



# CHAMPLAIN VALLEY HERITAGE CORRIDOR PROJECT

National Park Service Special Resource Study

November 1999

## FACT SHEET

From **November 15, 1999 to March 1, 2000**, the National Park Service (NPS) is seeking public comment on a draft special resource study report on cultural and natural resources in the Champlain Valley and the potential role of the NPS in furthering the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of these resources. **Your comments on the draft report and, in particular, on the heritage preservation options that could be pursued are important.** This fact sheet provides a brief summary of the draft report and contact sources for obtaining further information and a complete copy of the report.

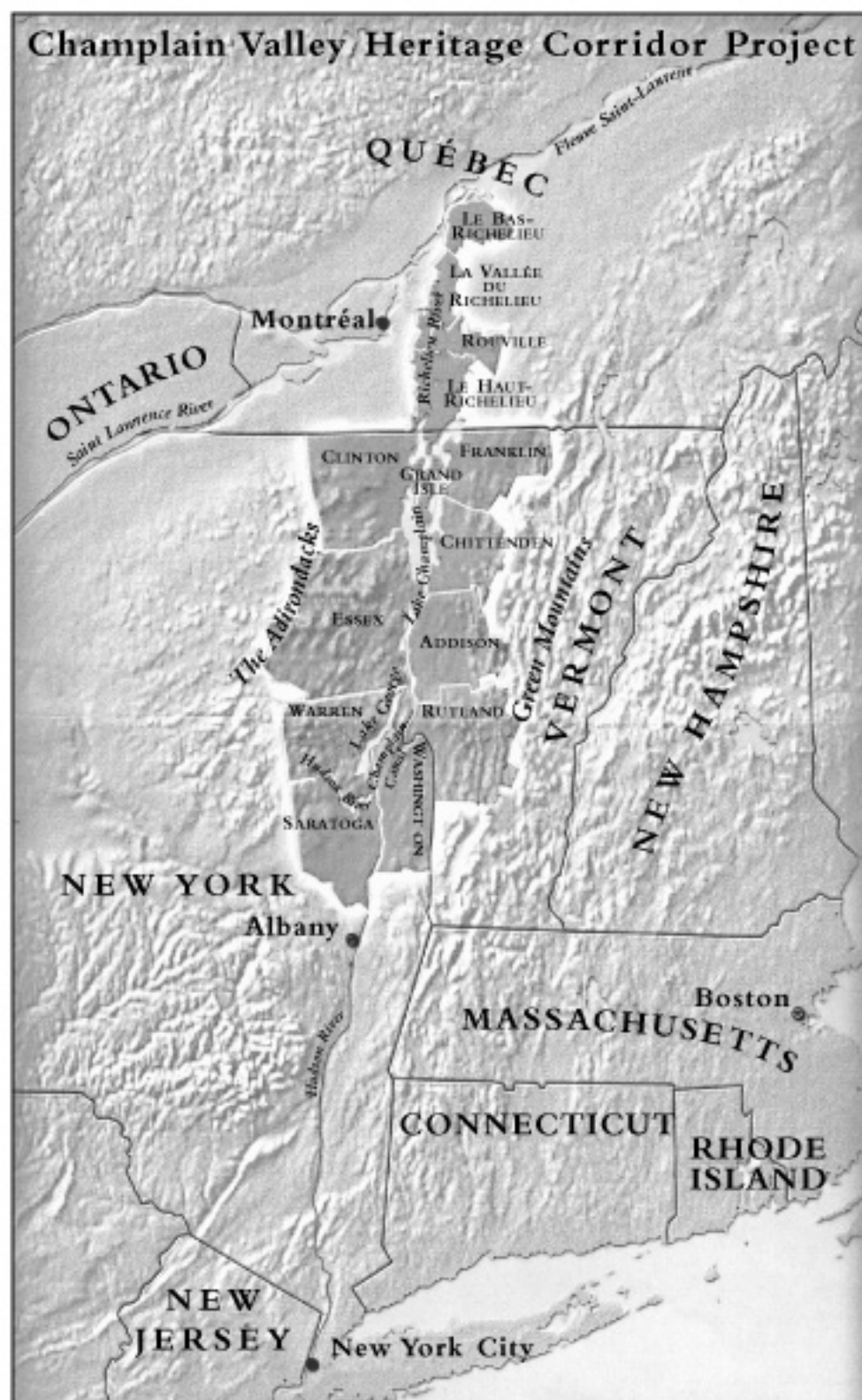
## BACKGROUND

The cultural landscapes and historic sites along the waterways and adjacent lands of Lake Champlain, Lake George, the upper Hudson River, and the Richelieu River are testimony to a rich and diverse history. For more than 10,000 years, Lake Champlain and its connecting waterways have been central to the lives of the Abenaki and Iroquois Nations. The region played a critical role in the formation of the United States and Canada, and reflects the influence of early French and English exploration and settlement.

Because of its strategic location, the region witnessed more than two centuries of military actions including the Seven Years (or French and Indian) War, the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and territorial struggles of Native Americans. The conflicts left behind a physical record in the great fortifications and earthworks—most notably at Fort Ticonderoga, Crown Point and Mount Independence—and in the exceptional collection of historic shipwrecks found in the cold waters of Lake Champlain and Lake George.

After 1815, conflict subsided in the region. With an influx of settlers and the construction of the Champlain Canal and the Chambly Canal, industry, commerce, and farming expanded. Tourism originated early and has grown into one of the region's primary economic activities.

In recognition of this important history, Senator James Jeffords of Vermont requested that the National Park Service assess the suitability and feasibility of the U.S. Congress establishing a national heritage corridor in the Champlain Valley. A team of planners from NPS worked in consultation with local citizens, government representatives, scholars, resource specialists, and consultants to evaluate whether the preservation and



interpretation of the resources of the Champlain Valley merit additional National Park Service involvement. The Special Resource Study used National Park Service

guidelines and criteria to consider whether a national heritage corridor or some other option would best serve the needs of the Champlain Valley.