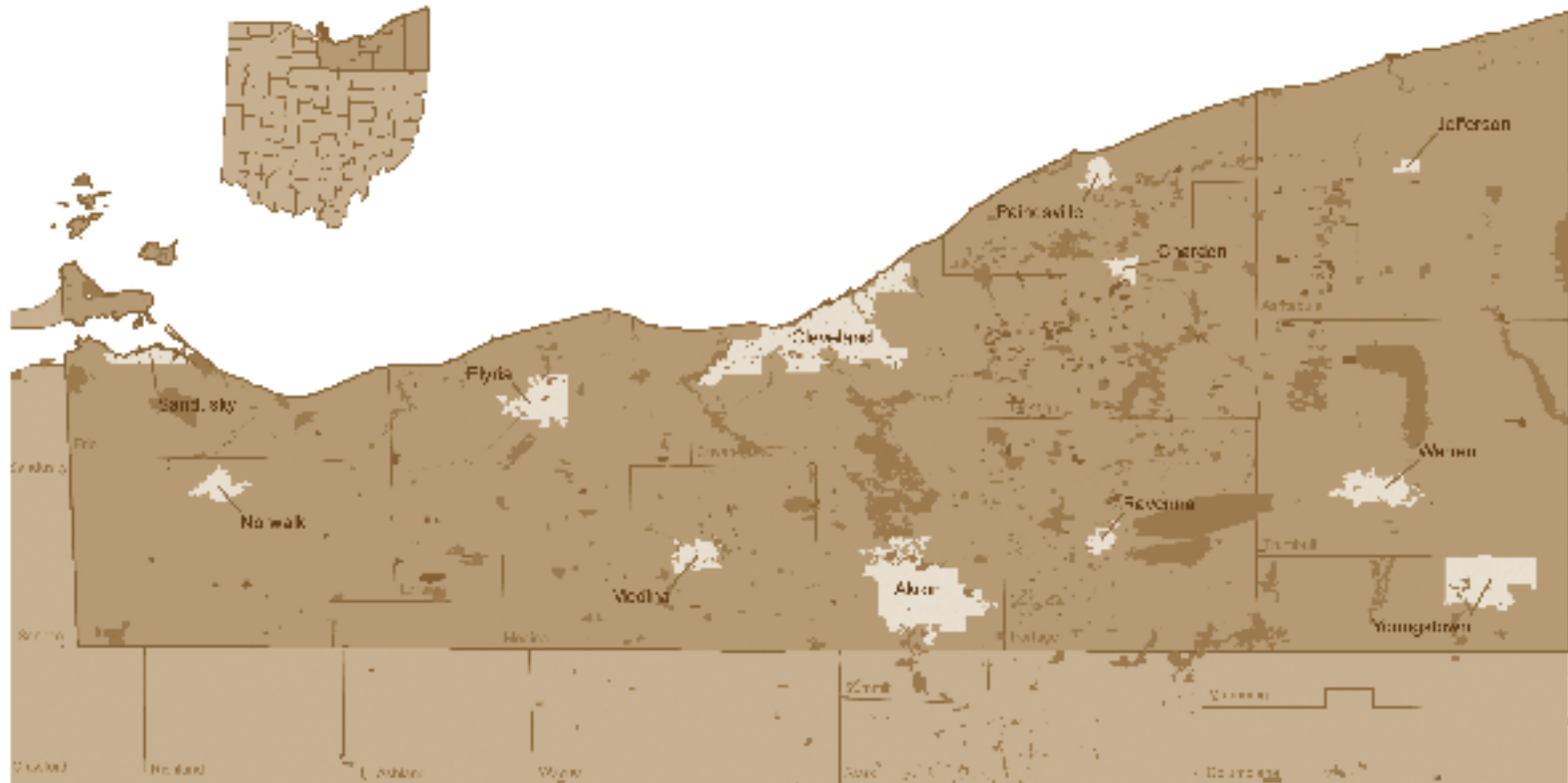
- Ashtabula State Scenic River
- Chagrin State Scenic River
- Conneaut Creek Wild and Scenic River
- Grand Wild and Scenic River
- Upper Cuyahoga Scenic River





OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Area



- WRLC Protected Properties
- Parks and Managed Areas
- Western Reserve
- County Seats
- County Boundaries

Map produced by  
 Ohio Historical Western Reserve Office  
 19-25 Elm Avenue  
 Columbus, OH 43211  
 Phone: 614-398-2000  
 www.ohiohistory.org



Figure 5 Western Reserve Parks and Protected Properties

## Socioeconomic Characteristics

To create a context for the proposed project, the following information summarizes socioeconomic characteristics of the region.

### *Population and Race*

In the 2010 Census, the total population of the 14-county Western Reserve was estimated at 3,548,553, a decrease of three percent from the 2000 census data. The Western Reserve is a diverse region, and the profile of the area has changed from 2000 to 2010. According to the 2000 census, the region was 80 percent White, 16 percent Black, one percent Native American, two percent Hispanic and one percent Other. The estimated 2010 Census data indicates a shift in the ethnic makeup with 79 percent White, 14 percent Black, one percent Native American, two percent Asian, three percent Hispanic and one percent Other.

### *Average Age and Income*

The average age of an individual in the Western Reserve increased from 2000 to 2010 by 2-1/2 years from 37.5 to 39.9 years. The average Median Housing Value increased 15 percent from 2000 to 2010 from \$112,240 to \$130,613. Also, average Median Household earnings increased by 14 percent from 2000 to 2010 from \$44,128 to \$50,827.

### *Education*

The education statistics of the Western Reserve also experienced significant changes from 2000 to 2010. The number of high school graduates, including those obtaining degrees through equivalency testing, decreased from 2000 to 2010 from 852,246 to 839,763 or two percent. The number of residents holding bachelor's degrees increased from 2000 to 2010 from 348,767 to 385,589 or 10 percent. The number of residents who have obtained master's degrees increased 20 percent from 2000 to 2010, from 123,299 to 155,805. Doctorate degrees-holders increased from 2000 to 2010 from 17,733 to 20,036 or 12 percent.

### *Ethnicity*

One of the distinct characteristics of the study area – and one that has a direct connection to the story of the Western Reserve – is the prominence of ethnic representation among the region's population. Cleveland, alone, is home to more than 117 ethnic groups speaking more than 60 languages.

The role of foreign migration in shaping the region is best examined by comparing Census data of foreign-born residents in three Ohio cities (including Cleveland) with that of the whole United States. Please note that the decline that begins in the 1930s in Cleveland is due, in part, to suburbanization.



*Photo courtesy of Positively Cleveland*

### *Summary*

While the overall population of the Western Reserve is declining, the region's ethnic population continues its tradition of becoming more diversified. Educational growth is mixed; although more residents are obtaining undergraduate and advanced degrees, the number of high school graduates is declining.

## Visitor Readiness Inventory

National Park Service guidelines for national heritage areas do not focus on visitor infrastructure as a criterion for successful designation; however, the Western Reserve evidences a present ability to serve visitor needs within its boundaries. Visitor infrastructure across the heritage area includes thousands of rooms, restaurants, shopping venues, and more.

Transportation options include all modes, from major airports and Amtrak stations to water ferries and buggy rides. The ability of every county in the heritage area to support visitors is illustrated with a short description below.

### *Ashland County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Ashland County offers 554 hotel rooms and 1796 campsites. The county also provides a range of attractions and entertainment, downtown shopping, retail, dining, sports, and recreation.

Ashland County is dissected by approximately 15 miles of I-71; 71 miles of US routes 30, 42, 224 and 250; and 172 miles of State Routes 3, 39, 58, 60, 89, 95, 96, 179, 302, 511, 545 and 603. The City of Ashland is located in the middle of the county and is roughly equidistant from Cleveland, Columbus, and the Akron-Canton area. The Ashland County Airport is publicly owned and includes about 135 flights per day.

### *Ashtabula County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Ashtabula County has 640 hotel beds and another 660 beds in motels, bed and breakfasts, and lakeshore cottages. The county also boasts 1,900 campsites, both primitive and full hook-up.

The Ashtabula County Convention & Visitors Bureau has seven distinct business membership

types: recreation, shopping, dining, wineries, lodging, camping, and services. Their membership ranges between 350 and 400 across those types, offering a variety of retail, dining, and other commercial experiences to visitors. A number of these are located in the county's historic downtowns, which are organized by six different downtown merchant associations. The GaREAT Sports complex, major development near the 534 corridor, and planned Wine and Culinary Center (construction in 2012) offer major attractions.

Ashtabula County has five intersections along Interstate 90 within its borders. Located on the waterfront, it also boasts nine marinas along Lake Erie for boaters.

### *Cuyahoga County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Positively Cleveland, the greater Cleveland Convention and Visitors Bureau, lists 97 different accommodation providers. A visitor center in Public Square in downtown Cleveland provides information to travelers about attractions and services in the area. Attractions include a rainforest and botanical garden, a historic district of 25 nationality gardens and sculpture ("Cultural Gardens"), an auto museum at the Western Reserve Historical Society, a science center, natural history museum, river cruises, and a rock and roll and hall of fame. The metro region boasts

endless dining options as well as microbreweries and wineries.

The county is well-served by interstates 90, 71, and 77 as well as the loops and bypasses (271 and 480, for example). Two airports—Cleveland Hopkins International Airport and Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport—provide a full range of flight options into and out of the region. Train service and public transit are also available, as well as a plethora of car rental agencies both at the airports and in the region at large.

### *Erie County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Erie County offers 5,760 hotel rooms, 52 bed & breakfast rooms, 209 campsites, and 517 vacation rental units.

Erie County collaborates with neighboring Ottawa County to promote the region as Lake Erie Shores & Islands. Welcome Centers located in Sandusky and Port Clinton are resources for visitors seeking information on lodging, attractions, restaurants, and outdoor recreation areas in the region. Erie County is the home of Cedar Point, one of the country's oldest and most visited amusement parks. This region is also the gateway to the Lake Erie Islands, including three islands that promote and depend economically on tourism experiences. Ferry transportation is available to the islands

from Port Clinton, Catawba, Marblehead, Sandusky, and Lorain. There are also three major indoor waterparks. The region's travel planner lists nearly 100 attractions, 51 dining establishments, 23 marinas/boating operations, four outdoor recreation providers, 37 retail businesses, and 18 coordinating organizations (Main Street associations, for example).

Erie County is well-covered by transportation networks, including passenger airports, passenger train service, ferries, and interstate highway access. I-80/I-90 both intersect the county as well as Interstate 2. Sandusky is the county seat and sits on the waters of Lake Erie, with access to water transportation. Ferries run from downtown Sandusky and provide service to Kelleys and South Bass islands.

### *Geauga County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

There are no hotel beds in Geauga County, but there are three campgrounds plus a county park system that offers primitive camping. There are several inns and bed & breakfasts, the largest of which is Punderson Manor Lodge & Conference Center with 34 rooms and cabins. Others include Bass Lake Tavern & Inn in Chardon, The Farm House in Middlefield, and Stonewall Bed & Breakfast in Parkman.

Geauga County also encompasses a diversity of visitor-serving businesses. Dining includes upscale dining to small family-owned restaurants and specialty locations like Tea Rooms/Coffee Houses to privately scheduled Amish Dinners in Amish homes. Retail encompasses a few “big box” stores in a couple of townships and many more small, privately owned businesses offering giftware, hunting goods, clothing, and groceries, to name a few. Amish “in home” businesses are also popular. The county's attractions are concentrated in three areas: Amish, history, and maple sugaring. Geauga County is home to a small airport in Middlefield, operated by the Geauga County Airport Authority; the airport includes one runway 3500 feet long by 65 feet wide, two T-hangars, one private hangar, two community hangars, and a pilot lounge and restroom facility. Precious Cargo Transportation in Newbury offers charter bus services. Interstate 90, Route 422, and several state highways cut through the county.

### *Huron County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

The Huron County Visitors Bureau lists one local accommodation: The Victorian Lady Bed and Breakfast. Attractions include golf, Amish furniture, heritage, and motorsports. Dining options include coffee, pizza, and Mexican, among others.

Interstates 80 and 90 provide easy access, and several smaller routes also service the county. There is a small airport, the Norwalk-Huron County Airport, just east of Norwalk.

### *Lake County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Lake County boasts 36 accommodation providers. It claims Ohio's largest winery district and is home to a Frank Lloyd Wright home. Other attractions include a nature center, lighthouse, historic districts, museums, galleries, and the National Park Service's James A. Garfield National Historical Site.

The county is well-served by interstates 90, 71, and 77 as well as the loops and bypasses (271 and 480, for example). Two airports—Cleveland Hopkins International Airport and Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport—are in neighboring Cuyahoga County and provide easy access to flight options.

### *Lorain County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

The Lorain County Visitors Bureau includes in its membership 19 hotels/motels/inns, five bed and breakfasts, and five campgrounds. The county also boasts a diversity of attractions and services, such as the Oberlin Heritage Center, lighthouses, Allen Memorial Art Museum, bicycling.

Lorain County is served by a variety of transportation options, including Amtrak trains

from Elyria, county transit (busses) service to/from Cleveland Hopkins International Airport to Elyria and Oberlin College, Greyhound busses, Lorain County Regional Airport, and car rental agencies.

### *Mahoning County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Mahoning County offers accommodations through 25 providers. Dining options are numerous and include both national chain/franchise restaurants as well as unique locally owned and operated options. Local favorites like Antone's Italian Café, Wedgewood Pizza, Bruno's, Alberini's, and Belleria Pizza give a glimpse into the strong Italian heritage of the county. Attractions range from the Mastropietro Winery to Mill Creek Park, from the Butler Museum of American Art to the Southern Park Mall.

The county is easily accessible from all directions by interstate highways 80, 680, 76, and 11.

### *Medina County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Two bed and breakfasts, 13 hotels/motels, and seven campgrounds offer visitors places to overnight. Dining is offered by family restaurants, a tea room, coffee shops, casual dining, and more. History museums and a butterfly experience are among the attractions in the county.

Medina County is served by interstates 71, 271, and 76.

## Youngstown Area Historic Architecture

Mahoning County, particularly the Youngstown area, is a region rich with historic architecture that reflects the time period of the Western Reserve heritage area. These range from a small, early 19th century log house in Austintown to a grand, early 20th century, McKim, Mead, & White-designed building that houses the Butler Institute of American Art. A small selection includes the following:

- 1846 Lanterman's Mill, a mill within Mill Creek Park (see below)
- Mill Creek Park Historic District, a late 19th century neighborhood that includes many residences and the nation's second-largest urban park
- Wick Park Historic District, a collection of significant early 20th century mansions and residences plus the Beaux Arts Stambaugh Auditorium, which surround the historic 34-acre Wick Park
- 1925 Kress Building, a terra cotta downtown commercial structure
- 1929 Central Tower Building, an art deco high rise in downtown
- 1931 Jones Hall, a Gothic Tudor administration building on Youngstown State University's campus

In downtown Youngstown and nearby neighborhoods, visitors to the city can experience a wealth of significant architecture, much of which reflects industrial-era prosperity.



### *Ottawa County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Ottawa County offers 1,894 hotel rooms, more than 100 bed and breakfast rooms, more than 2,000 campsites, and more than 800 vacation rental units.

Ottawa County collaborates with neighboring Erie County to promote the region as Lake Erie Shores & Islands. Welcome Centers located in Sandusky and Port Clinton are resources for visitors seeking information on lodging, attractions, restaurants, and outdoor recreation areas in the region. Ottawa County is the home to South Bass Island

and the Village of Put-in-Bay, one of Lake Erie's most visited islands. There are seven state parks in Ottawa County as well as Ohio's only federal wildlife refuge, the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. There are six chambers of commerce in the county and one Main Street community within the City of Port Clinton. The region's travel planner lists nearly 100 attractions, 51 dining establishments, 23 marinas/boating operations, four outdoor recreation providers, 37 retail businesses, and 18 coordinating organizations (Main Street associations, for example).

## Western Reserve Historical Society

The Western Reserve Historical Society is a not-for-profit educational institution that preserves and uses its collections, historic sites, and museums to inspire people to explore the history and culture of Northeastern Ohio and place that regional experience within the larger context of state, national, and global history.

Collections and exhibitions focus on the Western Reserve. Both permanent, and especially changing, exhibitions place the region in its larger historical context. The Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum collections illustrate the history of the automotive industry in the Western Reserve as well as nationally and internationally. At Hale Farm & Village, the Historical Society's premier outdoor living history museum in Bath, schoolchildren, adults and families experience life as it was in the Western Reserve during the 19th century.

The Society's collections and exhibits serve as a major educational resource for library and museum users, including school children, the general public, and scholars. In order to communicate effectively with these audiences, exhibits, whenever appropriate, employ modern interactive technologies and techniques. The Society seeks to make its research materials, exhibits, and programs accessible to a diverse and inclusive audience, including the handicapped.

Interstate 2 runs the length of the county, which also features the Erie-Ottawa Regional airport as well as airports on South Bass and Middle Bass Island. Ferry service to South Bass, Middle Bass, and Kelleys islands. There are also inter-island ferries.

### *Portage County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Portage County provides accommodations at locations like the Rocking Horse Inn in Ravenna. Restaurants like Eastpark provide casual dining.

The county is served by interstates 80 and 76. Two airports—the Portage County Airport and the Kent State University Airport—provide air service for small crafts.

### *Summit County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Summit County has 1,875 full service hotel rooms, 3,458 limited service hotel rooms, and 30 bed and breakfast rooms. The Akron area alone has a number of culturally-significant attractions, including The University of Akron, the Akron Art Museum, and the National Inventors' Hall of Fame. There are many restaurants, including the putative inventors of the hamburger, The Menches Brothers, as well as other local favorites such as The VegiTerranean, Luigi's and Tangier.

The Akron-Canton Airport, which has the lowest average fare in Ohio, provides convenient air travel. The Cuyahoga Valley Railway Company is located on Main St in Akron. The interstate highways accessible are I76, I77, I80, I271, I277, and I480.

### *Trumbull County Visitor Infrastructure Profile*

Trumbull County provides accommodations through 26 hotels/motels, six bed and breakfasts, and seven campgrounds. The county boasts a rich heritage and a strong Amish presence, especially in Mesopotamia. Other attractions include historic districts, stately homes and mansions from the 1800s, golf at 25 local courses, the Western Reserve Greenway, and antique and small town specialty shops. Dining options include national chains and family-owned restaurants as well as local diners and eclectic eateries; the Saratoga Restaurant, for example, is a local family-owned option.

Trumbull County is accessible through interstate 80 and nearby interstate 11. Route 422 runs through Warren and is a heavily traveled highway in the region. The Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport is east of Warren.

# Chapter 5

## Assessment of Criteria in the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act

**S**tudy Criterion (A) “...has an assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;”

The Western Reserve encompasses a wealth of resources that supports its significance as the nation’s town square and the associated themes of migration, transportation, industry, Lake Erie, land use and architecture, and education and social reform. These resources range across natural, historic, and cultural treasures, and they include historic buildings, towns, and cities; museums, historic sites, and heritage and cultural organizations; and waterways, natural environments, flora, and fauna. The examples shown here are illustrative only and not a comprehensive listing of what exists in the area.

### Natural Resources

**Lake Erie** is the region’s most visible and impressive natural resource, spanning 116 cubic miles in volume and stretching 241 by 57 miles across the land. It is the eleventh largest freshwater lake in the world and the fourth largest of the Great Lakes. It is also the shallowest and most southern, thereby making it the warmest and most biologically productive of the Great Lakes.

The Lake Erie region includes an array of landscapes:

- **Glacial islands** – Glacial Grooves Memorial on Kelleys Island is the world’s largest known example of glacial grooves, evidenced in limestone bedrock.
- **Bays, ports, and harbors** – Ashtabula Harbor was the first harbor to be officially surveyed on Lake Erie—by Moses Cleaveland. The port continues to be active today, handling coal, iron ore, sand, gravel, stone, and limestone, to name a few.

- **Rivers and streams** – The Mahoning River is 113 miles long and was a driver for industrial development in Youngstown and the surrounding areas. Today, efforts to return the river to environmental balance and add recreational and scenic uses are led by the Mahoning River Consortium. In contrast, but economically important as well, the 98-mile Grand River is designated a Wild and Scenic River and is the most biologically diverse and cleanest river of its size flowing into Lake Erie.

- **Forests and farmlands** – The Cuyahoga Valley National Park encompasses 33,000 acres along the banks of the Cuyahoga River. The natural landscape of the park is heavily forested, and the cultural landscape of the park includes significant agricultural lands.



Cuyahoga Valley  
National Park

- **Lakes and beaches** – Sheldon Marsh State Nature Preserve is 465 acres of barrier beach, diverse plant life, and other coastal wetland habitat. It is some of the last remaining undeveloped shoreline in Sandusky Bay.
- **Wetlands** – The Old Woman Creek Estuarine Research Reserve in Huron is a natural estuary containing various habitats: marshes and swamps, upland forests, open water, tributary streams, barrier beach, and near-shore habitat of Lake Erie.

There are numerous **Ohio Department of Natural Resources** lands within the Western Reserve. These include coastal properties like Geneva, Headlands Beach, Cleveland Lakefront, East Harbor, and Kelleys Island. They also include inland parks, such as Punderson, Findlay, Pymatuning, and Mosquito Lake. These parks are generally protected from development, open to the public, and include some educational component or programs.

## Historic Resources

The National Register of Historic Places “is the official list of the nation’s historic places worthy of preservation” (<http://www.nps.gov/nr/about.htm>). Properties must be old enough (generally 50 years or older) and of national significance for their

related stories, architecture, engineering, industry, or archaeology. In addition, enough historic fabric must remain to evidence that nationally significant element(s). The Western Reserve contains 1,005 listings on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Ohio Historic Inventory is a listing of surveyed and reviewed structures, buildings, or objects that have some historic, architectural, or engineering interest. The inventory program was developed to serve as an accurate and continuing record of the architectural and historic properties currently existing in the state. They have not yet been determined to have national, state, or local significance, but are resources with merit. To be placed on the Ohio Historic Inventory, a property must be surveyed and described in an application submitted for review and acceptance by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. Criteria include category or theme, year built, architect or



style, and condition of property. There are 20,839 listings on the Ohio Historic Inventory within the Western Reserve.

## Cultural Resources

Spanning urban, suburban, and rural areas, the Western Reserve is home to many history and cultural institutions. There are about 300 local history organizations in the 14 counties that make up the region. Many of these touch or focus primarily upon one of the themes identified for the heritage area: Town Square, Migration, Transportation, Industry, Lake Erie, Land Use and Architecture, or Education and Social Reform.

- **Town Square: Western Reserve Historical Society** is a not-for-profit educational institution that preserves and uses its collections, historic sites, and museums to inspire people to explore the history and culture of Northeastern Ohio and place that regional experience within the larger context of state, national, and global history.
- **Migration: The National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame & Museum** in Euclid highlights artifacts and memorabilia from polka stars like Frank Yankovic and Johnny Vadnal. It also includes a library and video collection. The American-Slovenian Polka Foundation operates the museum.



- **Transportation: The Mad River and NKP Railroad Museum** in Bellevue is the largest railroad museum in the state. Named for the 1839 Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad, the facility and collection is focused on the region's railroad history.



- **Industry: Youngstown Historic Center of Industry and Labor**, “The Steel Museum” tells the story of the iron and steel industry in the Mahoning Valley. Exhibits explore labor, immigration, and urban history. A library and archives is also housed in the 1986 Michael Graves building.
- **Lake Erie: The Keeper’s House** in Marblehead Peninsula was the home of Benajah Wolcott. Wolcott was one of the first settlers on the peninsula and served as keeper of the Marblehead lighthouse from 1822 until his death in 1832.

- **Land Use and Architecture: Stan Hywet Hall** is a 1915 country estate built by F.A. Sieberling (Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company founder). The house is one of the nation’s best examples of Tudor Revival architecture, and 3,000 separate blueprints and architectural drawings went into its design.
- **Education and Social Reform: The Oberlin Heritage Center** originated in 1903 as a community improvement group called the Village Improvement Society. Village Improvement Societies were common in New England and the Western Reserve in the early 20th century. Connectivity to this movement demonstrates the assertion that the Western Reserve served as a microcosm and impetus of movements. The Center celebrates and shares the stories of Oberlin, a small town in Ohio with a history centered on the local college and the community’s role in the Underground Railroad, abolitionism, women’s rights, and scientific research.

## Regional Partnerships for Resource Management

The Western Reserve is an area rich in regional thinking and partnership approaches. Resource preservation is no exception: many resource management, interpretation, and conservation groups represent partnership approaches to the

area’s heritage and culture. Regionalism and the rationale for working together are accepted values of the region.

Scenic byways operate much like heritage areas—as regional partnerships, marketing, product development, interpretation, and other activities covering a geographic area, in this case a linear region. **The Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail** is a 293-mile byway that includes more than 300 “discovery sites” along its length.

**The Ohio and Erie Canalway Association, in partnership with the Cleveland-based Ohio Canal Corridor and the Akron-based Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition**, oversees the Ohio & Erie National Heritage Canalway within the Western Reserve. It was designated in 1996 and operates under an advisory coalition and nonprofit formed for that purpose. The organization fosters partnerships, builds trails, provides grants within its boundaries, and more. The organization also partners in development of the Canalway Ohio national scenic byway.

Several regional efforts have focused on virtually linking coastal experiences, including the **Lake Erie Shipwrecks and Maritime Tales along the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail** (emphasizing shipwreck stories and diving experiences), **Lake**

**Erie Lighthouses and Maritime Tales** (focusing on the stories and visitor opportunities at the region's lighthouses, ship museums, and maritime heritage museums). A new effort will be launched September 2010 that links more than 70 birding hot spots through an interactive website and publication. This effort is being done collaboratively with the Ohio Sea Grant College Program and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

## Fairport Harbor

Like many Western Reserve ports, Fairport Harbor's character and charm was a direct result of those who settled there from foreign lands. Arriving in the mid- to late-1800s, Finns brought with them their customs, work ethics, religions, talents, and moral beliefs.

Finnish customs and traditions are shared at the Finnish Heritage Museum. Artifacts, artwork, and other exhibits tell the story of how the Finnish people came to the Western Reserve, as well as their influence on the region today. The museum also provides an experience where a fully-costumed tour guide greets visitors and serves authentic foods.

Fairport Harbor was the first federally sponsored port facility on Lake Erie, and its lighthouse and museum provide fascinating tales of this port's past and present. The lighthouse served as a final stop on the Underground Railroad when slaves were hidden at the lighthouse and smuggled aboard ships bound for Canada.

Based on the supporting information described above, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve has a story of great significance to the region and State of Ohio that had impact on the nation, but is not nationally distinctive or significant and has not met this criteria.

*Study Criterion (B) "... reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folk life that are a valuable part of the national story;"*

Cultural traditions, customs, beliefs, and folk life in the Western Reserve in many ways reflect the traditions and customs that are a valuable part of the national experience. This is the case because the Western Reserve is fully reflective of the demographic trends that affected the United States more broadly as a result of migration and immigration trends regionally and nationally for more than 200 years. Perhaps more so than any other Midwest region, the people of the Western Reserve are a microcosm of the national experience. Consequently, the cultural traditions, religious and political beliefs, folk life, foods, and other customs brought to the Western Reserve with migrants and immigrants for the last two centuries shaped the character of this region and in many ways reflect the broader experience.

Initially, the Western Reserve was settled by and defined primarily by migrants from New England—western Massachusetts, Vermont, and Connecticut. When the first settlers colonized the Reserve, they brought with them their traditions, ideals, psychology and inherited intellectual habits. They transplanted preferences for evangelical religion, family farming, and in many cases the New England tradition of reform and self-improvement. As the first migrants settled here, they began to establish their own local institutions that were based on and reflect their New England heritage. Religious leaders saw the Western Reserve as fertile ground for the expansion of New England religious culture.

Logically, the Western Reserve even today "looks east" to New England for many of its traditions because of this foundation, and the region's experience is akin in many ways to Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania. However, given the vastness of the region and influences of subsequent migrant and immigrant groups, there are sections within the Reserve that are definitively more Midwest in nature than "eastern."

New Englanders, Irish, and Germans dominated the Western Reserve for the most part until after the Civil War and into the early 20th century when increasing numbers of European immigrants came to the area, drawn by the area's



developing industrial base. The influx of south-eastern European immigrants, among them Poles, Italians, Slovenes, Slovaks, Jews, and Russians, to the Western Reserve mirrored immigration to other major eastern and Midwestern regions and cities, including New York City, Boston, Chicago, and Pittsburgh. The region's Jewish population, although not as large as that of New York City or Chicago, is one of the most influential in the United States, and the Cleveland Jewish Federation has been a leader amongst federations nationally.

Additionally, the Western Reserve's New England heritage shaped the region's strong tradition of charity and philanthropy with the Cleveland Foundation a sterling example—the first community foundation of its kind in the United States. That tradition of stewardship has been passed on to succeeding ethnic groups in the region, such as the Cleveland Jewish Federation, Catholic Charities, the United Black Fund, as well

as the charitable donations of individuals from newer communities, including Indian and Asian groups that are giving increasingly to support medical research and health care.

The regional combination of industry and agriculture and the evolution of its transit web, lake transport and commerce, canal, railroads, highways, and airline industries in both Cleveland and Akron parallel the larger American model. The canal, given its eastern origins, is particularly important, making the Western Reserve, as a Midwest region, exemplary particularly when compared with other Midwest regions/states like Illinois and Iowa.

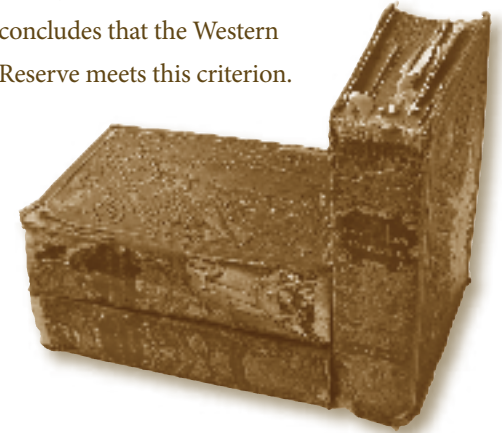
Lastly, one can look at higher education and the manner in which Case Western University and Oberlin College continue to support eastern concepts of higher education. Cuyahoga Community College was a major player contributing to the rise of two-year schools.

There are aspects of migration into the Western Reserve that are particularly important to the evolving cultural landscape here and that reflect national trends. For example, the movement of African-Americans to the area first was a result of the legacy of New England antipathy to slavery during the 19th century, and then as part of the

Great Migration beginning with World War I given the abundance of work in the Western Reserve, an emerging industrial powerhouse during both World Wars.

Recent (20th and 21st Century) migrant and immigrant groups and their influences on the Western Reserve include Latino/Latina, Asian, Arabian, and Indian. Each group has its own cultural traditions, beliefs, folk life, and foods that blend with the existing mix of ethnicities and cultures to create a region rich in diversity. Immigration continues, not only on its own accord. Regional leaders, recognizing the contributions of diversity past, present, and future, are working to establish a center focusing on outreach and service provision to assist future migrants to the Western Reserve.

Based on the supporting information described above, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve meets this criterion.



*Study Criterion (C) “. . . provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic features;”*

One purpose of a heritage area is to encourage the preservation, conservation, and appropriate development and promotion of the resources in the region. The Western Reserve has many existing organizations, programs, and partnerships working toward the goals of preservation and conservation within its boundaries already, and these organizations could take advantage of the additional tools of a heritage area. Likewise, opportunities for greater conservation and preservation efforts exist, either through increased resources or greater partnership.

## Historic Preservation

The National Register of Historic Places is an honorary listing, conveying the significance of a history property; a protective measure, requiring review before federal funds can be expended to alter the property; and an economic opportunity, providing eligibility for federal and state historic tax credit programs to owners of historic commercial properties. An inventory of the Western Reserve revealed 1,005 properties designated on the National Register of Historic Places or as a National Historic Landmark. Of these, many have utilized the historic tax credits

available at the state and federal level, with Ohio having garnered more than \$2 billion in private investment as a result of federal tax credits since their inception in 2005. Examples of recent tax credit recipients include the following:

- The **Andrew Jackson Residence** on Main Street in Akron is an 1870 Second Empire mansion built by an Akron business leader. The project, which cost nearly \$3.4 million and converted the building to office space, received both the 20 percent Federal Historic Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit and the 25 percent Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit.
- The **Sunshine Cloak Company Building** in Cleveland’s Superior Avenue Historic District is a 1911 industrial building that housed garment production. Its \$7 million rehabilitation project received the 20 percent Federal Historic Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit and the 25 percent Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit.
- The **Realty Building** in downtown Youngstown is a 1924, 12-story office building that houses residential units after nearly \$8.2 million in rehabilitation. The project received the 20 percent Federal Historic Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit and the 25 percent Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit.



**The Certified Local Government Program** is a local, state, and national government program promoting local historic preservation efforts. In Ohio, the program is run by the National Park Service and the Ohio Historic Preservation Offices. Communities apply and are certified, after which they are eligible for assistance and grants for historic preservation. To be certified, Ohio Certified Local Governments operate local historic preservation ordinances and preservation review boards, protecting local historic resources from inappropriate development or demolition.

**The Ohio Main Street Program** (Heritage Ohio) focuses on revitalization of historic or traditional commercial areas and is based on the principles of historic preservation. The program aims to improve downtown business districts through four core areas: organization, design, promotion,

and economic restructuring. There are 15 designated Main Streets in the Western Reserve, including the following:

- Amherst
- Cleveland- Historic Gateway Neighborhood
- Cleveland-Historic Warehouse District
- Elyria
- Lakewood
- Kent
- Medina
- Millersburg
- Norwalk
- Oberlin
- Painesville
- Port Clinton
- Sandusky
- Warren
- Wellington

**The Cleveland Restoration Society** has been working to preserve the historic built environment of Cleveland since the mid-1970s. It is the largest nonprofit local historic preservation organization in the state, a National Trust for Historic Preservation partner, and well-regarded nationally, particularly for its low-interest loans and technical assistance programs. The Cleveland Restoration Society is an excellent example of the types of organizations that advocate and work for historic preservation within their communities in the Western Reserve.

Many small communities throughout the Western Reserve, such as Medina, also have community design committees that uphold historic integrity in both public and private structures. Local historic preservation organizations are also prevalent throughout the region.

## Natural Resource and Land Conservation

**Metroparks** in Ohio are powerhouse conservation, recreation, and education programs that provide valuable open space and not only acquire and preserve natural areas and historic sites, but also provide programming, education, and community services.

**The Western Reserve Land Conservancy** was created through the voluntary merger of eight land trusts, creating an organization that covers the region from Sandusky Bay to the Pennsylvania border and from Lake Erie to Wayne County.

Partner organizations include the following:

- Chagrin River Land Conservancy
- Bratenahl Land Conservancy
- Headwaters Landtrust
- Hudson Land Conservancy
- Medina Summit Land Conservancy
- Tinkers Creek Land Conservancy
- Firelands Land Conservancy
- Grand River Partners

The Western Reserve Land Conservancy has preserved 24,000 acres through conservation easements, which are permanent legal covenants prohibiting certain changes to properties.

**The Killbuck Watershed Land Trust** preserves more than 4,500 acres of farm land, forests, wetlands, and open spaces in Ashland, Coshocton, Holmes, Richland, Tuscarawas, and Wayne counties.

**The Gates Mills Land Conservancy** preserves the natural, recreational, and scenic resources of the Village of Gates Mills and the Chagrin River Valley by acquiring land and conservation easements. About 469 acres have been protected thus far.

**The Little Beaver Creek Land Foundation** preserves and protects the Little Beaver Creek watershed through land acquisition and conservation easements, citizen education, historic preservation, and other environmental management activities. To date, it has protected 4,343 acres.

**The Mahoning River Consortium** works to restore the environmental health of the Mahoning River and its surrounding landscapes. It also supports efforts to improve the social, recreational and economic development occurring in the communities located along the river.

**The Cleveland Museum of Natural History** runs the Natural Areas Program, which is an effort to create a collection of nature preserves with a focus on northern Ohio's biodiversity. There are 35 natural areas in the program today, and the museum has used its conservation programs to protect more than 5,000 acres. Three of the natural areas are open to the public: Mentor Marsh, Scheele Preserve, and North Kingsville Sand Barrens.

**The Nature Conservancy in Ohio** has worked since 1958 to protect more than 56,000 acres of natural lands in partnership with other organizations. Two of the six Nature Conservancy



preserves that are open to the public are in the Western Reserve: Herrick Fen and Morgan Swamp. The Ohio Department of Agriculture administers the **Agricultural Easement Purchase Program** (AEPP) to preserve Ohio farmland through the purchase of agricultural easements. AEPP provides up to 75 percent matching grants to farmland owners who sell their development rights.

**The Lake Erie Allegheny Partnership for Biodiversity** is a collaboration of organizations focused on biodiversity. Its primary region includes lands through the glaciated region of northeastern Ohio, northwestern Pennsylvania, and western New York. They are developing a regional conservation plan to guide prioritization of land protection and restoration projects.

The **Ohio Department of Natural Resources** through its State Parks and Division of Wildlife also prioritizes natural area preservation and is an active initiator and partner in preserving natural areas throughout the Western Reserve.

Although not established for resource preservation goals, the **NE Adventures in Ohio** organization is an example of regional partnership around a common goal. This volunteer organization focuses on tourism promotion within a sub-segment of the Western Reserve.

Based on the supporting information described here, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve meets this criterion.

*Study Criterion (D) "... provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;"*

## **Recreational Assessment**

### *Recreational Importance*

The Western Reserve provides a wide range of outstanding recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to explore and experience the region's natural, historic, and cultural features of the land and its people.

Outdoor recreational opportunities include both passive and active opportunities, including birdwatching, hiking, cycling, walking tours, driving tours, geocaching, kayaking, railroad tours, sportfishing, skiing, scuba diving, and many more. These experiences are provided through a network of protected areas including sandy beaches, wetlands, lakes, rivers and streams, forests, plains, islands, and other habitats and ecosystems unique to the glaciated portion of northern Ohio. Local agencies, organizations, and private businesses enhance these experiences through providing interpretive and educational

components, such as private kayaking tour companies that sponsor trips throughout the region or narrated river cruises provided by metropark agencies.

### Availability of Public Lands

Identification of available public lands for recreation is provided in Figure 9. As demonstrated, there is a wide variety depending on geographic location and urbanization. A strong network of county park districts and prominence of state parks and preserved lands within the study area is supplemented by conservation efforts of local and regional land conservancies, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, state agencies, regional biodiversity and land-use planning consortiums, and others to provide future lands for public use on a voluntary basis with landowners.

### Obstacles for Outdoor Recreation Providers

Lack of funds and lack of communications were identified by outdoor recreation providers in the northeast area of the state within the Ohio Department of Natural Resources SCORP report. Data is not accessible by county; however, as designated by the SCORP focus group districts, this region encompasses nearly two-thirds of the Western Reserve. Poor communications and cooperation among governing entities and

### Outdoor Recreation Acreage by County

COUNTY	County Acreage	Outdoor Recreation Areas Acreage	% of Total Acres for Outdoor Recreation	2006 Population	Outdoor Recreation per 1000 Residents
Ashland	273,242	11,949	.9	54,727	218
Ashtabula	454,826	12,518	.9	102,703	122
Cuyahoga	294,307	27,361	2.0	1,314,241	21
Erie	163,355	10,796	.8	78,116	138
Geauga	261,738	10,015	.7	95,676	105
Huron	317,761	4,173	.3	60,313	69
Lake	148,095	12,213	.9	232,892	52
Lorain	316,566	16,038	1.2	301,993	53
Mahoning	272,300	15,018	1.1	251,026	60
Medina	270,905	11,876	.2	169,353	70
Ottawa	167,341	8,207	.6	41,331	199
Portage	322,904	21,796	1.6	155,012	141
Summit	269,000	31,763	2.3	545,931	58
Trumbull	407,413	32,162	2.3	217,3362	148
<b>Totals and/or Averages</b>					

Figure 6 Outdoor Recreation Acreage by County [SOURCE: 2008 SCORP Outdoor Recreation Acreage by County]

recreation providers, as well as among multiple groups trying to use the same resources were identified as obstacles—all of which could be enhanced through regional designation of a Western Reserve Heritage Area.

Participants also expressed concern about the lack of open space in trust for future generations, as well as for more specific needs for passive nature-based recreation opportunities, trails, and hunting land. There was specific mention of the need to balance active and passive recreation opportunities throughout the region.

### Tourism Importance

Throughout most of the study area, tourism is important to the economic health of Western Reserve communities and reflects both the quality and diversity of recreational offerings within the study area. The region's tourism industry vitality is also important to the state. Thirty-three percent of lodging tax revenues collected in the state is attributed to tax collections within the 14 counties encompassed within the study area which makes up 16 percent of the state's counties. This revenue is collected by local government entities; however, the comparison to state collections demonstrates the region's statewide significance and size within the Ohio tourism market.

## Education Assessment

### *Higher Education Network*

In addition to place-based, informal educational settings at natural areas and museums, the Western Reserve region is home to many universities and colleges, several of which have turned in recent years to supporting the area's rich cultural and historical diversity through research and special programming. This creates a unique opportunity for the region to access academia and researchers for project implementation, information and supportive research. Higher education presence includes Case Western Reserve University, Kent State University, University of Akron, Youngstown State University, Cleveland State University, Bowling Green State University (regional campus), Ohio State University (research laboratory and extension presence), Oberlin College, Lake Erie College, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland Institute of Music, Baldwin-Wallace College, Hiram College, John Carroll University, Notre Dame College, and Ursuline College.

### *Research Facilities*

In addition to primary and regional campuses, research facilities are also available. Stone Laboratory is the Ohio State University research laboratory for Lake Erie science and is located on Gibraltar Island in Ottawa County. In addition to providing educational opportunities for graduate

## Stone Laboratory on Gibraltar Island

Stone Laboratory is the oldest freshwater biological field station in the United States. Located on the 6.5-acre Gibraltar Island in Lake Erie's island-dotted Western Basin, Stone Laboratory is the center of Ohio State University's Lake Erie teaching and researching. More than 65 researchers from academic institutions around the country work year-round at the laboratory to solve some of the Great Lakes' most pressing problems. It is managed by the Ohio State University Sea Grant College Program.

Research at this laboratory has advanced not only Lake Erie science and stewardship, but environmental science on many fronts. The laboratory served as the research base for Lake Erie water quality recovery during the 1970s, and science conducted from this base led to the identification and reduction of phosphorus as a culprit of the lake's degradation. Publicity and grassroots movements surrounding the lake's environmental issues in the 1970s launched the Clean Water Act and the formation of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The island trains future scientists and land use planners by serving as the island campus for undergraduate and graduate students, teachers, and middle school and high school students. Visitors can explore the campus and learn about environmental science during tours throughout the summer, as well as by attending special programming. The nearby Aquatic Visitors Center and South Bass Island Lighthouse are also managed by the OSU Ohio Sea Grant College Program and provide interpretation on water quality, the importance of a healthy freshwater ecosystem, and current research issues and advancements.



students, undergraduate students, high school students, middle school students, and educators, the laboratory is the site for important Lake Erie ecological and environmental research.

Cleveland State University operates a Communication Research Center offering best practices in methods and tools.

### *Opportunities for Enhancing Educational Linkage*

Throughout the public meetings, residents expressed concern that future generations are not being taught the history and contributions of the local region. Residents identified designation as a way to provide for enhancing both formal and informal education inclusion of the Western Reserve story.



There is also a new effort related to the Lake Erie theme that could serve as both a model and a method for moving forward. A set of Lake Erie Literacy Principles has been developed for use in both formal and informal education settings. These have been adopted and altered at the Great Lakes level as well. A team of state agencies, educators, and academic advisors developed these Lake Erie Literacy Principles to unify the messages, ensure accuracy of information being delivered, and to provide a framework for future education. A similar effort could better link the story of the Western Reserve to regional museums, historic sites, and natural areas that provide interpretation.

In addition to providing opportunities for enhancing student and place-based visitor education, designation could also enhance professional education efforts. As identified at public and special interest meetings, regional designation could create an impetus for delivering training and education to resource managers, land-use planners, community development officials, and others to enhance story delivery, resource integrity, and customer service.

Based on the supporting information described above, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve meets this criterion.

*Study Criterion (E) “. . . contains resources important to the identified theme or themes of the Study Area that retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation.”*

The Western Reserve’s compelling national story as the nation’s town square has been discussed in great detail within this feasibility study. The themes that support this statement have also been presented. The concept of a town square as a meeting point for progress and reform is typified throughout the study area, both in the abundance of village greens and town squares of all magnitudes, as well as in the contributions those within this region have made to society. Early surveyors of the Western Reserve identified physical boundaries, yet probably did not recognize that the definition of these boundaries would one day translate into a culture unique upon the American landscape. Early settlers from New England began to influence the identity of this region as a crucible of cultures and ideas. Access to Lake Erie and the rich resources of the region further added to the allure, creating a diversity of ethnicities and values as immigrants arrived bearing their traditions, ideas, and beliefs.

Resources supporting the overarching theme and its subthemes are plentiful. Chapter 4 of this

feasibility study identifies these resources and their prominence throughout the entire Western Reserve.

## **Integrity of the Historic Resources**

Assessing the integrity of these resources is expressed here in two ways: integrity of the physical resources and integrity of the story. Integrity of the physical historic and cultural resources throughout the region is high, evidenced by more than 1,005 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and 17 National Historic Landmarks. Preservation societies focused on maintaining that authenticity include hundreds of local historical societies, as well as state efforts through the Ohio Preservation Office. The landscape, itself, is supportive of the story. Throughout the region, reminders of the area’s early New England roots are present. These include names of cities and towns (Marblehead, Kent, Norwalk, etc.) adopted from New England cities, as well as in the preservation of town squares and village greens in communities of all sizes.

## **Integrity of the Natural Resources**

Natural resources played an important part of the Western Reserve story by shaping the opportunities and challenges presented to early

settlers, as well as by forming the foundation for growth. Natural resources throughout the area are protected by an impressive network of county metropark systems and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, as well as active and passionate conservation conservancies and land trusts. These entities often work across political and geographic borders, recognizing the power of uniting efforts. The region's philanthropic base supports resource conservation as well. The region is varied, from urban to rural landscapes. Recent years have seen an increase in efforts to enhance public access, acquire public lands from willing sellers, and assist private landowners with conservation efforts.

## **Integrity of the Western Reserve Story**

Integrity of the story of the Western Reserve is more difficult to gauge, as this story is presently not coordinated on a region-wide basis. The Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland preserves artifacts and stories of this important region, but extension of the story beyond its walls and local region is limited by resources. Public meetings with historic interest groups and tourism professionals throughout the region revealed a strong interest and need in regional assistance of preservation, as well as in interpretation of the Western Reserve story to local place-based sites.

Many of the place-based venues, such as natural areas and historic sites identified within the resource inventory, currently interpret key pieces of the Western Reserve story. These interpretive efforts include a variety of methods, such as exhibit signage and first-person historical reenactment. Connecting existing interpretation into a broader framework telling the Western Reserve story would support current efforts, while creating a richer story to share with residents and visitors.

Some examples of how current interpretive efforts tell elements of the Western Reserve story are provided in Figure 10.

Recognition of the region as the “Western Reserve” is widespread, reflected in hundreds of businesses and associations bearing “Western Reserve” and “Firelands” in their names. The historical meaning behind the names; however, are lesser known. Also, as no regional effort currently links the region together, recognition of this common bond between counties and communities is absent. This is an opportunity that was identified through the public meetings as one that should be pursued by designation.

## **How Designation Could Enhance Integrity**

Specific opportunities for enhancing the integrity of the Western Reserve story were discussed at public meetings. These were identified as benefits and feasible activities for a coordinating entity to coordinate should designation occur. Should designation occur, a management plan will be developed with broad public participation. These recommendations do not supplant this plan, but demonstrate the public's awareness of how a regional effort can enhance resource integrity.

### *Recognizing and Rewarding Quality*

As a heritage area, the ability to both publicly recognize and reward the integrity of the resources and interpretation would provide not only recognition to those resource managers who have prioritized integrity, but would create incentives for future efforts. Many visitors bureau cannot prioritize integrity, but must promote all attractions within their political boundary. A need was expressed for a regional, objective peer-review rating system of recognition, which would increase awareness of those sites with strongest integrity who have met high standards, while at the same time providing goals and assistance for sites in achieving these standards.

**Western Reserve Sample Sites and Contributions to Theme**

LOCATION	WESTERN RESERVE THEME	STORY CONTRIBUTION	INTERPRETIVE METHODS
Hale Farm and Village, Bath	Migration	Early settlement, Civil War	Historical re-enactment, first-person characterization, music, and song
Sandusky Maritime Museum	Transportation	Shipping and sailing on the Great Lakes; movement of goods, people, and ideas	Exhibits, hand-on boat-building workshops, special programming, and lectures
Museum of Labor and Industry, Youngstown	Industry	Iron and steel industry, labor relations	Exhibits, videos, workshops, and lectures
Stan Hywet Hall	Land Use and Architecture	Country estate and gardens	Guided tours, speakers bureau, events
Canalway Center, Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation, Cuyahoga Heights	Lake Erie	Human impact on water quality, role of tributaries	Exhibits, music and songs through Cleveland Metroparks, first-person characterization, workshops guided tours
Oberlin Heritage Center	Social Reform and Education	Role in Underground Railroad, abolitionism women's activism, civil rights	Guided tours, publications, special programming and lectures, history walks

*Figure 7 Western Reserve Sample Sites and Contributions to Theme*

*Technical Assistance*

Providing the assistance for interpretation, conservation, preservation, and promotion on a regional basis would enhance long-term integrity of the region, its stories, and its places. As a regional coordinating entity, the Western Reserve would be in a better position to leverage assistance because of its network of sites. Coordination of such activities is likely to occur through existing organizations, but a coordinating entity would serve as the incubator for ideas, encourager of innovation, and provider of support for these organizations and their efforts.

*Education and Training on Revealing and Interpreting Regional Story*

As identified earlier, interpretation of the story of the Western Reserve is fragmented. A Western Reserve Heritage Area would provide the story, supported with facts and resources, and share interpretive resources, education, tools, and training to place-based venues throughout the region. Individuals at several public meetings also expressed a desire to ensure that future generations are taught about the Western Reserve in formal education. The Western Reserve Heritage Area could form an educational taskforce to incorporate local heritage into state educational curriculum requirements.

*Embracing Technology to Tell a Regional Story*

A Western Reserve Heritage Area could leverage the region's purchasing power by contracting with vendors to incorporate technology to tell regional stories. These could include podcasts, GPS systems, video feeds, etc., that could virtually connect the region. Also identified was the ability of a Western Reserve Heritage Area to continue its role as a "town square" and meeting place by providing a means for virtual dialogue about local issues and opportunities using technology as a means for connecting communities.

*Establishing a Framework for Ensuring Authenticity and Inclusion*

Authenticity of the story is paramount, so a Western Reserve Heritage Area would be in the position to coordinate research and expert forums to ensure accuracy. Because the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area boundary is all-inclusive of those counties originally platted by surveyors, the Heritage Area would ensure inclusiveness across political and geographical boundaries.

Based on the information provided above, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve meets this criterion.

*Study Criterion (F) “... whether the study area includes residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments that are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants, including the Federal Government, and have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area.”*

The Western Reserve community engagement process obtained public input and support from a wide variety of individuals, elected officials, and organizations across the 14-county region of the Western Reserve. Overall, the public input was positive, and there is a genuine interest among the respondents that the Western Reserve Heritage Area is an interesting idea and it is worth pursuing on a regional level. Many of the respondents recognize the authentic natural, historical, and cultural resources of the heritage of the Western Reserve and they are interested in working in partnership and collaboration for the future interpretation and celebration of the Western Reserve heritage.

Several of the regional organizations represented on the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Stakeholder Committee, including the Western

Reserve Historical Society, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition and the Fund for Our Economic Future, have long standing relationships and partnerships within the 14-county region that can be leveraged for the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Area. While all of these organizations are active in some of the 14 counties of the Western Reserve, few of the organizations are actively working in all 14 counties. One of the organizations, the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, has extensive heritage area experience with the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area and has worked with more than 20 Heritage Area projects across the country.

The Fund for Our Economic Future unites philanthropy to strengthen the economic competitiveness of northeast Ohio. The Fund supports six regional economic development organizations that collaborate to grow jobs and investments in 16 counties in northern Ohio. Representatives of the Fund for Our Economic Future have been very involved with the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study and there is the possibility that the Fund could play a larger role with the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Area as a regional community and economic development project.

There are several resources at the state level that have already assisted with various components within the Western Reserve. These resources include the Ohio Historical Society, Department of Natural Resource Natureworks, Clean Ohio, and Recreational Trail Fund grant programs for the development of trail and green space projects, and the Department of Transportation Scenic Byway and Enhancement Grant program for scenic roadway improvements and trail development.

While there continues to be much public interest for the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Area among members of the stakeholder committee and the general public, more work and partnership cultivation are necessary to transition from public interest to commitment of resources and investment for the long-term sustainability of the Western Reserve Heritage Area.



A conceptual financial plan has not been developed. The potential for financial support, technical assistance, and new partnerships to move the heritage area concept forward in the Western Reserve is great, but commitments have not been articulated. There are many organizations and agencies within the study area that have offered support, either verbally or in a writing (see Appendices), but these offer only broad support for the concept and/or anticipation of working with others to implement the heritage corridor vision and goals.

Many recognize the opportunity to come together as a region and pool resources in support of the significant, shared story. As this opportunity is realized by more, the level of support for the heritage area concept as well as direct financial commitments may grow, but the lack of a pre-existing or identifiable coordinating entity (see Study Criterion G) will make it difficult to coordinate potential partners and garner future financial commitments.

Based on the supporting information described above, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve does not on the whole meet this criterion.

*Study Criterion (G) “... whether the Study area has a potential local coordinating entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments to develop a national heritage area consistent with continued local and State economic activity.”*

Heritage areas are overseen by a coordinating entity that is identified in the authorizing legislation. The coordinating entity may be a state or local agency, a federal commission, or a private nonprofit corporation. The legislation gives the coordinating entity certain authorities and responsibilities; its primary responsibility being to develop a financially self-sustaining program that helps a region maintain its identity and heritage.

The coordinating entity is empowered to develop a management plan for the heritage area in collaboration with local governments and other stakeholders and is authorized to receive federal funds on the area's behalf. Any federal funds appropriated for the National Heritage Area are to be used as seed money to help the coordinating entity develop this self-sustaining National Heritage Area. The authority to implement the management plan is local—it rests in the hands of willing local officials and the actions of local organizations and individuals. Designation

legislation does not provide the management entity or any federal agency with the authority to regulate land uses, nor does it have any impact on private property.

There are many regional and local organizations within the Western Reserve with regional partnerships and collaboration experience. Some relevant examples include efforts to preserve natural resources through the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, efforts to preserve the story and resources through the Western Reserve Historical Society, and efforts to enhance regional economic development through the Fund for our Economic Future. At the time of this report, there is not currently a single entity that has emerged with either the willingness or the capacity and geographic-wide acceptance to be recognized as the coordinating entity if the area were to be designated a National Heritage Area.

Instead, it is suggested that a forum similar to the stakeholder committee brought together to assist with this study be looked at as a model for creation of a coordinating entity in the future. This committee had a decent geographic representation as well as the mix of skills necessary for success, but composition of a new entity would need more regional representation as well as organizations that either have or could

bring in additional resources to match federal dollars and implement a regional vision.

The Western Reserve Feasibility Study Stakeholder Committee included individuals from the following:

- Ashtabula County Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Canfield Heritage Foundation
- Cleveland Metroparks
- Cuyahoga County Planning Commission
- Eastgate Regional Council of Government
- Floyd Browne Group
- Fund for Our Economic Future
- Geauga County Historical Society
- Geauga County Parks
- Hale Farm and Village
- Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail
- Lake Metroparks
- Lake County Historical Society and History Ctr.
- Mahoning Valley Historical Society
- Medina County Commissioners
- Medina County Convention & Visitors Bureau
- National Park Service
- Oberlin Heritage Center
- Ohio and Erie Canalway Coalition
- Ohio Historical Society
- Ohio Sea Grant College Program
- Ottawa County Commissioners
- Portage County Regional Planning Commission
- Congressman Tim Ryan

- Sandusky Main Street Association
- Trumbull County Tourism Bureau
- Vienna Historical Society
- Village of Richfield
- Western Reserve Historical Society
- Western Reserve Land Conservancy
- Youngstown State University

The stakeholder committee as described above is not ready to assume the responsibilities of coordinating entity. Although participation by some of those listed was strong during the study process, the responsibilities and resources needed for the individual mission and tasks of these organizations and agencies would prevent the needed focus of time and materials to the heritage area. With time and commitment, this forum could be established as an effective convener and coordinator, but it would require a greater level of commitment than exhibited during the study process.

Heritage areas enhance local economies. Many communities within the Western Reserve recognize the natural relationship among resource conservation, enhanced recreational opportunities, community identity and image, and community economic development efforts. Resources define communities' characters and are often valued by those seeking to relocate. Heritage designation would enhance the current dialogue of balancing

development and conservation priorities resulting in more sustainable communities.

A national heritage area designation based on the natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources of the region would complement the existing tourist attractions and resources in the Western Reserve. The national heritage area coordinating entity would work with local businesses and organizations to build their capacity and develop a regional marketing approach. Overall, economic activity in the tourism sector would experience a positive impact.

Based on the supporting information described above, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve does not meet this criterion. Although heritage area designation would be consistent with economic activity in the area, the lack of an established coordinating entity combined with the lead time and resources necessary to get it up and running would impact the ability to develop and implement a management plan.



*Study Criterion (H) “. . . has a conceptual boundary map that is supported by the public;”*

The Western Reserve’s national significance lies in its establishment as the nation’s town square after the Revolutionary War, which took place in concurrence with the settlement of the historic Connecticut Western Reserve in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The small town squares, migration patterns, transportation developments, industry innovations, land use patterns, architecture, social reform activities, and education all resulted from and evolved in connection to this establishment as a settlement under Connecticut. Thus, the proposed boundaries for a heritage area mirror this important historic boundary. The boundaries were not revised as a result of the planning process, so the map included below has been viewed and approved at each Stakeholder committee and public meeting for the project.

The study area as defined by Congress in the Western Reserve Heritage Areas Study Act (et120 STAT. 1846 PUBLIC LAW 109–338—OCT. 12, 2006) also reflects the original boundaries of the Western Reserve as surveyed beginning in 1796.

Western Reserve Heritage Areas Study Act . . . (c) BOUNDARIES OF THE STUDY AREA.—The Study Area shall be comprised of the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio.

Based on the supporting information described above, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve meets this criterion.

*Study Criterion (I) “. . . whether the study area has potential or actual impact on private property located within or abutting the Study Area.”*

Concern over private property rights was identified at one public meeting. Designation of a national heritage area, however, does not provide the coordinating entity or any federal agency authority to regulate land or land uses. Participation in projects and programs is always voluntary, with zoning and land-use decisions remaining under the jurisdiction of local governments. In addition, the coordinating entity is also prohibited from using the federal funds it receives through enabling legislation to acquire real property (NPS 2003).

The coordinating entity is empowered to create a management plan for the heritage area, and it is authorized to receive federal funds on the area’s behalf. The authority to be a part of development and implementation of this plan is voluntary and local—resting in the hands of willing local officials and the actions of local organizations and individuals.

After a heritage area is designated by Congress, National Park Service partners with local community members to help plan and implement heritage area activities. The National Park Service also provides administrative oversight of federal funding that the heritage area receives. National Park Service involvement is always advisory in nature; it neither makes nor carries out management decisions.

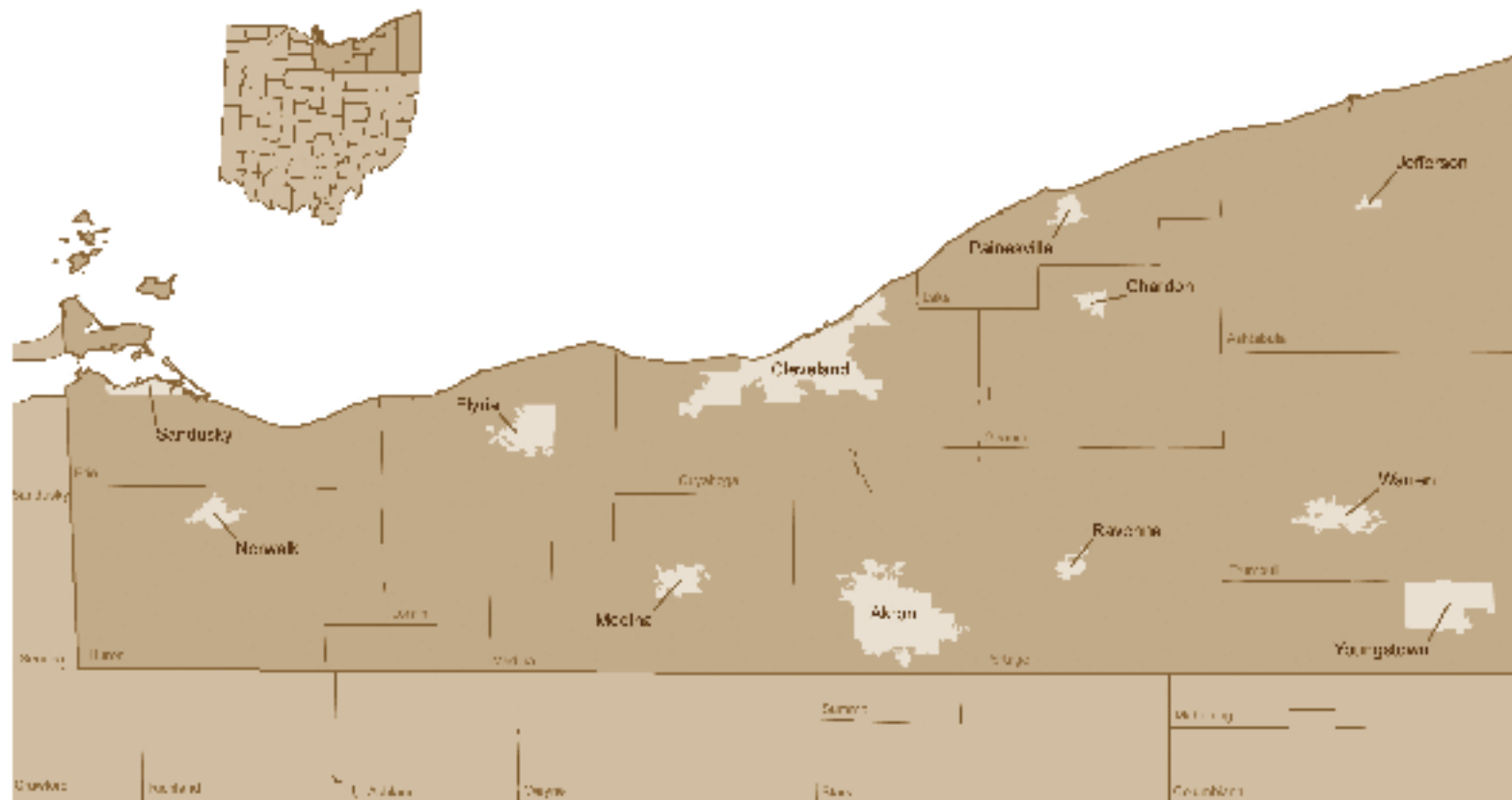
Heritage conservation efforts are grounded in a community’s pride in its history and traditions, and in residents’ interest and involvement in retaining and interpreting the landscape for future generations.

Based on the supporting information described above, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve does not have potential or actual impact on private property located within or abutting the study area.



OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Area



- Western Reserve
- County Seats
- County Boundaries

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Figure 8 Conceptual Boundary of the Western Reserve Heritage Area



# Chapter 6

## Designation Alternatives and Impact Assessment

### Review of Designation Alternatives

This section fully evaluates two management alternatives including no action and implementation of the heritage area concept as a regional initiative, and discusses a third alternative – national designation - that was initially considered but set aside.

#### *Alternative 1: No Action*

The no-action alternative implies that no attempt would be made to further consolidate interests for a unified Western Reserve heritage area. Local initiatives would continue to recognize, protect, and develop community resources individually.

Although many individuals, organizations, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government entities are working to preserve and enhance significant Western Reserve resources, a lack of coordination could have a negative impact if resource managers continue to compete for funding and visitors. Marketing in competitive

fashion would pit resources against each other rather than working together. This lack of coordination and un-unified effort could have a negative impact on significant cultural and other resources as there would not be a focused region-wide effort to develop common direction on resource protection policies, programs, marketing, and promotion. This could result in a loss of historic structures, archaeological resources and other significant resources that preserve and tell the Western Reserve story.

Uncoordinated planning and land use regulation could result in communities developing in ways that may diminish the natural and recreational resources of the Western Reserve. Natural resources, such as wetlands, could become further fragmented reducing the region's value as a wildlife migration route and eroding aesthetic qualities. The connection and enhancement of region-wide recreational opportunities might not be as easily realized.

Each community's individual potential for cultural, natural, and recreational resource conservation and the collective potential of a region working together to preserve and enhance these important resources might not be realized. Funding to support resource protection in the Western Reserve would continue to be challenging. If no action is taken, resource recognition, protection, and promotion within the region would be fragmented as no additional mechanism for working together would be provided.

There would be no technical assistance offered through the National Park Service's National Heritage Area program or associated federal funding. Other federal programs to expand protection of Western Reserve resources, such as the National Register programs, Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program, and National Historic Landmarks program would continue on a competitive basis.

### *Alternative 2: Implementation of the heritage area concept as a regional initiative*

In order for a regional initiative to work, a focal point or framework is necessary to coordinate the efforts of Western Reserve partners and to provide a forum where different interests can network, share, and have a voice. Several possibilities exist for an organization or framework to facilitate the protection and management of the corridor's resources. One example is the Plus Works, self-described as the following:

*“Partners in building a more vibrant Northeast Ohio are collaborating to tell a consistent, clear story within the region about the people, places and efforts that make Northeast Ohio great. Our objective is to increase awareness, support and participation in the work that is building a vibrant region. Our target audience is community influencers across Northeast Ohio – defined as 17 counties.”*



Other current regional initiatives to unite the northern Ohio include:

- JumpStart, the region's entrepreneurial assistance organization
- BioEnterprise, the region's bioscience advocacy and assistance organization
- NorTech, the region's high-tech advocate
- MAGNET, the region's manufacturing advocacy organization
- Greater Cleveland Partnership and other chambers of commerce, who are the founders of Team Northeast Ohio
- The Cleveland Plus Marketing Alliance
- Team Northeast Ohio (the region's business attraction organization)

This is a sample list of regional initiatives and does not reflect all regional activity within the Western Reserve. Most of the initiatives identified above do not include all 14 counties represented in the Western Reserve, but there may be opportunities to expand their geographic focus.

The Fund for Our Economic Future is a collaboration of philanthropic organizations and individuals that have united to strengthen the regional economic competitiveness through grant-making, research, and civic engagement. As such, it is in a position to provide funding and other support for many of these regional initiatives.

Another option to consider is coordination through the Western Reserve Heritage Area Feasibility Study Stakeholder Committee, a mix of agencies, organizations, and individuals brought together to assist with the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study (described in more detail in Chapter 2). If this group chose to stay engaged, they could be that regional coordinating forum for communities, organizations, agencies, and individuals who come together around their common story and begin to implement the vision and goals identified in Chapter 1.

Potential roles for partners include ownership, jurisdiction/authority or management of resources, funding, advocacy for one or more resource themes, and responsibility for developing plans that impact the Western Reserve. This alternative would rely on communities getting together to establish a regional framework to plan and implement the area vision. Resource protection and management would still occur through local action, but a regional authority would coordinate planning, facilitate information exchange, seek funding, and provide the vehicle for a unified marketing effort.

This alternative could increase state or federal support while creating a regional identity that could formalize the relationship among

communities working for a common cause. Existing regional organizations could assume this role with minor modifications. A regional coordinating body could prepare multi jurisdictional funding requests, or assist groups with limited staff or expertise to prepare better funding requests, thereby improving chances for additional state and federal funding.

Although regional partnerships are common, the Western Reserve has not worked as efficiently as it could as a region in the past. The major urban counties have viewed each other as competitors for economic development and state funds. One project's definition of a "region" is seldom of the same boundary as another, so an overlapping of regionalism occurs, minimizing the ability to leverage and creating confusion internally and externally. Dynamic local politics could undermine the stability of a regional authority, causing it to dissolve at any time, but creation of a regional forum for coordination and cooperation could minimize these issues.

Working together as a region in preserving and enhancing the shared story of the Western Reserve will increase both the marketability of the corridor in a national and international marketplace and the ability to leverage dollars.

A regionally organized initiative does not necessarily increase the capability to address natural resource issues that extend beyond local government jurisdictions. Water quality is an example of an issue that a voluntary regional organization would have difficulty addressing. A regional coordinating body could improve the consistency of natural resource planning and protection throughout the participating jurisdictions.

Although several communities have local preservation ordinances, they are faced with growing development pressure; many local preservation initiatives lack the capability to adequately protect important historical structures, archeological sites, and cultural landscapes. A regional approach that recognizes that the Western Reserve story is told through preservation and enhancement of all of the supporting resources in every community will have a positive influence on policy and funding at the local level.

Strong support of the private sector, although critical to each alternative, is most important for the success of a regional initiative. While this alternative would improve coordination of resource management over the No Action alternative, it requires voluntary participation and



strong coordination of the efforts of Western Reserve partners and a forum where different interests can network and have a voice.

Federal programs to expand protection of Western Reserve resources, such as the National Register programs, Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program and National Historic Landmarks program, would be better competed for as the region works in unity.

**Alternative initially considered, but set aside**

*Alternative 3: National Heritage Area*

Under this alternative, enabling legislation would define a coordinating entity, outline the role of the Department of the Interior and other federal entities and authorize appropriations to be matched by local funds.

Designation of national heritage areas do not entail federal acquisition of land, or federal management of heritage area resources.

If this had been a viable alternative, new programs and activities to support heritage resource protection likely would have been developed and technical assistance provided by the NPS National Heritage Area Program.



Successful heritage areas are led by a strong coordinating entity who can marshal the resources and partnerships to protect and properly develop important resources. The coordinating entity would become an information clearinghouse, coordinating efforts that would increase public awareness and stewardship of local resources.

Part of the coordinating entity's responsibility would include recreation planning and regional economic development. The coordinating entity would create the forum for resource users, landowners, industry, and communities to work together to identify, protect, and appropriately develop area resources, and collaborate with others. The coordinating entity would be responsible for raising funds or in-kind donations to implement the heritage area vision and goals described within this study and to match the federal financial assistance.

As indicated in the analysis of a coordinating entity in the National Heritage Area criteria, there is currently not a singular entity within the Western Reserve that has the willingness, capacity, and acceptance to be recognized as the coordinating entity if the Western Reserve were to be designated a National Heritage Area. Because the Western Reserve does not

meet suitability or feasibility criteria for National Heritage Area designation, this alternative was set aside.

The mix of skills and geographic representation of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Stakeholder committee is recommended as a model for creation of a coordinating entity. Members of this committee have expressed interest in developing the capacity and working toward establishing a plan for obtaining feasibility readiness.





# Chapter 7

## Conclusions

**T**hrough the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, including the collection of information regarding the natural, historical, and cultural resources and the development of the “Town Square” interpretive theme that is prevalent throughout the 14-county region of the Western Reserve, the abundance of unique heritage and resources of the Western Reserve became apparent. They are important to the traditions and stories of our country, reminding us of our national origins.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values, and industrial innovation of the late 18th and early 19th century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve of Ohio, they brought with them their values, customs, and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business, and social reform. From

Cleveland to Burton and Oberlin, evidence of this historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a “vanguard of thinking” is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms, and innovations. Just as the “Town Square” concept was vanguard thinking during the late 18th and early 19th century, the Western Reserve Heritage Area concept is gathering support throughout the 14-county region in northern Ohio.

As mentioned previously, one of the foundations of all successful heritage areas is an informed and engaged community that is committed to the long-term sustainability of the regional project. Active participation and strong support from all facets of the community are essential to cultivating partnerships and collaborations that leverage resources for the conservation and interpretation of the natural, historic, and cultural resources. While there is public interest for a Western

Reserve Heritage Area designation among elected officials, planning agencies, park agencies and individuals, and little opposition, increased public investment and commitment is necessary to develop the sustainable partnerships and collaborations for this important regional project. More importantly, the elected officials, units of government, community leaders, organizations, and citizens of the 14-county region need to make the Western Reserve Heritage Area a priority for the region and commit the necessary resources and investments for its long-term success.

In its current state, the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area is similar to other heritage area initiatives across the countries that develop from a seed of an idea and grow into a fully engaged regional resource conservation development project. Through the community engagement strategy of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, information about the proposed heritage area, its resources, and designation benefits was shared with the general public, elected

officials, and units of government. Increased community engagement and cultivation is necessary to enhance understanding and increase support for the Western Reserve Heritage Area. The community engagement strategy should continue in order to cultivate the strategic public-private partnerships for the Western Reserve Heritage Area.

One of the other challenges of the proposed Western Reserve Heritage Area is the large geography of the region. Working with community partnerships and collaborations across a 14-county region is challenging, and a process and structure for communication and partnership cultivation should be developed to build cohesion and a true regional identity in the Western Reserve. Currently, there is no regional structure or organization within the proposed 14-county Western Reserve Heritage Area to coordinate the community engagement strategy and partnership cultivation. However, that does not prohibit one of the regional organizations or a new regional organization to step forward and provide the leadership for the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Area.

## Recommendations

In evaluating the Western Reserve to determine if the area meets requirements as outlined in the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act, the National Park Service is looking at two distinctive sets of evaluation criteria—suitability and feasibility.

The determination of suitability looks at whether national heritage designation is appropriate. The National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve contributes to our country's national heritage. It contains an assemblage of natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources that make up a distinctive landscape, and the rich and varied stories about the Western Reserve support a captivating set of themes connecting the people to the heritage resources of the region. The Western Reserve comprises a story and resources of great regional, and state significance that influenced the nation, but is not determined nationally distinctive by the National Park Service and as such is not suitable for national designation.

The second evaluation method, feasibility, looks at whether implementation of the goals and vision of a National Heritage Area is capable of being accomplished. The opportunity to come together as a region and pool resources in support of the significant, shared story is recognized by

many. As this opportunity is realized by more, the committed support for the heritage area concept as well as direct financial commitments may grow, but that level of support is currently not present. At this time, there is a lack of an established coordinating entity, local capacity, and commitment to undertake the responsibilities of initiating a future national heritage area. The National Park Service determines that the Western Reserve is not feasible for national designation based on feasibility criterion.



The National Park Service feels that designation is not the best course of action at this time. It recommends the Western Reserve Heritage Area concept be implemented as a regional initiative.

### *Recommended First Steps*

At this stage in the project's assessment, the National Park Service concludes that two critical feasibility study criteria have not been met. In order to further develop the Western Reserve Heritage Area concept, the following steps are recommended:

- Engage members of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study Team and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance office to use their experience and skills with the development of organizational capacity building and community engagement to develop a further strategy for the Western Reserve Heritage Area.
- Develop a locally managed regional leadership structure to advocate for the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Area. This could be created through enhancing the current Stakeholder committee, creating a new body, or having one of the regional organizations serve as a host organization.



- Develop a regional communication and organizational structure for the 14-county Western Reserve Heritage Area to build cohesion and a true regional identity in the Western Reserve. Dividing the Western Reserve into regions would start to create synergy within each of those regions and cultivate partnerships within each region. It is important, however, that those divisions of the region ease administrative goals, but do not interfere with the overall goal of unification of the entire Western Reserve.
- Establish a regular meeting schedule, draft an operational budget for the organization, and develop a 3-year fundraising plan for the organization.

- Maintain the community engagement strategy by hosting regional public meetings, sponsoring workshops, and developing newsletters to continue to share information about the Western Reserve Heritage Area project, its purpose, and why it is an important project worth pursuing.

Through these early action steps, the Western Reserve Heritage Area will be able to cultivate the necessary community commitment and investment necessary to leverage the resources for the interpretation and development of the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the Western Reserve Heritage Area.

Most importantly, community leaders, elected officials, and nonprofit organizations need to recognize that regional partnerships and collaboration takes an increased amount of time, energy, and resources to cultivate. Working on heritage areas is like running a marathon, not a sprint. Through the long-term commitment to the regional vision, innovative and entrepreneurial partnerships and collaborations are cultivated, significant resources are leveraged, and sustainable communities are created.





# Appendix A

120 STAT. 1846 PUBLIC LAW 109–338—OCT. 12, 2006

## TITLE III—NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA – STUDIES

Subtitle A—Western Reserve Heritage Area Study

### *SEC. 301.SHORT TITLE.*

This subtitle may be cited as the “Western Reserve Heritage Areas Study Act”.

### *SEC. 302.NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STUDY REGARDING THE WESTERN RESERVE, OHIO.*

#### (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

- (1) The area that encompasses the modern-day counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio with the rich history in what was once the Western Reserve, has made a unique contribution to the cultural, political, and industrial development of the United States.
- (2) The Western Reserve is distinctive as the land settled by the people of Connecticut after the Revolutionary War. The Western Reserve holds a unique mark as the original wilderness land of the West that many settlers migrated to in order to begin life outside of the original 13 colonies.
- (3) The Western Reserve played a significant role in providing land to the people of Connecticut whose property and land was destroyed during the Revolution. These settlers were descendants of the brave immigrants who came to the Americas in the 17th century.
- (4) The Western Reserve offered a new destination for those who moved west in search of land and prosperity. The agricultural and industrial base that began in the Western Reserve still lives strong in these prosperous and historical counties.
- (5) The heritage of the Western Reserve remains transfixed in the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio. The people of these counties are proud of their heritage as shown through the unwavering attempts to preserve agricultural land and the industrial foundation that has been embedded in this region since the establishment of the Western Reserve. Throughout these counties, historical sites, and markers preserve the unique traditions and customs of its original heritage.
- (6) The counties that encompass the Western Reserve continue to maintain a strong connection to its historic past as seen through its preservation of its local heritage, including historic homes, buildings, and centers of public gatherings.
- (7) There is a need for assistance for the preservation and promotion of the significance of the Western Reserve as the natural, historic and cultural heritage of the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio.



(8) The Department of the Interior is responsible for protecting the Nation's cultural and historical resources. There are significant examples of such resources within these counties and what was once the Western Reserve to merit the involvement of the Federal Government in the development of programs and projects, in cooperation with the State of Ohio and other local governmental entities, to adequately conserve, protect, and interpret this heritage for future generations, while providing opportunities for education and revitalization.

**(b) STUDY.—**

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, Midwest Region, and in consultation with the State of Ohio, the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland, and other appropriate organizations, shall carry out a study regarding the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Western Reserve Heritage Area in these counties in Ohio.

(2) CONTENTS.—The study shall include analysis and documentation regarding whether the Study Area—

- (A) has an assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;
- (B) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folk life that are a valuable part of the national story;
- (C) provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic features;

- (D) provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;
- (E) contains resources important to the identified theme or themes of the Study Area that retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;
- (F) includes residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments that are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants, including the Federal Government, and have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area;
- (G) has a potential local coordinating entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments to develop a national heritage area consistent with continued local and State economic activity;
- (H) has a conceptual boundary map that is supported by the public; and
- (I) has potential or actual impact on private property located within or abutting the Study Area.

**(c) BOUNDARIES OF THE STUDY AREA.—**

The Study Area shall be comprised of the counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geauga, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio.

# Appendix B

## Historical Organizations of the Western Reserve



African American Museum  
Amherst Historical Society  
Ashland County Historical Society  
Ashtabula County Historical Society  
Atwater Historical Society  
Aurora Historical Society  
Austintown Historical Society  
Avon Historical Society  
Bath Township Historical Society  
Bay Village Historical Society  
Beachwood Historical Society  
Bedford Historical Society  
Belden Historical Society  
Bellevue Historical Society & Heritage Museum  
Berea Historical Society  
Berlin Center Historical Society  
Berlin Heights Historical Society  
Black River Historical Society  
Bloomfield Township Historical Society  
Boardman Historical Society  
Bratenahl Historical Society  
Brecksville Historical Association Inc.  
Brimfield Memorial House Association  
Bristol Historical Society  
Broadview Heights Historical Society  
Broadview Historical Society  
Brookfield Historical Society  
Brookfield Township Historical Society  
Brooklyn Historical Society  
Brownhelm Historical Association  
Brunswick Area Historical Society

Butler Museum of American Art  
Campbell Historical Society  
Canfield Fairground Western Reserve Village  
Canfield Heritage Foundation  
Canfield Historical Society  
Canfield War Veterans Museum  
Case-Barlow Farm  
Chagrin Falls Historical Society  
Chatham Historical Society  
City of Brook Park  
Cleveland Grays Armory Museum  
Cleveland Heights Historical Society  
Clinton Historical Society  
Collinwood Nottingham Historical Society  
Columbia Historical Society Inc.  
Conneaut Historical Society  
Copley Township Historical Society  
Cortland-Bazetta Historical Society  
Croatian Heritage Museum & Library  
Cuyahoga Falls Historical Society  
Cuyahoga Valley National Park  
Damascus Area Historical Society of Ohio  
Donauschwaben German American Cultural Center  
Dunham Tavern Museum  
Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve  
Early Settlers Association of the Western Reserve  
Edison Birthplace Association  
Ellsworth Historical Society  
Erie County Historical Society  
Euclid Historical Society  
Fairport Harbor Historical Society

Fairview Park Historical Society  
Firelands Historical Society  
Fowler Historical Society  
Friends of Hower House  
Friends of McKinley Memorial Library and Museum  
Friends of the Duncan McFarland Homestead  
Gallery of Akron's Black History & Culture  
Garfield Heights Historical Society  
Gates Mills Historical Society  
Geauga County Historical Society  
Girard Historical Society  
Grafton Village History Association  
Granger Library and Historical Society  
Great Lakes Historical Society  
Greene Historical Society  
Hale Farm and Village - WRHS  
Harpersfield Heritage Society  
Hartford Township Historical Society  
Hinckley Historical Society Inc.  
Hiram Historical Society  
Historic Lyme Village Association  
Historical Society of Olde Northfield  
Howland Historical Society  
Hubbard Historical Society  
Hubbard House Underground Railroad Museum  
Hudson Library & Historical Society  
Huron Historical Society  
Independence Historical Society  
Indian Museum of Lake County  
Inland Seas Maritime Museum  
James A. Garfield Historical Society

James A. Garfield National Historic Site  
John Stark Edwards House  
Johnston Historical Society  
Kelleys Island Historical Association Inc.  
Kent Historical Society  
Kent State University Museum  
Kinsman Historical Society  
Kirtland Temple Historic Center  
Lake County Engineer's Office  
Lake County Historical Society  
Lake Erie Islands Historical Society  
Lakeside Association  
Lakewood Historical Society  
Le Roy Heritage Association  
Lenox Historical Society  
Liberty Historical Society  
Litchfield Historical Society  
Liverpool Township Historical Society  
Lodi Harrisville Historical Society Inc.  
Lorain County Historical Society  
Lordstown Historical Society  
Lyndhurst Historical Society  
Madison Historical Society  
Mahoning Valley Historical Society  
Mantua Historical Society  
Maple Heights Historical Society  
Marblehead Lighthouse State Park  
Maritime Museum of Sandusky  
Mayfield Township Historical Society  
Mecca Historical Society  
Medina County Historical Society  
Mesopotamia Historical & Memorial Association  
Middleburg Heights Historical Society  
Middlefield Historical Society  
Milan Canal Historical Society  
Milan Historical Museum  
Mill Creek Metroparks  
Mogadore Historical Society Inc.  
Moreland Hills Historical Society  
Munroe Falls Historical Society

National Inventors Hall of Fame  
National McKinley Birthplace Memorial  
New London Area Historical Society  
Niles Historical Society  
North Bloomfield Historical Society  
North Fairfield Firelands Historical Association  
North Ridgeville Historical Society Inc.  
North Royalton Historical Society  
Northampton Historical Society  
Norton Historical Society  
Oberlin Heritage Center  
Oberlin Heritage Center/O.H.I.O.  
Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition  
Old Brick House Historical Society  
Olmsted Historical Society  
Orange Village  
Ottawa County History Museum  
Parma Area Historical Society  
Parma Heights Historical Society  
Peninsula Historical Society  
Perry Historical Society of Lake County  
Perry's Victory & International Peace Memorial  
Peter Miller House Museum  
Pittsfield Township Historical Society  
Poland Township Historical Society  
Portage County Historical Society  
Portage Lakes Historical Society  
Randolph Historical Society  
Richfield Historical Society  
Rochester Historical Society  
Rocky River Historical Society  
Rootstown Historical Society  
Russell Township Historical Society  
Sandusky Library Follett House Museum  
Sebring Ohio Historical Society  
Seville Historical Society  
Shaker Historical Society & Museum  
Shalersville Historical Society  
Sharon Township Heritage Society  
Sheffield Village Historical Society & Cultural Center

Silver Lake Historical Society  
Slavic Village Historical Society  
Solon Historical Society  
South Euclid Historical Society  
Southern Lorain County Historical Society  
Southington Historical Society  
Springfield Township Historical Society  
Stow Historical Society  
Strongsville Historical Society  
Struthers Historical Society  
Summit County Historical Society  
Summit County Historical Society  
Sutliff Museum  
Tallmadge Historical Society  
The Harriet Taylor Upton Association  
The Historical Society of Parma Heights  
The Keepers House  
The Temple Museum of Religious Art  
Trumbull County Historical Society  
Trumbull County Tourism Bureau, Ohio Appalachian  
Country North East Rep.  
Twinsburg Historical Society  
Ukrainian Museum-Archives Inc.  
Upton Association Inc.  
Valley View-Cuyahoga Valley Historical Association  
Vermilion Area Historical & Cultural Guild  
Vienna Historical Society  
Viets Museum  
Wadsworth Area Historical Society  
Western Reserve Heritage Association  
Western Reserve Historical Society  
Westfield Historical Society  
Westlake Historical Society  
Wickliffe Historical Society Inc.  
Willard Area Historical Society  
Willoughby Hills Historical Society  
Willoughby Historical Society  
Windsor Historical Society

# Appendix C

## Western Reserve Letters of Support

The following pages contain letters of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area.



December 4, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

The Western Reserve Area takes in a major portion of Northeast Ohio that our organization Adventures in Northeast Ohio represents. We are a regional tourism organization that promotes travel and tourism to Northeast Ohio. "Adventures" and our membership know how special the Western Reserve Area is and look forward to assisting in any way we can. We already work closely with area Visitors Bureaus, Historical Societies, Parks and other organizations throughout the region. Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland, to Burton and Oberlin, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

27587 Edgemark Boulevard • North Olmsted, Ohio 44070  
Phone 440.716.8093 • Fax 440.716.8083 • Toll Free 1.877.869.9911  
[www.adventuresinnortheastohio.com](http://www.adventuresinnortheastohio.com)

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mary Olah

cc: Kory Robinson, National Park Service



# BATH TOWNSHIP

Summit County, Ohio

January 6, 2011

### TRUSTEES

Elaine E. Goodrich  
Becky Cohen  
James M. Nelson

### FISCAL OFFICER

Sharon A. Thiele

### TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR

William E. Sisco

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Dear Mr. Quintana:

Bath Township is located in Summit County, Ohio, a part of the Western Reserve. As a Bath Township Trustee I strongly support designation of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve as the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. With 38 miles of county roadways in Bath Township designated the Heritage Corridor of Bath, an Ohio Scenic Byway, we are committed to promoting the benefits of a heritage area whether it is local or national.

Bath Township's first settlers arrived in 1810 as they migrated from the East to the Western Reserve, bringing with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of small hamlets such as Ghent Square and Hammond's Corners in Bath Township. The hamlet is where individuals gathered to pursue business and pleasure, which is still evident today. The township has worked with the Bath Township Historical Society to preserve our history and our community supports preservation and restoration not only for homes, barns and structures, but for infrastructure of the waterways, roadways and the natural scenic beauty of our area.

Bath Township is a unique community that offers historical exhibits, preserved open spaces, conservation greenways and a trail system connecting parks and neighborhoods that are all within a short distance to a complete range of urban services, shopping and restaurants. We see great value in this visionary plan which will provide assets to the community in the form of educational benefits, recreational activity, economic development and environmental stability.

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall improve the quality of life for the region.

On behalf of Bath Township I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
Elaine E. Goodrich, Trustee

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

3864 W. Bath Road  
P.O. Box 1138  
Bath, Ohio 44213-1138  
330-666-4007  
Fax 330-666-2305  
www.bathtownship.org

Bedford Historical Society  
PO Box 46282  
Bedford OH 44146-0282  
440 232-0796 [bedfordohiohistory.org](http://bedfordohiohistory.org)

M & W 7:30pm - 10:00pm; Th 10:00am - 4:00pm;  
Second Sunday monthly 2:50pm - 5:00pm



Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

November 2, 2010

Dear Mr. Quintana:

The Bedford Historical Society in Bedford Ohio has been a voice for the history of this region since 1955. Through our efforts, several historic structures and the unique commercial business district have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The society has worked with other historic associations, local governments, the Cuyahoga County Metropolitan park district, and the National Park to protect and highlight areas of our collective history. Our Western Reserve region offers visitors a glimpse of life in the early western movement and how we have evolved to welcome other cultures and customs in the tradition that makes our country great. Please add our support to designate the region as the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Thank you for your efforts on this endeavor.

Sincerely,

  
Janet Caldwell  
Director / curator

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

Founded in 1955 collecting, preserving and interpreting the history of Bedford, Bedford Township and portions of the Western Reserve.

Donations to the Bedford Historical Society, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization, are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Bedford Ohio Town Hall 1954

**BROOKFIELD TOWNSHIP  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

6844 Strimbu Drive  
Brookfield, Ohio 44403  
330-448-1124  
December 20, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

RE: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland, to Burton, Oberlin and Brookfield, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial land use and architectural legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non-profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Lois M. Warner  
Brookfield Township Historical Society, Trumbull County, Ohio



November 1, 2010

Administrative Offices  
4101 Fulton Parkway  
Cleveland, Ohio 44144  
216-655-3200  
FAX 216-635-3288  
TTY 216-951-0806

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

Cleveland Metroparks supports the designation of the Northeast Ohio Western Reserve as a National Heritage Area. We are pleased to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of this historic region. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we hope to stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland, to Burton and Oberlin, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

Cleveland Metroparks, as the oldest park district in the state of Ohio, looks forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non-profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we hope to celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
Brian M. Zimmerman  
Executive Director-Secretary

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service





*Charleston Village Society Inc  
1127 West 4th Street,  
Lorain, Ohio 44052  
E-mail: [cvsilor@yahoo.com](mailto:cvsilor@yahoo.com)  
Tel: 440-296-6096*

November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Mr. Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Dear Mr. Quintana

**Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area**

The Charleston Village Society, Inc. <http://www.loraincounty.com/charlestonlorain/> is a non-profit organization of volunteers striving for the preservation of the area of Lorain, Ohio formally known as Charleston, 1834. It is the area of Lorain that encompasses the earliest portion of what is now Lorain, surveyed and recorded in 1834 for incorporation by the early settlers who came to the Western Reserve in the very early 1800's.

The Charleston Village Society - began their concerted efforts as a society in 1989 to draw attention to and preserve the history and ambiance of this earliest settlement. The grassroots efforts of the society established the preservation of Lorain's first public green space 1807-2007, now known as Veterans Park, when it was under threat of becoming condos in 2005. We are also extremely proud of our most recent award winning efforts- Settlers' Watch 2010 and the reclamation and rehab of the original pioneer cemetery Charleston Pioneer Cemetery 2007 both receiving Lorain County Beautiful Awards for Community Service. Our annual reports can be found by accessing our website.

The earliest recorded settlement was of Nathan Perry Jr. in 1807 who set up the first trading post. Perry's father was also a Western Reserve Pioneer who helped settle other areas along the south shore of Lake Erie. Nathan Perry settled here because of the excellent location from which to trade. Other settlers began arriving in 1810-12. The pioneers used the natural resources of the area to carve out a community, shipbuilding, fishing, agriculture and trade. These early settlers began a community which suffered many hardships but survived through the centuries and has

become the City of Lorain, whose trade in steel and shipbuilding was known throughout the world. The heritage and legacy of those intrepid pioneers and their contributions need to be recognized, just as the steel and shipbuilding has impacted the world so too the efforts of this area's pioneers.

We support the initiative to create and designate this unique location and its heritage in America as a National Heritage Area. This area was a vital link to the development of states further to the west. It was the perseverance of the settlers who endured many hardships to build new communities which still thrive today and the designation would commemorate their endeavors. Today with the decline of the industrial age, Lorain and cities alike are turning once again to the natural resources (please follow this link <http://www.locophotoblog.com/?p=555>) and other assets that will help redefine its course for the future.

On behalf of the Charleston Village Society Inc. we look forward to the designation of a National Heritage Area for this special place in America's past and future. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

Yours sincerely,

Loraine Ritchey- Co Chair Charleston Village Society Inc.  
Renee Dore - Portside Chairperson, Charleston Village Society Inc.

CC:  
Mayor Krasienko - City of Lorain  
Rory Robinson National Park Service



GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT

PROTECT CONSERVE CONNECT

November 29, 2010

Mr. Rory Robinson  
National Park Service  
2179 Everl Road  
Peninsula, OH 44264

Dear Mr. Robinson:

I am writing on behalf of Geauga Park District to offer our strong support for the proposed designation of a 14-county area in the "Western Reserve" area of Ohio as a National Heritage Area. Each of the counties in the Western Reserve are rich in history and offer expansive cultural, educational and recreational opportunities to residents who call the Western Reserve their home.

Geauga Park District is looking forward to working with area residents, public officials, community organizations, government agencies (both local and National) and non-profit entities on the creation of this important regional project. A Western Reserve National Heritage designation for our area will promote economic development, preserve our natural, cultural and historic resources and celebrate the legacy left by our early settlers.

Regards,

Thomas G. Curtin  
Executive Director

9160 Robinson Road • Chardon, Ohio 44024-9148  
phone: 419 • 286 • 3516 fax: 419 • 286 • 1285 Geauga toll free 800 • 536 • 4005  
www.geaugaparkdistrict.org email: info@geaugaparkdistrict.org

Board of Park Commissioners / Robert McCloskey  
John D. Lovell  
Mark Rozanski  
Executive Director Thomas G. Curtin



## HUDSON PARKS

P.O. Box 544  
Hudson, Ohio 44236  
(330) 653-5201 • Fax (330) 342-0013

January 4, 2011

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social recreation. From Cleveland, to Burton and Oberlin, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Eric Hutchinson, Hudson Parks Superintendent

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service





Joseph J. Arpad, Ph.D.  
Susan S. Arpad, Ph. D.  
280 Woodland Avenue  
Wadsworth, OH 44281

December 2, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

We are retired professors of history and American Culture. One of the reasons we moved to this area for our retirement was because of its history and the concern of many of its residents to preserve its history and culture.

We support the designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are now working and plan to continue working to develop a regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural resources of some of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation, and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

We are particularly interested in the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the nineteenth century. We hope to be part of the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study and to work with local and regional citizens to promote the area.

We strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area designation and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact us directly if we can be of service.

Sincerely,

  
Susan S. Arpad, Ph.D.

  
Joseph J. Arpad, Ph.D.



**Kent Parks & Recreation Department**

497 Middlebury Road Kent, Ohio 44240 (330) 673-8897 FAX: 673-8898

December 30, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland, to Burton and Oberlin, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
John J. Iwane, Director

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service ✓

 *The Lakewood*  
Historical Society  
established 1922

Lakewood Historical Society 44710 Lake Avenue Lakewood, Ohio 44107 p: 216.221.7343 f: 216.221.0350 lakewoodhistory.org

November 1, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are very supportive of the National Park Service's regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we will stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The history of Lakewood, an inner ring suburb of Cleveland, reflects the general trends seen throughout the Western Reserve. Our earliest settlers farmed the land. As the industrial economy of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century took hold, Lakewood transitioned into a bedroom community for both average workers and the industrial elite. Our community population, economy and social activities boomed around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The long-term effects of this boom can still be seen in the architecture, community organizations, social and recreational trends and school and religious institutions found in Lakewood today. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non-profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
Mazie M. Adams  
Executive Director  
Lakewood Historical Society

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service



• The Arms Family Museum of Local History •  
• MVHS Archival Library •  
• Business and Media Archives of the Mahoning Valley •

October 27, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to write this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. The Mahoning Valley Historical Society is proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties now carved out of the historic Connecticut Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we can stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located in the southeastern corner of the Western Reserve, the Mahoning River Valley was one of two gateways for settlers to enter the region in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The communities of the Mahoning Valley share in the unique architecture, land use, social values, customs, traditions and industrial innovations of the rest of the Western Reserve. A wonderful example of this commonality is in the development of the Town Squares. The Town Square was where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland to Burton, Warren to Brookfield, Canfield to Youngstown, evidence of historic Western Reserve Town Squares is still very much part of the landscape today.

Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors will experience the unique industrial, geographical and architectural legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the many natural and recreational resources already existing in the region.

We look forward to working in partnership with our home corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, government entities and non-profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the cultivation of public-private partnerships, we will celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of the Mahoning Valley Historical Society, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
H. William Lawson  
Executive Director

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

648 Wick Avenue • Youngstown, Ohio 44502-1289 • (330) 743-2599 • Fax: (330) 743-7210  
www.mahoninghistory.org



Mr. Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director  
National Park Service

Mr. Quintana,

My name is Matthew Hintz and I am writing in support of the Western Reserve Heritage study. I am basing my decision, not simply on the fact that I grew up in the Reserve, but as an academic as well. I believe that after reading what I have been able to condense in this short letter you will understand the treasure that is the Western Reserve.

I grew up in Elyria, Ohio, near Oberlin College, and attended undergraduate school at Hiram College in Hiram, Ohio. My major at Hiram was American History, specifically in antebellum abolition in the Reserve. In my four years as an undergrad I had done everything from study books, looked through archives, and interned at the Oberlin Heritage Society helping to give tours and conduct outside research. I wrote my senior thesis on the radical abolition found in the region, primarily in Oberlin with the "Oberlin-Wellington Rescue", and in Hudson with John Brown. I am currently receiving graduate training at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina, and will be writing my thesis on the Western Reserve.

The Western Reserve is a unique location in the "Midwest". I put Midwest in quotes because the Reserve does not feel like the rest of the Midwest. The dominance of Congregationalists, Calvinists, and other New England religions can be seen across the area. In addition, the architecture of the buildings and the layout of the pre-twentieth century communities reflect that of Connecticut and Massachusetts. The most obvious example of this is the village green, a public park found at the center of a community. The far western edge of the Reserve is referred to as the "Firelands" because that land was reserved for citizens of Connecticut whose homes were burned by the British during the Revolution. The Western Reserve, in many ways, is "New" New England, a continuation of ideology and spirit of the Northeast.

As for noteworthy institutions, events or people, the list is long and profound. Oberlin College, founded in 1833, was the first college to enroll women in equal degree programs to men. In addition, the College was also the first to enroll African Americans in these same programs. Oberlin was one of the final stops on the Underground Railroad, and had a sizeable free black population. The Oberlin-Wellington Rescue was a massive slave rescue that was led by Charles Henry Langston, a black attorney who was the great grandfather of poet Langston Hughes. His brother, John Mercer Langston, became the first African American Senator from Virginia. In addition to Oberlin, John Brown of Hudson led the infamous raid on Harpers Ferry, Virginia, as well as participated in the Kansas-Nebraska Wars. The town of Oberlin, through its activity, earned the nickname "The Town that Started the Civil War", by the popular press of the day, and because of Oberlin and John Brown, the Western Reserve had earned a reputation in both the South and the North as a land of fanatics and radicals.

The Reserve is home to many inventors such as Charles Hall who invented a method for cheaply extracting aluminum. Garrett Morgan was an African American from Cleveland who invented the streetlight and gasmask. Thomas Edison, who invented the light bulb, direct current

electricity, the phonograph etc, was born in Milan and had his first lab there. Industrialist John D. Rockefeller, founder of Standard Oil. Contributors to the arts such as Robert Edwin Lee, who wrote the play, *Inherit the Wind*, lived in Elyria, as well as author Sherwood Anderson. U.S. President's James Garfield, William McKinley, Warren Harding, and Rutherford B. Hayes, are also from the Reserve. Famed Federal agent and Unouchable, Elliot Ness, served as Safety Service Director of Cleveland, and is buried in historic Lakeview Cemetery near James A. Garfield. The Reserve, Hiram to be exact, was one of the original headquarters for the Mormon Church before Joseph Smith was forced out of the community.

The Western Reserve is a physically beautiful and culturally significant location. The history of the Reserve is laden with stories of the Underground Railroad, radical abolition, famous inventors, and mass contributions to the arts. The city of Cleveland is home to the world renowned Cleveland Museum of Art, and the Cleveland Orchestra, both organizations/institutions considered among the finest in the world by American and European critics alike. Cleveland's Playhouse Square is the second largest performing arts center outside of New York, and the Cleveland Playhouse Theatre is the oldest and largest regional theater company in the Nation. I wish I could list more, especially contributors to the arts, but I'm afraid this letter would go on for too long.

Again, I could write about most of the counties and most of the communities in each county, but it would be impossible to do it in a small two page letter. I hope you see that, especially when compared to the other Heritage locations in Ohio such as the Erie Canal and the Aviation Heritage site, that the Western Reserve is worthy of such a designation. There is so much still to be studied, so much architecture to be preserved and to be documented for generations to come. The Western Reserve can teach us about abolition, about New England, and the arts and technology across the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is truly a remarkable part of the State of Ohio, and the Nation.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. If there is any more that I can personally do, or say, to aid you in this process please let me know. Have a good day sir.

Sincerely,

Matthew David Hintz  
4929 University Station  
Clemson, SC 29632  
hintzmd@my.hiram.edu



# The Medina County Arts Council, Inc.

P.O. BOX 532  
MEDINA, OH 44258  
www.medinacountyartsCouncil.org

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December 6, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform.

Here in Medina County we have several Town Squares or Town Centers which the Medina County Arts Council and many other Medina County Arts Organizations continues to use to promote the Arts within Medina County. We have used our town square and town centers for Shakespeare on the Square, Art Shows, Craft Shows, Concerts, Theatre programs and Arts Week which includes, children's and adult programs. These are just a few of the Arts programs. Our Communities also offer great Architecture with some of our buildings being over a century old. We have a thriving retail area and continue to use our Town Squares as an integral part of our daily life of here in Medina County. We still feel the Square is an important part of our community, as our fore fathers did. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique Arts, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region and Medina County while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

The Medina County Arts Council, established in 1963, is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote and build community excellence through the arts in Medina County.

Page 2

We also work with other organizations that use the Square as a part of their programs. Main Street Medina has done festivals that include entertainment and Art. They do a Chalk Art Festival and an International Festival. The Medina County Show Biz Co. along with the Medina County Historical Society and the MCAC do "Walk with the Spirits of the Past" which takes place all around the Square with actors portraying Historical Leaders of Medina County.

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Daniel D Hostetler  
President of the Board, M.C.A.C.

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service



# Medina County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Explore the Possibilities...

32 PUBLIC SQUARE • MEDINA, OHIO 44256  
(330) 722-6502 • FAX (330) 725-4715 • www.visitmedinacounty.com

December 28, 2010

Mr. Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Dear Mr. Quintana:

The Medina County Convention and Visitors Bureau would like to offer our support for the designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with, and offer to assist the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the fourteen counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland, to Burton and Medina, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Here in Medina, we continue to use our Square as a thriving Business Community, a social, cultural and a recreational center for the community. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and nonprofit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Daniel G. Hostetler  
Executive Director Medina County Visitors Bureau

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

# Medina County Commissioners

County Administration Building  
144 North Broadway  
Medina, Ohio 44256

Patricia C. Grissman  
Stephen D. Hambley  
Sharon A. Ray

(330) 722-9208  
(330) 225-7100  
(330) 336-6637

December 6, 2010

Fax: (330) 722-9206

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland to Medina, Burton, and Oberlin, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms, and innovations. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use, and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and nonprofit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. The Medina County Commissioners strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

The Board of Medina County Commissioners

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

Milan Public Library  
19 E. Church Street, P.O. Box 1550  
Milan, OH 44864  
419-499-4117 Fax: 419-499-4697



Berlin Township Public Library  
4 E. Main Street, P.O. Box 129  
Berlin Heights, OH 44814  
419-888-1250 Fax: 419-588-0025

learn | connect | explore

Mr. Ernest Quintana, Midwest Regional Office Director  
National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102

November 9, 2010

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am writing to give my support as Local History Coordinator of the Milan-Berlin Township Public Library for the Western Reserve to become a National Heritage Area. I can tell you that even as a smaller library, much of our collection's primary resource materials serve as evidence of the richness of this heritage. Contributions by those settlers from the east coast are evident in the remaining architecture, but also in the social and economic history of this area. In addition, research requests from scholars and those interested in genealogy is steady because of the connection the Western Reserve has to the larger context of United States history.

Thank you for considering the Western Reserve to become a National Heritage Area.

Sincerely,

Shari Bowers, Local History Coordinator  
Cc: William Rutger, Director  
Vikki Morrow-Ritchie, Library Services Manager

www.milan-berlin.lib.oh.us

# OBERLIN

Oberlin College  
Allen Memorial Art Museum  
87 North Main Street  
Oberlin, Ohio 44074-1161  
440/775-8665  
Fax: 440/775-8799 & 6841  
www.oberlin.edu/allenart

November 9, 2010

Mr. Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana,

We are pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we hope to stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Since its founding in 1917, the Allen Memorial Art Museum (AMAM) has been a major educational and cultural asset of Oberlin College and Northeast Ohio, becoming one of the five best college and university art museums in the United States. The AMAM is founded on the belief that the study and appreciation of high-quality original works of art is an indispensable part of an excellent liberal arts education and promotes the highest standards of visual literacy and encourages multi-disciplinary inquiry.

Open free of charge to all, the AMAM is a vital and unique resource for the students, faculty, and staff of Oberlin College as well as the public of Northeast Ohio and a national and international audience. Our school tours and public programs impact thousands of schoolchildren and residents each year.

The Western Reserve as a whole offers a depth of cultural resources across the visual and performing arts disciplines. From the many institutions represented in Cleveland – its orchestra, the Cleveland Museum of Art, non-profits such as Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio, and numerous independent galleries – to the Akron Art Museum and the Butler Institute of Art in Youngstown, as well as the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and the AMAM, there is a rich history and long-lasting appreciation for the arts found across the region.

On behalf of our organization, I fully support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to coordinating with our regional partners on this important project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stephanie Wiles  
John G.W. Cowles Director, Allen Memorial Art Museum



Mailing Address: P.O. Box 045E  
Oberlin, OH 44074-045E

Office Address: 73th South Professor Street  
Oberlin, OH 44074

Telephone: 440-774-1700  
Website: www.oberlinheritage.org

October 29, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

We are pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. The Oberlin Heritage Center is a nationally recognized small museum and historic site in Oberlin, Ohio where the powerful stories of equal rights, scientific discovery, and community activism are shared with visitors from around the world. The Oberlin Heritage Center has been proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square, where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Oberlin was particularly noted for its support of abolition and equal education for African Americans and women. The conservation, interpretation and development of heritage resources and attractions within the Western Reserve can stimulate community development and improve the quality of life for the region as residents and visitors experience the unique educational, industrial, recreational, and architecture legacy of region.

We look forward to working in partnership with elected officials, chambers of commerce, local residents, government entities and nonprofit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, we strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Pat Murphy*  
Pat Murphy  
Executive Director

*Elizabeth Schultz*  
Elizabeth Schultz  
Museum Education and Tour Coordinator



cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service



NATIONAL  
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD  
NETWORK TO FREEDOM



## Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition

### Board Resolution

#### Western Reserve Heritage Area Study

August 10, 2010

**WHEREAS:** Congress passed legislation authorizing the National Park Service to conduct a study of the historic counties of the Western Reserve to determine their national significance for conservation, interpretation and development and

**WHEREAS:** Congressman Tim Ryan sponsored the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act and requested the technical assistance and support of the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition regarding the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study and

**WHEREAS:** Cuyahoga and Summit Counties are two of the fourteen counties included within the proposed study area of the Western Reserve and

**WHEREAS:** The Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition is recognized at the local, state and national level as a leader in the development of Heritage Areas and cultivating partnerships and collaborations for resource conservation and community and economic development and

**WHEREAS:** The National Park Service engaged the services of the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition to assist with the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study.

**THEREFORE,** The Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition supports the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study and looks forward to work in partnership and collaboration with our private, local, state and federal partners on this important regional project.

*Daniel M. Rice*

President and Chief Executive Officer



47 West Exchange Street • Akron, Ohio 44306 • Phone: 330-374-5657 • Fax: 330-374-5688



**Portage County Regional Planning Commission**

December 8, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

We are pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. The Portage County Regional Planning Commission are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through shared efforts Portage County would like to work together towards the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Portage County has several communities and villages that developed directly from the early Connecticut settlers and we are proud of our heritage and want to see it not only preserved but shared with others parts of our great country so that our legacy is never lost. Our desire is shared in our region to be recognized and to develop and strengthen our unifying regional theme.

Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Smith, Chairman

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

124 North Prospect Street • Ravenna, Ohio 44266  
Telephone (330) 297-3613 • Fax (330) 297-3617  
*"An Equal Opportunity Employer"*

*Sheffield Village Historical Society*

GARFIELD FARMS — 4921 DETROIT ROAD  
SHEFFIELD VILLAGE, OHIO 44054  
(440) 934-1514



November 4, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

On behalf of the Sheffield Village Historical Society of Lorain County, Ohio, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area (WRNHA). Our Society is proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural, and recreational resources of the Ohio counties of the former Connecticut Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation, and wise development of the resources within the Western Reserve, we shall strive to stimulate community/economic development and to improve the quality of life throughout the WRNHA.

Located the shores of Lake Erie, Ohio's most valuable natural resource, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from New England migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square, where citizens gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business, and social reform. From Cleveland, to Burton, Oberlin, and Milan, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape.

Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources. We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government, and other non-profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. On behalf of the Sheffield Village Historical Society, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. I have enclosed an example of our collaborative work to establish *The North Ridge Scenic Byway* in Lorain County.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Herdendorf, Ph.D.  
President

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service





COME. EXPLORE. EXPERIENCE.

321 Mahoning Avenue NW • Warren, OH 44483  
P: 330-675-3081 • F: 330-675-3083 • ExploreTrumbullCounty.com

December 1, 2010

Mr. Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

As a member of the Western Reserve Heritage Area Steering Committee, the Trumbull County Tourism Bureau is proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties included in the historic Western Reserve. Through conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within this area, we will be able to stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life of our region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions including the development of the Town Square. This gathering place is where individuals met for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform.

From Cleveland to Mesopotamia to Warren, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

As a destination marketing organization, the Trumbull County Tourism Bureau looks forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non-profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we will celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve.

We look forward to working on this important regional project. On behalf of our organization, please accept this letter as written support for designation of the Western Reserve as a National Heritage Area.

Sincerely,  
  
Stephanie I. Sierra  
Executive Director

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

2010 Trumbull County Tourism Board  
Jerry Lassman, President • Tami Cardella, Vice President • Owen Logan, Treasurer • Kelly Tolgo, Secretary  
N Ferrara • Commissioner Paul Heltzel • Beverly Horton • John Palacios • Christopher Stephenson • Kim Zaitch

## Village of Richfield

4410 W. STREETSBO RD  
P.O. BOX 387  
RICHFIELD, OH 44256-0387  
330-858-9201  
FAX 330-888-4806

MICHAEL K. LYONS, Mayor  
JOHN CIOLKOVICH, Council President

SANDY TURK, Finance Director  
MELANIE BAKER, Service Director

December 21, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to submit this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. I am proud to be working with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. I believe the conservation, interpretation and development of these resources within the Western Reserve will stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

The Western Reserve, located on the north coast of Ohio, exemplifies the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Settlers from Connecticut who migrated to the Western Reserve brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland, to Burton and Oberlin, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

The Western Reserve National Heritage Area can be developed in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non profit organizations. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we can celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
  
Michael K. Lyons, Mayor  
Village of Richfield

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service



November 12, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

RE: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Visit Lorain County has attended local focus group meetings to share stories and ideas that could greatly contribute to the development of the Western Reserve as a National Heritage Area. Much of Lorain County's history is tied to its proximity to Lake Erie, which stimulated industrial growth in ship building, steel production, and sandstone quarries. Runaway slaves were drawn to the prospect of freedom across Lake Erie into Canada. Some found refuge and acceptance in the small town of Oberlin and remained. This unique college town became known as "The Town that Started the Civil War" and has become an attraction for Underground Railroad heritage tourists. Oberlin College serves as the cultural center of Lorain County, as well, with one of the most prestigious college art museums in the country. Architectural enthusiasts can view a wide variety of architectural styles within the small Village of Wellington home to Archibald Willard, painter of the famed "Spirit of '76" painting.

Lorain County offers some of the best perch and walleye fishing in the Central Basin and along the sandbar stretching between Vermilion and Lorain. Steelhead fishing in the Vermilion and Black Rivers is highly attractive to even the most experienced anglers. Kayaking is one of the fastest growing recreational opportunities attracting tourists to the natural beauty of Lorain County's rivers and the lake shoreline. The Vermilion-Lorain Water Trail offers a signed route with multiple access points. The Back Roads & Beaches Bike and Multi-sport route incorporates cycling on low traveled county roads with kayaking, mountain biking, hiking, and swimming. Newly identified and mapped shipwrecks off the shores of Lorain and other cities have garnered attention from scuba enthusiasts adding to the many recreational options available in

Visit Lorain County  
8025 Leavitt Road  
Amherst, OH 44001  
Ph. 440.984.5282  
939.334.1673  
Ft. 440.984.7363



[www.visitloraincounty.com](http://www.visitloraincounty.com) | [www.backroadsandbeachesohio.com](http://www.backroadsandbeachesohio.com)

Lorain County. Birding is also a popular attraction at many of the county metro parks, notably the Sandy Ridge Reservation.

On behalf of Visit Lorain County, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please contact me directly with any questions you may have.

Regards,

Barb Bickel  
Executive Director

cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

# WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bingham-Hanna Museum University Circle  
Childs-Hale House 1870-1910  
Crawford Auto Auction Museum University Circle  
Hale Farm & Village Bath, Ohio  
Hay-McKinney Museum University Circle  
History Museum University Circle  
Library/Archives & Genealogy Center University Circle  
Loghurst Historic Home Carleton Place  
Shady Hill Historic Home Geneva, Ohio

November 1, 2010

Ernest Quintana, Midwest Regional Office Director  
National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102

Dear Mr. Quintana:

Since 1867, the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) has been a collecting institution, insuring that the documents and artifacts used to interpret daily life in Northeast Ohio are preserved and made accessible for the education and enjoyment of the region's residents as well as visitors. WRHS' job is to tell "authentic" stories of the historic Western Reserve and the impact of its people, places, and events on local, state, national, and global history.

Today, WRHS cares for 130,000 artifacts, 12 miles of documentary materials, 250,000 books, 4-5 million photographs, and 36 historic buildings as well as 247 acres of land. In addition, the Society has committed the interpretation of its historical collections and the expertise of its staff to providing insight for the public as they seek solutions to current and future challenges in Northeast Ohio. And, as an educational institution, WRHS is dedicated to interactively connecting the public to its cultural heritage through life-long learning opportunities that focus on the following areas of relevancy:

- **Family History**—Providing a sense of place and stability in a mobile and fast-moving society by allowing people to discover their "roots"
- **Community History**—Creating pride in the history and potential of a culturally and ethnically diverse Northeast Ohio
- **Entrepreneurial History**—Documenting and utilizing information that will become the launching pad for continued excellence in the areas of innovation, invention, research & development, and business practices for a thriving 21st-century economy in Northeast Ohio
- **History of Sustainability**—Imparting the historic background on the use of natural and human resources in our geographical area that will allow the public to construct a viable and healthy environment for its residents

The Western Reserve Historical Society, therefore, believes that it can be an important partner, with the National Park Service, in the development of this regional study, designed to examine the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of what is now Northeast Ohio.

On behalf of the Western Reserve Historical Society, I strongly support the creation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and look forward to working closely on this project with other NED-based organizations and individuals.

Sincerely yours,

*Gainor B. Davis*

Gainor B. Davis, Ph.D., President/CEO

cc. Rory Robinson, NPS

*History... Take it Personally!*

University Circle Complex, 10825 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106, 216.721.5722, www.wrhs.org  
Hale Farm & Village, PO Box 296, 2686 Oak Hill Road, Bath, Ohio 44210, 330.666.3711, www.halefarm.org



Western Reserve Land Conservancy

OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.

September 30, 2010

Ernest Quintana  
Midwest Regional Office Director, National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Dr.  
Omaha, NE 68102

Re: National Designation of the Western Reserve Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Quintana:

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for designation of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. We are proud to partner with the National Park Service on the development of the regional study examining the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources of the 14 counties of the historic Western Reserve. Through the conservation, interpretation and development of the authentic resources and attractions within the Western Reserve, we shall stimulate community and economic development and improve the quality of life for the region.

Located on the north coast of Ohio, the Western Reserve celebrates the unique architecture, land use, social values and industrial innovation of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As settlers from Connecticut migrated to the Western Reserve, they brought with them their values, customs and traditions, including the development of the Town Square. The Town Square is where individuals gathered for pursuits of pleasure, business and social reform. From Cleveland, to Burton and Oberlin, evidence of the historic Western Reserve Town Square is still evident on the landscape today. Evidence of a "vanguard of thinking" is found throughout the region, as those living in the Western Reserve pursued new products, new social reform platforms and innovations. Through the development of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study, residents and visitors can experience the unique industrial, land use and architecture legacy of the Western Reserve region while enjoying the natural and recreational resources.

We look forward to working in partnership with corporations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, units of government and non profit organizations on the development of the Western Reserve National Heritage Area. Through the development of public-private partnerships, we shall celebrate the legacy of the Western Reserve, promote stewardship, stimulate community and economic development, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the Western Reserve. On behalf of our organization, I strongly support the Western Reserve National Heritage Area and we look forward to working on this important regional project. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

*Richard D. Cochran*  
Richard D. Cochran  
cc: Rory Robinson, National Park Service

P.O. BOX 814 - HOVVELTY, OH 44072

WILLIAM L. GARDNER, CLARENCE S. GARDNER, VICKI GARDNER, BRENDA J. J. GARDNER, VICKI GARDNER, SCOTT AMHERST, VICKI GARDNER, DAVID WALSH, TREASURER, DAVID L. HEIDER, JUDITH A. LEWIS, J. BRUCE, JENNIFER SULLIVAN, PAUL BAKER, JILL BLOMBERG, GARY M. COLGAN, SALLY CULLEN, BRAD DAVIS, GINA A. DAVIS, JAMES CERRACHES, ROBERT J. COCHRAN, WILLIAM J. HEAVEN, J. BENNY HULLAND, SCHMIDT L. HULL, JANA LUKARIC, KELLY JANE BLANKENHORN, JOHN D. LELAND, C. RUSSELL LINDOEN, PATRICK L. MURPHY, S. STEPHEN WOODLAND, M. RAND SWERDLOW, MICHAEL S. SHUMWAY, JAMES C. SPAHN, JAMES C. ANDERSON, SIMON DOBSON YERGIN, EDUARDO D. COCHRAN, PRESIDENT & CEO  
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# Appendix D

## Public Comment

As a part of the study process, the final draft of the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study was posted on the National Park Service Planning, Environmental and Public Comment web site for a period of 30 days for public review and comment. A total of 12 comments were posted to this site. Below are those comments and responses to them.

Although it is the feeling of the National Park Service that none of the comments below merit changes in the feasibility study itself, it is important to note that some of the comments received hint at a narrower, more defined case for distinctiveness. However, because the Western Reserve does not meet the feasibility criteria at this time, regardless of the national distinctiveness finding, the ultimate finding would be the same.

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*The power of diversity to create change is a fascinating and relevant story, and it's a story that emerges from the Western Reserve in a resounding manner. As a member of the feasibility study team, I agree with the National Park Service determination that the Western Reserve is not yet ready for national designation because of its inability to meet feasibility criteria. However, I would like to contribute additional support for the region's national significance. It is my hope that what follows will provide insight on the national significance of this portion of Ohio. It is a story that is not only distinct, but unique, on the American landscape.*

*The Western Reserve as the Nation's Town Square should be viewed as a metaphor for collaboration and conversation. The feasibility study doesn't say the Western Reserve lays claim to the development of village greens or town squares. However, the influence of New Englanders to this part of Ohio is most visible in the layout of its towns and cities around these features, and it is the "town square" concept that most resonated with Western Reserve citizens during town hall gatherings. When asked about the significance of town squares, citizens of the Western Reserve told us these were sites where people meet others, talk about new ideas, protest and demonstrate, and do business. In essence, by encouraging dialogue and interaction town squares and village greens are (and were) catalysts for progress.*

*As a metaphor, the town square concept represents the functions of a heritage area in a world that has changed. Increased mobility, globalization, demands on time, and changes in civic engagement as a priority have perhaps led to the decline of a physical place (a.k.a. a town square) to serve these functions; however, the management of a heritage area provides a similar venue. Through the management of a heritage area, the same functions-people meeting people, talking about new ideas, protesting, and doing business are achieved. Our citizens also reflected that this could be achieved virtually, through online dialogues, but that it is the boundary and purpose of a heritage area that could bring them together.*

*The town square concept also represents what historically occurred that defines this region as unique high concentrations of cultural diversity. This mingling of*

people with different beliefs, skills, and traditions contributed to an explosion of innovation. What continues to occur today, within the Western Reserve is similar; people with diverse backgrounds who aren't satisfied with the status quo.

The achievements that emerged from this Ohio region are astounding. To list them all would exceed our capabilities, and it would probably be impossible to do so without missing key stories. Innovations emerging from this region changed the nation. Industrial innovations in iron and steel, petroleum refining, automobile production and parts manufacturing, rubber, aviation, chemical, electric power, and agriculture also spawned equally important innovations in tools and methods for equipping these industries, such as labor relations policies, manufacturing process designs, and machine designs. The seeds planted within the Western Reserve allowed these industries to prosper; if not within the Western Reserve boundary, then elsewhere using the basic principles and patents developed in Ohio.

Innovation wasn't restricted to the industrial scene; citizens of the Western Reserve created social change as well. Its citizens were initiators and leaders in abolitionism, Underground Railroad, women's rights movement, environmental protection movement, and created the predecessors to the United Way, Easter Seals, Alcoholic Anonymous, and the Boy Scouts of America, to name just a few.

Two important factors converged on the Ohio frontier to create this story; the rich natural resources and transportation routes of Lake Erie and the influx of New England, and other domestic and international settlers.

The New England influence of early settlers laid the foundation for national and global contributions in nearly every field. The breed of New England settlers was distinctive people with a mix of the need for adventure, strong ambition, high moral values, and education. The wilderness of the Western Reserve gave them the opportunity to become "men of means" not found in the settled, politically

established, and more settled Connecticut, and the rich resources gave them the raw materials from which to make their fortunes. Subsequent generations had the greatest influence. Those generations were inspired by their parents' and grand-parents' stories and struggles and were raised with the foundation of moral strength and educational values. Combine this upbringing with waves of European immigrants, and you have the basis for the explosion of innovation in all fields.

How did international and domestic immigrants contribute to the story? First, immigrants were willing to work for less. This cheap labor allowed innovations to occur in a free-market economy at minimal production costs. Second, the massive numbers of immigrants formed cohesive communities that provided the support systems for the most ambitious and enterprising to seek their own fortunes. "The immigrants' communities provided their people the stability and confidence to achieve remarkable cultural, social, and especially, economic successes," said Bonutti and Prpic (Bonutti & Prpic, 1974). Third, it appears that many of the region's patents were contributed by individuals of foreign descent who were employed by Western Reserve firms. These firms were often begun by those domestic immigrants and descendants because they had the ability, knowledge, access to raw materials, and value systems to pursue. Then the international immigrants brought with them the skill sets and experiences to innovate. Fourth, the cultural diversity created by the blending of New England Puritans and immigrants from around the globe inspired free-thinking and tolerance.

Examples of immigrant influence and achievements include a Polish immigrant who saw how bituminous coal was used in England and Scotland and discovered coal in Trumbull and Mahoning counties in 1846, a German immigrant who developed the process for removing sulfur from crude oil, and an Italian immigrant who secured patents for producing sulfuric acid for refining and other processes (Cooper & Schmitz, 1993).

*Those arriving to the Western Reserve found the ingredients for success. Lake Erie, and the Great Lakes, is among the largest bodies of freshwater in the world. Tributaries, wetlands, lake effect micro-climate, glacial bedrock, and many more natural elements provided rich resources, while the transportation route provided for the movement of goods, people, and ideas. The region also inspired creativity. Spencerian handwriting, created by a Geneva gentleman, is said to have been inspired by the natural beauty of the region.*

*Cultural diversity and the natural landscape of the Western Reserve form the basic inputs as to how the Western Reserve achieved national significance. The significance of the region; however, is not just from those patents and innovations that came directly from within its boundaries. It is from the outflow of those raised within the Western Reserve who carried their upbringings and ideas to other areas of the nation. The area's network of universities and colleges helped in this movement. The Western Reserve's "abolitionist sentiment was intensified by the arrival in Oberlin in 1835 of freedom-loving students and faculty from the Lane Seminary in Cincinnati where they had been forbidden to associate with Negroes or debate the issue of slavery. In the 1840s, Oberlin enrolled over 500 students each academic year. And from its halls went forth a stream of teachers, ministers, and missionaries of both sexes not only to the Reserve, but to the uttermost parts of the world," (Hatcher, 1966).*

*Also contributing to the outflow of innovations was the acquisition and mergers of Western Reserve companies to places outside of the hometown grid. Start-ups elsewhere by those raised in the Western Reserve, as well as those who sought employment elsewhere before reaching greatness, should also not be discounted.*

*This mobility of innovation beyond the boundaries of the Western Reserve also occurred through ground-breaking patents that formed basic, underlying principles for the automobile industry, steel industry, petroleum industry, chemical*

*industry, machine and tool industry, civil engineering, transportation, and communication. Innovations in communication perhaps aided the movement of ideas and innovations to other parts of the nation. For example, we only have to look at the roots of Warner Bros., Western Telegraph, Edison innovations, Scripps-Howard, Knight Newspapers, lithography, etc., to find that they are planted within the Western Reserve.*

*"The Western Reserve has always been a land of leaders, inventors, innovators, pace setters, idea people in many fields people who so molded and improved life that many of their contributions were turning points in history. There's a bit of our community everywhere" (Hoover, 1977).*

*The Western Reserve made substantial contributions in many industries and movements. We could probably make the case for national significance of each of these areas, but that is not what makes the Western Reserve unique, "it wasn't one industry sector that made the area unique; it was the diversity of greatness. According to the Bureau of Census using the Industrial Classification System, Cleveland had the greatest variety of products produced in one place for many years" (Hoover, 1977).*

*Thank you for the opportunity to contribute additional information to this study. The Western Reserve story is complex, but it is truly a story of super powers, not unlike the story of Superman (incidentally also a product of two Western Reserve individuals). Lake Erie and the cultural diversity of its population laid the foundation for Western Reserve greatness, a greatness that continues to be felt today through contributions in medicine, science, plastics, and more. Rooted in a foundation of hard work, access to rich resources, innovation, and determination, the Western Reserve is a region whose branches of discovery have changed the world.*

**Works Cited:**

Bonutti, K., & Prpic, G. (1974). *Selected Ethnic Communities of Cleveland: A Socioeconomic Study*. Cleveland: Cleveland State University.

Cooper, H., & Schmitz, T. (1993). *History of Invention, Patents, and Patent Lawyers in the Western Reserve*. Cleveland: Cleveland Intellectual Property Law Association.

Hatcher, H. (1966). *The Western Reserve: The Story of New Connecticut*. Cleveland: World Publishing Company.

Hoover, E. R. (1977). *Cradle of Greatness: National and World Achievements*. Cleveland: Shaker Savings Association.

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*As a professional historian, I strongly support the argument that the Western Reserve Heritage Area offers its residents and the nation a historically unique region that contains significant local and national stories worthy of preservation and promotion. The region's historical societies, libraries, museums, and sites, traditions and cultural resources, and parks, recreation areas, and natural resources collectively tell the story of the nation's ongoing political patrimony, an inheritance available as a birthright and by acclamation. Explored and established in the decade after the passage of the United States Constitution, Connecticut's Western Reserve was one of the new nation's first experiments in land management and settlement, first separate from the Northwest Territory and later included within it. That distinct founding is evident on the landscape: the grid of townships in the Western Reserve is populated by five-by-five-mile squares, smaller than those planned in the rest of the state and in the Northwest Territory. Kept in "reserve" for the benefit of Connecticut citizens, the 3.3 million acres of Northeast Ohio were sold to the Connecticut Land Company; the proceeds of that sale established a school fund still in existence in Connecticut today.*

*Connecticut political and social traditions were updated in this "New Connecticut" to accommodate the broadened principles of participatory democracy. Uncoupled from colonial political and social traditions still imbedded in the new states, immigrants to this new "West" (as it was then called) incorporated the new nation's ideals as formulated in the Declaration of Independence and in the Constitution: in forming new communities and laws, defending personal liberty and property, and engaging in the pursuit of happiness—that is, historical understood, promoting the well being of their fellow humans as the core goal of human society. It was no accident that the surveyor in charge of charting the Western Reserve, Moses Cleaveland, and his expedition first set foot in the Western Reserve, on July 4, 1796, at the mouth of Conneaut Creek. They quickly renamed the place Port Independence. Having crossed Lake Erie as their ancestors had cross the Atlantic Ocean, Cleaveland and his team of surveyors chose words and symbols and rituals of the then-new nation-re-declaring independence, if you will—to invest the region with a democratic purpose. The Western Reserve was not to be another colony. Rather it was a reiteration of the nation writ small and promising anew what had been gained in the creation of the American republic.*

*One way to understand the legacy of this distinctive founding is to trace consistent regional identity, through the collective thoughts and actions of the region's residents over time. One may easily imagine the early nineteenth-century discussions and debates about the public good—individual rights and property right-of-ways, education and elder care, taxes and voting, and the like-taking place on the town square, or in the town hall or the schoolroom, or in the front parlor of private houses, all designed as Greek or Roman temples, a sure symbol of the res publica and a reminder of the virtues considered necessary to the public life of the nation. Those debates still occur in the same temple-front township halls. Townships, each five miles square, arranged in a grid of towns and ranges (and not in the crazy quilt pattern of metes and bounds), were founded with place names of Antiquity: Mecca, Medina, and Mesopotamia, Parma and Ravenna,*

*Troy and Rome. The region's early architecture has been studied as a distinctive style; many examples remain on the landscape, serving with these toponyms to teach every generation about the past.*

*A review of historians' works on the Western Reserve from the late nineteenth century through the last decade, representing many methodological approaches and theses, reveals a remarkable consistency in the assertion that the region was and remains a distinctive chapter in the nation's story. One recent example: Quentin Skrabec, author of *William McGuffey: Mentor to American Industry* (2009), finds in McGuffey's famous *Eclectic Readers* the impact of the McGuffey's youth in the Western Reserve. That so many of America's business leaders in the latter half of the nineteenth century pointed to the influence of these books strengthens the argument that the region played a crucial role in American industry and capitalism beyond its innovations and industrial might over the last two centuries. As Skrabec points out, however, McGuffey stressed not acquisition, but charity, that those with property had a responsibility to care for those without (the pursuit of happiness). Skrabec attributes McGuffey's upbringing in what he calls the "merged culture of the Western Reserve of Ohio" (in McGuffey's case, Connecticut Yankee, Scots-Irish, and German) as formative and lasting, and through his *Readers* influenced several generations of Americans. In that same "merged culture" was established, two generations of immigrants later, the nation's first community foundation: the Cleveland Foundation, in 1914.*

*The Western Reserve was and remains a coherent region within Ohio, distinctive in its progressive politics and voting patterns from the rest of the state. In such a way we may see how progressive thought and social reform initially formed the region's identity in the early nineteenth century and subsequently refined it. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the region supported federalism, internal improvements, business enterprise, banks, and tax-supported public schools-unlike much of the rest of the state. By 1840, Ohio was the nation's third*

*most populous state, and much of that population lived in the Western Reserve. The region's Connecticut Yankees, their children, and their grandchildren voted consistently for liberal policies that the rest of Ohio did not support-for example, in the state's constitutional convention of 1850-51. In the same years in which Lucretia Mott addressed the Salem's Woman's Convention and Sojourner Truth asked of her Akron audience "Ain't I a Woman?" as she toured for the American Anti-Slavery Society, seventy-one white men were meeting in Chillicothe to draft a new state constitution. The only votes in favor of equal political rights for African Americans in that statewide convention came from the Western Reserve. The only votes in favor of women's right to vote came from the Western Reserve. The delegates from the Western Reserve counties also voiced their opposition to a proposed ban on immigrants.*

*In presidential elections in the Reconstruction era the region was the Midwest's stronghold of Republicanism, when the Grand Old Party advocated racial equality. In the twentieth century, the rise of heavy industry and the concomitant increase of immigrant laborers did not alter the historic commitment to personal liberty, self determination, and civil rights. The region's political tendencies remained the same, though the transformation of the nation's political parties meant that the Western Reserve voted Democratic, even in the overwhelming victory of Ronald Reagan in the presidential election of 1984. The constant and consistent infusion of peoples into the crucible of the Western Reserve has continually refined the core collective mindset of the region's residents.*

*Part of being distinctive is having an internal consistency or commonality. The overwhelming influence and importance of Lake Erie-gateway to the West, creator of a microclimate, part of a water system of natural streams and manmade canals-trained the region's transportation and communication networks northward; the western trail of the National Road was much further south. The proximity to cheap water transportation, the availability of coal and oil in*



*Pennsylvania and West Virginia, and the concentration of capital in Cleveland lifted the region to national prominence during the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era: heavy manufacturing, inventions and entrepreneurship, the arts, political and social reform made Cleveland the nation's "Sixth City" by the first decades of the twentieth century. The region became a magnet for immigrant labor between 1880 and 1920; these groups added to the region's identity characteristic architecture and social and cultural practices that still endure. Progressive reformers such as Tom Johnson, mayor of Cleveland, reinvested Yankee ideas of social service and public good in the city, easing immigrants' entry into American life. I need only look to my own family's history for evidence of this chapter in the region's story.*

*The report's emphasis on the "town square" metaphor is a most appropriate one for the Western Reserve and links its various villages, towns, and cities to a common heritage. As historian Amy DeRogatis observes, the Connecticut Missionary Society in the early nineteenth century was obsessed "with plotting town greens and placing its churches on one side of the square [re-creating] its vision of a New England landscape on the frontier by fixing its place in the town's center." The Society insisted that "moral order was connected to the spatial order of a town square" (Moral Geography: Maps, Missionaries, and the American Frontier, 2003; pp. 96-97).*

*As the nation's "town square," the Western Reserve served early as a frontier "crucible," to borrow from historian Frederick Jackson Turner. Soon after the War of 1812, the region was populated with Connecticut and New York Yankees who brought longstanding practices of small town-meeting government, independently created churches, and a sense of shared purpose, represented in the re-creation of the New England town green, commons, or square. These spaces were more than shared land for various purposes such as grazing livestock or erecting a church. These iconic spaces linked the pioneers to their former communities in New England and New York, of course, but they were also sites of political and social*

*engagement, through the town halls and jails, schools and churches, shops and stores located on or around it. At one and the same time an historic form and a contemporary usable civic space, the town square was necessarily a dynamic place of public life and debate.*

*An example from my hometown: Vienna's first town clerk, Dennis C. Palmer, travelled with his wife Phebe and their children to the first county of the Connecticut Western Reserve, Trumbull, at the turn of the nineteenth century. Riding home from a religious meeting, Palmer saw a vision of a sword hanging over the town's Presbyterian church building on the town green. He took it as a sign of the falseness of that church's practice. Convinced his vision was true, he traveled to the county seat of Warren and began preaching in the public square.*

*That so many of the region's towns and cities retain all or much of their original squares and greens testifies to these spaces' usefulness in creating and sustaining community over time and in encouraging and symbolizing public debate. "Town square" as a metaphor represents traditions of free speech and public debate beyond its borders. Little wonder that the City Club of Cleveland, founded in the midst of an era of increasing xenophobia in the United States in 1912, is the oldest continuous free speech forum in the country, renowned for its tradition of debate and discussion.*

*Yet the value of the physical space is not to be overlooked. Cleveland's current determination to refocus the city's revitalization on its Public Square, matched by Youngstown's Federal Plaza renaissance, is surely recognition of the power of the town square, as a social space, as a shared public good, and as an icon that links past and present-and the future, as the region works to remove the moniker of "Rust Belt."*

*It is important to repeat that the "town square" as metaphor is, by definition, portable. Striking steelworkers transformed the ironically named Republic Steel Corporation's mills into town squares, conducting a sit-down strike in 1937 in Youngstown to protest unfair labor practices. The mills became public spaces of political action and discussion, and this bloody "Little Steel Strike" became a national story. Airplanes chartered by sympathetic citizens dropped food to the striking workers in the mills. Others attempted to mail food to the strikers. Still other citizens formed groups to protest the sit-down strikers' actions. This strike would fail in the short run, but during World War II Republic Steel paid back pay to the blacklisted strikers and acceded to the representation of unions.*

*On a clear spring day in May, 1970, the campus of Kent State University was a town square, where student activists protested the Viet Nam Conflict. Free speech guaranteed by the First Amendment was trumped by the power of the Second Amendment, as the citizens' own militia, the National Guard, shot four students and wounded nine in what was a peaceful protest.*

*As an metaphor realized materially on its landscape, in the forms of square towns, town squares and greens, and town halls, the "town square" possesses great resonance as a symbol of the region's history and as a symbol for the Western Reserve Heritage Area*

*I am interested in seeing if this study could perhaps be reconsidered as being designated as a Heritage Area by the National Park Service. I have always enjoyed the places sponsored by the National Park Service and their wonderful ways of preserving, highlighting, and educating our country on its resources and history. I grew up every summer traveling with my family across the US in a station wagon visiting many of these places. I am amazed at all of the diverse National Parks and areas that help people currently become more interested in our debt to the past. These preservation efforts help us provide for future learners as well. If we did not*

*have these areas identified by the NPS, our country would have lost much of its heritage along the way. NPS, thank you for reviewing this once, but please look again at this study.*

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*In regards to this study currently not meeting Criterion "A", I have some thoughts. I do agree that the: "Western Reserve has a story of great significance to the region and the State of Ohio that had an impact on the nation". But I disagree with the second part of this statement in the finding that says: "but is not nationally distinctive or significant and has not met this criterion". In our global world these days, I find it important, especially as a current educator, to connect our learning to see the historical patterns of people and their places, and the "evidence" left behind that make these "stories come to life". The Western Reserve Heritage Study helps put many meaningful pieces together for the rest of our nation to see and experience. As the 211 historical organizations and the 27 letters of support presented in the index show, these share just some of the supporters from those of us in this area that find this area is rich in history and learning, ready to be identified in our country as a distinctive part of the formation of who and what we are today. I don't see how this area is not nationally distinctive or significant. Thomas Edison, George Washington, The Revolutionary War, Johnson Island, Lake Erie, The Erie Canal...this list could go on and on of things that changed our nation from this area. I feel that we have a responsibility to try to stimulate interest and learning within our country from this area, in our debt to the past, in order to prepare for the future generations.*

*If Criterion "A" would be accepted, I think Criterion "F" and "G" would start to move further towards reality. Although finding one group, to speak and act for all 138 existing entities will be a challenge, I believe more momentum would occur with more support from the NPS.*

*I thank you for your time and consideration of my thoughts. Feel free to contact me about any questions you may have for me. I would appreciate being notified of any further developments. I grew up in the Firelands and was fortunate to have been part of this unique and special part of our country.*

**RESPONSE**—The National Park Service encourages future researchers and community advocates to view this study as a starting point for honing the significance story. The additional information provided in the three comments above begins to further define the story of the Western Reserve. Additional work in this area will add a great deal to better defining the common story that ties Western Reserve together and will greatly help move the heritage area concept forward as a regional initiative if this action is pursued.

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*I was wondering if Western Reserve Historical Society was considered to administer the federal program.*

**RESPONSE**—As indicated in chapter 5, Assessment of Criteria in the Western Reserve Heritage Area Study Act on page 67... “There are many regional and local organizations within the Western Reserve with regional partnerships and collaboration experience. Some relevant examples include efforts to preserve natural resources through the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, efforts to preserve the story and resources through the Western Reserve Historical Society...” At the time of this report, there is not currently a single entity that has emerged with either the willingness or the capacity and geographic-wide acceptance to be recognized as the coordinating entity if the area were to be designated a National Heritage Area.

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*Thank you very much compiling the results of the feasibility study, getting the process going, and encouraging residents to take a regional view of the cultural and natural resources in their area. It is often too easy to miss the "gems" next door. I think the study report is very detailed and clearly illustrates the diversity of the Western Reserve's history, population, and resources. I understand that the area does not currently meet two criteria of suitability, lacking a financial plan and a coordinating entity. I do wonder at why the National Park Service determined that the Western Reserve does not have a nationally distinctive history. Who is meant by "National Park Service"? Is this a council, a meeting, a review process, or one person? Did they submit any comments about their determination that could help focus regional initiatives? Is it possible that arguing distinctiveness would just be a matter of "honing" the report to find the themes that are truly unique to the Western Reserve? Or perhaps making more comparisons between the Western Reserve and the rest of the nation in order to demonstrate significance?*

*The document is a little unclear about how regional efforts to promote the area really will differ from official designation. Is reapplication possible in the future or is the determination final?*

**RESPONSE**—The study process and document was overseen, reviewed and approved by National Park Service staff from the MW Region and Washington offices. A local study team, defined on page 6, coordinated public input and aggregated the research, but the ultimate decision and approval of suitability rested with the National Park Service. The other questions asked in the above comment are addressed in responses to comments above and below.

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*The innovation from this area alone should be recognized for its national heritage. Sadly either the communities within the Western Reserve have failed to recognize this historic value or we have lost the cohesive bond to identify ourselves with the*

*Western Reserve. I would guess that the area recognizes itself more as Northeast Ohio and even with that terminology can mean something different depending on who you talk to too.*

*Maybe it is possible to tell the story differently, but I think there may still be a general lack of recognition to what this area meant to the nation.*

*I would also commend all those who worked hard to pull the study together. There was a lot of work and not enough acknowledgements for their effort.*

*Todd T. Peetz, Portage County Regional Planning Commission*

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*I support this study and the designation. I grew up in Erie County and feel the designation will help promote the area to visitors. This is a popular tourist area so I feel it will enhance the marketing opportunities for organizations and cities etc. The NPS provides quality interpretative opportunities at all of the various National Parks and Monuments. Having this designation will help all entities promote the region.*

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*As a member of the Study Team, I strongly support the Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study. The natural, historical and recreational resources associated with the Western Reserve represent the legacy and heritage of our nation. Using the "town square" concept as a framework for the interpretation of the significant cultural and historical resources and stories is a powerful and convincing statement of the importance of the Western Reserve Heritage Area. As a region, there are many significant historical resources and stories that reflect significant milestones in our nation's history, from the burning of the Cuyahoga River which led to the Clean Water Act, to the family heritage of the John Brown family and his subsequent actions which led to the Civil War. Fortunately, many of these*

*historical and cultural resources and stories remain intact in our cities, villages and townships throughout the Western Reserve. With additional organizational development and partnership cultivation, the public-private partnerships can be cultivated to promote, interpret and celebrate the unique natural, historical and recreational heritage of the Western Reserve.*

*As a regional concept, the Western Reserve Heritage Area is an important and worthy collaboration to pursue in order to promote community and economic development, build sustainable communities and create a legacy for future generations.*

*Daniel M. Rice, Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition*

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*Having sat on the WRHA Study Committee for the past year and a half, I feel that what the Western Reserve Heritage Area has is very unique. We are the Public Square for our Country. We were in the past but also we continue to be today. We were unique in the late 1700's and 1800's because we were one of the first areas of the new Country to see growth and expansion. We were the area that was set aside for Connecticut after the war, which is unique in that we were one of two areas set aside for specific states after the war. From that, much of our early settlement did mirror the North East with our Architecture, Faith, Ideals and Community layouts. We may have mirrored the NE but we have made it our own.*

*Our location along the lake and with waterways down to the Gulf, made us the stepping stone for our new Country. We were in the fore front of the industrial revolution. We were the start of the Bread basket for our country. Today with Polymers, Medicine, Energy we are still in the fore front.*

*What we offer is unique and we should be given the time to work together to promote our region as a heritage area. We have started the process and should*

*be allowed to move forward at our pace to build our Heritage Area as we see fit, and in the time frame we feel we need. We should not be pushed to complete the process within a specific time frame that the Park service has set. We are who we are and we do things in our own time. We do not rush into programs and complete them without some thought and work. We will continue to work on setting up a heritage area and when we get there we will have a strong well thought out program that the whole region can get their hands around and feel that they are a part of. We will come out as a stronger region working together to accomplish our goals and do the Heritage Area justice. We have a great start, now we need to be given the time to work together to make the Western Reserve Heritage Area a success.*

*Daniel D. Hostetler, Medina County Visitors Bureau*

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*I am sorry to see that we do not meet the criteria for a Heritage Area. I was sadden at the poor showing of attendance at the meetings around the Trumbull County area, esp.the many historical societies members and the elected officials. A designation such as this would promote tourism and encourage people to see what we have in our own back yard. Congressman Ryan is aware of what a great resource of history we have and I hope this will go forward in some manner.*

*Cynthia (Cindee) S. Mines, Trumbull County Historical Society*

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*The Western Reserve has a rich history that is worth preserving. Many communities in the Western Reserve are proud to share their history and cultural heritage. Historical Societies exist in so many cities and should be able to provide assistance with the study. I am pleased to see your study promoting awareness regarding our area assets. I fully support the designation of the Western Reserve as a National Heritage Area and hope such an honor will help protect our historic building stock and cultural landscape. Equating this area to a town square is an*

*appropriate metaphor and acknowledges our history and the development of so many of our communities. I think that continued education and outreach will help this idea take flight.*

**RESPONSE**—These seven comments above supports the study’s recommendation that the Western Reserve Heritage Area be supported and implemented as a regional initiative. Included in Chapter 7 of the document is a discussion of the value and opportunity in moving this effort forward as a regional initiative along with recommendations of how to get this started. A vision for the heritage corridor and guiding principles defined by those that participated in the study provides additional focus and direction for implementation of a regional heritage area.

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*Last year the ODNr tried to designate the Vermilion River as an Ohio Scenic River. The only notice of this to homeowners was a tiny ad in the classifieds which none reads. The ODNr was going to designate these PRIVATE PROPERTY owner's property, and the majority of them had absolutely no idea that it was even happening. I find your organization and policies just as underhanded.*

*We formed groups, and informed people of what was taking place, and they were wholly against having their lands designated for ANYTHING. We fought that battle and we won.*

*I am still in contact with about two hundred of those people. They do NOT want ANY designations of their properties. These people are from several counties, and our local governments passed resolutions against the designation. I am sure that they would pass resolutions against this designation as well. We are tired of the government(s) thinking that they can do whatever they want to with OUR private property. We are also against any individuals who think that they have the right to speak for others. They have no right or claim whatsoever, and they need to be*

*minding their own business, and worrying about their own property instead of everyone else's.*

*We are familiar with the U.N.'s Agenda 21, and we know that this is just another tentacle of it, and we do NOT want it. We do not need any non-governmental 'groups' formed here, for the government to funnel monies to, to implement Agenda 21 policies.*

*I truly believe that if you told your 'Steering Committees' the truth about the long term goals here, that they wouldn't want this either, and would truly see it as the threat that it is.*

*Rory Robinson said the comments were supposed to be posted and OPEN for view. Why are you not doing that? Afraid that people will learn the truth? That this is just another scheme to destroy private property rights, and limit our freedoms? The Steering Committee will be told that it must do certain things, and they might even be tricked into believing that they had a say in the decision making, but they don't.*

*Why does Senator Ryan want this? Hoping to get some grant monies that have lots of freedom choking strings attached? We do not want this. He is not even from our counties, and he has absolutely no right whatsoever to be putting in for a designation here. I have called his office and emailed him as well, asking for the details of how our area(s) can 'OPT OUT', and I have gotten NO REPLY whatsoever. He has the nerve to try and designate MY property, but the man won't speak to me? Or give me a straight answer? Senator Ryan, I have no respect for you.*

*Our final comment is, "WE DO NOT WANT THIS OR ANY DESIGNATION."  
Barbara Ramirez*

**RESPONSE**—In Chapter 5 of the study, one of the criteria evaluated is the “whether the study area has potential or actual impact on private property located within or abutting the Study Area.” Based on the supporting information described on page 69, the National Park Service concludes that the Western Reserve does not have potential or actual impact on private property located within or abutting the study area. Guiding principles were identified by citizens during Western Reserve Heritage Feasibility Study town hall meetings, and they are principles any organization assuming coordination of a regional heritage area initiative should protect and follow. The first of these found in Chapter 2 is: “The Western Reserve Heritage Area respects property rights”, followed direct quotes from citizens supporting each value

- “We value private property rights.”
- “All landowners understand what is special.
- “We have been able to protect land, agricultural heritage, natural areas, and scenic vistas due to successful homeowner programs, such as easements to land trusts.”
- “Local government control is preserved.”



