

# ***Black River Trail Scenic Byway***

## **Vision Statement, Themes, and Goals**

### **Vision Statement**

The Black River Scenic Byway is a 111-mile transportation corridor that begins in the City of Rome at the southern end and gently weaves travelers through quaint communities to the Village of Dexter and the Black River Bay on Lake Ontario. The Black River Valley corridor, nestled between the Tug Hill Plateau to the West and the Adirondacks to the East, invites travelers to enjoy the diverse geological, cultural, industrial, natural, and recreational history that can all be linked to the significant beauty and function of the Black River.

We envision the Black River Scenic Byway as an enduring common link among waypoint communities that inspires investment, vitality, and sustainable development that is realized through the economic benefits of providing a memorable traveling experience for generations to come.

### **Over-arching Theme Statement**

#### **Follow the Byway that follows the River**

The 111-mile Black River Scenic Byway is a series of lesser traveled highways from Rome to Dexter with one common thread—to inspire you to recharge and recreate in and along the Black River, where the changing character of the River is as wonderfully diverse as its nearby communities. As simply a driving tour, it will charm you with picturesque landscapes and the promise of new vistas waiting just around the corner...or river's bend. But the Byway also beckons passersby to stop and share in the experience—grab a paddle, set up camp, shop historic downtown, and to learn about each unique community—in short: to draw you into the scene for a spell, all the while inspiring you to anticipate upcoming adventures.

### **Byway Themes by River Segment**

#### **Around the corner, around the bend**

This history-rich byway follows canal relics and riverbanks in many stretches and offers four distinct thematic highlights:

- Beginning in Rome, the engineering marvel of the Black River Canal system that was instrumental to the industrial growth of the 'North County' through its connection to the waters of the Erie Canal—visit the Canal Museum in Boonville, and view Canal artifacts along the way, and learn the local lore of days gone by when commerce and livelihoods depended upon river transportation.

- The Boonville to Lyon's Falls wild and primitive waterway that whisks over rounded river rock into natural jetties before cascading downriver to gather in quiet fish filled pools.
- Lyons Falls to Carthage sports pastoral landscapes and quaint nearby river communities along this clear and slowly moving pebble-sand bottomed stretch, welcoming all skill levels of kayaker, canoeists, and anglers.
- Carthage's faster moving section on to Watertown's white and black water playground that courses through the City's center pinched between gorges—a kayaker's delight and river raft guides thrill—that is ultimately emptied into the great Lake Ontario in Dexter at Black River Bay.

Without a doubt, these four distinctive personalities of 'The Black' and the Black River Scenic Byway correspond with the history of its industry and people, the diversity of its flora and fauna, and the vast array of recreational uses. Put these all together and they create an intoxicating mixture of interests and activities that can induce even the weariest traveler.