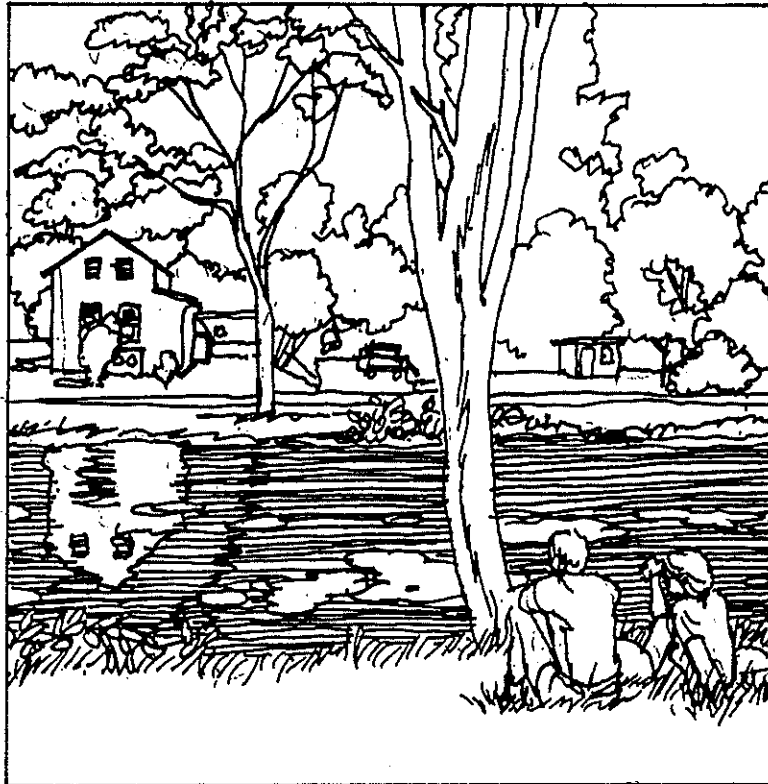


# DELAWARE & RARITAN CANAL COMMISSION

## 1992 ANNUAL REPORT



*C. M. V. L.*

### COMMISSIONERS

Benjamin B. Kirkland, *Chairman*

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New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Energy  
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# D&R CANAL COMMISSION

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Since 1974, when the canal was declared a State Park, it has been evident that the greatest challenge to converting the 60-mile-long historic waterway into a park lies in Trenton. The Trenton portion of the park has been more severely impacted by 20th century development than anywhere else. The strip of park land on either bank, and even the canal itself, have been narrowed by encroaching roads, buildings, and parking lots. In the 1960's a chain-link fence was erected on both canal banks throughout most of the city. This fence has separated the canal from its Trenton neighborhoods, preventing the canal from being an attractive and useful part of the community.

It has taken a long time, but 1992 was the year that good things began to happen in the Trenton portion of the Canal Park. Planning projects were completed and funding for the construction to implement that planning was secured in 1992. The Trenton section of the Canal Park is now on the way to becoming an important, useful, and beautiful part of the Capital City.

If there were no accomplishments in 1992 other than the change in Trenton, 1992 would still be a very good year. There were, however, many other accomplishments in 1992.

### THE COMMISSION'S VISION OF THE CANAL PARK

The Canal Commission's activities for 1992 are best measured against the Commission's vision of the Canal Park as a continuous corridor of land and water that is a favored place for recreation, a secure habitat for a diversity of wildlife, a critically important water supply system, and a historic site that reveals meaningful information about New Jersey's past.

The Commission pursues this vision for the Canal Park through four types of activities.

**Planning for Park Development.** Two of the goals enumerated in the Commission's master planning process are to establish continuity of the Canal Park corridor by eliminating breaks in the path and to provide access to the park at a large number of places.

**Planning for Land Acquisition.** The acquisition plan is aimed at three goals: to widen the park corridor where appropriate; to establish tributary corridors that link the Canal Park to other resources; and to preserve large pieces of land at intervals along the park corridor for recreational and ecological purposes.

**Development and enforcement of a land use regulatory program.** The Commission's land use regulatory program is designed to protect the public values of the park.

**Work with other State, county and municipal governmental agencies, as well as with private individuals and groups.** The purpose of the cooperative staff efforts is to promote policies by these organizations that will benefit the park and enhance its use.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES IN 1992

**Scenic Roads.** The Commission staff has worked on two scenic road projects for roads that are on the boundary of the Canal Park. The State DOT is proposing to give scenic road designation to Route 29 and Somerset County is giving a similar designation to River Road. The State DOT expects to spend \$2 million for planning, developing, and buying scenic easements for the Route 29 project.

**Canal Park Handbook.** The D&R Canal Watch is preparing a guidebook for Canal Park users. The Commission staff has contributed articles, photographs and editorial review to help this most useful project.

**National Recreational Trail.** The U.S. Secretary of the Interior recognized the Canal Park as a part of the National Recreational Trail network.

**Historic Photographs.** The Commission's collection of historic images of the canal grows every year. This collection is used for display, scholarly research, and publications.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### FY 1992 Budget

1. Salaries	\$155,887
2. Materials and Supplies	\$ 8,517
3. Maintenance and Fixed Charges	\$ 16,191
4. Services other than Personnel	\$ 2,622
TOTAL	\$183,217

Note: The Commission's allocation has been frozen at \$149,000 per year for the last seven years. The shortage between allocation and expenses has been assumed by the New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry.

*It is always difficult to list the year's accomplishments because there are never any projects that begin and end in a calendar year. Some of the 1992 accomplishments listed here may have started as 1991 activities, or might carry over to next year as accomplishments for 1993. It should also be understood that by listing these accomplishments the Canal Commission does not intend to imply that it deserves full credit for them. The Canal Commission has been involved in all the projects listed but the projects' successes have always been the result of a team effort. There is a wonderful variety of governmental and private organizations in alliance with the Canal Commission to make the Canal Park a better public resource.*

## 1993 SPECIAL PROJECTS

In order to continue to work toward realizing the Commission's vision of the Canal Park, the staff will focus on the following projects in 1993:

**Land Acquisition.** The approval in November, 1992 of a new Green Acres Bond Issue means that \$80 million is available for State acquisition and development of land for recreational and conservation purposes. The Commission hopes to see several valuable additions made to the Canal Park through this program. Consideration is being given to creating a major wildlife refuge and environmental education center next to the canal in the Trenton/Hamilton Marsh. Acquisitions in the Millstone River Valley are also proposed. The staff will continue to work with the non-profit land trusts on land-saving projects.

**Park Development.**

- a) Construction of the recreational path in Trenton and Lambertville will continue to require staff attention.
- b) Construction by Trap Rock Industries of a path and other recreational facilities between Kingston and Rocky Hill is expected to begin in 1993.
- c) Preliminary planning is needed to work toward completing several breaks in the continuity of the canal corridor, particularly from central Trenton south to Bordentown, from central Trenton north to Mulberry Street, the Route One crossing in Lawrence, and between Port Mercer and Alexander Road in Princeton.
- d) Restoration of the Prallsville Mill buildings will continue.

**Other Projects.**

- a) Both the State and the Somerset County scenic road projects have great potential to benefit the park and will continue to require staff time.
- b) The Trenton Canal Banks project will continue to be an important focus for the Commission staff.
- c) Greater development of ways to interpret the canal's historic significance are needed. It would be particularly useful to have materials at one or more locks to explain how canal locks operated.

