



Annual Report | 2007



In 2007, Rivers of Steel has overseen more than 65 projects that are fulfilling the National Heritage Area's mission to ensure that the region's remarkable industrial history of southwestern Pennsylvania endure for generations and contribute to the region's economic revitalization.

The scope and variety of the projects have been guided by the key economic strategies outlined in the National Heritage Area's management plan. They include heritage tourism, conserving and interpreting historic and cultural resources, creating educational programs, and revitalizing rivers valleys from the former industrial corridors into a system of green ways linking natural, historical and recreational sites.

Examples of Rivers of Steel's achievements in 2007 are discussed below and demonstrate the National Heritage Area's role as a partner in the economic revitalization of southwestern Pennsylvania.

Preserving Historic Resources

In partnership with the Greene County Historical Society, the Greene County Board of Commissioners, Friends of the Foundry, and the citizens of Rices Landing, W.A. Young Machine Shop in Rices Landing is one of Rivers of Steel's preservation priorities. Dating back to the early 1900s, with machinery dating back to the 1800s, it is in the early stages of preservation planning and restoration. The long term goals are to make this facility safe for public tours with interpretation and blacksmith artisans working in this rare industrial gem.

An Armstrong County treasure, the 200-year-old grist and saw mill is being preserved by the Freeport Area Historical Society in cooperation with Rivers of Steel. The Valley Mills, located along the Butler to Freeport Rails to Trails, will be rehabilitated into a working grist and saw mill that will serve as a museum and learning center and become a destination for tourists and trail users.



Recreation and Natural Resources

The ongoing construction and enhancement of southwestern Pennsylvania's biking and hiking trails are exemplified by the Steel Valley and Roaring Run Trails. Restrooms, picnic tables, bike racks and benches were installed at the historic Pump House and Water Tower, a major trail head on the Steel Valley Trail, and in partnership with the Roaring Run Watershed Association, a parking lot was enlarged to accommodate 105 cars at the Roaring Run Recreation Area.

Rivers landings are being planned and constructed to link the river towns with their natural resources. Rivers of Steel developed a graphic standards package for its signage program and produced a prototype river landing kiosk that was installed at the Kittanning River Landing and Park. The kiosk provides visitors, recreational boaters, kayakers and canoeists with the history and a listing of amenities in river front communities.



Supporting Cultural Traditions

Southwestern Pennsylvania is a mosaic of cultures, ethnicities, religions and races. The Bulgarian-Macedonian National Educational and Cultural Center (BMNECC) is one of the best preserved cultural institutions in America that is working to conserve the traditions of Bulgarians and Macedonians who settled in this region in the 1900s. Rivers of Steel has integrated the BMNECC into its tour program bringing hundreds of new visitors to their cultural center.

With support from The Pittsburgh Foundation, Rivers of Steel developed a program in partnership with elementary school teachers to incorporate the study of southwestern Pennsylvania's cultural traditions into classroom curriculums. Focusing on one of southwestern Pennsylvania's best-known cultural traditions, the cookie table, students learned about the cooking traditions of many cultures and ethnicities in their communities. They researched recipes and conducted oral histories to produce *The Cookie Table Cookbook*.



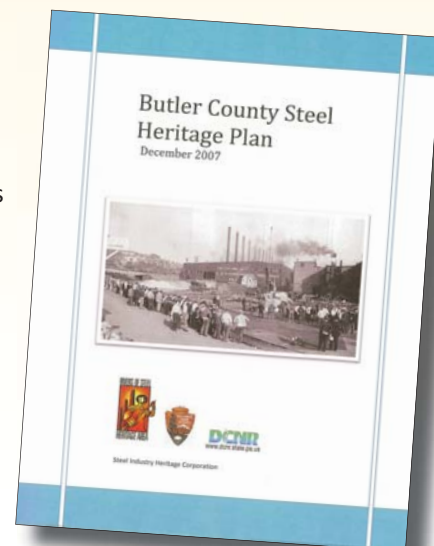
Communicating Our Story

As the mills and mines closed, workers sometimes saved hand tools, small signs and other mementos of their lives in the industry. One collection in Beaver County is the property of a former worker who collected hundreds of steel mill artifacts and documents from the Jones & Laughlin Steel Mill in Aliquippa, PA. With the help of Rivers of Steel, this collection is being conserved and will be displayed in a museum dedicated to the working men and women of the Beaver Valley.

Rivers of Steel's expanding interpretive program has developed and operated the Hard Hat Tours bringing hundreds of visitors to one of the nation's newest National Historic Landmarks - The Carrie Furnaces. Using former steel workers and life long residents as tour guides, Rivers of Steel is delivering heritage tourism to visitors eager to experience the region's industrial and cultural heritage.

Heritage Planning

Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area is focused on the development of five regional journeys that are centered in the industrial communities of the Monongahela, Ohio, and Allegheny River valleys. These thematic journey areas are the foundation of Rivers of Steel's mission to utilize the region's physical and cultural resources as the economic revitalization engine for the entire region. In 2007, Rivers of Steel completed the final two regional heritage plans, *Fueling a Revolution* and *Mountains of Fire*. Rivers of Steel worked with the communities, local governments, and legislators to identify, conserve, and interpret the cultural and historical assets within their journey area. Now completed, the journey area plans will serve as the framework to rejuvenate distressed industrial communities through the preservation of their unique physical and cultural assets.



**Financial Information****Fiscal Year 2007**

Dec. 31, 2007

Assets

Total Current Assets	\$	1,416,256
Fixed Assets	\$	5,455,908
Total Asset	\$	6,872,164

Liabilities and Net Assets

Total Liabilities	\$	32,634
Net Assets		
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	\$	5,476,022
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	\$	1,363,508
Total Net Assets	\$	6,839,530
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	6,872,164

