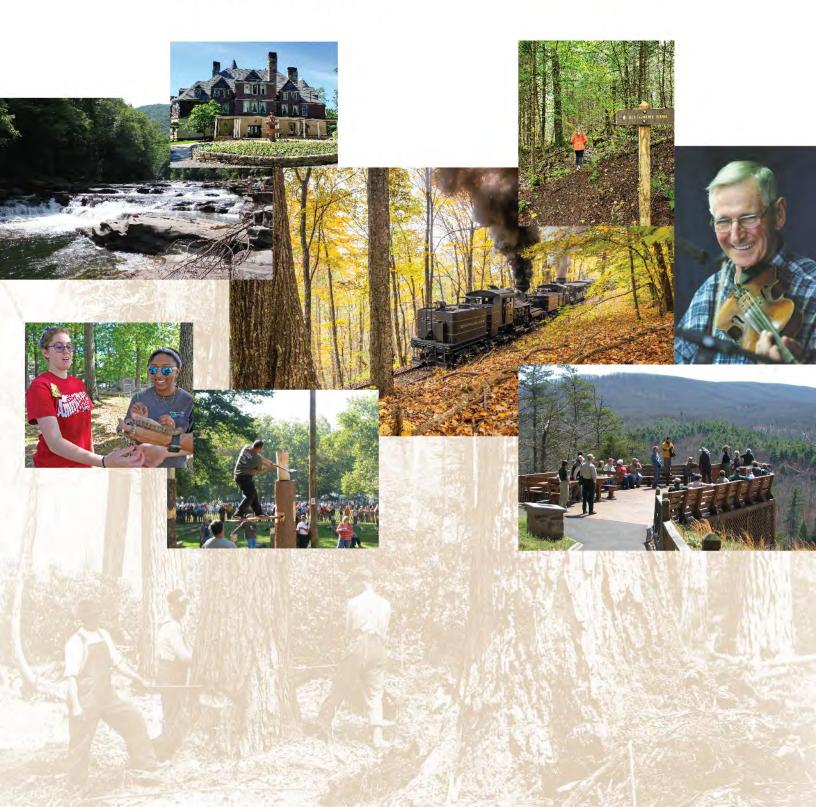


# MANAGEMENT PLAN AUGUST 2022



#### Cover captions:

(upper left) Rushing rivers in the Appalachian Forest invite swimmers.

(next right above) Halliehurst mansion, on the Davis and Elkins College Campus, was the home of industrialist Sen. Stephen B. Elkins. It is designated as a National Historic Landmark.

#### (center)

Steam train of Cass Scenic Railroad State Park pulls visitors, instead of logs, through scenic forest. (Credit: Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad, Walter Scriptunas II)

(upper right): Hiker enjoys the Allegheny Trail, near Gaudineer Scenic Area.

(middle right) Vernon Burkey is a master fiddler from the Swiss village of Helvetia. (Credit: Augusta Heritage Center)

#### (lower left)

AmeriCorps members learn to handle an eastern milk snake to share in interpretive program. (Credit: USDA Forest Service, Kelly Bridges)

#### (next below left)

Contestant competes in Spring Board event at Mountain State Forest Festival Lumberjack Contest. (Credit: USDA Forest Service, Kelly Bridges)

(lower right)

Interpretive program for visitors overlooking Green Ridge State Forest.

(background at bottom) Loggers on Cheat Mountain cut down large spruce tree with cross cut saw and ax. (Historic photo courtesy Robert C. Whetsell)

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August 16, 2022

The Honorable Debra A. Haaland Secretary of the Interior United States Department of the Interior 1849 C Street NW Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

We are pleased to submit for your approval the Management Plan for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. Designated by Congress as a National Heritage Area in the 2019 John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Public Law 116-9) this document is in fulfillment of the Management Plan legislative requirements of that bill.

The Board of Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc., the coordinating entity assigned responsibility for Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, has led a multi-faceted planning team and public engagement process to gather input and develop this plan. In spite of pandemic difficulties, we have engaged widely with public individuals, stakeholders, Tribal interests, public agencies, and non-profit partners, through multiple public meetings and task group efforts, held both virtually and in person, culminating in a formal 30-day Public Review of the proposed draft plan.

This resulting plan lays out the common mission, vision, and goals to protect, enhance, interpret, and share the Appalachian forest heritage of our region, through engagement with an active partnership network working together toward those goals, for the benefit of our environment and our communities.

We appreciate the support and guidance from Congress and from the National Park Service in the journey of our grassroots initiative moving forward as a National Heritage Area, as we preserve and share this significant part of our nation's story.

The Board of AFHA Inc. unanimously votes on this day, August 16, 2022 to submit this Management Plan for approval by the Secretary of the Interior. We look forward to working actively with our partnership network and the National Park Service over the coming years to bring the vision of the Plan to action.

Sincerely,

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Robert C. Johnson, President

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan** 

## **The Planning Process**

Enabling legislation mandated the development of a plan that outlines the purpose, goals, and actions of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. This plan is the result of a three-year, highly collaborative process. Planning efforts were led by the coordinating entity, Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc., and included three task groups, stakeholder interviews, surveys, a leadership roundtable discussion, and virtual and in-person public meetings. Through this process, the partnership network for the National Heritage Area was strengthened and expanded, and a shared vision for the region emerged. Moreover, the planning process resulted in a concise articulation of the region's story, the creation of an inventory of forest heritage assets that underpin that story, and the development of a mission, core values, and goals that will guide the National Heritage Area toward making the regional vision a reality.

## The Planning Document

All of these elements are set forth in the *Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan*, a living document intended to guide leadership, staff, and partners in shaping the region's future. The management plan outlines strategies for the conservation and enhancement of the region's natural, scenic, recreational, historic, and cultural assets, interpretation of the region's nationally and regionally significant stories, and development of heritage tourism and other economic opportunities related to forest heritage. The plan includes partnership opportunities, describes the role of the coordinating entity, and sets forth a business plan and an implementation strategy. This management plan is organized around the National Heritage Area's five primary goals and the actions that will lead to their achievement, described below.



Dramatic view of the Blackwater Canyon showcases the abundant forests and scenic beauty found in AFNHA. (Credit: Liz Stout)

#### **Conserve and Enhance Forest Heritage Assets**

The plentiful forests and public lands, anchored by the Monongahela National Forest, feature a variety of ecosystems, habitats and special places that support bio-diverse trees, plants, and wildlife, and provide opportunities for trails, scenic drives, and recreational and scenic opportunities. Historic buildings and battlefields, archaeological sites, community festivals, and museums and institutions share the region's history and perpetuate its culture. The Asset Inventory lists over 700 forest heritage sites and events, including many noted with national designations. AFNHA partners will work together on multiple strategies to conserve and enhance these assets.

#### Share the Stories

Stories connect communities over time and across the landscape in National Heritage Areas. The significant stories of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area arise from the biodiverse forested mountains where ecosystems intersect, microclimates abound, and rivers are born. Lessons learned from the logging boom of the early 20th century have shaped the way the forest is used and managed. The legacies of geographic isolation and forested mountain terrain have shaped the traditions and livelihoods of the region's resilient residents, past and present. Interpreting these stories in authentic and compelling ways is a shared priority, and will be implemented in multiple ways, such as through guided tours, interpretive signs and exhibits, and educational experiences for youth, local residents, and visitors.



Casselman Bridge, a National Historic Landmark along the National Road, symbolizes the transportation challenges that shape the history of the region.

#### Support Heritage Tourism and Community Development

The mountains, forests, and waterways of West Virginia and Maryland support a wide array of opportunities, and have long been a destination for outdoor recreation. AFNHA will build on the region's success as an outdoor destination by developing forest heritage experiences and products and boosting messaging. Caring for the region, enhancing its assets, and sharing its stories serve as important tools to welcome visitors, keep communities vibrant, and grow a healthy economy.

#### **Connect and Support Partners**

AFNHA is home to a strong and expanding network of partners in natural resource conservation, historic preservation, cultural conservation, interpretation, education, tourism, and the forest products industry. The public-private coalition includes individuals, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and governmental entities connected by the region's heritage and the vision built upon it. For partners who choose to participate, AFNHA will facilitate network-wide collaboration – convening, sharing information, offering technical assistance and training, and celebrating success. AFNHA will provide direct support to build capacity and accomplish projects and programs through cooperative agreements, grants, marketing, and the AFNHA AmeriCorps program.

#### Sustain and Grow the NHA Coordinating Entity

Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc., the NHA coordinating entity, sits at the hub of the AFNHA partnership network and serves as the keeper of the shared regional vision set forth in this plan. The organization is structured to support the implementation of the management plan, and its operations exhibit best practices in heritage development. Strategies that will lead to both organizational sustainability and growth will enable the coordinating entity to fulfill its critical role.



Bicycle riders on the Greenbrier River Trail highlight the abundant outdoor recreation opportunities.

## Looking to the Future

The Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan will guide ongoing coordination and collaboration among communities, partners, and residents at a landscape level. With implementation of this management plan, AFNHA envisions becoming a region where:

The stories and traditions of the mountain people are alive in the dynamic communities, preserved historic places, sustainable forests, and outstanding experiences of the AFNHA. Communities are flourishing with bustling downtowns, creative artisans, and welcoming places to visit, live, and work. The resilient forest is conserved with shared stewardship for sustainable production of forest products, biodiverse ecosystems alive with native plants and wildlife, and abundant recreational opportunities.

# **CHAPTER 1**

## Introduction to Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area

The Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area encompasses the mixed hardwood and red spruce forests of the central Appalachian highlands and the communities whose history is tied to them. Past and present, the forests have defined the region's ecology and economy, and have shaped and been shaped by the lifeways and livelihoods of the people who settled here.



## **Designation and Legislative Requirements**

The Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) includes sixteen counties in West Virginia (Barbour, Braxton, Grant, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Morgan, Nicholas, Pendleton, Preston, Pocahontas, Randolph, Tucker, Upshur, Webster) and two counties in western Maryland (Garrett, Allegany). In March 2019, the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area was signed into law in the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Public Law 116-9).<sup>1</sup> The bill was led by West Virginia's Senator Joe Manchin and Congressman David McKinley and co-sponsored by all West Virginia and Maryland senators and the West Virginia and Maryland representatives whose districts included AFNHA counties (see Appendix A: Designating Legislation). The legislation designating AFNHA also included five other NHAs, bringing the nation's total to 55 NHAs.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Title VI—National Heritage Areas, Section 6001, John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, Public Law 116-9, <u>https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ9/PLAW-116publ9.pdf</u> accessed April 21, 2022.



AFNHA supporters gather at Appalachian Forest Discovery Center to celebrate National Heritage Area designation.

The initial purpose of AFNHA is to link existing and potential forest-based historic sites, artisans, manufacturers, and working forests into a network of visitor destinations and local heritage education opportunities that provide high-quality products, programs, experiences, events, and services.

The nonprofit organization Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc. (AFHA Inc.) is named as the coordinating entity for the NHA in the designating legislation. The legislation requires AFHA Inc. to develop a management plan that outlines the significance and purpose of the National Heritage Area (NHA), as well as the activities that the coordinating entity and a regional network of partners will undertake over the next 12 years. To meet this requirement, AFNHA collaborated with a planning team from Point Heritage Development Consulting, LLC (PointHDC), and coordinated with the National Park Service (NPS) on the development of this management plan. The planning team began work in March 2020, following AFHA Inc.'s receipt of its first federal appropriation of funding as an NHA. This document is the culmination of public outreach and planning led by AFHA Inc. since designation.<sup>2</sup>

The designating legislation sets forth an outline of the AFHA Inc.'s board structure based on its bylaws. The organization is intended to be representative of both the geographic extent of the region and the diverse interests within it. Those interests provide a broad picture of the partnership network and include, but are not limited to, the forest industry, environmental interests, cultural heritage interests, tourism interests, and regional agency partners. Legislation directs AFHA Inc. to develop and implement a plan to:

• Carry out projects and programs that recognize, protect, and enhance important resource values in the NHA. Information on the stewardship and enhancement of the region's special resources

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Throughout this document, AFHA Inc. is used to refer to the nonprofit organization, the NHA coordinating entity, in contexts where the organization is the primary or sole entity referenced. AFNHA is used to refer to the physical region as a whole and / or the NHA partnership network, including AFHA Inc.

is found in Chapter 2, Appendix F: Action Plan (Goal 1), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities.

- Establish and maintain interpretive exhibits and programs. The AFNHA Interpretive Plan is found in Chapter 3, with Appendix D: Interpretive Matrix providing the foundational structure for interpretation in AFNHA. Interpretive actions are found in Appendix F: Action Plan (Goal 2), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities.
- Develop education and recreational opportunities. Educational opportunities are addressed in Chapter 3, Appendix F: Action Plan (Goal 2), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities. Recreational opportunities are addressed in Chapters 2 and 4, Appendix F: Action Plan (Goal 1 and 3), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities.
- Increase public awareness of, and appreciation for, natural, historical, scenic, and cultural
  resources of the National Heritage Area. Outreach to raise awareness is discussed in Chapter 5.
  As increasing awareness and appreciation also depends on stewardship, interpretation, and
  marketing, information is found in Chapters 2, 3, and 4, as well as in Appendix F: Action Plan
  (Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities.
- Protect and restore historic assets. The preservation of historic properties, landscapes, artifacts, and documents is addressed in Chapter 2, Appendix F: Action Plan (Goal 1), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities.
- Ensure clear and consistent signs to identify public access and sites of interest. Development of a regional wayfinding program is included in in Chapter 4, Appendix F: Action Plan (Goal 3), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities.
- Promote partnerships among federal, state, tribal, and local governments, organizations, and individuals. The AFNHA Partnership Network is described in Chapter 5, Appendix E: Partners, with additional information on partners' roles in Appendix F: Action Plan (Goal 4), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities.

Legislation authorizes AFHA Inc. to be able to receive federal funding to assist in carrying out the above directives for 15 years from the date of designation. In addition, legislation provides guidance on public engagement, reporting, and evaluation over that time period.

Legislation mandates that the management plan will incorporate an integrated and cooperative approach to the protection, enhancement, and interpretation of the natural, cultural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources of the NHA. The management plan will also take into consideration Federal, State, local, and Tribal plans and treaty rights. The management plan must include:

- A resource inventory. The AFNHA plan uses the term "assets" to talk about natural, scenic, recreational, historic, and cultural places and resources that can be conserved or enhanced, while "resources" are the sources of value that occur naturally or that support an asset. (Assets are discussed in Chapter 2, and listed in Appendix C: Assets Inventory)
- An interpretive plan. Chapter 3 and Appendix D: Interpretive Matrix comprise the interpretive plan, with actions detailed in Appendix F: Action Plan (Goal 2), and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities.
- Policies, strategies, and recommendations for resource management that consider appropriate land and water management techniques, including the development of intergovernmental and interagency cooperative agreements to protect the natural, historical, cultural, education, scenic and recreational resources (Chapter 2, Appendix F: Action Plan, Appendix G: Implementation Priorities, Appendix J: Partner Support and Comments).

- Policies, strategies, and recommendations for funding (Chapter 6 and 7, Appendix E: Partnership Network, Appendix H: AFHA Inc. Financial Projection), management (Chapter 6, Appendix H: AFHA Inc. Financial Projection), and development of the NHA (Appendix F: Action Plan, and Appendix G: Implementation Priorities).
- A description of actions that the partnership network will undertake in the region (Chapter 5, Appendix E: Partners, Appendix F: Action Plan, Appendix G: Implementation Priorities, Appendix J: Partner Support and Comments).
- An implementation plan that includes AFHA Inc.'s role in facilitating collaboration, specific commitments made by AFHA Inc. and the partnership network for the first five years, identification of potential funding, and recommendations for the roles of governmental entities (Chapter 6, Appendix E: Partnership network, Appendix F: Action Plan, Appendix G: Implementation Priorities, Appendix J: Partner Support and Comments).

Finally, the legislation prohibits the acquisition of real property with federal funds appropriated for the NHA for the above purposes and sets forth specific protections for private property rights and the existing jurisdiction of regulatory entities in the region.

## How National Heritage Areas Work

National Heritage Areas are living landscapes where people and land – culture and nature – have had a significant impact on one another through time, resulting in a special region with a distinct identity. NHAs are also a strategy for protecting and managing large landscapes through partnerships that lead to collaborative conservation and economic development. The first NHA was established by Congress during the Reagan administration in 1984; President Ronald Reagan called them a marriage of heritage conservation, recreation, and economic development. Every administration since Reagan has contributed to the development of the 55 NHAs in the U.S. today.

The management objectives of NHAs were summarized in a 2003 report by the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources as follows:

- Build sustainable partnerships to increase local stewardship capacity of resources
- Conserve natural, historic, and cultural resources
- Provide interpretive and educational programming around stories of national significance
- Develop recreational resources and heritage-based tourism
- Foster community and economic development

As part of the National Park Service's process of developing a strategy to evaluate National Heritage Areas, a study analyzed the way in which NHAs achieve these outcomes.<sup>3</sup> The findings from that analysis are useful in understanding the elements that contribute to successful NHAs.

NHAs are built on the premise that heritage has the potential to link people to place, serving as an organizing concept to engage partners across a region in landscape-scale projects and programs. The hallmark of NHAs is the development of a network of partners. This network includes community leaders, municipal officials, state and federal agencies, the business community, and tourism, environmental and preservation organizations. The network is woven together by the NHA's shared heritage-based vision that helps to sustain the network while encouraging organizations to work across areas of interest. The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Daniel Laven, et al. Conservation Study Institute, "Evaluating U.S. National Heritage Areas: Theory, Methods, and Application," *Environmental Management* (2010) 46:195-212.

feasibility study and management planning processes are designed to engage partners and build constituencies, with an important outcome being to help an NHA activate and manage a network.

The NPS's analysis led to the recognition of four key elements for NHA success – nationally significant heritage, a collaborative framework, NPS involvement, and building the network.

National heritage provides a shared mission, a context for community engagement, and a sense of pride.

A collaborative framework serves as a broad, regional umbrella through which a variety of organizations can find mission alignment. The NHA provides the structure for that framework, and NHA staff exhibit collaborative leadership in facilitating and enhancing partnership-building within the framework.

**NPS involvement** brings the credibility of the national brand, both for the integrity of the resources involved and for the expertise the federal agency has in interpretation and resource conservation. Access to NPS staff, leadership, and technical assistance is another benefit an NHA brings to a region.

An NHA must help build the network and, serving as a hub, maintain it using influence instead of power. This includes building capacity for smaller organizations, often through grant-making or connections to technical assistance. It also includes securing sustainable funding to support consistent staffing and long-term commitments. Finally, it requires time to accomplish capacity-building in smaller organizations, time for more established organizations to see value in working across areas of interest, and time to integrate resource conservation objectives with economic development goals.

Through management planning, the NHA builds an effective partnership network and leads the development of a regional vision based on a shared, nationally significant heritage. In planning and beyond, the NHA coordinating entity plays a variety of roles in a complex and dynamic network, connecting partners in different ways. At its best, this network is far more than the sum of its parts.

## Background

Residents and organizations in the highlands of Maryland and West Virginia have long recognized the central Appalachian forest's natural and cultural significance, and have been working collaboratively for over 20 years to build a future on that significance. The following pages provide a description of the region, the collaborative efforts that eventually led to the establishment of the NHA, and the management planning process that led to the development of a shared regional vision and other foundational elements that will carry AFNHA into the future.

NHAs are defined by the relationship between people and land. AFNHA is significant for the rare ecology and biodiversity of the temperate hardwood forest, its role in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial expansion in the northeastern United States, the increasingly sustainable practices of forestry harvest and management in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and the evolution over millennia of Appalachian communities and cultural traditions in the isolated, forested, mountain terrain.

### Overview of the Central Appalachian Regions of West Virginia and Maryland

This brief orientation to the region's primary physical features and cultural landscapes provides a foundation for understanding the AFNHA. Details of the area's physical features and major assets are outlined in Chapter 2, and Chapter 3 discusses the region's varied ecosystems, history, cultures, and economy that inform the statement of national significance and themes.

The 18-county region that comprises the NHA includes portions of three separate physiographic regions and contains large sections of three major watersheds – the Potomac, the Monongahela, and the Kanawha. These natural features and the timeline of European and American settlement led to a variety of cultural landscapes in the region. The Potomac Highlands of West Virginia are marked by the Potomac headwaters, which flows east to the Chesapeake. These landscapes feature distinct valleys and dramatic rock outcroppings, and the area retains a strong agricultural legacy. Settlers from Virginia's farmlands were among the first Europeans to populate the area, cutting forests to establish small farms and pastures. Similarly, due to the agricultural opportunities they offered, the rolling limestone-rich hills of Greenbrier County to the south were among the first areas settled.

The middle portion of the NHA features the high escarpment of the Allegheny Front that divides the eastern and Mississippi watersheds, and features a series of long ridges and valleys. This spine of the high Alleghenies ties the NHA together north to south. The mountainous terrain was a significant barrier to western migration, and the area was settled sparsely until railroads opened the forests to logging. A large amount of this land now lies within the Monongahela National Forest.



Allegheny Front at Dolly Sods (Credit: The Nature Conservancy)

West of the high mountains is the start of the Appalachian Plateau, with a varied landscape of hills and valleys different from the regular pattern of long ridges in the higher mountains. The landscapes were also remote and rugged, with small populations until the timber industry arrived. Yesterday and today, the timber industry is a dominant economic driver, with twin legacies of forestry and small-scale agriculture.

In the north of AFNHA, the region was marked by trade and agriculture that drove the country's population westward in the early 19th century. With transportation tied to the National Road and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, paralleling the North Branch of the Potomac, western Maryland provided a route through the high mountain barrier. Long-established access led to early logging, as well as development of a home base for railroad and timber magnates. From western Maryland, these industrialists extended railroads and industry into the mountains, launching the logging boom in the 1890s.

Both the high Alleghenies and the Plateau are drained to the north by the Monongahela watershed, which flows to Pittsburgh to create the Ohio River, and to the south by the Greenbrier River and other tributaries of the Kanawha, which also flow to the Ohio River and west. The center of this area is called "birthplace of rivers" with headwaters of the South Branch of the Potomac, the Shavers Fork of the Monongahela, and the Greenbrier and Elk tributaries of the Kanawha, all within a few miles of each other.

The area today is predominately rural. The two Maryland counties have a population of 100,680, including the only city over 10,000 in the NHA – Cumberland, with 18,914 residents. The 16 West Virginia counties total 301,800 population, with the largest city, Elkins, having 6,928 residents. Other than Allegany County, Maryland, which has the largest population, 68,106, the other counties range from 35,000 down to 7,100, with only four considered as "small metro" (most because they are adjacent to a metro area). The other 14 counties are all "non-metro rural." Population has declined for decades, with loss of around 2.3% in the last decade. This is largely driven by out-migration of young people and workers seeking jobs elsewhere. New residents in the region tend to be retirees or people seeking scenic beauty, outdoor recreation, or a rural lifestyle.

The racial composition of the region is fairly consistent, with the greatest diversity apparent in the county with the largest population, Allegany County. According to the 2020 Census, in Allegany, 85.7% of the population is white, 7.8% is African American or Black, and 4.4% identify as two or more races. The other 15 counties are between 90% and 97% white with an African American population between .2 and 3%, and a multiracial population between 2.6% and 4.5%. Native American, Asian, and other races have a population under .5% in all counties in the NHA.

Economic status is traditionally lower income than national average, with 2019 per capita income at 67% of the national average. Poverty rate average of these counties is 15.6%, more than two points higher than the national average, with a range of 10.9% to 26.1% poverty rate. Four of the counties are considered "distressed" by the Appalachian Regional Commission, three are "at risk," and the remaining are "transitional."

#### Becoming a National Heritage Area – Background and Accomplishments

AFNHA evolved from a project undertaken in 2001 by West Virginia University's (WVU) Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences Division of Forestry, and WVU Extension. These entities

recognized the growing alignment of, and need for, the integration of heritage tourism resources in the region and secured a grant from the USDA Fund for Rural America to establish a Forestry Heritage Trail. Through input from an engaged group of regional stakeholders, the idea for a trail expanded into a heritage area initiative. The primary goal was to promote economic and community development through the integration of central Appalachian forest history, culture, natural history, products, and forestry management into a multi-state heritage tourism initiative.

"Great and diverse group of people. Good opportunity to share input. Enjoyed enthusiasm and passion for our forest area and how to promote and preserve it."



Breakout groups at the first forest heritage stakeholders meeting in 2001

This initial grant-funded project led by WVU built the heritage partnership, distributed sub-grant funds for interpretation and tourism projects, developed initial interpretation, asset mapping, and promotion protocols, and established consensus to move towards NHA designation. In 2003, the nonprofit organization Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc. was established to carry out this work. In the years prior to NHA designation, AFHA Inc. worked with partner projects around the region as capacity allowed. Still primarily grant funded from a variety of sources, projects have included capacity building and wilderness stewardship supported by the National Forest Foundation; invasive species control and awareness STOMP program funded from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and tree planting on abandoned mine land funded by Plum Creek Foundation. AFHA Inc. provided fiscal sponsorship and AmeriCorps service for educational programs for school children, including the citizen science program to learn about invasive species, and snorkeling program to learn about stream health. AFHA Inc. led the development of mapping and interpretive signage for Rothkugel Plantation, a reforestation site from the logging boom era, creation of the Resilient Forest video documentary, rehabilitation and signage for fire tower sites, along with a number of other interpretation projects including signs, kiosks, and exhibits. A more recent project involves support and fiscal sponsorship for Monongahela Outdoor Volunteers (MOV) group working to train volunteers and improve trail conditions. In 2014, AFHA Inc. opened the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center in Elkins in a historic building that the organization had helped restore. This museum provides an interpretive center and visitor information about the area.

Since 2007, AFHA Inc. has operated a robust and growing AmeriCorps program providing conservation, community, and cultural heritage development services for West Virginia partners. Starting from 10 members in the initial year, the AmeriCorps program has grown to more than 40 positions annually. Most members are directly assigned to host sites around the region, and they provide service on direct improvement and educational projects for environmental and heritage sites. Over many years, about 50 members participated in a Hands-On Team, receiving specialized historic preservation training which was then used in the rehabilitation of public historic buildings. Members receive a living allowance and an education award, and gain valuable experience toward their career goals. AFHA's AmeriCorps program (known as AFNHA AmeriCorps following NHA designation in 2019) has sponsored 440 members who served over 689,295 hours for partner sites. They have helped rehabilitate more than 45 historic buildings or sites, improved 16,931 acres of public lands, and helped to manage 7,591 community volunteers leveraging 95,148 volunteer hours.

AFHA Inc. sits at the hub of a broader partnership of businesses, organizations, community groups, educational institutions, and governmental agencies that are committed to working together. Since AFHA Inc.'s formation, partners have maintained an active schedule of meetings and annual gatherings, despite the significant distance that separated communities and the sometimes harrowing experiences of travel through the mountains during certain times of the year. Nevertheless, the partnership network persisted and grew.

In 2006, AFHA Inc. and its partners in the region completed a feasibility study to explore the possibility of designating a National Heritage Area based on forest heritage, with input and review by the NPS Northeast Regional Office. This study included over 120 support letters from government entities and organizations around the region. Based upon the findings in the feasibility study, the West Virginia Heritage Act of 2013 proposed the establishment of the National Heritage Area including 16 counties in West Virginia and two counties in



AFHA AmeriCorps team in 2011-12 term

western Maryland. Subsequent bills in each session of Congress were pursued, co-sponsored by all West Virginia and Maryland senators and representatives whose districts included AFNHA counties, until the successful legislation was passed to establish AFNHA in 2019.

## **Management Planning**

#### Management Planning Process - Discovery Phase (Years One - Two)

The initial goal for AFNHA's management planning process was to build upon the established partnership by continuing gatherings of AFNHA stakeholders and building upon them to create a further unified, bi-state network of heritage development partners. Following designation of the NHA in March 2019, AFHA Inc. began public outreach to lay the foundation for planning. The organization identified

core planning participants – including board members, staff, and partner representatives – and held a stakeholder public meeting in May, 2019. The purpose of the 2019 meeting, attended by 50 people, was to introduce the NHA and start gathering public input. AFHA Inc. released a request for proposals and

"We are anticipating what adding 'National' to 'Heritage Area' is going to mean."

in summer 2019 selected Point Heritage Development Consulting (PointHDC) to facilitate management planning. In August of that year, a representative of PointHDC met with core planning participants to discuss the planning process and collect input on conditions and priorities. In March 2020, AFNHA received the NHA's first Congressional appropriation of funding and officially kicked off management planning.

The stage was set for greater outreach to all 18 counties, with regular, in-person meetings planned between AFHA Inc. staff, board, and local partners. However, just as the management planning process began, the unthinkable challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic completely changed the trajectory and timing of planning. The planning team's orientation visit was postponed, and all in-person outreach was curtailed due to governmental orders for social distancing and restricted access to places of business, tourism attractions, and other public locations.

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What are the regio What special places do What are the regio	you want	people to know	w abc
	portunitie	s?	Augie Carlino
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	1 91

Zoom screen of breakout group during first planning public meeting, showing discussion questions and some participants.

There is a remarkable trait of the people who live and work in the highlands of Appalachia – resiliency. The heritage and history of the region's people tell a story of commitment, toughness, and unflappable determination when faced with insurmountable obstacles. The region's topography underscores this point, leaving one wondering how people have traversed, settled, or managed the region's rugged landscape for the benefit of economic sustainability. Despite the pandemic, the AFHA Inc. staff, board, and the PointHDC team, set out to keep the management planning process on schedule. A strategy was devised for the use of remote video conferencing meetings between partners and the public to meet the congressional mandate of the management plan. This determination – to find a way to gather the businesses, organizations, governments, and residents of the 18-county region – remains a fundamental principle of AFHA Inc. and carries over into AFNHA's philosophy. AFNHA is deeply rooted in community decision-making, recognizing the assets and benefits of one community are the assets and benefits of all the communities.

The result of this adaptation of meetings has, ironically, created a much stronger coalition of partners. The ability to meet via video conferencing has allowed for greater outreach to communities that, in the past, were unable to attend meetings because of distance or the difficulty of travel during bad weather months. For an area that can be six hours of driving time from one end to the other, gathering for meetings has always been a challenge. Virtual convening options also increased participation by the regional and statewide partners and agencies whose offices lay outside the region. Resiliency and the ability to adapt when confronted with a challenge played into AFHA Inc.'s determination to remain a true, community-based, community-driven organization. This fundamental principle is evident in the work of AFHA Inc. and the AFNHA network of partners.

The first phase of planning focused on gathering information about the region, the organization, and the partnership network. Starting with the first public meeting in June 2020, this phase included field work, interviews, surveys, meetings, and a review of background materials and media. The information collected during this phase formed the basis of a situational analysis, presented to the board in May 2021, and laid the foundation for the next stage of planning. Research methods and activities are described below.

#### Field Work

The PointHDC consulting team conducted a series of visits to the AFNHA region throughout the summer and fall of 2020. These visits allowed the PointHDC team to become familiar with the AFNHA region, its resources, transportation corridors, the AFHA Inc. organization (staff, AmeriCorps members, and some board members), and the partners within the communities.

#### **Orientation Interviews**

During the field work, the PointHDC team conducted orientation interviews with partners, site managers, or other representatives of other entities identified



Planning team meets outdoors for a COVID safe conversation at Marlinton Ranger Station of National Forest.

by AFHA Inc. Interviews allowed the team members from PointHDC to meet partners and learn of their work, and also enabled the partners to learn more about AFNHA, the management planning effort that was starting, and how partners could become more involved.

As stated above, the ongoing pandemic limited orientation interview meetings. Regardless, the staff and team had the opportunity to meet with tourism directors, Main Street personnel, Monongahela National Forest representatives, historic site and museum managers, elected officials, and community leaders.

#### Surveys

In a management plan for an NHA, surveys are sometimes used to reach a broad audience, not just partners but also the public. For AFNHA, three surveys were employed. The first survey, conducted in 2019, was publicly available on the AFNHA website and served as a prelude to planning; 32 people responded. The latter two were used as methods to obtain information important for two different parts of the management plan. The survey conducted in summer 2020 was a management and organization survey. Survey questions were sent to current and former staff, board members, partners, current and past AmeriCorps volunteers, and key partners in the public and private sectors; 143 people responded. That survey helped measure AFHA Inc.'s effectiveness and tested other critical factors, including willingness to donate, interest in volunteering, and knowledge of the NHA designation for the 18-county region of West Virginia and Maryland. The results of the management and organization survey were provided in a summary report to AFHA Inc. staff, were incorporated into the situational analysis, and were ultimately used to develop plan recommendations.

The survey conducted in winter 2021 was targeted to tourism bureaus and agencies within AFNHA's 18county region. Responses were received from 15 city or county tourism bureaus and 8 tourism partners representing state, federal, and nonprofit entities. The information collected provided a baseline for follow-up and interviews with tourism promotion organizations in AFNHA. The survey's findings, and the subsequent meetings and interviews, formed the basis for the tourism component of the situational analysis and the management plan.

#### Stakeholder Interviews

Information collected from surveys, orientation interviews, and field work provided important background information to the PointHDC team as they conducted a series of stakeholder interviews in December 2020 and January 2021. These interviews were different from the conversations that occurred during the orientation interviews or the tourism industry interviews. AFHA Inc. staff developed a list of stakeholders, excluding board members and people who had already been interviewed. The stakeholder questions were designed to draw out a deeper understanding of AFNHA, including AFHA Inc.'s operations; relationships within and between the communities of the NHA; the confidence level the stakeholders have with AFHA Inc. management (staff and board); what the NHA designation means for the region; what its potential could be; and finally, what the broader regional partnership could bring to the table to build the future success of AFNHA.

#### Research

The PointHDC team conducted extensive research using resources from partner organizations, governmental bodies, foundations, news and media sources, past and current AFNHA newsletters along with additional information provided by AFHA Inc. staff. This information formed the foundational elements for the team to learn and understand AFNHA, as well as the coordinating entity's organizational history, mission, accomplishments, and current programs and projects.

#### Task Groups

Task groups, comprised of representatives from existing partners and interested individuals, met virtually over a two-year period. The Interpretation & Visitor Experience Task Group revised interpretive themes and developed an interpretive matrix, as well as identifying tourism priorities. The Asset Stewardship & Enhancement Task Group created a structure, provided information for the asset inventory, and identified governmental and partner plans that target the region and its heritage assets. The Management & Organization Task Group worked on organizational needs and priorities, and revisited the mission, vision, and core values.

#### **Public Meetings**

The formal planning process launched in June 2020, as AFNHA held the first-ever virtual management planning public meeting hosted by an NHA. Sixty-three people attended the virtual session, which included an introduction to NHAs, examples of what NHAs around the U.S. have done, and breakout discussions on what AFNHA might accomplish. A second virtual public meeting was held in May 2021, during which a summary of findings from the situational analysis were presented to the 34 people in attendance. The second public meeting featured an interactive discussion on the findings.

#### **Management Planning Process – Planning Phase (Year Three)**

The situational analysis was the culmination of the discovery phase and served as the foundation for the development of five primary goals for AFNHA, as well as the activities that will lead to the accomplishment of those goals. Goals were identified and activities were prioritized through public and partner engagement at a Planning Exchange, a Partner Roundtable Discussion, and virtual meetings of the three task groups. As mentioned previously, the management plan chapters that follow are structured to reflect AFNHA's primary goals, and an action plan lists proposed activities.



Breakout group at Planning Exchange Camp

#### AFNHA Planning Exchange Camp

On July 26, 2021, 75 stakeholders and partners came together at 4-H Camp Pioneer outside of Beverly, West Virginia, to consider the future of AFNHA. This was the first in-person public meeting to be held during the planning process due to the pandemic and took place largely outside. Participants in the daylong exchange of ideas were enthusiastic and grateful for the chance to convene. The day included a series of 20 45-minute discussion sessions on Arts, Craft and Living Traditions; Building the Partnership Network; Community Development; Conserving Natural Resources; Education; Historic Preservation; Outdoor Recreation; Telling the Story; and Visitor Experience and Regional Identity. This successful and synergistic event enabled partners to discuss opportunities and lay the groundwork for collaborative action based on the region's shared heritage. Participants felt strongly that an annual Exchange should be held to continue collaboration and engagement and to catalyze action.

#### Partner Roundtable Discussion

In September 2021, 24 people representing organizations within AFNHA's footprint gathered at a hybrid in-person / virtual meeting to build on the results of the Exchange. The Roundtable provided an opportunity for organizations to share their goals and activities with one another in order to strengthen

alignment and reduce duplication of efforts. AFNHA plans to continue to use this model in the future to facilitate coordination within different sectors.

#### Task Groups

Throughout 2021, the three task groups continued to meet to analyze the results of the Exchange and Roundtable. With their help, the planning team finalized the five primary goals, developed the action matrix with actions to achieve those goals, and considered the roles of AFHA Inc. as the coordinating entity and the participation opportunities for partners in the larger AFNHA partnership network.

#### Public Meetings and Plan Review

The third public meeting for management planning was held virtually in November 2021. The purpose of the meeting was to present the final goals, mission, and vision for AFNHA and to demonstrate how the action matrix works.

As the draft plan was developed, feedback was solicited from task group participants, partners, and NPS, and their comments were incorporated. The review draft management plan was released for public review on June 24, 2022.

A fourth public meeting to introduce the final plan was held in June 2022, as part of this public review process. The final meeting was presented as a half-day workshop at historic Adaland Mansion in Philippi, West Virginia, as well as a virtual information session the following day. The draft management plan was distributed widely across the region, including press release notices to area media. A digital copy was easily accessible on the AFNHA website, and print copies were available for the public in all AFNHA counties. The 30-day public review period was from June 24 to July 24, 2022. Comments and letters received after July 24 continue to be included as feasible.

#### Tribal Engagement

There are no federally or state recognized Tribes residing in or with territorial holdings in AFNHA, although many Tribes have ancestral ties to the central Appalachian forest. Legislation mandates that AFNHA include Tribal governments in the planning process, and authorizes their participation in projects and programs in the future. During the planning process, AFHA Inc. sent requests for consultation and planning review to the 45 Tribes with a known connection to the region. AFHA Inc. is working with those who have responded, and is continuing outreach to additional Tribes, in order to help foster future engagement with Tribal partners for the region. More information on collaboration with Tribal partners is found in Chapter 5.

#### Submission to National Park Service

As the lead federal agency that assists with NHA coordination, the National Park Service assisted with the review of the planning document. NPS personnel from the Northeast Regional Office and the Washington Office attended public meetings. A technical review of the draft document was completed in the Northeast Regional Office prior to the public release of the plan. Following the public review period, AFNHA submits the final plan, public comments, and letters of support to NPS. The Washington Office then transmits the document to the Secretary of the Interior for approval.

## Federal Laws and NEPA Categorical Exclusion

AFNHA will ensure all federal laws pertaining to preservation and conservation are properly applied, such as the Archeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The management plan will have no effect on the many cultural and natural resources in the region designated as AFNHA. As such, the NEPA pathway proposed for the federal approval of this management plan is a Categorical Exclusion (CE), according to the National Park Service (NPS) Director's Order No.12, "Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact

Analysis, and Decision Making," and associated guidance, NPS NEPA Handbook, Chapter 3.2 R: CE 3.2R, for the "adoption or approval of surveys, studies, reports, plans and similar documents which will result in recommendations or proposed actions which would cause no, or only minimal, environmental impacts." If, or when, future projects of the NHA develop that have a direct effect on cultural or natural resources in the region, the entity responsible for the individual project will ensure that it is reviewed through appropriate pathways, such as the NHPA Section 106 and NEPA processes as applicable.

## Foundation – Significance, Mission, Vision, Values, Goals

As described in the previous section, AFHA Inc. was created in the early 2000s, the outcome of many community meetings of regional stakeholders and governmental agencies interested in supporting forest heritage. These cooperating partners determined that a new organization was needed to help promote the heritage of the forest while at the same time assisting communities to benefit from the forest's assets – both from industry economy and from a tourism economy. Over the years, AFHA Inc. has grown, branched out, and matured into an effective and efficiently managed organization tasked with the new responsibility of coordinating the management of AFNHA.

That latter role, and the mandated management plan, have resulted in AFHA Inc. collaborating with the AFNHA network of partners to examine and articulate the foundational elements of the NHA:

- The region's story, as outlined in the thematic framework
- The cultural and natural heritage assets that support that story
- The National Heritage Area's mission
- A shared regional vision
- The core values of the National Heritage Area
- A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- The primary goals of the National Heritage Area

The management planning process coalesced around the consideration of these foundational elements, as AFHA Inc. board and staff worked with PointHDC and the NHA partner network to craft them. The result will be a NHA that is committed to its founding grassroots principles while providing a structural framework for organizational sustainability and the stewardship of a geographically broad regional partnership network.

#### Significance and Themes

Over the course of the management planning process, the Interpretation & Visitor Experience task group led the development of a thematic framework. The statement of significance and the themes that support that significance are introduced here, and an expanded narrative follows in Chapter 3. The significance and themes provide the connectivity of people and land that is the hallmark of NHAs. The shared heritage that is expressed in the statement and themes is the foundation upon which the vision for the region is built, which in turn serves as the platform for collaborative action.`

#### Statement of National Significance

The Appalachian Forest dominates the environment and economy in the central Appalachian highlands of West Virginia and Maryland. The forested ridges and valleys of Central Appalachia are marked by the intersection of northern and southern ecosystems, numerous microclimates, and the headwaters of major river systems. From prehistory to the present, these forested mountains have impacted settlement and immigration, resulting in several distinct cultural landscapes. The contrasting legacies of geographic isolation and the logging boom of the early

20th century have shaped the ways in which the forest is used and managed, as well as the living traditions and livelihoods of the people who live here today.

#### Theme One – Forest Abundance

Ancient mountains of the Appalachian Forest feature abundant mixed hardwood and red spruce forests, where mountain microclimates and northern and southern species converge to create some of the most biodiverse forest ecosystems in North America.

#### Theme Two – Crucible of Isolation

People from many cultures came together in the Appalachian Forest, where geographic isolation and the rough mountain terrain fostered a distinctive Appalachian culture of self-reliance and connection to the land, expressed through folkways and living traditions that enrich America today.

#### Theme Three – Logging Boom Builds the Nation

On the cusp of the 20th century, the expansion of railroads opened widespread harvest of the Appalachian Forest in a logging boom that helped fuel industrial expansion for the Eastern United States but devastated the landscape and altered mountain economies.

#### Theme Four – Resilient Forest

Recovery of the landscape from the logging boom shows the resilience of the Appalachian Forest, with scientific management today conserving forestlands for multiple purposes including ecological stewardship, recreation and tourism, and sustainable harvest of forest products.

#### Significant Heritage Assets

The significance statement and themes are based on the inherent resources of the area and the tangible assets that represent them across the landscape. History and culture assets – historic buildings, archaeological sites, community festivals, museums and institutions – are grounded in the region's living traditions, perpetuate its culture, and exemplify the region's cultural and historic resources. The natural, scenic, and recreational assets – extensive forests, public lands, conserved ecosystems and habitats, wilderness areas, rivers and waterfalls, caves and rock outcroppings, scenic drives, trails, campgrounds, and other recreational opportunities – represent the rich natural resources that embody the region's forests and biodiversity. The Stewardship & Enhancement Task Group guided the development of an inventory of these assets that includes over 700 listings (see Appendix C: Assets Inventory). The assets are further described in Chapter 2.

#### Mission

AFHA Inc. adopted new mission and vision statements as it worked on the management plan. The new mission statement reflects concisely the purpose of a mature nonprofit organization tasked with the continued responsibilities that led to its creation, but now is also responsible for implementing the congressional mandate of

"Concept of experience for visitors and residents is important. Living legacy and life experiences – fishing in the same river as my grandfather."

coordinating one of the nation's 55 NHAs. As such, it serves as a mission statement both for the coordinating organization, AFHA Inc., and for the National Heritage Area network of partnerships. The new mission statement is:

The Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area conserves, interprets, and promotes forest heritage to enhance landscapes and communities in the highlands of West Virginia and Maryland. Like the vision statement that follows, this new mission statement was crafted with collaboration and input from the broader AFNHA partnership, including the AFHA Inc. board, staff, and the Management and Organization Task Group. Each group addressed specific elements of how the NHA might function. Those goals helped identify a new, more comprehensive mission for AFHA Inc. and the NHA partnership network.

The new mission statement for AFNHA is also supported by other language that expands and builds on the statement. Detailed below, these statements further supplement and explain AFNHA's work and will be used in publications, website, news releases, social media, and where the additional explanation of the NHA may be warranted.

Supplement #1 – short version to be used for further explanation:

AFNHA works with partners to accomplish this through community development, conservation, celebrating cultural heritage, and creating opportunities for transformational experiences.

Supplement #2 – extended version or to highlight specific areas:

AFNHA works with partners to accomplish this through:

Building capacity and social capital for stronger, engaged communities. We support tourism, local businesses, and the forest industry and enhance economies through community development.

Celebrating our rich heritage and Appalachian culture through valuing and sharing our history over millennia of life in the forested mountains, the communities that grew here, and the living traditions that continue today. We support preserving our landscapes, buildings, collections, and cultural traditions and telling their stories to enrich our Appalachian Forest communities.

Conservation of our abundant natural resources, including diverse eco-systems, wildlife habitats, wilderness areas, and sustainably managed timber that contributes to the stewardship of our mountain forests. We support on-the-ground conservation, environmental education, and outstanding recreation experiences within our Appalachian Forest.

Creating and sharing transformative, engaging, participatory experiences to connect residents and visitors to our forest resources and cultural heritage. We network with historic sites, artisans, working forests, natural areas, and communities to tell our stories, raise awareness about stewardship, and provide exceptional opportunities for recreation and appreciation.

#### Vision

The new vision statement was developed by the Organization and Management Task Group based on input from the public and AFNHA partners. The vision statement accelerates the mission to a future point in time, expressing what the NHA and its communities will be after 12 years of implementing the recommendations and attaining the goals identified in this management plan. This forward-looking statement is an aspirational description of the region, one that can be achieved through the collaboration of the NHA's expansive network of partners. As such, this shared regional vision serves as the foundation for the actions set forth in this plan. The AFHA Inc. Board of Directors adopted the following vision statement in November 2021:

The stories and traditions of the mountain people are alive in the dynamic communities, preserved historic places, sustainable forests, and outstanding experiences of the Appalachian

Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA). Communities are flourishing with bustling downtowns, creative artisans, and welcoming places to visit, live, and work. Our resilient forest is conserved with shared stewardship for sustainable production of forest products, biodiverse ecosystems alive with native plants and wildlife, and abundant recreational opportunities.

#### **Core Values**

AFNHA's core values express the ethical foundation of the NHA in working toward goals and in interacting with partners and the public. They articulate the core principles and ethics that guide and direct the organization and its culture.

The Organization and Management Task Group developed the following core values, which were adopted by the AFHA Inc. Board of Directors. The following core values are based on the original core values developed previously by AFHA Inc. with some edits and additions:

- AFNHA values partnerships and communication across geographic lines and interest areas, seeking diverse and open participation with a balanced representation of all partners in decision making, access to resources, and presentation.
- AFNHA seeks to provide education and interpretation for a broad range of local and visitor audiences, presenting messages in entertaining formats with scholarly accuracy, balanced presentation of differing viewpoints, and respect for the complexity of the issues.
- AFNHA values the diversity of our ancestral, historic, and contemporary people and is committed to inclusion, equity, and accessibility of all people, including those under-represented and traditionally unheard, in engagement in our activities and telling of our stories.
- AFNHA values showing the working forest as an active force in the region's present and future, including making connections between the natural resources of the forest, people's livelihoods that are dependent on the forest, and the products from the forest that the whole country uses. Education and interpretation will address issues regarding long-term sustainability for the forest that respects the needs and concerns of forestry and forest products industries, the economic and social needs of forest communities, and for health and biodiversity of the forest ecosystems.
- AFNHA utilizes cultural / heritage / nature / recreation tourism as a means to bring economic benefits to the AFNHA communities in a well-thought-out and balanced way that respects community values. Encouraging visitor respect of local standards and privacy, and targeting promotion to those sites and communities who wish to invite visitation, are among the tools that will be used to manage tourism impact.
- AFNHA programs and projects are open to voluntary participation appropriate to each program, including residents, property owners, businesses, organizations, and communities.
- AFHA Inc. has no land management agenda beyond supporting and educating about best practices and has no power or authority to regulate, zone or control private property use.

#### AFNHA Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Policy

AFHA Inc. adopted the following diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility policy in addition to the core values expressed above as a part of its work developing the management plan for AFNHA. This policy will be used throughout the implementation of AFNHA activities. The policy is as follows:

National Heritage Areas are designed by Congress to tell nationally important stories that celebrate our nation's diverse heritage. AFNHA joins with NHAs across the country in championing diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible approaches to cultural heritage development activities. Coming from a region in which racial diversity is under-represented compared to many other parts of our country, we find it especially important for AFNHA to recognize and share the diverse stories of our area, to welcome diverse audiences and participation, and to include and empower all of our citizens.

Our core values statement recognizes this priority. AFNHA values the diversity of our ancestral, historic, and contemporary people, and is committed to inclusion, equity, and accessibility of all people, including those under-represented, marginalized, and traditionally unheard, in engagement in our activities and telling of our stories. Additionally, values focus on diverse and open participation with balanced representation of all partners in decision making, access to resources, and presentation, as well as providing education and interpretation for a broad range of local and visitor audiences, presenting messages in entertaining formats with scholarly accuracy, balanced representation of differing viewpoints, and respect for the complexity of the issues. Our long-standing equal opportunity policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of any grounds of difference or identity. This policy statement goes beyond prohibiting discrimination to actively encourage participation by and support for diverse and marginalized groups and individuals.

Through the work of AFNHA, we support racial equity, community empowerment, and social cohesion. Our conservation, enhancement, interpretation, and community development efforts include and highlight stories of those historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty, systemic racism, inequality, and disability. We support them to tell and share their own stories through their own lens and reach out to welcome and encourage participation from marginalized audiences. Through equity and inclusion in our community engagement and development efforts, we encourage participation from diverse and underserved groups, and help those adversely affected to gain access to opportunity, networks, and resources. Through our inclusive approach and outreach, we work towards developing a sense of belonging, trust, and upward social mobility among community members.

AFNHA resolves, as an organization, and on behalf of participating board, staff and representatives of our organization, to promote and support diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility for all citizens through our programming and our work.

#### Goals

Based on the AFNHA public meetings, working groups sessions, task group meetings, surveys, stakeholder interviews, the Planning Exchange and the Partner Roundtable, the planning team from AFNHA and the PointHDC team examined the outcomes and feedback to determine common priorities. The results of that examination were the categorization of similar programs and projects – five primary goals of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area:

- 1. Identify, preserve, conserve, and enhance assets that reflect forest heritage.
- 2. Share the stories of our forest heritage through education, interpretation, and experiences.
- 3. Support sustainable tourism and community economic development to benefit rural communities.
- 4. Connect and support partners linked by the region's forest heritage.
- 5. Manage, promote, and sustain AFHA Inc. as the National Heritage Area coordinating entity.

These goals provide the basis for the components of this management plan, and the chapters that follow are organized around them. The goals are also a roadmap for the work of AFHA Inc. and its partners. These goals, when viewed with the vision and mission, form the foundation of AFNHA. They are the framework that will help guide policy, programs, and projects for AFHA Inc. and its partners as they work together to implement this Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan.

# **CHAPTER 2**

## **Conserve and Enhance Forest Heritage Assets**

National Heritage Areas are built around heritage assets that are connected by the significance of the region and the themes that express that significance. One of the five primary goals for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) is to identify, preserve, conserve, and enhance the assets that reflect the region's forest heritage.

Natural resource stewardship and enhancement, historic preservation, and cultural conservation and the arts are three areas in which NHAs across the country commonly work to conserve heritage assets. These forest heritage assets – including strategies for the AFNHA partnership network to conserve and enhance them – are the focus of the current chapter.

## Heritage Assets in the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area

Historic buildings, archaeological sites, natural resources, and museum and archival collections are tangible assets that are visible in the region and help illustrate its history. Living traditions arising from Appalachian culture over centuries are the intangible elements that connect people to the landscape and to each other across generations. Both tangible and intangible assets and resources are important to AFNHA, as together they define a living landscape rich in history and culture.

#### **Inventory of Assets**

In its designating legislation, AFNHA is directed to develop an "inventory of resources." At a minimum, the inventory is to include sites that are "related to the themes of the NHA" and should be "preserved, restored, managed, or maintained because of their significance."<sup>1</sup> The AFNHA Asset Inventory lists place-based natural, scenic, recreational, historic, and cultural assets. Assets include parks, preserves, special places, trails and water opportunities used for recreation; historic buildings; museums and archival collections; institutions whose value is in sharing and preserving history and culture; and locations of special events that are based on the region's natural environment, history, and living traditions. AFNHA has chosen to distinguish between "resources" and "assets," defining "assets" as resources that are, or can potentially be, managed or enhanced to benefit the AFNHA region, and "resources" as sources of value or wealth that occur naturally or without enhancement, or that can support enhancement to become an asset. As an example, wildlife is a natural resource, a nature preserve where wildlife can be seen is an asset. The AFNHA Asset Inventory is found in Appendix C. Summary maps of assets are included in Appendix B. An implementation action for AFNHA will be to develop and provide some interactive maps with asset information based on this inventory, as part of the information clearinghouse for partners.

The inventory, whose development was guided by the Stewardship & Enhancement task group, currently holds over 700 listings. The inventory started with the asset list AFHA Inc. had developed for its Feasibility Study, added updates such as National Register of Historic Places listings, and incorporated input from partners, including the information developed by the Mon Forest Towns partnership, an initiative based on the recreation economy of gateway communities to the Monongahela National Forest. This chapter briefly describes some of the area's key forest heritage assets that provide a foundation for understanding the strategies that the AFNHA network of partners will employ to identify, preserve, conserve, and enhance those assets.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> <u>Pub. L. 116–9, title VI, § 6001(a)(1)</u>, Mar. 12, 2019, <u>133 Stat. 768</u>.

## **Goal 1: Identify, Preserve, Conserve, and Enhance the Assets** that Reflect Forest Heritage

## **Objective:** Conserve and Enhance Natural Resources

#### Natural Assets

Public lands – county, state, and national – occupy much of the forestland in the predominantly rural 10,500 square mile AFNHA (see public lands map in Appendix B).

The largest public landholding in the AFNHA is the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service's Monongahela National Forest (MNF or informally called the Mon) that extends into nine of AFNHA's 18

"We can't believe we have traveled for two and a half days and have never left the forest." counties. The Monongahela was established at the end of the logging boom in 1920 and now manages 921,000 acres of land within a 1,700,000-acre proclamation boundary (the area in which the National Forest may purchase land from willing sellers as funds are available). The Nature Conservancy considers it to be an area of

global ecological importance. The Mon manages an incredible wealth of natural, scenic, recreational assets (as well as historical and cultural assets described later), including pristine rivers, waterfalls, stands of old-growth timber, rocky outcroppings, and several nationally significant ecosystems. Some of the special use areas within the Mon are described below.



Traveling into the Monongahela National Forest

The Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area was designated by Congress in 1968 as the first Forest Service National Recreation Area. It contains Spruce Knob – the highest point in West Virginia – and the iconic Seneca Rocks outcropping. It includes recreational opportunities that range from interpretive trails to some of the best rock climbing in the eastern United States. The Seneca Rocks Discovery Center provides interpretive and visitor services for the National Recreation Area and the north half of the Monongahela.

The Cranberry Mountain Nature Center, in the south half of the forest, is the gateway to the Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, Fall of Hills Creek, the Highland Scenic Highway, and the Cranberry Wilderness and Backcountry.

Among the wealth of special use areas are eight designated wilderness areas within the Mon, which allow no motorized use and limited trail maintenance or markings. The best known of these are Dolly Sods Wilderness Area plateau on the top of Allegheny Front, Otter Creek Wilderness including the first tract purchased for the Mon, and the Cranberry Wilderness.

Other Forest Service properties include 123,629 acres of the George Washington National Forest within West Virginia along the eastern border of AFNHA in Hampshire, Hardy, and Pendleton counties, and the Fernow Experimental Forest. The Fernow is a 4,600-acre outdoor laboratory, located on property of the Monongahela, but operated by the Forest Service Northern Research Station to study the silviculture (i.e., timber management techniques and principles) of mixed hardwood forests and watersheds of the central Appalachians. Some interpretation of different types of forest management is also available.

Two natural resource areas operated by Department of Interior agencies are also important natural assets.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Tucker County was established in 1994 as the nation's 500th National Wildlife Refuge. The 16,550-acre refuge preserves a moist, high elevation valley with unique wetlands and uplands that support many plants and animals more common far to the north. At an altitude of 3,200 feet, it is 14 miles long and three miles wide, and the highest valley of its size east of the Rocky Mountains. The refuge is home to 580 species of plants and 288 different animals, with 8,500 acres of wetlands composed of 23 wetland types. The roads and trails of the refuge are open daily, with some interpreted with signs, brochures, or programs. The Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center offers exhibits and visitor information.

The Gauley River National Recreation Area includes the section north of the river in Nicholas County within AFNHA. This area is administered by the National Park Service out of the nearby New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.

Several U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes are also within the area, most notably Burnsville Lake with a campground and historical area, and Summersville Lake, the largest lake in West Virginia, which offers boating, trails, and campgrounds.

AFNHA encompasses many state-managed public lands, as well. In West Virginia, eight state parks and five state forests have a natural resource focus. In the two counties in Maryland, there are 10 state parks and three state forests established around natural resources. Among the most iconic are Blackwater Falls State Park in Tucker County, West Virginia, with dramatic waterfall and overlooks of the Blackwater Canyon, and Swallow Falls State Park in Garrett County, Maryland, where virgin forest areas overlook the falls and streams. State forests offer natural and recreation access, and sometimes include interpretation about forest management, such as the Kindness Demonstration Area in Garrett State Forest. State wildlife management areas, seven in Maryland and 32 in West Virginia, also protect and manage natural resources and wildlife habitats, and are generally open for recreation, hunting, and fishing during appropriate seasons.

In addition to federal and state lands such as those mentioned here, many local governments operate city and county parks. Nonprofits also play a significant role in preserving natural areas, such as the West Virginia Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). TNC owns 19 preserved properties within AFNHA, two of these are designated as National Natural Landmarks. Private lands, whether large corporate landholdings, or individual family properties, also have an important role to play in the landscape-scale management of the forests, wildlife, and natural resources.

The AFNHA region contains 15 of West Virginia's 16 National Natural Landmarks (NNLs). Many are located within the Monongahela National Forest or on other protected lands. The NNLS are:

- Bear Rocks and Allegheny Front Preserve (Grant and Tucker counties, TNC)
- Big Run Bog (Tucker County, MNF)
- Blister Run Swamp (Pocahontas County, MNF)
- Canaan Valley (Tucker County, CVNWR, WV State Parks, private)
- Cathedral State Park (Preston County, state park)
- Cranberry Glades Botanical Area (Pocahontas County, MNF)
- Cranesville Swamp Nature Sanctuary (Garrett and Preston counties, TNC)
- Fisher Spring Run Bog (Grant County, MNF)
- Gaudineer Scenic Area (Randolph and Pocahontas counties, MNF)
- Germany Valley Karst Area (Pendleton County, MNF, private)
- Ice Mountain (Hampshire County, TNC)
- Organ Cave System (Greenbrier County, private, tours available)
- Lost World Caverns (Greenbrier County, private, tours available)
- Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock Stand (Randolph County, MNF)
- Sinnett-Thorn Mountain Cave System (Pendleton County, private)



The Highland Scenic Highway shows off fall colors. (Credit: David Ede)

#### **Scenic Assets**

Scenic opportunities abound throughout the area, on every road or backcountry hike, with dense forests and rippling streams, as well as multiple overlooks and vistas. While scenic beauty shines in every season, the fall color in the mostly hardwood forests is spectacular, and a major tourist draw. A few routes have been designated as Scenic Byways specifically for scenic value, as well as to recognize other intrinsic qualities. The National Road All-American Road starts west from Cumberland, while the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike National Scenic Byway and the Midland Trail National Scenic Byway feature scenic assets following historic routes. The Highland Scenic Highway National Scenic Byway, entirely within the Mon Forest, has a parkway section built as a scenic route. The highway provides access to major attractions, and overlooks the Cranberry area of the forest. Both West Virginia and Maryland have additional designated scenic byways within AFNHA. Multiple excursion trains offer scenic rides, usually on historic tracks, including the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, the Potomac Eagle, and the Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad, as well as the historic Cass train.

#### Strategy: Provide stewardship of regional ecosystems

The development of modern scientific forest management over the last century changed the approach to the forest. For example, the Monongahela National Forest was established, in part, in response to devastating logging practices of the early 20th century that involved deforestation on a massive scale. Consequences of these practices included serious environmental degradation such as soil erosion, stream and river sedimentation, flooding, slash fires, loss of critical habitats, and denuded landscapes.



Forester using an increment borer on a black cherry tree – note the spray paint used to mark the trees in the timber sale or study area. (Credit: USDA Forest Service)

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, "the Forest Service, in cooperation with other federal agencies and the state of West Virginia, has attempted to actively and responsibly manage the landscape since that time, balancing the needs of the American people, wildlife, and our precious natural resources." Instead of the "cut everything and haul it out" approach of the logging boom, today's foresters and land managers study and balance the growth, species composition, and desired purposes for each land tract. They use management practices, including managed tree harvest when appropriate, with the overall goal of

nurturing a healthy, sustainable forest. Today, natural resource conservation is not only accepted in the region, it is expected. The health of forest resources is important to the forest products industry, communities, residents, and visitors that rely on the jobs and opportunities that the forest provides.

The natural resource conservation strategy described here guides the ways in which AFHA Inc. and its partners working together across AFNHA, will approach the conservation, enhancement, and promotion of the region's abundant natural resources.

There is a shared belief in the region that forest resources must be conserved, however there will always be differences as to how that conservation should occur. Some people and organizations are averse to any timber harvesting, citing the negative environmental and aesthetic impact large scale tree removal can bring. To others, productivity of timber management is what is most important. Some see forest management practices as providing important habitat to preserve floral and faunal biodiversity. Any forest management planning starts with the goals for the property being considered, which may include timber production, wildlife habitat for native species and / or for hunting, stream health for water conservation and fish populations, hiking and recreation, scenic beauty, and wilderness.

The type of forest management appropriate in one place will be different from treatments where the end goal is different. Forest production is often the priority of private woodland owners, who look to professional foresters, and organizations such as West Virginia Forestry Association and West Virginia University Woodland Stewards for information on best practices and support in reaching their personal forest goals – whether for timber production, non-timber products, or recreation. For another example, organizations focused on hunting and fishing are often committed to conservation through stewardship of Wildlife Management Areas, healthy species and varied age tree stand management practices that favor game species, and make access easier for outdoor enthusiasts. People who choose to recreate in the area have differing expectations, ranging from rugged visitor experiences to easy access and comfortable amenities.

Conservation and land management work by one organization typically benefits many others. Wildlife, or endangered species, do not recognize property boundaries, and to the extent conservation management can be supported on a landscape level, all property owners benefit. When it comes to

natural resource conservation and enhancement, the NHA can reach a broader audience than many of the local and regional organizations could do alone. A key tenet of AFNHA's approach to conservation will be to facilitate connecting groups with differing approaches to conservation, serving as the metaphorical "big tent" under which varied interests can come together as stewards of the natural environment and all it has to offer, thereby amplifying their impact.

Public lands, such as the Monongahela National Forest, the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, state forests and nonprofit preserves all have management plans, directives, policies, and / or goals to direct their land management strategies. Many private landowners have forest management plans as well to implement their goals, whether for timber production or recreation and wildlife. Since the public agencies hold a significant amount of land within AFNHA, their best practices help to set both the direction and the example for ecosystem stewardship in the region. Moreover, these agencies dedicate significant staff and economic resources to implementing their plans, generally developed with



AFNHA AmeriCorps member collects water sample to monitor stream health.

public involvement. Public partners will take the lead on implementing management goals and land management improvements on public lands, including responsibility for environmental clearance under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for projects when needed. AFHA Inc. will support their efforts, as well as facilitate and promote best practices of forest management on partnering private lands. With public and private partners, AFHA Inc. will also support understanding and implementation of best practices associated with:

- Monitoring and stewarding ecosystem conditions
- Maintaining healthy waterways, riparian environments, and watersheds

- Conserving native plants and animals and their habitats, including rare, threatened, and endangered species
- Harvesting, planting, and encouraging regrowth of forests including desired species and properly aging stands for forest health and sustainable production
- Tracking and mitigating invasive species
- Identifying, adapting to, and mitigating impacts of climate change

AFHA Inc. has taken a leadership role in the AFNHA Pollinator Initiative, a program supported nationally by the Alliance of National Heritage Areas. With this program AFNHA has coordinated and encouraged NHA engagement in an initiative to preserve pollinator species and pollinator health, including supporting projects such as pollinator gardens, and seeking partners on a Pollinator Resolution to raise awareness of this issue. While AFHA Inc. does not own forest land, the organization will support those that do, and



AFNHA AmeriCorps members remove invasive garlic mustard.

will take leadership roles in specific conservation projects when appropriate.

#### **Objective:** Conserve and Enhance Recreational Assets

#### **Recreational Assets**

Recreational assets within the vast greenspaces of AFNHA are the foundation for a wide array of opportunities. Throughout the region, there are many publicly accessible hiking and biking trails, ski and golf resorts, hunting and fishing lands, lakes and waterways, and scenic byways. The Mon Forest is the

"People see that big green area on the map, and they are drawn to it." largest physical tourism destination in the state of West Virginia and has more than 800 miles of trails. Other developed trails in the region include the Allegany County, MD, sections of the NPS Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, where the 150-mile Great Allegheny Passage and the 185-mile C&O Canal Towpath trail meet. The 78-mile Greenbrier River Trail,

and a number of other rail trails are also popular. Hiking trails feature a significant section of the Allegheny Trail through the heart of the NHA plus innumerable other dirt surface trails and backpacking routes of varying length and difficulty.

Water recreation in AFNHA includes whitewater runs, canoe, kayak, and boating, ranging from gentle paddles to wild whitewater. Fishing for native brook trout in sheltered streams, stocked trout in high altitude waters, and warmer water fishing on rivers and lakes is also an important activity dependent on the region's lakes, streams, and rivers. The Cheat River is one of the longest free-flowing rivers in the eastern United States. The Cheat River Water Trail offers a network of access points, resting areas, and points of interest for boaters and anglers. Deep Creek Lake is the largest lake in AFNHA, and Deep Creek Lake State Park in Maryland offers a major 4-season destination. At the other end of AFNHA, the Gauley River National Recreation Area offers world-class rafting, as does the Youghiogheny River.



Fisherman enjoys a forest stream. (Credit: WV Department of Tourism)

Hunting is a major traditional recreational use that is generally available in appropriate seasons on most public forests and many private lands.

Mountain biking is a fast-growing attraction, with trail networks around Canaan Valley and other areas. Most notably, the Snowshoe Highlands Ride Center, which boasts the International Mountain Biking Association prestigious Silver Level rating, offers 357 miles of mountain bike trails of varying difficulty in Pocahontas County.

The region features several resort areas that connect people to many recreational activities, including some of those mentioned above. Two of the region's largest recreational hubs include the Snowshoe Highlands and Canaan Valley. Both were originally known as winter skiing destinations but have expanded their seasonal appeal and annual revenue by offering mountain biking, golfing, hiking, and other active pursuits. These resort areas have successfully grown to engage larger and more diverse audiences by becoming year-round destinations with a variety of warm-weather outdoor activities. The region's oldest resort is The Greenbrier, a famous luxury destination that stands testament to the longstanding allure of tourism in West Virginia.

## **Strategy:** Enhance recreational opportunities for quality user experience and sustainability

Enhancing natural areas to provide outdoor recreation opportunities is important for providing access to natural assets for a variety of people, building awareness to care about natural areas, providing quality user experience for residents and visitors, and as a component of diversification of rural economies. Hunting and fishing are very popular traditional recreation activities that are dependent on the health of land and water habitats. Trails for a variety of uses such as back-country, hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian need to be planned, built, connected, and maintained. Off-road motorized use is another trail type that is often not allowed on public lands and is generally not compatible with other uses, but there are some specialized areas that offer those opportunities. Sustainable design and consistent maintenance of trails provide a high quality of user experience that brings repeat visitation, while minimizing damage to the environment. Water recreation involves pristine rivers and lakes and access including boat launches and river access locations. Active recreation activities such as skiing and cave tours are often developed and provided by commercial resorts. Nature appreciation recreation such as birding, wildlife observation and photography, wildflowers, foraging, and experiencing dark skies is available on public lands. Often this can be shared and enhanced with interpretation.

An important need for recreation enhancements is leveraging funding and technical assistance. This is discussed further in Chapter 5.

The trails that weave through the heritage area have always played a significant role in how people experience the landscape, access resources, and connect. Today, the majority of trail users are seeking easy access to scenic, safe, and fun recreational experiences that allow them to explore beyond paved roadways. The surge in outdoor recreation during the "With trail-based recreation, if the user experience is poor, the rest of [the amenities] don't matter too much. But having great trail experiences won't make an area a big success without a good overall visitor experience."

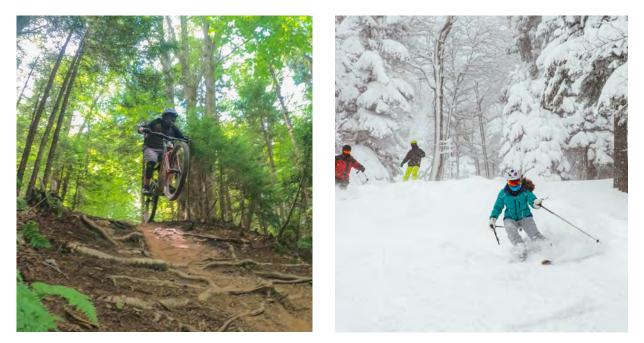
pandemic has increased numbers, as well as highlighting a discerning group of users, who are seeking a quality user experience. Because of a long-term reputation for poorly maintained trails, and numerous trails that currently fall short of users' expectations, improving trail conditions is important to attracting and keeping this dynamic recreation audience. This highlights the need for more capacity to maintain, improve, and expand trails for specific and multiple uses within the area. AFNHA can help evaluate trails on a regional scale and support efforts to identify and prioritize improvements, and help coordinate the funding and workforces to get improvements accomplished.

Trail improvements encompass actions including:

- Establishing safe and accessible points of entry so users don't have to park on narrow shoulders
- Maintaining passable tracks through densely vegetated areas
- Stabilizing existing trails
- Building features such as bridges or boardwalks over rough and / or fragile terrain
- Connecting trails to allow users to expand, or contract, trail mileage and experiences
- Developing physical and thematic trail networks
- Expanding offerings to meet the range of skill levels sought by diverse users
- Creating a plan for sustainable management

Importantly, the benefits of trail improvements are not limited to hikers and bikers. Well-planned and maintained trails are of tremendous value to hunters, anglers, foragers, birders, photographers, and the people who monitor and manage habitat areas. In order to improve the health and ensure the sustainability of the region's ecological diversity, it is vital to support access for conservation and wildlife experts and the users who value backcountry assets.

The rivers, streams, lakes, and riparian zones that weave through the region offer a range of recreational activities including fishing and all types of boating from motorboating, to kayaking, to rafting, and even some scuba. AFNHA can help coordinate efforts to identify the needs of organizations focused on water resources, water sports, and aquatic health. By identifying those needs, AFNHA can help set priorities and assist with funding to improve the health of the water resources, expand access and experiences for water sport enthusiasts, and increase education about the importance of maintaining sustainable practices.



Skiing and mountain biking are both popular activities at Snowshoe Mountain. (Credit: Snowshoe Mountain)

From the picturesque "mountainside of Maryland" to West Virginia's reputation as "almost heaven," AFNHA is graced with some of the region's most beautiful and diverse landscapes. It is not a coincidence that the terrain lends itself to a broad range of outdoor pursuits. In terms of public engagement and economic impact, one of the more notable sports in West Virginia is skiing. Not only do ski resorts contribute to a healthy winter revenue stream in their communities, but these resorts are also expanding to entice visitors to return in the warmer months to enjoy other outdoor recreational activities. This is most notable at Snowshoe where the resort has recently been awarded a Silver Level Award for its exceptional network of mountain biking trails. Snowshoe is serving as a model to other communities to expand their appeal to outdoor enthusiasts by offering more to do throughout the year. Other active recreation pursuits like caving, rock climbing, and rafting attract dedicated users. AFNHA can apply what it learns from working with larger, more popular outdoor recreation groups to help grow the smaller ones.

#### **Objective:** Preserve, Conserve, and Enhance Historic Assets

#### **Historic Assets**

The region's abundant natural assets are complemented by the historic and cultural assets that reflect human habitation over millennia. Archaeological remnants of native homelands, trade and settlement, historic homesteads, Civil War battlefields, 19th and early 20th century town centers, and the industrial, commercial, and residential structures that share the history of the logging boom feature prominently in the AFNHA Asset Inventory. In addition, the inventory lists museums and institutions that curate the region's historical collections, along with the organizations that document and sustain Appalachian cultural traditions and promote contemporary arts and craft.

The primary National Park Service presence in AFNHA is the western end of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park. The park preserves the 184-mile canal built in the early 19th century to transport coal from the Allegheny Mountains to port cities on the East Coast. The Cumberland Visitor Center for the national park has been here with information and a canal museum. The canal towpath from Washington D.C. to Cumberland is an important recreational resource that connects to a regional network of hiking and biking trails, including the Great Allegheny Passage that begins here and continues to Pittsburgh. The park partners with Canal Place, the anchor of the Passages of the Western



The Cumberland Visitor Center of the C&O Canal National Historical Park is located in the Western Maryland Railway Station at Canal Place. (Credit: mdmountainside.com)

Potomac Maryland Heritage Area, which includes the Western Maryland Railway Station, canal locks and landscape, and shops near the canal terminus.

AFNHA has five National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) that reflect different aspects of the region's past. In Garrett County, Maryland, Casselman Bridge, an NHL structure within Casselman River Bridge State Park, was built in 1813 along the National Road. Extractive industry and the incredible wealth it generated are evident in two West Virginia historic districts associated with the logging and mining eras – the Elkins Coal and Coke Company NHL District in Preston County features beehive ovens used to produce coke, and the Davis and Elkins NHL District in Randolph County includes the mansions of the industrialists who brought railroads and the logging boom to the area. The Greenbrier Resort, Greenbrier County, built around the hot springs of White Sulphur Springs, traces its roots to 1778 and was known as a retreat for national politicians and elites, and includes the Cold War Congressional bunker within its grounds. Finally, the Reber Radio Telescope, Pocahontas County, was the world's first parabolic astronomy antenna, and highlights the significance of the Green Bank Observatory. At Greenbank, birthplace of the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI), the world's largest steerable radio telescope makes use of the high, isolated landscape as an important location to study the stars.

Several key assets in the region are related to settlement, transportation, and westward expansion in the late 18th and early 19th century along the nation's western frontier. This includes two Maryland State Heritage Areas – Passages of the Western Potomac (Canal Place) in Allegany County and Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West in Garrett County. Three National Scenic byways follow historic transportation corridors. The historic National Road, selected as an All-American Road, the highest designation of National Scenic Byway, starts west from Cumberland contributing to westward expansion as the nation's first public works project. The Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike National Scenic Byway, a historic route connecting the Shenandoah Valley to the Ohio River that was significant in the First Campaign of the Civil War, crosses the middle of AFNHA. The Midland Trail National Scenic Byway, following the historic James River to Kanawha Turnpike route west, crosses the southernmost counties.

Six state parks in West Virginia, in addition to Casselman Bridge State Park in Maryland, highlight Appalachian Forest history. Cass Scenic Railroad State Park is a lumber company town with historic residences, a company store, and trains pulled by original geared steam engines that date from the logging boom. The state park comprises two separate National Register listings – the Cass Historic District and the Cass Scenic Railroad that runs from Cass to Bald Knob. Fairfax Stone State Park marks the beginning of a state boundary as well as the headwaters of the North Branch of the Potomac River. Berkeley Springs State Park was an early tourism destination whose hot springs have drawn visitors for more than a century. Carnifex Ferry and Droop Mountain are both Civil War battlefields that include greenspace as well as seasonal museums. Watoga State Park is significant for its extensive facilities constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Many of the state parks mentioned under "Natural, Scenic, and Recreational Assets" also feature historic CCC facilities. The Monongahela National Forest includes extensive historic sites, most notably the Sites



The Center Hall and central buildings of the New Deal community serve today as headquarters for Arthurdale Heritage museum. (Credit: Arthurdale Heritage Inc.)

Homestead log cabin at Seneca Rocks that has a seasonal garden as part of its cultural landscape, many CCC built cabins and pavilions, and documentation of old farmsteads and Native American sites across the landscape that are now in the national forest.

The AFNHA includes approximately 330 listings in the National Register of Historic Places, representing over 4,800 contributing properties. While not all of the listings support the NHA's national significance, most of them relate to the themes in some way. This represents over 60 listings in Maryland and 270 in West Virginia. Most of the area's museums are located on properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Arthurdale Historic District in Preston County, a nationally significant asset, was the first New Deal resettlement community and was championed by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. It features the Arthurdale Heritage New Deal Museum and contains 160 of the original homestead homes associated with the site.

The Beverly Heritage Center occupies four buildings within the Beverly Historic District in Randolph County including the original county courthouse and McClellan's Civil War headquarters. Interpretation includes the nearby nationally significant Rich Mountain Battlefield, site of Confederate Camp Garnett and the July 1861 Union victory that brought General George McClellan to national notice. The Allegany Museum in Cumberland, Maryland, offers extensive themed exhibits on local history and culture, the National Road, and transportation history. The North House Museum in Greenbrier County, and Adaland Mansion in Barbour County are historic house museums that also include regional history. The Jane Gates House in Cumberland is an opportunity to recognize African-American history. The Pearl S. Buck Birthplace honors the internationally known author in the Pocahontas County home where her family had settled to farm. The Evergreen Heritage Center in Allegany County utilizes a historic farmstead site to offer extensive historic and environmental programming, while the Governor H. Guy Kump House in Randolph County is home to the Kump Education Center, which focuses on educational support, historic preservation, and environmental sustainability. Many other county and community museums and historical societies are located within properties listed in the National Register.

Appalachian Forest Discovery Center, AFNHA's primary interpretive and visitor center, is located in the Darden Mill in Elkins in Randolph County. Connected to the railroad history of the region, this historic building also houses the West Virginia Railroad Museum.

Historic preservation is a key activity in NHAs as the cultural landscape, including the built environment, is the framework that helps tell landscape-level stories. National Register Historic Districts in many of the region's towns showcase the historic built environment as downtown cultural landscapes that define each community. Distinctive forested and agricultural cultural landscapes help to define the stories across the varied sections of AFNHA. Furthermore, sense of place is an economic driver. As such, the preservation of cultural landscapes, archaeological sites, historic buildings, and artifact and archival collections is connected to both interpretation and community revitalization.

#### Strategy: Recognize and conserve cultural landscapes

The National Park Service recognizes four types of cultural landscapes, including designed landscapes, historic sites, vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes. All four types fall under the definition of "a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person, or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values."<sup>2</sup> AFNHA contains cultural landscapes associated with Native American settlement, westward expansion, Civil War battles, the logging boom, the evolution of forestry, and agriculture. AFNHA will work to build awareness of significant landscapes and the stories associated with them, and will encourage nominations for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. AFNHA also will assist with the preservation of cultural landscapes, including archaeological sites and cemeteries. AFHA Inc. will support these efforts through education, outreach, grants, and technical assistance, as well as by helping connect landowners to the Preservation Alliance of West Virginia and the State Historic Preservation Offices in both states.

#### Strategy: Preserve and manage collections and archives

For museums and other organizations that collect artifacts, museum objects, and documents associated with AFNHA history, the NHA will help implement best practices for collections management and policies. AFNHA partners will share best practices and expertise, and support partner institutions with assistance, and sharing of research and information. AFHA Inc. will share industry best practices and provide direct support through training, technical assistance, AmeriCorps staffing, and grants to help implement best practices. In these ways, AFNHA will help build skills and capacity for organizations, including curation and digitization of archives and collections.

Another important activity is the collection, documentation, and research of local history, including photos and information not previously available to the public. Community collections held by private individuals and families are largely an untapped resource for better holistic understanding of local history and the commonplace practices of the residents. Museums, archives, educational institutions, heritage organizations, and historical societies will undertake most new research in the region. AFHA Inc. will take a direct role in researching, documenting, and sharing information related to AFNHA themes that may not be easily accessible, and will encourage partners to also share their information and expertise. AFHA Inc. will support these efforts through direct funding, capacity building, facilitation of partnerships, and technical assistance and training.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> <u>Understand Cultural Landscapes - Cultural Landscapes (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)</u>, accessed January 10, 2022.

#### Strategy: Preserve historic buildings and properties

Preservation of the buildings whose existence reflects bygone eras is important for sharing stories of the past, as well as catalyzing community vitality in the present. The story is truly greater than the sum of its parts in AFNHA. Helping the region to express that full arc of history by weaving together smaller stories, interpretive experiences, and a strong sense of place that builds local pride and attracts visitors is a worthy investment in the future.

With over 300 listings in the National Register of Historic Places, there is no shortage of opportunity to work with preservation organizations, local and state governments, and individuals on the documentation, preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of historic buildings and structures. There are many organizations working to preserve the region's historic assets, and AFNHA provides a logical forum through which to build a regional preservation coalition, as well as to develop cooperative practices and strategies.

"We can use historic properties as a public interface to tell the bigger story of our region, promote wilderness and rec areas, and educate about conservation."

Documenting the existence and condition of historic properties and conducting preservation planning are important activities in the initial stages of preservation. These activities allow for the prioritization of resource allocation to undertake bricks and mortar projects. In many communities, the foundation for preservation exists in the required comprehensive community plans in both states, which often highlight



AFHA AmeriCorps members help restore historic CCC cabin at Stuart Recreation Area, MNF.

preservation needs. AFHA Inc. can play an important role in the early stages of preservation by serving as an information resource, connecting individuals and communities to preservation organizations, and providing grant funding for documentation and planning. In addition, Preservation Alliance of West Virginia (PAWV), Preservation Maryland, the State Historic Preservation Offices in both Maryland and West Virginia, and the 16 designated Certified Local

Governments (CLG) are leaders in these early-stage projects. For preservation projects that contribute to downtown revitalization, the Main Street and ON TRAC programs, as well as the West Virginia Community Development HUB and Woodlands Development Group, are also major players. More information on these partners is available in Chapter 5. AFNHA's preservation priority will be to preserve historic buildings and structures related to the region's forest heritage, as outlined in the

NHA's themes. One activity that will lead to preservation is documentation and the development of National Register listings, which will in turn lead to eligibility for tax credits and grants. The West Virginia Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer called out this action as "particularly important," noting its alignment with the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office's goals. An opportunity apparent from the asset inventory is to review National Register listings for national significance, such as Arthurdale and Rich Mountain Battlefield, and encourage future National Historic Landmarks designations for more nationally significant sites.

Another activity is assistance in seeking funding for capital projects through private and public sources. Raising awareness about available funding, distributing information about grants and tax credits, and providing support and technical assistance to preservation projects about these tools can be very helpful, especially for those tackling their first historic preservation project. Bringing partners together as capture teams for combined projects can help to leverage larger funding opportunities.

#### Strategy: Support historic preservation policies

Working in partnership with regional coalitions, AFNHA can support policies and planning for historic preservation, and help raise awareness of historic preservation benefits, policies, and tools. Certified Local Governments (CLGs) are historic preservation bodies designated on a city or county level. They are eligible for historic preservation grant funding to facilitate historic survey, planning, education, and National Register designation projects. At a local level, historic district design review or similar zoning programs may be used to enforce preservation best practices for designated resources. This level of protection is only in place in a few AFNHA cities, such as Cumberland and Lewisburg. For most communities, historic preservation relies more on education and raising awareness. AFNHA can support these educational efforts and can work with local leaders and CLGs to encourage historic preservation best practices, while leaving decisions about design review and zoning to local choice. The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office considers connecting community leaders and Certified Local Governments to preservation tools and resources as an important role.

AFNHA will work closely with local partners on historic preservation, to raise awareness and provide education, and to connect projects with resources. Documenting and sharing information on the economic impact of historic preservation can help to build support. The NHA will partner with statewide preservation organizations – Preservation Alliance of West Virginia and Preservation Maryland – and State Historic Preservation Offices and related agencies in West Virginia and Maryland. AFNHA can help to educate about historic preservation best practices, and tools such as tax credits, on a state and national level.

#### Strategy: Develop and support preservation trades

For many years, the AFNHA AmeriCorps program operated a Hands-On Team that provided preservation construction activities in the region. From window restoration to plaster repair, the Hands-On Team has accomplished projects at the Darden Mill, Arthurdale, and other historic sites across the region. While this team is not currently active, direct preservation work could still be a priority, whether through the AmeriCorps program, or working with partners such as PAWV or the national HistoriCorps program.

Another activity that AFNHA will move into in upcoming years is developing historic preservation trades training using existing properties. The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office believes this will bolster preservation activities across the state and facilitate adaptive reuse of properties that enhance the sense of place in communities. With a large number of properties in need of preservation and the partnership potential of preservation organizations and the forest products industry, the opportunity exists to create workshops and courses to teach people from inside and outside the area the skills and techniques needed to work on historic buildings. While this need is especially crucial to build preservation trades professionals, it can also be helpful in training homeowners, business owners, public owners, and volunteers in proper techniques for preserving historic buildings. Finally, the region remains an important source of raw materials and secondary products used in building trades. Educating about and engaging private enterprise suppliers and vendors in historic preservation activities can help expand preservation of the region's assets and provide economic benefit for the forest products industry.

#### **Objective:** Conserve, Document, and Share Cultural Traditions

Appalachian cultural traditions in music, folklore, and craft are recognized across the nation and around the world. Throughout the region, there is a strong cultural arts presence that includes traditional arts, music, theater, and the visual arts.

#### **Cultural Assets**

AFNHA's cultural traditions are strongly supported by many community arts organizations dedicated to traditional arts, craft, traditions, and the contemporary expressions that have arisen from them. Dynamic leadership in this area comes from the Augusta Heritage Center, based in Elkins, which has supported Appalachian and other regional traditions of music, dance, craft, and folkways for over 45 years, through documentation and sharing of these traditions. Their long history of summer classes and festivals has evolved under new leadership (and facing pandemic challenges) to include new online programming to continue nurturing cultural traditions. The Mountain Arts District in Randolph and surrounding counties works to build networks and promote artists. Next door in Tucker County, there is a state-designated Cultural District Authority whose mission is very similar to a heritage area approach – "protect cultural and historical resources, connect recreational, artistic, educational, and historical opportunities throughout the county, enhance cultural resources, and promote the unique elements that set Tucker County apart as a special destination."

Traditional craft born of necessity arose from the needs of isolated homesteaders who made what they needed from the forest and what they could grow. Many of these cultural practices have become traditional artistic expressions, such as white oak baskets. Weaving and fiber arts are widely practiced, calling on traditional practices as well as New Deal revival of weaving at Arthurdale and Tygart Valley Homesteads. Today, working artisans, co-op marketplaces, gift shops featuring local items, festivals with arts sales, and galleries showcase traditional and contemporary art throughout AFNHA.

Traditional Appalachian music has strong roots and is still handed down across generations. Related musical traditions such as gospel, bluegrass, blues, country, and the genres that have grown from them, are also active. A collaborative Mountain Music Trail is one effort that connects musicians and venues that showcase live music. Dance traditions with local roots in distinctive circle and square dances unique to mountain communities have grown and evolved. There is a long history of community dances called to live music, where beginners find themselves welcome along with the experienced dancers. Prior to the pandemic, a Mountain Dance Trail linked local dances, including a number of AFNHA communities.



Artisan weaves white oak basket using traditional methods.

Folkways, foodways, and traditional uses of

the forest are practiced, shared, and celebrated throughout the region. Traditional storytelling continues to thrive and has given rise to creative expression through a variety of contemporary media. Non-timber forest products and medicinals are cultivated and interpreted at the Yew Mountain Center (Pocahontas County) and practices are shared through the Woodland Stewards Program (WVU Extension).

Many of the area traditions, products and folkways are celebrated by community festivals, from the Mountain State Forest Festival (Elkins) and Woodchopping Festival (Webster Springs) to the Maple Syrup Festival (Pickens), and a number of ramp dinners and festivals. Restaurants and shops throughout the area offer foods and products inspired by local traditions.

Communities throughout AFNHA reflect the rural culture of the area, often with commonalities of core historic districts and connection to regional culture but reflecting individual character. The largest city, Cumberland, Maryland, has a vibrant historic downtown, reflecting both arts and services, as does its

neighbor Frostburg, anchored by a regional university. Along the National Road, the Spruce Forest Artisan Village near Grantsville, Maryland, has permanent and guest artisans practicing traditional craft in the cluster of galleries that bring vibrancy to the historic setting. Artisans also offer workshops in a variety of craft, including blacksmithing, pottery, woodworking, and quilting. The colony is supported in part by state and county grants. In April 2020, it suffered a devastating storm that damaged many of the historic buildings and felled the spruce for which it is named, but the site is rebuilding. Oakland, Maryland, one of the first communities to be active with AFHA, reflects its railroad heritage and hosts the Autumn Glory Festival. All four of these communities are designated as Maryland Arts and Entertainment Districts.

At the southern end of AFNHA, Lewisburg (Greenbrier County), with Carnegie Hall and the Greenbrier Valley Theater, has long been known as a community that values and promotes the



Washington Street in downtown Lewisburg has multiple galleries and restaurants.

arts. Its downtown streets have a number of galleries featuring or owned by local artists. Elkins (Randolph County), the central hub of AFNHA, anchored in part by the Augusta Heritage Center, features an active arts community with abundant live music. Among the many cultural facilities are the Old Brick Playhouse

"Music, folklore, any type of human knowledge passed on generationally is a high priority to preserve and continue. It represents a culture, speaks to the culture's values." that offers dynamic live theater for youth, galleries such as Artists at Work co-operative, and the Arts Center that serves as a concert, gallery, and educational arts facility housed in a historic church. Also in Randolph County, the Swiss enclave of Helvetia has retained living traditions, especially dance, music, food, and holidays. In Hardy County, plans by Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College for developing the Mountain Skyway Center include arts – especially Appalachian

arts, music, and food – as one of its five economic development sectors. The dramatic resurgence of the community of Thomas in Tucker County as an arts enclave, with multiple galleries in historic downtown buildings, shows the potential the region's cultural assets hold.

All of these organizations and communities share a belief in community vibrancy driven by traditional arts. One stakeholder noted that arts education is a big part of self-actualization, and that happiness is dependent in part on the opportunity to express oneself creatively. Arts can be an important tool in fighting the opioid crisis in the region as well. "The opposite of addiction isn't sobriety. The opposite of addiction is connection. Arts is a perfect example of that, a part of something that is greater than you that will enable you to work through and past it. Traditional arts are an integral piece of healing what is happening. How do I find happiness living in Appalachia? Traditional arts has a large hand in that."

## **Strategy:** Document and conserve cultural traditions such as folkways, foodways, uses of forest products, music, dance, and stories

From providing quality arts education opportunities for students of all ages, to "nuts and bolts event planning" with the region's many cultural festivals, to AmeriCorps involvement and other partnerships with the communities and organizations above, there are many opportunities for AFNHA to support and engage with the arts community. Many proposed activities focus on the collection, research, documentation, and sharing of assets and living traditions related to Appalachian culture. These include gathering oral histories that reflect on the region's past, as well as exploring and encouraging contemporary expressions of music, dance, folkways, and craft that have deep roots in the central Appalachian highlands. Cultural and community organizations, and individual artisans and practitioners will lead in these activities, while AFHA Inc. supports by convening groups with similar goals, consolidating information, and connecting organizations to funding sources.

One new area of focus for AFNHA is sharing the history and culture of Tribal Nations with historic ties to the region. As with later settlers, Native Americans used the abundant forest resources in their daily lives, so a lot of Appalachian culture has roots in Native American traditions. This is discussed further in the Interpretive Plan (Chapter 3).

Another opportunity that emerged from planning was coordinating the use of specialized equipment. Some traditional arts require specialized equipment that can be expensive for individuals to purchase or maintain. Facilitating communal access to such equipment, including honey spinners and cider presses, can make it easier for practitioners to carry out Appalachian traditions and expand their capacity to share traditional production techniques and products with residents and visitors.

Finally, many arts and heritage organizations lack organizational and funding capacity. By providing training to build organizational capacity and ensuring that cultural activities are eligible for AFNHA grant funding, AFHA Inc. can support the documentation and intergenerational transmission of the region's distinctive cultural traditions.

#### Strategy: Grow market value and connections

Another important way in which to ensure the survival of Appalachian traditional arts is to grow market value and to increase opportunities for small businesses to engage with and incorporate traditional arts. This can be accomplished with entrepreneurial training, as well as through the development of visitor experiences based on arts and culture. AFNHA will assist in these efforts by supporting "buy local" and traditionally produced art, including small businesses in tourism-development training, and providing direct and indirect support to develop experiences based on arts and culture. Addition on the development of cultural experiences is found in chapters 3 and 4, which include interpretive planning and heritage tourism activities, and the Highlands Creative Economy program outlined in Chapter 5 includes artisan businesses.

## **Objective:** Expand Outreach and Raise Awareness to Promote Best Practices and Stewardship

# **Strategy:** Provide outreach and public education to promote conservation, historic preservation, and cultural traditions, including raising awareness, best practices and stewardship

Successful stewardship of the region's forest heritage assets through the activities outlined in this chapter will be based in part on expanded outreach and education regarding benefits and best practices. This can include educating public and private property owners on the benefits of historic preservation and natural resource conservation; sharing best practices employed in and beyond the region; and sharing news of the ecological and economic success of conservation and preservation projects. Furthermore, educating land and trail users, and offering ways to give back, will help encourage stewardship of natural resources.

AFNHA can support such experiential outreach through a trail ambassador program to engage trail users in popular recreation areas, and help manage volunteer opportunities for trail maintenance or invasive species mitigation. Raising awareness about scientific forest management can help users understand benefits in terms of recreational activities and forest products they enjoy, while maintaining forest health.

"We want people to understand that the cherry wood table they treasure comes from trees harvested from our Appalachian forest."

One of the original motivations of the initial AFHA stakeholders was to help to share the value of the region's forests and timber products with visitors from outside the region. In addition, raising awareness of the importance of the region's water and natural resource health to high-population areas downstream from AFNHA can motivate visitors and residents to engage in conservation activities. Understanding the significance of historic places will help raise awareness of the need to save and preserve these special assets. Similarly, outreach on the best practices and benefits of natural resources conservation, historic preservation, and cultural conservation is important in understanding appropriate policies at all levels. AFHA Inc. will support expanded outreach through grant and funding opportunities, the work of AmeriCorps members, and the development of interpretive and educational products and programs.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### Share the Stories – Interpretive Plan

This chapter provides the interpretive plan for Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA).

#### **Interpretive Planning Process and Approach**

The interpretive planning process is built on the research and foundation established in the feasibility study. The current process was led by the consultants, staff, and Interpretation Task Group and included participation, consultation, and review by scholars in multiple fields related to the themes. Steps of this process included multiple meetings of the Interpretation Task Group, feedback from several public meetings, individual review and comment from subject matter scholars, and multiple reviews and comments by an interpretation specialist in the NPS Regional Office. During this process, the original themes from the feasibility study were revised and rewritten to be more dynamic and in line with NPS expectations – these new themes were presented by the Interpretation Task Group and approved by the AFHA Inc. board. The thematic narrative lays the foundation for the detailed interpretive matrix included in Appendix D. The narrative, themes, and interpretive matrix make up the thematic framework for interpretation. These four themes draw connections across landscapes, across communities, and across time, articulating a unique forest heritage narrative.

Objectives and strategies for implementing interpretation based on this thematic framework were developed from experience with AFNHA partners and their input in planning meetings. Through engagement in task groups, public meetings, and the Community Exchange, residents and partner organizations used the themes as a foundation to identify creative ways to share the region's significant history, natural environment, and cultural traditions through interpretation and education. Stakeholders provided input, such as helping to identify audiences and define interpretive principles, that led to the development of objectives and strategies for implementing the interpretive plan that supports Goal 2 Sharing the Appalachian Forest Stories. The interpretive plan includes discussion of engaging with diverse audiences through a variety of methods; and strategies that will be used to support best practices and quality interpretation, the interpretation programs, products, and experiences provided by partners will be supported and integrated into the AFNHA themes while action steps for direct interpretative experiences will be provided by AFHA Inc. The plan also discusses formal educational strategies for youth and adult audiences, as well as evaluation of interpretation activities.

#### **Appalachian Forest Thematic Framework**

The thematic framework consists of the interpretive matrix in Appendix C and the thematic narrative below.

#### **Thematic Narrative**

AFNHA encompasses 18 counties in the highlands of West Virginia and western Maryland, representing the significant highland forests of the central Appalachians, where this forest has been, and remains, the defining element of the environment and the economy. Both historically and today, the interrelation of the forest and people who live here have shaped the ecology, history, culture, economy, and communities of the central Appalachian region.

AFNHA is at the core of the central hardwood forest of the United States, one of the largest temperate deciduous forests in the world. Hallmarks of the region are the distinctive mountain topography and biological diversity of flora and fauna. Streams and rivers that form several of the east's primary watersheds originate in these forested highlands.

The forested terrain in these ancient mountains has structured human history. Indigenous people lived in, hunted, worked the land, and relied on the forest since time immemorial. Much of European colonialera westward migration pushed through or around the mountains. Transportation routes often developed based on native travel routes. The people who stayed and settled built small homesteads and close-knit rural communities.

Life in these mountains forged an Appalachian culture born of isolation and self-sufficiency. Over time, immigration of diverse groups of people, and technological changes in transportation and communication, brought increased connection with the world. These influences created unique folkways, language, crafts, dance, and music that evolved into the central Appalachian traditions that enrich American life and culture today.

At the cusp of the 20th century, the mostly self-sufficient agrarian communities evolved as railroads opened the area to harvesting of the vast forests. This logging boom helped build great cities and fuel the industrial revolution in the U.S. Within a few decades virtually all of the original forest had been cut. This logging boom transformed much of the economy from agrarian to industrial wage labor, which dramatically changed the ecosystem with environmental consequences felt far beyond the mountain borders.

The impact of the wholesale cutting of the Appalachian Forest led to the creation of the eastern national forests to protect watersheds and conserve lands for multiple public uses. Anchored by the Monongahela National Forest, the region's public lands are managed for ecological conservation, public recreation, and forest production. The evolution of scientific forestry thrived here, supporting forest regrowth, through which major strides in forest health, productivity, management, and wood utilization have contributed to a vibrant natural resource-based economy and culture. AFNHA forests today provide a wide range of forest products, as well as habitats that support a variety of plants and animals. The forests also provide scenic beauty and recreation for AFNHA residents and visitors from across the country and around the world.

#### Theme 1. Forest Abundance

Ancient mountains of the Appalachian Forest feature abundant mixed hardwood and red spruce forests, where mountain microclimates and northern and southern species converge to create some of the most biodiverse forest ecosystems in North America.

The Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area encompasses a key section of the central Appalachian highlands. The forests in this region form the core of one of the largest temperate hardwood forests in the world. The long broad ridges, steep slopes, deep gorges and mountain valleys, geologic stability of ancient mountains over long evolutionary history, and confluence of northern and southern species, has resulted in significant biodiversity of plant and animal species. The area features a broad range of micro-habitats preserving numerous species and wildlife populations that at one time existed in abundance, but now only survive in particular places in the region. This rich biodiversity includes an abundance of hardwood tree species, plus red spruce and other conifers, with each forest type growing in specific climate conditions. These forests support a host of lifeforms including plants, mammals, reptiles, birds, amphibians, invertebrates, salamanders, freshwater mussels, crayfish, and fish. The region plays a critical role in safeguarding and buffering the headwaters of key watersheds that serve heavily populated regions of the eastern United States.

The forested mountains of the central Appalachians provide a distinctive ecoregion that is in many ways unique. The Appalachian mountain range has remained geologically stable for more than 245 million years, as time and erosion have worn the once jagged peaks down to a series of ridges and valleys. When glaciers covered much of North America, this region that is now central Appalachia was just beyond their reach – becoming the refuge and seedbed for many species that later spread back north. The climatic diversity in the region creates the complex setting which supports its biological diversity.

As prevailing weather patterns approach from the west, clouds are lifted up and over the Allegheny Front of the Appalachian Mountains. As a result, the west side of the area receives around 60 inches of precipitation annually, while the east side, in the rain shadow of the mountains, may get less than half that amount. Variations in altitude, direction of slope, and soils are also significant, where the climate conditions of a protected mountain valley may be very different from those of an adjacent ridgetop.

The highland mountain areas, reaching to 4,863 feet at Spruce Knob, feature cold soil temperatures with

stands of red spruce and northern hardwoods normally associated with more northerly regions. The highest plateaus and peaks originally featured red spruce forests that grew so thick the sun seemed to not reach through, with dense understories of rhododendrons along the streams that made some areas nearly impassable. Northern hardwoods including sugar maple, red maple, yellow birch, beech, black cherry, and basswood are predominant today, with hemlock intermingled within the hardwoods especially on northern exposures, along streams, and in protected coves mostly along waterways. An active collaborative effort the Central Appalachian Red Spruce Initiative (CASRI) - is working to restore the red spruce



View of restored red spruce forest, with hardwoods in fall color on the farther hillside (Credit: USDA Forest Service, Kelly Bridges)

ecosystem in the higher elevations, to return this forest type to more of its original range. These alpine ecosystems support prime examples of northern species that are found here near the southern limit of their range.

Moving west into the Appalachian Plateau region, the mixed mesophytic (moderate moisture) forest is found, including central hardwoods and cove hardwood types. The central hardwoods are dominated by oak and hickory, while cove hardwoods on the better soils and cooler exposures overlap with northern forest types, but also include yellow poplar, sweet buckeye, white ash, hickory, walnut, red oak, and white oak.

In the Appalachian ridge and valley province on the eastern side, the prevalent forest was originally chestnut and oak, along with sugar maples, beech, and yellow birch on the moist northern slopes and richer bottom land, and chestnut oak and hard pines on the thin soils of the dryer southern and southwest exposures. Today, the chestnut blight has virtually eliminated the native American chestnuts, but otherwise the species composition remains similar with white pine and central hardwoods. On some eastern slopes are dry-site stands of oak and white pine, with prickly pear cactus along with other rare species like shale barren rock cress. Huge oaks, walnuts, yellow poplars, sycamores and other hardwoods grow in the fertile bottomlands. Some prevailing southern species are found here near the northern limit of their range.

These variations in altitude, aspect, soils, and precipitation create conditions for a multitude of diverse ecosystems. More than 100 tree species can be found across the area, many of them valuable for commercial wood products as well as wildlife habitat. Especially valuable are black cherry, sugar maple, and red oak. The extensive old-growth forests with dramatic tree sizes are long past, and only a few isolated patches of undisturbed virgin forest that were not harvested during the logging boom are still

found at preserves like Swallow Falls State Park, Cathedral State Park, and Gaudineer Scenic Area. Some of the regrowing forests found today are relatively large areas containing 70-100 year-old stands that provide habitat for interior-dwelling species. Forest ecosystems often support a variety of canopy tree species at a single site, with thriving understories of ferns, fungi, shrubs, and animal communities. The

larger habitats – some in protected wilderness areas and set aside public lands and others in public and privately owned and managed forests – have the capacity to conserve these unique populations. Areas of early successional forest, evolved from old fields, burned areas, or harvested forests as they regrow, offer valuable habitat diversity for many wildlife species. This includes a range of pollinators that are crucial in supporting the forest's biodiversity. A number of species are unique to the area and over 240 are rare, threatened, or endangered.



The West Virginia Northern Flying Squirrel, which lives in red spruce ecosystems, is listed as an endangered species.

In addition to the forests, the highlands

encompass areas of wetland known as bogs or glades. These wetlands contain open areas with sluggish streams, featuring a variety of mosses and plant communities not usually found in other habitats. They often contain northern species that are rare at this latitude. Some other non-forested natural areas remain in low shrubland, a result of the damage from fires and erosion that have dramatically hindered regrowth of the forest. Bogs can be experienced at sites like the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge and Cranberry Glades Botanical Area.

Natural features throughout the forested mountains include limestone caves, dramatic rock outcroppings, whitewater rivers, and powerful waterfalls. The region's diverse natural features are stunning. All but one of West Virginia's 16 National Natural Landmarks are found in AFNHA's boundaries; most are within the Monongahela National Forest.

The biodiversity and abundance of forest resources can be threatened, or protected, depending on people's actions. Threats such as climate change, pollution, invasive species, developmental pressures, and overuse impact ecosystems and reduce biodiversity. While scientist's response to address these issues is discussed primarily in the Resilient Forest theme, individual understanding, appreciation, and valuing of forest abundance is also essential to long-term environmental health.

"The region's scenic waterways and mountain landscapes provide a haven for unique and varied flora and fauna that offer people limitless opportunities for observation, study, and enjoyment." Hiking through public lands, whether in the Monongahela National Forest or many state parks and forests, gives the opportunity to explore and appreciate the wide diversity of the Appalachian Forest. Activities such as bird-watching, photography, and enjoyment of solitude focus on intrinsic natural values of the forest. Some sites offer interpretation or tree identification, such as the Brooks Arboretum at Watoga State Park. The flora and fauna of the forest can be explored on the

vast public forestlands, and are highlighted at multiple interpretive centers throughout the region such as Cranberry Mountain Nature Center and the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center.

#### Theme 2: Crucible of Isolation

People from many cultures came together in the Appalachian Forest, where geographic isolation and the rough mountain terrain fostered a distinctive Appalachian culture of self-reliance and connection to the land expressed through folkways and living traditions that enrich America today.

The mostly forested central Appalachian mountains impacted the history of how people moved into, lived in, and created community in the area. Challenges of remoteness and difficulties of transportation shaped life here. How people adapted and interacted in these mountains affected their values and livelihoods, creating a unique mountain culture.

Indigenous peoples have been living in and utilizing the forest in this region for at least 14,000 years. The abundant forest provided sustenance, while caves and rock outcroppings were used as early or temporary shelters before they erected buildings and communities. Archaeological evidence and oral histories show that bands of Indigenous North Americans hunted, practiced agriculture, and lived in permanent towns that they would leave and return to cyclically. Mostly, women remained in the towns, practiced agriculture, led family-life, facilitated community decisions, and kept seasonal preparation moving forward; while men, and some women, left to hunt, trap, trade, and conduct diplomacy from mid-spring to late-fall. The towns had to be moved every 20 to 25 years, the length depended on local resources, in order to permit the earth to regenerate. Pre-contact Indigenous people utilized fire management and selectively planting to efficiently use the land, leaving old fields among the forest landscape. Indigenous Nations, including the Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee, and others, as well as their ancestors, lived, hunted, and traded in these mountains and valleys.



Jacob Sites homestead at Seneca Rocks interprets an early settlement cabin and garden.

For millennia, Indigenous communities learned to live and thrive on this landscape. Their worldview expressed as traditional ecological knowledge permitted a way of living that allowed human communities to understand seasonal and cyclical changes of life. Their practices, supported by tradition and archaeology, permitted a lifestyle engaged in leisure time creating aesthetically-designed utilitarian objects.

The earliest Europeans spread disease to the region, well before the arrival of the first European traveler. As they came through the region, brought trade, and eventually settlements, additional waves of infection decimated Indigenous populations. The relentless advance of colonial and American settlement doomed peacemaking and diplomacy efforts, caused discord and war between Nations, and brought conflict with Europeans. With establishment of permanent colonial settlements in the mid-18th century, followed by the American Revolution, disease, displacement, and warfare had reduced the Indigenous presence in the region to almost nothing. While there are no federally-recognized Tribal lands in the area today, many Nations trace their ancestry to these mountains and will share their stories of the land and their people.

The Allegheny Mountains formed a natural barrier that impacted transportation and settlement patterns of westward migration. While much western movement went through or around the mountains, some enterprising settlers followed Native American travel routes to form farming communities in the mountain valleys. The broader valleys, especially those east of the Allegheny Front, were settled earlier. These early routes were later adapted into wagon roads, and then into the few cross-country turnpikes that became the major access through the region. The landscape was predominantly forested until settlers cut the bottomland forests to create farms. Early settlement sites such as Fort Ashby, Fort Edwards, and the Jacob Sites homestead at Seneca Rocks, tell these stories.

Initially, the primary settlers were American colonists of English, Scots-Irish, and German origins. Some brought enslaved Africans with them, but most farms were too small to utilize plantation-style enslavement. Marginalized groups like free Blacks, and religious groups of Amish, Mennonites, and Brethren (Dunkers) found homes in the mountain isolation. Some people with mountain farming traditions, such as the Swiss who settled the community of Helvetia, were drawn to this region.

These farmers adapted to and depended on the forest, clearing small fields and raising livestock on open range through meadows and forest. As Indigenous people had done before them, the newcomers used forest products and materials to furnish shelter, food, fuels, clothing, and tools to sustain their everyday needs. The bounty of products harvested from the forest allowed mountain people a level of independence and economic self-sufficiency, despite their isolation from central markets. The region's terrain led to an agricultural economy based on diverse small family farms utilizing high-pasture grazing and forest-based products.

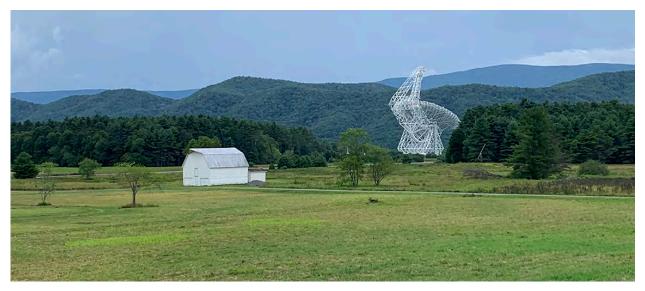
This does not mean the backcountry farmers of the late 18th and early 19th century were primitive or uninvolved with commerce. They regularly moved their goods to market and advocated for improved transportation, a demand that created conflict with the political establishment to the east. Stories of transportation challenges and growth are told along the railroad routes, many now used by excursion trains or hiked as rail trails, as well as interpreted by Western Passages of the Potomac and Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Maryland Heritage Areas. Transportation routes such as the National Road (an All-American Road that also features Casselman Bridge, a National Historic Landmark), the C&O Canal National Historical Park, and turnpikes westward across the mountains (including Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike and Midland Trail National Scenic Byway) can be experienced today. Improved technology came with more settlers, as the ax and adz were supplemented by whip saws and water sawmills to make lumber.

By the time of the Civil War, farming communities in western Virginia throughout the mountains were caught in the conflict of a border region. They depended on key transportation routes to get their goods

to eastern markets across the difficult terrain. The single railroad across the mountains – the B&O – became a target for the Union and the Confederacy, and historic sectional and economic differences between Virginia's prosperous eastern counties and its mountainous frontier set the stage for divided loyalties. The difficult mountain and forest terrain strongly impacted the Civil War in this region; it affected public sentiments, the campaigns, and the type of actions fought, and resulted in a new state. In the 1861 first campaign of the Civil War, General George McClellan secured the critically important B&O Railroad and western Virginia for the Union, making possible the formation of the state of West Virginia. The Civil War story can be explored across the region, including at Philippi, the first land battle of the war, Rich Mountain Battlefield, and state parks at Carnifex Ferry and Droop Mountain Battlefield.

While the lumber boom and industrialization following the Civil War brought pervasive change from farming to a wage-based economy, many elements of the forest-based self-sufficient culture were maintained. Reflecting original homesteading, the first New Deal resettlement community was established at Arthurdale, to enable displaced workers during the Great Depression to be more self-sustaining.

The relative isolation of the area has become an asset, as well as a challenge, in the increasingly populated eastern U.S. Struggles for improved roads are now echoed in the difficulties of internet broadband access. The rural landscape offers a recreation haven that supports quality of life and attracts visitors. It also brings people closer to the night sky at places such as Watoga State Park which has been recently designated as a Dark Sky Park. Green Bank Observatory, where astronomical research using the world's largest steerable radio telescope is feasible because of the surrounding radio quiet zone, is also home to the first parabolic radio telescope, the Reber Radio Telescope, a National Historic Landmark.



The Green Bank Telescope operates amidst rural hills and farms.

Forged by the relative isolation of the mountain terrain, regional versions of the rich Appalachian culture developed and survived. This region has a local population that both historically, and today, cares about, and is strongly connected to, the forest and Appalachian homeland.

Folklore, superstitions, oral history, and other stories, passed from generation to generation, reflect people's own description of themselves and present a window into their culture. Stories show artistic creativity, providing entertainment and shared memory throughout the area. Appalachian English, influenced by the Scots-Irish dialect, is one of the last spoken examples of 17th-century English in the world.

Originally from necessity, people used the abundant natural resources of the forest to create practical objects, which now provide inspiration for today's heritage artisans. Wood crafting had its roots in the self-sufficient lifestyle of early settlers, providing a method of creating economic independence. Utilitarian objects became artistic works of beauty in such items as white oak baskets, farm sleds, and twilled hickory bark chair seats. From individual artists creating for their own joy, to burgeoning cottage industries, the craft tradition is alive and growing throughout the area. Sites like Spruce Forest Artisans Village and multiple craft and art galleries share these traditions today.

European immigrants and African-Americans came to this region to help build railroads and communities, as skilled craftsmen, stonemasons and other artisans, tradesmen, farmers, miners, and timber workers. Towns like Davis and Thomas attracted immigrants from many countries to work in logging and mining, including Italians and Irish who helped build turnpikes and railroads. Craft, music, dance, folkways, and stories were enriched by influences of diverse ethnic identities, evolving into a regional culture with many indicators of ancestral origins.

Appalachian, or "old-time" music, has distinctive roots in this region. Local tunes celebrate places, songs commemorate events, and instrumental music is played and danced to at several locations. The unique music and dance styles that have developed, and are celebrated here, have retained a rare integrity and are still being handed down and taught to young people today, encouraged by programs such as those offered at the Augusta Heritage Center. The Augusta Heritage Center is among the organizations who



A traditional dance with live local music and caller in the small town of Harman (Credit: Gerry Milnes, Augusta Heritage Center)

help document, conserve, and share Appalachian culture. The Mountain Music Trail as well, supports and promotes venues for live music.

Cultural pride is celebrated through the area's many fairs and festivals. The Mountain State Forest Festival held annually in Elkins and the Autumn Glory Festival in Oakland both celebrate forest heritage and beauty. The Woodchopping Festival in Webster Springs draws some of the world's finest woodchoppers and lumbermen to demonstrate their skills and lifestyle to visitors. The choppers come from as near as the scenic mountains of Webster County and as

far away as Australia and New Zealand to compete. Community festivals abound, many are centered around the forest or forest products such as native ramps and maple syrup.

Changing economies following World War II included adding more producers of forest industry end products such as flooring and cabinets. Economies diversified with small manufacturing, service jobs, tourism, and growing high-tech opportunities. Building on 19th century resorts such as at Berkeley Springs and The Greenbrier, a National Historic Landmark, tourism today is anchored by major resorts at Deep Creek Lake, Canaan Valley, and Snowshoe, resulting in widespread and increasing recreation and heritage tourism throughout all counties. Today the coexistence of tourism and forest industry – both dependent on the land in vastly differing ways and both critical to the well-being of the economy – is an opportunity and challenge embraced by AFNHA.

Stereotypes of Appalachia as primitive, backward, and beaten by poverty are rejected by most residents of the area. Instead, people find a spirit of independence, strong commitment to sense of place, and pride in folkways and culture.

The region's culture is alive today in farm families and oldsters' stories, in community celebrations, dances, and dinners, in home craft and cottage industries, in heritage sites and restored inns, in woodchopper contests and shows of skill. This is a living American heritage, based on the past, but adapting and evolving thanks to today's artists, workers, and teachers.

#### Theme 3. Logging Boom Builds the Nation

On the cusp of the 20th century, the expansion of railroads opened the widespread harvest of the Appalachian Forest in a logging boom that helped fuel industrial expansion for the Eastern United States but devastated the landscape and altered mountain economies.

The end of the Civil War brought sweeping change, as wartime factories converted to peacetime production, and the rail transportation system built to serve wartime needs expanded to serve rapid industrialization. Mechanization of agriculture brought higher productivity, which marginalized subsistence farms and those on steep land. Across the nation, many subsistence farmers gave up farming for wage work in factories, mines, or logging camps. This migration was especially pronounced in the AFNHA region.

The industrial revolution brought increased demand for timber products for fuel, construction of factories and housing, mining timbers, paper, and consumer goods. The number of states in the nation tripled between 1860 and 1910. Since much of the rest of the eastern United States previously had been cleared for farmland, mountainous and remote areas where forests still predominated were targeted for timber production. While the bulk of timber production moved west, the central Appalachian forest offered hardwoods and timber products convenient to eastern markets. The AFNHA region, with its highland spruce and abundant hardwoods, was a key part of this trend.

In western Maryland the original small-scale, local timber industry was considerably altered by the construction of the B&O Railroad across the mountains in 1851. By providing new and distant potential markets for local lumber products, it lured large-scale timber capitalists to the wooded hills of western Maryland for the first time. This provided the base of operations for expanding into the forest highlands to the south.

Following the Civil War, entrepreneurs sought to harvest the forests and rich resources of the mountains. Initially, lowland pine areas were cut, and the logs floated out on rivers. But the development of railroads into the mountains enabled the wholesale cutting of the Appalachian Forest that contributed to the country's industrial development.

Promotion and boosterism showcased the area's rich natural resources and proximity to eastern markets. Significant financing and complex business organization were needed to acquire the land and build the infrastructure to provide for maximum timber production. Capital to invest and exploit these resources came from outside industrialists who built the railroads, extracted the resources, and exported them to the rest of the country. They built new towns, erected large sawmills, laid rails into the woods, and provided work for thousands of men.

These industrialists, led by West Virginia Senators Henry Gassaway Davis and his son-in-law, Stephen B. Elkins, moved in the social circles of the magnates of the day such as John D. Rockefeller, Jay Gould, and Andrew Carnegie. During this transition period, when the sectional conflict gave way to new issues of industrialization on the political stage, industrialists including Davis and Elkins gained control of the region's fuels and raw materials, as well as its political power, to further industrial growth. They utilized the new state of West Virginia to establish their national power base.

Davis built his mountaintop resort at Deep Creek, Garrett County, Maryland, as a base of operations to attract investors. From there, Davis and Elkins led in building the railroads that opened the highlands to wholesale harvesting of its forests and minerals. Along with other industrial leaders, they bought or gained control of huge tracts of land, developed the timber and coal resources, and created jobs. The beehive coke ovens of the Elkins Coal and Coke Company (a National Historic Landmark) in Preston County, West Virginia, are a legacy of their involvement in extractive industry.

They also established new towns, such as Elkins, West Virginia, where they built mansions and established community services. Graceland, Davis's summer home named for his youngest daughter Grace, and Halliehurst, the summer home of Stephen B. Elkins, named for Davis's daughter and Elkins's wife Hallie Davis Elkins, are now recognized in the Davis and Elkins National Historic Landmark District. The two properties are the dominant features of Davis and Elkins College, which is located on the grounds of these former homes.



Graceland mansion has been restored as an inn and conference center.

These leaders used the power base they built in western Maryland and West Virginia to support their national influence. A self-made man, Davis was the first Democratic Senator from West Virginia (1872 – 1883) and was nominated as the vice-presidential running mate for Alton B. Parker in 1904. Elkins, Davis's son-in-law and business partner, was a political strategist who ran James G. Blaine's campaign in 1884 and served as Secretary of War under President Benjamin Harrison. He served as Republican Senator from West Virginia from 1895 until his death in 1911. Through his long political career, Elkins' attention was largely centered on promoting the political needs of industries.

The abundant central Appalachian forest was uniquely positioned geographically to fuel the growing U.S. economy by the early 20th century. Raw materials for lumber and pulp, and products such as building materials, chemicals, clothespins, tanned hides, and charcoal were shipped out of the region to

supply the growing nation. During the half century between 1870 and 1920, the upland forests were subjected to such intensive logging that the original forests had been essentially eliminated by the end of this period. The lumber boom was declining by 1920, mostly due to overcutting. At its peak in 1909, logging in West Virginia produced 1.5 billion board feet of lumber in a single year.

The social and economic fabric of the region changed with the coming of the lumber boom, as self-sufficient farms and small farming communities gave way to lumber mill boomtowns and a wage-based economy. The social consequences were widespread, as small mountain farms were less able to compete in the increasingly industrial markets, while timber work offered steady wage opportunities. This led to the



Timber workers cut the Appalachian Forest using hand tools.

general movement of young men from farms to logging camps and company towns. The railroads and logging also brought significant immigration of a more diverse workforce from other parts of the country and across the world.

The wholesale cutting of these forests was done with hand saws and hard labor. In the early days trees were cut with axes and the logs were dragged to the mill by oxen, mules, or horses. A six-man crew could cut and prepare about 225 logs a day. Prior to the railroads, most of these logs were then moved downstream on flooding rivers. After logging railroads were built, the logs were loaded on railroad cars by steam-powered log loaders and taken to the mill by rail utilizing steam-powered geared locomotives. By the late 19th century, there were dramatic improvements in milling technology and movement of logs. Logging railroads were laid into the mountains, and geared locomotives developed to haul logs on steep slopes, moving them to sawmills and mainline railroads. The steam engine replaced water power in lumber mills with circular saws and later band saws providing much more efficient cutting of lumber.

The cutting and skidding of logs often took place miles from the mill and the lumber town. Men working in the woods lived in camps of up to 100 men. Food was hauled to the camps by the log train, cooked and served by camp cooks. Most stayed at camp for a week or more before coming to the nearest town. When they visited town, they had a boisterous celebration making such communities as Durbin and Cass roaring, wide-open places. Most of the camps were transitory, but some of these towns survive in some form.



Rows of worker houses in the company town of Cass are now available for lodging at Cass Scenic Railroad State Park.

The original company town of Cass remains largely intact, now as Cass Scenic Railroad State Park, where original buildings are interpreted and used, including workers' houses as park cabins. The scenic railroad rides in open-air converted logging cars are pulled by original steam logging (Shay) locomotives.

Extensive, destructive fires were frequent at the early logging operations when the remaining slash burned – often from sparks from railroads or equipment. These fires sometimes destroyed areas of uncut forest and caused long-term damage to the soil and landscape. The cutting of the forests, combined with fires and erosion, denuded the countryside. As the original forest was depleted, logging jobs diminished. Wildlife became scarce due to lack of food, habitat and polluted streams as well as overhunting. Downstream flooding brought national attention to the changed landscape upstream in the mountains. The 1930s brought dramatic change both economically and in the treatment of the forest. The decline of the lumber boom left many areas of the mountains overpopulated for the remaining job opportunities. Thus, the hard times that became the Great Depression were already well-known. New Deal programs such as the homestead resettlement communities of Arthurdale and Tygarts Valley Homesteads and employment programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) aimed to alleviate these conditions. The New Deal era also saw the development of the Federal Writers Project which documented local culture and inspired present day storytelling like the Traveling 219: The Seneca Trail multimedia project through the heart of AFNHA.

Throughout the changes brought by the logging boom, local communities often lagged behind the pace of change in the rest of the country. The mountainous terrain remained a hindrance, as most development of factories bypassed the region in favor of abundant flat land with better transportation and infrastructure elsewhere. The central Appalachians remained largely reliant on extractive industry with a high degree of absentee ownership and control. While this isolation resulted in slow infrastructural development as compared to the rest of the country, it provided for a retention of culture and traditions that persists today.

#### Theme 4. Resilient Forest

#### Recovery of the landscape from the logging boom shows the resilience of the Appalachian Forest, with scientific management today conserving forestlands for multiple purposes including ecological stewardship, recreation and tourism, and sustainable harvest of forest products.

In modern times, the partners throughout the region are working to find solutions for economic development that are compatible with its natural resources and cultural values. The growth of value-added products derived from the forest, and diversification of employment including tourism, are helping the region's communities find success in the modern world.

Scientific forest management in the United States began near the end of the 1800s. Prior to this, as eastern cities grew and settlers moved west into new territories, forests thought to be inexhaustible were eliminated to create farm pastures and fields, or to provide building materials for new settlements. An enormous demand grew for raw materials to build and fuel factories and urban communities as the nation entered the industrial revolution, fueling the wholesale cutting of one of the last remaining eastern forest systems, the central Appalachian forest.

In 1886 the European-trained forester Bernard Fernow was named director of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Division of Forestry. Fernow cooperated with timber companies to promote efficient use of the forests and wood products, and the development of professional forestry. Fernow's successor, and first chief of the USDA Forest Service, was Gifford Pinchot, often referred to as the Father of Forestry in the U.S. Closely allied with the Progressives, and having influence with President Theodore Roosevelt, Pinchot began to call for measures to counterbalance the effects of the big industrialist companies and protect forests from widespread destruction, aiming to show that forestry pays. Pinchot and the Progressives influenced federal conservation policy to include retention of public lands, planning and professional management for natural resources, and self-financing for conservation programs. Regulation and management of the forests would produce benefits for the public, instituting the doctrine of multiple use and management for sustained yield of the forest. While the first national forests were established on land already owned by the federal government in the western U.S., Pinchot saw the need for establishing eastern forests as well. In 1907, at the request of George Craig & Son Lumber Company, Austrian forester Max Rothkugel, an associate of Pinchot's, established the Rothkugel Plantation near Winterburn, West Virginia. This was the first attempt to apply management practices of silviculture and forestry to West Virginia's forests and cutover areas. European larch and Norway spruce planted by Rothkugel can still be seen on an AFNHAsupported interpretive trail at this location.

When severe flooding – attributed to the lack of forest cover in the mountains – devastated Pittsburgh in 1907, the nation began to take notice. With Pinchot's urging, the Weeks Act of 1911 was passed, providing the legislative foundation for the acquiring of eastern national forests. As a result, the Monongahela National Forest was created in 1920, initially to protect the highland watersheds, and later authorized for timber production and management for multiple resources. During this era, many West Virginia and Maryland state parks and forests also were established to provide additional public lands to benefit society as the forests recovered from early cutting, fires, and agricultural uses.

During the years of the Great Depression in the 1930s, CCC camps dotted the national forest and state lands and put many young men to work planting trees, fighting fires, and building roads and recreational facilities. Many of these CCC structures are still in use today, such as the pavilions at Stuart Recreation Area, and cabins and buildings at Watoga and other state parks.

Scientists, lands managers, and conservation stewards work together to conserve and restore ecosystems, enhance habitats, control invasive species, and protect rare and endangered species. The Appalachian Forest has contributed to, and benefited from, scientific research encompassing ecosystem restoration, forest hydrology, wildlife management, climate change, and silviculture.

Federal, state, and private research facilities and programs study the effects of various impacts on forest management practices. The Fernow Experimental Forest, located on Forest Service land near Parsons and named after Bernard Fernow, was established in 1934 as a premier forest research laboratory managed by the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Research Station. The Fernow conducts long-term ecological and silvicultural research. West Virginia University graduated its first professional foresters in 1939. Watershed protection groups such as Friends of Cheat and Trout Unlimited conduct testing and mitigation of water quality and stream health. Forest Service, university, and industry experimental forests are used for research on forest ecosystems to understand best management practices, wildlife management, silviculture, environmental threats, and climate change.



Research forester Melissa Thomas-Van Gundy gives a tour of the Fernow to international visitors. (Credit: USDA Forest Service, Kelly Bridges)

Through the efforts and experiences of these professional foresters and the experimental forests, the science of managing American temperate hardwood forests was developed, as differentiated from coniferous forests of the southern and western U.S., or the centuries-long experience of European management. These lessons in how to best manage the Appalachian forests for sustained yield and healthy ecosystems were instrumental to the development of the recommendations used in modern forest management.

As agriculture declined and the forests regrew, the acreage of forested land increased. Some remained in large tracts owned by large, usually out-of-state, corporations; others became government lands. Some tracts were subdivided after cutting and sold to individual landowners, and still today a significant portion of the forest is in the hands of small, nonindustrial, private forest owners. Some hold the land for timber production or as a woodlot associated with small farms assisted by programs to encourage good forest management. Increasingly, forest lands are owned by those whose primary purpose is residential or recreational.

The modern trends that reduce forestland are often associated with development activities, such as roads and power rights-of-way, surface mining, and urban sprawl. But since the 1920s, the challenges of the mountain terrain and economics have helped maintain low population density and impose limits on large-scale agriculture and development. However, the forest growth rate exceeds harvest, and forest cover continues to increase throughout the area

Another factor affecting forest use is the rise of the environmental movement and the increasing value given to reserved forestland and landscape-level ecosystem management. The AFNHA region had a nationally significant impact with the landmark Monongahela Decision of 1970, establishing the precedent of public policy determining forest resource management decisions. Keeping residents involved in the dialogue that determines the future of their forest is key to the future of forests in the AFNHA.



Harvesting of timber continues to be important to rural communities.

The processing and manufacturing of forest products is one of the largest contributors to the economy of the region. As the majority of forests here are composed of broadleaf trees, the industry specializes in the processing of high-guality hardwood lumber for the production of fine furniture and flooring. Lowquality logs are also used for composite wood products like oriented strand board, laminated veneer lumber, paper, pellet fuel and charcoal. Increasingly, value-added wood manufacturing companies such as flooring and cabinetry plants, are locating in the region. Outdoor recreation is a major activity throughout the Appalachian Forest region, enjoyed by large numbers of local residents and visitors. Education and interpretation to encourage low-

impact recreation such as Leave No Trace principles can be important in minimizing damage from these activities. Hunting and fishing, camping, hiking, biking, birdwatching, outdoor photography, canoeing, kayaking, rafting, rock climbing, caving, and skiing all contribute to the economic value – and the appreciation – of the natural forest in the area.

The forest of the central Appalachian region is both a home and a means of livelihood. It provides beauty, recreation, and a peaceful retreat for people, as well as habitat for the rich forest life. The forest is valued today by the many people who live on the same land as their ancestors, as well as by newer residents and visitors who appreciate the region's special qualities. Scientists study the forest for understanding and stewardship, foresters manage the forest for sustainable harvests and resource conservation, and the public enjoys the forest for recreation and scenic splendor. Hunters and hikers, birders and bikers, foresters and ecologists, residents and visitors, all value the healthy forests exemplified in the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area.

## **Goal 2: Share the Stories of Forest Heritage through Education**, **Interpretation**, and **Experiences**

#### **Existing Interpretation**

This interpretive plan will build on robust interpretive opportunities provided across AFNHA. AFHA Inc. operates the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center interpretive museum, and has helped develop signage for a number of interpretive trails and sites, as well as on-line story maps. Many partners provide interpretation about their stories that relate to AFNHA themes, with examples of museums from Allegany Museum in Cumberland to North House Museum in Lewisburg that offer exhibits and programming related to settlement, transportation, logging boom and industrialization, local communities and culture. The Beverly Heritage Center features four primary exhibits focused on growth of the county's first county seat, transportation and settlement along the historic turnpike, the Civil War actions to protect the turnpike that led to West Virginia statehood, and losing the county seat to the logging boom town of Elkins. Other interpreted historic sites such as the C&O Canal Museum, Fort Ashby frontier fort, and Arthurdale New Deal resettlement community each tell stories related to the Crucible of Isolation theme of AFNHA. Programming sharing Appalachian culture by Augusta Heritage Center, and other venues, include concerts, dances, and craft demonstrations. Cass Scenic Railroad State Park, and a number of railroad and logging related exhibits and historic sites, tell the logging boom stories. In addition to visitor center exhibits, the Forest Abundance theme is often highlighted by interpretive signs such as at the Cranberry Glades boardwalk and pull-offs along the Highland Scenic Highway. The Resilient Forest theme is exemplified through forest management stories at interpreted trails in Rothkugel Plantation, Kindness Demonstration Area, and Fernow Experimental Forest. Many partners and communities offer events that include interpretation storytelling such as reenactments, nature days, and community festivals.

The objectives, strategies, and actions outlined in this chapter will build on this existing interpretation to accomplish Goal 2, Sharing the Story.

#### **Objective:** Provide Quality Interpretation Based on AFNHA Thematic Framework

## **Strategy:** Develop and interpret a forest heritage narrative focused on assets, conservation, and stewardship

AFNHA has the role to convene and communicate a common forest heritage narrative among partners and visitors. This is based not only on the thematic narrative and interpretive matrix, but also on the ongoing conversation between partners to enhance understanding and shared viewpoints surrounding this narrative. Interpretation involves both the research and conversation of thematic narratives, and the ways these stories are shared with the diverse audiences. AFNHA will follow, and encourage others to use, best practices and interpretive principles in interpretive and educational programs and products.

"I know the framework is good because I can drop every single thing I'm doing in this realm into one of the themes, and I can use the framework to influence how I craft the stories I tell in the activities we do." AFNHA will develop and share research, narratives, and bibliographies to be used to inform these conversations, and to support the interpretive products and programs presented. Sponsoring a context narrative for Native American history and viewpoints has been identified as a short-term project, which may set an example for research on other under-represented topics. AFHA Inc. will help identify and share this scholarship to partners, as one part of the information clearinghouse role. AFNHA focuses on the interrelationship of forests and the people who live there, on conservation for multiple purposes in different situations, and on encouraging responsible stewardship of natural, historic, and cultural resources and stories. Stewardship includes both best practices of management based on scientific understanding of sustainable resources and encouraging an ethic of stewardship among resource users to protect assets for the future. In some cases, this will involve difficult conversations – for example, discussing differing approaches to conservation between some environmental organization partners and forest industry partners. It is not AFNHA's role to dictate answers to these questions; rather AFNHA is committed to creating a common table to discuss those viewpoints, to help move toward finding common ground where there can be agreement, and to encourage civil and responsible expression of viewpoints where partners disagree.

#### Strategy: Provide interpretation to diverse audiences

Good interpretation must take into account a wide array of audiences and learning styles. Needs and interests of different audiences shape the information content visitors are seeking, as well as the format in which they take in information. People vary in their preference for written, visual, auditory, and experiential learning. Audiences will vary widely in their style of engaging with the material, and their degree of interest. The casual visitor may only look at a few images or read a headline, or only listen to the introduction of a program. The mainstream visitor will look at images and a sampling of the text and will pay attention to the parts of the program that interest them. The serious visitor will read nearly everything, pay close attention to the program, and will want to learn more. Designing interpretive experiences that satisfy the most serious, without boring the casual visitor, is a real challenge. In many cases, different types of products or program experiences may be needed to reach the full range of audiences. The following section describes known audiences, as well as strategies and specific actions that will enable AFNHA's network of partners to reach them.

#### Audiences

Out-of-area or out-of-state visitors have varied interests, as described below. Most of these visitors will not be familiar with the history, culture, and natural amenities of the region to start with. They may be interested in stories of the region and how that history relates to their own interests and experience.

- Get-away trips or long weekends, often from urban areas within less than a day's drive, are a significant visitor group. If they have a positive experience, and see more of interest they would like to experience, this is a prime group for return visits and increased engagement.
- While the traditional long vacation may have declined in recent years, still the mountains attract
  visitors from outside the region, those on longer road trips, and international travelers. They will
  want to learn about, absorb, and experience the variety of the area. They may need more
  contextual information about an area they have not experienced before, and in some cases may
  need translation from other languages. Often, this may be their only trip to the area.

Local and regional resident visitors are from the region or within a day-trip distance. They will have a variety of interests but are more likely to be familiar with the area and to have intrinsic interest in, and connection to, special places and stories. This group has more potential for repeat visitation and can share word of mouth about their experiences. They are also potential supporters of the NHA and / or of individual sites and programs.

- Residents from within AFNHA communities may visit sites multiple times, attend special events, and bring friends. They will be more likely to attend off season events and activities.
- Day travelers from within the region may explore sites in other communities and may also be repeat visitors and attend multiple events.

- Second-home residents are in the area with some regularity and have chosen connection to the region, even if they have a primary home elsewhere.
- Local residents who are not usually motivated by outdoor recreation, heritage, or cultural travel may have different interests from the visitors who come for those reasons. This group often includes underserved people and those with accessibility challenges, whether cultural, financial, transportation, or disability. Dedicated efforts will be needed to engage them and offer opportunities and participation that may reach their community, family, or personal interests.



Families with children are excited to view Blackwater Falls.

Whether visitors are from out of the area or are residents of the region, audience interests will vary:

- General interest audience Traveling for multiple reasons, this audience often includes adult small groups and families. They may be exploring the area and communities, driving for scenic beauty, or looking for something to do. Interpretation can provide an overview and pique their interest in interpretive stories.
- Family groups with children This audience also travels for multiple reasons, but interpretation and experiences for them needs to account for the varying interests and needs of different family members and a variety of ages. Children should be provided with interpretations specific to them, not just a simplified version of adult messages.
- Generational audiences Audiences may be categorized by generational groups. Age and generational characteristics may affect interests and activity levels, as well as, in some cases, learning style preferences and comfort with technology.
- Niche interest visitors Individuals interested in specific topics will be looking for different types of interpretation than more general visitors. Many of them will be studiers looking for in-depth information with a high degree of accuracy. This audience is also a source of long-term support, contributing to stewardship of the resources. Niche interest topics may include:

- People interested in specific historical eras or topics Topics include early settlement, Civil War, logging or industrial history, railroads, architecture, etc.
- Cultures and ethnic groups This audience may include Native Americans, African Americans, immigrant groups, and other groups with ties to the region.
- Family or community history buffs This audience includes genealogists and family or community reunion visitors.
- Visitors seeking Appalachian culture, food, art, and music People who want to experience the culture, in addition to learning about it, may engage with local experiences through media or in-person connections, events, performances, participation, and shopping opportunities.
- Nature studiers This audience includes birders or people interested in wildlife or plants.
- Outdoor recreation visitors Many of these visitors come to participate in specific recreational
  experiences and may be less likely to intentionally engage with interpretation. They can be
  offered opportunities, both in preparation for their trip and while recreating, to learn more about
  the outdoor experience, stewardship of the environment, and the historic events that occurred
  on the landscape they are traversing. Trail users commented in planning feedback on the value
  of learning about other topics history, culture, nature as an additional bonus to their trail
  experience.
- Group tours Motorcoach tours and groups will usually be following pre-planned itineraries, often with step-on guides. Quality training for these guides as interpreters can help reach a larger audience. Sites visited by groups can offer enhanced interpretive experiences adapted to their interests and demographics.
- People with specific accessibility challenges This audience includes people with physical, visual, hearing, learning, and language challenges. It is important to provide accessible interpretation within the primary interpretive experience to the extent possible, and with alternative access options when needed.
- Interpreters and front-line tourism workers This audience includes group tour operators and guides, visitor center and heritage site managers and docents, outfitters, and hospitality industry front-line workers who can be trained to share effectively both interpretation about themes and information about the area. They can be offered how-to training so they can share interpretive messages and support cross-promotion to encourage broader visitation.

The following audience groups are addressed in the Educational Opportunities section (below):

- Curriculum-oriented visitors This educational audience includes participants in workshops and learning opportunities for specific topics, life-long learners, and college students. They will often want more depth, and devote more time, than a more casual tourist visitor.
- Youth groups This audience includes school groups in classroom and out-of-school enrichment, field trips, and activities, for classes, home schooled students, and youth groups such as scouts and 4-H. Interpretation needs to be engaging for student interest, to be keyed to the appropriate age group(s), and whenever possible tied to curriculum standards for specific classes or programs. Interpretive roles can include both directly delivered youth interpretation, and train-the-trainer opportunities for teachers and youth leaders.

## **Strategy:** Develop visitor experiences using interpretive programs and products based on AFNHA themes

AFNHA partners will use the thematic framework described in the thematic narrative and the interpretive matrix in Appendix B to guide interpretation for programs, products, and experiences. In general, AFHA Inc. will focus on regional and networked interpretation – the larger stories and overarching context and connectivity in the region. AFNHA partners are more likely to interpret stories related to their specific sites and assets, putting them into the context of AFNHA themes. The concepts and ideas, topics and stories in the Interpretive Matrix will be a guide to interpretation options to share and will continue to grow with future research and partner input.

Some of the priority ideas to share will include those highlighted in the action plan. This includes the evolution of the region with influences from the mountain geography, transportation challenges, and settlement patterns, and how that history impacted the forest, communities, and Appalachian culture. Native American Tribes, African-Americans, and immigrant ethnic groups will tell their own stories and share their impact on history and culture. One focus is on the logging boom era, including its connections with national politics, and the long-lasting impacts on the land, on communities, and on people's

"AFNHA could provide resources to organizations in need, such as interpretation help to tell the stories in meaningful way, or help with historical research and photo archives. By creating cross network stories, each location shares what is meaningful for itself, while helping add to the larger story."

livelihoods. AFNHA will explore the influence of the mountains and forest experience in the evolution of Appalachian art, craft, music, dance, food and folkways, from early settlement to heritage-inspired traditions still evolving today. AFNHA will reach out across Appalachia, to understand and explore the similarities, differences, and pride in Appalachian culture in the face of pervasive challenges and negative stereotypes. Along with interpreting the stories of history and culture, AFNHA will encourage stewardship concepts of cultural conservation and appreciation, and preservation of historic buildings and places.

Ideas explored will also focus on the natural resources and assets, such as sharing understanding of ecosystems, habitats, watershed, flora, and fauna, including their significance and strategies for ecosystem restoration and protection of rare, threatened, and endangered species. Interpretation will



AFNHA AmeriCorps members serving with Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge lead visitors on a snowshoe tour of wintertime ecology on the refuge.

also focus on ecosystem threats, invasive species, and stewardship needs and practices. AFNHA will help foster a better understanding of the complexity of scientific forest management, and how this is different now from the primitive cutting practices of the logging boom era. This can include best practices for sustainability and conservation, and various options to meet different forest management goals. AFNHA will also educate recreational users to raise awareness of environmental stewardship, including best practices like not spreading invasives and following Leave No Trace principles.

Interpretation provides visitor connection to the assets and stories of AFNHA. This can be delivered in a variety of ways, which sometimes overlap within a given situation. These may include:

- Programming (personal interpretation) where the interpreter is interacting directly with the audience. This includes programs such as talks, guided tours, presentations, living history, and demonstrations. They may be individually presented by staff or docent volunteers, based on an outline, concept or a script. In some cases, they may be recorded for audio, video, or digital repeat presentations.
- Physical media products (often known as nonpersonal interpretation) generally offer a selfguided experience, including products such as exhibits, waysides, signs, and brochures.
- Digital / virtual media, including websites, interactive programs, webinars, livestreams, internet-based videos, or smart phone tours or apps offer interpretive experiences without in-person contact. These may be, self-guided experiences, or may convey a program with interaction such as a livestreamed presentation or video-conference experience.
- Audio / video media using recorded or live programming also offers interpretation without in-person contact. This may be



The Beverly Heritage Center exhibit on African American experience in Randolph County, was created by an AFNHA AmeriCorps member, with help from Kathy "Kanika" Marshall who found her enslaved ancestor in Beverly.

audio only, images, or video programming, either presented live or recorded. These may be incorporated into digital media, as a component of exhibits, or stand-alone such as audio driving tours.

• Interactive experiences include visitor participation in the interpretive activity. Some examples of these include hands-on interactive museum exhibits, learning to make a cultural craft, or participating in a dance.

These interpretive delivery modes can create a variety of types of experiences. They also often overlap and can be offered in a variety of ways.

- Cognitive delivery is intended to make intellectual connections. Content information for a topic or story should be related to a theme. This is what most people think of first for developing an interpretive panel or a tour script. Care should be taken to keep the content connected to universal values that will reach the audience, and to use headlines and formatting to convey meaning to those in the audience who chose to not read the full text.
- Emotional content moves people to feel connected, such as through personal stories, interviews, or oral history. This is often conveyed through personal interpretation by engaging guides or programs, living history, or audio or video featuring individual stories.
- Participatory delivery encourages people to take part in activities. Planning participants frequently spoke of the value of these experiences as a way to set the region apart as an engaging destination. This goes beyond observing to activity. Workshops where participants

create art, theater, or learn to play music, and community dances where the audience participates are examples that combine interpretive learning with participation. In some cases, the activity itself can be considered interpretation – such as for trail users or volunteers providing care for the resource.

• Sensory experiences reinforce interpretation by engaging people's senses. This can be accomplished by adding sounds or smells to an exhibit, tour, or program. It can also be self-discovery by the audience, such as the reflective experience of a natural area, garden, historic building, or the enjoyment of music or food.

Expanding interpretation to engage diverse audiences and tell AFNHA stories will be a shared responsibility across the AFNHA network. Asset sites and partner organizations, especially those open to the public or providing public programming, will support interpretation and visitor experience related to the significance of their own site, putting it in context of the AFNHA themes. AFHA Inc., the coordinating entity, will encourage and offer support for this partner site interpretation related to their own assets, stories, and locations. AFNHA can offer training in principles and techniques for interpreters and tourism workers, including site partners, docents, tour guides, product developers, teachers, and youth group leaders, to improve skills and the quality of interpretation delivery. AFNHA services will include:

- Development of site expectations and best practice criteria, and encouraging partner sites to engage with and use those tools
- Encouraging interpretation connected with the AFNHA thematic framework
- Offering NHA grants for interpretation
- Providing AmeriCorps member service for site interpretation
- Offering interpretive technical assistance
- Encouraging participation in regional packages, cross-promotion, and co-branding.

#### Strategy: Create interpretation connecting AFNHA themes across the region

AFHA Inc. will prioritize focus on regional interpretive experiences, and on those activities that help to connect the stories of AFNHA as a region. The following projects are underway or anticipated within the first few years following completion of the management plan.

#### Appalachian Forest Discovery Center (AFDC)

This museum, housed in the historic Darden Mill in downtown Elkins, has been offering exhibit interpretation about the region since 2014. The building – a historic grist mill built during the logging boom – has significant interpretive value in itself.

AFHA Inc. acquired the historic Darden Mill property in 2021. It will serve as both an interpretive and administrative hub for the region, and continued historic preservation of this property is included in Goal 1. The management plan recommendation is to continue developing this facility as the AFNHA's primary visitor center / museum. In addition, the West Virginia Railroad Museum is a tenant on the second floor of the Darden Mill, interpreting the history of West Virginia railroading,

"If interpretation on the forest and forest heritage is something AFNHA takes on, there are so many opportunities to do more... signage and co-branding are two important opportunities."

and connecting to the building's location on the former Elkins railyard. Rehabilitation of the property under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties has been ongoing since 2002. The West Virginia SHPO helped fund the early stages of the project, including a preservation deed covenant on the property, and continues to provide guidance. Future work accomplished with federal funding will include SHPO consultation and will require Section 106 review.

Inside, half of the AFDC space is a stationary exhibit introducing the Appalachian Forest and the heritage area themes. This orientation exhibit in the Darden Mill will be updated with the new themes from the interpretive plan and based on visitor and docent feedback over recent years. Updating these exhibits is prioritized for the first three years of the plan implementation. The remaining exhibit space has featured annual rotating exhibits on topics such as Appalachian culture, logging boom era workers, ethnic group influences, ecosystems, forestry, public lands, and for 2022, cultural uses of plants. Programs related to the rotating exhibits are often offered through the season, and select content from these exhibits is usually added to the website when the physical exhibit is taken down. Continuing to offer changing exhibits on a variety of topics, and related in-person programming, will keep interest high and avoid stagnation. The AFDC also offers the opportunity to share visitor information for sites across the region and hosts a small gift shop.



Appalachian Forest Discovery Center exhibits interpret different aspects of the forest.

#### **Orientation Exhibits**

Exhibits at gateways and major attractions are a new recommendation for conveying the sense and significance of the Appalachian Forest throughout the area. Orientation exhibits will introduce and share AFNHA themes and the region's overarching story more widely. Planning will identify the practical design or style of exhibits – such as pop-up banners, a small indoor standing exhibit in an existing visitor center, outdoor kiosk, or wayside. These will be primarily consistent in content, with appropriate individualization to the local partner and location. Obvious gateways and high-visitation hubs will be selected for these exhibits, to be placed within partner organizations. The timeline for deployment of the orientation exhibits is within the first five years.

#### Thematic Tours

Thematic tours, itineraries, passports, and other networked packages have long been an interest for AFNHA. From the earliest days of the forest heritage initiative, thematic tours were a priority, and several are featured on the current website. Changing technology and vetting of information accuracy have

been challenges. With completion of the management plan, reviewing how to best implement connecting sites to create larger destinations will be a renewed priority. In addition to current use of ArcGIS Story Maps, AFNHA will investigate other applications, technology tools, and types of packages to identify which will be most practical, user-friendly, and feasible to develop and maintain. These may include thematic tour or clustering options, suggested itineraries, on-the-ground thematic trails that use markers or interpretive signage, networked events, challenges, scavenger hunts or other games, and / or passport programs including NPS passports. All interpretive tools will offer information and interpretation about the sites and how they fit into AFNHA themes. Most of these packages will be based on a system of identified partner sites who meet appropriate criteria and agree to participate in the program. In some cases, printed brochures or wayside signage may be a tour product, but for flexibility and updating of accurate information, much of the product delivery will be virtual. Package frameworks will be evaluated and planned within the first two years, with implementation ongoing.

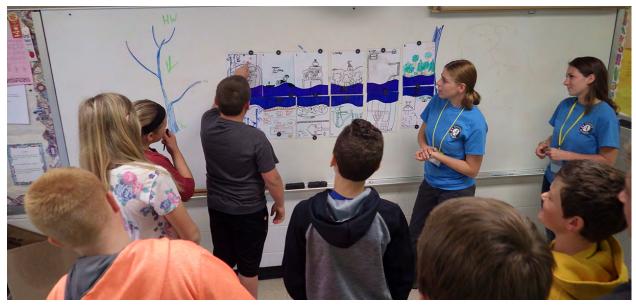
The coordinating entity may also develop selected individual interpretive products related to the themes, based on resources available and priority needs. Traveling exhibits developed by AFHA Inc. and shown at partner sites across the region are a likely product. Providing interpretive development services, whether grant funded or supported by a partner, is a potential fee-for-service opportunity, as discussed in Chapter 6.

# **Objective:** Provide Educational Opportunities for Youth and Adult Audiences

# **Strategy:** Expand forest heritage educational programming for youth and lifelong learners

AFNHA partners provide school-based and extra-curricular educational experiences related to many of the themes and topics. A successful example is the citizen science project focused on non-native invasive species. The project was developed through collaboration among several partners with implementation support from AmeriCorps member service provided by AFHA Inc. AmeriCorps members present a series of non-native invasive species (NNIS) training programs as enrichment activities in local schools, then take the students on field trips to identify, locate and enter data into citizen science documentation apps, and finally take part in a volunteer invasive species pull. Another educational nature activity is snorkeling field trips in local streams, to enable students to see and learn about fish and macro-invertebrates, and to learn about river health. Historic sites offer on-site field trip tours, as well as in-school programs and traveling trunks to teach about local history.

Project Learning Tree, which provides forest-based environmental education, is an international program sponsored by the West Virginia Division of Forestry and West Virginia Forestry Association. The related Project Wet provides education for watersheds, and Project Wild for wildlife. These programs are tied to curriculum standards and are designed for a wide variety of educational programming targeting a range of ages. They are often delivered with a train-the-trainer model, providing teacher training to programs that can be used in schools or with youth groups. AFNHA AmeriCorps have supported these programs for many years.



AFHA AmeriCorps members deliver an environmental education program in a local classroom in preparation for a citizen science field trip.

Augusta Heritage Center is a prime example of adult education for curriculum-oriented visitors based on cultural heritage. Workshops have traditionally offered in-person, participatory, beginning to advanced, week-long classes for traditional music instruments, singing and dance, as well as craft and folklore classes. While in-person Augusta classes were suspended during the pandemic, Augusta transitioned to a robust virtual class model that kept the educational programming available. AFNHA AmeriCorps utilized this period to continue the digitization of hundreds of tapes of traditional Appalachian music to be made available online. A variety of other venues around the area, from arts and nature centers to private craft businesses, offer classes and workshops for youth and adults in traditional arts and craft, herbs and native plants, and a variety of other traditional practices.

Future educational activities will utilize these, and similar programs, to provide quality environmental and heritage education tied to school standards, learning objectives, and curricula. Further, AFNHA partners will work to develop specific curricula and experiential opportunities for youth groups, including schools and enrichment programs that are connected to AFNHA themes, local resources, and stories, and to help make these opportunities available for more students and youth groups. AFNHA can create and support age-appropriate, content-rich, engaging, and participatory educational opportunities for children that may be used in schools, for out-of-school enrichment, and by youth groups such as 4-H and scouts. This may include teacher and leader training and engagement, curriculum development, connection to learning standards and youth programs, and out of class enrichment activities and field trips. AFNHA will encourage opportunities for students in the many communities to learn about and experience their local history, culture, geography, biology, and environment in the context of AFNHA themes and learning their own local connections to the broader world.

This programming will prioritize going beyond learning what happened to understanding why and how the learner can help address threats or stewardship challenges. Stewardship education including environmental awareness, historic preservation, and cultural conservation will be integral to AFNHA educational and interpretive programs, leading students to understand issues, raise awareness of stewardship needs, and to take action in their own lives to care for the world around them.

AFHA Inc. may take the lead on some educational programming, but will more often encourage and support these programs. Support can include grants, AmeriCorps member services, and promotion of educational opportunities to wider audiences.

# Strategy: Adapt forest heritage educational programming for wider audiences

Many of the educational programs developed for use in schools or other institutional settings may provide opportunities for expanded offerings for visitors and less formal programming. Educational experiences such as native-stream snorkeling, citizen science data collection, behind-the-scenes tours of historic buildings or forest products factories, and invasive species garlic mustard pulls are examples of educational activities developed for, or often associated with, schools and field trips. Some of these opportunities can potentially be adapted for other groups, residents, families with children, volunteers, and visitors. AFHA Inc. can assist with support, logistics, and scheduling.



Youth Conservation Corps members snorkeling to learn about stream life (Credit: USDA Forest Service, Kelly Bridges)

# **Objective:** Ensure Interpretation and Educational Experiences Achieve Impactful Outcomes

# **Strategy:** Follow Interpretive Principles and Best Practices

Interpretation seeks to inspire, not just inform, and aims to connect the heritage asset and story with concepts meaningful to the visitor. Interpretive principles and best practices support engaging, effective, and high quality experiences. AFNHA aims for quality, authentic, inclusive, and balanced interpretation that create impactful outcomes of learning about AFNHA themes and stories, raised awareness of issues, challenges, and stewardship needs, and changed behavior to care for natural, historic, and cultural resources.

AFNHA core values include three points specifically related to interpretation (see Chapter 1):

- AFNHA seeks to provide education and interpretation for a broad range of local and visitor audiences, presenting messages in entertaining formats with scholarly accuracy, balanced presentation of differing viewpoints, and respect for the complexity of the issues.
- AFNHA values the diversity of our ancestral, historic, and contemporary people, and is committed to inclusion, equity, and accessibility of all people. In our activities and in the telling of our stories, we will actively seek engagement and participation of under-represented and marginalized communities.
- AFNHA values showing the working forest as an active force in the region's present and future, including making connections between the natural resources of the forest, people's livelihoods that are dependent on the forest, and the products from the forest that the whole country uses. Education and interpretation will address issues regarding long-term sustainability for the forest that respects needs and concerns of forestry and forest products industries, of economic and social needs of forest communities, and for health and biodiversity of the forest ecosystems.

In addition, the following principles express the intentions AFNHA strives for in interpretation. Criteria for funding and support from AFNHA, and inclusion of sites, stories, and experiences in AFNHA branding, will include these principles.

- Connection and Context Connect visitors to experiences meaningful to them, and to universal values. Frame interpretation in the context of Appalachian Forest themes and concepts. Maintain connection between the local experience and the larger story.
- Authenticity and Accuracy AFNHA interpretation should reflect the real, authentic, nuanced, and in-depth stories expressed in the themes and connected to the places and assets, informed by research, scholarship, and local experience. Use primary sources when possible. Clearly differentiate stories that are based on legends or folk traditions, or that are elaborated through dramatization or reenactment.
- Diversity and Inclusion Include the range of stories that is inclusive of all groups that contribute to the Appalachian Forest experience and themes, over time and today. Offer the point of view of each group's experience, in their own words when possible. Explore stories from multiple perspectives in thematic, historical, and personal context.
- Engage the Audience Provide interpretive products and programs that reach the variety of audiences and convey the most important messages quickly, maintaining interest, and offering depth of information opportunities for those that want to know more. Adapt interpretation to reach different age groups, backgrounds, and varieties of interest. Use engaging design, storytelling, images, and delivery to create quality interpretation.
- Accessibility Provide interpretation that is accessible to all to the extent possible, including
  people with physical, visual, hearing, mental, and language challenges. Recognize differences in
  learning styles, technology access, and comfort levels, to give opportunities to those using a
  variety of communication and learning tools.
- Experiences and Exploration Encourage visitors to experience AFNHA places, stories, activities, and traditions in order to build the connections between resource and meaning that are the core of interpretation. Walking in the woods, dancing to traditional music, eating local food, and making a basket are all examples of experiences that can build those connections and invite reflection.

- Quality Develop criteria and review processes, guidelines, technical assistance, and training to build capacity and maintain high standards of interpretation that reflect positively on AFNHA.
- Stewardship and Support Throughout the interpretive messages, products, programs, and experiences, share the importance of taking care of the regional natural, historic, and cultural assets. Encourage visitors to show this caring through their actions while visiting, and through understanding and supporting, the mission of AFNHA and of the sites they are visiting.

For formal education programs, tying programming to curriculum standards will help connect the experience to other concepts the students are learning. Providing engaging and interactive experiences will build enthusiasm and increase learning, retention, and understanding.

AFNHA will encourage use of these principles throughout direct and partner interpretation, by providing training, collaboration, funding, and resources, utilizing criteria to encourage quality interpretive experiences, and measuring impacts and outcomes of interpretive experiences.

# Strategy: Evaluate success of educational and interpretive activities

An important challenge in any interpretive or educational activity is to evaluate the success, outcomes, and impact of the program. This is important both for process evaluation for continuous improvement, and to demonstrate the outcomes and impact of the program. Is the product or program successful in delivering the learning objectives? What practices work best and how can they be improved? Does it engage the audience and connect their values with the resource? Does it result in targeted outcomes including raising awareness or changing behavior? Measuring such results in a scientific and meaningful way offers a variety of challenges, including audience participation response, effective techniques to measure this wide variety of programs, and time and cost of a meaningful study.

AFNHA AmeriCorps program is initiating an outcome evaluation study in Year 1 and 2 of the management plan in order to assess in-person stewardship education and interpretive programs delivered by AmeriCorps members, both for formal classes and voluntary audience programs. In addition to the specific results targeted for this study, they also expect to develop tools and strategies for use in broader evaluation of interpretive and educational outcomes in future years.

In addition, evaluation of outcomes both from viewpoint of the audience experience and the partner providing the interpretation will help AFNHA understand and demonstrate outcomes, and continually improve interpretive experiences.

# **CHAPTER 4**

# Support Sustainable Tourism and Community Development

This chapter provides an overview of current travel trends and promotions in the AFNHA region, followed by objectives and strategies to increase travel to generate economic impact. AFNHA is poised to capitalize on the area's established popularity as an outdoor destination by developing cultural and heritage products and enhancing messaging to a variety of audiences.

Research conducted early in the management planning process indicated there was minimal understanding of what a National Heritage Area is or can do as a tourism leader or partner. The assertive

steps taken by AFHA Inc. have now positioned the organization as a recognized leader in the region's heritage development and tourism industry. The strategies included in this chapter will build on this success, resulting in a unified brand as an NHA and a tourism destination. The strategies in the latter section of this chapter will assist the NHA in meeting its congressional

"We have history, arts, nature, recreation... there is so much to draw people into the area, and AFNHA is another benefit to us that we can utilize to bring in people that may not have been here before."

mandate, as outlined in Chapter 1. This includes governance that includes tourism interests, projects and programs that raise public awareness of and appreciation for the region's assets, signage that will guide visitors throughout the region, and opportunities for economic viability consistent with the NHA.

# Sustainable Tourism: The Intersection of Cultural Heritage Tourism and Ecotourism

Travel and tourism are two of the most dynamic economic sectors in the world, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The Council's research shows that tourism accounts for 10.4% of the global gross domestic product (GDP) and 8.6% of the GDP in the United States. Projections for post-COVID travel show continued growth.<sup>1</sup>

Although people have been traveling for vacations in the United States since the 19th century, the advent of defining travel industry segments began in the late 20th century. In the ensuing decades, the desire to promote cultural, historic, and natural resources and outdoor recreation moved to the forefront for many tourism agencies who recognized it as a way to generate economic revenue based on a community's authenticity and to support a high quality of life for residents.

Among the most prominent travel industry segments are ecotourism, also referred to as geotourism, and cultural heritage tourism. While this segmentation is helpful to tourism planners and promoters to understand and address the specific interests of tourists, the intertwining of these terms is clear in the definitions for each:

• Ecotourism: The International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of local people and involves interpretation and education."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> World Travel and Tourism Council Report (2020), featuring 2019 data, <u>https://wttc.org/Research/Economic-Impact</u>, accessed May 1, 2021.

• Cultural heritage tourism: The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines cultural heritage tourism as: ..." traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources."

Taken together, these definitions reflect a unified goal - **sustainable tourism** - which sustains the community or region while generating beneficial economic impact. Sustainable tourism is particularly attractive for communities interested in maintaining or enhancing their community's character and sense of place. In addition to economic impact and job creation, sustainable tourism increases the area's attractiveness to outside industries and people seeking to relocate to locales rich in historic, cultural, and natural amenities, which results in more civic pride, and offers residents more shops, activities, and entertainment options the local market alone might not be able to support.

Sustainable tourism is a positive outcome of **creative placemaking**. The American Planning Association notes: "Successful creative placemaking highlights unique community characteristics. Projects can focus on connecting local history with the present, bringing cultural influences into the spotlight, and creating new traditions. It builds connections between people and places by encouraging collaboration."



Pedestrian plaza in downtown Cumberland

Many planning organizations have developed guidelines and how-to manuals for creative placemaking. Four primary attributes of placemaking for tourism are:

• Context and conservation – An aesthetically appealing visual appearance can contribute to a sense of place and a meaningful experience for tourists. The beauty and authenticity of destinations should be preserved, protected, and maintained.

- Site interpretation Sites hold the stories and history for a place to engage tourists and residents. Interpretation should be clear, memorable, and accurate to encourage interaction with a place.
- Comfort and image Destinations should reflect a sense of place and be visually pleasing. They should feel safe, comfortable, and clean.
- Access and linkage Visitors should be able to easily reach a destination on streets, bike lanes, and pedestrian paths.<sup>2</sup>

Actions to support this type of tourism focus will:

- Support cultural, historic, and natural resource asset-based development
- Share the stories of the region's unique identity in a variety of venues
- Preserve natural and cultural resources to share with current and future generations
- Support local businesses and organizations that reflect the area's sense of place
- Offer activities for outdoor recreation that also sustain the environment

# Tourism in the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area

## **Tourism Agencies and Support**

There are multiple state, regional, and local tourism agencies promoting the counties and communities within AFNHA boundaries with various promotional messages. AFHA Inc. has already begun building strong partnerships with these agencies, a process that will continue as strategies in the management plan are implemented. Following are primary partner agencies and a summary of tourism-related activities in West Virginia and Maryland.

### West Virginia Department of Tourism and Maryland Office of Tourism Development

The two state tourism offices capitalize on the markets that are targeted by AFNHA – travelers interested in culture, heritage, and outdoor experiences. The West Virginia Department of Tourism promotes a diverse array of tourism opportunities across the state and specifically highlights opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, including visiting national and state parks, hiking, biking, fishing, rafting, skiing, and other activities rooted in the state's natural beauty and mountain towns. Maryland's Tourism Office also promotes the state's scenic beauty and opportunities for outdoor activities. Maryland's extensive system of scenic byways and recreational offerings are among the focuses of the state's promotions. In October 2021, the travel publication Lonely Planet recognized West Virginia as a Top Travel Region to visit in 2022, the only state selected alongside international destinations. In particular, the publication recognized West Virginia's mountain landscape, heritage, and opportunities for outdoor adventures.<sup>3</sup>

### Tourism Funding

Maryland's Tourism Development Board offers grants to Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) for sales and marketing activities that meet the goals of increasing visitation, visitor spending, and length of stay, resulting in the growth of tourism sales tax revenues. Within the AFNHA region in Maryland, the county tourism offices are housed in a chamber of commerce office and an economic and community development office. In addition, the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority provides annual administrative funding to the state-certified heritage areas.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Adapted from: "Placemaking as an Approach to Foster Cultural Tourism In Heritage Sites,"

Haitham Samir, Salwa Samargandi and Mohammed F. M. Mohammed, Department of Architecture, Effat University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> <u>https://governor.wv.gov/News/press-releases/2021/Pages/Gov.-Justice-announces-West-Virginia-named-top-10-global-travel-destination.aspx</u>, accessed January 31, 2022.

The West Virginia Department of Tourism offers free business and event listings on the agency's website and a variety of marketing and technical assistance programs for partners, including a public-private cooperative marketing program. The cooperative marketing program reduces costs for DMOs and other tourism businesses opting in to state tourism marketing. West Virginia's Tourism Development Act supports the creation and / or expansion of tourism projects to companies and entrepreneurs for projects over \$1 million. Eligible applicants receive a 25% tax credit from consumer sales and service taxes collected on the gross receipts generated directly from daily operations. Additionally, certain projects are eligible to receive a 35% credit if the project is on an abandoned surface mine or is on or adjacent to a state or national forest or park. Recent applications for this tax credit represent \$250 million in investment in West Virginia's tourism industry. West Virginia has also invested over \$151 million in state parks improvements between 2018 and 2021, helping to bolster visitation to public lands. There are 19 community or county tourism offices (DMOs) within the AFNHA region - two in Maryland (mentioned above), and 17 in West Virginia, which are convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs). The primary source of funding for most CVBs is the hotel occupancy tax. In 1985, the West Virginia Legislature passed legislation permitting cities and counties to impose a hotel occupancy tax. This localoption law mandated that bureaus receive at least half of the tax proceeds, with the balance used for specified tourism projects. In its 2021 session, the West Virginia Legislature passed a law with new oversight and reporting requirements for CVBs and established minimum requirements for a CVB to gualify for distribution of hotel occupancy tax proceeds. Requirements include a minimum annual budget, a marketing plan, allocation of approximately 40% of revenues to advertising and marketing, a full-time executive director, an office or visitor center, a website, and annual reports submitted to the CVB's funding entities. The impact of this new law on CVBs in AFNHA is under assessment, but will almost certainly make it more difficult for small counties to maintain their own CVBs. Maryland's tourism offices are also funded through a hotel occupancy tax.

#### **Economic Impact**

Annual studies commissioned by the West Virginia Department of Tourism track economic impact throughout the state and in each of the state's 55 counties. Data includes direct spending (lodging, food, transportation, and other expenditures), jobs and earnings attributed to the tourism industry, and tax revenue collected by local and state governments. A review of the data from 2015-2018 shows that, except for minor decreases in employment in four counties and minor decreases in local government revenue in five counties, all of AFNHA's 16 West Virginia counties experienced an increase in key indicators during these years. AFNHA counties reporting the largest economic impact are Greenbrier, Pocahontas, Nicholas, and Randolph. As outlined in the West Virginia Department of Tourism's 2021 Annual Report, the tourism industry across the state saw an overall increase of 14.8% in traveler spending between 2016 and 2019. In 2019, the state reported \$4.8 billion in traveler spending, \$1.2 billion in earnings, and 791 million in state and local tax revenue, while supporting 47,600 jobs.

The Maryland Office of Tourism Development releases economic impact reports for each fiscal year, providing data on revenues for the state's 23 counties and Baltimore City. Data categories are slightly different from West Virginia's. A review of data from the state's FY2016 report shows significant growth in AFNHA's two counties' tourism economy. Additionally, in the fall of 2020, the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) released a report documenting the economic and societal contribution of Maryland's 13 state-certified heritage areas and their visitors across the state. The two AFNHA counties, Allegany (Passages of the Western Potomac) and Garrett (Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West), both showed significant economic impact from tourism.

#### West Virginia's Tourism Regions

The West Virginia Department of Tourism divides the state into nine tourism regions, five of which include portions of AFNHA. Each region is promoted on the state's tourism website with featured itineraries. The fact that these five regions do not align with the AFNHA boundaries, and each region

except for the Potomac Highlands includes counties outside of AFNHA, complicates AFNHA's branding and messaging as a tourism destination. The five regions that include portions of the NHA are:

- Mountain Lakes Braxton, Nicholas, Upshur, Webster (outside AFNHA: Clay, Gilmer, Lewis)
- New River / Greenbrier Valley Greenbrier (outside AFNHA: Fayette, McDowell, Mercer, Monroe, Raleigh, Summers, Wyoming)
- Potomac Highlands Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Randolph, Tucker
- Eastern Panhandle Morgan (outside AFNHA: Berkeley, Jefferson)
- Mountaineer Country Barbour, Preston (outside AFNHA: Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Taylor)

### Maryland's Tourism Regions

Maryland's tourism office highlights 12 cities / regions on its website. Maryland's two counties in the AFNHA region are located in the state's **Western Region**. Both counties have additional promotional brands:

- Allegany County The county's tourism website promotes the county as the Mountain Side of Maryland. The county also includes a state-certified heritage area, Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area.
- Garrett County The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce serves as the tourism office for the county. The county also contains a state-certified heritage area, Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area.

### Community / County Tourism Offices

The promotional activities of the 19 community or county tourism offices in the AFNHA region vary greatly depending on the number of staff and funding capacity (for complete listing, see Appendix E: Partners). All of these act as Direct Marketing Organizations for their own county or city, engage in social media promotion, and maintain a website. Those with higher funding levels have more staff and, in some cases, contract with an advertising agency to assist in developing promotions and tracking success. In West Virginia these are known as Convention and Visitors Bureaus. In most cases they are funded from lodging tax collected at the city or county level.

#### Cultural Heritage Tourism Support

The West Virginia Department of Tourism supports cultural heritage tourism sites by reaching out to these sites and inviting them to participate in their comprehensive tourism marketing and development efforts across the state. The state agency has devoted specific sections of its website and publications to highlighting cultural and historic sites, such as museums, national historic trails, and culinary traditions. Additionally, programs such as the West Virginia Main Street Program help communities develop tourism based on cultural and historic assets. The West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture, and History also provides grant funding for projects that preserve and highlight the state's historic and cultural resources, many of which play a role in tourism experiences

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program is overseen by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. The program focuses specifically on heritage tourism and includes the two previously mentioned state-certified heritage areas that are within the AFNHA boundaries - Passages of the Western Potomac in Allegany County and Mountain Maryland in Garrett County. Local partners contributing to these heritage areas are eligible for grants, tax credits, and loans to support tourism projects through the Heritage Areas Authority.

## **Major Destinations and Gateways**

Current tourism within AFNHA is accessed through gateways and potential gateways leading into the area, and is focused primarily around major destinations. Understanding and leveraging these opportunities can help to expand visitation across the area.

With interstate highway access to AFNHA mostly along the outskirts of the region, gateways into the interior are important. Most of the interior of the area is reached only by two-lane mountain highways, presenting a challenge for transportation, but also an opportunity for outstanding experiences. Primary gateways to the region include Cumberland, Maryland, and Lewisburg, West Virginia. These two cities have active cultural arts scenes, retain a strong sense of place downtown, and provide highway access to AFNHA. They also have major attractions nearby – one end of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park is located in Cumberland, and the famed Greenbrier Resort is near Lewisburg. Preston County - near to, and promoted in conjunction with, Morgantown, Arthurdale, the Cheat River, and Coopers Rock State Forest – stands out as a gateway to the northwest, and Sutton, along Interstate 79, has high potential as a more southerly gateway. Corridor H (U.S. Route 33 / 48) is a major route across the center of the area, and is mostly four-lane with some sections still under construction. When the Mountain Skyway Center is completed in Moorefield, that eastern gateway, on U.S. Route 48 as a direct route from Washington DC, will gain additional significance for the NHA, especially with its emphasis on tourism and traditional arts and craft. Other interior routes pass through Thomas, Davis, Canaan Valley, and Elkins, with Buckhannon at the western gateway. A major north-south road is U.S. Route 219 from Lewisburg, through Elkins, to Garrett County. This two-lane road offers a fascinating and varied driving experience. Other north-south highways parallel this following the valleys and ridges of the Allegheny Mountains.



The active community of Buckhannon is one of the western gateways to AFNHA. (Credit: Robert Skinner)

Beyond the communities, major destination hubs based on AFNHA's most popular activities already attract visitors. These include the one million-acre Monongahela National Forest and its many special places such as the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area, wilderness areas, The Highland Scenic Highway, and 800 miles of trails. The Monongahela National Forest anchors the region, and along with Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Snowshoe Resort, and major state parks and forests within or near the Monongahela, provides a major destination for outdoor recreation and exploration.

Cass Scenic Railroad State Park has the most extensive collection of intact resources to help interpret the railroad and logging boom story. With train rides by the Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad, coupled with connectivity to Snowshoe Resort and newly designated Snowshoe Highlands Ride Center, the Mon, and the Greenbrier River Trail this area plays a unique, multi-opportunity role in the region.

The Canaan Valley area is another gem, with the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Blackwater Falls State Park, Canaan Valley Resort State Park and Timberline ski resorts, and booming small town resurgence based on recreation and the arts in Davis and Thomas, all surrounded by some of the most popular areas on the National Forest.

Other recreational hubs include Garrett County, with Deep Creek Lake and Wisp Resort, and the Greenbrier Resort, near Lewisburg's cultural activities. All of these are increasingly becoming successful year-round destinations, a trend which continued through the pandemic as people desired to be outdoors. As a result, the communities in the orbit of these resorts are among those that have the most tourism development activities underway.

Elkins serves as a central hub for AFNHA, as the largest West Virginia city in the region, and located at the intersection of major routes. It has heritage and cultural attractions, significant community synergy, and has long been a gateway to the Monongahela, Canaan Valley, and Snowshoe areas. Elkins is where the main AFHA Inc. office is located, along with the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center.

Gateway programs are a way to connect parks and other large tourism attractions with the communities that support them. In the NHA, Cumberland is the western anchor of the Canal Towns Partnership (CTP), formed in 2011 with the goal of generating mutually beneficial economic activity in the towns along the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Based on a similar model, the Mon Forest Towns initiative collectively promotes 10 gateway communities to the Monongahela National Forest, to benefit recreation economy development. This program is discussed more below under outdoor recreation opportunities, and in Chapter 5.

# **Visitation – Audiences and Interests**

Travel during the COVID pandemic shifted to outdoor activities on a national scale, a trend that has been documented in West Virginia and Maryland. As COVID continues to influence travel decisions for the foreseeable future, research shows that travelers continue to look for the types of experiences found in the AFNHA region. A national study conducted in January 2022 found that Americans who plan to travel will prioritize having fun (75.8%), relaxing (69.2%), finding happiness (64.1%), and escaping stress (60.9%). They will seek travel experiences that include spending time with loved ones, enjoying nature and scenic beauty, engaging in warm weather outdoor activities, taking road trips, visiting national parks, and finding new cuisine and food experiences.<sup>4</sup>

As part of the AFNHA management planning process, a survey was distributed to tourism agencies as well as several heritage attractions. The survey was designed to gather baseline information to understand what attracts visitors to the area, where they come from, and how potential visitors are reached. Fifteen community / county tourism agencies completed the survey as well as eight other tourism promoters (heritage attractions, historical society, etc.). In addition, a follow-up meeting was held with tourism promoters to discuss responses and gather additional information. The top states of visitor origin identified by survey respondents are West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

The Maryland Office of Tourism Development's research shows the majority of tourists statewide are Maryland residents traveling within their home state (44% of day-trippers and 25% of overnight

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> <u>https://www.destinationanalysts.com/blog-update-on-american-travel-trends-sentiment-week-of-january-3rd/</u>, accessed January 31, 2022.

travelers). Similarly, the West Virginia Department of Tourism's research shows the majority of tourists statewide are West Virginia residents (32% of day-trippers and 20% of overnight travelers).

Tourism leaders identified natural assets and outdoor recreation opportunities as the primary reason visitors travel to the area (56%), followed by visiting friends and family (20%) and enjoying cultural and heritage assets (12%). It should be noted that travelers in the "visiting friends and family" category may also be engaging in activities in the other two categories. Top activities related to natural assets and experiencing the outdoors were fishing, scenic / historic landscape driving tours, camping, hiking, and hunting. Top activities related to cultural and heritage assets were visiting history museums, attending festivals, touring downtowns / Main Streets, and enjoying arts and traditional craft.



Visitors prepare to board the Tygart Flyer at the Elkins Depot. (Credit: David Ede)

Audiences that AFNHA tourism leaders would like to attract include families with young children, couples, individual travelers, school groups, and business travelers. Chapter 3, Goal 2: Share the Stories of Our Forest Heritage (interpretive plan) includes the strategy, "Provide Interpretation to Diverse Audiences Based on the AFNHA Interpretive Matrix." The strategy addresses these target audiences

and others, including visitors with niche interests or those with accessibility challenges. For tourism it can be helpful to look at generational audiences. Visitors are often categorized by generational groups such as seniors, baby boomers, generation X, millennials, and more recently gen Z. For example seniors and baby boomers may prefer cultural heritage

"Millennials are now the largest generational block in the United States, and many are now able to spend disposable income on experiences and outdoor activities."

experiences, be less active and more likely to need accessibility help, and may prefer group tours. Millennials and younger may be more likely to participate in active recreation. Some tourism strategies recommended may help to cross-promote across audiences to encourage them to try new experiences.

# **Goal 3: Support Sustainable Tourism and Economic Development to Benefit Communities**

Sustainable tourism objectives and strategies in this chapter were developed through the study of current research on visitor audiences, activities, and marketing campaigns. The process included several meetings with tourism leaders in the AFNHA region and at the state tourism offices, engagement in task groups, public meetings, the Community Exchange, stakeholder interviews, and discussions with partner organizations. The following section presents these objectives and strategies and discusses the role of AFNHA and partners in implementation.

# **Objective:** Provide Support for Tourism in AFNHA

The management planning process confirmed that AFNHA is primarily known among its partners for its AmeriCorps program. As discussed in this chapter, AFNHA's counties are organized and promoted in a variety of ways by the West Virginia Department of Tourism and the Maryland Tourism Office, which do not yet capitalize on the existence of an NHA. Additionally, of the 19 tourism agencies in the region, only one includes the AFNHA logo on its website.

# Strategy: Understand and support the tourism industry

AFHA Inc.'s new leadership role in managing the Highlands Creative Economy Group (detailed in Chapter 5) and its pilot tourism grant program will elevate awareness of the NHA beyond the AmeriCorps program and create opportunities to work with tourism partners to include AFNHA in their marketing. Building relationships with tourism partners depends on an understanding of each agency's capacity. AFHA Inc.'s intention to eventually place field staff across the region could help build capacity where it is needed.

AFHA Inc. will further assume a role as a tourism partner by joining and participating in the West Virginia Hospitality and Tourism Association, the West Virginia Association of CVBs, the Maryland Tourism Coalition, and other professional tourism organizations. Through these organizations and other partnerships, AFHA Inc. will support the tourism industry's infrastructure needs, including expanded broadband and affordable housing (following AFHA Inc.'s policies).

Supporting the tourism industry depends on understanding current trends, issues, and opportunities. Therefore, AFNHA will undertake three types of research and monitoring:

- In the planning process, tourism partners expressed a strong interest in AFHA Inc.'s assistance in filtering the many state and national studies and reports about tourism, and providing updates on national and state travel trends. Tracking will include major travel trends but will focus specifically on trends related to the region's targeted audiences and travel to West Virginia and Maryland. This information can be shared in the AFNHA information clearinghouse.
- Because a primary role for AFNHA will be telling the region's stories through new or enhanced interpretation, events, or activities, understanding the visitor experience is essential. AFHA Inc. will work with partners to develop a process for gathering information on the visitor experience, focusing on historic, cultural, and natural assets and outdoor recreation and the visitor activities and products based on these assets. In addition, information can be gathered on satisfaction with visitor amenities, such as internet access, lodging, signage, dining, and shopping. This information will provide a critical foundation for program and project development by AFHA Inc. and its partners.
- Finding and retaining employees and volunteers is an ongoing challenge with many tourism destinations. AFHA Inc. will conduct research or gather and compile existing research on employee and volunteer capacity in the region. This data will aid tourism partners in identifying where employees and volunteers can be found and where there are gaps in the tourism products, and the available employees and volunteers to staff these products.

# **Strategy:** Convene tourism attractions, businesses, and organizations to work together on tourism and creative economy collaboration

Partner organization Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College (Eastern) established the Potomac Highlands Creative Economy collaboration to connect and provide training for community and tourism entities in the Potomac Highlands Counties. While AFHA Inc. had originally been one of many partners, in 2021 this partnership with Eastern was strengthened. Supported by a grant from the Benedum Foundation, AFHA Inc. took on a leadership role with the networking aspects of this initiative and expanded it to all AFNHA counties, while Eastern continues a primary responsibility as training provider.

The main venue for this program is a monthly, virtual Creative Economy Council meeting discussing topics of interest and sharing updates from participants. This is attended by tourism organizations, businesses and attractions from around the region. Eastern provides training workshops on topics such as media marketing, lodging and business development, and COVID recovery strategies, and an annual Tourism Summit combines training and networking. More information on the Highlands Creative Economy Program to establish AFNHA as a regional tourism destination is found in this chapter. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss this partnership as a major program for AFNHA.

# **Objective:** Develop and Promote AFNHA as a Regional Tourism Destination

Building on partnerships and communication established through the previous objective, AFHA Inc. will create awareness of the 18-county NHA as a regional tourism destination through branding, marketing, and product development initiatives.

# Strategy: Build brand recognition for AFNHA

An effective brand encompasses a slate of communications tools that create a compelling, unified look and message about a tourism destination. AFHA Inc. uses several of these tools, including a logo, website, newsletter, collateral materials, and social media. An updated version of the logo has been introduced in conjunction with this management plan. Visitors to the website are greeted with an invitation to "Discover the Appalachian Forest."

AFHA Inc. will develop toolkits and tips sheets to encourage the use of key messaging and the AFNHA brand. These resources will include design guidelines for the appropriate use of branding materials. The brand identity elements will also be applicable for AFNHA projects, such as a regional wayfinding program or a digital app that provides history, culture, nature, forestry stories, and places visitors can experience them.

AFHA Inc. will continue to expand the reach of its monthly newsletter. Additionally, AFHA Inc. will develop new social media campaigns and add information to the website on travel opportunities to market to potential visitors directly. New tourism experiences developed by partners will be shared through promotional channels.

AFHA Inc. will also take a leadership role in reaching out to travel media (collaborating with the two state tourism offices whenever possible) to build relationships, host familiarization tours, and increase media coverage.

# Strategy: Market AFNHA as a regional destination

While currently most of the AFNHA tourism partners market their own counties, and state tourism offices use their own regions, as AFNHA is branded more effectively, and awareness of the NHA is strengthened, this can contribute to joint marketing of the region. West Virginia Department of Tourism

"We need to market and brand the AFNHA as a place to experience. The assets are here." and Maryland Tourism Office will help market AFNHA as a regional destination, and will help to build AFNHA destination marketing as the branding and regional networking elements described throughout this chapter are implemented. This promotion can support and link individual counties and tourism regions, while encouraging tourists to come to the NHA as their destination. Expansion of marketing both by individual partners, and collectively, can use traditional media, word of mouth, and virtual communication to raise awareness of AFNHA as a region and a destination.

# **Strategy:** Make trip planning through AFNHA easy for visitors

Today's travelers have high expectations for accessing information and assistance when planning and taking a trip. Travelers expect to find information in many places – through social media, websites, printed guides and brochures, exhibits, and direct assistance from knowledgeable visitor center hosts.

Creating a strong presence for AFNHA at local visitor centers will be a priority, using a program that invites tourists to Discover AFNHA *Here*. The program will be designed to create a complete circle of information, including publications, websites, and visitor centers. As the program grows, it will also include other places such as attractions, restaurants, or lodging establishments. Likely elements to this program are:

- Print materials A new AFNHA brochure introducing the area as a destination is a top priority. This will be supplemented with other materials such as thematic or itinerary brochures, rack cards, or map guides, that build on information also available digitally.
- Exhibits Each participating visitor center will feature an exhibit with a map, pictures, and information about things to see and do in AFNHA.
- Host training Visitor center hosts will receive training, including routes, communities, and attractions in AFNHA.
- "Ask Me" "Ask Me How to Discover the Appalachian Forest" buttons will be made for visitor center hosts, and signs will be placed at the information counter.
- AFNHA Info Emblem The logo can be placed next to listings in tourism publications or websites to alert tourists and encourage them to stop at the visitor center to get more information.

# Strategy: Connect AFNHA with a Wayfinding System

A unified wayfinding system will help visitors to AFNHA discover special places throughout the region, creating a memorable experience and a positive lasting impression. The system will identify specific areas or corridors and provide connectivity for scenic corridors, pedestrian and bicycle trails, and primary and secondary travel routes, both highway and off-road. Coordination with the Mon Forest Towns initiative will be a critical element of planning. Mon Forest Towns is developing a wayfinding program to direct visitors to and from gateway communities to the Monongahela National Forest. AFNHA can expand and support this project, using new and existing gateways as springboards for destination travel.

AFHA Inc.'s planning process will focus on developing a system that can assist with navigation but not overwhelm the area's rural sense of place. The system will help reinforce the identity of AFNHA, which is found in nature and in the independent, unique communities in the region. Although large destinations in AFNHA, such as the Monongahela National Forest and Snowshoe Mountain Resort, have the resources to create signage and other marketing tools to attract significant visitation, AFNHA's wayfinding system will be particularly helpful in promoting the presence of smaller destinations such as history museums, shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues.



Proposed gateway identity sign as one element in a regional branding and wayfinding system

AFNHA will create logical circulation routes and itineraries that bundle attractions and experiences to help visitors understand and appreciate the larger story of the region. Such an endeavor will include identifying gateway communities and trail communities along the circulation routes. Additionally, AFHA Inc. will support tourism partner sites and communities to improve transportation infrastructure such as bike and pedestrian access, parking, and streetscapes. Supplemental wayfinding tools may also be developed, including apps, digital and paper guides, collateral materials for thematic itineraries, and informational wayside kiosks.

# **Strategy:** Develop a regional network of attractions and experiences connecting AFNHA's sustainable tourism opportunities

AFNHA features a wide array of existing and potential tourism attractions, recreation opportunities, and cultural experiences for visitors. This is the tourism product that AFNHA can market. However, in many cases, a stand-alone attraction is not enough to entice visitors to travel a great distance. By supporting the development of additional attractions, and connecting the attractions, opportunities, and experiences, AFNHA will create a larger destination that will attract visitors, encourage them to stay longer, and come back again. As AFNHA's brand and partnership network grow stronger, AFHA Inc. will take a leadership role in connecting tourism sites to create this larger destination that provides a wide range of visitor experiences.

This will be accomplished by creating and connecting a variety of tourism opportunities. These priorities include:

- Support the enhancement, development, and improvement of potential tourism attractions and opportunities as described previously in Chapter 2 enhance assets, Chapter 3 interpretation, and in the section below "develop products and activities."
- Provide support for sites to meet tourism quality criteria both in the stories and experiences they share, and in providing needed services such as reliable hours, signage, parking, and restrooms.
- Connect sites to create a larger destination using products such as thematic story maps that link sites of similar interest; suggested itineraries to reach sites of interest along a route; and / or clusters or hub and spoke guides to lead visitors to multiple attractions reachable from one community. Attractions may be grouped for a variety of interests, such as historical topics,

traditional arts or music, natural landmarks, to learn about the forest or agriculture, and local foods and restaurants.

- Create an AFNHA-branded passport program and challenges (e.g., 10 stops to get a prize) to encourage visitors to explore more areas than they might otherwise visit.
- Work with tourism partners to create and promote travel packages for individual travelers, families, and group tours.
- Assist tourism partners to expand personnel (staff, volunteers) to increase hours and days of operation in order to accommodate more visitors and generate additional income.



AFNHA is using Story Maps for thematic maps that describe and link sites of similar themes.

This AFNHA destination will be promoted and strengthened by:

- Expanding visitor center functions in the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center, located in Elkins and managed by AFHA Inc. to provide tourism information for the entire region.
- Encouraging the network of tourism bureaus and attractions to become familiar with the area's resources in order to cross-promote and lengthen visitors' stays.
- Supplementing existing visitor information centers with interpretation / information kiosks located at multiple sites and gateways.

### **Strategy:** Enhance accessibility

In Goal 2: Share the Stories of Our Forest Heritage (Chapter 3), tourists with accessibility challenges are identified as a target audience. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 26% of adults in the United States have some type of disability. This may include physical, visual, hearing, learning, and language challenges. A 2020 study found that more than 27 million people with disabilities traveled in the United States during 2018-2019 and spent \$58.7 billion.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The 2020 Market Study on Travelers with Disabilities, Open Door Organization, <u>https://opendoorsnfp.org/</u>, accessed January 31, 2022.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires the accommodation of people with disabilities, but accessibility standards are often not fully adhered to by historic sites or outdoor recreation providers. In some cases this is due to inherent difficulties of the activity, but often it is more due to lack of information or cost. Recognizing the desire to welcome these visitors, AFNHA will assist tourism attractions (e.g., historic sites, downtowns, outdoor activities, and small businesses such as restaurants and shops) to improve accessibility. AFHA Inc. can help through providing information, resources, partnering with leading organizations such as Open Door Organization or Adaptive Adventures, and sharing guidance from federal and state ADA resources to achieve this goal.

# **Objective:** Develop and Promote Sustainable Tourism Products and Activities

When cultural heritage travelers take a trip, the primary reason is to experience a destination's history and culture, and in addition, many leisure travelers also include cultural and heritage activities in their itineraries. The *2013 Cultural Heritage Traveler Report* (Mandala Research LLC) found that cultural heritage travelers:

- Prefer to take trips that offer a wide variety of activities (culture / shopping / nature / exercise) (76%)
- Like to purchase local / regional memorabilia (73%)
- Enjoy tasting local food and wines (70%)
- Seek travel experiences where the destination, its buildings, and surroundings retain their historic character (63%)
- Want travel to be educational, and they like to explore and learn about local culture (56%)

### Strategy: Develop heritage, culture, nature-based activities and tourism products

An essential component of successful cultural heritage tourism is the effort to preserve and conserve historic assets, cultural traditions, and natural resources. Strategies addressing this component are found in Chapter 2: Goal 1: Enhance Forest Heritage Assets.

With the preservation and conservation of resources, AFNHA will also focus on developing a variety of culture, heritage and nature tourism products and activities. Authentic sites to see and experience are at the heart of sustainable tourism. The region already offers a wide variety of attractions, and many more assets have potential, if developed further, to become visitor attractions. In many cases this includes telling the stories connected to the place, as described in Chapter 3. Therefore, one priority focus for AFNHA will be on the enhancement of existing attractions and developing new attractions to share stories of forest heritage.

Opportunities identified in Chapter 3's strategy – *Develop interpretive products and programs that effectively connect AFNHA themes with audiences* – include programs offering personally guided tours and presentations, self-guided products such as exhibits, signs, brochures, and recorded media (see Chapter 3 for complete descriptions).

Task group feedback during planning emphasized the importance of active experiences for visitors. In addition to interpretive programs and tours, experiences such as engaging in cultural activities, rainy day activities, participating in events, and exploring shopping and eating in communities are important opportunities for visitor activity. Local products such as craft and art to see and purchase, and local foods restaurants, farmers' markets and agri-tourism sites are all products that will enhance the visitor's experience.

New products and programs will be developed to engage visitors within AFNHA. Special attention will be given to developing activities for children, pre-teens, and teens in order to attract families. Additionally, new products and programs will be designed with cross-over interpretation to encourage visitors to explore new activities. For example, visitors to AFNHA who hike mountain trails may also be interested in taking a guided or self-guided tour, or visiting a museum to learn about the history of the area. Products and programs may include:

- Create new, and enhance and refresh existing, exhibits, signs, and other products, as well as programs and tours that reflect AFNHA themes, as described in Chapter 3.
- Develop tours and experiences highlighting forest heritage, forest management, and forest products, including factory tours.
- Support recreation sites, museums, historic sites, and other tourism partners to develop participatory programs to engage in cultural traditions, including music and dance, farm and foodways, traditional craft, and other activities.
- Create new rainy day activities to offer at museums, historic sites, or indoors at parks or other recreational sites.
- Support the development and availability of locally made products, including forest products, local foods, arts, and craft.

# **Strategy:** Enhance and improve availability and quality of tourism sites

AFHA Inc. will establish quality and accessibility criteria for tourism partner sites to be eligible for AFNHA branding and AFHA Inc. direct assistance. AFNHA will also provide assistance to sites in meeting these criteria and building capacity to offer a quality tourism experience. This may include expanding and supporting transportation and visitor services infrastructure, as well as supporting availability and reliable hours of operation. Support may include recognition, training, technical assistance, AmeriCorps support, and grant eligibility to build tourism capacity for sites.

# **Objective:** Develop and Promote Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

# **Strategy:** Develop and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities for a variety of activities and audiences

As described earlier, outdoor recreation is a major activity throughout the Appalachian Forest region, enjoyed by large numbers of local residents and visitors. Hunting and fishing, camping, hiking and biking, birdwatching, outdoor photography, boating, swimming, canoeing, kayaking, rafting, rock climbing, caving, and skiing all contribute to the economic value – and the appreciation – of the natural forest in the area.

To immerse themselves in nature, most Americans must leave home. A 2020 report estimated that 83% of the US population lives in urban areas, up from 64% in 1950. This number is projected to reach 89% by 2050.<sup>6</sup> For ecotourism, the implications are clear. Areas that conserve their natural resources and traditional heritage (nature, culture, history) can benefit economically from accommodating visitors. A survey of tourism agency leaders during the AFNHA management planning process found that the region's natural assets and outdoor recreation opportunities are the primary reason visitors travel to the area.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "U.S. Cities Fact Sheet." Pub. No. CSS09-06, Center for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan, (2020).

Maryland and West Virginia recently completed comprehensive outdoor recreation plans that include discussion of the importance of tourism to the economy. West Virginia's plan observes the state's "economic base has been in transition for a number of years from traditional mining and manufacturing to small business and tourism / leisure development...tourism based on outdoor recreation has the potential to broaden and deepen in the future. The state's environmental attractiveness, low population density, and high connectivity to half of the nation's population are likely to sustain and increase demands for future development of the state's outdoor assets for both residents and visitors."<sup>7</sup> Maryland's plan notes, "Outdoor recreation is an economic engine in the state of Maryland. Given that key outdoor recreation destinations are within a four-hour drive of major metropolitan areas in the mid-Atlantic (New York, Philadelphia, and Washington DC) and the Midwest (Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Columbus), there is substantial potential for Maryland to increase its share of the outdoor recreation economy."8



Hiking is a favorite AFNHA activity. (Credit: Canaan Valley Resort)

The Mon Forest draws 1.3 million visitors annually who use the land for recreation as well as subsistence and other resource use.<sup>9</sup> A key partner for AFHA Inc. in supporting the development of tourism and outdoor recreation, and focus on recreation economies, is the Mon Forest Towns Partnership formed to promote 10 gateway communities to the National Forest. Participating towns are Cowen (Webster County); Davis, Parsons, and Thomas (Tucker County); Elkins (Randolph County); Franklin (Pendleton County); Marlinton (Pocahontas County); Petersburg (Grant County); Richwood (Nicholas County); and White Sulphur Springs (Greenbrier County). Partner organizations in addition to the Monongahela National Forest are USDA Rural Development, West Virginia University Extension, and Woodlands Development Group, with partial funding from Benedum Foundation.

While much of the focus of the Mon Forest Towns Partnership is on recreation and tourism development, one clear goal is marketing -- Promote the uniqueness of the Mon Forest Towns and recreation opportunities in the region through collaborative regional marketing. Mon Forest Towns maintains a website (https://monforesttowns.com/) and a social media presence which connects visitors to the Mon Forest with the many attractions and activities in communities surrounding the forest. The website features information on each of the ten towns as well as resources for visitors with disabilities and suggestions for places to find visitor services.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> West Virginia Development Office, West Virginia Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: 2020-2025, (2020).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Maryland Department of Commerce, Maryland Outdoor Recreation Commission Final Report, (December 2019).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> West Virginia Development Office, West Virginia Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: 2020-2025, (2020).



Encouraging recreation-based businesses, such as this bike shop in Marlinton, is a priority for Mon Forest Towns and for AFNHA.

Strategies for conservation and enhancement of recreation sites are discussed further in Chapter 2. Development includes attention to variety and diversity of year-round outdoor recreation possibilities for people of all ages and all abilities. While attention to providing a quality user experience for dedicated trail users is vital, it is also important to encourage and provide opportunities for beginners, families, and those looking for broader types of recreation experiences.

Across the AFNHA region, parks, trails, and other outdoor recreation sites are supported by environmental organizations, watershed and trail organizations and volunteer groups who are invested in this work. These are important partners for AFNHA to promote and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities -- many of them are described in Chapter 5. Working with these partners and others, AFNHA can support the development and promotion of outdoor recreation opportunities for audiences of all ages and abilities.

# **Strategy:** Expand available visitor services and information for the recreation economy

Understanding that the visitor experience comprises three stages: pre-visit, visit, and post-visit. AFNHA will work to reach visitors in each stage.

In the pre-visit stage, as potential visitors consider options and select a destination, AFNHA will support partners and collaborate to create a presence for the region and its outdoor recreation opportunities. Research from the West Virginia Department of Tourism and the Maryland Tourism Office found that the majority of tourists statewide are residents traveling in their home state. With this in mind, AFNHA partners will develop new marketing campaigns to reach residents in the region and throughout both states. Additionally, visitors from nearby urban areas such as Washington DC, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland will be the focus of targeted "get away from the city" campaigns.

An AFNHA assessment can identify needs for enhancement and maintenance of trails, access points, wayfinding signs, and other outdoor recreation resources. For visitors arriving in the region seeking outdoor recreation experiences, AFNHA will work with trail ambassadors at recreation sites to provide information about trails and other activities. AFNHA will also support an increase in experts, guides, and outfitters (creating new jobs for the region) to help visitors more easily access and enjoy outdoor recreation activities. AFHA Inc. is supporting the Mon Towns Forest Partnership with AmeriCorps members who are coordinating events and activities to promote outdoor recreation to visitors and residents. AFHA Inc. also currently has an AmeriCorps position focused on recreational tourism to develop a hiking challenge program and other hiking experiences and to develop outdoor experience tour products, story maps, and packages.



Forest Service employee shows visitors a map model of the Monongahela National Forest at Seneca Rocks Discovery Center.

Post-visit, AFNHA will seek to maintain a connection to these visitors through social media, newsletters, and other communications to announce new events, programs, and other outdoor recreation opportunities.

### **Strategy:** Connect interpretation with recreation

AFNHA's interpretive themes are centered on telling the stories of forest heritage from the land and ecosystems, to the unique Appalachian culture, and to the industries that have built economies from the forest over generations. Stories of the forest are told through exhibits in museums and interpretive signage along some trails. AFNHA's permanent exhibit at the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center in Elkins traces the stories of the forest and the impact of humans on the forest, based on AFNHA themes. Often interpretation is seen as separate from action-oriented recreation such as trails. One way to build a more robust destination is to find connections and cross-over between interpretive and recreation experiences.

AFNHA will work with outdoor recreation partners to extend interpretation in appropriate ways to highlight the history in the mountain forests and cultures. By sharing how historic events shaped the region's trails and waterways, AFNHA can enhance the experiences of hikers, bikers, hunters, paddlers, and others users while deepening their appreciation of the landscape and the people and industries that shaped it. For many outdoor enthusiasts, it is not just the natural beauty that draws them to a place but also its history. In addition, interpretation about the natural environment can add value to the recreation experience. Relatively easy trails and boardwalks with interpretive signage can be an introduction to area for hikers and trail users, while being accessible to less action-oriented visitors to give them an experience in the landscape. AFNHA will develop interpretive media for trail users to have outdoor experiences that go beyond physical engagement. These interpretive overlays will be shared through signage where appropriate, and more broadly on website, social media, and other digital interpretive platforms, as well as linking to other resources. Similarly, historic sites, usually focusing on interpretation, can add trails and recreational activities for visitors seeking more activity such as the new hiking trail at Rich Mountain Battlefield. This will engage heritage visitors more actively and allow them to explore, as well as learn about, the historic sites they are experiencing.

# **Objective:** Support Community Economic Development and Build Social Capital

National Heritage Areas are powerful tools for regional economic development. History and heritage, which are blind to governmental jurisdictions or lines drawn on a map, serve as the organizing factors for NHAs. By erasing boundaries and deconstructing barriers, the positive power and effectiveness of partnership networks comprised of organizations, businesses, communities, and governments gain far more benefits as they work for the greater good of NHA regions. As such, NHAs help communities diversify their economies, reducing the dependence on dominant business or industry.

Their focus on heritage assets leads to the creation of new jobs and the sustaining of existing jobs within the tourism, construction, arts, administrative, and service sectors. Throughout the country, NHA investments in community projects – whether they are physical projects like trails, riverfronts, historic buildings, or programmatic projects in education or interpretation – have additional benefits in enhancing community spirit, building community pride, and improving upon the quality of life of a place.

"How can we help people to make a good living? One of the things we can do is to try to bring in more tourism. Not tourism because we want more people, but tourism because we want to help our folks make a good living."

# Strategy: Support community development on local and regional level

AFNHA communities benefit from the creative talents of the AFNHA partnership network to build upon the region's forest heritage assets. The forests of the Appalachian Highlands of Maryland and West Virginia provide a stable, traditional, economic base upon which the communities of the 18 counties have a long history of progress and sustainability. However, in recent years, the opportunity to use traditional craft and forest assets have provided communities with new economic prospects to diversify opportunities for the region's residents. These new prospects include arts and craft, performing arts, music, storytelling, folklife, foodways, and historic, outdoor, and nature-based recreation. These opportunities form the basis of a creative economy for AFNHA, where commercial trade, labor, and production co-exist with emerging industries in sustainable tourism, placemaking, and community development. Together, these industries – the traditional and the new – will continue to transform AFNHA communities into dynamic destinations that attract visitors, create jobs, and generate revenue to sustain the region's economic growth. Many of these same activities enhance the quality of life for those who live here, and provide reasons to attract those who chose to stay or move here.

The AFNHA partnership network will help advance opportunities in the new creative economy for the region's businesses and organizations. The partnership will be poised to respond to the needs of the communities, working to create opportunities for skill-building and new career paths that ensure the adaptability and resiliency of AFNHA communities.

Some of the ways in which AFNHA will invest in the creative economy are:

- Supporting economic diversification in the 18-county region, including opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Supporting job creation in non-traditional industries, such as tourism, arts, and hospitality.
- Helping business and organizations increase revenue or decrease costs by offering skill-building in non-traditional industries to ensure adaptability and resiliency.
- Providing individuals with skill-building, career opportunities, and economic recovery from job losses from other industries.

- Undertaking programs and projects that further enhance the beauty of the region.
- Increasing collaboration across jurisdictions by extending partnerships across administrative or governmental borders that too often impede cooperation or regional economic growth.
- Helping organizations increase capacity and accomplish more through the AFNHA AmeriCorps program.



Frostburg Main Street is one of eight Main Street designated communities within AFNHA.

# **Strategy:** Support assessment, planning, and community development programs

Actions to support local community development include many of the support strategies discussed elsewhere in the plan. Some specific actions may include:

- Assess community situations. Each community is different and has its own history, relationship networks, and ways of working together. Any assistance starts with understanding where the community is, and what it needs. Leadership should come from, or at least work closely with, long-standing members of the community.
- Share examples of best practices and what worked elsewhere so communities can see what might be helpful for their situation. Initiate community conversations, whether in public meetings or between partner organizations, to establish goals and build synergy.
- Support existing programs and ongoing initiatives such as Main Street and ON TRAC, HubCAP, Mon Forest Towns, and other community development efforts.
- For lower-capacity communities and organizations without much professional assistance or established community networks, coaching and one-to-one assistance to build skills and help people connect with opportunities can be important.
- For communities that already have significant community development activities underway, meet them where they are and build on the work that is already in place. Building connections to leverage funding and accomplish / identify projects may be more appropriate action.

• AFNHA partners help to build capacity for local communities and organizations, including assessment, planning, and building social capital.

AFNHA partnership network strategies discussed in relationship to partner organizations, can also help with community development. This may include convening, collating information, volunteer management, technical assistance, training, AmeriCorps member assistance, grants, and leveraging of larger funding pools. These strategies, and others, may each be appropriate as needed in specific communities.

AFNHA connections can help to identify and leverage funding for community projects. The availability of additional funding as a designated NHA, with potential for increased annual appropriations, will be of great benefit to revenue generation for AFNHA businesses and local governments. Federal NHA dollars through the NPS Heritage Partnership Program must be matched by non-federal dollars and can help to leverage contributions and grants for community projects. Overall, NHAs have historically leveraged federal funds by at least 5:1, with the majority of that leverage coming from creative economy projects and programs. There exist many opportunities for funding creative economy projects within AFNHA with foundations that have a history of philanthropy within the region, as well as from state level programs, and the federal government through agencies such as the Appalachian Regional Commission.

# Strategy: Coordinate workforce and leadership development

AFNHA partners can encourage local leadership development both for professional staff and volunteer leaders. Training, coaching, connecting with peers, and mentorship can all help to increase confidence and effectiveness of community leaders.

Workforce development is also a crucial piece of community development. Broadly speaking this includes not only front-line workers, such as for tourism and forest industry jobs, but also support for entrepreneurs, small business, nonprofit staff and volunteers, and local government professionals. AFNHA will contribute to this by:

- Helping business and organizations increase revenue or decrease costs by offering skill-building in non-traditional industries to ensure adaptability and resiliency.
- Providing individuals with skill-building, career opportunities, and economic recovery from job losses from other industries.

Many of the activities within this plan, such as conservation, historic preservation, education, and cultural practices all require a skilled workforce. The AFNHA partnership network will offer opportunities for the labor pool to learn skills and gain experience through schools, community colleges, trade groups, apprenticeships, AmeriCorps service, skills workshops, and service learning experiences. Networking to provide training opportunities and build workforce skills will benefit creative economy, tourism, and community development goals.

# **CHAPTER 5**

# **Connect and Support Partners**

As described in the opening section of this management plan, a strong network of partnerships is the hallmark of successful NHAs. Generally, the NHA is at the center of this network, facilitating collaboration amongst organizations under a wide umbrella that encompasses various interests and missions. The AFNHA partnership network is expansive, encompassing organizations and businesses that span preservation, conservation, recreation, interpretation, education, cultural traditions, economic development, and the forest products industry. Through the existing AFNHA AmeriCorps program, grants, other direct support, and engagement of communities, AFHA Inc. will facilitate connections and support partners in a variety of ways.

# **Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Partnership Network**

From its roots as an initiative to integrate heritage tourism efforts in the early 2000s to its endeavors as a newly minted NHA today, partnerships have been a foundational tenet of AFNHA. Within AFNHA, local, state, and federal agencies hold a significant amount of public land. As forest land managers, they are directly responsible for conservation, enhancement, interpretation, recreation, and other uses on their lands, making them an essential part of the partnership network. In addition, they are important partners in many other AFNHA strategies, and are, in turn, supported by other partners. Also of significance are the thousands of acres of privately owned forests, much of which are managed through the private sector forest products industry.

Beyond land managers, regional and statewide community development organizations have a significant footprint and overlapping economic development missions. Many umbrella organizations lead particular sectors, such as historic preservation, cultural conservation, environmental stewardship, forest industry, recreation, and tourism interests. Historic sites, museums, historical organizations, cultural activities, arts organizations, trails, and

"What's important about AFNHA? Networking – building bridges between geographic and interest groups, and working together to grow the pie instead of compete."

recreation facilities are important local partners. Communities, historic downtowns, and the businesses that keep them vital, are essential to the network. A healthy partnership network comprised of these public and private entities will enable the region to meet the primary goals for AFNHA established through the management planning process, as well the NHA's legislated mandates.

Partners within the AFNHA network focus on a variety of purposes relevant to AFNHA's mission. These are related to the balanced diverse interests specified in AFHA Inc. bylaws and in AFNHA designation language, to involve and represent regional agency partners, the forest industry, environmental interests, cultural heritage interests, and tourism interests. In discussing roles of AFHA Inc. – the coordinating entity – and individual and collective roles of partner agencies and organizations, it is helpful to group them in terms of type and focus areas related to diverse interests.

Many of these organizations and places, along with their roles in the AFNHA partnership network, have been mentioned in previous chapters and some primary examples are described in more detail below. Appendix E, "Partners," contains a more comprehensive list of many of the committed formal partners, current informal partners, and some of the potential partners likely to engage with implementation of the AFNHA management plan. The list notes current and expected types of engagement, including potential project funders, and, when relevant, includes links to planning documents of partners. This chapter's description and Appendix E list are not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive, but instead highlight the current success, and future potential, for regional collaboration. The AFNHA partnership network will remain open to future partnerships that align with the mission, vision, themes, and goals of the NHA.

# **Public Land Management Partners**

## The Monongahela National Forest, U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service

The foundational federal partner for NHAs is the National Park Service. For AFNHA, the Forest Service is an equally important federal agency. Both have a role to play in helping AFNHA develop a regional vision based on a shared heritage in which the forest plays a defining role. This relationship with two federal agencies with different organizational missions presents AFNHA with unique opportunities.

The one-million-acre Monongahela National Forest anchors the AFNHA region and is the largest landholding among the many federal, state, county, and private forestlands in the central Appalachian highlands. As a place with innumerable assets to visit, an industry partner, a focal point for conservation and research, and an important source of technical and financial assistance, the Monongahela is a key partner in the AFNHA network.

The Forest Service was established in 1905 to provide quality water and timber to the nation. The Forest Service's mission – to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations – embodies the priorities of multiple use. Harvest, conservation, recreation, research, watershed protection, and technical assistance to private, local, and state forestry entities are all part of the multi-faceted mission of the agency. The Forest Service well understands the complexity of its mission and the challenges of balancing diverse aspects of this mission.

"We help people share and enjoy the forest while conserving the environment for generations to come. Some activities are compatible. Some are not. "<sup>1</sup>

Forest Service representative

Also of note is the Shared Stewardship Program, which is one of the agency's top priorities. In a 2017 speech, Forest Service Chief Tony Tooke discussed the priority of promoting shared stewardship by increasing partnerships and volunteerism. "We can't succeed alone, and we can't succeed at all if all we do is focus on National Forest System lands. It takes others to help us make a difference across the whole landscape. We will work with partners and volunteers to accomplish work

on the nation's forests, both public and private, in the spirit of shared stewardship. As we pursue our conservation goals, we will work with anyone interested – with all citizens, from rural and urban communities alike. We will strengthen and expand our partner and volunteer programs. Coming together with all citizens across shared landscapes and around shared values is critical for the future of conservation."<sup>1</sup>

While Shared Stewardship is initially focused on land management across jurisdictions, it also provides important opportunities to work with and within communities, connect diverse groups with common goals, and work through partnerships to enhance outdoor recreation and preserve historic resources. One example is the intersection between public lands, sportsmen's groups, and the forest industry, working together to restore early successional habitat for wildlife.

The Monongahela National Forest Supervisor and Leadership Team recognize existing and potential mutual benefits in collaborating with AFNHA. The Forest Service's Shared Stewardship focus and the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> U.S. Forest Service, <u>https://www.fs.usda.gov/speeches/five-priorities-forest-service</u>, accessed February 26, 2022. Chapter 5 AFNHA Management Plan

AFNHA management planning process present an opportunity to work together towards shared goals. Below are several notable points of intersection between AFNHA and the MNF.

AFHA AmeriCorps members have been serving MNF sub-sponsor sites since 2008, with AmeriCorps service assisting with public lands improvement, ecosystems conditions monitoring, environmental education, interpretation, and community connections. This partnership is highly successful. Forest Service leadership values the work AmeriCorps volunteers have accomplished and intends to continue that relationship.

The success of the AFNHA AmeriCorps partnership with the Monongahela National Forest has been recognized by Forest Service partnership honor awards.<sup>2</sup> Forest Service leadership understands the capacity and feasibility of AFNHA helping to accomplish projects and programs with which they may need assistance. This creates a level of trust that opens the door to potential funding when it is available.

AFHA Inc. has flexibility as a non-federal partner. AFHA Inc. can serve as a fiscal agent for Forest Serviceled grants that must go to a nonprofit organization. In other cases, by obligating federal money to partners for a specific purpose, they can have a longer period to carry out specific projects and programs than annual appropriations may provide. Also, AFHA Inc., as a private nonprofit, has the opportunity to raise awareness to further support the Forest Service's mission.

In the Shared Stewardship model, the Monongahela National Forest and AFNHA partners can be effective intermediaries to collaborate on carrying out elements of the Forest Plan related to communities' interests and priorities. AFNHA can think creatively about the forest products industry, the recreation economy, history, and conservation.

The 2020 Great American Outdoors Act presents a five-year funding window for national forests,

"In line with the Forest Plan, we are putting tremendous emphasis on partnering to ensure viability of the Mon as a large diverse ecosystem in West Virginia."

Forest Service representative

national parks, and other federal partners to address critical facilities and infrastructural needs. Although the initial focus is on backlog maintenance, there will be opportunities for recreation and conservation projects that can benefit the Mon Forest and surrounding counties and communities. Given AFHA Inc.'s successful track record with the Mon Forest and its flexibility, the Forest Service will continue to view the NHA coordinating entity as a reliable partner. There is a clear opportunity for AFNHA to help identify and move forward projects funded under the Great American Outdoors Act.

#### National Park Service

National Park Service (NPS) is the lead federal agency associated with NHAs. Through the Region 1 Office and the Washington DC NHA Office, NPS provides AFNHA with technical assistance on planning and NHA activities, and channels Heritage Partnership Program (HPP) funding appropriated by U.S. Congress for National Heritage Area activities. AFHA Inc., the coordinating entity, receives funding through a federal financial assistance agreement tied to an annual work plan. NPS has experienced staff who are able to provide technical assistance during the implementation of this management plan.

In many NHAs, a national park within the region is a key partner and often closely related to the NHA's historical and cultural significance. The C&O Canal National Historical Park is the primary NPS presence within AFNHA, with a visitor center and park staff in Cumberland, although the park's administrative headquarters is in Williamsport, Maryland, outside of AFNHA. The story of the canal ties to the region's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> U.S. Forest Service, Eastern Region, 2017 Volunteerism and Service Honorable Mention for Preservation Partnership of AFHA with Monongahela National Forest Heritage Program and HistoriCorps; 2020 Volunteer and Service Award for Cultural Diversity, for AFNHA AmeriCorps partnership including help with the Forest Centennial.

settlement patterns and economy within the AFNHA Crucible of Isolation interpretive theme, so there are partnership opportunities related to the visitors' experience, technical assistance, and interpretation. The NPS Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail includes the Allegany County portions of the Great American Passage and C&O Canal Towpath, and is administered through C&O Canal National Historical Park. The other NPS partner is the Gauley River National Recreation Area, which is partially within AFNHA in Nicholas County. This NRA is administered by the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, located just south of AFNHA in the neighboring National Coal Heritage Area. This site connects to AFNHA Forest Abundance focus and offers world-class river rafting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation opportunities.

#### Other Public Lands

Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is another major public land management entity for the 17,000-acre wildlife refuge that protects the high valley wetland habitats and the wildlife that live there. The refuge sponsors AFNHA AmeriCorps members who primarily assist with biological monitoring, as well as visitor interpretation. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also has two field offices in the AFNHA area, the West Virginia Field Office co-located with Canaan Valley Refuge, and the Appalachian Field Office in White Sulphur Springs, in Greenbrier County. The programmatic work of the field offices includes supporting endangered species, and the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program that works with private landowners.



AFNHA AmeriCorps members and U.S. Fish & Wildlife staff survey wetlands at Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages some lakes in the AFNHA region, including Summersville Lake, and Burnsville Lake with adjoining Bulltown Historic Area.

West Virginia Division of Forestry manages the West Virginia State Forests, as well as providing other services for private landowners, and environmental education. West Virginia State Forests are managed for multiple uses including timber harvest and recreation, and are marketed for recreation alongside state parks. West Virginia State Parks are primarily managed for conservation and recreation, and housed within the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WV DNR). WV DNR manages the WV DNR

Wildlife Management Areas primarily for wildlife. This agency is also responsible for hunting and fishing management, and the West Virginia Wildlife Center in Upshur Co. AFNHA AmeriCorps members have served with West Virginia Division of Forestry and with one of the state parks, and a representative of West Virginia Division of Forestry sits on the AFHA Inc. board.

An important historical asset is Cass Scenic Railroad State Park, a mostly intact logging company town with a functioning historic logging railroad system. The state of West Virginia's responsibility includes historic preservation and historical interpretation. Partners are important to the Cass State Park operations, as the scenic train is now operated by Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad, and they are also supported by nonprofit partner Mountain State Railroad and Logging Historical Association. An AFNHA AmeriCorps member has assisted with interpretation here.

The Maryland Forest Service, which manages Maryland State Forests, and Maryland Park Service, which manages Maryland State Parks, are both housed within the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR). In addition, MD DNR manages wildlife management areas, hunting and fishing services, and conservation programs. A representative from one of the Maryland State Forests formerly served on the AFHA Inc. board.

Many counties and cities own and manage land for the public, most often used for recreational facilities, and sometimes including forests and / or historic sites. Some nonprofit organizations own and manage land, usually for preservation or recreation purposes. Most notable is The Nature Conservancy, which manages nature preserves that are generally open to the public unless restricted to protect specific natural resources. The West Virginia Land Trust and similar entities in Maryland protect land from development both through easements and purchase. Another example is the nonprofit Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation, which preserves the 400-acre Rich Mountain Battlefield Civil War Site.

## **Tribal Partners**

AFNHA is building engagement with federal and state recognized Nations and Tribes through the planning process and for future activities. While there are no federally recognized Tribes residing in or with territorial holdings within AFNHA, many Nations continue to maintain a relationship with the region through a number of initiatives and processes ranging from State and Federal Section 106 consultations to taking part in local Indigenous-themed programming. The planning team sent requests for consultation and for plan review to 45 Tribes. At time of writing, the response from Nations and Tribes has been limited. Based on some feedback from Tribes, this slow response may be due to the COVID shutdown and start-up, along with added responsibilities for Tribal offices working in historic and cultural preservation.

AFNHA has initiated outreach and continues conversations with those who have responded, including consultation with the THPO Director from the Seneca Nation on plan review and Tribal outreach. Future engagement with the Seneca Nation and Seneca-Iroquois National Museum will include participation in AFNHA planning and activities, providing assistance in research, interpretation development, and implementation, which will include Native American history, activity and stories, and review of all pertinent interpretive project content. They will also assist with outreach to engage with other Tribal Nations who have interests within our region.

AFNHA will continue outreach to increase future engagement with Tribal Nations and citizens and will encourage more conversations as it receives future responses. These efforts will be ongoing to build Tribal consultation with all willing Tribal governments who have interests in the region. In addition, AFNHA will work to involve and build ongoing and future engagement with Tribal partners and Tribal citizens to participate in NHA activities such as planning, project implementation, resource conservation, interpretation, events, programming, and cultural heritage tourism.

# **Program Partners**

Beyond the primary responsibility for land management, there are many agencies, organizations, and private partners who provide or participate in programs, projects, and services related to AFNHA goals. These include state agencies, statewide and regional organizations, local communities, and individual assets or businesses. Many of these are already engaged with AFNHA as program partners, and current agreements are noted in Appendix E list. Many current and future partners have participated through the management planning process or are potential partners for future engagement. Statewide and regional organizations, because of their outward reach, have the potential to be important in the AFNHA partnership network. More local and targeted partners fill in the network and accomplish projects. The land management organizations described above, and the programmatic interest partners discussed below should not be considered exhaustive, but give a range of potential partners across the region. This information demonstrates the types of programs that have a conceptual or geographical overlap with AFNHA and provides examples of potential opportunities for collaboration.

Forest Industry and Private Land Management The majority of forest lands within AFNHA are owned by private landowners. This includes individual homeowners, many with a small acreage, farms, and woodlots, as well as large landowners, commercial farms, and corporate holdings. Some AFNHA public partners provide information or services to assist private landowners in assessing and managing their lands to meet the landowner's chosen goals of sustainable timber production, recreation, wildlife, and / or scenic beauty. In some cases, AFNHA can assist with this messaging. In most cases, however, these properties are not open the public, and partnering with AFNHA is totally voluntary.



Forester at Fernow Experimental Forest instructs about forestry and watershed research. (Credit: USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station)

The West Virginia Forestry Association (WVFA)

is a nonprofit organization funded by its membership. Members include individuals and businesses involved in forest management, timber production, firewood production, harvesting, and wood product manufacturing. A WVFA priority is to ensure there is a sustainable balance between the forest products industry and tourism and recreational development, an issue underscored in AFNHA's Core Values statements. A representative of WVFA sits on the AFHA Inc. board to represent private forestry interests.

Corporate forest ownership is substantial in the area, including timberlands owned by national as well as local companies. Most of these are managed for sustainable timber production, with added benefits for wildlife, watershed protection, and outdoor recreation. Non-commercial and smaller forest owners can participate in programs to support sustainable management in both states, including services from the state forestry agencies, the Tree Farm program, and Extension Service Woodlands Stewards programs. The AFNHA region is known for producing high quality hardwoods, and professional foresters, logging, sawmills, and commercial and consumer wood products manufacturing are all substantial economic opportunities within the region.

### Environmental, Conservation, and Recreation Organizations

- Friends of the Cheat (FOC) Friends of Cheat is a nonprofit watershed group working to restore, preserve and promote the Cheat River watershed. FOC works in pollution mitigation and watershed restoration, mapping and documentation, education, and recreation in the Cheat Watershed. Among their programs are the Preston Trail Towns program to revitalize small towns along the Cheat River Rail Trail, and as the primary sponsor of the Upper Cheat River Water Trail designated in 2012 under the National Water Trails System. In addition, FOC is engaged in innovative education, such as a snorkeling program. Several other watershed groups are active to protect streams across AFNHA.
- West Virginia Highlands Conservancy (WVHC) WVHC is an environmental organization that promotes, encourages, and works for the conservation – including both preservation and wise management – and appreciation of the natural resources of West Virginia and the nation. Focusing on the highlands region, they helped establish the Central Appalachian Spruce Restoration Initiative (CASRI) to restore red spruce habitat and are organizing volunteers for the Dolly Sods Wilderness Stewards Program.
- Central Appalachian Spruce Restoration Initiative CASRI is a partnership of diverse interests with a common goal of restoring historic red spruce-northern hardwood ecosystems across the high elevation landscapes of Central Appalachia. It is comprised of private, state, federal, and non-governmental organizations which recognize the importance of this ecosystem for its ecological, aesthetic, recreational, economic, and cultural values. AFHA Inc. has partnered with this group in multiple ways including AmeriCorps support, education and outreach, and fiscal sponsorship for projects.
- Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Area (CWPMA) In 2010, AFHA Inc. signed an MOU in partnership with 22 other federal, state, and local agencies and organizations including U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, West Virginia Division of Forestry, and The Nature Conservancy to participate in the Potomac Highlands Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Area. The Potomac Highlands CWPMA is a partnership whose mission is to establish efforts to control and manage non-native invasive species across jurisdictional boundaries of 12 counties in the highlands of West Virginia and Virginia. In 2018, the Rivers and Gorges Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Area (RGCWPMA) was established to extend the mission to an additional nine counties. Because these are collaborative groups rather than formal 501(c)(3) corporations, AFHA Inc. has been helpful as a fiscal agent for some of their projects.
- Monongahela Outdoor Volunteers (MOV) Working in partnership with the Monongahela National Forest, MOV helps maintain and develop a beginner to intermediate trail system for residents and tourists in the Richwood, Nicholas County area. The program's vision is to sustain the trail system through the efforts of a nonprofit working to raise funding, although organizational capacity is currently limited. AFHA Inc. has served as fiscal agent to help MOV secure over \$90,000 in grant funding from public and private organizations such as the Benedum Foundation, Appalachian Regional Commission, USDA, and Dominion Energy. AFHA Inc. also provides administrative capacity for managing the project and the hiring of seasonal employees and contractors. This model of providing organizational assistance is one way AFHA Inc. can assist and incubate other small organizations and start-ups. Planning feedback requested this type of service from AFHA Inc., which is further described in Chapter 6.
- Snowshoe Highlands Area Recreation Collaborative (SHARC) This informal group of selfdescribed doers is pursuing a Gold-Level Ride Center designation through the International Mountain Biking Association. Trails and infrastructure already exist, and the area reached Silver-

Level in fall 2020. Many community partners and stakeholders are collaborating on workforce development, long-term sustainability through staffing, and expanding to include partners throughout Pocahontas and Webster counties. The total project is estimated to cost about \$1.5 million.

Trail Organizations – Numerous other trail groups, including private, public, and associations, work in the AFNHA region to develop, create, manage, and improve multi-use trails for the enjoyment of tourists and residents. Trails attract many based on their use, including rail trails, mountain biking trails, and hiking trails. Garrett Trails is a nonprofit group building and maintaining trails in Garrett County, Maryland. A representative from that group currently sits on the AFHA Inc. board. The West Virginia Scenic Trail Association, with help from the U.S. Forest Service, manages the Allegheny Trail, a multi-use trail in the heart of the Monongahela National Forest. The 287.81-mile trail begins at the Appalachian Trail intersection on Peters Mountain and runs until it meets the Mason-Dixon Line at the Pennsylvania-West Virginia border near Bruceton Mills. The Greenbrier River Trail is managed by West Virginia Rails to Trails Council works statewide, while small organizations such as the Lost River Trails Coalition, Heart of the Highlands, and Highlands Trail Foundation provide planning, volunteers, and technical support to keep trails maintained and available.

### **Cultural Heritage Organizations**

- The Augusta Heritage Center of Davis & Elkins College By highlighting and elevating traditional Appalachian folkways, this organization supports community vibrancy and connection, and documents and sustains cultural traditions. The Augusta Heritage Center leadership profile in the cultural community makes them a key partner for this segment. AFNHA AmeriCorps members have been instrumental in helping with the Center's living archive.
- Spruce Forest Artisan Village Resident and visiting artists practice their craft in this congregation of studios established in historic buildings along the National Road. Visitors can see firsthand, and sometimes experience, pottery production, blacksmithing, and storytelling, among other living traditions.
- Cultural Arts and Music Venues The region boasts many arts organizations, venues for music and theater, and art studios. Randolph County Arts Center and Old Brick Playhouse (Randolph County), Pocahontas Opera House (Pocahontas County), and Carnegie Hall and Greenbrier Valley Theater (Greenbrier County) are a few of the arts, performance, and live theater venues in the area. Many artisans work out of their own studios or sell their work in galleries or co-op marketplaces. Live music of many genres abounds, and can be heard in bars and restaurants, at community events, as well as in concerts. Cultural networking groups are important in supporting both traditional and contemporary arts. ArtSpring in Tucker County, Mountain Arts District connecting artists in Randolph and surrounding counties, and the Mountain Music Trail supporting musicians and music venues along U.S. Route 219, are a few of these.
- Maryland Heritage Areas This program, housed in the Maryland Historical Trust, includes two
  of Maryland's 13 state-certified heritage areas that are within AFNHA. Passages of the Western
  Potomac Heritage Area includes Canal Place and much of Cumberland and Frostburg in
  Allegany County, and Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area includes the
  towns, scenic byways, and other heritage resources in Garrett County. Heritage tourism is central
  to the Maryland state program, and the engagement of public and private partners committed
  to preserving and interpreting historical, cultural, and natural resources is similar to the NHA
  program.

Historic Sites, Museums, and Historical Organizations - These entities are significant local partners. While a few historic sites are already noted as publicly owned, many are the responsibility of nonprofit organizations, or occasionally local governments, for preservation, operations, and programming. These include Allegany Museum, Evergreen Heritage Center, Garrett County Historical Society Museum, Oakland B&O Museum, Ashby's Fort and Fort Edwards Foundation early settlement sites, Arthurdale Heritage, Adaland Mansion, West Virginia Railroad Museum, Beverly Heritage Center, Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation, Pearl Buck Birthplace, and Greenbrier Historical Society - North House Museum. Most are operated by one or two staff or by volunteers. All of these sites have existing or potential interpretation that ties their story into Crucible of Isolation or



Kim Folk, Executive Director of Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area, shows the heritage area gateway sign at Spruce Forest Artisan Village.

Logging Boom themes. In addition, many counties have historical societies or genealogical societies who often have museums, substantial collections, or research facilities, but may be run totally by volunteers and may not be able to open to the public regularly.

- State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History houses the West Virginia SHPO, as well as the Arts Section, the State Archives, and State Museum. They provide technical assistance and communication on matters of structural preservation, archives and collections, and historic research as well as grants for preservation and arts projects. In Maryland, the Maryland Historical Trust is the state agency dedicated to preserving and interpreting the legacy of Maryland's past. Through research, conservation, and education, MHT assists the people of Maryland in understanding their historical and cultural heritage. As part of the Maryland Department of Planning, MHT serves as Maryland's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and offers a range of programs including financial incentives for rehabilitation and documentation of historic and cultural properties, as well as planning and heritage tourism.
- Statewide Nonprofits The Preservation Alliance of West Virginia is the statewide, grassroots preservation organization that supports and promotes historic preservation through education and outreach, advocacy, preservation tools, and heritage tourism. The program is headquartered in Elkins and has a strong working relationship with AFHA Inc. In addition, the Preservation Alliance has its own AmeriCorps program that was partially modeled after AFHA's program, compounding the potential benefits to the AFNHA communities. Preservation Maryland is the corresponding organization in Maryland, dedicated to preserving Maryland's historic buildings, neighborhoods, landscapes, and archaeological sites through outreach, funding, and advocacy. West Virginia Association of Museums is a statewide membership organization for museums that provides support, networking and an annual conference. Maryland Museum Association is a similar alliance of historical and cultural museum institutions. West Virginia Humanities Council houses a state folklorist. That organization and Maryland Humanities both provide support, programs, and grant opportunities for humanities-related programming.

#### **Community Development Partners**

#### Mon Forest Towns

The Mon Forest Towns Partnership is a collaborative, regional tourism promotion effort between 10 gateway communities to the Monongahela National Forest. As noted in Chapter 4, Mon Forest Towns is supported by the U.S. Forest Service, USDA Rural Development, and West Virginia University and has received funding from the Benedum Foundation. In 2020, six of the 10 Mon Forest Towns were also selected as West Virginia HubCAP communities (see details below). The Mon Forest Towns Initiative's vision, which has parallels to AFNHA, is to:

"Connect communities to each other, to the Forest, and to our natural resources to generate positive and tangible outcomes that will improve quality of life and vitality of this region. Through relationship-building, community engagement, and resource sharing, the partnership aims to foster a sustainable recreation economy across the Mon Forest region."<sup>3</sup>

Although the program is defined through recreation tourism, it is also focused on marketing, capacity building, technical assistance, destination development, and access to capital. The initiative began in 2017 with program partners using the USDA resource guide for recreational economies and the Collective Impact Strategy framework. A steering committee with grass-tops representation from each of the towns was facilitated by the WVU Extension Services Rural Tourism Program and MNF leadership. The goal was to determine how

"The initiative promotes more of an overall economic impact than just recreation. Arts, heritage, recreation, food, shopping... Mon Towns pulls in all of this, but the primary focus is the connection between the towns and the forest. "

recreation and proximity to the forest could benefit the towns. As a leader in the process stated during stakeholder interviews, the initiative "was framed as management, not marketing. Previously, CVBs solely focused on marketing, but through the Mon Forest Towns initiative, we got them to realize they could have greater impact if they focused on management."

In January of 2022, the Mon Forest Towns Partnership completed a five-year strategic plan with goals that align with the goals of AFNHA:

- Improve community health and wellness by promoting outdoor recreation activities and infrastructure improvement.
- Develop an outdoor recreation entrepreneurial culture by supporting the creation and growth of local recreation and tourism-based businesses.
- Promote the uniqueness of the Mon Forest Towns and recreation opportunities in the region through collaborative regional marketing.
- Develop world-class trails and outdoor recreation opportunities in the Mon Forest Towns region.
- Increase employment opportunities in recreation-related fields to build a year-round recreation economy.
- Create a downtown experience that recreationists would enjoy.
- Develop a Sustainable Partnership Framework.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Mon Forest Towns, West Virginia University, <u>https://publicinterestdesign.wvu.edu/mon-forest-towns/about-mon-forest-towns</u>, accessed February 26, 2022.

This same strategy had previously been employed in the WVU Extension Service's work with communities in Tucker County sponsored by the Tucker Cultural District Authority. The renaissance in Thomas and Davis shows the success of this approach. The 10 Mon Forest Towns communities have varying capacities and needs; therefore, communities are taking different approaches to the Mon Forest Towns initiative with individualized action plans. In some towns that currently have less capacity, individual businesses are working directly with the initiative, while in places where there are more assets – such as festivals or established destinations – the approach is more community-wide.

Mon Forest Towns and AFNHA have a lot of similarity in goals and approach. The primary differences lay in scale, conceptual focus, and sustainability. Mon Forest Towns is 10 communities, compared with the 18 counties that comprise AFNHA. While the Mon Forest Towns includes possibility of expansion to additional towns in the future, it is specific to individual communities within the MNF footprint. For AFNHA, it is important to be inclusive of all counties and communities, not only the ones within the Mon. A similarity is the intention to recognize the capacity of each community and support them individually to move forward. The Mon Forest Towns focuses on recreation as a unifying concept, while AFNHA utilizes the region's historic, cultural, and natural heritage as unifying concepts. Both use these concepts broadly, as a development tool to increase tourism, enhance economic opportunity, and improve the quality of life for West Virginia residents. AFNHA representatives are active in Mon Forest Towns community groups, and work collaboratively to coordinate and support efforts for shared goals.

#### West Virginia Community Development Hub

A statewide community development organization, the West Virginia Community Development Hub (The Hub) has created the West Virginia Community Development Model to help communities attain and sustain economic well-being and quality of life. The Hub offers a variety of programs, including training for community organizations, and an AmeriCorps VISTA program. Through their Blueprint program, in partnership with FHLBank, community teams build a shared vision, master plan, and community development strategies, supported by coaching and opportunities to leverage funding. Current Blueprint communities in AFNHA are Kingwood (Preston County), Meadow River Valley (Greenbrier County), Parsons (Tucker County), while Richwood (Nicholas County) has completed the program.

Through HubCAP, the two-year Communities of Achievement Program, communities take development efforts to the next level, including downtown revitalization, building redevelopment, expanded business opportunities, and community engagement activities. Although Hub programs are generally spread across the state, in 2020 the six communities chosen were Mon Forest Towns. The Hub supports the idea of concentrating in an area with focused coaching, and the towns gain the opportunity to plan and implement specific projects. This approach has eased some of the workloads on the WVU staff and has also helped build capacity. As part of the partnership, the Hub has placed an AmeriCorps VISTA position with the Mon Forest Towns initiative and has made available VISTA support to the individual town teams. The upcoming Downtown Appalachia: Revitalizing Recreational Economies (DARRE) program will work with many of these same communities to expand redevelopment opportunities.

#### Main Street Programs

Main Street is a downtown revitalization program that follows the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center community-based approach to preservation and development. Because the early histories of Main Street and NHAs have some of the same people involved, there are many similarities between the two programs and their approaches. This shared philosophy means that Main Street programs across the country are often strong partners with NHAs. One of the most significant differences between the programs is scale, as the Main Street program focuses on downtowns, and NHAs work at a large-landscape level. The Main Street programs operate statewide to provide training, technical assistance, and ongoing support to designated communities. The West Virginia Main Street Program has 15 designated Main Street communities in the state. Of these, four are in AFNHA – Elkins (Randolph County), Kingwood (Preston County), Philippi (Barbour County), and Ronceverte (Greenbrier County).

West Virginia ON TRAC, a statewide West Virginia program within the Main Street office, supports communities to learn the basics of the Main Street approach. Communities must participate in the ON TRAC program for at least two years before they are eligible for Main Street designation, though some small towns choose to stay in ON TRAC. Of the 11 ON TRAC communities in West Virginia, eight are in AFNHA – Bath (Morgan County), Belington (Barbour County), Beverly (Randolph County), Marlinton (Pocahontas County), Parsons (Tucker County), Romney (Hampshire County), Rowlesburg (Preston County), and Sutton (Braxton County).

The current focus of the West Virginia Main Street Program includes:

- Training on transformation strategies for downtowns
- Developing tourism focus on how it benefits downtown
- More attention to ON TRAC towns that need to be reactivated

Main Street Maryland Program emphasizes community-driven, comprehensive revitalization based on design, organization, promotion, economic restructuring, and clean, safe and green priorities. Four communities in AFNHA are designated Maryland Main Streets – Cumberland and Frostburg (Allegany County), and Grantsville and Oakland (Garrett County).

Some of the individual Main Street and ON TRAC communities have partnered with AFNHA through AmeriCorps members, technical assistance, and networking. The West Virginia state program has contributed to AFNHA management planning. Given the philosophical overlap between the Main Street and NHA approaches, and that 16 communities bear either a Main Street or ON TRAC designation, opportunities exist for deeper partnerships.

#### Woodlands Development Group (WDG)

Woodlands Development and Lending acts as a community development corporation within some AFNHA counties. The projects they support tie directly to some of the goals of NHAs, including historic property redevelopment, downtown community revitalization, parks, greenspace, and trail building, while other projects support a broader, more expansive mission like housing and job creation. AFHA AmeriCorps members have supported WDG from multiple angles over the years with Hands on Team rehabilitation of historic structural assets, building inventory, education and outreach for community development, National Register and Historic Tax Credit development, and historic building needs assessments. Woodlands has reciprocated with an impressive track record of hiring AmeriCorps alumni as permanent staff.

#### Philanthropic and Funding Opportunities

Philanthropic organizations such as private foundations can be game-changing partners for NHAs. Frequently, constellations of projects that present opportunities to leverage additional partners and funding attract funders to produce the beneficial outcomes they are seeking.

The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation is one such philanthropic organization that is currently active in the region and is the only major foundation which specifically targets West Virginia. The Benedum Foundation has a long track record of supporting other NHAs and state heritage areas in West Virginia and Pennsylvania and is a current funder for some AFNHA projects. Benedum understands how NHAs function and is familiar with what NHAs can accomplish. The foundation has counseled AFHA Inc. staff on convening partners and projects to leverage other funders and projects. Based on this advice,

AFHA Inc. will immediately initiate early actions that prioritize projects considered to be low cost but high integration.

Community, family, and corporate foundations serve portions of the AFNHA region, and are most frequently engaged for specific projects. A number of larger regional or national foundations have overlapping missions with NHA priorities and can be approached for expanding partnership and potential funding.

Government agencies offer a number of potential grants and funding opportunities. Some partner agencies that have already been mentioned, as well as other federal agencies, offer grant funding related to specific types of projects such as historic preservation, museums, or conservation. Some other possibilities support community development or other broad programs. Some agencies that AFNHA partners have had some experience with include Appalachian Regional Commission, USDA Rural Development, US Department of Transportation (especially Scenic Byway, Recreational Trails, or Transportation Enhancement grants), and Economic Development Administration. AFNHA partners can often work together to support each other, and to combine similar projects into more competitive applications, to try to leverage additional government funding.

#### **Academic Partners**

Academic partners near and within AFNHA are important for shared expertise, sources of training, interns and service learning opportunities, support for AmeriCorps programs and recruiting, and involvement in projects. Major current partners are:

Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College (Eastern) is involved in programs and initiatives with partners throughout the Potomac Highlands region with a particular focus on tourism and agritourism. The Creative Economy regional tourism initiative discussed in Chapter 4 was initiated by Eastern, starting with a Benedum grant in 2015 to develop a vision for economic development for the Potomac Highlands Region. From this emerged the Potomac Highlands Creative Economy Council comprised of CVBs, chambers of commerce, and tourism-centered businesses and attractions in the region, which works to support the tourism industry and market the area as a tourist destination. Another related initiative is the Ag Action Council that supports farmers and local foods, with a connection to AFNHA interests through agricultural tourism and farming as a long-standing tradition. A major project envisioned that will help fulfill the goals of the initiative is the development of the Mountain Skyway Center as a facility for economic and community development (http://www.easternwv.edu/about-eastern/mountain-skyway-center). The center will house programs to advance workforce education, small business development, entrepreneurship, tourism, Appalachian arts, music, humanities, and food. Eastern continues a focus on technical and workforce training, including non-curriculum trainings and workshops to build capacity for community members.

West Virginia University is the largest university in West Virginia and is located in a neighboring county to AFNHA. The original initiative that became AFNHA was started by a partnership between WVU Division of Forestry and WVU Extension Services, and both of those departments remain involved. Other departments, such as Public Administration and Public History, contribute to AFNHA projects. WVU remains an important partner for expertise, internships, and shared programming.

Other educational institutions have tourism, recreation, or other related programs that make them current or potential partners, including Frostburg State University, Garrett College, Allegany College of Maryland, WVU Potomac State College, Davis & Elkins College, Alderson Broaddus University, West Virginia Wesleyan College, Future Generations University, New River Community and Technical College, and Fairmont State University.

#### **Communities as Partners**

AFNHA is a large region with overlapping cultural landscapes, as described in the introductory chapter. Over time, historical, geographical, political, and economic drivers have shaped counties and communities. Today, the region encompasses several hubs of activity, some of which are established destinations as described in Chapter 4. The communities throughout AFNHA are essential to the success of the partnership network. Many communities have active community development synergy and established track records. Building on these efforts will be vital to AFNHA's ability to substantially impact the region. Going beyond these current initiatives and extending these successes to outlying areas and smaller communities that will benefit from heritage development is a major role for AFNHA. While other successful initiatives including programs of The Hub and the Mon Forest Towns Partnership support individual communities, AFNHA aims to build on that success, offering support to all communities who wish to engage with services appropriate to their need and level of progress.

"It is essential to meet communities where they are. Some have already come a long way, and others need help\_getting there." The 18 counties that comprise AFNHA have a combined total of 16 Certified Local Governments (CLGs) supporting historic preservation, 10 Mon Forest Towns, eight Main Street communities, eight ON TRAC communities, six HubCAP communities, four Hub Blueprint communities, one Cultural District Authority, and two counties with heritage areas in the Maryland state program including four designated Arts and

Entertainment Districts. Although there is overlap amongst these designations, they impact 28 distinct communities across all 18 counties in AFNHA. Partnerships have been critical to achieving these designations and implementing their programs, therefore, momentum and synergies with potential partners already exists in each of these communities and will help advance the goals of community and heritage development within AFNHA. In a rural area with a small population, this is an astounding partnership network on which AFNHA can continue to build.

Some major community anchors for AFNHA include:

- Cumberland, county seat of Allegany County, is the largest city in the area, and at 19,076 is the only city over 10,000. With a downtown historic district, extensive historic buildings and attractions, anchored by the C&O Canal National Historical Park, Cumberland is the major northern gateway for AFNHA.
- Frostburg, also in Allegany County, is the second largest city at 7,027. With a major university, Frostburg State, and a vital historic downtown, Frostburg is a popular destination.
- Lewisburg is the county seat of Greenbrier County, and the southern gateway to AFNHA. Lewisburg, a charming arts and historic destination, has only 3,749 population, but together with neighboring White Sulphur Springs as home of the Greenbrier Resort, and Ronceverte historic railroad, river and logging town, anchor the county.
- Elkins, the county seat of Randolph County, is the largest West Virginia city in AFNHA at 6,934. Elkins is where AFHA Inc. is headquartered, and its role as a hub within the AFNHA region is already well established.

In addition to these primary cities, each county has one or more communities that serve the people who live there, as well as the surrounding small towns and rural areas of the county. A number of these small towns have been mentioned as participating in Main Street, Mon Towns or other programs. While it is important to recognize the priority of partnerships with some of the larger communities which have substantial resources, each small town in the area has its own contribution to make.

## **Goal 4: Connect and Support Partners Linked by the Region's Forest Heritage**

# **Objective:** Develop the Partnership Network through Leadership and Collaboration

Developing and strengthening the partnership network across AFNHA will be the responsibility not only of the coordinating entity AFHA Inc., but also of the many participating partners. The strategies included here are those suggested during the planning process that will help to build this network. The distribution of roles will be worked out in practice, with AFHA Inc. taking a strong leadership role and implementation responsibility for some projects, while other efforts may be led by partner groups, with AFHA Inc. as a supportive participating partner.

A network of partners working toward similar and supporting goals and interests already exists in both formal and informal ways in AFNHA, as demonstrated in the multitude of partners described in this chapter. By working together this network creates a structure for organizations and individuals to share ownership of common goals within AFNHA.

Through the goals and actions in this management plan, AFNHA will advance from a loose network working in 18 counties in two states to one unified coalition of community partners working together on heritage development. Moving towards a unified coalition of AFNHA partners will lead to expanded support of the NHA's goals, enhanced networks, and connections. An AFNHA coalition will provide a louder voice for communities, and increased effectiveness by strength in numbers. A coalition can speak more actively for messaging, raising awareness, and as a non-governmental call-to-action, than individual partners can do alone.

A unified coalition will help lessen the burden for smaller nonprofit partners by providing more access to other coalition members' volunteers and shared resources. A unified coalition will become a vehicle for sharing information, and for incubating new leadership for the partners and the region, which is a need expressed in many stakeholder interviews and at the Community Exchange. The coalition also could enhance the information exchange that so many AFNHA partners said is needed.

#### Strategy: Convene and connect partners with related interests and priorities

Building the AFNHA partnership network will be the responsibility of all partners, with leadership and coordination by AFHA Inc. As the coordinating entity, AFHA Inc. can convene partnership roundtables and collaborative groups, most likely organized by focus area networks for partners with common

"The role of convener, helping integrate work into a larger initiative, is sorely lacking, but when filled it is magical" interests. The role of convener, long an informal AFHA role, has expanded during management planning with the public outreach and community meetings mandated as part of the process. Major regional partners, primarily those with a community development focus, met to share current initiatives and discuss ways to work

together. AFHA Inc. initiated a Roundtable Discussion, a forum of regional partners with emphasis on those focusing on community development. This included invitations to foundations, government agencies, regional nonprofit organizations, etc. to share information on their work and plans. The group agreed to continue with gatherings or communication for sharing information.

The Highlands Creative Economy group is another example, in this case a convening of tourism and local economy partners who are actively working on building tourism products and connections. AFHA Inc. was invited to take on the convening role for the group initiated by Eastern, who wished to move to focusing more on the training components of this initiative. With current monthly networking meetings,

and annual Tourism Summit, AFHA Inc. is taking a leadership role for tourism attractions, service providers, and businesses to work together.

Some other partners are already moving forward with collaborative organizations, with AFHA Inc. participating and assisting when needed. Mon Forest Towns Partnership is emerging as a significant development group based on recreation economies. Among conservation entities, several collaborative groups involve multiple partners working together towards a specified goal, such as the two Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Areas in our region who fight against invasive species, and the Central Appalachian Spruce Restoration Initiative to restore red spruce forest to the Appalachian highlands. Some arts and culture initiatives network artisans and opportunities within a specific area, which can lead to opportunities to connect across county and regional lines. Other focus area groups may work together individually, or participate in statewide initiatives, which could present opportunities for AFNHA network groups. This may include trails groups and heritage museums. As is currently underway with the Highlands Creative Economy group, the CWPMA's, and HubCAP communities, AFHA Inc. may dedicate staff time to help convene, lead, and support these partnership group initiatives.

Both in providing leadership and supporting partner efforts, convening collaborative conversations is an important AFNHA role. Improving communication tools and opportunities to support these collaborations may involve, web, or email tools, video conferences, and opportunities for in-person engagement. One such opportunity may be to use AFNHA meetings as a chance for groups to meet and network, along the lines of the topical break-out groups used in the management planning Community Exchange. Continued use of digital and video-conference tools also strengthens the opportunity to communicate and collaborate across significant distances, enabling more people to participate.

## **Strategy:** Develop an Information Clearinghouse to consolidate asset and organizational information

The Maryland and West Virginia region that forms AFNHA is a vast, mountainous expanse of wilderness dotted with small cities, towns, and unincorporated settlements. Unfortunately, those features – which

together create the region's beauty, and influenced its culture and heritage – are also sometimes obstacles for communities. The sparse population, sometimes disconnected from neighboring communities because of rugged geography, places intense strains on human capital capacity, thereby taxing the services of nonprofits, local governments, social service agencies, and volunteer groups. While there is no shortage of these groups doing important

"AFNHA could create databases of useful information, tourism attractions, and anything else that is large, hard to handle or becomes obsolete quickly. I envision elaborate, searchable directories."

work, the inability to communicate between and among partners is exacerbated by these obstacles. Simply put, there is little time to stop and coordinate communication when the pressing priority is to get the work done.

Moreover, without consistently shared information, organizations don't always know what other partners are doing or how they might help each other until after the fact. This lack of shared information was often expressed in public meetings and at the Community Exchange. It was the impetus for AFHA Inc. initiating the Roundtable discussions, and AFHA Inc.'s role as a coordinating entity for the NHA, to become a communications hub – an information clearinghouse – by disseminating essential information to partners and the general public.

As a communications hub, AFHA Inc. will collect information that could include news on upcoming grants, local and regional heritage projects, community and business association meetings, festivals and

events, and other matters important to the region. The AFNHA newsletter is one vehicle for communication distributed to over 1,150 email addresses. The distribution can grow as the benefits of the information clearinghouse role become more widely known, and more organizations provide news and information to AFHA Inc. to communicate to the broader region.

One of the needs identified by stakeholders is to have better access to information about assets, resources, partners, and activities within the AFNHA network. This will be accomplished by a clearinghouse collecting and making available information for use by the network. This will include multiple topical databases and calendars. AFHA Inc. may take a lead role in this clearinghouse to collect, organize, and provide access to the information, though in some cases it may provide an index to identify and share links to information collated by partners. Some types of information to be included are discussed in other sections. Among the topics specifically requested include:

- A content management system database of AFNHA assets, including historical, cultural, natural, scenic, and recreational assets. This will build on the asset inventory included in Appendix C, with additional information such as location, contact information, visitation information for sites serving the public, and connected to more descriptions of the asset. Private contact information will be kept in a confidential form and not shared with the public. Interactive maps based on the assets database will be a useful implementation tool.
- Database directory or links to partners, their roles and what they offer; including support resources that can be available to help partners, and clearinghouse of professional services available for relevant skills. This will help organizations find and share services, skills, and expertise.
- An artists' directory for the region to help connect apprentices and masters. This can also include training opportunities and classes for novice and more advanced learners, as well as open sales venues, studios, and galleries to connect artisans with retail opportunities, and in identifying tourism opportunities to cross-promote.
- An online calendar of relevant events. This would provide information on major events to promote visitation. A secondary calendar could include meetings and activities of interest within the region, including networking and training opportunities.

# **Strategy:** Collaborate on funding opportunities and coordinate technical assistance for grant and funding opportunities

Like many community organizations across the United States, AFNHA partners have critical need for funding assistance to help implement and advance programs and projects. Many assets that AFNHA seeks to protect and conserve, as well as sites that attract visitors, are managed by nonprofit organizations or government agencies, and are supported by "friends of" groups. With the increased focus on supporting and increasing recreation and heritage tourism, many of these groups are applying to the same funding opportunities from foundations, government agencies, and other philanthropic sources. Many of these groups are too small to have an experienced fundraiser on their staff or board who could help identify sources and apply for support. AFNHA partners can help identify funding opportunities and provide grant writing support, with some potential AFHA Inc. roles detailed in Chapter 6.

AFNHA will help to leverage funding with many connections across and beyond the region. As recommended by a major foundation, coordinating funders and potential project grantees to leverage larger projects can support conservation, historic preservation, cultural, and community development projects. When appropriate, AFHA Inc. will assist in bundling projects for funding requests to create a more impactful and fundable proposal.

Moreover, the NHA designation offers opportunities to acquire more significant, more competitive national grants that can be difficult for a local partner to win. This provides an opportunity to use NPS HPP funding to encourage partners to collaborate, creating a more integrated network and scales initiatives up to help partners reach their goals. The result will make partners and collaborative initiatives more effective and attractive to regional and national funders, while building capacity in smaller organizations. This may be facilitated through the partner roundtable groups discussed above, or through planning conversations around specific opportunities.

Consolidation and distribution of information on grants and other funding opportunities can be a part of the AFNHA information clearinghouse. This will include information on applications, deadlines, and best practices, and potential funding sources and grant opportunities from sources inside and outside the area. To reduce competing applications and ensure the best result for the resources and visitors, AFNHA collaboration can help coordinate funding requests and facilitate the creation of support letters for requests from partner organizations.

Some organizations requested assistance with navigating paperwork regarding grants and project management. AFHA Inc. staff can provide technical assistance in this area. AFNHA grants to partners will be treated as a learning opportunity for organizations with less experience. A specific request during the planning discussions was for help with permitting that accompanies conservation work, which could also apply to construction projects or other project management. By connecting partners, AFNHA can facilitate finding answers to specific questions and situations like these. Actual assistance with project management, which is significantly more time consuming, may require a fee-for-service consultation.

#### Strategy: Coordinate volunteer recruitment and management

The lack of population is one of the biggest challenges of the AFNHA region. There simply aren't enough people to do all that needs to be done. Getting more people involved is a challenge, and even



Volunteers help with downtown painting and cleanup on historic building in Parsons.

in places or programs with good involvement, the small population results in too much work for too few people. Because of this shortage, models for volunteer activities, such as trail maintenance teams, are not as effective in the region as in other parts of the country.

AFHA Inc. has long had interest in supporting volunteer management, going back to an initial training and discussion of how to develop volunteerism 2009. AFHA AmeriCorps members have always assisted with volunteer management for their host site as one role of their service assignment, and the program has provided training and assessment of success of these efforts. Assessment has found that most existing volunteerism is local and dependent on

personal relationships, and that efforts to improve volunteer management need to be intentional to build more robust systems. Strengthening volunteer management within the AFNHA network will include:

• Creating a regional volunteer program to connect volunteers with opportunities and needs across heritage sectors, such as trail ambassador or improvement, eco-restoration, museum docents, and event support. AFHA Inc. is initiating this in Year 1 with a volunteer program clearinghouse that collates volunteer position opportunities and the names and interests of

people interested in volunteering. To be successful beyond developing the tools to collect and organize the information will take active participation from partner sites to connect with their own volunteer needs, and dedication of time and effort to communicate, make the connections, and track results.

- Providing robust and practical volunteer management training and resources for partners and AmeriCorps members. Training includes assessing and developing volunteer programs, recruitment, training, management, retention, recognition, and evaluation. Training will be offered on a regular basis, to reinforce and keep information available as personnel change.
- Continuing AmeriCorps member support for capacity building and volunteer management for partner sites.
- Providing assistance with outreach for recruiting. For the many organizations who continue to
  rely on their local, word-of-mouth recruiting, wider exposure can highlight and reinforce needs.
  For reaching out more broadly to new volunteer pools, including those less familiar with
  community opportunities, user groups, and volun-tourists, a broader platform to communicate
  needs and opportunities can help to reach new recruits.
- Providing assistance in reaching potential volunteer groups. This can include mission-oriented groups such as churches and civic service organizations.
- Developing contacts for youth and college groups. Scouts, 4-H and other youth groups, college organizations, and service learning programs can all be potential sources for volunteer engagement.
- Providing tools and platforms for tracking, evaluating, and celebrating volunteer service.
- Incentivizing volunteerism with awards, recognition, and other benefits to provide a broader range of volunteer satisfaction and reduce overall cost to individual organizations for doing the same activities on smaller scales.

#### **Strategy:** Provide technical assistance and training opportunities

As an important part of building capacity for partners, AFNHA will offer opportunities to develop organizational and programmatic skills. During the public outreach and participation processes for the management plan, stakeholders, partners, AmeriCorps host sites, agencies and businesses, and the public all pointed to the lack of human capital and the resulting void created in back-of-the-house staffing so critical to many small, volunteer-only, nonprofit organizations. As one philanthropic foundation officer stated, "The [Appalachian] region folks are always willing to volunteer to help, so there is never a lack of people to sit on a board or step up to help. There is a gap with professional services supporting the basic operations of nonprofits. There is a lack of funding to hire staff, and there simply aren't enough people to fill positions because of the small population. This lack of human capital stretches thin those volunteers, inevitably exacerbating the gaps in assistance, or even worse creating burnout of those always willing to help."<sup>4</sup>

One approach to providing technical assistance is individual help from professionals from AFHA Inc. or other partners to answer questions and assist smaller and less experienced organizations. This can happen informally, through collaborative groups, and by building direct mentor or service delivery connections. It can also be an outgrowth of training delivery, with individual follow-up with trainees to assist in implementing what they have learned.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Interview with James Denova, Vice President (retired), Benedum Foundation, April 9, 2021.

Training needs for partners overlap with other proposed programs, such as the Highland Creative Economy, volunteer management, and interpretation. AFNHA AmeriCorps already provides targeted training for AmeriCorps members – in many cases this type of training can be expanded to partner representatives. A number of AFNHA partners provide training related to their programming, AFNHA can look for ways to expand the availability of these opportunities to additional partners. AFHA Inc. can be proactive to provide or arrange for training requested by partners or identified as priorities in implementing AFNHA goals. Depending on the topic, training may be presented virtually or in person, and may include speakers or webinars, training series, day-long seminars, or multi-day workshops.

In addition to structured training, AFNHA may offer direct technical assistance. AFHA Inc. staff, and some service providing organizations, will provide support in specific skills as available. Depending on the source and extent of the services needed, some of this assistance will be included in service delivery, while more extensive help or professional expertise may be fee-for-service based.

Topics for training, workshops, or technical assistance may include:

- Organizational development such as leadership, board development, and other capacity building; strategic planning, assessment, evaluation; volunteer management; grant writing and fundraising.
- Natural conservation and enhancement skills such as natural resource conservation, identification, eco-restoration or similar skills; complying with conservation regulations.
- Heritage development skills including historic preservation documentation, best practices for owners and stewards of historic assets, archive and collections management, preservation, and digitization.
- Cultural conservation and documentation, oral history, traditional skills.
- Recreation enhancement skills such as trail building and maintenance.
- Interpretation training and criteria to support sites in offering quality interpretive products connected to AFNHA themes, including understanding and researching AFNHA themes, how-to skills for leading interpretive tours and programs, and for developing and designing interpretive products such as exhibits, signs, brochures, and virtual programming.
- Technology skills including digital programming and social media, database management, GIS skills, interpretation, historic preservation, conservation, and other requested skills.
- Small business / entrepreneurial training and support, workforce training, and facilitating assistance from experts with community involvement.
- Offer and / or support professional experience opportunities, professional development, and career shadowing, to encourage the new generation of professionals.

#### Strategy: Partner with schools and colleges for education and support

Working with academic partners, schools, and other education programs, AFNHA will leverage opportunities both to gain experience for students, and to provide assistance to local partners. They can encourage and develop service learning opportunities for service activities and volunteerism tied to learning objectives and educational achievement, develop and leverage internships and class projects that support AFNHA and site projects, and connect with schools, colleges, and youth groups as sources for volunteer recruitment.

Academic partners are also a major source for trainers and consultants for training opportunities to partners. Some college programs provide direct community programming, in addition to sharing academic knowledge. The WVU Extension Service is an outstanding example, as is the community

development efforts by Eastern. Institutions can provide opportunities, leverage, and partnerships for grants and other projects. Academic partners can provide information resources, support and research related to AFNHA goals and projects. Academic professionals can participate in planning, interpretation, and projects, often providing professional oversight and evaluation to ensure quality products.

#### Strategy: Support the National Heritage Area program

Participating cooperatively with other NHAs supports the work of AFNHA, and of collaborative heritage development across the country. Participating as a member of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas furthers this cooperation and support, while enabling AFNHA to learn from examples and experience of other NHAs.

AFNHA will participate in awareness efforts about the value of NHAs, including AFNHA specifically, and may educate at the state and federal level on issues and challenges.

AFNHA may participate in awareness efforts to support and educate about the value of related programs that benefit AFNHA or NHAs, such as AmeriCorps, Scenic Byways, historic preservation or cultural programs, conservation programs and related agencies such as the National Park Service and USDA Forest Service

Program support can also come from coalitions between the NHAs designated in Maryland and West Virginia. In Maryland, other NHAs include Baltimore NHA and a portion of Journey Through Hallowed Ground (JTHG). In West Virginia, National Coal Heritage Area is to the south of AFNHA, and Wheeling NHA is in the northern panhandle of the state. JTHG also includes one town, Harpers Ferry, in West Virginia. NHA coalitions within states have demonstrated effectiveness on statewide issues, as evidenced within Pennsylvania, New York, South Carolina, Colorado, and other states. Other partnership opportunities may exist for collaboration and cross-promotion between heritage areas with similar programs or themes, such as pollinator initiative, industrial history, or Appalachian culture.

AFHA Inc. may provide information to support these issues, under the guidance of board policies, and in accordance with 501(c)(3) regulations. AFHA Inc. may request support letters or educational messages from partner organizations to support these efforts.

AFNHA partnership network is encouraged to support these issues of benefit to the network, and to support each other through educational messages and support letters, as authorized by the individual leadership of each organization. When active partners have clear differences about policies they support or oppose, they are encouraged to approach such issues with each other with civility, and to make efforts so that such disagreements do not negatively impact NHA partnership projects.

## **Objective:** Provide Direct Support for Partners

These strategies are major programs that AFHA Inc. will take primary responsibility for to benefit partners in the AFNHA network. Some of the previously discussed partnership strategies may move to this status as they are developed further, while others will remain as shared responsibilities. Nevertheless, even for these major programs, partnership participation and support are essential to success, and contribute to the AFNHA partnership network.

#### **Strategy:** Continue AmeriCorps program

#### The Value of AmeriCorps

AFHA Inc. has a long, successful history with AmeriCorps, a federal program funded by AmeriCorps Federal Agency (formerly the Corporation for National and Community Service) through Volunteer West Virginia (the West Virginia Commission for National and Community Service). This program was initiated in 2007 as AFHA AmeriCorps and has grown in service to the area since that time. Since NHA designation in 2019, the program has been known as AFNHA AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps members provide direct service – "Getting Things Done" to benefit American communities and environment. In the AFNHA AmeriCorps program, members are assigned to host partner organizations and sites throughout the 16 West Virginia counties of the NHA. These members assist AFNHA partner organizations in various ways as they serve the partner organization's constituency and the larger AFNHA community.

The AmeriCorps members provide implementation of projects for their host sites. This helps fill the need among partners strapped by inadequate resources, as AmeriCorps members can jumpstart or complete projects. Stakeholders spoke about the value of AmeriCorps in supporting projects and programs and

"Community vibrancy, stopping the brain drain, and achieving work that is of great public service – this is having a profound impact on the community." helping build capacity in host organizations. People commented on the energy and insight members bring from outside the region. Another positive attribute of the program is the diversity of experience and positions members can fill, working on projects with trails, ecosystem health, museums, events, historic preservation, and many other sectors.

Beyond the day-to-day service the individual AmeriCorps members provide for their host partner sites, AFNHA gains value from the AmeriCorps roles in strengthening those organizations. In addition to supporting programs and completing projects, they help to build capacity for their host organizations through volunteer management, assessment and planning support, and facilitating training to develop new skills.



2019-2020 AFNHA AmeriCorps team at a 2019 Volunteer West Virginia training event

AFNHA AmeriCorps program instills a diversity of experience for each AmeriCorps member, as they gain skills such as caring for public lands, historic buildings, and collections, stewardship education, interpretation, events management, and promotion. The program draws participants from local and instate sources, and also brings in talent from across the nation. Many of the program alums choose to stay in the area following their service, finding professional jobs or attending graduate schools nearby. Several AmeriCorps alums have been hired by host organizations following their service, further underscoring the quality of their work and their dedication to the region. Some AFNHA AmeriCorps alums are current or former AFHA Inc. board members.

AmeriCorps members touch the broader region with their extensive reach by being placed throughout the 16 counties. With implementation of the management plan, the role of each AmeriCorps member as an ambassador for AFHA Inc. will be emphasized, carrying the message to partners and communities of AFNHA. Working with staff of AFHA Inc., AmeriCorps members can become the eyes and ears for the organization and the web that ties together the entire NHA region.

#### Making AmeriCorps a Part of the Larger NHA

AFHA Inc. is well known and recognized throughout the region as the partner organization that oversees and manages this beneficial program. The AmeriCorps program is so successful and well-received that it has become, in many respects, the identity of AFHA Inc. This identity, however, has overshadowed the recent designation of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. For many NHA partners, the strength of the AmeriCorps program has contributed to an informational disconnect – they see AmeriCorps as the purpose of the organization and do not understand what the NHA designation means or what benefits it can bring to partners.

The AFNHA partnership network gains invaluable service from the AmeriCorps program, and it will continue as part of the NHA as long as the AmeriCorps grant funding is sustained. With the AmeriCorps program solidly established within AFHA Inc., the organization will now deploy AmeriCorps members to host sites and communities with a central focus on those sites and the AmeriCorps program as extensions of the NHA. This subtle shift is tactical as it helps to build the understanding and size of the network of NHA partners. This strategic repositioning of the AmeriCorps program as a tool of the NHA will enable AFHA Inc. to deliver a more significant benefit -- one that is more comprehensive in the scope of community building and the benefit of regional collaboration rather than benefiting only an individual host site. The AmeriCorps members will become an extension of AFNHA and help solve an operational problem that often plagues newly designated NHAs in their first years as they struggle with delivering the programs and projects to their communities. Many of the "assist partners" tasks noted under Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4 will involve activities accomplished by AmeriCorps members.

#### AmeriCorps Members as Ambassadors

The AmeriCorps members will act as AFNHA ambassadors to the towns and counties in which they are placed. One of the overriding difficulties of coordinating the NHA is its vast geography of mountains, hollows, and valleys that sometimes feel isolated from their neighboring communities, not realizing they are part of a more extensive network of partners within AFNHA. In addition to delivering program and project services to AFNHA communities and partners, AmeriCorps members touch the broader community with their extensive placement and resulting outreach. Essentially, each AmeriCorps member will be an ambassador for AFNHA and deliver the message of what an NHA is and what AFNHA can provide. AmeriCorps members will be trained to carry the message of the NHA designation and its benefits to the communities and act as a liaison between host partners and AFHA Inc. AmeriCorps members will become the connective tissue of AFNHA – the web that ties together the entire region. They will help strengthen the network of partners in the NHA. As these ambassadors increase in this role, they help grow the influence and effectiveness of the entire AFNHA partnership network. The power of an organized, coordinated consortium of regional partners offers opportunities for transformative initiatives in heritage development and community economic enhancement throughout AFNHA.

#### Limitations of AmeriCorps

There are limitations in what is allowed for the AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps members are National Service members providing community service and are prohibited from replacing staff or being assigned routine administrative duties unrelated to their project. Thus they can't replace staff for AFHA Inc. or for the sub-sponsor host sites. They also are prohibited from providing direct benefit to private businesses, from organizational fundraising, and from political advocacy.

Because the AFNHA AmeriCorps program is funded through West Virginia, the program is not able to place members in the two Maryland counties. AFNHA is building relationships with some existing AmeriCorps programs in Maryland and can provide technical assistance to partners who may wish to apply for these other programs. This will enable some Maryland partners to take advantage of AmeriCorps service, although the ambassador function of their connection with AFNHA will be lessened. AFNHA can also provide information and help link sites and projects with other AmeriCorps and Service Corps program opportunities, including Corps Network, Job Corps, Youth Conservation Corps, Appalachian Conservation Corps, Ancestral Lands Corps, Indian Youth Service Corps, NCCC, and VISTA programs.

As a result of these limitations, AFNHA needs to remain aware of the importance of staff and partnership network support to assist businesses, fundraising, and other activities beyond the scope of the AmeriCorps program. Priority emphasis on outreach and engagement with Maryland counties, where AFNHA AmeriCorps are not available, will be important for AFNHA staff and partners.

#### Strategy: Offer AFNHA grants to partners

The role of the grantor, played by many NHAs, will be beneficial in the central Appalachian Highlands, where there exist small organizations in need of funds to accomplish heritage projects and programs. Help with funding is probably the most requested assistance by AFNHA partners throughout the planning process. With NPS HPP funding, and other funding leveraged by that assistance, AFHA Inc. can become a grant-making agency for the AFNHA network. The initiative has a history of small project grants, as the initial grant through WVU that established the Appalachian Forest initiative included a small grants program. Funding for that program ended in 2006.

The first AFNHA grant program, initiated during the management planning (for Year 1), is the Creative Economy Tourism Development Grant. The purpose of this grant program is to assist projects that enhance place-based tourism opportunities. This initial grant program is supported in part by Benedum Foundation funding, leveraged by HPP funds and local match, as part of the Highlands Creative Economy program (see below). The grant is intended to provide new or improved experiences for visitors, increase audience diversity, or address COVID-19 pandemic challenges. Grants for 18 projects have been awarded, including trail development, interpretation, and new tourism programs. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$5,000, and each will provide a local in-kind or cash match. The Tourism Development Grant program serves as a pilot grant-making effort, providing an opportunity to identify criteria, best practices, and procedures that will support AFNHA's more robust ongoing grant program.

Once the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan is approved, and the funding level is increased, a subgrant program is anticipated to be a significant portion of budgeted funds. While criteria and details of the program remain to be developed, it is anticipated that these grants will be an opportunity for nonprofits and government partners to support projects related to management plan goals. In many cases, actions identified in the AFNHA Actions Matrix as partner roles could be eligible for AFNHA grants, with eligibility criteria adopted based on range of capacity and annual priorities. Those receiving grants will be expected to participate actively as AFNHA partners, to report on their projects and spending to meet NPS criteria, and to provide project funding to match the grant they receive.

#### **Strategy:** Develop the Highlands Creative Economy Program

The Highlands Creative Economy Program is becoming an intentional, significant program for AFNHA tourism development and networking. This encompasses many of the tourism development strategies identified in Chapter 4.

The Highlands Creative Economy Council has evolved from the Potomac Highlands Creative Economy group initiated by Eastern, filling the need to provide networking and outreach opportunities for local tourism bureaus, county tourism leaders, and local small tourist businesses. AFHA Inc. has been a consistent partner in this effort, including providing AmeriCorps assistance for some projects. In 2020, AFHA Inc., with added staff capacity from HPP funding, was able to take on a larger role.



AFNHA Executive Director Phyllis Baxter receives Eastern partnership APEX Award from (center) Dr. Megan Webb, Dean of Advancement and Continuing Education, along with (from left) Dr. Thomas Striplin, Eastern President, and Greg Greenwalt, Chair of Board of Governors, and (at right) Robert Burns, Director of Non-Profits, and Melissa Shockey, Workforce Education Program Coordinator.

In 2021, Eastern asked AFHA Inc. to take co-leadership of what has been rebranded as the Highlands Creative Economy Program. The expanded program will foster networking opportunities, discuss successes, ongoing issues, and problems, and identify creative solutions. The collaborative effort includes AFNHA roles as convener of monthly networking meetings and a Tourism Summit, and targeted assistance to support tourism product development and networking. Eastern as an educational institution will provide several regular trainings and workshops focusing on tourism and small business development, as well as a continuing focus on agritourism. Guest speakers with direct experience in the creative economy and tourism industry will be invited to present industry trends and opportunities. The yearly Tourism Summit brings together partners to share ideas, learn from experiences, and work together to build a strong tourism and creative economy. The program will continue projects for tourism site development, including the initial tourism development grants program, as well as connecting multiple sites and providing assistance for low-capacity sites and communities, with an emphasis on COVID recovery. This program has substantial funding for years one and two from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

# **Objective:** Actively Engage AFNHA Communities with Expanded Outreach

#### Strategy: Raise awareness and engagement with AFNHA communities

The topography, weather, and distance across the 18-country region of AFNHA can become barriers and impede efforts of person-to-person partnership engagement. Interstate highways cross the edges of the region, leaving only a network of U.S. routes, state highways, or local roads – often only two lanes – that wind through the mountains and valleys. Bringing people together, or traveling to meetings, often involves two or more hours travel time each way and sometimes means a trip extending over two days or more. Therefore, engaging with partners is difficult.

Organizing the existing coalition of partners to form and win the designation of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area was no small feat. Continuing this partnership will require determined outreach, engagement, and communication to ensure the successful development and implementation of programs and projects that benefit the communities. Holding and attending meetings and activities in all parts of the area is very important and will rely on efforts of the whole AFNHA partnership network, not only AFHA Inc. staff. The original intention for management planning was to hold a series of public and community meetings in multiple counties, to expand outreach and awareness about AFNHA. While the pandemic resulted in virtual meetings, outreach plans for the first few years of plan implementation will include personal outreach to communities to raise awareness of AFNHA, share the goals of the management plan, and to build broader engagement and participation.

Included in the outreach goal is the intentional effort to engage more actively with communities that traditionally have been left behind in other programs. People who are often not involved, not engaged, and not heard may include those impacted by poverty, poor communication or transportation access especially in rural areas, as well as minority groups such as African Americans, Native Americans, and recent immigrants. Reaching out to engage with these communities will involve examining the appropriate communication and outreach tools used with each community and demographic, and to make targeted outreach efforts.

AFHA Inc. will establish broader engagement with the NHA constituency by implementing several new strategies. As described in further detail previously and in Chapters 4 and 6, AFHA Inc. is increasing its outreach to communities by becoming a communications hub. In addition, with the AmeriCorps members taking on a more significant role as ambassadors, their involvement becomes more essential to engaging and connecting the host partner sites and the communities in which they exist. The addition of field staff – new positions for AFHA Inc. projected by Year 5 – positioned strategically within the 18 counties will enable AFHA Inc. to be physically present and actively participate more in local partners' meetings. Establishing a speakers bureau can provide opportunities to reach more groups and communities than staff are able to reach directly. Including board members and partner volunteers to talk about AFNHA can increase outreach opportunities. Finally, as the world has discovered through adaptation during the COVID pandemic, software and online web platforms now provide for remote engagement. While virtual engagement does not fulfill all of the benefits of in-person gathering, it does have the added advantage of allowing participation without long travel times and increases participation. Thus, even when return to in-person meetings becomes possible, virtual communications will remain a tool that AFNHA will continue to use for some meetings and outreach.

AFNHA has a long history of stakeholder meetings, originally twice a year, then continued as annual meetings, that have been held at least once in each of the 18 AFNHA counties. Unfortunately, due to travel difficulties and lack of engagement, these meetings did not always attract a substantial audience of partners. During the management planning feedback, some partners expressed appreciation for the chance to meet with other partners and expressed interest in continuing these opportunities. The partnership energy raised by NHA designation and management planning is an opportunity to reset these meetings and gain expanded participation. Gatherings for the tourism summits under the Creative Economies Program have been successful and offer another opportunity to convene partners, as do training workshops in general. AFNHA will continue to offer gathering opportunities to convene partners and stakeholders, to provide information and opportunities to learn, plan, interact, and celebrate, and to showcase the rich variety of assets and opportunities around the region.

Throughout the 30-year history of NHAs, the benefit of active, continuous outreach and engagement has proven vital. Those NHAs which make this a priority of their mission have often the most impressive track records of success. The partnership of an NHA is, indeed, the fundamental management apparatus of the NHA, with the coordinating entity orchestrating the collective efforts.

#### **Strategy:** Expand AFNHA Network Outreach

Promotion within AFNHA to reach and engage stakeholder and partners is subtly different from marketing to attract tourists as discussed in Chapter 4. Internal communication with partners, potential partners, and stakeholders is essential to build and strengthen the AFNHA partnership network and to increase stakeholder and community engagement. Many of the same promotional tools may overlap between internal engagement and tourist marketing – especially using virtual tools like website and social media. But the target audience, and messages, often differ.

One consideration important for communications within the network is the need to stay flexible in methods to be inclusive of all audiences. Communication methods vary over generations and experience, and availability varies with location and demographics. It is important to not leave audiences out. This is especially notable with the move toward more digital communications which reach larger numbers of people with less effort and cost. However, a little extra effort can be important to find ways to still reach those in communities who do not use or have access to computers or smart phones.

Expanding digital communications is important, as is taking advantage of social media and digital platforms as opportunities to convey messages and increase engagement. A professional, up-to-date, comprehensive website, regular electronic newsletters, active social media outreach and cross-promotion, and compelling photos and personal stories, keep the messages about AFNHA alive both for internal and tourist audiences.

Traditional broadcast and print media remain important as well. Rural communities have significant numbers of people who read newspapers and listen to the radio more than they are on Facebook. Being published in the newspaper, or quoted on TV news, can be especially important in reaching community leaders and establishing credibility and official standing for activities.

In person and word of mouth outreach remains essential, especially in rural communities. Reading about an organization or activity opportunity is often a first step, but many people are more likely to take action when they also hear about it from a friend. Many of the activities included in this plan, from encouraging visitation to sites and events, volunteering with a project, or attending a community meeting, are all opportunities to increase personal engagement and build the AFNHA partnership network.

#### **Strategy:** Establish a structured partnership program

AFNHA will identify ways that the partnership network works together, including more definition of partner roles. Currently, the partners who have a fiscal relationship with AFHA Inc., such as AmeriCorps site sponsors, have a written agreement defining the relationship. Developing a Memorandum of Understanding program that can also include partners working together or supporting AFNHA projects and programs, can expand this network of formal partners. One example could be AFNHA Tourism Site Partners for those partners serving the visiting public who wish to be part of AFNHA joint promotion and branding, and who agree to meet public readiness criteria. A partnership program can encourage participation by formal and informal partners with varied roles and interests in engaging with AFNHA.

## **CHAPTER 6**

## Manage and Sustain the NHA Coordinating Entity

This chapter and the financial projections in Appendix H constitute the business plan component of the management plan.

Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc. (AFHA Inc.), the congressionally-designated coordinating entity for the National Heritage Area, is a nonprofit organization chartered in 2003 under the laws of the State of West Virginia. Responsibilities are defined by the regulations that govern 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, including those of the State of West Virginia and the Internal Revenue Service.

The designating legislation states that AFHA Inc. shall be governed by a board of directors whose membership shall represent a geographic balance across the 18 counties. The law further states the board shall consist of at least seven but not more than 15 members, and be a "balanced group of diverse interests, including forest, environmental, cultural heritage, tourism, and regional agency partners... [that] shall manage the activities and affairs of the local coordinating entity" in accordance with bylaws adopted by the AFHA Inc. Board of Directors and subject to state and federal laws.<sup>1</sup>

## Role of Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc.

AFHA Inc. is a well-respected organization throughout the central Appalachian forest of Maryland and West Virginia. Although small, its staff is dedicated to the communities within which they work and has a track record of securing project grants. In addition, the network of partners within AFNHA is working to advance their efforts for the benefit of the

communities, local businesses, and residents. Throughout the management planning process, many partners expressed concern about the lack of human capital. The plan addresses the role AFHA Inc. can play in coordinating and assisting organizations with

"AFNHA can help address challenges most entities face – funding, technical assistance, and unified messaging."

operational, technical, and informational services. Assisting with capacity building – through skill building and information gathering, mobilization of people, and helping to find or provide funding – is the biggest need identified by partners. This chapter discusses the roles of AFHA Inc. in supporting the AFNHA partnership network and providing programs to assist partners.

## Goal 5: Manage, Promote, and Sustain Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc. as the NHA Coordinating Entity

# **Objective:** Manage AFHA Inc. to provide direct service programs and leadership for partner initiatives

#### **Strategy:** AFHA Inc. supports AFNHA Partnership Network

A number of implementation activities identified in the management plan will involve significant staff time and resources from AFHA Inc. in order to take a leadership role. The degree of responsibility from the coordinating entity will vary and may evolve over time. In some cases, one or more AFNHA partners may take the lead while AFHA Inc. coordinates and communicates those opportunities. In other cases, these may be significant AFHA Inc. activities, possibly becoming major AFHA Inc. programs.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Title VI—National Heritage Areas, Section 6001, John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, Public Law 116-9, <u>https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ9/PLAW-116publ9.pdf accessed April 21</u>, 2022.

#### Act as a Convener

As a leading organization in the 18-county region of the Appalachian Highlands of Maryland and West Virginia, AFHA Inc. has a vital role to play as a convener of partners that support each other's efforts while collectively advancing the goals and opportunities of AFNHA.

Throughout the management planning process, partner organizations continued to express the desire for AFHA Inc. to play a vital role as collaborative leader. As a convener, AFHA Inc. can be responsible for bringing people together to address issues, problems, or opportunities within the NHA. In the context of collaborative leadership, this involves convening representatives from multiple sectors for a multimeeting process. AFHA Inc. already functions in this role to a degree; most notably through the Highlands Creative Economy program. Taking on a more significant role as a convener and fostering communication between partners will further benefit the existing relationships between public officials, business professionals, leaders of the community, and nonprofit organizations already working in AFNHA. AFHA Inc. is an influential and respected organization, and its congressional mandate provides a level of authority to function as a convener. Other organizations and groups within the AFNHA partnership network also offer a convening role, and AFHA Inc. will support their efforts.

When acting as a convener, AFHA Inc.'s responsibility will be to serve as the organizer and administrator of the NHA collaboration, carrying out the preliminary and follow-up tasks agreed to by the partners. In creating a platform for the collaboration, AFHA Inc. will reach out to involved and potential partners to clarify needs and purposes of these collaborative leadership efforts and to secure partner and stakeholder buy-in and participation. In this role, AFHA Inc. will not be taking over partners' projects. Instead, the purpose is to provide regular forms of communication between the public and private sectors so that the outcome of each partner's work can be known and possibly enhanced by other partners in the region.

In addition to the regional leadership roundtable initiated during management planning, and the Highlands Creative Economy group working on tourism development, other sectors, such as conservation, recreation, and cultural heritage may also offer opportunities for convening in collaborative networking groups. Where other organizations take the lead, AFHA Inc. will participate and support those efforts. Where collaborative leadership is needed, AFHA Inc. may assist. These actions will require considerable staff time, along with travel and meeting resources.

#### Develop an Information Clearinghouse

Many of these tasks involve collecting, organizing, updating, and communicating information. Actions mentioned in the plan in this category include consolidation and continued expansion of the asset inventory, discussed in Chapter 2, and collecting and archiving thematic information, research, and stories discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 5 discusses the information clearinghouse specifically. AFHA Inc. will assist in collating and sharing information, and over time may take a leadership role for this within the AFNHA partnership network. Shared information may include a partners directory, with identification and update of organization information including partners, stakeholders, and contact information for communications. Specific directories requested by partners include professional skills and an artists' directory. A regional calendar of events is also a primary request.

Accomplishing this information clearinghouse will need some outlay for software and the expertise to set up efficient systems. But the main challenge will be the extensive personnel time it will take to collect, update, organize, and share information, including collaboration with partners to include their information. AFHA Inc. staff responsibilities are discussed below in the section addressing staffing.

#### Collaborate on Funding Opportunities

This strategy brings together a number of the actions already discussed, with a focus on finding project funding. The information clearinghouse can collect and provide information on grants and funding opportunities. Training and technical assistance can help partners with grant writing and fundraising

"Human capacity and funding for resource development [are] critical." skills. While some potential sources of project funding are noted in the Partners list (Appendix E), developing and sharing this information will be an implementation task. Direct funding of projects by the AFNHA grants program is also discussed below.

Convening collaborative groups provides connections and opportunities to cooperate. Taking the next step to collaborate on funding requests and leveraging larger cooperative projects will be an outgrowth of convening of collaborative groups. As an example, AFHA Inc. has already been a partner on collaborative funding through the Mon Forest Towns initiative.

#### Facilitate Volunteer Management

An important part of supporting organizational capacity building is volunteer management. AFHA Inc. is piloting a volunteerism program in Year 1 that will grow into a regional volunteer program to support volunteer management for interested partners. This volunteer management program is expected to include volunteer management training for partners, based on AFNHA experience and the new volunteerism curriculum developed by Volunteer West Virginia. Training will be offered annually or when needed, to help organizations take a more organized approach to recruiting, managing, and retaining their own volunteers. The program will also offer an on-line volunteerism portal for connecting volunteers with volunteer opportunities. Like the information clearinghouse, this will require setting up a robust and appropriate software tracking and communications system, and substantial staff time to implement the program (discussed below). Additional services may include tracking and recognition of volunteers, as well as program evaluation.

#### Provide Technical Assistance and Training

AFHA Inc. can offer training opportunities to AFNHA partners in a number of fields of expertise, as discussed in Chapter 5. Building on training provided to AmeriCorps members, some of these skills will be offered on a regular basis either virtually, or in person. Volunteer management training has already been mentioned. Another example is interpretation training, which can include principles of interpretation, interpretive and design skills for products such as signs and exhibits, and tour guide training for personal interpretive programs. Other workshops will be tied to programs such as the Highlands Creative Economy, or to training requests from partners. AFHA Inc. staff who have expertise in commonly needed training fields and skills will enable AFHA Inc. to provide robust training opportunities for partners at minimal cost. In addition to trainings offered by AFHA Inc. staff, some will be provided by trainers arranged by AFHA Inc., and some will be offered by partners and available to attendees outside their own organization. Many of these trainings will be provided for free, or at a nominal cost to cover expenses, although some may be fee-based workshops. Going beyond group workshops to one-to-one technical assistance is also mostly a matter of staff expertise and time. A number of partners offer assistance in specific needs, such as small business assistance. Technical assistance will be a role for AFHA Inc. field staff, who will be close to, and able to assist, partners in local communities. Another benefit is that staff can include assistance to business partners, a role that federal law prohibits AmeriCorps members from doing.

#### Coordinate Communications and Outreach

No list of NHA responsibilities can be complete without including the essential task of communicating activities, messages, and opportunities. This includes branding and building identity and communicating current AFNHA activities. For tourist audiences, as discussed in Chapter 4, external marketing is a partnership effort including attractions, CVBs and other tourism marketing entities, state tourism agencies, with AFHA Inc. as a partner, especially in promoting AFNHA as a destination. To grow engagement and participation in the partnership, as described in Chapter 5, AFHA Inc. will have substantial roles of sharing partner news and communications across AFNHA, and engagement with partners and stakeholders. This involves substantial staff time, as well as meetings, travel, communications, and marketing costs.

#### Strategy: AFHA Inc. operates programs to support AFNHA

Activities of AFHA Inc. that are major operational programs, usually with dedicated funding sources, are discussed in this section. Some of the strategies previously discussed may have the potential to grow into major programs, as shown by the recent establishment of the Highlands Creative Economy program.



AFHA AmeriCorps members reset historic cemetery marker as a service project.

#### AmeriCorps

AFHA Inc. has a long, successful history with AmeriCorps, a federal program funded by the AmeriCorps Federal Agency (formerly the Corporation for National and Community Service), as described in Chapter 5. AmeriCorps members are assigned to sub-sponsor partner organizations and sites throughout the West Virginia counties of AFNHA. These members assist the sub-sponsor host organization in completion of projects that further management plan goals, provide capacity building for the host organization, and provide outreach and networking as ambassadors of AFNHA to help connect the partnership network and serve the larger community. Administration of the AmeriCorps program is supported by the AmeriCorps grant and partner site fees. AFHA Inc., as program sponsor, is responsible for payroll and expenses for the AmeriCorps member stipends. Program costs also include one full-time Program Manager and additional time from other staff, plus

"We don't have enough warm bodies. We rely on AmeriCorps for bright people that help."

training, travel, supplies, background checks, and program evaluation. Grant funds generally cover at least 50% of these costs, with the balance from the site fees and in-kind contributions by the sites. The AmeriCorps grant must undergo a recompete application each three-year cycle and be approved for funding. Within the cycle, modifications and budget changes are approved annually. AmeriCorps allows most types of federal funding to be used towards match, but AmeriCorps funds or reported match cannot be used to match HPP funding from NPS. While the AmeriCorps match expectation is normally 50-50, for two recent years AmeriCorps has offered a COVID match waiver, enabling AFHA Inc. to use some of the AmeriCorps site fees from nonprofit partners as HPP program funding match. AFHA Inc. intends to pursue alternative match options in future AmeriCorps grant cycles to enable some of the site fees to help match HPP funding, while helping support AmeriCorps member service towards fulfilling management plan activities.

#### AFNHA Grants Program - Administration, Management, and Oversight

As detailed in Chapter 5, AFHA Inc. will create, advertise, administer, and manage a grant program to support programs and projects that advance the goals of the NHA. Much of the funding for these subgrants will come from Heritage Partnership Program (HPP) funding through the National Park Service. In offering these grants, AFHA Inc. will play a role as a small granting entity while continuing to have some role in the project development and implementation to ensure projects meet the AFNHA goals and objectives. The AFHA Inc. Board of Directors will designate policies and responsibilities for developing procedures for this grant program. Most likely the board will delegate a committee to develop grant eligibility and criteria, and to accept and review applications from the partnership network, with formal approval of grant awards provided by the board. While many management plan actions are included as eligible for the grants program, the grants committee will develop eligibility criteria and objectives for the grant competition, which may vary depending on priority objectives for the grant cycle.

Grant recipients will be required to meet a specified match - usually a dollar-to-dollar match ratio. Documented in-kind is expected to be eligible as match, but federal funding is not. The criteria for the grant program will be developed in Year 1, with feedback and experience from the initial AFNHA Tourism Development Grant. The wider program will be targeted to begin when full HPP funding is available, likely in Year 2. Administration of the subgrant program to recipients, including financial administration and reporting, documentation paperwork meeting NPS requirements, technical assistance to grantees to help support their projects, and reporting on project completion and outcomes, will be the responsibility of AFHA Inc. staff working closely with grant recipients.



LaVale Toll Gate House will open for visitors with the help of a Tourism Development Grant awarded by AFNHA in the program's initial round of funding in 2022. (Credit: mdmountainside.com)

#### **Highlands Creative Economy**

Another program role involves the newly developed partnership with Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College to host the Highlands Creative Economy Group. Originally composed only within the Potomac Highlands region in West Virginia, the group expanded to include AFNHA's 18 counties, including Allegany and Garrett counties in western Maryland. AFHA Inc. is now convening and taking leadership for the networking components of this program, while Eastern continues to lead on training delivery and agriculture. With support from a 2021 Benedum Foundation grant, this effort is continuing the monthly virtual networking meetings, Tourism Summit, and trainings, and has initiated the first Tourism Development Grant Program, funded in part from the Benedum grant as well as initial NHA funding.

#### Appalachian Forest Discovery Center and Communication of Themes

AFHA Inc. operates the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center (AFDC) to provide a hub for visitor information, interpretation of AFNHA themes, and a small gift shop. AFHA Inc. also owns the historic Darden Mill where the AFDC and West Virginia Railroad Museum are located, and is responsible for preservation, improvements, and operations of the facility. A number of the regional tourism development actions recommended in Chapter 3 and 4 are responsibilities that AFHA Inc. will focus on, with priorities to connect sites together and to help tell the larger Appalachian Forest story. These efforts include thematic story maps and connecting sites, establishing gateways and thematic info at partner locations, and helping develop the regional tourism destination.



Appalachian Forest Discovery Center in the Darden Mill

## **Objective:** Operate AFHA Inc. According to Best Management Practices

#### Structure and Description of Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc.

From early beginnings as a Forestry Heritage Trail initiative in 2001 to the ultimate development of a National Heritage Area, AFHA Inc. has steadily continued to evolve as an organization and to grow a strong network of partners. Incorporated in 2003, the organization is headquartered in Elkins, West Virginia, with four core staff and several AmeriCorps members. The core staff of AFHA Inc. currently includes an Executive Director, a Deputy Director, an AmeriCorps Program Manager, and a Communications Manager. In addition, AFHA Inc. also has AmeriCorps members assigned to AFNHA projects, currently a pollinator coordinator, a museum associate, a heritage tourism associate, and a recreation tourism associate. These, along with more than 30 other AmeriCorps members located with partner hosts sites throughout the 16 West Virginia counties, are the current nucleus of the NHA's operations, management, and program delivery.

#### Strategy: Continually improve organizational governance and management

#### Staffing

As AFHA Inc. grows and evolves during the implementation period of this management plan, other staff additions will be necessary. While specifics of position titles may be flexible, providing for each of these roles will be important. Expectations for staff needed to implement the management plan are based on two executive level positions and three program manager positions short term (Years 1-3), and eventually adding two field positions (anticipated mid term, Years 5-7).

The Executive Director is responsible for direct work with the board to advance the policies and mission of AFNHA. Additionally, the Executive Director can play a significant role developing more relationships for increased opportunities for programmatic growth, fund development, and revenue generation. The Executive Director is an enhanced role working to position AFHA Inc. as a vital regional partner with businesses, governments, agencies, and communities within the 18 counties of AFNHA.

Other executive level duties, currently the responsibility of the Deputy Director, include oversight of administration and management, financial management oversight including accounting, audits, and grant reporting, a major role in partnership relations, and working with the Executive Director to advance AFNHA's programs and projects. One priority skill to add will be a development professional focused on fundraising, writing and management of grants, membership, sponsorships, donor outreach, events, and earned income initiatives. Whether as a stand-alone position, or as a significant portion of duties for one of the directors, adding resource development as a focus and skill set is a priority goal by Year 4.

A new program manager level position of Operations Manager is planned starting in Year 1. This position will relieve the Deputy Director of some current bookkeeping and administration duties, improving financial separation of duties, and focusing the Deputy on management and oversight of the organization, including relationships with partners. This new Operations Manager position will also help with increased workload implementing the management plan, such as administering the AFNHA grants program, the information clearinghouse, and the volunteer program.

The AmeriCorps Program Manager is responsible for most administration of the AFNHA AmeriCorps program, and is funded primarily through that program. Currently, the Deputy Director manages payroll and helps administer the program, while the Executive Director holds the title of Program Director, and is responsible for grant-writing, oversight, long-range planning, and evaluation of this program. The director title and more responsibility may be moved to the Program Manager in future years, but with a 30- to 40-member program, help from additional staff is still important, as the workload requires more than a single position.

The Communications Manager is responsible for communications and outreach, including essential activities like newsletters, website, social media, and organization publications. The Communications Manager supports information planning and flow for the organization, marketing both for stakeholder (internal) and tourist (external) audiences, and direct communications for programs affiliated with AFNHA. In the outreach role, this staff member currently acts as convener for the Highlands Creative Economy networking activities, and oversees outreach for the pollinator initiative. This role of outreach to, working with, and convening partners will become increasingly important, whether it is the responsibility of one staff member, or shared between several positions.

Other important skills to consider for staff are subject matter experts who can work with partners, provide technical assistance and training in fields such as tourism development, conservation, historic preservation, cultural heritage, and interpretation. While a dedicated staff position for each of these is likely not practical, looking for a variety of professional backgrounds as staff are added can increase the services AFHA Inc. can offer, and build credibility with partners.

Currently all staff are based in Elkins, working in the Darden Mill and a nearby rented office building. In the future, AFHA Inc. should add at least two field staff positions strategically located in counties across the AFNHA region. The field staff will have a primary responsibility to carry the message of the benefits of the NHA, will provide technical assistance and project help to partners, and will strengthen those partnership relationships with businesses, local governments, and organizations that, together, can advance the goals of AFNHA.

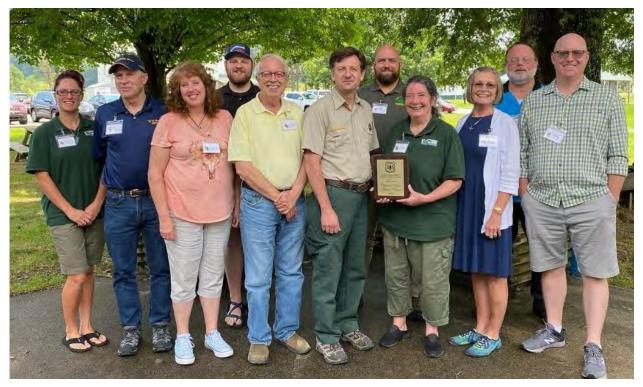
When noting the staff responsibilities of the strategies described above, it is likely that additional AFHA Inc. staff will be needed as programs grow, and to the extent that partnership support activities become significant program responsibilities. These personnel could be located either in the Elkins office, or in field locations, as appropriate to best meet program needs.

In addition to professional staff, AFHA Inc.'s AmeriCorps program is unique among the many different program structures of NHAs. While AmeriCorps members are considered national service members, not staff, they nevertheless make outstanding contributions to the mission of AFNHA. With the NHA designation, AFHA Inc. will train AmeriCorps members to carry out their programs and projects with host partner sites as an extension, and under the umbrella, of AFNHA. This cadre of personnel significantly enhance AFHA Inc.'s ability to implement the recommendations of this management plan. Additionally, as described in Chapter 5, the AmeriCorps members act as AFNHA ambassadors to the towns and counties in which they are assigned. AmeriCorps will continue as a vital, integral component of the operation of the NHA, supporting AFNHA partners and their projects and programs across the region, helping to build capacity in host organizations, and representing AFNHA within the communities where they serve.

#### Succession Planning and Personnel Policies

AFHA Inc. has a long-tenured Executive Director and Deputy Director who oversee the management and operations of AFHA Inc. and the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. Both persons in these positions also maintain vast institutional knowledge of the intricacies and complexities of the organization and its work. This longevity of management is one of the primary reasons for the organization's success. AFHA Inc. will develop transition plans for its executive staff and its board chair to provide orderly transition when a change occurs to one of those positions, and to minimize the loss of institutional knowledge when a long-tenured leader leaves or retires. AFHA Inc.'s staff and executive committee will develop a leadership succession plan to be adopted by the board and implemented when there is a leadership transition.

AFHA Inc. operates with professional personnel policies that establish responsibilities and expectations, and follow all applicable regulations, both for employees and AmeriCorps members. The staff culture of the organization is one of commitment to mission, collaboration, and respect for employees' personal needs in conjunction with their professional responsibilities. AFHA Inc. employment practices welcome AmeriCorps alums, emerging professionals, non-traditional careers, and representatives of diverse groups as applicants.



Board members and staff representing AFNHA receive a Forest Service Partnership Honor Award from Monongahela National Forest Supervisor Shawn Cochran.

### **Objective:** Operate AFHA Inc. According to Best Practices

#### Strategy: Continually improve organizational governance and management

Management and governance of AFHA Inc. is conducted by a board with membership that can range from 7 to 15 individuals. The AFHA Inc. Board of Directors aims to represent interest groups including those identified in the designating legislation as the forest industry, environmental interests, cultural heritage interests, tourism interests, and regional agency partners. The board's gender diversity is currently fairly split between women and men, with one woman holding an officer's position as treasurer. The racial composition of the board is currently all white, with commitment to diversify representation whenever feasible such as including African-American or Tribal representation when available. Geographic spread of board members across the area, as well as a mix of skills represented, is also important. One-third of AFHA Inc.'s board members are elected at the annual meeting by the members each year.<sup>2</sup> A board member serves for a three-year term, and the board selects officers from its members. The board has five permanent committees responsible for governance of the organization executive, finance, audit, nominating, and personnel. Membership on these governance committees is from one to four board members. In addition, the board establishes ad hoc programming committees, and encourages non-board members to serve on these committees. Programming committees include management planning and communications. AFHA Inc. staff provide information to the board members and support to the committees.

AFHA Inc. operates with articles of incorporation and bylaws that govern the organization and its board. The bylaws are reviewed regularly and describe the governance and organization of AFHA Inc. The board develops and approves policies setting out in more detail the operation of the organization,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A member currently is any person who signs up for the AFNHA newsletter, but this can be changed by board policy.

including personnel policies, conflict of interest, and financial procedures. In addition, a board expectation agreement outlines board members' roles, responsibilities, terms, attendance policy, support of AFHA Inc., communications, and conflict of interest. Both the AFHA Inc. policies and the expectation agreement are updated annually and define the number of board meetings per year, board members' responsibilities for attendance and participation, and further explains the organization's committees, their functions, and membership. The board expectation agreement is provided to each board member and is to be read, signed, and returned to AFHA Inc. with the board member selecting the committee(s) on which they choose to participate.

Historically, AFHA Inc.'s annual budgets have been below the threshold for specific required governmental reporting, and its internal financial reporting has not been overly complex, though it does account for multiple, overlapping, AmeriCorps reimbursement grants. AFHA Inc. completes a certified financial review each year and files required IRS-990 filings and grant reporting. With expected expansion of funding and funding sources, including increases with NHA designation, AFHA Inc. will contract with an accounting firm with experience in nonprofit accounting to advise the organization as it prepares for and anticipates annual audits requiring greater detail. Financial reports provided to the board include detail for balance sheets and income statements, an annual operating budget adopted by the board, and the reporting of budget to actual expenses as the fiscal year advances. AFHA Inc. operates on a fiscal year starting January 1. The organization will continue to implement continuous improvements in financial as well as operating policies, based on best practices and government requirements.

### **Objective:** Ensure Sustainability and Growth of AFNHA

#### **Strategy:** Develop funding strategies

#### Develop a Funding Plan

AFHA Inc. will develop a comprehensive funding strategy that leverages diverse sources of revenue to support operations, projects, and programs. Articulating that strategy is the primary responsibility of a development professional working with the Executive Director and the board to implement. AFHA Inc. has remarkable in-kind and cash support from partners leveraged by current programs.

Board and staff will work together to identify other grants, potential sources of earned revenue, donor and sponsorship opportunities, and other fund sources that can support and sustain AFHA Inc. As the demands of AFNHA programs and projects increase over the years, so too will the need to add additional resources to accomplish the many activities anticipated to fulfill this plan.

#### Utilize NPS Heritage Partnership Program Funding to Support AFNHA

The base funding source to fulfill the goals of this management plan is from NHA funding – specifically Heritage Partnership Program (HPP) funds dedicated to NHAs, through the National Park Service budget. These funds are appropriated annually and distributed according to a formula to designated NHAs. The budget of funds available to NHAs working on management planning is modest, with a significant increase expected following NPS approval of the management plan. All HPP funds received must be matched equally by non-federal funds and in-kind contributions, as described in the Financial Projection (Appendix H). These funds will provide the initial support for AFHA Inc. staff and operations, and for the direct grants program. The HPP funds also provide important leverage when seeking additional grants and funding revenue to accomplish programs and projects identified in the management plan.

#### Pursue Grants to Implement Projects and Programs

AFNHA partners have a successful track record of seeking grants for projects, from a variety of federal, state, and foundation sources. This is certainly an avenue to continue both for AFHA Inc. in

implementing projects and programs, and for the AFNHA partnership network collaborating on grant projects and supporting each other for individual asks. However, often grants are for specific projects, or limited time programs. They are rarely available for long-term operations and they often require matching funds from other sources.

Some possible sources for potential grant or partnership funding are noted in the Partners list (Appendix E). Some partners have supported AFNHA projects in the past, while others potentially fund the types of projects proposed in this plan. Seeking out additional information about potential grant sources is a recommended implementation strategy. Aggressively pursuing and leveraging multiple revenue opportunities is an important part of a robust and diverse funding strategy.

#### Strategy: Create revenue-generating programs and projects

AFHA Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and is not required to pay federal income tax. It does not mean that AFHA Inc. cannot generate revenue by charging for its services, collecting fees, or developing income-generating opportunities. Any activity within the mission of AFHA Inc.'s exempt status that generates revenue is exempt from taxation. Many other NHAs generate revenue that support their operations, advance programs and projects, or are reinvested back into the NHA and its assets.

A major opportunity for AFHA Inc. is to leverage the skills of staff, the programs provided, and the visibility of the NHA to include income generating opportunities that further the AFNHA mission. These opportunities should balance the costs, including funding, time, and effort involved, and benefits, including contribution to mission as well as financial return. Another consideration is balancing services that AFHA Inc. provides without charge (funded by HPP funds or other sources) to serve partners, as compared to services that are administratively more expensive and require some compensation by beneficiaries to cover those costs. Some of these potential earned income opportunities may include:

- Program fees for partner programs This may include cash fees paid and in-kind reported. These are essential to the success of many programs, even those with substantial grant funding. In some cases, these may be encumbered by match requirements of those programs. When not encumbered by other match reporting, they may be available for use matching HPP funding.
- Admission fees Currently admission to the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center is free, with donations encouraged. Many other small museums in the region charge a modest admission fee, typically to help offset some of the costs for utilities, insurance, and maintenance. Changing this policy to charge a fee at the Discovery Center, or for other AFNHA facilities, is a possibility.
- Fee for participation products As AFNHA develops programs for participation, some may involve a fee for products or rewards for participation. This may include items such as passport booklets, pins or patches, or other awards. In most cases the fee would be nominal, to cover the cost of the materials.
- Tour services AFHA Inc. could provide services as a receptive operator to organize and provide group tours, as some other NHAs do. Another possibility might be to serve as an organizer to schedule and ticket specialized tour opportunities, such as for forest management or factory tours.
- Fee for service This may include providing fiscal agent, grant writing, and grant administration services, technical assistance, and other professional assistance services. Provision of these services will be dependent on the skills available and program responsibilities of AFHA Inc. staff and providers.
- Events AFHA Inc. could consider organizing, or playing a major partner role, in fundraising events, or in programming events that generate some revenue such as through tickets or sponsorships.

- Inventory sales AFHA Inc. can expand the gift shop at the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center and can develop logo items or other AFNHA merchandise that can be sold there, through partner outlets, and on-line.
- Facility rental AFHA Inc. owns the historic Darden Mill where the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center is located. Much of the second floor of this facility is leased to a partner museum, for a monthly rental fee that covers utilities share for that space and a portion toward building expenses. The building also offers potential for rented space for meetings or events, and once the third floor is complete, for other uses such as for offices and additional interpretive space.

#### Strategy: Grow fundraising and sustainability

Critical to every nonprofit is the need to grow multiple sources of revenue that contribute to a base of funding and ensure sustainability. For AFHA Inc., the NPS HPP funding provides a base of operational and program support that is essential to implementing this management plan. Other funds will be raised to provide match for HPP funding and to enhance or expand operations and programs.

#### Membership

AFHA Inc. initially has established a friendly, open membership program whereby any individual, business, organization, or government agency that signs up for its newsletter is considered a member. Membership does not require any donation or dues, but simply an expressed interest in AFHA Inc. and its work by registering. Members are notified of stakeholder meetings and the annual membership meeting at which they vote on the nominated slate of board members. The membership size stands at 1,150 as of the end of 2021. This no dues policy was a purposeful decision during the establishment of the AFNHA network in order to encourage maximum participation. At some point AFHA Inc. may decide to amend the membership program and implement annual dues to make the membership more formal and generate a small revenue source for the NHA. While membership dues per se do not usually raise significant amounts of funding, the membership is an important source to build relationships for soliciting donors. Membership may also be structured to offer members additional value for their membership, such as free facility or event admission, free or discounted AFNHA logo merchandise, or included program benefits.

#### Develop and Strengthen Donor Fundraising

Donations are a critical part of a diverse funding strategy, and important source of non-federal match. Most often these will be unrestricted funds that can be used to sustain the organization, and for purposes not eligible for restricted grants and federal programs. AFHA Inc. does not have a strong track record of donor development or fundraising efforts, in part as a conscious choice as a young organization to limit perceived competition for donors with local partners. An evaluation of this policy, and thoughtful expansion of fundraising efforts, is needed to build a base of donors for the organization, and for projects.

#### Create an Endowment or Reserve Fund

When analyzing organizational sustainability, many potential funders and creditors look at endowments and reserve fund balances as part of a risk assessment of an organization. A target amount for a minimum reserve fund is a balance that can sustain the organization for three to six months if no additional grants are secured.

The addition of a professional fund development staff member will greatly enhance AFHA Inc.'s ability to build its fundraising operations. Conducting an end-of-year campaign, soliciting donations from members and the public during the annual, national Day-of-Giving campaign, mining prospective benefactors, and soliciting sponsorships from corporations and businesses, will help build additional financial resources that support the programs and projects of AFNHA, in addition to providing stability and funding for AFHA Inc.

#### **Financial Analysis**

To assist AFHA Inc. in its goal of fiscal sustainability, a financial projection has been created to provide a 10-year budget forecast (Appendix H). This projection is based on the calendar year (the AFHA Inc. fiscal year) with Year 1 being the year during which the management plan is submitted. This chart is populated with expected operational revenue and expenses for all AFHA Inc. programs that contribute to this management plan. AFHA Inc. activities include substantial programming funded from HPP funding, as well as from other federal and non-federal sources. This financial projection includes expected revenue from the HPP funding through the National Park Service, from non-federal match that is leveraged by those HPP funds, as well as from other revenue sources including other federal grants. Expenditures from HPP funds and match leveraged for those funds are primarily used for staff, consultant, and operational costs not connected to other revenue streams; subgrants for partner projects; direct projects and program expenses (many of which are noted in Implementation Priorities); and for travel and event costs (such as travel to complete projects, and stakeholder outreach events) needed to implement programs and projects identified in the management plan. Other federal funds, such as the AmeriCorps grant, Forest Service cooperative agreement funds, and occasional other grants, are used to pay the staff and program costs specific to those programs and agreements.

Because AFHA Inc. activities also include substantial programming funded from other federal sources in addition to HPP funds, a separate section on available non-federal match is included below the Revenue and Expense section of the Financial Projection chart. This section identifies projected non-federal funding that is available for HPP match. Federal source income – whether from HPP, AmeriCorps, or other federal sources – or resources used as match for other federal sources, are not counted in the "Available for NPS match" section. Available non-federal match generally comes from donations; state, local, or foundation grants; earned income; subgrant match from recipients; and administrative fees that are not used to match another grant.

This financial projection will be a tool for the executive staff and board to use as it plans future operational, program, and project budgets and sustainability for AFNHA. In addition, the forecast provides AFHA Inc. a guide to know how much funding it will need to cover the costs of operations and programs, and to meet the NHA non-federal match requirement, in the ensuing years of the management plan.

## **CHAPTER 7**

## **Implementation Plan and Conclusions**

The Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan sets forth the mission of the National Heritage Area, its goals for the first 15 years, and a vision for what accomplishment of those goals will mean for the region. In addition, the management plan serves as a guide for AFHA Inc. and the AFNHA partnership network to reach that vision through collaborative action carried out at a landscape level. AFNHA overlays an extensive partnership network that has already begun to work collaboratively in the region. This management plan builds on the synergy that currently exists in the network. The strategic collaboration described in this plan is critical for success, as the region's small population and rugged geography limit human capital. However, residents are long-accustomed to these conditions and unfazed by the challenges they present, as those same conditions are the source of the region's unparalleled beauty and biodiversity, cultural character, and economic promise.

As the plan is implemented, the capacity for AFHA Inc. as a regional leader will grow. The organization's leadership role encompasses the continuation of successful programs, the development of new projects and programs identified during the planning process, and the support of partners' efforts to further the NHA's mission. Furthermore, AFHA Inc. and the AFNHA partnership network are prepared to adapt to changing circumstances as new opportunities arise that are consistent with the mission, goals, and vision.

## AFNHA Action Plan and Implementation Priorities

The three-year National Heritage Area management planning process that engaged partners and residents across the region has resulted in the development of the AFNHA Action Plan (Appendix F). This plan includes projected activities for the next 12 years to account for the remaining period of the Secretary of the Interior's authority to provide funding to AFHA Inc.

The action plan is organized by AFNHA's five primary goals. Under each goal, the key objectives, strategies, and actions to achieve those objectives are listed. Each action listed



Historic steam engine that once hauled logs to the mill now provides scenic rides for visitors. (Credit: Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad)

includes a brief description of the role of AFHA Inc. along with the primary AFHA Inc. program areas likely to be engaged in that action. Primary partner roles and opportunities that contribute to that action are described next. Each action also has a suggested timeframe to initiate programs or projects. Many actions are already underway through activity of AFHA Inc. and of partners, and are likely to be continued, expanded, and enhanced through the activities of the AFNHA partnership network. For new programs and projects, the expected starting timeline is indicated in the action plan as Years 1-3 (short term, with Year 1 being the calendar year this plan is submitted), Years 4-6 (mid term), and Years 7-12 (long term.) A few projects may be distinct, to be accomplished and completed within a year or so. But most programs and projects, once initiated, are expected to continue in some form. The timeframe is flexible in order to enable AFHA Inc. to set priorities for new and ongoing activities, and to guide the AFNHA partnership network in setting a feasible pace at which to undertake activities.

In addition, the AFNHA Action Plan aligns with chapter organization in this planning document. As noted previously, Chapters 2 through 6 in this management plan are each oriented toward one of the primary goals and provide a detailed description of each goal's context as well as the activities and partnership coordination that will lead to the goal's achievement.

Because of the wide range of AFNHA goals and extensive partner engagement in actions, this action plan is quite extensive. In order to clarify the legislative requirement of planning for the first five years, as well as to help set priorities, especially for actions by AFHA Inc. and to identify partner commitments, a shorter Implementation Priorities chart (Appendix G) is also included. The Implementation Priorities are based on the action plan, although some actions have been combined or differentiated to clarify timelines and details. This plan focuses on priority actions to be continued or initiated during the first five years, arranged generally by timeline within each goal. The focus is on AFHA Inc. roles, along with major partner responsibilities.

The Implementation Priorities chart includes estimated project costs for specific new project expenditures, but does not include AFHA Inc. or partner staff time or operations. In some cases, some likely additional sources for funding those projects are noted. The exception is for Goal 5 – Manage, Promote, and Sustain AFHA Inc. as the NHA Coordinating Entity. This section does include expected staff costs for operating the programs discussed throughout the plan. Where applicable, some of the expected or potential funding sources outside of NHA funds are noted.

AFHA Inc. will develop an annual workplan, grounded in the management plan, to guide AFNHA projects and priorities. The implementation priorities will help to guide AFHA Inc. workplans for the first few years. A workplan based on these priorities is submitted annually to NPS as part of federal financial assistance agreement awarding process.

The actions selected for inclusion in the action plan share guiding principles that will continue to be important for AFNHA's success. All actions are connected to the concepts in AFNHA's themes of Forest Abundance, Crucible of Isolation, Logging Boom Builds the Nation, and Resilient Forest, found in the AFNHA Interpretive Matrix (Appendix D). In addition, actions include a focus on authenticity and quality, ensuring the integrity of the history, living traditions, and natural and cultural assets of the region. Actions contribute to the stewardship and / or enhancement of the natural, scenic, recreational, historic, and cultural assets of the region. Actions also contribute to strengthening the partnership network and building capacity for communities and organizations. Finally, all actions undertaken by AFHA Inc. and the AFNHA partnership network will adhere to the core values outlined in Chapter 1 and best practices in each applicable field. As implementation of the plan unfolds over the next several years, unforeseen opportunities may arise that align with AFNHA's mission and goals and follow the guiding principles. AFNHA will continue to gain an understanding of the opportunities, needs, and priorities in the NHA sectors. Although some specific roles for AFHA Inc. and its partners are recommended in this plan, there is flexibility for a variety of roles.

"There are so many great organizations in the region! We need help getting organizations to work together instead of working only on their own projects." As collaboration continues, AFNHA will be proactive in assessing regional needs to find the fit amongst the existing initiatives and other opportunities. AFNHA will remain open to pursuing opportunities that propel the NHA forward to reach the regional vision established through the collaborative management planning process. This applies to shifting roles between AFHA Inc. and partners, as

well as some flexibility for which programs become major initiatives of AFHA Inc. as discussed in Chapter 6. Conversely, there may be actions included in the action plan that become impractical or impossible to carry out and that AFNHA needs to delay or set aside permanently.

# **Performance Outcomes and Evaluation**

AFHA Inc. has a long history of self-evaluation and a culture of continuous improvement. This has included periodic surveys and feedback from stakeholders, partners, and AmeriCorps members that have led to changes and improvements in organizational functioning. Because so much of AFHA Inc.'s organizational funding has been from grants from multiple sources, there is a long-standing established protocol for reporting on financial and performance accomplishments and longer term outcomes. This has involved rigorous reporting, documentation of activities and outcomes, and evaluation of programs and impact, demonstrating accountability, results, progress, and paths to improvement for these programs.

For example, the AFHA AmeriCorps program previously conducted multiyear evaluation studies of volunteer management practices supported by AmeriCorps members. During the first three years of this management plan, an evaluation study will examine the range of delivery and effectiveness of interpretation and education programs delivered by AmeriCorps members. This culture of evaluation will continue to use feedback from stakeholders and beneficiaries for process evaluation to improve programs, document results of activities to communicate benefits and provide accountability, and evaluate long-term impact to understand and demonstrate success.

This performance review attention to collecting data, understanding outcomes, and evaluating the success of the activities and programs of AFNHA will be applied to the NHA evaluation process. This process will also inform periodic reviews of AFNHA planning with updated strategic plans to adjust objectives and priorities for the long-term success of the AFNHA partnership network.

In 2008, it became more common for Congress to include an evaluation requirement in designating legislation and other NHA reauthorizations. For AFNHA, an evaluation by the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the National Park Service, is mandated to review goals and objectives articulated within the management plan in order to become reauthorized when the initial period of funding authorization expires 15 years after designation. The evaluation will determine if AFNHA has met the congressional mandate as established in its authorization and assesses the performance outcomes of the programs and projects carried out by the NHA during the authorization period. With the findings from the NHA evaluation, the Secretary will prepare a report to Congress documenting accomplishments, what has not been accomplished and why, and what may still need to be completed. In addition, the report's findings may also identify new opportunities, previously unknown or not identified during the management planning phase, that could become projects or programs of the NHA. With these findings, the Secretary will make recommendations to Congress regarding the future role of AFNHA including reauthorization.



One of many roads to explore the Appalachian Forest

The legislated purposes of AFNHA and the goals of this management plan are articulated strategies that will guide the AFNHA and its partners over the first 15 years. Accordingly, when AFHA Inc. approaches the end date to this management plan, it will provide information needed for the plan evaluation – historical budgets, project and program accomplishments, administrative, management, and governance procedures. This information will be used to determine that AFHA Inc., as the coordinating entity, has addressed its legislated purposes and goals outlined in the management plan.

### **Financial Projections for Implementation**

As described in Chapter 6, Appendix H provides financial projections for the first 10 years of the management plan, starting with Year 1 as the year in which this plan is completed. It includes expected income from multiple sources, including NPS Heritage Partnership Program (HPP) funds, non-federal funds leveraged to match HPP, as well as funds from other federal sources including AmeriCorps grants. The table shows expected expenditures to carry out the management plan activities, including personnel, operations, subgrant program, AmeriCorps program, and project and program expenditures. Project costs and staffing levels suggested in the implementation priorities chart, plus estimated inflation increases, are included in these projections. The plan also specifies non-federal funds expected to be available to match HPP funding, including in-kind and partner contributions.

# Conclusions

The congressional designation of AFNHA and the implementation of the *Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan* present an incredible opportunity for the region. AFNHA has the potential to be transformative in connecting and supporting partners to accomplish conservation, cultural heritage development, tourism, and community development, as it brings to the table a combination of features that no other regional organization has:

- Longevity AFHA Inc. already has a long track record of success in the region, and the NHA designation is in perpetuity.
- Financial and staffing stability An annual federal appropriation of funding for NHAs has been consistent for two decades and is anticipated to continue. This adds further stability to AFHA Inc. as the coordinating entity, as it provides operational funding that most other regional initiatives lack.
- Federal mandate AFNHA has a mission and a legislative mandate to act collaboratively for resource stewardship and enhancement, telling the story, and creating economic development opportunities consistent with the region's forest heritage.
- Flexibility Through its public / private nature, AFNHA combines its federal recognition and connections with flexibility beyond what federal governmental partners have. This helps bridge the gap between larger federal agencies operating in the region and the nonprofit organizations, businesses, communities, educational institutions, and other active partners in the region.
- Reach AFNHA is comprised of a regional network of partners with AFHA Inc., the coordinating entity, at the network's hub. Through the management planning process, the network has developed a regional vision that serves as a "big tent" under which diverse interests and capacities can meet.

These characteristics enable AFNHA to think one size larger, leveraging funding and engagement and scaling up the activities and collaboration already present in the region. AFNHA will act intentionally to assess common goals and find ways to engage everyone toward the shared vision.

# **APPENDICES**

- A. Legislation
- B. Maps
- C. Assets Inventory
- D. Interpretive Matrix
- E. Partners
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- G. Implementation Priorities
- H. Financial Projections
- I. Planning Team
- J. Partner Support and Comments

### S.47 - John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act

Became Public Law No: 116-9 3/12/2019

Full text at https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/47/text

Excerpts that apply to Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area:

TITLE VI--NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS SEC. 6001. NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA DESIGNATIONS. (a) In General. -- The following areas are designated as National Heritage Areas, to be administered in accordance with this section: (1) Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, West Virginia and Maryland.--(A) In general.--There is established the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area in the States of West Virginia and Maryland, as depicted on the map entitled ``Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area'', numbered T07/80,000, and dated October 2007, including-(i) Barbour, Braxton, Grant, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Morgan, Nicholas, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Preston, Randolph, Tucker, Upshur, and Webster Counties in West Virginia; and (ii) Allegany and Garrett Counties in Maryland. (B) Local coordinating entity. -- The Appalachian Forest Heritage Area, Inc., shall be--(i) the local coordinating entity for the National Heritage Area designated by subparagraph (A) (referred to in this subparagraph as the `local coordinating entity''); and (ii) governed by a board of directors that shall-(I) include members to represent a geographic balance across the counties described in subparagraph (A) and the States of West Virginia and Maryland; (II) be composed of not fewer than 7, and not more than 15, members elected by the membership of the local coordinating entity; (III) be selected to represent a balanced group of diverse interests, including--(aa) the forest industry; (bb) environmental interests; (cc) cultural heritage interests; (dd) tourism interests; and (ee) regional agency partners; (IV) exercise all corporate powers of the local coordinating entity; (V) manage the activities and affairs of the local coordinating entity; and (VI) subject to any limitations in the articles and bylaws of the local coordinating entity, this section, and other applicable Federal or State law, establish the policies of the local coordinating entity.

### Appendix A

### Legislation

(b) <> Administration.--

(1) Authorities.--For purposes of carrying out the management plan for each of the National Heritage Areas designated by subsection (a), the Secretary, acting through the local coordinating entity, may use amounts made available under subsection (g)--

> (A) to make grants to the State or a political subdivision of the State, Indian Tribes, nonprofit organizations, and other persons;

> (B) to enter into cooperative agreements with, or provide technical assistance to, the State or a political subdivision of the State, Indian Tribes, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties;

(C) to hire and compensate staff, which shall include individuals with expertise in natural, cultural, and historical resources protection, and heritage programming;

(D) to obtain money or services from any source including any money or services that are provided under any other Federal law or program;

(E) to contract for goods or services; and

(F) to undertake to be a catalyst for any other activity that furthers the National Heritage Area and is consistent with the approved management plan.

(2) Duties.--The local coordinating entity for each of the National Heritage Areas designated by subsection (a) shall--

(A) in accordance with subsection (c), prepare and submit a management plan for the National Heritage Area to the Secretary;

(B) assist Federal agencies, the State or a political subdivision of the State, Indian Tribes, regional planning organizations, nonprofit organizations and other interested parties in carrying out the approved management plan by--

(i) carrying out programs and projects that recognize, protect, and enhance important resource values in the National Heritage Area;

(ii) establishing and maintaining interpretiveexhibits and programs in the National Heritage Area;(iii) developing recreational and educational

opportunities in the National Heritage Area; (iv) increasing public awareness of, and

appreciation for, natural, historical, scenic, and cultural resources of the National Heritage Area;

(v) protecting and restoring historic sites and buildings in the National Heritage Area that are consistent with National Heritage Area themes;

(vi) ensuring that clear, consistent, and appropriate signs identifying points of public access and sites of interest are posted throughout the National Heritage Area; and

(vii) promoting a wide range of partnerships among the Federal Government, State, Tribal, and local governments, organizations, and individuals to further the National Heritage Area;

(C) consider the interests of diverse units of government, businesses, organizations, and individuals in the National Heritage Area in the preparation and implementation of the management plan;

(D) conduct meetings open to the public at least semiannually regarding the development and implementation of the management plan;

(E) for any year that Federal funds have been received under this subsection--

(i) submit to the Secretary an annual report that describes the activities, expenses, and income of the local coordinating entity (including grants to any other entities during the year that the report is made);
(ii) make available to the Secretary for audit all records relating to the expenditure of the funds and any matching funds; and

 (iii) require, with respect to all agreements authorizing expenditure of Federal funds by other organizations, that the organizations receiving the funds make available to the Secretary for audit all records concerning the expenditure of the funds; and
 (F) encourage by appropriate means economic viability

that is consistent with the National Heritage Area. (3) Prohibition on the acquisition of real property.--The local coordinating entity shall not use Federal funds made available under subsection (g) to acquire real property or any interest in real property.

(c) <> Management Plan.--

 In general.--Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the local coordinating entity for each of the National Heritage Areas designated by subsection (a) shall submit to the Secretary for approval a proposed management plan for the National Heritage Area.

(2) Requirements. -- The management plan shall --

(A) incorporate an integrated and cooperative approach for the protection, enhancement, and interpretation of the natural, cultural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources of the National Heritage Area;

(B) take into consideration Federal, State, local, and Tribal plans and treaty rights;

(C) include--

(i) an inventory of--

(I) the resources located in the National Heritage Area; and

(II) any other property in the National Heritage Area that--

(aa) is related to the themes of the National Heritage Area; and (bb) should be preserved, restored, managed, or maintained because of the significance of the property;

(ii) comprehensive policies, strategies and recommendations for conservation, funding, management, and development of the National Heritage Area;

(iii) a description of actions that the Federal Government, State, Tribal, and local governments, private organizations, and individuals have agreed to take to protect the natural, historical, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources of the National Heritage Area;

(iv) a program of implementation for the management plan by the local coordinating entity that includes a description of--

(I) actions to facilitate ongoing collaboration among partners to promote plans

for resource protection, restoration, and construction; and

(II) specific commitments for implementation that have been made by the local coordinating entity or any government, organization, or individual for the first 5 years of operation;

(v) the identification of sources of funding for carrying out the management plan;

(vi) analysis and recommendations for means by which Federal, State, local, and Tribal programs, including the role of the National Park Service in the National Heritage Area, may best be coordinated to carry out this subsection; and

(vii) an interpretive plan for the National Heritage Area; and

(D) recommend policies and strategies for resource management that consider and detail the application of appropriate land and water management techniques, including the development of intergovernmental and interagency cooperative agreements to protect the natural, historical, cultural, educational, scenic, and recreational resources of the National Heritage Area.

(3) Deadline.--If a proposed management plan is not submitted to the Secretary by the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the local coordinating entity shall be ineligible to receive additional funding under this section until the date on which the Secretary receives and approves the management plan.

(4) Approval or disapproval of management plan.--

(A) In general.--Not later than 180 days after the date of receipt of the management plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary, in consultation with State and Tribal governments, shall approve or disapprove the management plan.

(B) Criteria for approval. -- In determining whether to approve the management plan, the Secretary shall consider whether--

> (i) the local coordinating entity is representative of the diverse interests of the National Heritage Area, including Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments, natural and historic resource protection organizations, educational institutions, businesses, and recreational organizations;

(ii) the local coordinating entity has afforded adequate opportunity, including public hearings, for public and governmental involvement in the preparation of the management plan; and

(iii) the resource protection and interpretation strategies contained in the management plan, if implemented, would adequately protect the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the National Heritage Area.

(C) Action following disapproval.--If the Secretary disapproves the management plan under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall--

(i) advise the local coordinating entity in writing of the reasons for the disapproval;

(ii) make recommendations for revisions to the management plan; and

(iii) not later than 180 days after the receipt of any proposed revision of the management plan from the local coordinating entity, approve or disapprove the proposed revision.

(D) Amendments. --

(i) In general.--The Secretary shall approve or disapprove each amendment to the management plan that the Secretary determines make a substantial change to the management plan.
(ii) Use of funds.--The local coordinating entity shall not use Federal funds authorized by this subsection to carry out any amendments to the management plan until the Secretary has approved the amendments.

(d) <> Relationship to Other Federal Agencies.--

(1) In general.--Nothing in this section affects the authority of a Federal agency to provide technical or financial assistance under any other law.

(2) Consultation and coordination.--The head of any Federal agency planning to conduct activities that may have an impact on a National Heritage Area designated by subsection (a) is encouraged to consult and coordinate the activities with the Secretary and the local coordinating entity to the maximum extent practicable.

 (3) Other federal agencies.--Nothing in this section- 
 (A) modifies, alters, or amends any law or regulation authorizing a Federal agency to manage Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Federal agency;

(B) limits the discretion of a Federal land manager to implement an approved land use plan within the boundaries of a National Heritage Area designated by subsection (a); or(C) modifies, alters, or amends any authorized use of

Federal land under the jurisdiction of a Federal agency. (e) <> Private Property and Regulatory Protections.--Nothing in this section--

(1) abridges the rights of any property owner (whether public or private), including the right to refrain from participating in any plan, project, program, or activity conducted within a National Heritage Area designated by subsection (a);

(2) requires any property owner--

(A) to permit public access (including access by Federal, State, or local agencies) to the property of the property owner; or

(B) to modify public access or use of property of the property owner under any other Federal, State, or local law;

(3) alters any duly adopted land use regulation, approved land use plan, or other regulatory authority of any Federal, State, Tribal, or local agency;

(4) conveys any land use or other regulatory authority to the local coordinating entity;

(5) authorizes or implies the reservation or appropriation of water or water rights;

(6) enlarges or diminishes the treaty rights of any Indian Tribe within the National Heritage Area;

(7) diminishes--

(A) the authority of the State to manage fish and wildlife, including the regulation of fishing and hunting within a National Heritage Area designated by subsection (a); or

(B) the authority of Indian Tribes to regulate members of Indian Tribes with respect to fishing, hunting, and gathering in the exercise of treaty rights; or

(8) creates any liability, or affects any liability under any other law, of any private property owner with respect to any person injured on the private property.

(f) <> Evaluation and Report.--

(1) In general.--For each of the National Heritage Areas designated by subsection (a), not later than 3 years before the date on which authority for Federal funding terminates for each National Heritage Area, the Secretary shall--

(A) conduct an evaluation of the accomplishments of the National Heritage Area; and

(B) prepare a report in accordance with paragraph (3).(2) Evaluation.--An evaluation conducted under paragraph (1)(A) shall--

(A) assess the progress of the local management entity with respect to--  $% \left( A^{\prime}\right) =0$ 

(i) accomplishing the purposes of the authorizing legislation for the National Heritage Area; and

(ii) achieving the goals and objectives of the approved management plan for the National Heritage Area;(B) analyze the investments of the Federal Government,State, Tribal, and local governments, and private entities in each National Heritage Area to determine the impact of the investments; and

(C) review the management structure, partnership relationships, and funding of the National Heritage Area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the National Heritage Area.

(3) Report.--Based on the evaluation conducted under paragraph (1) (A), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that includes recommendations for the future role of the National Park Service, if any, with respect to the National Heritage Area.

(g) <> Authorization of Appropriations.--

(1) In general.--There is authorized to be appropriated for each National Heritage Area designated by subsection (a) to carry out the purposes of this section \$10,000,000, of which not more than \$1,000,000 may be made available in any fiscal year.

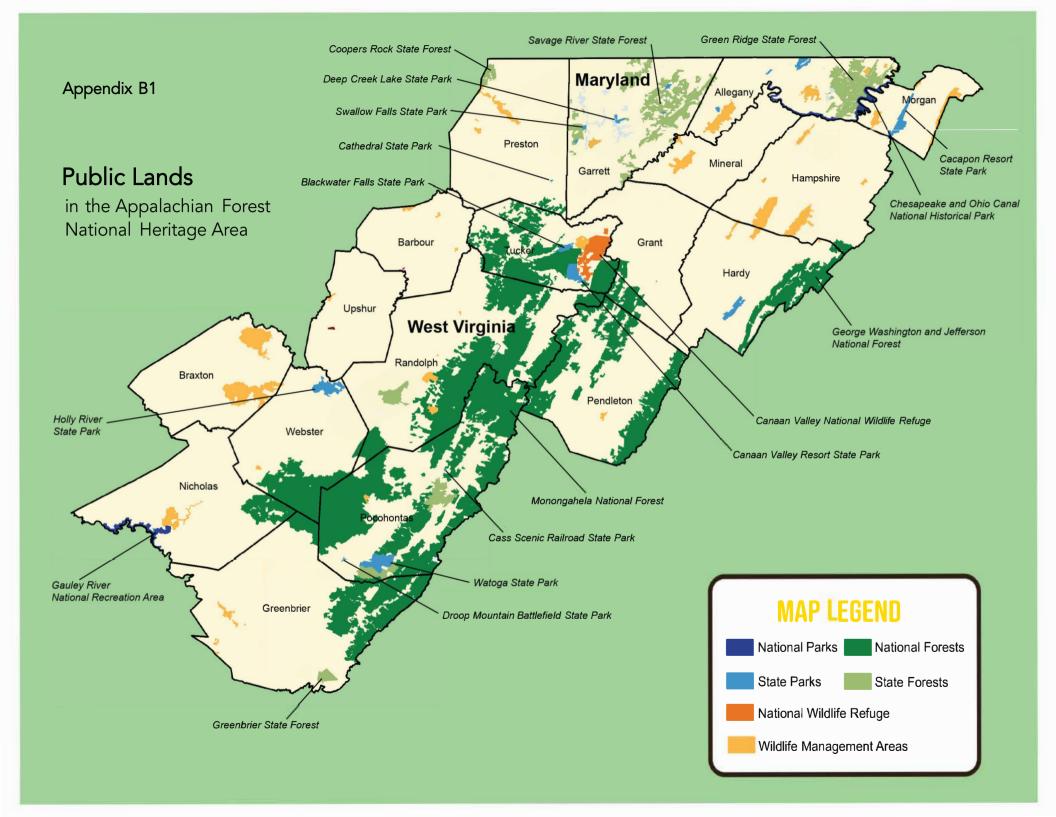
(2) Availability.--Amounts made available under paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.

(3) Cost-sharing requirement.--

(A) In general.--The Federal share of the total cost of any activity under this section shall be not more than 50 percent.

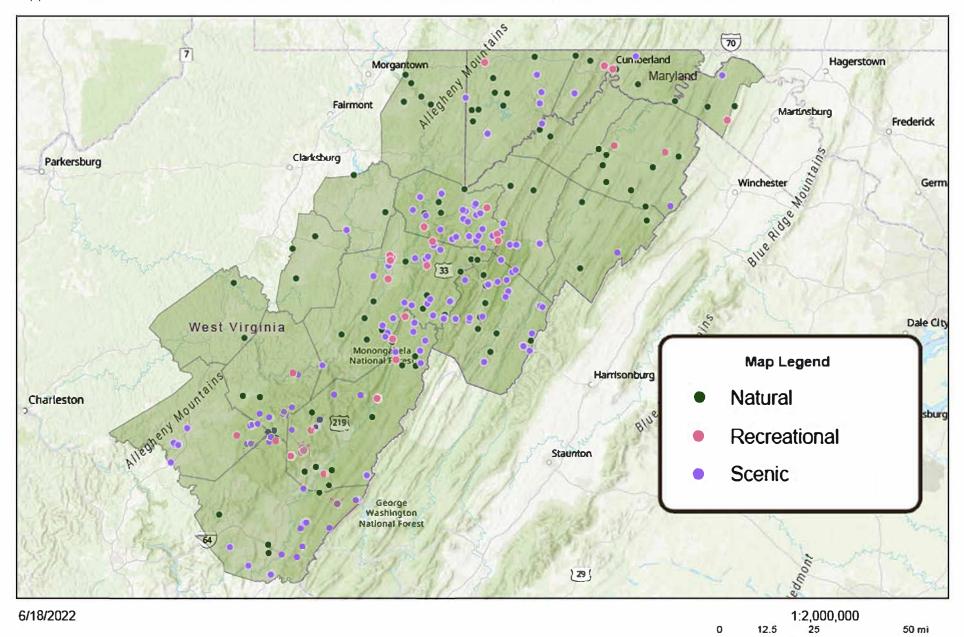
(B) Form.--The non-Federal contribution of the total cost of any activity under this section may be in the form of inkind contributions of goods or services fairly valued.

(4) Termination of authority.--The authority of the Secretary to provide assistance under this section terminates on the date that is 15 years after the date of enactment of this Act.



Appendix B2

AFNHA Natural, Recreational and Scenic Assets



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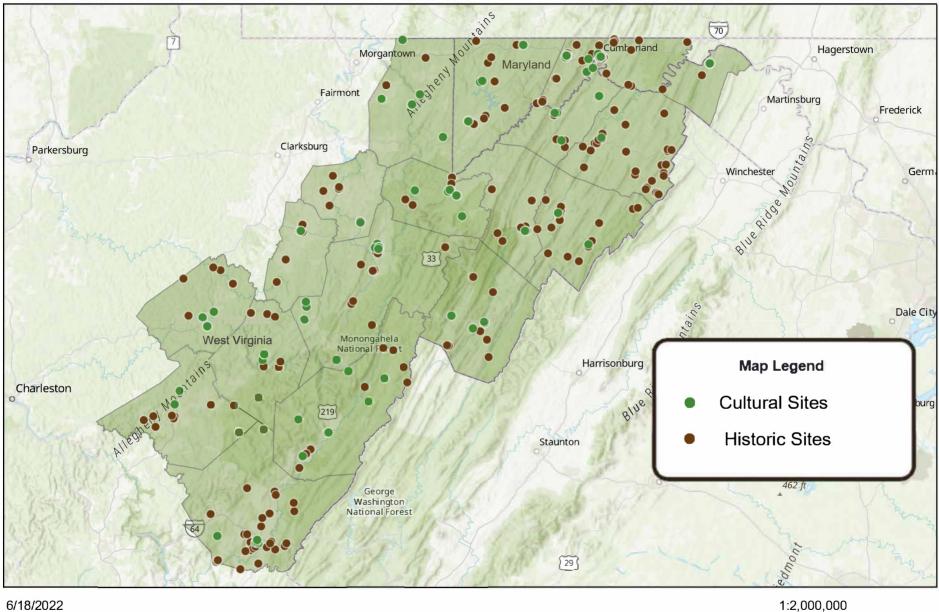
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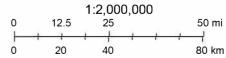
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80 km

### Appendix B3

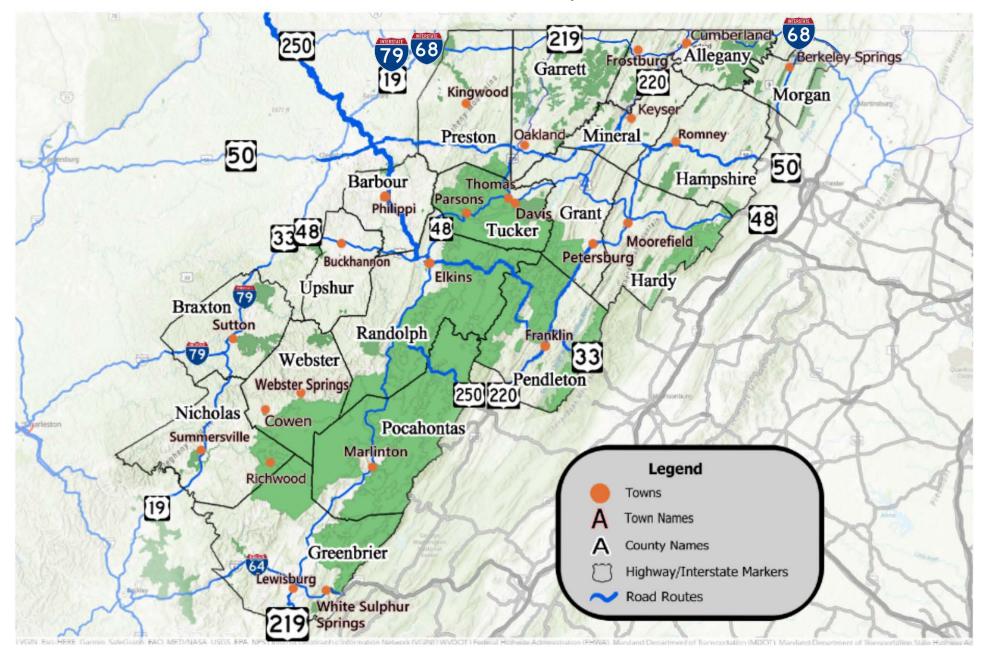
AFNHA Historic and Cultural Assets





Appendix B4

**AFNHA** Gateways



Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
16 Altamont Terrace	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP					
200208 Decatur Street	Multiple		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Abes Run Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Randolph	Bartow	WV	Х								х	
Adaland Mansion	Organization	0	Barbour	Philippi	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
African Methodist Episcopal Church	Organization		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Agnes Howard Hall	Organization	L	Upshur	Buckhannon	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Albert and Liberal Arts Halls	Organization	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Alderson Bridge	Public	0	Greenbrier	Alderson	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Alderson Historic District	Multiple	Р	Greenbrier	Alderson	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Allegany Arts Council	Organization	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х				Х			
Allegany Museum	Organization	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х			Х	Х			
Allegheny Echoes	Organization		Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV			Х				Х			
Allegheny Highlands Trail	Organization	0	Randolph, Tucker	Elkins	WV	х	х	х				х		x	х
Allegheny Mountain Radio	Organization	L	Pocahontas	Dunmore	WV			Х				Х			
Allegheny Trail	Multiple	0	Multiple	Multiple	WV			Х			Х	Х		Х	Х
Allegheny Wildlife Management Area	Public	Х	Mineral	Keyser	WV				Х				Х		
Ambrose Chapel	Private	L	Morgan	Stotlers Crossroads	WV			х		NRHP	х	х			
Anderson Chapel	Private		Garrett	Swanton	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Anthony Creek		0	Greenbrier	White Sulpher Springs	WV				х				х	x	
Appalachian Ballet Theatre	Organization	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х				Х			Х
Appalachian Waters Scenic Byway	Public	0	Miltiple		WV			Х		Nat'l Byway		Х			Х
Apple Alley Players	Organization	L	Mineral	Keyser	WV			Х				Х			
Apple Butter Festival	Organization	Р	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х				Х			
Arbuckle, Alexander W., I, House	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х			Х				
Argabrite House	Private		Greenbrier	Alderson	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Arthurdale	Multiple	Р	Preston	Arthurdale	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
ArtSpring Festival	Organization	L	Tucker	Thomas	WV			Х				Х			
Audra State Park	Public	0	Barbour	Buckhannon	WV				Х				Х	Х	
Augusta Heritage Center	Private	0	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х				Х			

Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
BaldwinChandlee Supply CompanyValley Supply Company	Private		Randolph	Elkins	wv			х		NRHP	Х				
Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Station	Private	0	Garrett	Oakland	MD		Х	Х		NRHP	Х				
Barbour County Courthouse	Public	G	Barbour	Philippi	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Barbour County Fair	Organization	L	Barbour	Belington	WV			Х				Х			
Barbour County Historical Museum	Organization	0	Barbour	Philippi	WV			Х			Х				
Barnum Whitewater Area	Public	0	Mineral	Keyser	WV				Х				Х	Х	
Barton Village Site	Organization		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х	Х			
Bear Heaven	Public	0	Randolph	Elkins, Parsons	WV	Х							Х	Х	
Bear Pen Run Natural Area	Public	0	Garrett	Swanton	MD				Х				Х	Х	
Bear Rocks Preserve	Public	0	Grant, Tucker	Davis	wv				х	NNL			х	х	
Beard, Richard, House	Private		Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV			Х			Х				
Beartown State Park	Public	0	Greenbrier	Marlinton	WV				Х				Х	Х	
Beaver Dam Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Randolph	Glady	WV				Х				Х		
Beaver Mill	Organization	L	Nicholas	Craigsville	WV			Х			Х				
Becky Creek Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Randolph	Huttonsville	WV				Х				Х		
Bell Knob Fire Tower	Public	0	Grant	Davis	WV	Х							Х		Х
Bell Tower Building			Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Ben's Old Loom Barn	Private	L	Tucker	Davis	WV			Х				Х			
B'er Chayim Temple	Organization		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Berkeley Springs State Park	Public	0	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV				Х		Х		Х	Х	
Berkeley Springs Train Depot		0	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV		Х				Х	Х			
Bernard E. Wilmoth House	Private		Barbour	Belington	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Beverly Heritage Center	Organization	0	Randolph	Beverly	WV			Х		NR contributing	Х	Х			
Beverly Historic District	Multiple	Р	Randolph	Beverly	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Bickle Knob Observation Tower	Public	0	Randolph	Parsons	WV	Х								Х	
Big Bend Campground	Public	0	Pendleton	Cabins	WV	Х								Х	
Big Bottom Farm	Private		Allegany	Dickens	MD					NRHP	Х				
Big Bottom Farm ("Clausen Farm")	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD						Х				
Big Ditch Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Webster	Cowen	WV				Х				Х		
Big Draft Wilderness	Public	0	Greenbrier	White Sulphur Springs	wv				х	NWA			х	х	

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Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Big Rock Campground	Public	0	Nicholas	Richwood	WV								Х	Х	
Big Run Bog	Public		Tucker		WV				Х	NNL			Х	Х	
Big Run State Park	Public	0	Garrett	Grantsville	MD				Х				Х	Х	
Bishop Knob Campground	Public	0	Webster	Richwood	WV	Х							Х	Х	
Blackman-Bosworth Store/Randolph Co Museum	Organization	0	Randolph	Beverly	WV			х		NRHP	х				
Blackwater Falls State Park	Public	0	Tucker	Davis	WV				Х				Х	Х	
Blackwater Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Tucker, Preston		WV				х				х		
Blister Run Swamp	Public		Pocahontas		WV				Х	NNL			Х	Х	
Bloomington Viaduct	Public		Garrett	Bloomington	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Blue & Grey Reunion	Organization	L	Barbour	Philippi	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Blue Bend Forest Camp	Public	0	Greenbrier	Alvon	WV			Х			Х			Х	
Blue Bend Recreation Area	Public	0	Greenbrier	White Sulphur Springs	WV	х							х	х	
Blue Meadow Group Campsite	Public		Greenbriar	White Sulphur Springs	WV	х								x	
Blue Sulpher Springs	Multiple		Greenbrier	Blue Sulphur Springs	WV			х				х		х	
Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion	Organization		Greenbrier	Blue Sulphur Springs	WV			х		NRHP	х	х			
Boggs Mill	Private		Pendleton	Seneca Rocks	WV			Х			Х				
Borden Mines Superintendent's House	Private		Allegany	Frostburg	MD					NRHP	Х				
Borderside	Private		Garrett	Bloomington	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Bowers House	Private		Pendleton	Sugar Grove	WV			Х			Х				
Brandywine Lake	Public	0	Pendleton	Brandywine	WV	Х							Х	х	
Brandywine Lake Campground	Public	0	Pendleton	Brandywine	WV	Х								х	
Brandywine Recreation Area	Public	0	Pendleton	Brandywine	WV	Х								х	
Braxton County Fair	Organization	L	Braxton	Sutton	WV			Х				Х			
Breakneck Road Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Flinstone	MD					NR District	Х				
Breezewood Adventures	Private	0	Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х				Х		Х	
Brill Octagon House, The	Private		Hampshire	Capon Springs	WV			Х			Х				

Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Broadford Lake Park	Public	0	Garrett	Mountain Lake Park	MD	х							х	x	
Brock Hotel	Private		Nicholas	Summersville	WV			Х			Х			Х	
Brooke Whiting House & Museum	Organization	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х			Х	Х			
Brown, Dr. Flavius, House	Public		Nicholas	Summersville	WV			Х			Х				
Buckhannon Central Residential Historic District	Multiple	Р	Upshur	Buckhannon	wv			х			х	х			
Buena Vista Farms	Business		Hardy	Old Fields	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Bulltown Historic Area	Public	0	Braxton	Burnsville	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
Bulltown MRA	Public	0	Braxton	Bulltown	WV			Х			Х				
Burgoo International CookOff	Organization	L	Webster	Webster Springs	WV			Х				Х			
Burlington Apple Harvest Festival	Organization	L	Mineral	Burlington	WV			Х				Х			
Burlington Historic District	Multiple	Р	Mineral	Burlington	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Burnsville Bridge	Public	0	Braxton	Burnsville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Burnsville Lake Wildlife Management Area	Public	Х	Braxton	Burnsville	WV				Х				Х		
Butcher Hill Historic District	Private		Randolph	Beverly	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
Butler, Wright, House	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Buxton & Landstreet Gallery & Studios	Organization	0	Tucker	Thomas	WV			Х		NRHP		Х			
Cabins	Public	0	Grant	Cabins	WV			Х						х	
Cacapon Resort State Park	Public	0	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV	Х			Х				Х		
Calvin Price State Forest	Public	0	Pocahontas	Marlington	WV	Х			Х				Х		
Camp 70 Boulders	Public	0	Tucker	Davis	WV				Х				Х	х	
Camp Allegheny (Allegheny Battlefield)	Multiple	Р	Pocahontas	Bartow	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Camp Bartow (Battle of Greenbrier River)	Multiple	Р	Pocahontas	Bartow	wv			х		NR District	х				
Camp Belington / Battle of Laurel Hill	Organization	0	Barbour	Belington	WV			Х			Х				
Camp Caesar	Public	0	Webster	Cowen	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Camp Run Campground	Public	0	Pendleton	Brandywine	WV	Х								х	
Camp Run Lake	Public	0	Pendleton	Brandywine	WV	Х							Х	х	
Canaan Loop Road Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Tucker	Davis	WV	Х								х	
Canaan Mountain	Public	0	Tucker	Davis	WV				Х				Х	х	
Canaan Mountain Backcountry	Public	0	Tucker	Parsons	WV				Х				Х	х	
Canaan Valley	Multiple	0	Tucker		WV	Х			Х	NNL			Х		Х

Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge	Public	0	Tucker	Davis	WV				Х	NWR			Х	Х	
Canaan Valley Resort State Park	Public	0	Tucker	Davis	WV	Х							Х	Х	
Canaan Valley Ski Resort	Public	0	Tucker	Davis	WV	Х								х	
Canada Hose Company Building	Public	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Canal Place Heritage Park	Public	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х			Х			х	
Cannon Hill Historic Site			Preston	Rowlesburg	WV										
Capon Bridge Museum	Orgqanization	0	Hampshire	Capon Bridge	WV			Х			Х				
Capon Chapel	Organization	L	Hampshire	High View	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Capon Lake Whipple Truss Bridge	Public	0	Hampshire	Capon Lake	WV			Х			Х				
Capon Springs	Multiple		Hampshire	Capon Springs	WV			Х			Х				
Capon Springs Resort	Private	0	Hampshire	High View	WV	Х					Х			Х	
Carden, James B., House	Private		Nicholas	Summersville	WV			Х			Х				
Carnegie Hall	Organizational	L	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х				Х			
Carnifex Ferry Battlefield State Park	Public	0	Nicholas	Summersville	WV	Х		Х			Х	Х			
Carrollton Covered Bridge	Public	0	Barbour	Carrollton	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Carskadon House	Organization		Mineral	Burlington	WV			Х			Х				
Carskadon, Thomas R., House	Organization		Mineral	Keyser	WV			Х			Х				
Cass Excursion Trains - Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad	Public	0	Greenbrier	Cass	WV		х				х				х
Cass Historic District	Multiple	Р	Pocahontas	Cass	WV		Х			NRHP	Х	Х			
Cass Scenic Railroad	Public	0	Pocahontas	Cass	WV	Х	Х	Х	Х		Х	Х			Х
Cass Scenic Railroad State Park	Public	0	Pocahontas	Cass	WV	Х	Х	Х			Х				Х
Casselman River Bridge State Park	Public	0	Garrett	Grantsville	MD	Х		Х		NHL			Х		
Cathedral State Park	Public	0	Preston	Aurora	WV				Х	NNL			Х	Х	Х
Chapel Hill Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NR District	Х				
Charlotte Ryde Nature Preserve	Public	0	Preston		WV				Х				Х		
Cheat Canyon Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Preston	Huttonsville	WV				Х				Х		
Cheat Mountain/Shavers Fork	Public	0	Randolph	Multiple	WV				Х				Х	х	
Cheat River	Public	0	Tucker, Preston	Parsons	wv				х				х		
Cheat River Festival	Organizational	L	Preston	Albright	WV			Х				Х			
Cheat River Put-In (Parsons)	Public	0	Tucker	Parsons	WV				Х					х	
Cheat Summit Fort	Public	0	Randolph	Valley Head	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				

Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Cheat Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Randolph	Huttonsville	WV				Х				Х		
Cherry River	Public	0	Pocahontas	Richwood	WV				Х				Х	х	
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Park, Cumberland Visitors Center	Public	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD		х				х			x	
Circleville School	Public		Pendleton	Circleville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
City Hall	Public	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Confederate Cemetery at Lewisburg	Public	0	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Constitution Park	Public	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD						Х		Х		
Cooper's Rock State Forest	Public	0	Preston	Bruceton Mills	WV				Х						
Corricks Ford Battlefield Park	Public	0	Tucker	Parsons	WV			Х			Х				
Cottrill's Opera House	Organization		Tucker	Thomas	WV			Х				Х			
Craig Run East Fork Rockshelter	Public		Webster	Mills Mountain	WV				Х		Х		Х		
Cranberry Campground	Public	0	Webster	Richwood	WV									х	
Cranberry Glades Botanical Area	Public	0	Pocahontas	Richwood	WV				Х	NNL			Х	Х	Х
Cranberry Mountain Nature Center	Public	0	Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV			Х							
Cranberry River	Public	0	Multiple	Richwood	WV				Х				Х	х	
Cranberry River Campsites	Public	0	Webster	Richwood	WV	Х								х	
Cranberry Tri-Rivers Rail Trail	Public	0	Nicholas	Richwood	WV	Х								х	Х
Cranberry Wilderness Area	Public	0	Multiple	Richwood	WV				Х	NWA			Х	Х	
Cranberry Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Multiple	Cranberry Glades	WV				Х				Х		
Cranesville Swamp Preserve	Public	о	Preston, Garrett	Terra Alta	WV, MD				х	NNL			х	х	
Creedmore	Private		Garrett	Mountain Lake Park	MD			х		NRHP	х				
Cresap, Michael, House	Private		Allegany	Oldtown	MD					NRHP	Х				
Crim, J. N. B., House	Private		Barbour	Elk City	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Cumberland Choral Society	Organization	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х				Х			
Cumberland History Tours	Organization	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х			Х			х	
Cumberland Theatre	Organization	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х				Х			
Cumberland YMCA	Organization	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Cunningham House and Outbuildings			Braxton	Napier				Х		NRHP	Х				
Cunningham-Hevener House	Private		Pendleton	Upper Tract	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Dan's Mountain State Park	Public	0	Allegany	Lonaconing	MD				Х				Х	Х	

Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Darden House	Public	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NR contributing	Х				
Darden Mill/Elkins Milling Company	Organizational	0	Randolph	Elkins	WV		Х	Х		NRHP	Х				
David S. Creigh House	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Davis and Elkins Historic District	Private	Р	Randolph	Elkins	WV		Х	Х		NR District	Х				
Davis Memorial Presbyterian Church	Private	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Davis, Henry Gassaway, House	Organization		Mineral	Piedmont	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Dawson, T. H. B., House	Private		Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Day Run Campground	Public	0	Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV	Х							Х	Х	
DayVandevander Mill	Private	L	Randolph	Harman	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Decatur Heights Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NR District	Х				
Deep Creek Lake NRMA	Public	0	Garrett	Swanton	MD	Х				NRMA			Х		
Deep Creek Lake State Park	Public	0	Garrett	Swanton	MD	Х									
Deitz Farm (General Robert E. Lee Headquarters)	Private		Greenbrier	Meadow Bluff	wv			х		NR District	х				
DelFest	Organization	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х				Х			
District Parsonage, Old	Private	L	Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Dolly Sods (Blackbird Knob Trailhead)	Public	0	Grant	Maysville	WV	Х								х	
Dolly Sods (Laneville trailhead)	Public	0	Tucker	Laneville	WV	Х								х	
Dolly Sods Wilderness Area	Public	0	Multiple	Dry Fork	WV				Х	NWA					
Downtown Buckhannon Historic District	Multiple	Р	Upshur	Buckhannon	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Downtown Cumberland Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NR District	Х				
Downtown Elkins Historic District	Multiple	Р	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Downtown Richwood Historic District	Multiple	Р	Nicholas	Richwood	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Drane, James, House	Private		Garrett	Accident	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Droop Mountain Battlefield State Park	Opublic	0	Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV			Х			Х	Х	Х		
Dry Fork	Public	0	Randolph, Tucker	Dry Fork	wv				х					x	
Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad	Private	0	Randolph	Elkins	WV		Х				Х				Х
Durbin Excursion Trains - Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad	Private	0	Pocahontas	Durbin	wv		х				х				х
E. E. Hutton House	Private		Randolph	Huttonsville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Edgefield			Greenbrier	Renick	WV			Х		NR District	Х				

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Edwards Run Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Hampshire	Cold Stream	WV				х				х		
Eidolon Nature Preserve	Public	0	Morgan	Great Cacapon	WV				Х				Х		
Elk River	Public	0	Multiple		WV				Х					х	
Elk River Touring Center	Private	L	Pocahontas	Slaty Fork	WV			Х						х	
Elk River Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Braxton	Sutton	WV				Х				Х		
Elkins Coal and Coke Company Historic District	Multiple	Ρ	Preston	Bretz	wv		х			NR District	х				
Elkins Depot Welcome Center	Organization	Р	Randolph	Elkins	WV		Х			NR contributing	Х				
Elkins, Senator Stephen Benton, House (Halliehurst)	Private	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			х		NRHP	х				
Elmhurst (Caldwell Place)	Private		Greenbrier	Caldwell	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Evergreen Heritage Center	Organization		Allegany	Mount Savage	MD					NRHP	Х	Х	Х		
Fairfax Stone Site	Public	0	Grant	William	WV			Х			Х		Х		
Fairfax Stone State Park	Public	0	Preston	Davis	WV						Х				
Fairview	Private		Mineral	Burlington	WV					NR District	Х				
Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area	Public	0	Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV								Х		Х
Fasnacht	Organizational	L	Randolph	Helvetia	WV			Х				Х			1
Feast of the Ransom	Organization	L	Nicholas	Richwood	WV			Х				Х			
Fernow Experimental Forest	Public	0	Tucker	Parsons	WV	Х									1
Fidler's Mill		L	Upshur	Arlington	WV			Х			Х				
Finzel Swamp Preserve	Public	0	Garrett	Frostburg	MD				Х				Х		
First Baptist Church	Private	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х	Х			
First Ward School	Private		Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Fisher Spring Run Bog	Public		Grant		WV				Х	NNL			Х	Х	Х
Five River Campground	Public	0	Tucker	Parsons	WV	Х							Х		1
Folck's Mill	Public		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				1
Footer's Dye Works	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Fort Ashby	Organization	0	Mineral	Fort Ashby	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Fort Edwards at Capon Bridge	Organization	0	Hampshire	Capon Bridge	WV			Х			Х				
Fort Hill		0	Mineral	Burlington	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
Fort Marrow (Camp Elkwater)	Multiple	Р	Randolph	Huttonsville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Fort Mill Ridge Civil War Trenches		0	Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			

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Fort Mill Ridge Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Hampshire	Romney	WV				Х		Х		Х		
Fort Mulligan			Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х			Х				
Fort Pleasant	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Fort Van Meter			Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Founders Day Festival	Organization		Hampshire	Capon Bridge	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Fox Forest WMA	Public	0	Randolph	Elkins	WV				Х					х	
Francis Kotz Farm			Hardy	Wardensville	WV										
Franklin Historic District	Multiple	Р	Pendleton	Franklin	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
French Creek Presbyterian Church	Private	L	Upshur	French Creek	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
French's Mill	Private	0	Hampshire	Augusta	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Front & Centre Stage Productions	Organization		Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х				Х			
Frostburg Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Frostburg	MD					NR District	Х				
Frostburg Museum	Organization	0	Allegany	Frostburg	MD			Х			Х				
Frostburg Palace Theatre	Organization		Allegany	Frostburg	MD						Х	Х			
Frostburg Performing Arts Center	Organization	L	Allegany	Frostburg	MD			Х				Х			
Fuller-Baker Log House	Private		Garrett	Grantsville	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Funkhouser, Henry, Farm and Log House	Private		Hardy	Baker	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Gandy Creek Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Randolph	Spruce Knob	WV				Х					х	
Garrett County Agricultural Fair	Organization	L	Garrett	McHenry	MD			Х				Х			
Garrett County Arts Council / The Gallery Shop	Organization	0	Garrett	Oakland	MD							х			
Garrett County Courthouse	Public	L	Garrett	Oakland	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Garrett County Historical Museum & Transportation Museum	Organization	0	Garrett	Oakland	MD			х			х	х			
Garrett Lakes Arts Festival	Organization	L	Garrett	McHenry	MD			Х				Х	Х		
Garrett State Forest	Public	0	Garrett	Oakland	MD				Х				Х		
Garrett VanMeter House			Hardy	Old Fields	WV										
Gassaway Depot	Organization		Braxton	Gassaway	WV		Х			NRHP	Х				
Gatewood Campround	Public	0	Randolph	Petersburg	WV	Х							Х		
Gaudineer Picnic Area	Public	0	Pocahontas	Bartow	WV				Х				Х		
Gaudineer Scenic Area	Public	0	Randolph	Huttonsville	WV				Х	NNL			Х	Х	Х
Gauley River	Public		Multiple	Multiple	WV				Х	National River				х	
Gauley River National Recreation Area	Public	0	Nicholas	Glen Jean	WV				Х	NRA			Х	х	

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George Truog House	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
George Washington National Forest	Public	0	Multiple		WV	Х			Х	National Forest			Х	Х	
George Washington's Headquarters	Public	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х			Х				
Germany Valley Karst Area	Public	0	Pendleton	Riverton	WV				Х	NNL			Х		
Gladwin Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Randolph	Wymer	WV	Х							Х	х	
Glady Presbyterian Church and Manse	Organization		Randolph	Glady	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Glamorgan	Private		Garrett	Deer Park	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Golden Rule, The	Organization	L	Barbour	Belington	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Gordon Roberts House	Organization		Allegany	Cumberland	MD						Х				
Gormania Presbyterian Church	Organization		Grant	Gormania	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Gov. H. Guy Kump House	Public	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Gov. Samuel Price House	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Graceland Mansion	Private	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV		Х			NHL	Х				
Graham-Davis Historic District	Multiple	Р	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Grant County Arts Council	Organization	L	Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х				Х			
Grant County Courthouse	Public	L	Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Grantsville Community Museum	Organization	0	Garrett	Grantsville	MD			Х			Х	Х			
Great Allegheny Passage	Public	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х					Х		
Green Bank Science Center & Observatory	Public	0	Pocahontas	Green Bank	WV			Х				Х			
Green Ridge State Forest	Public	0	Allegany	Flintstone	MD				Х						
Greenbrier County Courthouse and Lewis Spring	Public	L	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			х		NRHP	х	х			
Greenbrier River	Public	0	Greenbrier, Pocahontas	Multiple	WV				х					x	
Greenbrier River Trail	Multiple	0	Multiple	Marlinton	WV	Х							Х		Х
Greenbrier River Trail (Northern Terminus)	Multiple	0	Greenbrier	Caldwell	WV	Х								Х	
Greenbrier River Trail (Southern Terminus)	Multiple	0	Pocahontas	Cass	WV	Х								х	
Greenbrier State Forest	Public	0	Greenbrier	Caldwell	WV				Х						
Greenbrier Valley Theatre	Organization	L	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х				Х	Х		
Greene Street Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NR District	Х				
Greenland Gap Preserve	Public	0	Grant	Maysville	WV				Х				Х		
GW Jeep Site	Public		Pocahontas	Arbovale	WV			Х			Х				
Haley, Francis, House	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				

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Halliehurst Mansion	Private	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х			Х				
Halstead, Capt. John, Farm			Nicholas	Kesslers Cross Lanes	WV			х		NRHP	Х				
Hamilton, Martin, House	Organization		Nicholas	Summersville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Hampshire County Arts Council Inc.	Organization	L	Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х				Х			
Hampshire County Courthouse	Public	L	Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Hampshire Heritage Festival	Organization	L	Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Handley Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Pocahontas	Marlington	WV				Х				Х		
Hardy County Tour & Craft Association / Heritage Weekend	Organization	L	Hardy	Moorefield	wv			х			х	х			
Hartland (Rodgers Farm)	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Haymond, William Edgar, House	Private		Braxton	Sutton	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Hebron Church	Organization	L	Hampshire	Yellow Spring	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Helvetia	Multiple	Р	Randolph	Helvetia	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Henry Funkhouser Farm & Log House			Hardy	Baker	WV										
Heritage Days Festival	Organization	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х				Х			
Hermitage Motor Inn	Private	L	Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Herns Mill Covered Bridge	Public	0	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Herrington Manor State Park	Public	0	Garrett	Oakland	MD	Х							Х		
Hick Festival	Organization	L	Tucker	St. George	WV			Х				Х			
Hickory Grove	Public	0	Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Hickory Hill	Private	0	Hardy	Petersburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
HIgh Falls of the Cheat	Public	0	Randolph	Glady	WV				Х					х	
Highland Arts Unlimited, Inc.	Organization	L	Mineral	Keyser	WV			Х				Х			
Highland Scenic Highway	Public	0	Pocahontas	Marlington	WV			Х		Nat'l Byway		Х			Х
Historic Lewis Theatre	Organization	L	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Historic Thomas	Multiple	Р	Tucker	Thomas	WV			Х			Х				
History House Museum	Public	0	Preston	Terra Alta	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Hocking House	Private		Allegany	Frostburg	MD					NRHP	Х				
Hokes Mill Covered Bridge	Public	0	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Holly River State Park	Public	0	Webster	Hacker Valley	WV				Х						
Homeplace	Private		Greenbrier	Frankford	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Hook's Tavern	Private		Hampshire	Capon Bridge	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				

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Hopeville Canyon	Multiple		Grant	Hopeville	WV			Ň	Х		X			Х	
Hopkins Mountain Historic District	Multiple	Р	Greenbrier	Alvon	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
Horeshoe Run Horseshoe Recreation and Campground Area	Multiple Public	P O	Preston Tucker	Thomas Parsons	wv wv	х			Х				х	x x	
Hovermale, Clarence, House	Private		Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Hoye Site			Garrett	Oakland	MD			Х			Х				
Hunter, Frank and Anna, House	Private		Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV					NRHP	Х				
Huntersville Presbyterian Church	Private		Pocahontas	Huntersville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Huttonsville State Farm Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Randolph	Huttonville	wv				х				х		
Ice House Artists' Coop	Organization		Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х				Х			
Ice Mountain Preserve	Public	0	Hampshire	Elkins	WV				Х	NNL			Х		Х
Inns on the National Road	Private	0	Allegany, Garrett	Cumberland	MD					NR District	х				
Inskeep, P. W., House	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
IOOF Lodge Building	Private		Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Iron Furnace	Public		Allegany	Lonaconing	MD			Х			Х				
Irons, Dr. John C., House	Private		Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Irvin Allen / Michael Cresap Museum	Organization	0	Allegany	Southeast Oldtown	MD			х			х				
Island Campground	Public	0	Randolph	Bartow	WV	Х							Х	х	
Ivy & Stone Council for the Arts	Organization		Nicholas	Summersville	WV			Х				Х			
Jane Gates Heritage House	Organization	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х			Х				
Jennings Randoph Lake	Public	0	Mineral	Elk Garden	WV	Х							Х		
Jess Judy Group Campground	Public	0	Pendleton	Petersburg	WV	Х								х	
John A. North House	Public		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
John Herbert Quick House	Private		Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
John Mathias House	Private		Hardy	Mathias	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
John Mathias House			Hardy	Mathias	WV										
John Wesley Methodist Church	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Johnny Meadows Group/Horse Camp	Public		Randolph	Whitmer	WV			Х						х	
Judge J. W. F. Allen House (Ingleside)	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				

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Kaese Mill	Private		Garrett	Accident	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Kindness Demonstration Area	Public	0	Garrett	Oakland	MD	Х									
Kirkwood Winery Grape Stompin' Festival	Organization	L	Braxton	Summersville	WV			Х				Х			
Klots Throwing Company Mill	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Koon, Thomas, House	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Kotz, Francis, Farm	Private		Hardy	Wardensville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Kultur Haus Helvetia	Public	L	Randolph	Helvetia	WV			Х				Х			
Kumbrabow State Forest	Public	0	Randolph	Huttonsville	WV				Х				Х		
Kuykendall Polygonal Barn	Private		Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
La Vale Toll Gate House	Public		Allegany	LaVale	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Lake Buffalo Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Pocahontas	Bartow	WV	Х			Х					х	
Lake Sherwood	Public	0	Greenbrier	Neola	WV	Х								х	
Lake Sherwood Recreation Area and Campground	Public	о	Greenbrier	White Sulphur Springs	wv	х							х		
Landes Arts Center	Organization	L	Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х				Х			
Landmark Studio for the Arts	Organization		Braxton	Sutton	WV			Х				Х			
Lascaux MicroTheatre	Private	L	Upshur	Buckhannon	WV			Х				Х			
Laurel Fork Campground	Public	0	Randolph	Bartow	WV	Х							Х		
Laurel Fork of the Cheat	Public	0	Randolph	Dry Fork	WV				Х					х	
Laurel Fork Wilderness Area	Public	0	Randolph	Bartow	WV				Х	NWA				Х	
Laurel Run Rockshelter	Public	0	Webster	Coe	WV				Х		Х				
Leaf Peeper's Festival	Organization	L	Tucker	Davis	WV			Х				Х			
Lemuel Chenoweth House & Museum	Private	0	Randolph	Beverly	WV			Х		NR contributing	Х				
Lewisburg Historic District	Multiple	Р	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Lewisburg Music Festival	Organization	L	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х				Х			
Lighthorse Harry Lee Cabin	Public	0	Hardy	Mathias	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Literary Hall	Private		Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Little Canaan WMA/Yellow Creek Preserve	Public	0	Tucker	Davis	WV				Х					х	]
Little River Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Pocahontas	Durbin	WV				Х					х	
Little River Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Pocahontas	Durbin	WV				Х				Х		
Lockwood Historic District	Multiple	Р	Nicholas	Lockwood	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Locust Creek Covered Bridge	Public	0	Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV			Х			Х				
Lonaconing Furnace			Allegany	Lonaconing	MD	Х	Х	Х		NRHP	Х				

is	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	<b>Resilient Forest</b>	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Lonaconing Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Lonaconing	MD					NR District	Х				
Lost River Artisans Cooperative	Organization		Hardy	Lost City	WV			Х				Х			
Lost River General Store	Private	L	Hardy	Lost River	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Lost River State Park	Public	0	Multiple		WV	Х			Х				Х		
Lost River Valley Museum	Organization		Hardy	Lost River	WV						Х				
Lost World Caverns	Private	0	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV				Х	NNL			Х		
Lower Glady Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Randolph	Wymer	WV	Х			Х					х	
Lowther Store	Private	L	Webster	Wheeler	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Maple Street Historic District	Multiple	Р	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Marlinton Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Station	Private	0	Pocahontas	Marlinton	wv		х			NRHP	х	х			
Marlinton Opera House	Organization	L	Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Mason Branch	Multiple	0	Hardy		WV				Х				Х	Х	Х
Mason-Dixon Line	Public	ο	Multiple		WV MD			х		Nat'l Hist CE Landmark		х			
MasonDrennen House	Private		Nicholas	Drennen	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
McClung's Price Place (Hillyrock Farm)	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
McCoy Fort	Organization		Greenbrier	Williamsburg	WV			Х			Х				
McCoy House (Franklin Town Office) (Pendleton County Library)	Public		Pendleton	Franklin	wv			х		NRHP	х				
McCoy Mill	Multiple		Pendleton	Franklin	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
McCoy's Grand Theatre and Museum	Organization	L	Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х				Х			
McNeel Mill (Mill Point Mill)	Private		Pocahontas	Mill Point	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Meadow River	Multiple	ο	Greenbrier;N icholas	Multiple	wv				х					х	
Meadow River Lumber Building	Organization		Greenbrier	Fairlea	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Meadow River Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Greenbrier	Rupert	WV				Х				Х		
Meadows, The	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Mercy Chapel at Mill Run	Private		Garrett	Selbysport	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Meyer Site			Garrett	Westernport	MD			Х			Х	Х			
Middle Mountain Cabins	Public	0	Randolph	Bartow	WV	Х				NRHP	Х		Х	Х	
Middle Mountain/Laurel Fork Area	Public	0	Randolph	Glady	WV				Х					х	
Middle Ridge Campground	Public	0	Hampshire	Romney	WV	Х							Х		

Site	Owner Type	<b>Open to Public</b>	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Midland Trail National Scenic Byway	Multiple	0	Greenbrier	Multiple	WV			Х		Nat'l Byway	Х	Х		Х	Х
Mill Island	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Miller, Alexander McVeigh, House	Private		Greenbrier	Alderson	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Milleson's Walnut Grove Campground	Public		Hampshire	Springfield	WV	Х							Х		
Mineral County Courthouse	Public	L	Mineral	Keyser	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Mineral County Fair	Organization	L	Mineral	Fort Ashby	WV			Х				Х			
Mingo Saloon & Lounge (was BrazenHead Inn)	Private	L	Randolph	Mingo	wv			х				Х			
Mollohan Mill	Private		Webster	Replete	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Monongahela National Forest	Public	0	Multiple	Elkins	WV	Х	Х	Х	Х	National Forest	Х	Х	Х	Х	
Moorefield Historic District	Multiple		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Moorefield Historic District	Multiple		Hardy	Moorefield	WV										
Moorefield Town Park	Public	0	Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х				Х		Х	
Morgan County Courthouse	Public	L	Morgan	Berkeley	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Morlunda (Col. Samuel McClung Place)	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Morton House	Private		Webster	Webster Springs	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Mount Porte Crayon Preserve	Public	0	Pendleton	Dry Fork	WV			Х					Х		
Mount Savage Historic District / Museum	Multiple	0	Allegany	Mount Savage	MD			Х		NR District	Х				
Mount Storm Lake	Public	0	Grant	Mount Storm	WV	Х							Х		$\square$
Mountain City Center for the Arts	Organization	L	Allegany	Frostburg	MD			Х				Х			
Mountain Dance Trail	Multiple	0	Multiple	Elkins	WV			Х				Х			
Mountain Home	Private		Greenbrier	White Sulphur Springs	wv			х		NRHP	х				
Mountain Lake Park Historic District	Multiple	Р	Garrett	Oakland	MD			Х		NR District	Х				
Mountain MD Gateway to the West	Public	0	Garrett	McHenry	MD										
Mountain Music Trail	Multiple	L	Multiple	Thomas, Davis	WV			Х				Х			
Mountain State Forest Festival	Organization	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х				Х			
Mt. Tabor Baptist Church	Private	L	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Museum of the Berkeley Springs	Organization	0	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х			Х				
Music at Penn Alps	Organization	L	Garrett	Grantsville	MD			Х				Х			
Nathaniel and Issac Kuykendall House	Private		Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Nathaniel Mountain Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Hampshire	Rio	wv								х		

Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
National Road	Public	0	Garrett, Allegany		MD			х		Nat'l Hist CE Landmark	х			х	х
Nelson Rocks	Organization	0	Pendleton	North Fork Valley	WV				Х					х	
New Deal Festival	Organization	L	Preston	Arthurdale	WV			Х				Х			
New Deal Resources in Cacapon State Park Historic District	Multiple	0	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	wv			х		NR District	х	х			
New Deal Resources in Greenbrier State Forest Historic District	Multiple	0	Greenbrier	Caldwell	wv			х		NR District	х	х			
New Deal Resources in Holly River State Park	Multiple	0	Webster	Hacker Valley	wv			х		NR District	х				
New Deal Resources in Kumbrabow State Forest Historic District	Public	0	Randolph	Huttonsville	WV			х		NR District	х	х			
New Deal Resources in Lost River State Park	Multiple	0	Hardy	Mathias	wv			х		NR District	х	х			
New Deal Resources in Seneca State Forest Historic District	Public	0	Pocahontas	Dunmore	WV			х		NR District	х	х			
New Deal Resources in Watoga State Park	Multiple	0	Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
New Embassy Theatre			Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х				Х			
New Germany State Park	Public	0	Garrett	Grantsville	MD	Х			Х						
Nicholas County Bank	Private		Nicholas	Summerville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Nicholas County Courthouse	Public	L	Nicholas	Summersville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Nicholas County High School	Public		Nicholas	Summerville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Nicholas Switzer House			Hardy	Wardensville	WV										
Noah Snyder Farm (The Snyder House)	Private		Grant	Lahmansville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
North Bend Picnic Area	Public	0	Greenbrier	Richwood	WV	Х							Х		
North Fork Mountain	Multiple	0	Grant, Pendleton	Multiple	wv				х					x	
North Fork Mountain	Public	0	Pendleton	Judy Gap	WV	Х								х	
North Fork Mountain (North Trailhead)	Public	0	Grant	Cabins	WV	Х								х	
North Fork of the South Branch River	Public	0	Pendleton	Judy Gap	WV				Х					х	
North House Museum	Organization		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV						Х	Х			
North River Mills Historic District	Multiple	Р	Hampshire	North River Mills	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
North River Retreat	Private	0	Hampshire	Delray	WV			Х					Х		

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Oakhurst Links	Private	L	Greenbrier	White Sulphur Springs	WV			х		NRHP	х	х		х	
Oakland B & O Museum	Organization	0	Garrett	Oakland	MD		Х	Х			Х				
Oakland Hall	Organization		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Oakland Historic District	Multiple	Р	Garrett	Oakland	MD			Х		NR District	Х				
Old Hardy County Courthouse	Private	L	Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Old House Picnic Area	Public	0	Pocahontas	Bartow	WV	Х							Х		
Old Judy Church	Private	L	Pendleton	Petersburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Old National Pike Milestones	Public	0	Allegany	Bellegrove	MD					NRHP	Х				
Old Pine Church	Private		Hampshire	Purgitsville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Old Probst Church	Private		Pendleton	Brandywine	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Old Stone Church	Public		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Old Stone Tavern	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Old Sutton High School	Public		Braxton	Sutton	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Olson Observation Tower	Public	0	Tucker	Parsons	WV	Х							Х		
Organ Cave	Private	0	Greenbrier	Ronceverte	WV				Х	NNL	Х		Х	х	
Otter Creek Wilderness	Public	0	Randolph, Tucker	Parsons	wv				х	NWA			х		х
Our Lady of the Pines	Organization		Preston	Eglon	WV			Х			Х				
P.W. Inskeep House			Hardy	Moorefield	WV										
Palace Theatre	Private		Allegany	Frostburg	MD			Х				Х			
Parson Nursery	Public		Tucker	Parsons	WV			Х			Х				
Parsons Railroad Depot (Western Maryland Railroad) and Heritage House	Organization	ο	Tucker	Parsons	wv		х				х				
Passages of the Western Potomac HA	Public, Multiple	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD						Х	Х			
Pearl Buck House	Organization	0	Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Peck-Crim-Chesser House	Private		Barbour	Philippi	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Pendleton County Fair	Organization	L	Grant	Circleville	WV			Х				Х			
Pendleton County Poor Farm			Pendleton	Upper Tract	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Pendleton Lake	Public	0	Tucker		WV	Х								х	
Pennington Cottage	Private		Garrett	Deer Park	MD					NRHP	Х				
Perly, Fred A., House			Randolph	Jenningston	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Pheasant Mountain	Public	0	Tucker		WV				Х					х	

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Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Philippi B & O Railroad Station	Public	0	Barbour	Philippi	WV		Х			NRHP	Х	Х			
Philippi Historic District	Private, Public	Р	Barbour	Philippi	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Phillippi Covered Bridge	Public	0	Barbour	Philippi	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Phoenix Mill Farm	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Pickens Maple Syrup Festival	Organization	L	Randolph	Pickens	WV			Х				Х			
Pierson Hollow, at Carnifax Ferry Battlefield State Park	Public	0	Nicholas	Summersville	wv			х	х						
Pike Knob Preserve	Public	0	Pendleton		WV				Х				Х		
Pin Oak Fountain	Organization		Hampshire	Pin Oak	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Pinecrest	Private		Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Pitsenbarger, Ananais, Farm	Private		Pendleton	Franklin	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Barbour	Grafton	WV				Х				Х		
Pleasant Green Methodist Episcopal Church	Organization		Pocahontas	Seebert	WV			х		NRHP	х	х			
Pocahontas Campground	Public	0	Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV	Х							Х	х	
Pocahontas County Courthouse and Jail	Public	L	Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Pocahontas County Opera House	Organization	L	Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV			Х				Х			
Pocahontas Times Print Shop	Private		Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Post, William, Mansion	Private		Upshur	Buckhannon	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad	Private	0	Hampshire	Romney	WV		Х				Х				Х
Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail	Public	0	Allegany, Garrett		MD			х		Nat'l Scenic Trail	х	х	х	х	х
Potomac Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Multiple		WV				Х				Х		
Preston Community Arts Center	Organization	L	Preston		WV			Х				Х			
Preston County Buckwheat Festival	Organization	L	Preston	Kingwood	WV			Х				Х			
Pretty Penny Cafe	Private	0	Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV			Х				Х			
Priest Mill	Private		Pendleton	Franklin	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Pringle Tree Park	Public	0	Upshur	Buckhannon	WV			Х			Х		Х		
Public Safety Building ("Old Post Office")	Public		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Pugh, Capt. David, House	Private		Hampshire	Hooks Mills	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Quilt Trail of Pocahontas County	Multiple	0	Pocahontas		WV			Х			Х	Х			
Randolph County Community Arts Center	Organization	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NR Contributing		Х			
Randolph County Courthouse and Jail	Public	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			

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Reber Radio Telescope	Public	0	Pocahontas	Green Bank	WV			Х		NHL	Х	Х			
Red Creek	Public	0	Tucker		WV				Х				Х	x	
Red Creek Campground	Public	0	Tucker	Petersburg	WV	Х							Х		
Reeds Creek	Public	0	Pendleton		WV				Х					x	
Renick Farm (William Renick Farm)	Private		Greenbrier	Renick	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Rich Mountain Battlefield	Organization	0	Randolph	Beverly	WV			Х		NR District	Х			х	
Richwood Depot	Private	0	Nicholas	Richwood	WV			Х			Х			х	1
Richwood Feast of the Ramson	Organization	L	Nicholas	Richwood	wv			Х				Х			
Riverside School	Private		Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			1
Roaring Plains West Wilderness	Public	0	Randolph, Pendleton		wv				х	NWA			х		
Robert E. Urban Nature Trail	Public	0	Randolph	Elkins	WV	Х							Х	х	Х
Rockshelters on the Gauley Ranger District	Public	0	Webster		WV	Х			Х		Х		Х		
Rocky Gap State Park	Public	0	Allegany	Flintstone	MD				Х				Х	Х	
Rohrbaugh Cabin	Public		Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Rolling Mill Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NR District	Х				
Ronceverte Historic District	Multiple	Р	Greenbrier	Ronceverte	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Rothkugel Plantation	Public	0	Pocahontas	Thornwood	WV	Х							Х		
Rowlesburg Riverwalk			Preston	Rowlesburg	WV	Х		Х					Х	Х	Х
Sam Black Church			Greenbrier	Smoot	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Samuel Taylor, Cottage (Berkeley Castle)	Private	L	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Savage River State Forest	Public	0	Garrett	Grantsville	MD	Х							Х	Х	
Saville Gallery	Organization	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD							Х			
Scanlon Farm	Private		Hampshire	Three Churches	WV					NRHP	Х				
Scott Hill	Private		Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
Seebert Lane Colored School	Private		Pocahontas	Seebert	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
See-Ward House	Private		Randolph	Mill Creek	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Seneca Caverns	Private	0	Pendleton	Riverton	WV				Х				Х		
Seneca Creek	Public	0	Randolph		WV				Х				Х	х	
Seneca Creek Backcountry	Public	0	Randolph		WV				Х					х	
Seneca Rocks	Public	0	Pendleton		WV				Х				Х	х	
Seneca Rocks Discovery Center	Public	0	Pendleton	Seneca Rocks	WV	Х		Х					Х		
Seneca Shadows Campground	Public	0	Pendleton	Seneca Rocks	WV	Х							Х		

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Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	city	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Seneca State Forest	Public	0	Pocahontas	Dunmore	WV	Х							Х		
Seneca Trail/Route 219	Public	0	Multiple					Х			Х			Х	Х
Shavers Fork	Public	0	Multiple		WV				Х				Х	х	
Shavers Fork Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Randolph	Huttonsville	WV	Х								х	
Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock Stand	Public	0	Randolph		WV	Х				NNL			Х		Х
Shaw Mansion	Private		Allegany	Barton	MD					NRHP	Х	Х			
Shawnee Old Fields Village Site			Allegany	Oldtown	MD			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Short Mountain Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Hampshire	Multiple	WV				Х				Х		
Sinks of Gandy	Private	L	Randolph		WV				Х		1		Х	х	
Sinnett-Thorn Mountain Cave System	Multiple		Pendleton		WV				Х	NNL			Х	Х	
Sites Homestead	Public	L	Pendleton	Seneca Rocks	WV			Х			Х	Х	Х		
Slatyfork Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Multiple		WV				Х				Х		
Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Morgan, Berkeley	Berkeley Springs	wv				х				х		
Sloan-Parker House	Private		Hampshire	Junction	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Sloat-Horn-Rossell House	Private		Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Smith Creek Playhouse / Pendleton County Committee for the Arts	Organization	L	Grant	Franklin	wv			х				х			
Smith, Michael, House	Private		Braxton	Cedarville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Smoke Hole Canyon	Multiple	0	Pendleton		WV				Х				Х	х	
Smoke Hole Caverns	Private	0	Grant	Cabins	WV				Х		Х		Х	х	
Snake Hill Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Preston, Monongalia		WV				х				х		
Snowshoe Highlands Ride Center	Organization	L	Pocahontas	Snowshoe	WV	Х						Х			
Snowshoe Mountain	Multiple	0	Pocahontas	Snowshoe	WV	Х			Х				Х	х	
South Branch of the Potomac	Public	0	Hampshire	Multiple	WV				Х				Х	х	
South Branch River		0	Pendleton	Multiple	WV				Х				Х	х	
South Branch Valley MRA	Multiple	0	Multiple		WV				Х		Х		Х		
South Branch Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Hampshire, Hardy	Multiple	wv				х				х		
South Church Street Historic District	Multiple	Р	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
South Side Depot	Private		Grant	Petersburg	WV		Х				Х	Х			
Southern Methodist Church Building	Organization	L	Upshur	Buckhannon	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			

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Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	<b>Resilient Forest</b>	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Spice Run Wilderness Area	Public	0	Pocahontas	White Sulphur Springs	wv				х	NWA			х		
Spring Fest	Organization	L	Grant	Franklin	WV			Х				Х			
Spring Mountain Festival	Organization	L	Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х				Х			
Spring Music Week	Organization	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х				Х			
Springfield Brick House	Private		Hampshire	Springfield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Spruce Forest Artisan Village	Organization	0	Garrett	Grantsville	MD			Х				Х			
Spruce Knob	Public	0	Pendleton	Seneca Rocks	WV				Х				Х		
Spruce Knob Lake Campground	Public	0	Randolph	Petersburg	WV	Х							Х	х	
Spruce Knob Observation Tower	Public		Randolph	Riverton	WV								Х		
Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area	Public	0	Multiple		wv	х		х	х	NRA	х	х	х		
Stanton's Mill	Multiple		Garrett	Grantsville	MD			Х		NR District	Х				
Star Theatre	Private	L	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х				Х			
State Barn			Hampshire	Romney	WV										
Staunton Parkerburg Turnpike	Public	0	Multiple	Beverly	WV			Х		Nat'l Byway	Х	Х			Х
Stewart's Tavern	Organization	L	Mineral	Short Gap	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Stirrup Gallery	Private	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х			Х	Х			
Stone Manse	Private	L	Greenbrier	Caldwell	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Stonecoal Lake Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Upshur, Lewis	Buckhannon	wv				х				х		
Stuart Manor	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Stuart Recreation Area	Public	0	Randolph	Parsons	WV	Х							Х		
Stump Family Farm	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
Stump Family Farm			Hardy	Wardensville	WV										
Summersville Lake	Public	0	Nicholas	Summersville	WV	Х								х	
Summersville Lake Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Nicholas	Summersville	wv				х				х		
Summersville Lake/Battle Run	Public	0	Nicholas	Summersville	WV				Х					х	
Summit Lake	Public	0	Greenbrier	Richwood	WV				Х					х	
Summit Lake Campground	Public	0	Greenbrier	Richwood	WV	Х							Х		
Supreme Court Library Building	Public	L	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Sutton Downtown Historic District	Multiple	Р	Braxton	Sutton	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			

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Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	<b>Resilient Forest</b>	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Sutton Fall Festival	Organization	L	Braxton	Sutton	WV			Х				Х			
Swallow Falls State Park	Public	0	Garrett	Oakland	MD	Х							Х		
Swiss (Lower Gauley)			Nicholas	Swiss	WV						1				
Switzer, Nicholas, House			Hardy	Wardensville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Sycamore Dale	Private		Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Tailwaters Campground at Summersville Dam			Nicholas	Summersville	wv										
Tailwaters River Access			Nicholas	Summersville	WV										
Taste of Our Towns Festival	Organization	L	Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х				Х			
Taylor-Condry House	Private		Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Tea Creek Area and Campground	Public	0	Garrett	Grantsville	MD	Х							Х		
Teter Creek Lake Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Barbour	Belington	WV				х				х		
The Aurora Project	Organization	L	Preston	Aurora	WV			Х				Х			
The Bunker at The Greenbrier	Private	L	Greenbrier	White Sulphur Springs	wv			х			х				
The Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area	Public	0	Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV				Х				Х		Х
The Gilchrist Gallery and Museum	Organization	L	Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х			Х				
The Glades	Public	0	Garrett		MD				Х		Х		Х		
The Greenbrier	Private	L	Greenbrier	White Sulphur Springs	wv			х		NHL	х	х		х	
The Manor (Peter and Jesse Hutton Farm)	Private		Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
The Meadows			Hardy	Moorefield	WV										
The Mower Tract	Public	0	Randolph, Pocahontas		wv	х							х		
The Old Brick Playhouse	Organization	L	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х				Х	Х		
The Old Hemlock Foundation	Organization		Preston		WV			Х			Х				
The Potomac Highlands Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Area	Public	0	Multiple	Multiple	wv	х									
The Purple Fiddle	Private	0	Tucker	Thomas	WV			Х				Х			
The Webster County Nature Tour	Organization	Х	Webster	Cowen	WV			Х					Х		
The Wild Edibles Festival	Organization	L	Pocahontas	Hillsboro	WV			Х					Х		
The Willows (The Randolph Place)	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				

Appendix (	2
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Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Thomas Coke Ovens	Public	0	Tucker	Thomas	WV		Х				Х				
Thomas Koon House	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD						Х				
Thomas Maslin House	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Thorn Creek Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Pendleton		WV				Х				Х		
Thorn Spring Park	Public	0	Grant	Franklin	WV			Х					Х		
Thrasher Carriage Museum	Organization		Allegany		MD			Х			Х				
Timberline Resort	Private	0	Tucker		WV	Х								х	
Tom Kicks Military Museum	Organization	0	Grant	Petersburg	WV			Х			Х				
Tomlinson Inn and the Little Meadows	Private		Garrett	Grantsville	MD			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Town Clock Church	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Town of Bath Historic District	Multiple	Р	Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV					NR District	Х	Х			
Traveler's Repose	Private		Pocahontas	Bartow	WV					NRHP	Х				
Travelers Rest	Organization	0	Mineral	Burlington	WV					NRHP	Х	Х			
Treasure Mountain Festival	Organization	L	Grant		WV							Х			
Triangle Rock	Public		Pendleton		WV									х	
Trillium Performing Arts Collective	Organization		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV							Х			
Trout Pond	Public	0	Hardy	Wardensville	WV				Х				Х	Х	
Truog, George, House	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Tuckwiller Tavern	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV					NRHP	Х	Х			
Tuscarora Trail	Organization	0	Morgan	Hedgesville	WV	Х							Х		Х
Tuscawilla	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Tygart Valley Homesteads Historic District	Multiple	Р	Randolph	Dailey	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
Tygarts Valley Church	Organization		Randolph	Huttonsville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Union Civil War Fortification			Braxton	Napier	WV			Х		NRHP	Х	Х			
Union Grove One Room School House	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Upper Deckers Creek Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Preston		wv				х				х		
Upshur County Historical Society	Organization	0	Upshur	Buckhannon	WV			Х			Х				
Valley Bend Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Randolph		WV				Х				Х		
Valley View	Private		Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Vandiver-Trout-Clause House	Private		Mineral	Ridgeville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
VanMeter, Garrett, House	Private		Hardy	Old Fields	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Wapocoma Campground	Public	0	Hampshire	Romney	WV	Х							Х		

### Appendix C

Site	Owner Type	Open to Public	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Warden Lake Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Hardy	Multiple	WV				Х				Х		
Wardensville Wildlife Management Area	Public	о	Hampshire, Hardy	Multiple	wv				х				х		
WarfieldDye Residence	Private		Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Warrior Mountain Wildlife Management Area	Public	0	Allegany	Flintstone	MD				х				х		
Washington Bottom Farm (Ridgedale)	Private		Hampshire	Springfield	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
Washington Heritage Trail	Organization	0	Multiple	Paw Paw	WV						Х		Х		
Washington Street Historic District	Multiple	Р	Allegany	Cumberland	MD						Х				
Washington Street Historic District	Multiple		Allegany	Cumberland	MD			Х		NR District	Х				
Watoga State Park	Public	0	Pocahontas	Marlinton	WV	Х							Х		
Waverly Street Bridge	Public	0	Allegany	Westernport	MD			Х		NRHP	Х				
Wees Historic District	Multiple	Р	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NR District	Х	Х			
West Fork Dispersed Camping	Public	0	Randolph		WV	Х								х	
West Fork Rail Trail (Greenbrier)	Public	0	Randolph	Glady	WV	Х								х	Х
West Virginia Children's Home	Public		Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х		NR District	Х				
West Virginia Filmmakers Festival	Organization	L	Braxton	Sutton	WV			Х				Х			
West Virginia Railroad Museum	Organization	0	Randolph	Elkins	WV			Х			Х				
West Virginia State Fair	Organization	L	Greenbrier	Fairlea	WV			Х				Х			
West Virginia State Wildlife Center	Public	0	Upshur	French Creek	WV				Х				Х		
West Virginia Strawberry Festival	Organization	L	Upshur	Buckhannon	WV			Х				Х			
West Virginia Writers, Inc.	Organization		Statewide		WV			Х				Х			
Western Maryland Railway	Public	0	Allegany	Woodmont to North Branch	MD						Х				
Western Maryland Railway Station	Organization	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD					NRHP	Х				
Western Maryland Scenic Railroad	Private	0	Allegany	Cumberland	MD		Х			NRHP	Х				Х
Westernport Heritage Society Station & Museum	Organization	0	Allegany	Westernport	MD		х				х				
Westfall Place	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Weston and Gauley Bridge Turnpike	Public	0	Braxton	Burnsville	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				Х
Whitegrass Touring Center	Private	0	Tucker	Davis	WV									х	
Whitescarver Hall	Private		Barbour	Philippi	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Williams River	Public	0	Multiple		WV				Х				Х	х	

Appendix	С

Site	Owner Type	<b>Open to Public</b>	County	City	State	Resilient Forest	Logging Boom	Crucible of Isolation	Abundant Forest	Designation	Historic	Cultural	Natural	Recreational	Scenic
Williams River Campsites	Public	0	Webster	Cowen	WV	Х								х	
Willow Wall	Private		Hardy	Old Fields	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Wilson-Kuykendall Farm	Private		Hardy	Moorefield	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Wilson-Wodrow-Mytinger House	Private		Hampshire	Romney	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Windy Run Grade School	Public		Braxton	Telsa	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Withrow, James, House	Private		Greenbrier	Lewisburg	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Woodbine Picnic Area	Public	0	Nicholas	Richwood	WV	Х							Х		
Woodchopping Festival	Organization	L	Webster	Webster Springs	WV			Х				Х			
Woodland Owners Association of West Virginia	Organization		Multiple	Nitro	wv			х							
Wood's Ferry			Fayette	Victor	WV										
Wright Butler House	Private		Allegany	Cumberland	MD						Х				
Wright, Judge John W., Cottage	Private		Morgan	Berkeley Springs	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
WVHighlands Artisans Gallery	Organization	0	Tucker	Davis	WV			Х				Х			
Wylie House, James	Private		Greenbrier	Springs	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Yellow Spring Mill	Private		Hampshire	Yellow Spring	WV			Х		NRHP	Х				
Youghiogheny Scenic and Wild River State Park	Public	0	Garrett	Swanton	MD	х			х				х		х

need to survive?

# Theme 1. Forest Abundance

Ancient mountains of the Appalachian Forest feature abundant mixed hardwood and red spruce forests, where mountain microclimates and northern and southern species converge to create some of the most biodiverse forest ecosystems in North America.

Concepts and Ideas	Topics and Stories
Ancient Landscapes, Evolving Forests	Landscapes
Describe how the ancient mountains have been pushed up and worn down for millennia, providing a rich geological foundation under varied terrain and landscapes.	Geologic history of Appalachians • Foundation of terrain and landscapes
How do the high-elevation mountains provide the headwaters for rivers that flow across the eastern United States? How does the Eastern Continental Divide form the structure of the riverine network, with watersheds feeding east to the Chesapeake and	<ul> <li>Glaciation era effects</li> <li>Eastern Continental Divide</li> <li>Watersheds</li> </ul>
west to the Ohio River? What types of natural features are found throughout the forested mountains? What types of forest resources comprise today's landscape?	<ul> <li>Waterfalls</li> <li>River headwaters</li> <li>River ecology, macro- invertebrates, fish</li> <li>Wetlands and bogs</li> </ul>
Describe how the region plays a critical role safeguarding and buffering the headwaters of key watersheds that serve heavily populated regions of the eastern United States. How did the establishment of the Monongahela National Forest help protect highlands rivers and prevent flooding downstream?	Forest types, tree species • Red spruce • Northern hardwoods • Oak-hickory • Mixed mesophytic • Early successional • Old growth forests
<b>Uncommon Biodiversity</b> Explore how the biodiversity of ecosystems in the Appalachian Forest result from the interplay of altitude, aspect (directional orientation), soils, and precipitation, creating microclimate ecosystems in the mountains. Consider the impact of northern and southern ecosystems overlapping in this region. What are some of the factors, of natural and human origin, that have helped create and sustain this biodiversity?	<ul> <li>Biodiversity</li> <li>Cold climate species</li> <li>Warm climate species</li> <li>Mountain slope / aspect variation</li> <li>Soils &amp; micro-climates</li> <li>Specific species and species groups can be individual topics,</li> </ul>
Consider how this southward extension of the northern boreal forest hosts rare remnants of northern species found in a broad range of micro-habitats such as high altitude glades and barrens. Investigate the more than 240 rare, threatened or endangered species found in red spruce and spruce-hardwood ecosystems. Why do species and communities that at one time existed in abundance now only survive in particular places in the region?	<ul> <li>including typical as well as rare species</li> <li>Federally threatened or endangered species such as Cheat Mountain salamander, native brook trout, Candy Darter, West Virginia northern flying</li> </ul>
What ecosystem benefits come from the wide range of pollinators supported by the Appalachian forests? How does the forest's biodiversity contribute to the survival of pollinators? What do they	squirrel, saw-whet owl.

Threats and Pressures What are some of the pressures that pose threats to the ecological integrity of the forest ecosystem? How do climate change, pollution, invasive species, and developmental pressures negatively impact native wildlife and plant communities? What can be done to perpetuate the biological diversity and integrity of the ecosystem and to protect water resources? How do non-native invasive species threaten the forest ecosystem? What impact do invasive species have when they invade natural areas and replace native species?	<ul> <li>Threats and Pressures</li> <li>Fire impacts (see resilience)</li> <li>Non-native invasive species and their impact</li> <li>Climate change</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Valuing the Forest, Yesterday and Today</li> <li>Compare and contrast past and present values that people have found in the central Appalachian Forest? What values have changed over time? Who uses the forest today, and how are the uses different than the past?</li> <li>Consider how the region's scenic waterways and mountain landscapes provide a haven for unique and varied flora and fauna that offer people limitless opportunities for observation, study, and enjoyment.</li> <li>How have primary uses such as timber harvest, scientific research, and recreation changed through time? What is the impact of these activities today?</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Forest Values &amp; Uses</li> <li>Intrinsic value of nature</li> <li>Recreation for appreciation</li> <li>Quality of life for</li> <li>Scientific research</li> <li>Value of forest products</li> <li>Value to nearby communities</li> <li>Recreation for activity and for appreciation</li> <li>Specific uses</li> </ul>

# Theme 2. Crucible of Isolation

People from many cultures came together in the Appalachian Forest, where geographic isolation and the rough mountain terrain fostered a distinctive Appalachian culture of self-reliance and connection to the land, expressed through folkways and living traditions that enrich America today.

Concepts and Ideas	Topics and Stories
Diverse People of the Mountains	Cultural Diversity
Explore how indigenous people who have lived in these mountains for more than 12,000 years lived and used the forest. What evidence do we find of their lives and homes? How have they influenced later culture, such as with their traditions, trails, and place names? What stories do the Tribal Nations who have homelands here have to share?	<ul> <li>Indigenous People:</li> <li>Over 14,000 years</li> <li>Hunter-Gatherers</li> <li>Settled communities - Seneca Rocks example</li> <li>Mound-builders</li> <li>Homelands shared by multiple tribal nations,</li> <li>Stories from individual</li> </ul>
Trace the early frontier settlement in the highlands, primarily by people of English, Scots-Irish, and German descent, and the traditions they brought with them from colonial America and their ancestral homelands.	tribes based on their feedback • Traditional Ecological Knowledge
How were the lives of African-Americans brought to the mountains as slaves similar, or different, from in the plantation areas of eastern Virginia and Maryland? To what degree could free blacks find homes in mountain communities, or refuge while seeking freedom? Following emancipation, how did black Americans live, work, and influence our communities.	<ul> <li>Influences seen in place names, historic &amp; archaeological sites.</li> <li>Interaction and conflict with incoming settlers.</li> <li>Early European settlers including English,</li> </ul>
Investigate individual immigrant or religious communities who found homes in the mountains, in many cases settling together and founding communities, such as the Swiss, Mennonites, or Chestnut Ridge people. Why did they move here, and in what ways did they retain, and share, their distinctive culture?	German, Scots-Irish African-Americans enslaved and free • Enslaved people • Underground railroad
Explore the wide variety of workers from many nations and backgrounds, who came here to build roads or railroads, and to work the woods, mills, and mines. What can we see of their creations, and what influences have they had on the evolving Appalachian culture?	• Black communities Cultures who chose the mountains such as Swiss, Mennonite and Amish
	<ul> <li>Logging boom era immigration included</li> <li>Italians and other southern and eastern European</li> <li>20th century growth of Latino, Asian and many other groups and individuals.</li> </ul>

### Transportation and Connection

How did the natural barrier of the Appalachian mountains influence westward expansion of the early United States? Which migrants traveled around and through the mountains to settle further west, and who decided to stay and settle in the mountains?

Trace evolution of transportation from game trails and native paths to the early settler roadways, wagon roads, and turnpikes, through the rise of railroads, and then highways.

Show how railroads impacted the course of history in the mountains. Protecting the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, at the time the only railroad across the mountains, brought the Civil War here. Following the War, rail construction launched the logging boom of the late 19th century.

How did the difficulty of travel through the mountains impact the isolation of Appalachian communities and their connection to the wider world? To what extent do transportation and communication challenges still impact today?

Discuss how cultural conservatism in the region is a reflection of the isolation. Even thousands of years ago in the prehistoric archaeological record, there is evidence of a time lag for the introduction cultural traits & developments in the AFNHA region.

What are some opportunities today that build on historic transportation routes and challenges? Explore how scenic trains, rail trails, and scenic byway drives offer recreation opportunities based on historic transportation.

What are some opportunities created by the area's relative isolation and lower population density?

### **Civil War and WV Statehood**

How did the forested mountain landscape and the culture that developed here impact the causes, course, and outcomes of the Civil War in the area?

What were the sources of division between eastern Virginia and the western mountains? How did dissatisfaction with state government in the East, the slow pace of transportation and internal improvements development, economic differences, and attitudes about slavery foster division that influenced support for West Virginia statehood?

Explore the First Campaign of the Civil War that was fought here in 1861 over control of western Virginia and of the B&O Railroad. How did the Union victories here impact the conduct of the Civil War, and the movement toward West Virginia statehood?

### Transportation and Connection

- Animal trails improved by people
- Native American travel routes, Seneca Trail
- White explorers & pack roads
- Wagon Roads and Turnpikes
  - The National Road
  - Northwestern Turnpike
  - Staunton Parkersburg
     Turnpike
  - James River & Kanawha Turnpike now Midland Trail
- Canals
  - C&O Canal National Historic Park
- Railroads
  - B&O Railroad
  - C&O Railroad

• Logging railroads

Roads/Highways/Bridges Transportation recreation

- Scenic trains
- Rail trails
- Scenic Byways

Information Technology Green Bank Observatory Dark Skies

### Civil War and WV Statehood

- Battles and Campaigns
  - First Campaign 1861-62. Philippi, Rich Mountain, Laurel Hill, Corrick's Ford, Beverly, Elkwater, Cheat Summit Fort, Camp Bartow, Camp Allegheny.
     Carnifex Ferry 1861
  - Protecting the B&O Railroad and Jones-Imboden Raid (1863 - Beverly, Oakland, Rowlesburg more)

Describe how the struggle for control of mountain counties divided loyalties and split communities. How were people impacted by the fortifications, skirmishes, and battles throughout our the area? Discuss examples of how people's attitudes about their community and people around them, and their state and national identity, were affected by the Civil War, and about how our understanding, awareness, and perceptions of that war have changed over time.	<ul> <li>Droop Mountain campaign</li> <li>Fortifications &amp; skirmishes Romney, Moorefield, etc.</li> <li>guerrilla warfare</li> <li>Civilians, women's roles, hospitals, etc.</li> <li>WV Statehood - how it came about and aftermath</li> <li>Conflict within communities split support for both sides.</li> </ul>
Work and Livelihood Explore how the relative isolation of the mountains necessitated self-sufficiency, and how that evolved into a cultural trait. From the early settlers who cut the bottomland forests to build farms, and raised a variety of crops and livestock, many mountaineers relied on the land and their own work in order to survive. How is that value still shown today? Investigate the variety of European and African-American immigrants who came to this region to build turnpikes and railroads, as skilled craftsmen, stonemasons and other artisans, tradesmen, farmers, miners and timber workers. What did they create, and how did they live? How did the challenges of decline of the logging boom and the Great Depression impact mountain people? In what ways did New Deal programs such as resettlement communities, CCC, and WPA support struggling workers? To what extent did people use cultural self-reliance to survive? Investigate how our rural area has adapted to the changing economy and livelihoods through the 20th century to today. Without large cities, significant industry, and with declining extractive resources, how have some struggling communities found ways to diversify their economy, while others have declined. Trace the trend of out-migration to find jobs in cities, and efforts to reverse that trend.	<ul> <li>Work and livelihood</li> <li>Industrial Revolution</li> <li>Workers from many backgrounds (see Logging Boom)</li> <li>Mineral Resources</li> <li>20th Century Expansion</li> <li>New Deal <ul> <li>CCC,</li> <li>Homestead communities (Arthurdale, Tygarts Valley)</li> <li>Writers project</li> </ul> </li> <li>WWII Maneuver Area</li> <li>Changing Economies</li> <li>Out-migration</li> <li>Back to the land homestead immigration</li> <li>Tourism and service economies</li> <li>Returnees and retirees</li> <li>Modern technological expansion</li> <li>Remote workers</li> </ul>
<b>Appalachian Culture</b> What distinctive challenges were faced by those who explored and settled in the mountain valleys, and formed farming communities here. How did these challenges shape their lives and culture?	<ul> <li>Appalachian Culture</li> <li>Isolation &amp; influences</li> <li>Westward exploration and migration of colonial / American</li> <li>Frontier settlement/forts</li> </ul>

### Interpretive Matrix

Explore distinctive elements of central Appalachian culture, and place them in context compared to other parts of Appalachia, and other parts of our country. How can we preserve, understand, and share these traditions?

How have farming, gardening, and foodways evolved from the self-sufficient traditions?

What stories are found here? folklore, superstition, memories, oral history

How have the art and craft of today's heritage artisans evolved from and been inspired by the practical objects people created from necessity

Illuminate the distinctive roots of Appalachian or "old-time" music in this region. How have these unique music and dance styles been handed down and shared today, and influenced American music and dance.

Explore how cultural conservation and historic preservation benefit communities today, both as direct benefit to community quality of life and for attracting tourism.

Investigate the stereotypes of Appalachian culture that see mountaineers as primitive, backward, and beaten by poverty. How have these stereotypes been reinforced throughout the early-mid 20th-century from popular media and appropriations of Appalachian culture to drive tourism? To what extent do residents of the area reject the stereotypes, and instead show a spirit of independence, strong commitment to their sense of place, and pride in their folkways and culture?

- Frontier settlement isolation
- Self-sufficient homesteads
- Agriculture & small family farms
- Self-sufficiency in modern times

   New Deal
  - o New Deal homesteads
  - Back to the land
  - Local foods
- Local foods
   Close-knit families
- Limited transportation and commerce

Evolving culture

- Exploitation of resources
- Suspicion of outsiders
- Folkways & Traditions
- Languages -
- Appalachian English dialect
- Forest and Farming
- Foodways
- Communities and Festivals
- Music old time and more
- Dance distinctive to local areas
- Art and craft
- Regional heritage art
- Heritage literature and writers
- Oral Histories and Storytelling
- Revivals and Religion
- Traditional and local festivals and fairs

Misleading Stereotypes

- Outsider viewpoints
- Dispel negative stereotypes
- Embracing, preserving and sharing of Appalachian culture

# Theme 3. Logging Boom Builds the Nation

On the cusp of the 20th century, the expansion of railroads opened widespread harvest of the Appalachian Forest in a logging boom that helped fuel industrial expansion for the Eastern United States, but devastated the landscape and altered mountain economies.

Concepts and Ideas	Topics and Stories
Pre-boom Use of Forest	Early Use
Explore uses of the forest prior to the logging boom, and how this differed from the wholesale forest harvest the railroads made	Indigenous people used fire and tools to clear areas for villages and farming.
possible. What was the Appalachian forest like before the logging boom.	Earliest settlers cleared forests and valleys for agriculture
What about this forest raised interest and made it suitable for the logging boom?	Trees harvested before railroads were hauled by horse-pulled carts, or moved by river in arks riding flood waters.
	Composition of forest, types of trees and their value
	Exposure of forest richness during Civil War to future industrialists as they traveled through
Logging Boom	Logging Boom
Describe the growth of railroads into the mountains, and why and how this enabled the logging boom. Place the central Appalachian logging boom in context of the	<ul> <li>Railroad development,</li> <li>multiple lines and changes</li> <li>moving logs to market by rail</li> <li>logging railroads for harvest from the mountains</li> </ul>
rising industrialization of the eastern United States. Who financed, enabled, and profited from the boom?	Industrialists invested in railroads & logging • Senator Henry Gassaway Davis
What were the forest products that were harvested used for and where were they used?	<ul> <li>Senator Stephen B. Elkins</li> <li>Political power &amp; influence</li> <li>Their homes, towns, institutions</li> </ul>

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Explain the technological changes that enabled the logging boom, including new ways to move logs and better tools to cut and mill them.	<ul> <li>Land and resources owned by outside interests, profits exported</li> <li>Demand for timber for industrial revolution.</li> <li>fuel, building materials, paper,</li> <li>consumer goods,</li> <li>specialty uses like red spruce for instruments</li> <li>Evolution of technology and tools</li> <li>Saws - cross-cut, circular, band</li> <li>Water-powered cutting mills</li> <li>Multiple blade saw mills</li> <li>Aerial cable logging - Blackwater Canyon</li> <li>Logging inclines - Beula, Braucher - Greenbrier River watershed</li> <li>Geared locomotives - Shay &amp; others</li> </ul>
<b>Communities and Workers</b> Illustrate the impact on communities as the logging boom transformed small agrarian communities into boom towns, and then as companies cleared one area and moved to the next, left some as ghost towns. Examine the boom and bust cycle of communities, and why some towns survived and others didn't. Investigate the workers who built the railroads and harvested the timber in the logging boom. Describe where they came from, how they lived and worked, and how this changed their lives and livelihood.	Communities Boom towns • buildings and economic growth • Sawmills, industrial production, companies • wild towns, lawless • bust and decline Workers • where they came from, ethnicities • how they lived, • tools, • working conditions • wage labor instead of farming
<b>Impact on the Landscape</b> Explore the impact of the extensive clear-cutting of the logging boom on the forest landscape, and how this impacted the environment and public opinion. How would this change forest management following the logging boom?	Impact on the Iandscape • extensive clear-cutting • erosion & flooding • wildfires • wildlife habitat • no sustainability plan

### **Theme 4. Resilient Forest**

Recovery of the landscape from the logging boom shows the resilience of the Appalachian Forest, with scientific management today conserving forestlands for multiple purposes including ecological stewardship, recreation and tourism, and sustainable harvest of forest products.

Concepts and Ideas	Topics and Stories
Regrowing the Forests	Regrowing the
Explore how and why the Appalachian forests regrew following the wholesale cutting of the logging boom era. What tree species regrew naturally, and what were planted?	Forests Native regeneration and regrowth. • Forested area larger
How does the forest composition differ from the forest prior to the logging boom?	today • Changes in forest
How do the few old growth forest areas that were not cut in the logging boom show us the pre-cutting forest? How have they evolved over time?	<ul><li>composition</li><li>Plantations and replanting</li></ul>
In what ways do designated Wilderness Areas that are set aside to be protected offer experience of forests left largely to natural processes.	<ul> <li>Old growth forests</li> <li>Cathedral, Gaudineer, Swallow Falls, etc</li> <li>Environmental processes of uneven aged forest growth</li> </ul>
Illustrate ways that fire has impacted our area's forest ecosystems, whether caused by natural forces or activities of man. How has the role of fire in forest ecosystems and forest management changed over time?	<ul> <li>Wilderness Areas</li> <li>Dolly Sods, Otter Creek, Laurel Fork, Cranberry, etc.</li> <li>Management and use of Wilderness areas</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Fire use, impact, control</li> <li>Indigenous use of fire</li> <li>Logging era wildfires</li> <li>Fire towers, evolution of control tools</li> <li>Controlling vs managing fire</li> <li>Wildfires worsened by climate change</li> <li>Prescribed burns as a management tool</li> </ul>
Public Lands	Public Lands
What was the role of our area in the passage of Weeks Act in 1911 to establish eastern National Forests, following extensive downstream flooding?	Public lands established on cut-over lands Agencies established each for identified
Explore the establishment of the Monongahela National Forest in 1920, and its growth to over 900,000 acres, the largest public	<ul> <li>purposes</li> <li>Monongahela</li> <li>National Ecrost</li> </ul>

National Forest

<ul> <li>holding in AFNHA. What are the variety of uses, opportunities, and special areas within the Monongahela?</li> <li>Trace the establishment of Maryland and West Virginia State Forests and State Parks. What are the variety of uses and opportunities?</li> <li>Describe the resources and priorities of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1994 to protect habitat and wildlife in the high altitude wetlands of Canaan Valley.</li> <li>Understand the different purposes prioritized for the variety of public land agencies. Explain how each entity, as articulated in their management plans, may provide for public benefit in different ways, such as timber harvest, ecosystem conservation, and recreation</li> <li>How do land trusts and conservation groups protect and conserve land through non-profit organizations and private support?</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Maryland State Forests and Parks</li> <li>WV State Forests and Parks</li> <li>Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge</li> <li>Wildlife management areas</li> <li>The Nature Conservancy, WV Land Trust, other land protection non-profits and their preserves.</li> </ul>
Scientific Forest Management	Scientific Forest
From the logging boom to today, how has forest management evolved based on changing science, technology, and priorities?	<b>Management</b> Management evolves
Illustrate how the science of professional forestry was beginning at the time of the logging boom, and some early conservation efforts that took place here.	<ul> <li>over time</li> <li>Pioneering forestry leaders</li> <li>Early plantations</li> </ul>
How was the evolution of forestry applied in the central Appalachian Forest? Show how forestry here had implications for national policies, such as the results of the Monongahela Decision on public involvement in managing public lands.	<ul> <li>(Rothkugel)</li> <li>Civilian Conservation Corps</li> <li>Clear-cutting and the Monongahela</li> </ul>
Explain how forest management is applied for different end goals according to the purposes identified by the agency or private owner for use of each piece of land. How do professional foresters use science to guide management?	Decision • Environmental Impact Studies and Public involvement • Public lands
What are some ways that forestry management practices may overlap, or differ, because of different end goals? How might forest management practices like planting, thinning, and harvesting practices impact the species composition of the forests, type of wildlife habitat, or scenic beauty?	management plans Demonstration / experimental forests
What is the role of public and industry Experimental Forests and Demonstration Areas in understanding and improving forest management?	<ul> <li>Fernow Experimental Forest</li> <li>Kindness Demonstration Area</li> </ul>
Look at the historic and contemporary forest management approaches that aim for preservation of natural areas with minimal man-made changes, and for conservation of natural areas for production and human use. Where might each be appropriate?	Conservation and Preservation strategies • Historic differences in approach
In what ways has the Appalachian Forest has contributed to and benefited from scientific research on ecosystem restoration, forest hydrology, wildlife management, climate change, and silviculture?	<ul> <li>Differences in management practices</li> </ul>

Forest Management for Sustainable Timber Production and	
Forest Products	

How does forest management benefit sustainable harvest of timber, including consideration of future growth of desired species?

In what ways do private forest owners, ranging from large corporate holdings that manage for timber production to small family farms, manage their forests? What are some resources available to them for managing their forests to meet their stewardship priorities?

How do state regulated Best Management Practices enforce logging, road building, and erosion prevention practices to help protect soil and water quality.

Trace some ways that central Appalachian Forests have been sources for extractive industries and energy, including coal and natural gas, as well as wood for fuel. How is this changing today, and what are some ways our area can provide renewable energy?

What are some of the forest products that people value and rely on? How does forest management maintain that production for people's use?

Look at the role of the timber industry as a segment of our economy, creating jobs for communities through management, harvest, transportation, processing, and value-added products. How important is this to the economy of our communities, historically, today, and in the future?

### Forest Management for Ecosystem Health

How do lands managers and scientists understand forest conditions and processes? How does scientific research guide their stewardship and forest management?

Explore ecosystem fields of study and goals that guide management priorities, such as ecosystem restoration, hydrology, wildlife management, silviculture, native and endangered species, control of invasive species, and climate change. What are some distinct management techniques that are tools for each of these?

Explore differences of opinion on best management and land use among scientists, agencies, timber industry, and land users. Where are there some differences of opinion even among scientists, and how do these differences impact chosen management strategies?

In what ways has the Appalachian Forest has contributed to and benefited from scientific research encompassing ecosystem restoration, forest hydrology, wildlife management, climate change, and silviculture?

### **Timber Production**

# For Sustainable Production

- Timber harvest
- Sustainable growth of target tree species
- Growth for future sustainable harvest

### Best management practices to prevent environmental damage

Forest products • Hardwood lumber • Pulp and timber byproducts • Charcoal • Wood products, manufacturing, valueadded • Baskets, carving and wood crafts • Forest-grown plants, ginseng, ramps, etc. Energy - coal, gas, windmills Economic benefit from forest industry and valueadded

### Ecosystem Health

- Monitoring and scientific study
  Wildlife surveys
  Water monitoring
- Water monitoring
- Mitigation tools
   Manage for wildlife and ecosystem conditions
- Desired habitat types for variety of species
- Habitat for game or non-game wildlife
- Pollinators
- Mast for livestock and wildlife
- Protect native and threatened species
- Wetland and stream health
- Biochar and carbon sequestration

As climate change impacts our global environment, what are some ways that forest managers help to understand, mitigate, and adapt to its effects?	<ul> <li>Control non-native invasive species, pests, and diseases</li> <li>Climate change adaptation and mitigation</li> </ul>
Forest Management for Recreation	Outdoor recreation
Explore the wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities within our Appalachian Forest including traditional outdoor sports, active pursuits, beauty and renewal. How has the relationship between communities and the forest that surrounds them changed over time? What are some ways are communities are economically, environmentally, and recreationally entwined with this forest? What are some community benefits from forest recreation? Show how outdoor recreation helps to diversify community economies and support tourism, provides exercise, adventure, and health opportunities, and supports quality of life. What are some impacts on the forest and ecosystems of human recreation activities? How can we mitigate the negative impacts through education about stewardship?	<ul> <li>Hunting and game wildlife</li> <li>Diversity of non-game wildlife observation and study</li> <li>Recreation</li> <li>Scenic beauty and connection to nature</li> <li>Trails, hiking, biking</li> <li>Camping</li> <li>Hunting and fishing</li> <li>Water activities rivers and lakes - kayak, canoeing, boating</li> <li>Climbing</li> <li>Caving</li> <li>Winter sports</li> <li>scenic drives; beauty</li> <li>study, enjoyment, renewal</li> <li>dark skies.</li> <li>Communities' relationship with the forest</li> <li>Outdoor recreation benefits</li> <li>for community quality of life</li> <li>for exercise and adventure</li> <li>for tourism and economic benefit</li> <li>Stewardship</li> <li>Leave No Trace</li> <li>Awareness education</li> <li>Volunteer opportunities</li> </ul>

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
	AmeriCorps Federal Agency	Washington, DC	Funding through Volunteer West Virginia	Funder for competitive AmeriCorps program grants	Federal AmeriCorps grants through state agencies	
	Appalachian Regional Commission	Washingron, DC	Grant agreements	Support, technical assistance, funding	Grants & Initiatives (current funder)	https://www.arc.gov/wp- content/uploads/2022/01/Appalachia-Envisioned-ARC- Strategic-Plan-FY-2022-2026.pdf
	National Park Service, C&O Canal National Historical Park	Cumberland, MD Allegany County		Manage C&O Canal including Cumberland Visitor Center. AFNHA interpretation and collaboration		https://www.nps.gov/choh/learn/management/upload/ CHOH-Strategic-Plan-2019-2023_508-Compliant.pdf
	National Park Service, Gauley River National Recreation Area	Nicholas Co		Management for Gauley River from New River Gorge National Park. Include AFNHA interpretation (exhibits, passport, special events, public affairs, and social media outreach)		
	National Park Service, Heritage Partnership Program (National Heritage Areas)	Washington, DC; Region 1 Philadelphia, PA	Grant Agreement (HPP)	Support, technical assistance, funding	HPP funding (current funder)	
Federal Agencies	National Park Service, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail	Allegany Co.		Trails including Great Allegeny Passage & C&O Canal Towpath. Will include AFNHA Interpretation and collaboration.		
Federal	US Army Corps of Engineers	Summersville Lake, Nicholas Co; Sutton and Burnsville Lakes, Bulltown Historic Area, Braxton Co		Manage lakes and adjoining property for conservation and recreation		
	US Fish & Wildlife Service, Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge	Tucker Co, Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge	Partnership agreement, MP support letter	Conservation and cultural resource management on Refuge, conservation collaboration, interpretation and stewardship education programs, AmeriCorps site host.		Comprehensive Conservation Plan 2011 https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CV <u>R%20CCP.pdf</u>
	US Fish & Wildlife Service, West Virginia Field Office & Appalachian Field Office	Tucker Co, Greenbrier Co	Partnership Agreement	Endangered species program, Partners for Fish & Wildlife program with private landowners et. al.	PFW Grant (Current Funder)	
	USDA Forest Service, Monongahela National Forest	WV 11 counties, Headquarters Elkins, Randolph Co	Challenge Cost Share Agreeement; multiple AmeriCorps positions, NHA and Management Plan (MP) support letters	Conservation and cultural resource management on MNF, conservation collaboration, interpretation and stewardship education programs, recreation economy partnership (Mon Forest Towns). AmeriCorps sites sponsor.	Federal funds for projects benefiiting the MNF, Secure Rural Schools grants (current funder)	Land and Resource Management Plan, 2006, updated 2011 <u>https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/s</u> <u>telprdb5330420.pdf</u>
	USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station	Tucker Co	MP support letter	Manage Fernow Experimental Forest, research and interpretation		

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
	Delaware Nation	Andarko, OK		Engage, review, advise		
Tribal Nations	Seneca Nation; Seneca-Iroquois National Museum	Salamanca, NY	THPO engagement, consultant, MP support letter	Advise and review, collaboration, interpretation & engagement support		
	Shawnee Tribe	Miami, OK		Engage, review, advise		
	Wyandot Nation of Kansas	Wyandotte Co., KS	MP support letter	Collaboration, engage, review, advise		
	Maryland Historical Trust, MD State Historic Preservation Office	MD statewide agency	MP support letter	State agency for Historic Preservation Office, Maryland Heritage Areas. Statewide programming and support. Collaborate with CLGs, historic properties, future planning.		https://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/plan/Preser veMaryland%2011_04-29-2020_small.pdf
	Green Ridge State Forest, Maryland Department of Natural Resources	Allegany Co	NHA support letter			
	Maryland Department of Planning	MD statewide agency	MP comment letter	Parent agency for MD Historical Trust, provided supportive comments on plan		
	Maryland Humanities	MD statewide		Humanities programming and funding	Grant funds for Humanities projects	
	MD Division of Natural Resources, State Parks	MD statewide agency	NHA support letter	Manage state parks		https://dnr.maryland.gov/land/Pages/Stewardship/Loc al_LPPRPs.aspx
	MD Forestry Service	MD statewide agency	NHA support letter	Manage state forests,		https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Documents/Maryland- State-Strategy_wAON%202020FINALpages.pdf
	MD Tourism Office	MD statewide agency		Tourism support and marketing	marketing funding	https://www.visitmaryland.org/sites/default/files/2021- 09/Maryland FY22 Marketing Plan v6 8-26-21- reduced.pdf
State Agencies	Volunteer West Virginia	WV statewide agency	AmeriCorps grant agreement, Volunteer grant agreement, MP support letter	State agency that administers AmeriCorps program grants, supports volunteer service programming for the state.	AmeriCorps grants, Volunteer Generation fund grants (current funder)	Annual reports describing programming and priorities
Ň	WV Department of Agriculture	WV statewide agency	project support letter	Support agriculture statewide		http://www.wvagadvisory.org/wp- content/uploads/2020/10/WVAg-Full-Report-Version- 03.2020.pdf
	WV Department of Arts, Culture & History, WV State Historic Preservation Office	WV statewide agency	MP support letter, Sec 106 review letter	State agency for Historic Preservation Office, Archives & History, and Arts. Statewide programming and support, funder for several grant opportunities. for historic preservation & cultural projects	state grants for historic preservation and arts programming	http://129.71.204.160/shpo/planning/2020- 2024Plan.pdf
	WV Department of Tourism	WV statewide agency	MP support letter	Tourism industry development support and marketing	marketing funding	https://wvtourism.com/wp- content/uploads/2015/09/AECOM-West-Virginia-Final- <u>Report.pdf</u>
	WV Development Office, Main Street Program	WV statewide agency	NHA support letter	Dupport for development, Main Street & ON TRAC programs	Main Street funding; NIP tax credits	
	WV Division of Forestry	WV statewide agency	AmeriCorps agreement, NHA support letter, MP support letter	Manage state forests, environmental education		https://wvforestry.com/wp- content/uploads/2021/02/WV-2020-SFAP-Final.pdf

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
	WV Division of Natural Resources, State Parks	WV statewide agency	NHA support letter	Manage state parks		https://wvcad.org/assets/files/resources/Land%20and %20Water%20Conservation%20Fund/WV- SCORP%20DRAFT.pdf
State Heritage Areas	Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority and Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area	Allegany Co	Grant agreement, MP support letter	Owns and manages Canal Place attraction and Western Maryland Railway Station, lead for Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area; heritage networking, support, promotion Allegany Co, collaborate on interpretation and tourism development	Provides project grants through Maryland Heritage Areas Provides project	https://2t4vzn2pp8n81ic6zjaoqaw1-wpengine.netdna- ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/RFP-Appendix-A- 1-Report_Management-Plan-April-2014.pdf update for expansion in process
State I	Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area	Garrett Co	MP support letter	Heritage networking, support, promotion Garrett Co	grants through Maryland Heritage Areas	
	Central Appalachian Spruce Restoration Initiative (CASRI)	multiple counties, highlands	Collaborative agreement	Collaborative organization of multiple partners focused on restoration of red spruce habitat		https://www.landscapepartnership.org/Members/casri/ resources/action-plan/casri-action-plan/index_html
	Tri County Council for Western Maryland	Allegany and Garrett Cos		Conducts regional planning, economic development, assists with grant applications and project leveraging		https://www.tccwmd.org/wp- content/uploads/CEDS_2018-2022_2021_Update.pdf
ıcies	West Virginia Region IV Planning & Development Council	Nicholas, Webster, Pocahontas, and Greenbrier Cos		Conducts regional planning, economic development, assists with grant applications and project leveraging		https://secureservercdn.net/104.238.71.109/d8u.8b6. myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CEDS- 2020-Update.pdf
Regional Agencies	West Virginia Region IX Planning & Development Council	Morgan Co		Conducts regional planning, economic development, assists with grant applications and project leveraging		https://region9wv.com/ceds
Regic	West Virginia Region VI Planning & Development Council	Preston Co		Conducts regional planning, economic development, assists with grant applications and project leveraging		http://www.regionvi.com/events/2020%20CEDS%20An nual%20Update.pdf
	West Virginia Region VII Planning & Development Council	Barbour, Braxton, Randolph, Upshur, and Tucker Co		Conducts regional planning, economic development, assists with grant applications and project leveraging		https://www.nado.org/wp- content/uploads/2014/08/WV-Region-VII-Planning- Development-Council-2014.pdf
	West Virginia Region VIII Planning & Development Council	Mineral, Hardy, Hampshire, Grant, Pendleton Cos		Conducts regional planning, economic development, assists with grant applications and project leveraging		http://regioneight.com/files/documents/c42fafa8-f0a7- 4b40-88d0-80459a91b5d5.pdf
	Alderson Historic Landmark Commission	Greenbrier Co		Support historic preservation		
	Alderson, Town of	Greenbrier Co	NHA support letter	Town Government	Town funds	
	Allegany County (Allegany County Board of Commissioners, MD)	Allegany Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	https://www.alleganygov.org/DocumentCenter/View/8 00/2014-Comprehensive-Plan-PDF?bidId=
	Barbour County Barbour County Development	Barbour Co	NHA and project support	County government	County funds	
	Barbour County Development Authority	Barbour Co	NHA and project support letters	Economic development authority		
	Bath Historic Landmark Commission	Morgan Co		CLG		

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
	Belington Historic Landmark Commission	Barbour Co		CLG		
	Belington, City of	Barbour Co		City government	City funds	
es	Berkeley Springs (Town of Bath)	Morgan Co		Town Government	Town funds	
agenci	Beverly Historic Landmark Commission	Randolph Co		CLG		
iated a	Beverly, Town of	Randolph Co	NHA support letter	Town Government	Town funds	https://landuse.law.wvu.edu/files/d/f88240da-c351- 4972-93c7-890d27abba92/town-of-beverly.pdf
affil	Braxton County	Braxton Co		County government	County funds	
ities, a	Braxton County Development Authority	Braxton Co	Project support letter	Economic Development Authority		
Author	Buckhannon Historic Landmarks Commission	Upshur Co	Previous AmeriCorps agreement	CLG		
ns,	Buckhannon, City of	Upshur Co		City government	City funds	
ssio	Cowen, Town of	Webster Co	Project support letter	Town Government	Town funds	
in min	Cumberland Historic Preservation Commission	Allegany Co		CLG		
Gs), C	Cumberland, City of	Allegany Co		City government	City funds	http://www.cumberlandmd.gov/275/2013- <u>Comprehensive-Plan</u>
Ū	Davis, Town of	Tucker Co		Town Government	Town funds	
ernments	Elkins HIstoric Landmark Commission	Randolph Co	NHA Support Letter, previous AmeriCorps agreement	CLG		
County or Local Governments, Certified Local Governments (CLGs), Commissions, Authorities, affiliated agencies	Elkins, City of	Randolph Co	AmeriCorps agreement, NHA support letter, MP support letter from Councilor	City government; partner on economic development and partnership network goals	City funds (current funder)	https://cityofelkinswv.com/wp- content/uploads/2015/10/05_CompPlan2015_Chapter <u>4_EconomicDevelopment.pdf</u>
ifie	Franklin, Town of	Pendleton Co	NHA support letter	Town government	Town funds	
s, Cert	Frostburg Historic District Commission	Allegany Co		Support historic preservation		
nment	Frostburg, City of	Allegany Co		City government	City funds	https://planning.maryland.gov/Documents/OurWork/c ompplans/11_CMP_Frostburg.pdf
Local Govern	Garrett County ( Board of Garrett County Commissioners, MD)	Garrett Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	https://www.garrettcounty.org/resources/planning- land- development/pdf/Comprehensive%20Planning/2008G arrettCountyAdoptedPlan-FULL.pdf
nty or	Grant County	Grant Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	http://www.grantcountywv.org/uploads/commission/G CDA-Strategic-Plan-2017.pdf
Cour	Grantsville, Town of	Garrett Co		Town government	Town funds	
	Greenbrier County	Greenbrier Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	
	Greenbrier County Historic Landmark Commission	Greenbrier Co		CLG		
	Hampshire County	Hampshire Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	https://landuse.law.wvu.edu/files/d/057d467c-ce3d- 4346-9fd7-de6bb73ad43e/hampshire-county.pdf

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	Hardy County	Hardy Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	https://landuse.law.wvu.edu/files/d/4eca9e4c-d8ca- 4d48-b1bf-0c77f1a47dee/dc51dece-c36f-4371-bb31- 83547f921688.pdf
s	Keyser, City of	Mineral Co	NHA support letter	City government	City funds	
ncie	Kingwood, City of	Preston Co		City government	City funds	
age	Kitzmiller, Town of	Garrett Co	NHA Support Letter	Town government	Town funds	
liated	Lewisburg Historic Landmark Commission	Greenbrier Co		CLG		
es, affi	Lewisburg, City of	Greenbrier Co		City government	City funds	http://lewisburg-wv.com/city-government/planning- and-zoning/comprehensive-plan/
riti	Luke, Town of	Garrett Co	NHA support letter	Town government	Town funds	
rtho	Marlinton, Town of	Pocahontas Co		Town government	Town funds	
ssions, Aı	Mineral County	Mineral Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	https://landuse.law.wvu.edu/files/d/8ab3d52f-493b- 4443-a6eb-f06184f7343d/mineral-county- comprehensive-plan-2010.pdf
County or Local Governments, Certified Local Governments (CLGs), Commissions, Authorities, affiliated agencies	Mineral County Development Authority	Mineral Co	Project support letter	Economic Development Authority		https://mineralcountydevelopmentauthority.com/docs/ Region-8-Regional-Development-Plan-Update- Comprehensive-Economic-Development-Strategy.pdf
its (CL	Moorefield HIstoric Landmark Commission	Hardy Co		CLG		
mer	Moorefield, Town of	Hardy Co		Town Government	Town funds	
iovern	Morgan County	Morgan Co	NHA support letter	County Government	County funds	http://morgancountywv.gov/Services/Planning/Plan/in dex.html
d Local G	Nicholas County	Nicholas Co	NHA support letter	County Government	County funds	https://www.summersvillewv.org/wp- content/uploads/2021/01/Draft-Summersville- Comprehensive-Plan-2030.pdf
ertified	Nicholas County Historic Landmark Commission	Nicholas Co		CLG		
s, C	Oakland, Town of	Garrett Co	NHA support letter	Town Government	Town funds	
lent	Parsons, City of	Tucker Co	AmeriCorps agreement	City government	City funds	
E.	Pendelton County	Pendleton Co	NHA support letter	County Government	County funds	
Gove	Pendleton County Development Authority	Pendleton Co	Project support letter	Economic Development Authority		
ocal	Petersburg, City of	Grant Co		City government	City funds	
y or Le	Philippi Historic Landmark Commission	Barbour Co		CLG		
Count	Philippi, City of	Barbour Co		City government	City funds	https://landuse.law.wvu.edu/files/d/51865724-a4b9- 4a9f-89b7-0184d90ca80a/city-of-philippi.pdf
	Pocahontas County	Pocahontas Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	
	Preston County	Preston Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	https://www.downstreamstrategies.com/wp- content/uploads/2020/01/FINAL_Preston-Vision- <u>Report 2 4 11.pdf</u>
	Rainelle, Town of	Greenbrier Co		Town government	Town funds	
	Randolph County	Randolph Co	NHA support letter	County government	county funds	

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
County or Local Governments, Certified Local Governments (CLGs), Commissions, Authorities, affiliated agencies	Richwood, City of	Nicholas Co	NHA & project support letters	City government	City funds	https://landuse.law.wvu.edu/files/d/5abf197f-d7e9- 453e-bce2-32ed204da590/city-of-richwood- comprehensive-plan.pdf
	Romney, Town of	Hampshire Co		Town government	Town funds	
	Ronceverte Historic Landmark Commission	Greenbrier Co	Project support letter	CLG		
	Ronceverte Planning Commission	Greenbrier Co	NHA support letter	Planning commission		
ients (CL0	Ronceverte, City of	Greenbrier Co	NHA support letter	City government	City funds	https://landuse.law.wvu.edu/files/d/532bf48e-3ee9- 4820-b827-4c11b3398fba/city-of-ronceverte- comprehensive-plan.pdf
Ē	Summersville, City of	Nicholas Co		City government	City funds	
ove	Sutton, Town of	Braxton Co		Town government	Town funds	
Ŭ Ŭ	Terra Alta, Town of	Preston Co	NHA support letter	Town government	Town funds	
oca 1 ag	Thomas, City of	Tucker Co		City government	City funds	
ernments, Certified Local Gover Authorities, affiliated agencies	Tucker County Commission	Tucker Co		County government	County funds	https://landuse.law.wvu.edu/files/d/65716c1d-36e9- 4d6d-8ad3-d121db6a8cb6/tucker-county- comprehensive-plan-approved-copy-2012-12-12.pdf
uthorit	Tucker County Cultural District Authority	Tucker Co	Previous AmeriCorps agreement	County-wide cultural development		
Gover	Tucker County Historic Landmark Commission	Tucker Co		CLG		
a	Tucker County Planning Commission	Tucker Co		county planning commission		
Š	Upshur County	Upshur Co		County government	County funds	
۲ ۲	Webster County	Webster Co	NHA support letter	County government	County funds	
Count	Webster County Economic Development Authority	Webster Co	NHA support letter	Economic Development Authority		
-	Webster Springs (Town of Addison)	Webster Co	NHA support letter	Town government	Town funds	
	White Sulphur Springs Historic Landmark Commission	Greenbrier Co		CLG		
	White Sulphur Springs, City of	Greenbrier Co		City government	City funds	
	Bath ON TRAC	Morgan Co		Community development organization		
unity ons	Belington ON TRAC, Belington Revitalization Committee	Barbour Co	Grant agreement	Community development organization		
Comm anizati	Berkeley Springs-Morgan Co Chamber of Commerce	Morgan Co	NHA support letter	Community development organization		
er ( Drg	Beverly ON TRAC	Randolph Co	AmeriCorps partner	Community development organization		
Main Street, other Community Development Organizations	Buckhannon Upshur Chamber of Commerce	Upshur Co	NHA support letter	Community development organization		
Stre	Create Buckhannon	Upshur Co		Community development organization		
eve	Cumberland Main Street	Allegany Co		Community development organization		
Σ́Δ	Elkins Main Street	Randolph Co	AmeriCorps agreement	Community development organization		
	Frostburg Main Street	Allegany Co		Community development organization	1	

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Main Street, other Community Development Organizations	Grantsville Main Street	Garrett Co		Community development organization		
	Kingwood Main Street	Preston Co		Community development organization		
	Lewisburg Downtown Business Association	Greenbrier Co		Community development organization		
	Marlinton ON TRAC	Pocahontas Co		Community development organization		
iy Dev	Northern Webster County Improvement Council	Webster Co	NHA support letter	Community development organization, Byway org		
iuni	Oakland Main Street	Garrett Co		Community development organization		
her Community Organizations	Parsons ON TRAC, Parsons Revitalization Org.	Tucker Co	AmeriCorps agreement,	Community development organization		
er (	Philippi Main Street	Barbour Co		Community development organization		
d t	Romney ON TRAC	Hampshire Co		Community development organization		
treet,	Ronceverte Main Street	Greenbrier Co	Previous AmeriCorps agreement	Community development organization		
in S	Rowlesburg ON TRAC	Preston Co		Community development organization		
Aa	Sutton ON TRAC	Barbour Co		Community development organization		
	Terra Alta Betterment Committee	Preston Co	NHA support letter	Community development organization		
	Webster County Main Street	Webster Co	NHA support letter	Community development organization		
	Allegany County Tourism	Allegany Co	Grant agreement; project support letter; MP support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		https://www.alleganyco.com/wp- content/uploads/Allegany-County-Comprehensive- Plan2013FINALSectionIV.pdf
ing Org's	Elkins-Randolph County Tourism CVB	Randolph Co.	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement, Highland Creative Economy (HCE), MP	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
Convention and Visitors Bureaus/Direct Marketing Org's	Garrett County Chamber of Commerce	Garrett Co	support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing; manage Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area	Project grants through Maryland Heritage Areas	https://www.garrettheritage.com/management-plan
aus/Dir	Greenbrier County CVB	Greenbrier Co	HCE, MP support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing	5	
Burea	Hampshire County CVB	Hampshire Co	HCE, MP support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
d Visitors	Hardy County CVB	Hardy Co	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement, HCE, MP support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
ion an	Mineral County CVB	Mineral Co	grant agreement, HCE	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
Conventi	Mountaineer Country CVB	Preston Co (and Taylor, Monongalia, outside AFNHA)	HCE, MP support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
	Pendleton County CVB	Pendleton Co	HCE	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
	Philippi CVB	Barbour Co		Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
rect	Pocohontas County CVB	Pocahontas Co	HCE, MP support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
aus/Di	Richwood CVB	Nicholas Co	AmeriCorps agreement	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
Convention and Visitors Bureaus/Direct Marketing Org's	Summersville CVB	Nicholas Co	HCE	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
	Travel Berkeley Springs	Morgan Co	NHA support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and marketing		
and V Marke	Tucker County CVB	Tucker Co	HCE, MP support letter	Collaborate on tourism development and		
ntion	Upshur County CVB	Upshur Co	NHA support letter	marketing Collaborate on tourism development and		
Conve	Webster County Tourism	Webster Co		marketing Collaborate on tourism development and		
				marketing		
	Maryland Museum Association	MD statewide		Museum statewide association		
	National Trust for Historic Preservation	Nationwide		Technical assistance, funder, educator	Grants and training	
	Potomac Highlands Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Area (PHCWPMA	Pendleton, Randolph multiple counties	Agreement for AFHA Inc to provide fiscal sponsorship	Collaborative organization of multiple partners focused on non-native invasive species control		https://eos.ucs.uri.edu/seagrant_Linked_Documents/m du/2014-09_RO_Anderson_M_INV-3b.pdf
onal	Preservation Alliance of WV	WV statewide	NHA support letter, MP support letter	Statewide preservation support, AmeriCorps program, help with preservation training, technical assistance, funding	Preservation grants and loans	
legic	Preservation Maryland	MD statewide		Historic preservation statewide non-profit		
ewide, R	Rivers and Gorges Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Area (RGCWPMA	Pocahontas, multiple counties	Agreement for AFHA Inc to provide fiscal sponsorship	Collaborative organization of multiple partners focused on non-native invasive species control		https://bugwoodcloud.org/mura/phcwpma/assets/File/ <u>Management_Plan.pdf</u>
Non-profits -National, Statewide, Regional	The Nature Conservancy WV	multiple counties, highlands	AmeriCorps agreement, MP support letter	Preservation of special lands by purchase and easement; collaborate on spruce restoration and conservation projects		nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/priority- landscapes/appalachians/
s -Nati	The Nature Conservancy, Cumberland MD	multiple counties, highlands	NHA support letter	Preservation of special lands by purchase and easement		us/about-us/where-we-work/priority- landscapes/appalachians/). The
ofit	Tucker Co. Chamber of Commerce	Tucker Co	NHA support letter			
Non-pr	Woodlands Development Group & Woodlands Community Lenders	Randolph, Tucker, Barbour primarily	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement, HCE, MP support letter	Provide preservation, development, business assistance, and loan fund across multicounty region. Collaborate on multiple goals.	Loan funds	
	WV Association of Museums	WV statewide		Museum statewide association, trainings, conference		
	WV Development HUB	WV statewide	Project support letter, MP support letter	Community development programs, some include funding plus coaching; work with AFNHA especially on shared partnership development and historic preservation goals	Community development programs, some include funding plus coaching	

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
	WV Forestry Association	WV statewide	MP support letter	Trade organization for forest industry; help with environmental education; help balance issues of conservation and recreation with industry concerns.		
gional	WV Highlands Conservancy	multiple counties, highlands	AmeriCorps agreement,	Conservation projects and advocacy for highlands ecosystems, red spruce restoration, trail ambassadors		
Non-profits -National, Statewide, Regional	WV Hospitality and Travel Association	WV statewide				
	WV Humanities Council	WV statewide	Previous project grants	Humanities programming and funding	Grant funds for Humanities projects	
	WV Land Trust	WV statewide		Preservation of special lands by purchase and easement		
1-profits -Natio	WV Rails to Trails Council	WV statewide		Collaborative group supporting rail trails		https://www.railstotrails.org/resourcehandler.ashx?nam e=connecting-parkersburg-to-pittsburgh-by-rail-trail- bringing-a-world-class-trail-network-to-west- virginia&id=14639&fileName=P2P Feasibility Study 0 42418.odf
Nor	WV Rivers Coalition	WV statewide	MP comment letter, MP support letter	Conservation projects and advocacy for WV rivers and watersheds. Support recognition and protection of headwaters streams. Collaborate on outdoor recreation and public lands issues.		https://wvcad.org/assets/files/resources/Land%20and %20Water%20Conservation%20Fund/WV- SCORP%20DRAFT.pdf
	WV Scenic Trail Association	multiple counties, WV		Stewards of the Allegheny Trail		https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wiRpktTC1wJpFMIXm <u>ez0IRI6QA7gdF8V/view</u>
	Adaland Mansion	Barbour Co	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement, HCE, MP support letter	Museum, venue, collaborate on tourism development		
	Allegany Museum	Allegany Co	Grant agreement	Museum		
	Appalachian Headwaters	Greenbrier Co	AmeriCorps agreement,	Environmental land and education		
ns, local	Arthurdale Heritage Inc.	Preston Co	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement, MP support letter	Historic site, museum, collaborate on historic preservation training, heritage tourism, interpretation.		
lizatio	ArtSpring	Tucker Co	AmeriCorps agreement, MP support letter	Cutural arts preservation and events		
gar	Ashby's Fort	Mineral Co		Museum, archelogical dig site, early settlement		
ofits, o	Augusta Heritage Center	Randolph Co	AmeriCorps agreement, NHA support letter	Cultural preservation, classes, presentations		
Non-Profits, organizations, local	Beverly Heritage Center	Randolph Co	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement, HCE, MP support letter	Interpretve Museum & Vistor Center, partnership for Rich Mountain Battlefield, Historic Beverly Preservation, Beverly ON TRAC, Collaborate on interpretation, preservation, heritage tourism.		
	Carnegie Hall Lewisburg	Greenbrier Co		Theater venue, historic site		
	Cass Scenic Railroad State Park	Pocahontas Co	AmeriCorps agreement	Historic town, train, logging boom interpretation		

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
	Cooper's Rock State Forest	Preston Co	Grant agreement	Manage state forest lands, hiking trails, interpretive trail		
	Durban & Greenbrier Valley Railroad	Barbour Co	Project support letter	Business partner for Golden Rule Marketplace, scenic trains		
	Elkins Depot Welcome Center	Randolph Co	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement			
	Evergreen Heritage Center	Allegany Co	Grant agreement, HCE, MP support letter	Development and promotion of outdoor recreation opportunities, preserving and enhancing Forest Heritage Assets, developing culture, heritage, and nature tourism products and activities which leads to sustainable tourism.		
	Fort Edwards Foundation	Hampshire Co		Early settlement historic site		
	Frankfort District Historical Society	Mineral Co	Grant agreement	Museum		
	Friends of Blackwater	Tucker Co		Environmental advocacy, heritage interpretation		
al	Friends of Cheat	Preston Co		Environmental advocacy and conservation projects, trail towns support		
loc	Friends of the 500th	Tucker Co	AmeriCorps agreement	Support group for Canaan Refuge		
ns,	Garrett County Historical Society	Garrett Co		Historical Museums		
Non-Profits, organizations, local	Garrett Trails	Garrett Co	Project support letter, MP support letter	Countywide trail development; share sustainable trailbuilding info		
rga	Green Bank Observatory	Pocahontas Co	AmeriCorps agreement,	Scientific research, museum, interpetive trails		
ofits, o	Greenbrier Historical Society, North House Museum	Greenbrier Co	AmeriCorps agreement,	Museum, archives		
-Pro	Greenbrier River Trail Foundation	Greenbrier, Pocahontas	Grant agreement	Support group for Greenbrier River Trail		
lon	Greenbrier Valley Theater	Greenbrier Co	Grant agreement	Professional theater presentations		
~	Hampshire County Arts Council	Hampshire Co	NHA support letter			
	Heart of Highlands	Tucker Co	AmeriCorps agreement,	Trail building and networks		
	Highlands Trail Foundation	Tucker Co	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement, NHA Support Letter	Support group for trail trail		
	Historic Beverly Preservation	Randolph Co	NHA support letter			
	Kump Education Center	Randolph Co	MP support letter	Youth programming, environmental education, historic house, grounds preservation		
	Lost River Trails Coalition, supporting Lost River State Park	Hardy Co	Grant agreement (through Hardy CVB)	Partnership to develop a system of mountain trails to increase outdoor recreation,		
	Marlinton Business Association	Pocahontas Co	NHA support letter			
	Mineral County Historical Society	Mineral Co	Grant agreement	Museum		
	Monongahela Outdoor Volunteers (MOV)	Nicholas Co	Agreement for AFHA Inc to provide fiscal sponsorship	Informal association working to improve trail quality, build trail work skills, and engage volunteers in portion of the MNF		
	Mountain Arts District	Randolph & surrounding co		Artisan networking and support		

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
	Mountain State Railroad & Logging Historical Association	Pocahontas Co	Project support letter	Foundation / support group for Cass State Park		
	Oakland B&O Museum	Garrett Co		Historical Museum		
	Old Brick Playhouse	Randolph County		Youth and community theater		
	Pearl Buck Birthplace	Pocahontas Co		Historical site and museum		
	Philippi Civil Wat History & Historical Musum	Barbour Co	AmeriCorps agreement	Museum, venue		
	Pocahontas County Historic Landmarks Commission	Pocahontas Co	NHA support letter	Historic preservation support		
	Pocahontas Opera House	Pocahontas Co		Music arts venue in historic building		
	Potomac Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development Region	Morgan Co	NHA support letter	Natural conservation and community development		
ocal	Randolph County Arts Center	Randolph Co		Music arts venue in historic building		
Non-Profits, organizations, local	Randolph County Historical Soc, Museum	Randolph Co	AmeriCorps agreement, NHA support letter	Museum, archives		
anizati	Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation	Randolph Co	NHA support letter	Preserved Civil War site, partner in Beverly Heritage Center		
ts, org	Ronceverte Historic Landmark Commission	Greenbrier Co	NHA support letter	Historic preservation support		
1-Profi	Snowshoe Highlands Area Recreation Collaborative (SHARC)	Pocahontas Co		Collaboration for International Mountain Biking recogntion for mountain bike trails		
Nor	Spruce Forest Artisan Village	Garrett Co		Artisan village		
	Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike Alliance	Randolph Co	NHA support letter	Byway organization		
	Upshur County Historical Society	Upshur Co	AmeriCorps agreement, project support letter	Research archives, museum, interpretation training		
	Wes-Mon-Ty Resource Conservation and Development Area	Barbour, Preston, Tucker, Upshur Cos	NHA support letter	Enhance rural and urban areas and agricultural communities through education, partnerships, and the wise management of natural resources.		
	WV Railroad Museum	Randolph Co	AmeriCorps agreement,	Museum		
	Yew Mtn Center	Pocahontas Co	AmeriCorps agreement, grant agreement, HCE, project support letter	Native plants and botanicals, interpretation and education		
Foundations or potential funders	Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation	West Virginia	Grant agreement	Community development project partner and funder, supporting Highlands Creative Economy program through 2023.	Community Development (current funder)	

#### Appendix E

Org type	Agency or organization	Location	Formal Partner (agreement)	Role or commitment	Potential funder	Partner Plans
Foundations or potential funders	Snowshoe Foundation	Snowshoe, WV		A 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to serving the children and families of Webster, Pocahontas, Randolph, and surrounding counties.	Community programs in selected cos	
Found potenti	Tucker Community Fund	Parsons, WV		A tax-exempt public charity that serves 8 counties in North Central WV and Garrett County, MD.	Community programs in selected cos	
	Alderson Broaddus University	Barbour Co		Academic support, internships, trainers		
	Allegany College of Maryland	Allegany Co		Academic support, internships, trainers		
	Davis & Elkins College	Randolph Co	NHA support Letter, MP support letter	Academic support, internships, trainers; cultural conservation through Augusta Heritage Center		
Resources	Eastern WV Community & Technical College	Hardy Co	HCE co-lead, funding agreement, project support letter, MP support letter	Project partner for Highlands Creative Economy program, agritourism, community development programs, academic support, internships, trainers,		
	Fairmont State University	Marion Co		Academic support, internships, trainers		
ing	Frostburg State University	Allegany Co		Academic support, internships, trainers		
rair	Future Generations University	Pendleton Co	HCE	Academic support, internships, trainers		
× ×	Garrett College	Garrett Co	NHA support Letter	Academic support, internships, trainers		
Academic & Training	New River Community and Technical College	Greenbrier Co		Academic support, internships, trainers		
Acad	West Virginia University, including WVU Division of Forestry, Public Administration and Public History departments	Monongalia Co	Div of Forestry original AFHA project lead, MP Support Letter	Academic support, internships, trainers, project partner		
	West Virginia Wesleyan College Upshur Co			Academic support, internships, trainers		
	WVU Extension Services	multiple counties	Original AFHA project lead	Academic support, internships, trainers, project partner		
	WVU Potomac State College	Mineral Co		Academic support, internships, trainers		

Appendix F			AFNHA Action Plan		
Objectives for AFNHA Partnership	Strategies accomplish Objectives	•	AFHA Inc. Role as coordinating entity	AFNHA Partner Roles for Partners throughout AFNHA region	Timeframe to initiate
		Goal 1: Identify, Preserve, Co	onserve, and Enhance the Assets that I	Reflect Forest Heritage	
Conserve a	and enhan	ce natural resources			
	Provide stev	wardship of regional ecosystems			
		Implement conservation management goals on public lands	Support conservation best practices based on public agency mangagement goals such as helping with land treatments and monitoring	Land management agencies conduct conservation improvements and monitoring based on their land management plans	Underway
		Implement best practices of forest management on partnering private lands	Support best practices on partnering private lands	Property owners manage properties following best management practices; agencies support activities that benefit conservation of shared landscape	Underway
		Provide assistance with land management improvements	Provide assistance with land treatments and improvements	Land management agencies conduct conservation improvements based on their land management plans; private owners support conservation of shared landscape	Underway
		Monitor and build stewardship understanding of ecosystem conditions	Provide assistance with monitoring and stewardship	Land management agencies conduct conservation monitoring, research and tracking based on their land management plans; private owners support conservation of shared landscape	Underway
		Maintain healthy waterways, riparian areas, and watersheds	S upport stewardship of water resources	Land management agencies conduct conservation improvements and monitoring of waterways and watershed based on their land management plans; private owners support conservation of shared landscape	Underway
		Conserve native plants and animals, including for rare, threatened, and endangered species, and the habitats they depend on	Support stewardship of native species, including rare, threatened, and endangered	Land management agencies conduct conservation to encourage native plants and animals and the habitats that support them, based on their land management plans; private owners support conservation of shared landscape	Underway
		Harvest, plant, and encourage regrowth of forests, including desired species and age of stands for forest health and sustainable production. This includes but is not limited to timber production goals.	Support growth of healthy forests according to management goals of forest management entities.	Land management agencies and private owners manage forests	Underway
		Encourage forest growth and health for special ecosystems, including red spruce, old grown, and wilderness areas.	Support growth of healthy forests according to management goals of forest management entities.	Land management agencies manage forests. Collaborative groups assist and support goals for special areas.	Underway
		Track, contain, and remove invasive species	Support invasive species identification and mitigation	Land management agencies conduct conservation activities to indentify, remove, and mitigate invasive species based on their land management plans; private owners support conservation of shared landscape	Underway
		Identify, adapt to, and mitigate impacts of climate change	Support efforts to address climate change	Land management agencies conduct conservation monitoring, research and tracking based on their land management plans; private owners support conservation of shared landscape	Underway
		Preserve pollinator species and pollinator health	Support and promote pollinator initiative, including implementing and encouraging pollinator projects, promoting regional initiative and awareness	Land management agencies conduct conservation activities to encourage pollinator species and the habitats that support them, based on their land management plans; private owners support conservation of shared landscape	Underway

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Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Include conservation improvements in eligibility for AFNHA grants, to the extent feasible.	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants that includes conservation projects, to be eligible as feasible based on priorities for funds available	Partners use AFNHA grants for conservation projects	Years 1-3
		ce recreational assets			
	Enhance rec	reational opportunities for quality user experience an			
		Establish safe and accessible entry points and gateways for recreational trails and opportunities.	Support trail improvement projects	Land management agencies and trail support groups conduct trail improvement activities	Underway
		Maintain trail quality and passable tracks through dense vegetation to offer a quality user experience.	Support trail improvement and maintenance projects	Land management agencies and trail support groups conduct trail improvement and maintenance activities	Underway
		Stablize existing trails and use techniques for sustainable trails to reduce negative impact and erosion.	Support trail improvement and maintenance projects	Land management agencies and trail support groups conduct trail improvement and maintenance activities	Underway
		Build, maintain, and use features such as bridges or boardwalks to protect fragile ecosystems.	Support trail improvement and maintenance projects	Land management agencies and trail support groups conduct trail improvement and maintenance activities	Underway
		Connect trails to offer a variety of user routes	Support trail planning and improvement projects	Land management agencies and trail support groups conduct trail planning and improvement activities	Underway
		Develop physical and thematic trail networks	Support trail planning and improvement projects	Land management agencies and trail support groups conduct trail planning and improvement activities	Underway
		Expand trail offerings for multiple types of use and to meet the range of skill levels sought by diverse users	Support trail planning and improvement projects	Land management agencies and trail support groups conduct trail planning and improvement activities	Underway
		Create plans for sustainable management of trails and trail networks	Support trail planning and improvement projects	Land management agencies and trail support groups conduct trail planning and improvement activities	Underway
		Support development of water recreation opportunities, including water trails and access points.	Support water recreation projects	Land management agencies and support groups conduct water recreation planning and improvement activities	Underway
		Support habitats, management practices, and access to encourage hunting and fishing opportunities	Support hunting and fishing as important traditional recreation within the area	Agencies and private owners manage for game habitat and provide access, when that fits their management goals.	Underway
		Partner with recreational resorts to encourage full-year recreation opportunities	Support variety of recreational opportunities in all seasons	Recreational resorts and providers offer multi-season opportunities	Underway
		Include trail and recreational site improvements in eligibility for AFNHA grants, to the extent feasible.	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants that includes trail and recreational sites, including consideration of construction projects, to be eligible as feasible based on priorities for funds available	Partners use AFNHA grants to improve recreational facilities	Years 1-3
		nd enhance historic assets			
	Recongnize	and conserve cultural landscapes			1
		Build awareness of landscape level significance and stories, including encouraging National Register nominations of cultural landscapes	Encourage documentation and awareness of significance on a landscape scale	cultural landscapes and nominate to National Register	Underway
		Preserve landscape sites such as Indigenous landscapes, battlefields, farms, and forests	Support preservation and awareness efforts, including preservation awareness and actions to reduce looting	Property owners and local organizations preserve cultural landscape properties and features, interpreting and allowing access when appropriate	Underway
		Preserve archaeological sites and conserve the information they contain	Support preservation and awareness efforts, including preservation awareness and actions to reduce looting	Property owners preserve archaeological properties and features, interpreting and allowing access when appropriate	Underway
		Conserve historic cemeteries	S upport documentation, cleanup and restoration activities	Property owners, cemetery organizations, and genealogical societies document burials and work to conserve historic cemetery sites	Underway

P	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
Pre	Preserve and	d manage collections and archives			
		Implement best practices for collections management and policies	Share best practices, support partners in implementing them	Collecting organizations work to improve and implement best practices for collections management	Underway
		Build skills and capacity for organization, digitization, and curation of collections and archives	Share best practices, offer training and resources, support partners in implementation	Collecting organizations upgrade and implement policies and improve skills for staff and volunteers	Underway
		Collect, document, and research area and local history including oral history, documents, photos and information not previously available to the public	Support research, documentation and digitization initiatives.	Collecting organizations conduct private collections documentation projects to collect / copy / archive family and local history photos and collections	Underway
		Collect, document, and research stories of under- represented people such as Indigenous, African- American, ethnic groups, rural, and people with disabilities. Support people to tell their own stories using oral history, documents, photos and information not previously available.	Involve under-represented groups to document and tell their stories using research, documentation, oral history, and digitization initiatives.	Collecting organizations conduct private collections documentation projects to collect / copy / archive stories, photos and collections	Year 2
F	Preserve his	toric buildings and properties			
		Document existence and condition of historic properties, conduct preservation planning	Support historic preservation documentation, survey, and planning projects.	Property owners and local organizations including CLGs document and survey historic properties, and participate together in preservation planning.	Underway
		Preserve historic buildings and structures, including rehabilitattion and adaptive reuse	Support rehabilitation efforts, provide tech assistance, assist with project pre-planning, pre-development, tax credit support	Development and community organizations organize and support projects to save and redevelop historic properties	Underway
		Preserve historic buildings related to Forest Heritage	Consider direct support for rehabilitation of signficant historic buildings prioritized by Board; support and encourage partner preservation efforts	Partners preserve and rehabilitate significant historic buildings.	Underway
		Preserve and enhance Darden Mill, to be used for AFNHA programming.	Complete rehabilitation of Darden Mill including third floor, access, and retaining wall. Continue annual maintenance.	WV Railroad Museum as tenant, Randolph Co Development Authority as adjoining, support Darden Mill improvements.	Maintenance (Underway), improvemen (Years 4-6)
		Develop National Register listings that will provide eligibility for grants and tax credits	Facilitate NR listing with emphasis on under-represented sites. Educate owners about grant and tax credit process	Partners pursue NR listings	Underway
		Seek National Historic Landmark designations for nationally significant properties	Support and encourage efforts to seek National Historic Landmark designation for nationally significant properties	Property owners of nationally significant properties and related local organizations including CLGs seek National Historic Landmark designation when appropriate.	Years 4-6
		Seek funding for preservation including capital improvements	Identify funding sources and share information, assist grant applications, provide letters of support	Partners pursue funding through grants, fundraising, and other strategies	Underway
		Connect multiple resources to plan and leverage funding for historic preservation projects	leverage preservation funding	Develop teams with multiple partners to facilitate larger projects	Years 4-6
		Include capacity building, identification, documentation, pre-development, and rehabilitation for historic preservation in eligibility for AFNHA grants, as feasible.	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants that includes historic preservation, including consideration of construction projects, to be eligible based on priorities for funds available	Partners use AFNHA grants to preserve historic properties	Years 1-3
	Support hist	oric preservation policies			
		Identify priorities and planning for historic preservation	Support and participate in preservation planning to identify historic preservation priorities.	Statewide preservation orgs, SHPOs, and local organizations including CLGs, communicate and work together on preservation planning.	Underway
		Build regional historic preservation coalition	Convene or support efforts to build regional historic preservation coalition, including within and larger than AFNHA.	Statewide preservation orgs, SHPOs, and local organizations including CLGs, communicate and work together on preservation planning.	Years 4-6

Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Build cooperative practices and strategies across region for historic preservation	Support and participate in strategic planning conversations to build cooperative practices and strategies	Statewide preservation orgs, SHPOs, and local organizations including CLGs participate in strategic planning conversations	Years 4-6
	_	Provide education to support preservation policies and best practices	Support and participate in education to support preservation policies and best practices	Statewide preservation orgs, SHPOs, and local organizations including CLGs provide education and information	Underway
	Develop and	support preservation trades			- -
		Accomplish historic preservation hands-on work	Support historic preservation hands-on work	Partners and property owners conduct historic preservation hands-on projects	Underway
		Build historic preservation trades training and job creation	S upport historic preservation trades training and job creation	Preservation partners including orgs and private businesses encourage or conduct historic preservation trades training and create jobs	Underway
		Support growth of suppliers and vendors of historic preservation products and services	Support efforts to increase availability of suppliers and vendors	Identify, promote vendors and suppliers; negotiate and co- op for sustainability and economy of scale; support salvage and storage of historic preservation materials	Years 4-6
onserve,		and share cultural traditions			
	Document a stories	nd conserve cultural traditions such as folkways, foo	dways, uses of forest products, music, dance, and		
		Collect, research, document, and share original sources, oral history, memories, and stories that tell region's past and traditions	Support cultural documentation and conservation	Cultural and community organizations, and individual artisans and practicioners, collect, document, share, and create expressions and experiences	Underway
		Collect, research, document, and share music and dance traditions, and their evolution in expression today	Support cultural documentation and continued expression	create expressions and experiences	Underway
		Collect and share oral history and memories for preserving history and culture	Support oral history initiatives	Collecting organizations conduct oral history interviews to collect and transcribe local memories	Underway
		Share history and culture of tribal nations and how that impacts regional heritage	Seek out, connect with, and cultivate relationship with tribal nations to share and integrate their stories into regional experiences	Tribal nations, and agencies with which they work, share their stories and experiences of the region	Underway
		Coordinate communal equipment for producing traditional arts	Support conversations about resources and equipment to support traditional artisans	Identify, provide, coordinate opportunities for sharing of resources and equipment to support traditional artisans	Underway
	_	Include capacity building, identification, documentation, conservation, and outreach concerning cultural traditions in eligibility for AFNHA grants	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants that includes conserving cultural traditions, to be eligible as feasible based on priorities for funds available	Partners use AFNHA grants to conserve cultural traditions	Year 2
	Create mark	et value and connections			
		Connect small businesses and their trends to relevant traditional arts and culture	Support "buy local" and traditional arts and products connected to our themes	Businesses and service organizations that support them encourage traditional arts and local products	Underway
		Offer entrepeneurial training to make connection between traditional culture and small businesses	Include entrepreneurs in tourism-development training and support	Service organizations that support businesses and business training encourage connection to traditional culture and local products	Underway
		Create visitor experiences based on arts and culture, including year round as well as events	Support experiences based on arts and culture	Businesses and communities include traditional culture in events and year-round experiences	Underway
xpand ou	utreach and	l raise awareness to promote best practices a	and stewardship		
	Provide outr including rai	reach and public education to promote conservation, ising awareness, best practices, and stewardship	historic preservation, and cultural traditions,		
	î	Educate residents and local communities about importance of and how they can help with stewardship of natural resources	Support stewardship programs and include in interpretation and education products and programs	Organizations with local community audience encourage conservation practices and awareness.	Underway

Objectives	Strategies		AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Encourage backyard conservation for private property owners	Support stewardship programs and include in interpretation and education products and programs	Organizations with local property audience encourage conservation practices and awareness.	Underway
		Engage with land and trail users about the importance of and how they can help to encourage stewardship of natural resources, such as promoting Leave No Trace, and using Trail Ambassadors in popular recreation areas to engage with trail users	Support stewardship programs and include in interpretation and education products and programs	Trail and recreation organizations provide ambassadors and educational programs to encourage stewardship and awareness	Underway
		Share news about how conservation projects are bringing benefits to local communities by maintaining ecological diversity and economic stability and growth	Support stewardship programs and include in interpretation and education products and programs	Organizations with local community audience encourage awareness of conservation benefits.	Underway
		Promote the importance of the region's water and natural resource health, and how that impacts downstream, high-population areas that represent many of our visitors.	S upport stewardship programs and include in interpretation and education products and programs	Organizations with tourist and out-of-area audience encourage conservation and stewardship awareness.	Underway
		Provide education and support to promote best practices and conservation policies, and raise awareness of issues, such as climate change, invasive species, and threats to biodiversity.	Support best practices for conservation and awareness following AFHA Inc policy	Promote and support best practice conservation policies	Underway
		Educate public and property owners about principles and best practices of historic preservation and cultural conservation	Support historic and cultural stewardship programs and include in interpretation and education products and programs	Organizations with local community audience encourage historic preservation practices and awareness.	Underway
		Educate general public of importance and benefits of historic preservation and cultural conservation	Support historic and cultural stewardship programs and include in interpretation and education products and programs	Organizations with public audience encourage historic preservation practices and awareness.	Underway
		Provide education and information to promote best practices and historic preservation policies	Support best practice historic preservation policies and promote following AFHA Inc policy	Promote and support best practice historic preservation policies	Underway
		Include raising awareness about stewardship in eligibility for AFNHA grants, to the extent feasible.	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants that includes raising awareness about stewardship, to be eligible based on priorities for funds available	Partners use AFNHA grants to educate about stewardship.	Years 1-3

ives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Goal 2: Share the Stories of Fore	est Heritage through Education, Interpr	etation, and Experiences	
e qua	ality interp	retation based on AFNHA thematic framewor	rk		
	Develop and	interpret a forest heritage narrative focused on asset	ts, conservation, and stewardship		
-		Continue conversation about our forest heritage narrative, including viewpoints and consensus on conservation and stewardship, and on facts, context, and understanding of natural, cultural and historic assets and stories	Using AFNHA significance statements and thematic framework, convene conversations and encourage interpretive concepts of the shared forest heritage narrative	Multiple partners, including forest industry representatives, public entities, conservation groups, heritage sites, and communities, work together to view region's history, development and resource use through the lens of shared forest heritage	Years 1-6
		Research and collate credible information on background and content on AFNHA themes, including academic, oral history, community sources	Support research and documentation that underscores interpretation of themes	Partners develop research and documentation related to themes relevant to them, and share this information with the AFNHA archive	Years 1-6
		Develop background context to tell stories of Indigenous	Contract with tribal partner consultants to develop context document from their own point of view. Develop and support interpretation to share these stories.	Partners share in research and connections to contribute to context document. Develop interpretive programs and products to share these stories.	Years 1-3
		Develop background context research and information on diverse and under-represented cultural groups, communities, and stories that make up Appalachian culture and history, with emphasis on people telling their own stories	Support and collate research, document, and relevant links and bibliography. Potentially sponsor studies on specific topics and under-represented stories that are not available from other sources. Develop and support interpretation to share these stories.	Partners develop research and documentation related to themes relevant to them, and share this information with the AFNHA archive. Develop interpretive programs and products to share these stories.	Years 4-6
		Compile and support research on natural resources, ecosystem conservation, and forestry practices	S upport research and documentation that underscores interpretation of our themes	Partners develop research and documentation related to themes relevant to them, and share this information with the AFNHA archive	Underway
		Provide archive sources to collect and share information that provides background and content for interpretive AFNHA themes	Develop, as part of the information clearinghouse, an archive repository using print and digital resrouces to collect AFNHA thematic content, compile, and provide bibliography and links to information available elsewhere	Partners provide content information or links to contribute to the clearinghouse archive	Years 4-6
		Share forest heritage narrative with diverse audiences, including communities, educators, and visitors	Include broad forest heritage narrative in interpretation and education	Include broad forest heritage narrative in interpretation and education	Underway
Γ		pretation to diverse audiences			•
-		Understand existing and targeted audiences, the needs of each, and how best to communicate with them and connect with their needs.	Audience feedback, tracking, and communication identifies and analyzes audience needs and ways to best meet those needs.	Interpretive partners track and share information on their audiences	Years 1-3
		Understand diverse audiences, including local and out- of-area visitors, with mulitiple viewpoints and backgrounds represented, targeting interpretation to meet diverse needs.	Criteria, training, and project implementation by AFHA Inc prioritizes including representation of diverse stories, and reaching diverse audiences.	Interpretive partners tell diverse stories for diverse audiences.	Years 1-3
-		Interpret for a variety of learning styles, type of experience, and accessibility for all audiences	Criteria, training, and project implementation by AFHA Inc prioritizes including variety of types of delivery, products, experiences accessible to all audiences	Interpretive partners include variety of types of delivery, products, and experiences to be accessible to all audences.	Years 1-3
	Develop visit	or experiences using interpretive products and prog			•
		Share the history and stories of Native Americans and how they impact regional heritage and culture	Understand and integrate tribal stories into regional interpretation, with emphasis on Native Americans telling their own history	Tribal nations, and agencies with which they work share their stories and experiences of the region	Years 1-3

ectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timefram
		Explore and interpret the evolution of Appalachian history and culture as impacted by the mountains and forest, transportation challenges, settlement patterns, and influence of diverse groups	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide interpretation and shape criteria for interpretive programs and products, including regional and networked interpretation	Partners conduct and share in research, contribute to and use AFNHA archive to support interpretation; use AFNHA interpretive matrix to guide and provide context for site specific and partner interpretation	Underway
		Recognize diversity with focus on African Americans and immigrant communities, and their contribution to historical story and Appalachian culture	Focus on diversity and inclusion in interpretive products and in outreach to audiences; include background context of historical and cultural groups, including from their own point of view	Partner sites encouraged to explore and share less-told stories of diversity and inclusion to guide and provide context for interpretation	Underway
		Tell the history of the logging boom and its impacts on the land and communities, distinct from modern forestry	Use AFNHA thematic framework and information archive to guide interpretation and shape criteria for interpretive programs and products, including regional and networked interpretation	Use AFNHA archive and thematic framework to guide and provide context for site specific and partner interpretation	Underway
		Explore the influence of the mountains and forest livelihoods in the evolution of Appalachian art, craft, music, dance, food and folkways, from early settlement to heritage-inspired artisans today	Research and document cultural heritage influences; support focus on heritage influences in traditional and contemporary expressions	Cultural partners such as Augusta Heritage Center, and local artisan initiatives such as Spruce Artisan Village and Mountain Music Trail, among others, take lead on documentation.	Underway
		Create and share region-wide, and cross-area narrative on traditional Appalachian culture and heritage	Help build and share regional context of heritage influences in Appalachian traditional and contemporary expressions. Convene and coordinate partner understandings of Appalachian culture, within AFNHA and across Appalachia	Work with other WV & Appalachia region NHAs, Humanities Councils and other orgs, develop context, collaborate, share resources and accomplishments toward broader understanding and interpretation of Appalachian culture	Underway
		Explore the natural resources of the area, including ecosystems, habitats, watershed, flora, fauna, and their significance, threats, and stewardship needs	Collect and collate research and information on natural resources; use AFNHA interpretive matrix to guide interpretation and shape criteria for interpretive programs and products, including regional and networked interpretation	Share research and information with AFNHA archive for interpretive use by partners; use AFNHA interpretive matrix to guide and provide context for site specific and partner interpretation	Underway
		Encourage better understanding of forest management, best practices, and forest industry today	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide interpretation and shape criteria for interpretive programs and products, including regional and networked interpretation	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide and provide context for site specific and partner interpretation	Underway
		Educate for environmental stewardship including best practices for recreational users	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide interpretation and shape criteria for interpretive programs and products, including regional and networked interpretation	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide and provide context for site specific and partner interpretation	Underway
		Create interpretive programs (presentations, guided tours, trail ambassadors, demonstrations, activities) interpreting AFNHA themes, concepts and ideas, topics and stories	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide interpretation and shape criteria for interpretive programs and products, including support to partners, and regional and networked interpretation		Underway
		Create interpretive products (signs, exhibits, itineraries, tours) interpreting AFNHA themes, concepts and ideas, topics and stories	including support to partners, and regional and networked interpretation	context for site specific and partner interpretation	Underway
		Create interpretive interactive visitor experiences that	Explore and include active experiences for visitors in	Explore and include active experiences for visitors in	Years 1-3
ſ	Croato intor	engage visitors in active learning and participation pretation connecting AFNHA themes across the regio	interpretive programs and products	interpretive programs and products	
Į	create inter	Interpret forest heritage and AFNHA in Appalachian	Develop new exhibit for updated themes; continue annual	Partners support planning, content, and loan of materials	
		Forest Discovery Center	rotating exhibits and related programming	for exhibits	Years 1-3
		Develop orientation exhibits at gateways and major attractions to introduce and communicate AFNHA themes	Develop orientation kiosks or displays deployed around the area.	Partners host orientation displays and help connect audiences to AFNHA	Years 1-6

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Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
	educational	Use thematic tours and networking products to link sites, attractions, and programs of related topics, using story maps, passports, signage trails, challeges, other tools to connect stories	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide interpretation and shape criteria for interpretive programs and products, including regional and networked interpretation	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide and provide context for site specific and partner interpretation	Years 1-6
		Support interpretation of forest heritage and AFNHA themes and stories throughout the area	Develop targeted interpretive products, and and provide support to partners including funding, training, and assistance, for forest heritage interpretation at variety of locations around the area	Use AFNHA thematic framework to guide and provide context for site specific and partner interpretation	Years 1-3
		Support connection of AFNHA themes to national initiatives, such as America 250, and other milestones	Coordinate and support region-wide interpretive projects to connect AFNHA to national milestones.	Participate in AFNHA initiatives, and develop site-relevant interpretation related to national milestones.	Year 2
		Offer interpretive programs that highlight forest management and products, such as forest management and factory tours	Develop and help coordinate "forestry" tours; support tours and activities related to this theme	Partners including forest industry offer interpretation and access	Years 1-6
		Provide interpretation in variety of modes and formats to reach different audiences including digital, audio, print, accessible	Develop and encourage best practices for accessibility, provide support for partners	Use best practices for accessibility in planning and implementing interpretive products and programs	Years 1-3
		Include fit-to-theme criteria for AFNHA supported interpretive products and sites	Develop and implement criteria to connect sites of related themes	Cooperate with and follow criteria to help implement quality region-wide interpretation	Years 1-3
		Use design guidelines and coordination for interpretive products to connect visitor experiences across the region	Develop and implement criteria to encourage thematic and visual connection across the region	Cooperate with and follow criteria to help implement quality region-wide interpretation	Years 1-3
		Include interpretation projects in eligibility for AFNHA grants	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants for interpretation projects, when funds are available	Partners use AFNHA grants for interpretation projects	Years 1-3
Provide ed	ducational	opportunities for youth and adult audiences			
	Expand fore	est heritage educational programming for youth and life	felong learners		
		Develop and use natural, cultural, and heritage education curricula connecting AFNHA themes and assets to educational standards	Support, share, and potentially help coordinate across sites	Partner sites develop and offer programs and curricula, adapt national programs like Project Learning Tree	Underway
		Expand teacher training and train the trainer opportunities for natural, cultural, and heritage education	Support, share, and potentially help coordinate across sites	Partner sites develop and offer programs and curricula, adapt national programs like Project Learning Tree	Underway
		Offer hands on outdoor education, participatory cultural heritage education	Offer and / or support programs and experiences	Partner sites develop and offer programs	Underway
		Introduce historic preservation concepts to younger generation, to appreciate historic structures and landscapes	Offer and / or support programs and experiences	Partner sites develop and offer programs	Years 4-6
		Build connections to bring programming to schools or support field trips	Provide support and show regional benefits	Partner sites build relationships with local schools	Underway
		Expand programming with youth groups, colleges, adult learning opportunities	Offer and / or support programs and experiences	Partner sites develop and offer programs	Years 4-6
		Include stewardship awareness and practices in interpretive and educational programs	Support, share, and potentially help coordinate across sites; evaluate outcomes	Partner sites develop and offer programs and curricula, adapt national programs like Project Learning Tree	Underway
		Include education projects in eligibility for AFNHA grants, to the extent feasible.	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants that includes education projects, to be eligible as feasible	Partners use AFNHA grants for education projects	Years 1-3

Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
	Adapt forest	heritage educational programming for wider audiend	ces		
		Find ways to use educational programs, especially participatory ones, for family and visitor interpretation	Provide support and potentially help coordinate for general audiences	Partner sites develop and offer programs	Years 4-6
		Expand stream snorkeling, citizen science, other engagement programs	Provide support and potentially help coordinate for targeted groups and general audiences	Partner sites develop and offer programs	Years 4-6
Ensure int	terpretation	and education experiences achieve impactf	ul outcomes		•
	Follow Inter	pretive Principles and Best Practices			
		Use interpretive principles and best practices of interpretation to deliver engaging, effective, and high quality experiences in professional and inclusive ways	Develop, encourage conversation, and train partners and interpreters in best practices and principles of effective interpretation	Interpretive partners use principles and best practices in programs and products	Underway
		Develop, communicate, and use best practice quality criteria for interpretation under AFNHA name	Develop quality criteria for partners to follow who receive AFNHA funding, support, or using AFNHA logo	Interpretive partners help develop, implement, and follow AFNHA quality criteria	Years 1-3
	Evaluate suc	ccess of educational and interpretive activities	•		
		Evaluate success of interpretive and educational programming for continuous improvement and demonstrating outcomes; use tools to understand ooutcomes for variety of audiences and situations	Take lead using AmeriCorps program evaluation	AFNHA sites that deliver interpretation and educational programs assist with study	Years 1-3
		Evaluate impact of stewardship educational programs	Take lead because of the AmeriCorps program evaluation	AFNHA sites that deliver interpretation and educational programs assist with study	Years 4-6
		Evaluate effectiveness of interpretive and educational programming for understanding of NHA impact	Implement data collection and surveys across the area as feasible, analyze and report on outcomes	AFNHA sites participate in data collection	Years 1-3
		Evaluate effectiveness of interpretive and educational programming for continuous improvement for sites	Encourage and provide evaluation tools	AFNHA sites evaluate interpretation they provide	Years 4-6

s Strategies		AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Time
		<b>Fourism and Economic Development to</b>	Benefit Communities	
	tourism in AFNHA			
Understand	d and support the tourism industry			
	Track national and state travel trends and share	Coordinate with partner organizations to track travel	Provide information and tracking on travel trends	Underv
	updates	trends	_	Underw
	Conduct periodic research on visitor experience	Coordinate with partner organizations to conduct	Partner and provide data for research on visitor	Years 1
		research on visitor experience	experience	
	Conduct research - or gather existing research - on employee / volunteer capacity in the region	Coordinate with partners to gather existing research on employee / volunteer capacity	Partner and provide data for research on capacity	Years 4
	Participate in WV Hospitality and Travel Association,			
	WV Association of CVBs, and Maryland Tourism	Join and participate in appropriate professional	Join and participate in appropriate professional	Years
	Coalition, etc.	organizations	organizations	
	Support tourism industry and infrastructure needs such	Support initiatives and educate about tourism industry	Support and help implement tourism industry and	
	as expanded broadband and workforce housing	and needs for tourism infrastructure improvements,	infrastructure improvements	Under
		following AFHA Inc. policy		
	ourism attractions, businesses, and organizations to w	ork together on tourism and creative economy		
collaboratio				-
	Promote AFNHA and heritage tourism activities and	Take lead to increase earned media opportunities about	Partners include AFNHA messaging in their earned media	
	destinations through digital and earned media	AFNHA as a region	oppotunities for their sites	Years
	opportunities		oppotulities for their sites	
	Encourage networking between tourism sites,	Take lead to encourage networkng and cross-promotion	Dente an activity at its second strand with all an sizes	
	attractions, partners to support cross-promotion and	such as through Creative Economy group and Tour Maps	Partners participate in cross-promotion with other sites within their local area and across AFNHA	Under
	"grow the pie"	networking		
	Work with state and local tourism marketing	Coordinate with state and local tourism offices to promote	State and local tourism marketing includes AFNHA as a	
	organizations to encourage marketing of AFNHA as a	marketing of NHA	destination	Years
	destination Work with state and local tourism marketing	<u> </u>		
	organizations to determine AFNHA organization roles in	Coordinate with state and local tourism offices to promote	State and local tourism marketing includes AFNHA as a	Years
	tourism marketing for the region	marketing of NHA	destination	i ears
nd promot	e AFNHA as a regional tourism destination	<u>I</u>		
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Build brand	d recognition for AFNHA			r
	Develop brand identity / signature look	Develop logo and brand	Partners use AFNHA brand and materials following brand guidance	Years
	Use toolkits and tip sheets to encourage use of key		Partners use AFNHA brand and materials following brand	
	messaging & AFNHA brand	Develop toolkits	quidance	Years
	3.3		Partners use AFNHA brand and materials following brand	
	Use design standards for AFNHA logo	Communicate and use design standards	guidance	Years
	Use branding campaign and distribute materials that	Develop branding campaign and distribute materials	Partners use AFNHA brand and materials following brand	Years
	communicate the AFNHA brand and messages		guidance	rears
	Engage travel media to build relationships, host		Partners include AFNHA messaging in their travel media	Years
	familiarization tours, and increase media coverage	state tourism offices	initiatives	
Market AFN	IHA as a regional destination			
	Work with WV Tourism, MD Tourism, and county DMOs		Partners assist in development of promotion for AFNHA	Years
	to promote region as an NHA	and local tourism websites	region	
	Expand broadcast and traditional media communication	Use press releases and outreach to print, radio, and TV	Partners include AFNHA messaging in their traditional	Underv

ectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timefram
		Expand virtual communication	Continued development of monthly newsletter outreach, social media campaigns, new section of website; and other virtual promotion; share promotion of partner opportunities	Partners include AFNHA messaging in their digital media opportunities for their sites, including sharing with AFNHA and other sites	Underway
		Expand outreach within the region to raise awareness of AFNHA as a region and cross-promote partner sites	Coordinate promotion and networking to raise awareness of AFNHA and connections with partner sites	Partners participate in cross-promotion with AFNHA and other sites to raise awareness of the NHA	Underway
		Expand outreach outside the region to raise awareness of AFNHA and partner sites as visitor destinations	Coordinate promotion and marketing to raise awareness of AFNHA and increase visitation to the area and partner sites	Partners participate in cross-promotion with AFNHA and other sites to increase visitation to the NHA	Years 1-3
	Make trip pla	anning through the AFNHA easy for visitors	1		
		Develop user friendly website tools to support trip planning to AFNHA as a destination	Expand website tools beyond providing thematic story maps information, to include also advanced trip planning capability	Partners contribute site information and participate in AFNHA tourism site program to support robust trip planning to AFNHA	Years 4-6
		Develop responsive fulfillment system to answer inquiries and provide visitor information	Develop response fulfillment protocols and responsibilities, in connection with AF Discovery Center information	Partners include AFNHA information in answering inquiries and providing visitor information.	Years 1-3
		Expand visitor center functions for Appalachian Forest Discovery Center to provide information about all of AFNHA	AFDC provide tourism information for entire AFNHA	AFNHA sites and partners provide information to AFDC in order to cross-promote across AFNHA	Underwa
		Establish satellite visitor information / interpretive centers through partnering with visitor centers across the region	Develop interpretation / information materials (kiosk / exhibit / signs) and services to be located at multiple sites and gateways (see also interp orientation displays)	Selected visitor center partners host AFNHA displays for visitor information and interpretation.	Years 1-3
		Share AFNHA information at participating visitor centers	Provide AFNHA information and brochures to area visitor centers.	Partners distribute AFNHA and partner site information	Years 1-3
		Create "Discover AFNHA <i>Here</i> " program with use of logos	Coordinate logo and awareness campaign for visitors across the region	Participate in and support regional AFNHA awareness campaign	Years 4-0
		Host training and familiarization tours for docents and those who provide visitor information	Host periodic familiarization tours to connect regional sites, encourage cross-promotion, and train those who give tourism information	Participate in regional familiarization tours to encourage cross promotion	Years 1-
	Connect AF	NHA with a wayfinding system			
		Plan and implement a regional wayfinding and signage system including shared design standards	Plan a regional wayfinding system, and implement key provisions	Partners participate in regional signage and follow shared design standards when possible	Years 1-
		Use signage, outreach, logo useage, and interpretation for connectivity across the region	Coordinate and implement wayfinding plan with informational, interpretive, and branding elements for coordinated connectivity	Partners participate in regional signage and follow shared design standards when possible	Years 1-
		Install AFNHA gateway signage at key locations	As part of wayfinding plan, coordinate and install planned AFNHA signage	Partners assist and participate in AFNHA regional signage	Years 4-
		Develop and implement additional wayfinding and directional tools, which may include apps and digital tools, brochures or mapguides	Expand apps and tools to coordinate wayfinding and networked sites elements	Partners participate in and promote wayfinding and networked sites apps, tools, and products	Years 4-
		Develop and implement circulation plans and itineraries tied to site network products	Promote geographic and thematic network itineraries, with web based and print products	Partners participate in geographic and thematic network itineraries; include AFNHA in locally developed products	Years 1-
		Assist with wayfinding for sites and attractions	Plan for and assist with wayfinding for tourism sites	Tourism partner sites and attractions work to provide and improve accessibility for all visitors	Years 1-6

Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
	Develop a re	gional network of attractions and experiences connection	cting AFNHA's sustainable tourism opportunities		
		Identify and connect tourism sites across AFNHA to provide experiences and larger "destination"	Take lead on identification and networking of tourism partner sites, including tourism sites criteria, to create larger destination	Partner sites participate and meet criteria as AFNHA tourism site partners	Years 1-3
		Tourism sites meet tourism readiness and quality criteria in stories, experiences, and services	Identify criteria for tourism sites, and provide support to partners to meet the criteria and enhance their site readiness.	Tourism sites meet criteria and participate as partners, emerging sites enhance their site readiness towards meeting criteria.	Years 1-3
		Develop networked thematic "story maps" and / or similar products to connect sites and create a larger destination	Take lead on thematic networking using "story maps" or other digital platform, as well as potentially print formats.	Partner sites participate as AFNHA tourism partners and provide information and cross-promotion to support thematic "story maps"	Underway
		Connect sites with regional guides / itineraries for a variety of interests and themes	Take lead on geographic area networking to develop itineraries or drive trails by region, implement with digital and potentially print formats.	Partner sites participate as AFNHA tourism partners and provide information and cross-promotion to support geographic itineraries	Years 1-3
		Connect and brand tourism site partners with AFNHA, including use of tools like passport stations and challenges	Take lead on development of tourism site branding and programs to engage tourism partner sites such as passport stations or challenges.	Partner sites participate as AFNHA tourism partners and provide information and cross-promotion to support passports and challenges	Years 1-3
		Develop "cross-over" interpretation to encourage audiences initially interested in one area to explore additional activities	Support tourism site partners including recreation sites, museums and attractions to offer programs and interactive activities	Tourism partners - recreation sites, museums and attractions - offer programs and interactive activities	Years 1-6
		Collaborate on creation and promotion of travel packages	Support and work with tourism sites and tourism organizations to create and promote travel packages.	Tourism partner sites and tourism organizations work together with AFNHA to create and promote travel packages.	Years 4-6
		Develop packages for group tour opportunities to bring groups to the region	Support and work with tourism sites and tourism organizations to create and promote group travel packages. Act as or work with receptive operators to include AFNHA tourism sites.	Tourism partner sites and tourism organizations work together to create and promote group travel packages. Receptive operators include AFNHA tourism sites.	Years 4-6
		Develop and communicate packaged opportunities for families and individual travelers to attract people to a larger destination	Support and work with tourism sites and tourism organizations to create and promote travel packages for individual travelers.	Tourism partner sites and tourism organizations work together to create and promote individual travel packages.	Years 4-6
		Familiarize and connect sites with each other for support and cross-promotion	Network and connect tourism partner sites to enhance and promote sites and encourage cross-promotion	Partner sites participate as AFNHA tourism partners including networking and cross-promotion	Years 1-3
		Include tourism projects in eligibility for AFNHA grants, to the extent feasible.	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants that includes tourism projects, to be eligible as feasible based on priorities for funds available	Partners use AFNHA grants for tourism projects	Years 1-3
	Enhance ac	cessibility			
		Improve visitor access to sites, attractions, and activities not previously available due to mobility, physical, or capacity limitations	Support and assist tourism sites to improve accessibility	Tourism partner sites and attractions work to provide and improve accessibility for all visitors.	Underway
		Support sites to meet ADA accessibility standards	Support and assist tourism sites to improve ADA accessibility	Tourism partner sites and attractions work to provide and improve accessibility for all visitors.	Years 1-6
evelop aı		sustainable tourism products and activities			
	Develop her	itage, culture, and nature-based activities and tourism			
		Provide quality tourism attractions	Support local assets to build capacity to offer quality experience, and to be open and accessible, meeting tourism site criteria	Partners develop quality interpretation and experiences; and grow capacity to meet tourist needs	Years 1-3
		Develop opportunities for "action" tourism (experiences, participatory programs, opportunities to engage in cultural traditions)	Support tourism site partners including recreation sites, museums, and attractions to offer experiential programs and interactive activities	Tourism partners - recreation sites, museums, and attractions - offer experiential programs and interactive activities	Underway

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Objectives	Strategies		AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Create new, and enhance and refresh existing, exhibits, signage, itineraries, and self-guided tours	Develop and support interpretive products for tourist engagement	Partners develop interpretive products for tourist engagement	Underway
		Develop themed walking and driving tours; community tours	Support communities and attractions to offer walking and driving tour products and programs	Communities and attractions develop and offer walking and driving tour products and programs	Underway
		Develop indoor, "rainy day" activities	Support museums and attractions to offer programs and interactive activities	Museums and attractions offer programs and interactive activities	Years 1-6
		Promote local foods - farmers' markets, restaurants, agri-tourism	S upport development and promotion of locally made products	Local producers participate in capacity building and promotion; businesses prioritize sales of local products	Years 1-6
		Develop and promote locally made products	S upport development and promotion of locally made products	Local producers participate in capacity building and promotion; businesses prioritize sales of local products	Years 1-6
		Develop activities for children, pre-teens, and teens	Support tourism site partners including recreation sites, museums and attractions to offer youth programs and interactive activities	Tourism partners - recreation sites, museums, and attractions - offer youth programs and interactive activities	Years 1-6
	Enhance an	nd improve availability and quality of tourism sites			
		Develop quality and accessibility criteria for AFNHA- supported tourism products and sites	Establish criteria for tourism partner sites to be eligible for AFNHA assistance and promotion	Tourism partner sites provide input and information to meet AFNHA quality and accessibility criteria	Years 1-3
		Assist tourism sites and communities to improve transportation infrastructure such as bike and pedestrian access, parking, streetscapes, and visitor infrastructure such as signage and comfort facilities	Support and work with tourism sites and communities to improve transportation and visitor services infrastructure	Tourism partner sites and communities work to provide transportation accessibility to accommodate all visitors	Years 4-12
		Assist attractions to expand personnel (staff, volunteers, AmeriCorps) to expand availability and hours of operation	Support and work with tourism sites to be open regular hours	Tourism partner sites and attractions work to expand availability and provide accurate opening information for visitors	Underway
Develop an	nd promote	e outdoor recreation opportunities			
	Develop an	d enhance outdoor recreation opportunities for a varie	ety of activities and audiences		
		Support and promote recreational assets (see Goal 1), including promoting variety and diversity of trails for multiple purposes, water recreation, hunting, fishing and nature activities, and active sports for year-round outdoor recreation possibilities for people of all ages and all abilities	Support public agencies, organizations, communities, and partners in developing and promoting recreation opportunities	Partners develop, provide, and market recreation opportunities	Underway
		Broaden and elevate recreation participation through education and promotion	S upport development of educational and promotional media	Partners promote and market recreation opportunities	Underway
	Expand ava	ilable visitor services and information for the recreation	on economy		•
		Market recreation opportunities to local users	Support and help market outdoor recreation opportunities	Partners develop, provide, and market recreation opportunities	Underway
		Market recreation opportunities to populations in nearby large urban areas	Support and help market outdoor recreation opportunities	Partners develop, provide, and market recreation opportunities	Years 1-3
		Improve access points to trails, water resources, other recreation	accessibility	Partners develop access points, trailheads, and increase accessibility	Years 1-3
		Improve trail wayfinding	Support planning and development of trail wayfinding systems, with unifying brand identity	Partners implement wayfinding systems	Years 1-6
		Provide information about trails and other opportunities through trail ambassadors at recreation sites	Support trail ambassador programs	Partners coordinate, train, and / or support trail ambassador programs	Years 1-3

bjectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
	Connect int	Develop and expand experts, guides, and outfitters for various outdoor recreation activities and help visitors access them	Support and help market outdoor recreation services	Partners and entrepreneurs offer outdoor recreation services to expand visitor use	Years 1-3
		Maintain connection to visitors through social media, newsletters, and other communications to share upcoming opportunities	Support and promote recreation opportunties through AFNHA media outreach	Partners support and promote recreation opportunties through media outreach	Underway
	Connect inte	erpretation with recreation			
		Build and brand a regional identiy around trails and waterways through interpretation	Apply thematic framework to opportunities around trail systems (land and water) to tie together a regional story and identity	Partners identify trails and waterways where interpretation will be beneficial, and provide appropriate interpretation tied to AFNHA themes	Years 1-6
		Use trailheads, thematic trails and itineraries, and destinations to share the region's history, tell the story of a landscape now used for recreation	Support design and development of interpretive products at landscape level	Partners identify interpretive needs at trailheads; collaborate on development of thematic trails and interaries	Years 1-6
		Create digital interpretive content for trail users	Expand interpretation for trail users on AFNHA website, social media and other platforms, and link to other resources	Partners use digital tools for interpretation, and link to interpetive resources on AFNHA website	Years 1-6
		Develop recreation opportunities at historic, cultural, and natural sites	Support expanding recreation activities connected with historic, cultural, and natural sites	Partners develop recreational activities and opportunities at a variety of historic and cultural, as well as natural, sites.	Years 1-6
pport co	ommunity e	economic development and build social capit	al		
	Support con	nmunity development on local and regional level			
		Work together regionally and collaboratively to build community development, increase cross-jurisdictional projects	Enhance collaboration and support efforts of partner organizations; support communications and leadership	Community development initiatives and collaborations, such as Main Streets, Mon Forest Towns, HUBCap, etc. work towards community development goals in their communities	Years 1-3
		Support individual communities as they move along their path toward community development goals	Provide support at level identified in communities based on their needs and capacity, not one size fits all	Communities and local organizations identify their goals and needs to build their community development	Years 1-3
		Support business and non-profit efforts in development and entrepreneurship	Support business and non-profit development efforts, especially related to forest heritage asset development, historic preservation, recreation economy, tourism, and forest industry	Communities, businesses, and service providing organizations that support them, work together to build capacity, skills, and work toward joint community goals	Years 1-3
		Include community development projects in eligibility for AFNHA grants, to the extent feasible.	Develop criteria and eligibility for AFNHA grants that includes community development projects, to be eligible as feasible based on priorities for funds available	Partners use AFNHA grants for community development projects	Years 1-3
	Support ass	essment, planning and community development prog	rams		•
			Provide technical assistance and support for community and organizational assessments and planning	Communities and organizations conduct periodic planning and assessments; service-providing organizations provide support and technical assistance	Years 1-6
		Support existing programs and Underway initiatives such as Main Street and ON TRAC, HubCAP, Mon Forest Towns, and other community development efforts	Support existing and developing programs to leverage assistance and provide gap services that support partner initiatives.	Service providing partners continue to serve Underway initiatives. Orgs who need assistance participate in and take advantage of available programs.	Underway

Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
			Meet organizations where they are in providing assistance, provide services as needed not one-size-fits- all. Help develop network and make connections.	Service providing and community partners continue to help lower-capacity communities. Orgs who need assistance take advantage of available help.	Years 1-6
		Build connections to identify projects and leverage funding	Connect with partners to identify funding needs, and to work together to leverage project and program funding.	Partners work together to identify funding needs, and to leverage project and program funding.	Years 1-6
		Build capacity, leadership, and social capital in communities and organizations	Provide technical assistance, training, and support for leadership and capacity building for partner organizations	Communities and organizations participate in trainings and capacity building activities; service-providing organizations provide support and technical assistance	Years 1-6
	Coordinate	workforce and leadership development	•		8
		Assist individuals with developing craft / trade skills necessary for heritage conservation projects and programs	Offer and arrange trainings; partner with schools, community colleges, trade groups, unions, etc., to foster more workforce development skills	Staff with educational organizations / institutions, job training organzations, unions, etc., provide workforce training	Years 4-6
			Offer and arrange trainings; partner with schools, community colleges, trade groups, unions, etc., to foster more workforce development skills	Staff with educational organizations / institutions, job training organzations, unions, etc., provide workforce training	Years 4-6
		Encourage "Employer of AmeriCorps" to hire AmeriCorps alumni within AFHA, Inc. organization and AFNHA partners across the area	Communicate opportunities, and prioritize AmeriCorps alumni in hiring	Encourage partners to consider AmeriCorps alumni in hiring	Years 1-3

Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Goal 4: Connect and Su	pport Partners Linked by the Region's	Forest Heritage	
evelop th	ne partnersl	hip network through leadership and collabor	ation		
•		d connect partners with related interest and priorities			
		Convene partners, facilitate their partcipation in networking and collaboration	Build on annual gathering of partners and Roundtables to establish regular gathering of key partners, to assist with partner comminications and help facilitate coordination plans and outcomes	Partners partcipate in networking and collaboration; other organizations who provide "convening" roles coordinate with AFNHA for positive collaboration	Years 1-3
		Facilitate organizational connection at various levels (leadership and staff; private, local, state, federal)	Support, participate, provide leadership for collaboration	Partners partcipate in networking and collaboration	Years 1-6
		Coordinate "Partners Roundtables" to build communication and cooperation among major partners linked by common interests	Provide leadership for partner connection when appropriate, such as Highland Creative Economy for tourism partners	Partners partcipate in networking and collaboration	Years 1-6
		Participate in regional networks and collaborations based on relevant focus areas. Bring focus and thematic approach to goals of partner organizations using themes as framework for connectivity	Support, participate, assist, and provide leadership when needed, for partner connection	Partners partcipate in networking and collaboration	Years 1-6
		Establish a communications network of partners	Create a ListServ and / or other networking tools to enable partners to share information or ask questions across a regional heritage partnership network	Partners partcipate in networking and collaboration	Years 1-6
		Provide staff support for partnership coordination	Provide dedicated staff support from AFHA, Inc. for partnership coordination	Partner staff participate and support networking and collaboration	Years 1-3
	Develop an l	Information Clearinghouse to Consolidate asset and o	organizational information		
		Develop a resource management system / content management system for understanding and coordinating assets and resources across AFNHA	Coordinating entity either establishes and takes responsibility for information, or identifies partners who maintain relevant information, in order to provide access to relevant information for AFNHA partners	Partners provide information for ongoing updates to asset and resource system; partners who maintain similar or contributing systems coordinate with coordinating entity to minimize duplication of efforts	Years 1-6
		Maintain comprehensive asset list of natural, cultural, and historical assets	Maintain primary asset list	Partners provide information for ongoing updates to asset list	Underway
		Develop and maintain directory of partners, what they offer, existing resources - help organizations find / share skills and expertise	Collect and share information on partners and the resources they are willing to share	Partners provide information for ongoing updates to partners list	Years 1-6
		Establish a clearinghouse of professionals	Create a list with names of credible professionals for partners to consider for help with projects in their communities	Partners provide information for ongoing updates to list	Years 1-3
		Develop and maintain artists directory for the region, including to help connect apprentices and masters	Either establish and take responsibility for artists directory, or identify partners who maintain relevant information, in order to provide artist information and connections through the region	Partners provide information for ongoing updates to artists directory; partners who maintain similar or contributing directories coordinate to minimize duplication of efforts	Years 4-6
		Develop and maintain online calendar of relevant events	Either establish and take responsibility for calendar, or identify partners who maintain relevant information, in order to provide calendar information on AFNHA relevant events	Partners provide information for ongoing updates to events calendar; partners who maintain similar or contributing calendars coordinate to minimize duplication of efforts	Years 4-6
		Identify existing and opportuntities for AFNHA interpretation and signage using interpretive plan and signage plan	Collect information on implementation of signage and interpretive plans	Partners provide information for ongoing updates of signage and interpretation they provide	Years 1-6

Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
	Collaborate	on funding opportunities and coordinate technical as	sistance for grant and funding opportunities		
		Convene funders and potential project grantees to leverage larger projects (capture teams) for conservation, historic preservation, cultural, and community development projects	Help convene and support capture team conversations and funding asks	Provide information on projects and potential funders; help convene and participate in capture team conversations and funding asks	Years 1-6
		Consolidate information and distribution of information on grants and other funding opportunities by creating a "Funders Pool" of grant opportunities with information on applications, deadlines, and best practices	Collect, organize, and disseminate information	Collect and share information	Years 1-3
		Identify and share funding opportunities including from sources outside the area	Collect, organize, and disseminate information	Collect and share information	Years 1-3
		Coordinate partner and community efforts on funding asks and leveraging	Provide communication about and technical assistance with grant applications, support letters, etc.	Provide communication about and technical assistance with grant applications, support letters, etc.	Years 1-3
		Provide assistance with navigating paperwork and permitting that accompanies conservation work	Provide technical assistance and support partners in navigating paperwork	Provide technical assistance and support other partners in navigating paperwork and permitting processes	Years 4-12
	Coordinate	volunteer recruitment and management			1
		Create regional volunteer program to connect volunteers with opportunities and needs across heritage sectors (such as trail ambassador or improvement, ecorestoration, museum docents, event help)	Establish program, help make connections	Partners manage their own volunteer programs, and support and participate in regional program and training	Years 1-3
		Provide volunteer mangagement training	Improve volunteer management training curriculum and training capacity, offer training annually for sites and AmeriCorps members	Partners participate in training and share their own best practices with others	Years 1-3
		Continue AmeriCorps support for capacity building and volunteer management for partner sites	AFNHA AmeriCorps program continues to prioritize capacity building and volunteer management as one of the program goals	Partners hosting AmeriCorps members or service projects engage with members to building organizational capacity and enhance volunteerism	Underway
		Assist with volunteer recruitment through creation of a database with names of people willing to volunteer and sharing of this information across a communitcations network with other partner organizations	Implement a volunteer management system using software to track information and connect volunteers with opportunities.	Partners utilize volunteer management system to enhance their own volunteerism program.	Years 1-3
		Provide tools and platforms for tracking, evaluating, and celebrating volunteer service	Volunteer program includes tracking, evaluation, and volunteer appreciation.	Partners participate and include their site volunteers in volunteer program tracking, evaluation, and volunteer appreciation.	Years 1-3
		Coordinate opportunities for college students	Connect with academic partners to provide service learning and volunteer opportunities	Academic partners make and share connections for engaging students with service learning and volunteer opportunities	Years 1-3
		Collaborate with existing service organizations	Connect with service organization partners to provide service project and volunteer opportunities	Academic partners make and share connections for engaging students with service learning and volunteer opportunities	Years 1-3

ectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
	Provide tech	nical assistance and training opportunities			
		Offer workshops, technical assistance and / or training for partners in leadership, board development, volunteer management, fundraising, and other requested capacity building skills	opportunities: open some AmeriCorps training	Service provider partners share their training expertise and tech assistance; site partners participate to increase organizational capacity	Years 1-6
		Offer workshops, technical assistance and / or training for partners in technology, promotion, social media, tourism development, historic preservation, conservation, and other requested skills	opportunities to partners	Service provider partners share their training expertise and tech assistance; site partners participate to increase organizational skills	Years 1-6
		Offer interpretation training and criteria to support partners in offering quality interpretive products connected to AFNHA themes	Support through offering annual interpretation trainings, direct tech support, and connecting to other training opportunities; open some AmeriCorps training opportunities to partners	Service provider partners share their training expertise and tech assistance; site partners participate to increase organizational skills	Years 1-3
		Identify, define, and communicate historic preservation best practices for owners and stewards of historic assets and conservation best practices for forest owners.	training opportunities	Service provider partners share their training expertise and tech assistance; help promote and communicate opportunities to private property owners	Years 1-6
		Develop business / entrepreneurial training and support	Support through facilitating business training and technical assistance	Service provider partners share their training expertise and tech assistance	Years 4-6
		Offer and / or support experience, professional development, career shadowing, to encourage new generation of professionals	Provide opportunities for professional experience through AmeriCorps, internships, and volunteer opportunities	Partners support new professionals through hosting AmeriCorps members, interships, mentorships	Underway
	Partner with	schools and colleges for education and support			
		Encourage service learning opportunities for service activities / volunteerism tied to learning objectives	Support, potentially offer programs, share opportunities and connections	Partners provide service learning opportunities	Years 1-6
		Develop internships and class projects that support AFNHA and site projects	Support, potentially offer programs, share opportunities and connections	Partners provide internship and class project opportunities	Years 1-6
		Connect with schools, colleges, and youth groups as sources for volunteer recruitment	Network and share connections	Partners provide volunteer opportunities	Years 1-6
	Support Nati	ional Heritage Area Program			
		Participate in Alliance of National Heritage Areas and work cooperatively with neighboring National Heritage Areas	Join and participate in ANHA, partner with other NHAs	NHAs with connections to AFNHA provide tech assistance, cooperation, and support	Underway
		Provide support for AFNHA	Support education about AFNHA benefits and needs following AFHA Inc. policy	Communicate accomplishments, share information, provide support and support letters	Underway
		S upport National Heritage Area program	Support education about NHA benefits and needs following AFHA Inc. policy	Communicate accomplishments, share information, provide support and support letters	Underway
		Support state and federal programs that benefit NHA programs, such as for AmeriCorps	Support education about program benefits to AFNHA following AFHA Inc. policy	Communicate accomplishments, share information, provide support and support letters	Underway
		L	1	1	

es Strate		AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
	oport for partners			
Contin	Department of the AmeriCorps program Operate a high-quality AmeriCorps program to provide asset enhancement, educational / outreach direct services, and capacity building for WV partners selected on competitive basis	Operate AmeriCorps program according to best profiessional practices, to meet AFNHA goals, build ed capacity for partners, and professional development for the members	Partner sites participate in AmeriCorps program, providing quality supervision and engagement, admin fees and inkind reporting, for community benefit, member support, and continuous improvement	Underway
	Utilize AmeriCorps members as outreach ambassador of AFNHA in communities to help communicate and improve awareness and understanding of the NHA	AmeriCorps members, in addition to the service to accomplish goals of the NHA; act as ambassadors for AFNHA to help build a strong NHA coalition that affects change	Work with all approved AmeriCorps partners to help understand that they are a part of a larger NHA	Underway
	Evaluate process, outcomes, and impact of AmeriCorp program to meet AmeriCorps evaluation expectations and for continuous improvement	s Conduct evaluation studies to improve program and meet AmeriCorps grant requirements; Years 1-3 conduct stewardship education evaluation	Partners participate in evaluations when requested	Years 1-3
	Investigate Maryland AmeriCorps partners to support potential opportunities for sites	Build relationships with Maryland AmeriCorps programs and assist MD partners to access their services	MD partners work to provide AmeriCorps or other service resources for sites	Years 1-3
	Build network of AFHA AmeriCorps alumni to continue their engagement with AFNHA and support continued professional development	Reach out to AmeriCorps alums to build engagement and Underway support	Partner sites help provide outreach to AmeriCorps alumni	Years 1-3
Offer A	NHA grants to partners			
	Initiate heritage tourism mini-grant pilot program using NHA and foundation funds; Implement pilot program for tourism development grant, with criteria and policies, implement, and evaluate program	AFNHA Creative Economy program provides one year of tourism enhancement mini-grants, grant solicitation, review, funding, and monitoring	Benedum Foundation and Eastern WVCTC support grants, Creative Economy partners participate in grants, complete and report on projects	Year 1
	Establish a grant program to support heritage projects that align line with AFNHA goals	Determine scope and eligibility for grants from management plan priorities and goals, using experience with pilot program as a guide; draft grant program criteria for application, match, administration, requirements, reporting, and evaluation; and grant solicitation, review, funding, and monitoring	Partners participate in grant program	Year 2 or firs year of full NHA funding
Develo	the Highlands Creative Economy Program	-		•
	Provide technical and professional assistance to communities and organizations	Provide technical assistance from staff based on available skills and capacity	S taff and other partners that have internal capacity	Underway
	Provide additional services or programs in line with management plan goals, based on evolving needs, funding opportunities, and organizational capacity	Provide services and programs in line with management plan goals	Support and participate in services and programs in line with management plan goals	Years 1-6
	FNHA communities with expanded outreach		-	
Raise a	wareness in and increase engagement with AFNHA com	munities		1
	Conduct in-person visits and meetings in AFNHA counties, when feasible, starting with those less	Staff and Board arrange and conduct local meetings	Local partners help arrange and invite participants	Years 1-3

bjectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Establish AFNHA presence in multiple counties.	Seat staff in regional offices to be accessible to all 18- counties	Work with regional partners to share resources and grow AFNHA presence	Years 4-6
		Establish a speakers bureau roster who will present about AFNHA to community organizations	Staff and Board present to community organizations throughout the area	Local partners set up invitations to meetings	Years 1-6
		Continue virtual and media outreach to raise awareness of AFNHA within communities across the region	S taff and Board continue using virtual tools to engage those beyond in-person meetings	Work with regional partners to share resources and grow AFNHA presence	Underway
	Expand AFN	IHA network outreach			
		Stay flexible to remember communication methods vary over generations and experience; make effort to not leave audiences out	S tay up-to-date with new communication methods and the changing atmosphere of social and traditional media; accommodate members and partners not using digital media	Partners assist with sharing AFNHA communication efforts	Years 1-3
		Expand virtual communication including social media and newsletters	Expand exisitng virtual communication through monthly newsletters, special releases, and social media campaigns	Partners assist with sharing and promoting AFNHA media	Underway
		Expand broadcast and traditional media communication to all communities in the region	Continue to expand existing broadcast and traditional media communication across all platforms	Partners assist with sharing and promoting AFNHA media	Underway
		Expand in-person and word-of-mouth outreach throughout 18 counties	Expand in-person and word-of-mouth outreach throughout 18 counties	Partners assist with sharing AFNHA communication efforts	Underway
	Establish a	structured partnership program			
		Develop definitions, costs, and benefits for AFNHA organizational partners	Develop AFNHA definitions, costs, process, and benefits for organizational members and partners	Agencies and organzation partners sign on and participate in AFNHA partner program	Years 1-3
		Determine roles, definitions, agreements for formal and informal partners	Develop AFNHA definitions and process for engaging with and tracking partners and reporting	Agencies and organzation partners sign on and participate in AFNHA partner program	Years 1-6

Objectives Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
Goal 5: N	lanage, Promote, and Sustain Appalach	nian Forest Heritage Area Inc. as the Na	tional Heritage Area Coordinating Entit	y
lanage AFHA Inc. to	o provide direct service programs and leaders	hip for partner initiatives		
AFHA, Inc.	supports AFNHA partnership network			
	Convene partner networks	AFHA Inc convene, provide leadership, and offer opportunities to for partner networking	Partners participate and engage with partner networking	Years 1-6
	Develop an information clearinghouse	opportunities, and partners	Partners participate through sharing information and utlizing clearinghouse resources	Years 1-6
	Collaborate on funding opportunities	AFHA Inc coordinate and share information on funding opportunities, leveraging opportunities, and support including support letters	Partners participate through sharing information and working together on funding opportunties, leverage, provide support for AFHA and partners' projects.	Years 4-6
	Facilitate volunteer management	AFHA Inc develop volunteer support program including training and support services to partners	Partners participate in AFNHA volunteerism program to support and improve their own volunteer management	Years 1-3
	Provide technical assistance and training	AFHA Inc develop targeted training and workshops, some offered annually for AmeriCorps members and partner sites. Individual technical assistance offered in conjuction with programs.	Partners provide workshops and other training opportunties for the AFNHA partnership network	Years 1-6
	Coordinate communications and outreach	Continue and expand AFNHA outreach, awareness and communication of activities and opportutnities	Partners participate and assist with sharing AFNHA communication efforts	Underway
	Evaluate programs and projects to continuous improvement and to understand impact		Partners participate in data collection and evaluation, learn from, and help to share results	Years 1-3
	Increase outreach across area with field staff located away from Elkins	Add AFHA Inc field staff in 2 to 4 locations across the	Select partners host and provide office space for AFHA Inc field staff	Years 4-6
AFHA Inc.o	operates programs to support AFNHA			
	Operate AmeriCorps program		Volunteer West Virginia and AmeriCorps Federal Agency provide funding and support program; host sites provide supervision and funding support	Underway
	Offer AFNHA Grants program for sub-grants to partners	Develop criteria and procedures for grants program, implement annually with matching grants to partners, with project eligibility selected from management plan goals	Partner sites apply and receive AFNHA grants, following criteria and procedures for quality products and reliable reporting	Years 1-3
	Convene the Highlands Creative Economy program	tourism and community development networking, training, and capacity building.	Eastern WV Community & Technical College is lead partner and training provider. Other partners participate, attend activities, & support the program	Underway
	Operate the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center and communicate AFNHA themes	Operate the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center as primary public facility with museum, interpretation, and visitor information	Partners support AFDC with information and museum loans for rotating exhibits, and by sharing information materials for visitor information	Underway
-	ccording to best management practices			
Continually	y improve organizational governance and management			1
	Conduct AFHA, Inc. governance and management according to professional standards	improvement, and compliance	Partners support AFHA Inc through sharing experience and best practices	Underway
	Periodically update organizational policies, and review that organization follows them properly	Board and staff responsible for best practices, updates, and compliance	Partners support AFHA Inc through sharing experience and best practices	Underway

Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Regularly review and update board by-laws to ensure current with operations and state / federal laws	Review and recommend bylaws changes	AFNHA members vote to approve bylaws changes	Year 1, every two years
		Maintain active board representing diverse interests	Conduct outreach to attract board members diverse in interest groups, locations, and skills.	AFNHA members vote to elect board members	Annually for 1/3 of board
	Establish active board committees for organizatio issues		Establish committees of board members only with responsibilities of organizational advancment	Partners support AFHA Inc through sharing experience and best practices	Years 1-3
		Establish active board / partner committees for programs	Use active committees to engage people beyond the board and encourage potential new leadership	Members and partners encouraged to participate in program committees	Years 1-3
		Provide market-based competitive salaries and benefits to all staff	Insure that all staff salaries and benefits are comparable to the standard salaries and benefits of similar positions in Elkins, and West Virginia / Maryland	Share information with AFHA about salary comparison and benefits opportunities	Years 1-3
		Establish transition plan for executive staff	Write, and use when needed, transition plan for key positions	Share information with AFHA about succession plan best practices	Years 1-3
		Build AFNHA professional staff positions	Create new positions within AFNHA to take on greater roles and responsibilities of growing NHA, including field positions located around the area	Support AFHA expansion. Select partners host field staff in existing offices.	Years 1-6
Ensure su	stainability	and growth of AFNHA			
	Develop fun	ding strategies			
		Establish a funding plan with strategy to ensure financial stability with diverse income sources for organization and the NHA - Raise sufficient funds to match NHA's annual congressional approproations along with other funds for organizational operations and sustainability	Board members and executive staff develop short-term and long-term funding strategies to ensure financial stability	Partners support and participate in multi-partner grants; partners provide grant and AmeriCorps match both cash and in-kind	Years 1-6
		Utilize NHA funding as basis of support for AFNHA and implementation of AFNHA management plan	Funding plan uses NHA funding to leverage additional grant and private resources to match NHA funding, leverage additional programs, and support implementation of management plan.	Partners support and participate in matching and leveraging funding for implementation of the management plan.	: Underway
		Strategically apply for grants to implement management plan and NHA programs and projects	Use grant requests to support and implement AFNHA programs and projects	Partners support and participate in multi-partner grants	Underway
	Create reven	nue-generating programs and projects			
		Identify fee-for-service programs - tours, technical / professional assistance, that can generate income for the organization	Assess services provided by staff and provide these services for a fee when appropriate to cover costs and support the mission	Partners utilize AFHA Inc fee-based services and programs when appropriate for their needs	Years 1-6
		Generate revenue from AmeriCorps site administrative fees to sustain and operate AmeriCorps program	Operate AmeriCorps program dependent on successful grant funding	AmeriCorps site partners participate in AmeriCorps program and provide administrative fee, in-kind match, supervision and compliance	Underway
		Consider program fees to operate AFNHA programs	Assess program costs and benefits and assess program admistrative fees when needed and appropriate.	Partners participate in and support AFNHA programs when appropriate	Years 1-6
		Generate revenue through admission and event participation fees	Assess museum and events costs and charge admission fee if/when appropriate.	Partners support AFNHA museum and events	Years 1-6
		Investigate viability and need for tourism services such as guided tours or receptive operator	Consider providing these services for a fee if feasible and needed	Partners use AFNHA services when needed	Years 1-6
		Leverage available staff skills for fee-for-service technical assistance	Provide these services for a fee	Partners use AFNHA services when needed	Years 1-6

Objectives	Strategies	Actions	AFHA Inc. Role	AFNHA Partner Roles	Timeframe
		Consider offering fee-based grant-writing, oversight, and reporting assistance for small organzations and towns	Provide these services for a fee	Partners use AFNHA services when needed	Years 4-6
		Provide fiscal agent and grant administration services	Provide these services for a fee	Partners use AFNHA services when needed	Underway
		Investigate possibilities for AFNHA events that serve programmatic and fundraising goals	Consider hosting or participating in events that raise revenue.	Partners host events that include AFNHA awareness; partners participate in AFNHA events	Years 4-6
	Expand gift shop in Appalachian Forest Discovery		Build inventory and sales program for logo items and made-in-AFNHA products	Partner retail sites and artisans provide goods for AFNHA to sell; sell AFNHA goods through their outlets	
		Generate rent revenue for AFHA Inc. owned facilities - Darden Mill	Rent portions of Darden Mill for museum tenants and event use	WV Railroad Museum rent museum space. Partners rent event room for appropriate events.	Underway
	Grow fundra	aising and sustainability			
		Expand AFNHA individual membership program	Build individual membership program to build engagement, with free or dues based program	Individuals join as AFNHA members	Years 1-3
		Develop donor fundraising and sponsorship program	Board members, staff, development staff, develop and implement fundraising and sponsorships	Partners support AFNHA fundraising	Years 4-6
		Build a reserve fund through annual contributions	Board members and executive/development staff build fundraising to provide a reserve fund	Partners support AFNHA fundraising	Years 4-6
		Work to establish an endowment through grants and donors	Board members and executive/development staff build fundraising to establish an endowment	Partners support AFNHA fundraising	Years 7-12

Appendix G	_				A Implementation Priorities			
Actions described here are based on Actions and Roles described in Action Plan,					and the second state of th			
Timeframe Underway is already happening, and continuing. Year + ongoing is y Budget Expected additional costs to AFHA Inc. for suggested projects. Goal 5								
Funding Sources Possible additional funding sources for some or all of project								
AFHA Inc. Priority Actions		FHA Inc. Pro			Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	AFHA direct action	Inform, outreach, coordinate	Ameri- Corps service	Sub- grants				
Goal 1: Identify, Preserve, Conserve, and Enhance th	e Ass	ets that		t Fore	est Heritage			
Support conservation best practices based on public agency mangagement goals such as helping with land treatments and monitoring		x	x	x	Land management agencies Implement conservation management goals and stewardship on public lands, based on their land management plans.	underway		
Support and promote <b>pollinator initiative</b> , including implementing and encouraging pollinator projects, promoting regional initiative and awareness	x	x	x	x	Partners support pollinator species and pollinator health through conservation activities and education. Partners sign AFNHA Pollinator Resolution to help raise awareness	underway		
Support planning, improvement, and maintenance for <b>recreational</b> opportunities including trails, water recreation, hunting and fishing		x	x	x	Partners plan and establish safe, accessible, and well maintained recreational opportunities including trails, water recreation and hunting and fishing opportunities	underway		
Build awareness, conservation, and <b>preservation of historic buildings, cultural</b> <b>landscapes, collections and properties</b> , and support partner efforts to build capacity and skills, to use best practices, and preserve historic properties. Provide support for preservation efforts including tech assistance, training, planning, project support and hand-on assistance		x	x	x	Partner sites use best practices to preserve historic properties, manage collections, and document local history.	underway		
Preserve and enhance Darden Mill, to be used for AFNHA programming. Continue preservation with annual maintenance.	×		x		Partner WV Railroad Museum continues as tenant and assists with maintenance.	underway	\$6,000 annually	rent
Conserve stories that tell region's past through collecting, research, documenting, and sharing original sources, oral history, memories, traditions and practices.	x	x	x	x	Cultural and community organizations, and individual artisans and practicioners, collect, document, share, and create expressions and experiences	underway		
Raise awareness of stewardship, educate residents and local communities about importance of and how they can help with stewardship of natural resources	×	x	x	x	Support stewardship programs and include in interpretation and education products and programs	underway		
Cultivate <b>relationship with tribal nations</b> to understand, share and integrate their stories into regional experiences	x	x	x	x	Tribal nations, and agencies with which they work, share their stories and experiences of the region, and participate as partners with AFNHA.	Year 1 ongoing		
Complete rehabilitation of Darden Mill including third floor, access, and retaining wall.	x		x		S upport grant funding for capital improvement and access improvements	Year 4 & 5	\$300,000 improvements.	WV Arts Commission Cultural Facilities grant, or other preservation / access grant sources

Appendix G					A implementation Priorities			
AFHA Inc. Priority Actions	AFHA	FHA Inc. Pro	<u> </u>	es	Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	direct	outreach,	Ameri- Corps	Sub-				
	action	coordinate	service	grants				
Goal 2: Share the Stories of Forest Heritage through	Educa	ation, In	terpreta	ation,	and Experiences			
Use <b>AFNHA thematic framework to guide interpretation</b> by AFHA Inc and								
partners, to shape criteria for interpretive programs (such as presentations &					Partners use AFNHA thematic framework to guide and provide			
guided tours), products (signs, exhibits, self-guided tours), and experiences	x	x	x	x	context for site specific and partner interpretation, follow criteria and use interpretation best practices in providing interpretive	Year 1 ongoing		
(demonstrations, activities) including interpretation of natural, historic, and	^	^	^	^	programs, products, and experiences. Utilize Citizen Science	real rongoing		
cultural assets, resources, and stories related to AFNHA themes.					programs at partner sites.			
Include stewardship awareness and support expanded opportunities for					Partners offer natural, cultural, and heritage education			
natural, cultural, and heritage education experiences connected to AFNHA		х	x	х	experiences connected to AFNHA themes and stewardship	underway		
themes and assets					awareness, to youth and adult audiences.			
Use <b>story maps and thematic tours</b> to link and network sites, attractions, and	x	x	x	x	Tourism site partners participate in thematic tours, provide site	underway		
programs of related thematic topics	^	^	^	^	information, implement criteria, engage with visitors.	underway		
Appalachian Forest Discovery Center interprets forest heritage and AFNHA					Partners support planning, content, and loan of materials for			WV Humanities Council, other
stories and thematic framework in <b>annual exhibits</b> and related programming.	х	х	×		exhibits	underway	\$2000 annually	interpretation grants
Evaluate outcomes of stewardship educational programs, conduct	x		x		AmeriCorps site partners that deliver interpretation and	Year 1 & 2	\$20,000 for outside evaluator	WV Humanities Council, other
AmeriCorps process and outcomes evaluation of stewardship programs	~		~		educational programs participate in study	rourrouz		interpretation grants
Develop archive to collect and share information, including research								
documented under Goal 1, as part of the information clearinghouse. Research								
and collate credible information on background and content relevant to					Partners support research and documentation that underscores			
AFNHA themes, including academic, scientific, oral history, and cultural	x	x	x	x	interpretation of themes. Provide information from partner	Year 2 ongoing		
community sources including under-represented people. Use archive repository					research and information to include in archive repository, and use information from the archive in developing interpretative products.			
with print and digital resrouces to collect AFNHA thematic content, compile,					information nom the archive in developing interpretative products.			
and provide bibliography and links to information available elsewhere								
Target interpretation to meet needs of diverse audiences and learning								
styles. Understand existing and targeted audiences, the needs of each, and					Partners assist by participating in tracking and audience			
how best to communicate with them and connect with their needs. Develop	x	x	x	x		Year 2 ongoing		
and use means to assess audience feedback, tracking, and communication to								
identify and analyze audience needs and ways to best meet those needs.								
Develop and implement criteria and best practices for AFNHA supported								
					Partners support and implement criteria, striving for continuous			
interpretive products and sites, to include thematic connection, interpretation	х	x	x	х	improvement in interpretive programs and products to offer quality region-wide interpretation	Year 2 ongoing		
best practices, design criteria, and accessibility. Appalachian Forest Discovery Center develops new primary exhibit based					5 I			
on updated AFNHA thematic framework	х		x		Partners assist by participating in exhibit planning, providing information, and loaning objects to be used exhibit.	Year 2 & 3	\$30,000	WV Humanities Council, other interpretation grants
					Partners around the area host orientation displays and help			1 3
Develop orientation exhibits at gateways and major attractions to introduce	x	x	x			Year 2 & 3	\$30,000	City, county, or DMO funding
and communicate AFNHA themes					media to include the AFNHA message.			support
Develop program to tell national <b>America250</b> stories that connect to AFNHA themes. Support partners in sharing and promoting this initative.	x	х	x	х	Develop interpretive products to tell stories connecting site stories, AFNHA themes with national themes of America250	Year 2 - 5	\$25,000	Humanities or America250 related grants
Convene conversations and encourage interpretive concepts of the shared								
forest heritage narrative, using AFNHA significance statements and thematic					Multiple partners, including forest industry representatives, public			
framework,. Including viewpoints and encourage consensus on conservation	x	x	x	x	entities, conservation groups, heritage sites, and communities, participate in conversation to view region's history, development	Year 3 ongoing		
and stewardship, and on facts, context, and understanding of natural, cultural		~			and resource use through the lens of shared forest heritage and	ongoing		
and historic assets and stories. Share with diverse audiences.					share multiple viewpoints through their interpretation.			
and historic assets and stories. Share with diverse addictices.								

AFHA Inc. Priority Actions	A	FHA Inc. Pro	gram Ro	les	Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	AFHA direct action	Inform, outreach, coordinate	Ameri- Corps service	Sub- grants				
Research and share the history and <b>stories of Indigenous people</b> and how they impact regional heritage and culture. Research and develop background context to tell stories of Native Tribes and Nations within the AFNHA region, understand and integrate tribal stories into regional interpretation, with emphasis on them telling their own stories.	x	x	x	х	Tribal partners and individuals contribute to research and information about Native history, culture and stories, and help tell those stories in interpretive programs and products. Site partners use information from Native sources in their interpretation of Indigenous people.	Year 3 ongoing	\$30 000 for Native consultant	Humanities or diversity interpretation grants
Offer interpretive programs that highlight <b>forest management and products</b> , including forest management and factory tours. AFHA Inc. help to develop and manage tour opportunities and/or related forestry interpretation products.	x	x	x		Partners offer forest management and products tours and information, participate in sharing forestry interpretation.	Year 4 ongoing		
Evaluate effectiveness of interpretation programs and products	x	x		x	Partners include feedback and evaluation in interpretive planning.	Year 2 ongoing		
Evaluate impact of stewardship educational programs, conduct AmeriCorps impact evaluation of stewardship programs	x		х		AFNHA sites that deliver interpretation and educational programs assist with study	Year 4 & 5	\$30,000 for outside evaluator	AmeriCorps grant

AFHA Inc. Priority Actions		HA Inc. Pro	ogram Ro	les	Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	AFHA direct action	Inform, outreach, coordinate	Ameri- Corps service	Sub- grants				
Goal 3: Support Sustainable Tourism and Economic				efit C	Communities			
Support the tourism industry, track national and state travel trends, and share updates	x	×			Partner organizations help track travel trends and information and share with partnership network	underway		
Develop and encourage <b>networking between tourism sites</b> , attractions, and partners to <b>support cross-promotion</b> and "grow the pie" including through through Highlands Creative Economy group and Tour Maps networking	x	x	x		Partners participate in cross-promotion with other sites within their local area and across AFNHA	underway		
Expand visitor center functions for Appalachian Forest Discovery Center to provide information about all of AFNHA	×		x		AFNHA sites and partners provide information to AFDC in order to cross-promote across AFNHA	underway		
Create and support new, enhanced, and refreshed <b>activities and interpretive</b> <b>experiences</b> , such as exhibits, signage, itineraries, guided or self-guided tours walking, driving tours, community or nature tours, and participatory activities.	x	x	x	x	Sites, museums, attractions, public lands, and communities offer and continually improve tourist activities and experiences. AFNHA supports diversity of media to reach a broader audience.	underway	varies by project	interpretation and tourism development funding sources
Support and promote recreational assets (see Goal 1), including promoting variety and diversity of trails for multiple purposes, water recreation, hunting, fishing and nature activities, and active sports for year-round outdoor recreation possibilities for people of all ages and all abilities		x	x	x	Public agencies, and related organizations, communities, and partners work to develop and promote recreation opportunities	underway		
Develop and implement tourism readiness, quality and accessibility criteria, in conjunction with interp criteria, for AFNHA-supported tourism products and sites	×	x			Partners participate in developing criteria, support, implement and follow criteria guidelines.	Year 1 ongoing		
Support development and capacity building for sites that don't yet meet criteria. Assist attractions to expand personnel (staff, volunteers, AmeriCorps) to expand availability and hours of operation		x	x	x	Tourism partner sites and attractions work to expand availability and provide accurate opening information for visitors	Year 1 ongoing		
Identify and <b>connect tourism sites across AFNHA</b> to provide experiences and larger "destination". Connect AFNHA tourism site partners, using tools like thematic trails, story maps, and challenges	x	x			Partner sites participate in site networking programs starting with thematic story maps and challenges.	Year 1 ongoing		
Develop brand identity / signature look to <b>create brand recognition for</b> <b>AFNHA</b> . Use toolkits, design standards, and branding campaign to communicate AFNHA brand and messages.	x	x			Partners use and distribute AFNHA branding and messages, following recommendations and criteria.	Year 1 ongoing		
Improve visitor access to sites, attractions, and activities not previously available due to mobility, physical, or capacity limitations, help sites meet ADA accessibility standards		x	x	x	Tourism sites work to improve availability and accessibility	Year 1 ongoing		
Develop opportunities for "action" tourism (experiences, participatory programs, opportunities to engage in cultural traditions)		x	x	x	Tourism site partners including recreation sites, museums, and attractions offer experiential programs and interactive activities	Year 1 ongoing		
Expand and adapt thematic tours, story maps, and site networking to improve and expand tourism networking products.	x	x	x	x	Partners participate in and promote wayfinding and networked sites apps, tools, and products	Year 1 ongoing	\$10,000 year program budget estimated for tour products and app software	interpretation and tourism development funding sources
Promote recreation economy including local foods and restaurants, lodging, locally made products, outfitters, etc.		x			Local producers and providers participate in capacity building and promotion; businesses prioritize sales of local products; community programs focus support for recreation economy providers.	Year 2 ongoing		
Develop activities for youth - children, pre-teens, and teens		x	x	х	Tourism partners - recreation sites, museums, and attractions - offer youth programs and interactive activities	Year 2 ongoing		
Conduct <b>research on visitor</b> tracking, visitor experience, and capacity	×	x	x	~	offer youth programs and interactive activities Tourism partner organizations participate in research and share data with AFHA Inc. for regional information	Year 2 ongoing		

Appendix G AFHA Inc. Priority Actions		HA Inc. Pro			A Implementation Priorities Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	AFHA	Inform,	Ameri-		Partner Roles and Actions	Timetrame	Project Budget AFRA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	direct	outreach,	Corps	Sub- grants				
Madest and some sta AFNULA sustainable tourism a stitution and	action	coordinate	service	giants				
Market and promote AFNHA sustainable tourism activities and					Market and support AFNHA tourism, include AFNHA and			
destinations through digital, earned media, and advertising opportunities to	x	х	х		networked sites in partner tourism marketing. Partners help	Year 2 ongoing		
increase tourist engagement					promote through multiple means.			
Develop interpretive marketing materials such as brochures or map guides					Partners provide information and participate in distributing			
to support trip planning; develop responsive fulfillment systems to distribute					materials	Year 2 ongoing		
materials and answer inquiries.								
Establish satellite visitor information / interpretive centers through								
partnering with visitor centers across the region. Develop interpretation /	x	x	x		Selected visitor center partners host AFNHA displays for visitor	Year 2 ongoing		
information materials (kiosk / exhibit / signs) and services to be located at	~	~	~		information and interpretation (see also interpretation)	r cur z origoing		
multiple sites and gateways.								
Plan and implement a regional wayfinding and signage system including								
shared design standards. Use signage, outreach, logo useage, and	x	х			Partners participate in regional signage and follow shared design standards when possible	Year 2 ongoing	\$25,000	
interpretation for connectivity across the region.					standards when possible			
Build AFNHA awareness for visitor centers across the region. Host training								
and familiarization tours for docents and those who provide visitor information.					Tourism partners participate in networking, cross-promotion, fam	¥	the states in	supported by attractions
Implement "Discover AFNHA Here" awareness campaign through participating	х	x	x		touts and trainings, and awareness campaign.	Year 3 ongoing	travel costs	participating
visitor centers.								
Build on story maps to plan <b>coordinated networking sites program</b> using best								
					Partners participate in planning, implementation, and cross-		Program plan will identify	
adapted and popular products, which may include thematic tours, challenges,	x	x	х	x	promotion of coordinated networking sites programs, passport	Year 3 ongoing	costs, such as app fees,	supported by attractions
passport program, sign trails, audio tours, and mapguides, and which may be					programs, etc.		prizes, printing, signage, etc	participating
delivered by apps, digital tools, signage, brochures or mapguides for delivery.								
Develop "cross-over" networking and interpretation to encourage								
audiences initially interested in one area to explore additional activities.					Tourism site partners including recreation sites, museums and			
Provide tours or networking with multiple themes, heritage information for	x	х	х	х	attractions offer additional information, programs and interactive activities for more than their usual audience.	Year 3 ongoing		
recreation sites, physical activities for heritage sites.					acuvities for more than their usual audience.			
Develop packages for group tour opportunities to bring groups to the region;					Tourism partner sites and organizations work together to create			
develop and communicate packaged opportunities for families and individual		x			and promote group and individual travel packages. Receptive	Year 3 ongoing		
travelers to attract people to a larger destination		~			operators include AFNHA tourism sites in developing and offering	r our o origoing		
Improve recreation information and wayfinding, including digital, signage,					tours.			
and in-person such as through trail ambassador programs		х	х	x	Partners implement wayfinding systems, trail ambassadors, and other recreation information	Year 3 ongoing		
							est \$5000 per location, 10	
Install AFNHA gateway signage at key locations	х				Partners assist and participate in AFNHA regional signage	Year 4	locations	county funds match
Implement user friendly website trip planning tools to make trip planning to					Partners contribute site information and participate in AFNHA		\$10,000 annually est app	supported by attractions
AFNHA as a destination easy	х	x	х	х	tourism site program to support robust trip planning to AFNHA	Year 4 ongoing	cost	participating
Market AFNHA as a regional destination, working with state and local					State and local tourism partners recognize AFNHA as a regional	1		
tourism marketing organizations	х	х			destination and market it as such	Year 4 ongoing		
Community Development						1	<u> </u>	
Build community development regionally by working collaboratively to build					Community development initiatives and collaborations, such as	1		
		х			Main Streets, Mon Forest Towns, HUBCap, etc. work towards	underway		
community development, increase cross-jurisdictional projects					community development goals in their communities			
Support existing programs and ongoing initiatives such as Main Street and					Service providing partners continue to serve ongoing initiatives.			
ON TRAC, HubCAP, Mon Forest Towns, and other community development	х	х	х		Orgs who need assistance participate in and take advantage of	underway		
efforts					available programs.	<u> </u>		

AFHA Inc. Priority Actions	A	FHA Inc. Pro			Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	AFHA direct action	Inform, outreach, coordinate	Ameri- Corps service	Sub- grants				
Provide <b>opportunities to learn skills and gain experienc</b> e that can lead to jobs and job advancement, foster training and experience opportunities that can lead to career advancement through AmeriCorps and other programs.		x			Educational and training organizations offer and arrange trainings; partner with schools, community colleges, trade groups, unions, etc., to foster more workforce development skills	Year 1 ongoing		
Encourage <b>"Employer of AmeriCorps</b> " program for hiring AmeriCorps alumni within AFHA, Inc. organization and AFNHA partners across the area		x	х		Communicate opportunities, and prioritize AmeriCorps alumni in hiring	Year 1 ongoing		
Assess community needs and share examples of best practices in order to further community goals	x	x	x		Communities and organizations conduct periodic planning and assessments; service-providing organizations provide support and technical assistance	Year 2 ongoing		
Build connections to identify projects and leverage funding		x			Partners work together to identify funding needs, and to leverage project and program funding.	Year 2 ongoing		
Build capacity, leadership, and social capital in communities and organizations by providing technical assistance, training, and support for leadership and capacity building for partner organizations	x	x	x		Communities and organizations participate in trainings and capacity building activities; service-providing organizations provide support and technical assistance	Year 3 ongoing		
Support individual communities as they move along their path toward community development goals, at level identified in communities based on their needs and capacity, not one size fits all	x	x	х	x	Communities and local organizations identify their goals and needs to build their community development	Year 3 ongoing		
Support <b>entrepreneurship</b> and community development efforts for businesses and non-profits		×	x		Communities, businesses, and service providing organizations that support them, work together to build capacity, skills, and work toward joint community goals, especially related to asset development, historic preservation, recreation economy, tourism, and forest industry	Year 3 ongoing		
Provide coaching and one-to-one assistance for lower-capacity communities and organizations, helping to build skills and connect people with opportunities	x	x	x		Service providing and community partners continue to help lower- capacity communities. Orgs who need assistance take advantage of available help.	Year 4 ongoing		
Assist individuals with <b>developing craft / trade skills</b> necessary for heritage conservation projects and programs		х			Heritage conservation organizations, educational institutions, etc offer and arrange trainings that develop craft and trade skills	Year 4 ongoing		

Appendix G					A Implementation Priorities			
AFHA Inc. Priority Actions		HA Inc. Pro		les	Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	AFHA direct action	Inform, outreach, coordinate	Ameri- Corps service	Sub- grants				
Goal 4: Connect and Support Partners Linked by the	Regio		est Her	itage			•	
Operate a <b>high-quality AmeriCorps program</b> to meet AFNHA goals, provide asset enhancement, educational / outreach direct services, and capacity building for WV partners selected on competitive basis	x	х	x		Partner sites participate in AmeriCorps program, providing quality supervision and engagement, admin fees and inkind reporting, for community benefit, member support, and continuous improvement	underway		
Utilize <b>AmeriCorps members as outreach ambassadors</b> of AFNHA in communities to help communicate and improve awareness and understanding of the NHA and to help build a strong NHA coalition that affects change			x		AmeriCorps site partners understand that they are a part of a larger NHA, with their members provide outreach about AFNHA to their local communities.	underway		
<b>Evaluate process, outcomes, and impact of AmeriCorps program</b> to meet AmeriCorps evaluation expectations and for continuous improvement			x		Partners participate in evaluations when requested	underway		
Offer and / or <b>support experience, professional development</b> , career shadowing, to encourage new generation of professionals, through AmeriCorps, internships, service learning, and volunteer opportuntities		×	x		Partners support professional experience through hosting AmeriCorps members, interships, mentorships	underway		
Participate in <b>Alliance of National Heritage Areas</b> and work cooperatively with neighboring National Heritage Areas	x	х			NHAs with connections to AFNHA provide tech assistance, cooperation, and information	underway	\$3000 annual	private donations
Support AFNHA including education about AFNHA benefits and needs.	x	x			Partners communicate accomplishments, share information, provide support and support letters	underway		
Develop the <b>Highlands Creative Economy</b> program to provide technical and professional assistance to communities and organizations for community and tourism development. Use networking meetings, tourism support, and trainings to build capacty and support tourism organizations and providers.	x	x	x	x	Eastern provides training and coordination assistance, Benedum provides funding (through Year 2), Partners support and participate in services, trainings, and programs	underway		
<b>Continue media outreach,</b> stay up to date with communication methods. Use virtual and social media, broadcast and traditional media to raise awareness of AFNHA within communities across the region and to reach a variety of audiences.	×	x			Partners assist with sharing and promoting AFNHA media	underway		
<b>Convene partners,</b> facilitate their partcipation in networking and collaboration, establish regular connection of key partners based on focus areas, thematic approach, and common interests, to assist with partner comminications and help facilitate coordination plans and outcomes. Provide leadership or support lead by other partners, as appropriate to each group.	x	x	x		Partners partcipate in networking and collaboration; other organizations who provide "convening" roles coordinate with AFNHA for positive collaboration. Analysis is ongoing of existing and developing strategic planning across partnerships.	Year 1 ongoing		
Establish a <b>communications network of partners</b> , coordinating and sharing contacts and information and facilitating communication. Create a ListServ and / or other networking tools to enable partners to share information or ask questions across a regional heritage partnership network		x	x		Partners partcipate in networking and collaboration	Year 1 ongoing		
Develop an <b>information clearinghouse</b> with resource management system / content management system for understanding and coordinating assets and resources across AFNHA, to provide access to relevant information for partners. This may include asset list, background context information, partner directory, skills and resources, etc	x	x	x		Partners provide information for ongoing updates to asset and resource system; partners who maintain similar or contributing systems coordinate with coordinating entity to minimize duplication of efforts	Year 1 ongoing		

Appendix G					A Implementation Priorities	Timesfuence	Design to Durdwet A FUA las	Detential Funding Courses
AFHA Inc. Priority Actions	AFHA	HA Inc. Pro	Ameri-		Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	direct action	outreach, coordinate	Corps service	Sub- grants				
Create regional volunteer program to connect volunteers with opportunities								
and needs across heritage sectors. Establish program with volunteer					Partners manage their own volunteer programs, and support and	Year 1	\$3600 annual for volunteer	Year 1 & 2 Volunteer WV grant;
management training, connection database, tracking, recognition, and other	х	х	x		participate in regional program and training	ongoing	management software	program fees for continuation
volunteer management assistance for participating sites.								
Offer <b>interpretation training</b> and criteria to support partners in offering quality					Contraction of the second structure of the second stru			
interpretive products connected to AFNHA themes, with annual training	x	х	x		Service provider partners share their training expertise and tech assistance; site partners participate to increase organizational	Year 1 ongoing		
including interp principles, products design, tour guide training.					skills	5 5		
Initiate heritage tourism grant pilot program using NHA and foundation funds;								
Implement pilot program for tourism development grant, with criteria and					Benedum Foundation and Eastern WVCTC support grants,	V 1 0	¢ (0,000	Benedum grant \$30,000,
policies, implement, and evaluate program. Award grants to 18 partners and				х	Creative Economy partners participate in grants, complete and report on projects	Year 1-2	\$60,000	recipients project match
manage project implementation and reporting.								
Establish a grant program to support heritage projects that align line with								
AFNHA goals. Determine focus scope and eligibility for grants from								
management plan priorities and goals, which may vary from time to time based					Partners apply for and participate in grants, complete and report			
on priorities and funds available. Using experience with pilot program as a				х	on projects	Year 2 ongoing	est \$150,000 annually	recipients project match
guide, draft grant program criteria for application, match, administration,								
requirements, reporting, and evaluation; and grant solicitation, review, funding,								
and monitoring Coordinate <b>signage inventory</b> with existing and future opportuntities for								
AFNHA interpretation and wayfinding signage, coordinate with interpretive		v			Partners provide information for ongoing updates of signage and	Year 2 ongoing		
planning and wayfinding	x	х			interpretation they provide	rear z ongoing		
Conduct community outreach to AFNHA counties, when feasible, especially								
those less involved. Use in-person visits and meetings, speakers roster for					Staff and Board arrange and conduct local meetings and in	Year 2 (post		
community organizations, and personal connections to build support,	х	x			person outreach, partners help make arrangements and build awareness of AFNHA in their own communities.	COVID) ongoing		
awareness, and engagement.						ongoing		
Establish a <b>partnership program</b> with definitions, responsibilities, costs, and					<b>.</b>			
benefits for AFNHA organizational / partner members, with flexibility of	х	х			Agencies and organzation partners sign on and participate in AFNHA partner program	Year 2 ongoing		
agreements for different situations.								
Identify and <b>share funding opportunities</b> and distribution of information on					Provide information on projects and potential funders;			
grants and other funding opportunities, with information on applications,		x			communicate with and support AFHA and other partners in	Year 2 ongoing		
deadlines, and best practices. Support partner asks with tech assistance and					funding efforts.	0.0		
support letters. Convene funders and potential project grantees to collaborate and leverage								
larger projects (capture teams) for conservation, historic preservation, cultural,		×			Partners provide information on projects and potential funders;	Vaar 2 angeine		
and community development projects.		х			help convene and participate in capture team conversations and funding asks	Year 3 ongoing		
and community development projects. Expand information clearinghouse with more information relevant to specific							¢2000	
sections, such as artists directory that can help connect apprentices and		x			Partners provide information for ongoing updates to artists directory; partners who maintain similar or contributing directories	Year 3 ongoing	\$2000 annually for software, hard drive, and cloud	program fees
masters, online calendar of events.		~			coordinate to minimize duplication of efforts	. sai e origoring	storage.	F 3/4// 1000
Offer or connect partners with <b>capacity building skills training</b> , workshops,					Service provider partners share their training expertise and tech			
technical assistance in leadership, board development, fundraising,	x	x	x		assistance; site partners participate to increase organizational	Year 3 ongoing	Trainer costs when not	some donated inkind; some
technology, promotion, etc.					skills		provided by staff	supported by program fees
Offer or connect partners with <b>program field skills training,</b> workshops, and					Service provider partners share their training expertise and tech			1
technical assistance such as tourism development, historic preservation,	х	х	x		assistance; site partners participate to increase organizational	Year 3 ongoing	Trainer costs when not provided by staff	some donated inkind; some supported by program fees
conservation, business development, etc.					skills		p. 511000 by 51011	supported by programmees

AFHA Inc. Priority Actions	A	AFHA Inc. Program Roles			Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	AFHA direct action	Inform, outreach, coordinate	Ameri- Corps service	Sub- grants				
Build network of <b>AFNHA AmeriCorps alumni</b> to continue their engagement with AFNHA and support continued professional development		x			Partner sites help provide outreach to AmeriCorps alumni	Year 3 ongoing		
Investigate other National Service programs including Maryland AmeriCorps partners to support potential opportunities for sites		x			MD partners work to provide AmeriCorps or other service resources for sites	Year 3 ongoing		
Establish <b>regional offices of AFNHA</b> with field staff to be more accessible to all 18 counties.	x				Partners provide regional office work space, share resources and grow AFNHA presence	Year 5 ongoing		
Use all goals and actions to <b>build the partnership network into a unified</b> coalition of community partners for AFNHA as a whole, working together on heritage development	x	x	x	х	Partners partcipate in the partnership network through joint actions, networking and collaboration toward the unified coalition of AFNHA as a region	Year 5 ongoing		

Appendix G AFHA Inc. Priority Actions	Δ	FHA Inc. Pro			A Implementation Priorities Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources		
	AFHA	Inform,	Ameri-	Sub-		Timename	r oject budget Al HA IIIC	i otontiari unung oources		
	direct action	outreach, coordinate	Corps service	grants						
Goal 5: Manage, Promote, and Sustain Appalachian				, Inc.	as the National Heritage Area Coordinating	Entity				
Coordinate <b>communications and outreach</b> - Continue and expand AFNHA										
	x	x			Partners participate and assist with sharing AFNHA communication efforts	underway	\$5000 advertising, \$15,000 staff time, annually	tourism marketing funds, state, county or local sources		
outreach, awareness and communication of activities and opportutnities					communication enorts		stan time, annually	county of local sources		
Operate AmeriCorps program - Write AmeriCorps grant, develop,					Volunteer West Virginia and AmeriCorps Federal Agency provide					
implement, and evaluation program for community benefit, member support,			х		funding and support program; host sites provide supervision and	underway	\$950,000 annually, includes \$50,000 staff time	AmeriCorps grant, site administrative fees		
and continuous improvement					funding support					
Operate the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center as primary public facility					Partners support AFDC with information and museum loans for		¢2.000			
with museum, interpretation, and visitor information (see also historic	х	х	х		rotating exhibits, and by sharing information materials for visitor	underway	\$2,000 staff time annually, other costs previously noted	Museum admission/donations		
preservation, interpretation & tourism)					information		outer costs previously noted			
Convene the Highlands Creative Economy program for tourism and					Eastern WV Community & Technical College is lead partner and		\$25,000 training costs,	Benedum grant years 1 & 2,		
community development networking, training, and capacity building.	x	х	х	×	training provider. Other partners participate, attend activities, and	underway	\$5000 meeting costs,	potential community development		
					support. Initial funding from Benedum Foundation		\$10,000 staff costs annually	grant funding		
Act as a convener - AFHA Inc convene, provide leadership, and offer	x	x			Partners participate and engage with partner networking	Veer 1 engeing	\$5,000 staff time annually	potential community development		
opportunities to for partner networking	~	~			raitiers participate and engage with partner networking	rear rongoing	\$5,000 stall time annually	grant funding		
Develop an information clearinghouse - AFHA Inc collate and provide							6 L \$10.000			
information to partners including assets, information archive, events,	×	x			Partners participate through sharing information and utilizing clearinghouse resources	Year 1 ongoing	software above; \$10,000 staff annually	possible program fees		
opportunities, and partners							stan annually			
Offer AFNHA Grants program for sub-grants to partners - Develop criteria										
and procedures for grants program, implement annually with matching grants				x	Partner sites apply and receive AFNHA grants, following criteria	Voor 1 opgoing	\$100,000 to \$200,000 annually, plus staff to	recipient project match		
to partners, with project eligibility selected from management plan goals				^	and procedures for quality products and reliable reporting	rear rongoing	administer \$10,000	recipient project match		
Facilitate <b>volunteer management</b> - AFHA Inc develop volunteer support	x	x	x		Partners participate in AFNHA volunteerism program to support	Year 1 ongoing	software above, \$10,000	possible program fees		
program including training and support services to partners	^	^	^		and improve their own volunteer management	Tear Tongoing	staff time annually	possible program lees		
Provide technical assistance and training - AFHA Inc develop targeted					Partners provide workshops and other training opportunities for the		\$5,000 trainers and \$5,000			
training and workshops, some offered annually for AmeriCorps members and	х	х	х	х	Partners provide workshops and other training opportunties for the AFNHA partnership network	Year 1 ongoing	staff time annually	workshop fees		
partner sites. Individual technical assistance offered with programs.					L L					
Evaluate progress through data collection and feedback, analyze and share						V1	included in staff time; additional cost if outside			
progress with partners and funders.					Partners provide data and participate in evaluative feedback.	Year 1 ongoing	evaluator is used.			
Collaborate on funding opportunities - AFHA Inc coordinate and share					Partners participate through sharing information and working					
information on funding opportunities, leveraging opportunities, and support	x	x			together on funding opportunties, leverage, and providing support	Year 3 ongoing	\$10,000 development staff time annually			
including support letters					for AFHA and other partners' projects.		une annually			
Add <b>new field staff positions</b> located in 2 to 4 locations across the region to					Select partners host and provide office space for AFHA Inc field	V	2 FTE, \$75,000 salary;			
Increase outreach and services across the area	х				staff	Year 5 ongoing	\$10,000 office costs annual	partner support		
Organization Sustainability										
Conduct AFHA, Inc. governance and management according to <b>professional</b>							¢50.000			
standards with board and staff responsible for best practices, policies,	х				Partners support AFHA Inc through sharing experience and best practices	ongoing	\$50,000 executive staff annually			
continual improvement, and compliance.					h					
Provide <b>professional staff positions</b> to manage AFNHA programs, attract					Chara information with AEUA about a law another and a law for					
quality personnel, with competitive salaries and benefits, and transition plan for	x				Share information with AFHA about salary comparison, benefits opportunities, and to support hiring	ongoing				
executive staff					8					
regically <b>apply for grants</b> to implement management plan and NHA					Partners support and participate in multi-partner grants	ongoing				
programs and projects	^					ongoing				
Generate <b>revenue from AmeriCorps site administrative fees</b> to sustain and	x		x		AmeriCorps site partners participate in AmeriCorps program,	ongoing				
operate AmeriCorps program	Â		^		provide site fee, in-kind match, supervision, compliance	Sigoing				

AFHA Inc. Priority Actions	A	FHA Inc. Pro	ogram Ro	les	Partner Roles and Actions	Timeframe	Project Budget AFHA Inc	Potential Funding Sources
	AFHA direct action	Inform, outreach, coordinate	Ameri- Corps service	Sub- grants				
Provide fiscal agent and grant administration services	х	х			Partners use AFNHA services when needed	ongoing		
Generate rent revenue for AFHA, Inc. owned facilities - Darden Mill	x				WV Railroad Museum for museum space, partners event room	ongoing		
Maintain <b>active board representing diverse interests</b> , including interest areas, diversity, demographics, locations, and skills	x					Annually for 1/3 of board		
Regularly <b>review</b> and update <b>board by-laws</b> to ensure current with operations and state / federal laws	x				AFNHA members vote to approve bylaws changes, when proposed.	every 2 years		
Establish active committees for organizational and program issues	х				Members and partners participate in program committees	Year 1 ongoing		
Expand AFNHA individual membership program with option of instituting dues payments for members	x	х			Individuals join as AFNHA members	Year 2 ongoing		
Expand <b>gift shop</b> in Appalachian Forest Discovery Center, online, and other venues for sale items related to AFNHA branding or themes	x	х			Partner retail sites and artisans provide goods for AFNHA to sell; sell AFNHA goods through their outlets	Year 2 ongoing		
Consider <b>program fees and fee-for-service</b> activities that can generate income for the organization and help cover costs of delivering services.	x	x			Partners participate in programs and utilize AFHA Inc fee-based services when appropriate for their needs	Year 2 ongoing		
Establish short and long term <b>funding plan</b> with strategies to ensure financial stability with diverse income sources for organization and the NHA - use NHA funding to leverage grant and private resources for match	x				Partners support and participate in matching programs, and fundraising opportunities. Provide cash and inkind program match for programs they participate in	Year 3 ongoing		
Develop <b>donor fundraising and sponsorship program</b> including development staff and board engagement	x	x			Partners support AFNHA fundraising	Year 3 ongoing	\$50,000 development staff annually	donations raised
Investigate possibilities for hosting <b>AFNHA events</b> or participating in partner events that serve programmatic goals and also raise revenue	x	х			Partners host events that include AFNHA awareness; partners participate in AFNHA events	Year 4 ongoing		
Build a <b>reserve fund</b> through contributions	x	х			Partners support AFNHA fundraising	Year 5 ongoing		

# Appendix H

# **AFNHA Financial Projections**

Projectons for 10 years, starting with 2022

Based roughly on AFHA Inc FY, which is calendar year

Year 1 projection -- funding at FY2022 Tier 1

Year 2+ projection at Tier 2 funding level at 2022 rate or \$500,000. Any increases will help cover inflation, then increase in project expenses and subgrants

REVENUES		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	<u>Year 5</u>	<u>Year 6</u>	Year 7	<u>)</u>	ear 8	<u>Year 9</u>	<u>Year 10</u>	1	0-Year Total
Earned Income (fee for service)	\$	3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 10,000.00 \$	\$	10,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$	80,000.00
Partner Fees (Fed & Non-Fed)	\$	120,000.00	\$ 140,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 220,000.00	\$ 240,000.00 \$	5	250,000.00	\$ 255,000.00	\$ 260,000.00	\$	2,085,000.00
Sales	\$	500.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,500.00 \$	\$	3,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$	21,850.00
Rental income	\$	6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,600.00	\$ 6,800.00	\$ 7,000.00 \$	\$	7,200.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$	67,100.00
Interest	\$	-	\$ -	\$ 300.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,300.00 \$	\$	1,600.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$	9,200.00
Special Events	\$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 2,000.00 \$	\$	4,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$	21,500.00
Donations/Memberships	\$	5,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 20,000.00 \$	\$	25,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$	193,000.00
NHA Federal funding	\$	157,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00 \$	\$	500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$	4,657,000.00
Other Federal Grants	\$	800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 750,000.00	\$ 825,000.00	\$ 825,000.00	\$ 825,000.00	\$ 850,000.00 \$	\$	850,000.00	\$ 850,000.00	\$ 880,000.00	\$	8,255,000.00
State Grants	\$	-	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00 \$	\$	25,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$	280,000.00
Local Grants- County & Municip.	\$	5,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 25,000.00 \$	\$	30,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$	194,000.00
Foundation/Private Grants	\$	75,000.00	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00 \$	\$	90,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 115,000.00	\$	775,000.00
Other	\$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ - \$	\$	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$	-
Tot	tal \$	1,171,500.00	\$ 1,569,750.00	\$ 1,532,300.00	\$ 1,688,600.00	\$ 1,702,000.00	\$ 1,678,300.00	\$ 1,742,800.00 \$	\$1,	795,800.00	\$ 1,840,300.00	\$ 1,917,300.00	\$1	16,638,650.00
Available for NPS match														
Non-fed cash grants & unrestricted	\$	94,500.00	\$ 129,750.00	\$ 82,300.00	\$ 163,600.00	\$ 177,000.00	\$ 133,300.00	\$ 152,800.00 \$	\$	195,800.00	\$ 235,300.00	\$ 277,300.00	\$	1,641,650.00
Non-federal Partner Fees	\$	78,000.00	\$ 105,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 130,000.00	\$ 130,000.00	\$ 143,000.00	\$ 156,000.00 \$	\$	162,500.00	\$ 165,750.00	\$ 169,000.00	\$	1,389,250.00
Non-federal inkind donated services	\$	50,000.00	\$ 96,000.00	\$ 96,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00 \$	\$	75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$	757,000.00
Sub-grant match (partner cash & inkind)	\$	30,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00 \$	\$	175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$	1,605,000.00
Total non-federal match	\$	252,500.00	\$ 505,750.00	\$ 503,300.00	\$ 538,600.00	\$ 552,000.00	\$ 526,300.00	\$ 558,800.00 \$	\$	508,300.00	\$ 651,050.00	\$ 696,300.00	\$	5,392,900.00

Match Budget Notes Non-federal cash grants & unrestricted = Sum of non Federal cash listed in revenue

Non-federal cash Partner fees = X% of Partner Fees Revenue as estimated

Non-federal inkind is not listed in revenue (cash through our books only). We document tracking of this reported inkind.

Sub-grant partner match is not listed in revenue (reported to us and tracked, but doesn't pass through our accounting books).

# Appendix H

# AFNHA Financial Projections

# **EXPENSES**

Salary & Related Staff costs	\$	150,000.00	\$	200,000.00	\$	220,000.00	\$	242,000.00	\$	301,200.00	\$	366,320.00	\$	402,952.00	\$	443,247.20	\$	487,571.92	\$	536,329.11	\$ 3,349,620.23
AmeriCorps stipends & related	\$	682,000.00	\$	693,000.00	\$	706,800.00	\$	721,000.00	\$	725,000.00	\$	730,000.00	\$	735,000.00	\$	742,000.00	\$	750,000.00	\$	755,000.00	\$ 7,239,800.00
AmeriCorps program costs	\$	48,000.00	\$	60,000.00	\$	60,000.00	\$	72,600.00	\$	64,000.00	\$	66,000.00	\$	75,000.00	\$	75,000.00	\$	75,000.00	\$	75,000.00	\$ 670,600.00
Consultants	\$	60,000.00	\$	90,000.00	\$	75,000.00	\$	50,000.00	\$	50,000.00	\$	50,000.00	\$	50,000.00	\$	50,000.00	\$	50,000.00	\$	50,000.00	\$ 575,000.00
Program & Project Expenses	\$	60,000.00	\$	150,000.00	\$	150,000.00	\$	100,000.00	\$	100,000.00	\$	100,000.00	\$	100,000.00	\$	100,000.00	\$	85,000.00	\$	90,000.00	\$ 1,035,000.00
Subgrants for projects	\$	60,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$	175,000.00	\$ 1,635,000.00
Professional Development	\$	5,000.00	\$	6,000.00	\$	6,500.00	\$	7,000.00	\$	7,000.00	\$	7,500.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00	\$ 71,000.00
Travel & Related	\$	16,000.00	\$	17,600.00	\$	19,360.00	\$	21,296.00	\$	23,425.60	\$	25,768.16	\$	28,344.98	\$	31,179.47	\$	34,297.42	\$	37,727.16	\$ 254,998.79
Event costs (federal eligible)	\$	5,000.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,500.00	\$	9,000.00	\$	9,000.00	\$	9,000.00	\$ 80,500.00
Event costs (hospitality, not fed)	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Marketing, communications	\$	4,000.00	\$	6,000.00	\$	6,500.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	11,000.00	\$	11,500.00	\$	12,000.00	\$	13,000.00	\$	14,520.00	\$	15,000.00	\$ 103,520.00
Audit/Accounting & Legal	\$	15,000.00	\$	18,150.00	\$	20,000.00	\$	22,000.00	\$	24,000.00	\$	26,500.00	\$	29,000.00	\$	31,500.00	\$	32,150.00	\$	35,000.00	\$ 253,300.00
Office & Facility/ Utilities	\$	16,920.00	\$	18,612.00	\$	20,473.20	\$	22,520.52	\$	24,772.57	\$	27,249.83	\$	29,974.81	\$	32,972.29	\$	36,269.52	\$	39,896.47	\$ 269,661.22
Printing, Copying, Postage	\$	1,000.00	\$	5,000.00	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,100.00	\$	1,210.00	\$	1,331.00	\$	1,464.10	\$	1,610.51	\$	1,771.56	\$	1,948.72	\$ 17,435.89
Insurance	\$	5,600.00	\$	5,600.00	\$	6,160.00	\$	6,776.00	\$	7,453.60	\$	8,198.96	\$	9,018.86	\$	9,920.74	\$	10,912.82	\$	12,004.10	\$ 81,645.07
Supplies & Furnishings	\$	10,000.00	\$	11,500.00	\$	13,225.00	\$	15,208.75	\$	17,490.06	\$	20,113.57	\$	23,130.61	\$	26,600.20	\$	30,590.23	\$	35,178.76	\$ 203,037.18
Equipment & Maintenance	\$	8,000.00	\$	9,200.00	\$	10,580.00	\$	12,167.00	\$	13,992.05	\$	16,090.86	\$	18,504.49	\$	21,280.16	\$	24,472.18	\$	28,143.01	\$ 162,429.75
Inventory, sales items,	\$	250.00	\$	375.00	\$	500.00	\$	750.00	\$	800.00	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,250.00	\$	1,500.00	\$	2,000.00	\$	2,500.00	\$ 10,925.00
Construction	\$	-	\$	50,000.00	\$	-	\$	175,000.00	\$	125,000.00	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$ 350,000.00
Regulatory & Fees	\$	500.00	\$	550.00	\$	605.00	\$	665.50		732.05		805.26		885.78	\$	974.36		1,071.79		1,178.97	\$ 7,968.71
Reserves / Endowment	Ş	-	\$	15,000.00	\$	15,000.00	Ş	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00		15,000.00	÷	15,000.00	\$	10,000.00	\$	-	\$	-	\$ 90,000.00
Misc. & Other	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$ -
	total \$	1,157,270.00	•	1,549,587.00	•	, ,	\$	1,683,083.77	•	1,700,075.93	•	1,666,377.63	\$	1,733,025.62	\$	1,792,784.93	•	1,837,627.45	•	1,916,906.31	
SubtotalProfit	•	14,230.00	•	20,163.00	•	,	\$	5,516.23	\$	1,924.07	•	11,922.37	•	9,774.38	•	3,015.07	•	2,672.55	•	393.69	\$ 77,208.15
Cumulative bal	ance \$	14,230.00	\$	34,393.00	\$	41,989.80	\$	47,506.03	\$	49,430.10	\$	61,352.46	\$	71,126.84	\$	74,141.91	\$	76,814.46	\$	77,208.15	\$ 77,208.15

# Appendix I

# Planning Team

# Point Heritage Development Consulting, LLC

Nancy I.M. Morgan, Ph.D., Principal August R. Carlino Carolyn Brackett Jennifer L. Humayun Dawson Associates, LLC

# Technical assistance from NPS/NHA Program

DOI/NPS Region 1: Peter Samuel, Hannah Blake

DOI/NPS NHA Program Washington Office: Liz Vehmeyer

# AFNHA Staff and AmeriCorps

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director

J. Logan Smith, Deputy Director

Lukas Ray, Communications Manager

Samantha Peet, Communications Manager

Chrissy Hall, AmeriCorps Manager

AmeriCorps members on planning team

Moira Gasior Lindsay Dobrovolny Maria Bray Lydia Plescher Steven De Vita

# **AFNHA Board of Directors**

Robert Johnson, President	Richwood, WV	Former Mayor, educator
David McGill, PhD. Vice-President	Morgantown, WV	WVU Extension Forester
Travis Miller, Secretary	Buckhannon, WV	Lands Manager, WV Div of Forestry
Anne Beardslee, Treasurer	Elkins, WV	Director, Elkins-Randolph Co Tourism
Eric Carlson	Charleston, WV	WV Forestry Association
Deidre Ritchie	Cumberland, MD	Director, Canal Place
Kent Walker	Cowen, WV	Cowen Town Council
Josh Spiker	McHenry, MD	Director, Garrett Trails
JoLynn Powers	Buckhannon, WV	Director, Adaland Mansion
Jackie Burns	Davis, WV	Retired F&W nature interpreter
Susan Williams, PhD.	Princeton, WV	Professor of Tourism, Concord Univ.

# Support letters received and attached:

# Governmental Support Letters:

Sen. Shelley Moore Capito Sen. Joe Manchin III Maryland Congressional Delegation (Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin, Sen. Chris Van Hollen, Congressman David J. Trone) Congressman David B. McKinley Congresswoman Carol D. Miller Congressman Alex X. Mooney West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office Maryland Historical Trust (State Historic Preservation Office) Seneca-Iroquois National Museum / Seneca Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Office Wyandot Nation of Kansas USDA Forest Service, Monongahela National Forest USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station, Fernow Experimental Forest Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge West Virginia Department of Tourism Volunteer West Virginia West Virginia Division of Forestry Elkins City Council representative Nicholas County Historic Landmark Commission

# **Educational Partner Support Letters:**

WVU Division of Forestry and Natural Resources Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College Davis and Elkins College

# **Tourism Entity Support Letters:**

Allegany County Tourism Elkins-Randolph County CVB & Elkins Depot Welcome Center Greenbrier County Convention & Visitors Bureau Hampshire County Convention & Visitors Bureau Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau Mountaineer Country Convention & Visitors Bureau Pocahontas County Convention & Visitors Bureau Tucker County Convention & Visitors Bureau

# Natural Resource, Cultural, Heritage, Community Support Letters:

- Canal Place Preservation & Development Authority Adaland Mansion Arthurdale Heritage Inc. ArtSpring Beverly Heritage Center Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation Evergreen Heritage Center Garrett Trails Kump Education Center
- Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area Mon Forest Towns Preservation Alliance of West Virginia Richwood Community Center The Nature Conservancy in West Virginia West Virginia Development HUB West Virginia Forestry Association West Virginia Rivers Coalition Woodlands Development and Lenders

# United States Senate

COMMITTEES: APPROPRIATIONS COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4805

July 22, 2022

Secretary Deb Haaland U.S. Department of the Interior 1849 C Street NW Washington, DC 20240

Secretary Haaland,

I write you today in support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's (AFNHA) management plan.

After years of support from both the West Virginia and Maryland Congressional delegations, I was proud that we were successful in establishing the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, as part of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act in 2019. As the only state completely within the Appalachian region, West Virginians are proud of this fact, which is why our communities rallied around the creation of the AFNHA, to highlight the area's rich history, heritage, and culture. Since the establishment of this National Heritage Area, the staff at the AFNHA has worked diligently to develop a management plan that will ensure that the AFNHA lives up to the prestige of being a National Heritage Area.

The management plan will further the conservation and preservation of Appalachia's natural beauty and its historical assets so they can continue to be appreciated for generations to come. We have seen the positive impact that National Heritage Areas have on communities across the United States and I look forward to seeing how the implementation of this management plan will benefit the communities that fall within the boundaries of the AFNHA.

I am supportive of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's management plan and urge the National Park Service to approve this. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Shelley More Capito

Shelley Moore Capito United States Senator

WASHINGTON, DC 172 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON, DC 20510 (202) 224–6472 CHARLESTON 500 VIRGINIA STREET, EAST SUITE 950 CHARLESTON, WV 25301 (304) 347–5372 MARTINSBURG 300 Foxcroft Avenue Suite 202A Martinsburg, WV 25401 (304) 262–9285 MORGANTOWN 48 DONLEY STREET SUITE 504 MORGANTOWN, WV 26501 (304) 292–2310

www.capito.senate.gov



SUITE 306 HART BUILDING WASHINGTON, DC 20510 (202) 224–3954



WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES APPROPRIATIONS ARMED SERVICES ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES VETERANS' AFFAIRS

September 8, 2022

Phyllis Baxter Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Executive Director Baxter,

I write to you today to express my support for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's progress towards establishing a final Management Plan. Following the congressional designation of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area in 2019, the Management Plan will outline the significance and purpose of the National Heritage Area (NHA) as well as guide the activities that leadership and staff will undertake over the next 12 years.

The Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) encompasses sixteen counties in West Virginia and has provided the region with an abundant natural resource-based economy for centuries sustaining logging, outdoor recreation, education and culture. This region contributed significantly to the U.S. industrial expansion in the late 19th century through the production of forest products and logging in which these early discoveries led to much of our current scientific understanding of forest management and conservation. Each of these factors have contributed to the unique forest heritage and identity that encompass the Central Appalachian Region.

In 2019, the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (P.L. 116-9) included provisions from my original bipartisan bill designating the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. Following this designation, your group, Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc. (AFHA Inc.) worked with the community and stakeholders to develop a draft Management Plan that will guide your efforts and those of your partners as you work to protect the AFNHA's unique assets. This draft Plan supports the five primary goals of conserving and enhancing forest heritage assets, sharing stories, supporting heritage tourism and community development, connecting and supporting partners, and sustaining and growing the NHA coordinating entity.

I remain a long-time supporter of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area and look forward to the Heritage Area strengthening and highlighting the distinctive characteristics of the region. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

/auc 1 5

Joe Manchin III United States Senator

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

August 3, 2022

The Honorable Debra A. Haaland Secretary of the Interior United States Department of the Interior 1849 C Street NW Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

We write to express our full support for the Management Plan of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. Following congressional designation and dedicated partnership across various stakeholders over the course of three years, the draft Management Plan serves as a the key document to support leadership and staff in their conservation, recreational and educational efforts to preserve the Appalachian region's historical significance.

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Maryland's portion of the Central Appalachian Region, especially the high mountain barriers, served as a reliable trade route for trade and agriculture as railroad networks began to open the forests to logging. The ridges and valleys tell stories of settlements and migrations, cultivating the cultural and diverse traditions and livelihoods we see today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Public lands within Maryland's share of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area include Deep Creek Lake State Park, Savage River State Forest, Green Ridge State Forest and Dans Mountain Wildlife Management Area serve as local hubs for recreational tourism and vital shelter for an array of wildlife.

In 2019, the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, S.47, became law, thereby recognizing and designating the Appalachian Forest as a National Heritage Area (NHA). The legislation established the Appalachian Forest Heritage Area, Inc. as the local coordinating entity to oversee development of a management plan for the Area, consistent with the NHA's five primary goals of conserving and enhancing forest heritage assets, sharing stories, supporting heritage tourism and community development, connecting and supporting a network of partners, and sustaining and growing the NHA coordinating entity.

We believe, through a proven, collaborative framework set out in the draft, the Management Plan will meet the moment in preserving the past and protecting the future of the region's history, significance and natural resources. The intersectionality of cultural, heritage, nature and recreational tourism will foster community development and strengthen the local economies for generations to come. We therefore urge you to favorably and expeditiously complete review of the Appalachian Forest Heritage Area, Inc.'s Management Plan.

As members of the Western Maryland congressional delegation, we look forward to future collaboration with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area and implementing the goals and visions expressed in the Management Plan.

Benjamin L. Cardin

Benjamin L. Cardin United States Senator

Chris Van Hollen United States Senator

m

David J. Trone Member of Congress

DAVID B. MCKINLEY, P.E. 1st District, West Virginia

2239 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON, DC 20515 TEL: (202) 225–4172 www.mckinley.house.gov

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT & INVESTIGATION

## **Congress of the United States** House of Representatives

Co-Chair, Congressional Coal Caucus Co-Chair, Congressional Building Trades Caucus Co-Chair, Congressional Arthritis Caucus Co-Chair, Congressional Youth Challenge Caucus Co-Chair, High Performance Buildings Caucus Co-Chair Congressional Hearing Health Caucus Co-Chair

**CONGRESSIONAL PENSION PROTECTION CAUCUS** 

September 23, 2022

The Honorable Debra A. Haaland Secretary of the Interior United States Department of the Interior 1849 C Street NW Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

This letter is to express my strong support for Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) Management Plan.

In 2019, I was proud to lead the effort in the House to establish the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area as part of the John D. Dingell Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. I was able to meet with local leaders to understand what was needed most to undertake this legislation. The AFNHA has worked hand in hand with our office over the past 3 years to help establish a responsible management program.

West Virginia is proud of our forests and the recreational and economic benefits they offer. This plan will ensure that it remains in excellent condition. As co-chair of the National Heritage Areas caucus, we have spent years working with these leaders to secure the funding they need.

AFNHA has engaged with stakeholders throughout West Virginia for years to solidify this plan in an effective manner. Many of these discussions we were a part of and are pleased to see them come to consensus.

We have no doubt this plan will conserve and protect the beauty of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area and I fully endorse this plan.

Sincerely,

mil D. mile

David. B. McKinley, P.E. Member of Congress



COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRADE SUBCOMMITTEE ON WORKER AND FAMILY SUPPORT

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS

## Congress of the United States House of Representatives

September 26, 2022

Secretary Debra Haaland National Park Service U S Department of the Interior 1849 C Street, NW, Room 3325 Washington, DC 20240-0001

Dear Secretary Haaland:

Please accept this letter in support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's (AFNHA) Management Plan through the Department of the Interior. The AFNHA is comprised of 16 West Virginia counties and 2 counties in western Maryland, they play a vital role in not only helping to preserve the rich history of this scenic forested area, but also in shaping a bright and prosperous future for the communities and people of this region.

With the AFNHA Management Plan, it will serve as the primary tool to implement their goals and vision that not only reflect the importance of the areas forest heritage but also provide for long-term sustainability of the forest. Such coordination and planning is essential for this region to not only thrive economically but also preserve and maintain its forestry resources and the scenic beauty that makes it such a popular destination for visitation and tourism.

It is my hope that you will give the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's Management Plan application the utmost consideration for approval. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

caroe D. miller

Carol Miller Member of Congress

WASHINGTON DISTRICT OFFICE 465 CANNON HOB WASHINGTON, DC 20515 (202) 225-3452 BECKLEY DISTRICT OFFICE 307 PRINCE STREET BECKLEY, WV 25801 (304) 250-6177 HUNTINGTON DISTRICT OFFICE 2699 PARK AVE., SUITE 220 HUNTINGTON, WV 25704 (304) 522-2201

MILLER.HOUSE.GOV

ALEX X. MOONEY 2ND DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTOR PROTECTION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND CAPITAL MARKETS SUBCOMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

# Congress of the United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515–4802

CHARLESTON OFFICE: 405 CAPITOL STREET SUITE 306 CHARLESTON, WV 25301

MARTINSBURG OFFICE: 300 FOXCROFT AVENUE SUITE 101 MARTINSBURG, WV 25401 (304) 264–8810

WASHINGTON OFFICE: 2228 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON, DC 20515 (202) 225–2711

http://mooney.house.gov

August 11, 2022

The Honorable Deb Haaland, Secretary U.S. Department of the Interior 1849 C Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

Please accept this correspondence as an indication of my strong support for the work of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) and their Management Plan. Comprising 16 West Virginia counties and 2 counties in western Maryland, AFHNA plays a vital role in not only helping to preserve the rich history of this scenic forested area, but also in shaping a bright and prosperous future for the communities and people of this region.

With a guiding theme of forest heritage, the AFNHA focuses on conservation, sound forestry practices, cultural heritage, asset-based tourism and community development. They seek to develop and support partnerships across geographic lines and interest areas that help to showcase the working forest as an integral and active force in the region's present and its future. This is accomplished by making connections between the abundant natural resources of the forest, people's livelihoods that are dependent on the forest, and the products from the forest that are used throughout the country and much of the world.

The AFNHA Management Plan will serve as the primary tool to implement their goals and vision that not only reflect the importance of the area's forest heritage but also provide for the long-term sustainability of the forest. In doing so, the AFNHA Management Plan will respect the needs and concerns of forestry and forest products industries, of the economic and social needs of forest communities, and for the health and biodiversity of forest ecosystems. Such coordination and planning is essential for this region to not only thrive economically but also preserve and maintain its forestry resources and the scenic beauty that makes it such a popular destination for visitation and tourism.

With the achievements and success that they have already had, I am proud to offer my support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's Management Plan and encourage the National Park Service to provide its approval. Please feel free to contact my office should you have any questions.

incerely, Mooney

Alex X. Mooney Member of Congress

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

The Culture Center 1900 Kanawha Blvd., E. Charleston, WV 25305-0300



Randall Reid-Smith, Curator Phone 304.558.0220 • www.wvculture.org Fax 304.558.2779 • TDD 304.558.3562 EEO/AA Employer

April 11, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area P.O. Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Re: AFNHA Management Plan

Dear Ms. Baxter,

Please accept this letter of support for the Appalachian National Forest Heritage Area's Management Plan and its goals. The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office has worked with AFNHA since its inception in 2003, and the organization's dedication and support of historic resources and preservation efforts is clear from the work it has accomplished since then.

AFNHA's Management Plan includes a number of goals that complement our office's own Statewide Historic Preservation Plan including identifying and preserving important cultural and historic assets, assisting with community development, and connecting and supporting organizations and individuals throughout the region. This vision from AFNHA will help to protect and promote the communities the organization serves within West Virginia and will allow for thoughtful and meaningful collaboration with stakeholders across the state.

Goals noted in the Management Plan that our office finds particularly important include "Conserving Historic Assets" by documenting and listing historic buildings and structures that pertain to the history of the National Heritage Area on the National Register of Historic Places. Notably, the plan also prioritizes supporting preservation policy in part by connecting local leaders and CLGs to tools and resources provided by those policies. AFNHA also plans to support preservation trades by working with regional partners to develop and support preservation trades education in the NHA. These initiatives would bolster the preservation of historic buildings throughout West Virginia and allow communities to redevelop and rehabilitate historic properties that have value to community members and contribute to a sense of place.

We look forward to working with AFNHA in the future to help the organization see this plan successfully implemented in West Virginia.

Sincerely

Susan M. Pierce Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer



MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

July 19, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

RE: AFNHA Management Plan

Dear Ms. Baxter,

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) in support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) Management Plan. MHT is the state agency dedicated to preserving and interpreting the legacy of Maryland's past. Through research, conservation, and education, MHT assists the people of Maryland in understanding their historical and cultural heritage. As part of the Maryland Department of Planning, MHT serves as Maryland's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and offers a range of programs including financial incentives for rehabilitation and documentation of historic and cultural properties, as well as planning and heritage tourism. We encourage you to use or adapt this language in describing our agency in the AFNHA Management Plan (p. 99).

The proposed AFNHA Management Plan outlines a well-crafted mission, vision, and set of values and goals for conserving, interpreting, and promoting the forest heritage of the region and has the potential to serve as a key partner in assisting MHT with fulfilling its own statewide preservation plan, *PreserveMaryland II* (2019-2023), especially Goal 4: Build Capacity and Strengthen Networks and Goal 5: Collaborate Toward Shared Objectives. Of particular interest to MHT are the western Maryland counties of Garrett and Allegany that are appropriately included in the boundaries of the proposed plan.

The Management Plan outlines several opportunities where MHT and AFNHA can be mutually supportive. However, I wanted to highlight the two MHT programs that will potentially assist AFNHA most directly with fulfilling its goals to share stories, sustain tourism, and connect partners. They are the Maryland Heritage Areas Program (MHAA) and the Certified Local Government Program. MHAA focuses on boosting the economic well-being of communities through heritage tourism that promotes historic, culture, and natural resource in 13 heritage areas throughout the state of Maryland. As mentioned in the Management Plan, there are two local heritage areas that can serve as key partners in fulfilling the objectives of the AFNHA: Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area (Garrett County) and Canal Place/Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area (Allegany County).

The city of Cumberland in Allegany County, referenced in the AFNHA Management Plan as the only city in the proposed national heritage area with a population over 10,000, is a Certified Local Government that has been designated as such by MHT and the National Park Service because of its special commitment to preservation. We recommend that you reach out to these entities to ensure that they have had an opportunity to review and comment on the Management Plan.

MHT reviewed the AFNHA Management Plan's list of assets and National Historic Landmarks and was pleased to see it included working with Maryland state parks and forests, as well as Main Streets, scenic byways, and trails, including (but not limited to) Swallow Falls State Park in Garrett County, the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, the C&O Canal Towpath Trail, Deep Creek Lake, the scenic byways of Mountain Maryland, the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, and the Historic National Road. MHT sees the proposed AFNHA playing an important role in connecting the Western Maryland's network of preservation projects and efforts to local and regional partners and audiences. If you have not already done so, we strongly recommend that AFNHA share the Management Plan for review and comment with the Maryland Main Street Program (Department of Housing and Community Development), the Maryland Office of Tourism, and the Maryland Park Service and Forest Service (Department of Natural Resources), as well as individual management entities. We have shared information about the Management Plan with the Maryland Department of Planning for review by planners focused on Western Maryland and conservation efforts; you may receive additional comments under separate cover.

AFNHA is poised to serve as a strong partner in assisting MHT with fulfilling mutually beneficial statewide and regional goals that focus on providing the public with access to historic, cultural, and natural assets. For all the above reasons, MHT supports the AFNHA Management Plan and looks forward to future collaboration.

Einhoth High

Elizabeth Hughes Director/State Historic Preservation Officer Maryland Historical Trust



# ONÖHSAGWË:DE' Seneca-Iroquois National Museum

82 West Hetzel Street Salamanca, NY 14779 716/945-1760 www.senecamuseum.org



Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

July 20, 2022

Dear Ms. Phyllis Baxter,

It is my pleasure to support Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA). Although a bit further away than we usually engage, the Seneca-Iroquois National Museum is always supportive of grass-roots endeavors like this one. Over the last calendar year, we have had the distinct pleasure or learning about, and later, consulting on the project. The long-term goals of AFNHA co-inside with SINM's long-term and short-term goals on the positive promotion of Indigenous knowledge and culture.

Our commitment to AFNHA's next steps includes supportive input on interpretation of materials, creating a knowledge base, and participating on many facets of this management plan from Indigenous history to the many uses of the forests. We hope to make meaningful contributions to their long-term goals.

We believe together we can do it.

Please call if there are any concerns.

Nya:wëh,

#######

#### Dr. Joe Stahlman

Director Seneca-Iroquois National Museum Tribal Historic Preservation Office Onöhsagwë:De' Cultural Center 82 W. Hetzel Street Salamanca, NY 14779 Phone (716) 945-1760 Cell (716) 277-5580 Joe.Stahlman@sni.org



July 23, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241 Sent via Email (to phyllisb@afnha.org)

Kweh, Kweh (Hello) Executive Director Baxter:

We are grateful to you for being afforded consideration in review of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) draft Management Plan.

Although we are headquartered in Kansas City, Kansas, we have ancestral ties to the region of the AFHNA. As such, we appreciate being consulted by AFNHA now and in the future when AFNHA and its partners relate the indigenous stories, culture, and history of the AFNHA region.

We are the Wyandot Nation of Kansas. We have been in Kansas since 1843, after being forcibly removed from Ohio via the Indian Removal Act. We are dedicated to the preservation of Wyandot history, culture and language, and the preservation, protection, restoration, and maintenance of historically and/or culturally significant Wyandot sites, including the Wyandott National Burial Ground (nee the Huron Indian Cemetery) in Kansas City, Kansas."

One of the original tribes of West Virginia (WV), the Shawnee (Algonquin language group), became affiliated with the Wyandot (Iroquoian language group) after the Wyandot gifted some its lands to the Shawnee in Ohio in the 1700s. The Wyandot also intermarried with the Shawnee and participated in Indian wars in WV. Our history in WV includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- In 1762, Wyandots kidnapped and adopted a 9-year-old member of the WV frontier Zane Family, founders of Wheeling, WV (i.e., Isaac Zane, brother of Colonel Ebenezer Zane, Jonathan Zane, and Betty Zane, the heroine of Fort Henry). Isaac grew to manhood among the Wyandots and married the daughter of Tarhe ("The Crane"), Principle Chief of the Wyandot.
- On the night of August 31, 1777, Wyandot and Mingo forces attacked Fort Henry at present-day Wheeling, WV.
- On May 16, 1778, about 300 Wyandot and Mingo Indians attacked the garrison at Fort Randolph in Point Pleasant, WV.
- During the second siege of Fort Henry, which took place from September 11 to 13, 1782, a force of about 300 Wyandot, Shawnee, Seneca and Delaware Indians laid siege to Fort Henry Wheeling, WV.

AFNHA July 23, 2022 Page **2** of **2** 

We are a partner of Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area (FFNHA), headquartered in Lawrence, Kansas, and a member of our tribe is a Trustee on its Board of Trustees and another is its Interim Executive Director. We are supportive of and have witnessed firsthand the efforts of NHAs to promote nationally significant stories, including those of Indigenous peoples.

We support the Management Plan of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area and look forward to future collaboration with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area.

Sincerely,

udith & Marthe

Judith Manthe Principal Chief Wyandot Nation of Kansas

cc: Holly R. Zane, Interim Executive Director, Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area Kristen E. Zane, Trustee, Board of Trustees, Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area



200 Sycamore Street Elkins, WV 26241 304-636-1800

 File Code:
 1500; 1800

 Date:
 May 24, 2022

Phyllis Baxter Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins WV 26241

Dear Phyllis,

Congratulations on completing the first draft of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's management plan. It's been a long road to get to this point, and it is a significant accomplishment for you, your organization, and your many partners, including Monongahela National Forest.

The Forest Service has been involved with Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area for two decades, and we look forward to continuing our partnership and strengthening it as you work to implement your management plan once it is finalized.

I particularly want to express my appreciation for your organization's coordination and management of the AmeriCorps program since 2008, which provides an avenue for recent graduates to obtain on the job training and experience in Monongahela National Forest and other local organizations, and sometimes leads to permanent federal employment for the members once their service is completed. It is an important recruitment program that we plan to continue supporting.

Again, congratulations on completing the first draft of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's management plan. We are looking forward to continuing our work with you on future projects that result from the plan.

Sincerely,

SHAWN COCHRAN Forest Supervisor





Northern Research Station

Timber and Watershed Lab PO Box 404, Nursery Bottom Parsons, WV 26287-0404

 File Code:
 4060

 Date:
 May 4, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director

Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

The USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station, unit NRS01 - *Ecological and Economic Sustainability of the Appalachian Forest in an Era of Globalization* is pleased to be a partner in the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA). As part of our mission, we manage the Fernow Experimental Forest, a heritage asset listed in the AFNHA Management Plan. In this outdoor laboratory of approximately 4,600 acres, we demonstrate management practices for the restoration and sustainable use of Appalachian forest resources. We also conduct long-term research on forest management practices and watershed science and other topics.

Our staff have hosted field trips for AmeriCorps members affiliated with AFNHA to expose them to forestry and watershed sciences. We have also reviewed parts of the AFNHA management plan and hope to become more involved in the future.

We look forward to working with AFNHA to implement the goals of the Management Plan and continue our role as a living landscape displaying sustainable forest practices. While the Fernow Experimental Forest does not include any developed recreation sites, there are opportunities for wildflower and wildlife viewing, one short hiking trail, and extensive signage for a self-guided tour of our on-going research.

We look forward to future collaboration with the AFNHA to raise awareness of the Fernow Experimental Forest and how the forest fits into the human and natural history of the Appalachian forest. We hope to be an active partner in promoting the work of the AFNHA beyond the Fernow Experimental Forest.

itisa Thimas-Van Jundy

Melissa Thomas-Van Gundy Research Forester/ Acting Project Leader Northern Research Station



# United States Department of the Interior



### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge 6263 Appalachian Hwy. Davis, West Virginia 26260

July 22, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area P. O. Box 1206 Elkins WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

The Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge (CVNWR) is very much looking forward to our continued support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA). This includes helping to support the AFNHA in achieving their goals outlined in the new Management Plan. The Refuge is pleased that we have been able to partner with AFNHA for over 10 years by participating in the AmeriCorps program. Agencies, non-profits and communities in our area struggle due to lack of financial and human resources that make it difficult to provide stewardship for environmental and community assets. The AmeriCorps members sponsored by AFNHA provide direct stewardship to protect public lands and cultural heritage assets, and stewardship education to encourage the public to understand and care for these assets.

CVNWR, part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Refuge System, in Tucker County was established in 1994 as the nation's 500th National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,000-acre refuge preserves a moist, high elevation valley with unique wetlands and uplands that support many plants and animals more common far to the north. At an altitude of 3,200 feet, it is 14 miles long and three miles wide, and the highest valley of its size east of the Rocky Mountains. The refuge is home to 580 species of plants and 288 different animals, with 8,500 acres of wetlands composed of 23 wetland types.

AmeriCorps members assist with ongoing projects at CVNWR, but also develop completely new inventory and monitoring projects. These projects are needed to help the Refuge continue to manage for many species of wildlife and their habitats. As an environmental steward, these AmeriCorps members work will benefit not only the Refuge and the wildlife that find their homes here, but will be a benefit to the entire community. While the Refuge is a place for wildlife, it is also a place for the community to enjoy nature and wildlife.

The CVNWR affirms our commitment to the vision and goals of the AFNHA as set forth in the Management and we look forward to working with you to implement the goals in the future.









May 3, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Re: Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan

Dear Ms. Baxter,

On behalf of the West Virginia Department of Tourism, I am writing today to express support for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) Management Plan. The West Virginia Department of Tourism has been engaged in the process of developing this document through a series of stakeholder meetings and we have been given the opportunity to comment on the draft plan itself.

Our department supports tourism industry development and marketing throughout the state, and we are excited to see AFNHA implement the tourism-related strategies outlined in this planning document. We are particularly delighted to see AFNHA's plans to bring additional federal funds to the region to be used for tourism initiatives.

One of the key goals that AFNHA outlines in the Management Plan includes enhancing opportunities for outdoor recreation in the forests and waterways. At the state level, we continue to see significant demand for more outdoor recreation opportunities increase across the state. Whitewater rafting trips were up 26% in 2021, ski visits increased 37%, and hunting and fishing license revenue was the highest it has been in 20 years.

AFNHA's location, based in the Potomac Highlands region and stretching into other areas as well, means that the organization is poised to support and enhance an already growing tourism industry with a bounty of cultural and natural resources to share with visitors. Tourism already comprises a significant portion of the economy in many areas of the heritage area. For example, in Pocahontas County, in the heart of AFNHA, the tourism industry supports over 1,300 jobs, employing roughly 17% of the county's entire population.

We look forward to engaging with AFNHA as your organization finalizes and implements this management plan.

Should you have any questions, please contact me by phone at 304-558-2200 or email Chelsea.A.Ruby@wv.gov.

Chilse A. Ruby

Chelsea A. Ruby Cabinet Secretary West Virginia Department of Tourism

almost heaven





July 18, 2022

Hawley Carlson Executive Director Volunteer West Virginia

Phyllis Baxter Executive Director Appalachia Forest National Heritage Area

Subject: Letter of Support

Volunteer West Virginia is pleased to provide this letter of support to Appalachia Forest National Heritage Area's Appalachian Forest NHA Management Plan. AFNHA has the experience and dedication to work towards' the plan's goals of conserving and enhance natural, recreational, historic, and cultural assets, sharing stories of forest heritage through interpretation and education, building sustainable tourism, and leveraging National Heritage Area resources.

AFNHA has been a strong partner in national service to Volunteer West Virginia. For many years AFNHA has managed a robust rural intermediary AmeriCorps program that supports communities in West Virginia with dedicated AmeriCorps members and access to services that would otherwise not be available. Volunteer West Virginia will provide support to the implementation of this plan in partnership with AFNHA.

Yours In Service. Hawley Carlson

600 Capitol Street, Charleston WV 25301 T: 304-558-0111 W: volunteer.wv.gov



### WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION OF FORESTRY

#7 Players Club Drive Charleston, West Virginia 253011 Phone: (304)-558-2788

### **TOM COVER** Director/State Forester

July 12, 2022

Phyllis Baxter Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241 phyllisb@appalachianforest.us

Dear Ms. Baxter,

I write on behalf of the West Virginia Division of Forestry in support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's Management Plan. We strongly support this plan and have been a partner of AFNHA for several years. We have supported the organization by utilizing the AmeriCorps program.

This program has been a great asset to us in the education of West Virginia's citizenry on the wise use of its natural resources. We have been able to expand our contacts with educators in the state using Project Learning Tree. The WVDOF is also participating in the evaluation process to help AFNHA achieve a better grasp on the services they provide and the outcomes they have with their various program.

Our organization, with the assistance of AFNHA AmeriCorps members, provides lasting outcomes for our community. AmeriCorps members serving with local organizations through AFNHA AmeriCorps have a positive impact on our communities and environment. Through this letter, we acknowledge specific roles and responsibilities we will fulfill in this partnership.

We look forward to working with you in future and help you meet your outcomes and goals through the AFNHA Management Plan.

Sincerely,

<Linda O. Carnell>

Linda O. Carnell Assistant State Forester -Communication and Education West Virginia Division of Forestry #7 Players Club Dr Charleston, WV 25311 Nanci Bross-Fregonara Fourth Ward Councilor City of Elkins 401 Davis Ave. Elkins, WV 26241

Phyllis Baxter Executive Director, Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1260 Elkins, WV 26241

July 24, 2022

Dear Ms. Baxter,

I am excited to read the current Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) Management Plan and discover the goals and action plans that will positively affect the Elkins economy and community. As a councilor representing the city's Fourth Ward, I have been familiar with the AFNHA for years before its national designation.

The city has benefited from having AmeriCorps members work on hands-on crews with municipal properties, and the Elkins Tree Board has benefitted from having an AmeriCorps member for almost two service years.

Throughout the region, AmeriCorps members have enhanced their communities, whether planting red spruce and working with endangered species or developing streetscape designs and interpretive displays for museums. All these projects are essential in improving our town and the broader area.

In reviewing the management plan, there are specific areas that I particularly support as someone active in city government.

 Goal #3: Supporting sustainable tourism and economic development. Elkins has increased efforts to promote itself as a beautiful place to visit and a wonderful place to create a small business and relocate. The AFNHA management plan provides a perfect opportunity to collaborate.

6

 Goal #4: Connect and support partners linked by the region's forest heritage. Like many rural West Virginia communities, growing the economy in Elkins requires collaboration, civic investment in infrastructure, diversity, and grant opportunities.

Therefore, as an Elkins City Councilor, I support and look forward to working with Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area to implement the goals of the Management Plan.

mi Bron Degonara

Nánci Bross-Fregonara Fourth Ward City Councilor, City of Elkins

### Nicholas County Historic Landmark Commission

717 Main Street, Suite 206 Summersville, West Virginia 26651-1468

#### 304-618-3611

atcsco@gmail.com

August 12, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Post Office Box 1206 Elkins, West Virginia 26241-1206

Re: Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan

Dear Ms. Baxter:

This letter is to provide a statement of support for the contents of the Management Plan noted above.

We are a Certified Local Government entity, created by the Nicholas County Commission. Principally charged with preservation of historic structures, we also review and are listed members of local organizations that participate in compliance with the tenants of federal FEMA Section 106 in appropriate matters.

On behalf of the Nicholas County Historic Landmark Commission, we look forward to future collaboration with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area [AFNHA] and hereby affirm out commitment to the vision and goals of the AFNHA as set forth in its Management Plan.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Johnson

Robert C. Johnson, President



DAVIS COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES AND DESIGN

DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES PO Box 6125 1322 Percival Hall Morgantown, WV 26506-6125 03 04.293.2941 1 304.293.2441

forestry.wvu.edu Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

July 13, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

As Director of the West Virginia University Division of Forestry and Natural Resources (DFNR), I am very happy to submit this letter of recommendation in continued support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA). I reviewed the draft management plan for the AFNHA and found it very complete. I am sure it will be an excellent guide to creating an effective and productive national heritage area in our state.

As you know, our partnership history with the Appalachian Forest Heritage Area (AFHA) began in 2001 with some of our recreation and forestry faculty writing the original proposal and working with you to initiate the AFHA. Your hard work, perseverance, and the team you have put together over time has accomplished a great achievement—the creation of a national heritage area! As well, we have enjoyed working projects with your team and have even had some graduate students enrolled from your AmeriCorps team. We in the WVU DFNR are looking forward to continuing our participation and engagement with the new AFNHA management team and stakeholders.

Again, please take this as a letter of support and let me know how we might continue to partner with the AFNHA.

Dr. Robert Burns



July 13, 2022

AFNHA, Inc. Board, Bob Johnson, President Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

#### LETTER OF SUPPORT: AFNHA 2022 Management Plan

This letter is written to expresses the support from Eastern WV Community and Technical College for the AFNHA Management Plan. We partner with AFNHA in the regional Creative Economy program that supports the plan's goals of supporting the region's economy in the areas of tourism, hospitality, and outdoor recreation development. We are currently developing education and community outreach programs to support those goals.

Eastern WV Community and Technical College has supported the region for the past 23 years. The College is relatively young but has developed extensive programs in business, nursing, wind technology, and continuing education through workforce and continuing education programs. We have recently added agriculture and agritourism education and expanded hospitality certificate offerings.

This Plan will help address our community's needs by creating a pathway of technical and educational support to preserve our forest and community assets while allowing the communities to develop an economy based around them. Many agencies have been developed over the past years to work in these areas but need the support of AFNHA as outlined in the Management Plan.

We support the Management Plan of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, and we look forward to our continued partnership.

Heyer Welebb

Megan Webb Dean of Advancement & Continuing Education



July 19, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

#### **Dear Phyllis:**

Davis & Elkins College is pleased to partner with the AFNHA and to offer our support to the Management Plan Draft. Davis & Elkins College is a small liberal arts college located in Elkins with a rich history steeped in the forests of Appalachia. Our founders, Senators Henry Gassaway Davis and Stephen Benton Elkins, were significant in developing the lumber industry in the area and bringing the railroad to the area that laid the foundation for economic growth and stability. They saw the need for higher education in the growing region and established the College in the heart of North Central West Virginia in 1904.

D&E is poised to support the AFNHA through internships and trainers and most significantly through our new Sustainable Natural Resources and Forest Technology Programs beginning fall of 2022. Students pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in sustainable natural resources will have a choice of three areas of concentration: natural resources management, forest resources management and parks and recreation management. All three will focus on the sustainable use of natural resources such as watershed management, forestry and recreation and are designed to prepare students for employment in fields such as conservation, fish and wildlife biology, forestry and park recreation and administration. Students pursuing an Associate of Science degree in forest technology will be well-prepared for a career as a forestry technician, procurement forester or utility forester.

In addition to classroom study, students will gain hands-on experience in the 300-acre experimental forest donated to the College by Trustee Chair Emerita June Myles and conveniently located east of Beverly, which is just a short drive from campus. The property will allow students to complete much of the field study necessary to complete the degree programs and will feature the George A. Myles Field Station. "The experimental forest provides an incredible opportunity for our students to get real-world management practice on such a diverse property," D&E Associate Professor of Biology and Environmental Science Dr. Crystal Krause said.

The sustainable natural resource major builds upon our existing academic strengths in environmental science and outdoor recreation management, provides clear career paths for students interested in these and related fields and is a natural fit for our location in central West Virginia. We are grateful to June Myles for her gift and excited by the opportunities that it opens up for our present and future faculty, staff and students, and we are especially pleased that it allows us to significantly support the work of the AFNHA.

Sincerely,

Kabert J. Phillips

Robert J. Phillips, Ph.D. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

LEADING THE WAY

100 Campus Drive > Elkins, WV 26241 > 304.637.1900



July 21, 2022

Ms. Phyllis Baxter Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

Allegany County Tourism provides full support for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's management plan, and we look forward to working with your organization to accomplish the outlined goals for tourism and development.

Allegany County Tourism is the Official Destination Marketing Organization for Allegany County, Maryland, one of only two counties in Maryland included in the AFNHA program area. As an organization, we have worked with AFNHA through the certification process as well as provided input on the management plan. AFHNA has been receptive to feedback and has been a pleasure to work with.

Our destination's pillars of success include outdoor recreation, natural and scenic beauty, history and heritage, and arts and culture. The goals and objectives of the management plan reflect and align with our organization's goals to preserve, interpret, and develop these assets and pillars of success in our own community. With over 70,000 acres of public land and over 200 miles of developed recreational trails, including the C&O Canal Towpath trail and Great Allegheny Passage Trail, it is of great importance to us that we honor our cultural history and enhance our recreational assets, and we look forward to working with AFHNA to do just that.

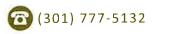
We are in full support of the management plan, and we look forward to collaborating with and supporting the future initiatives of the AFNHA.

Sincerely,

Shew Workman

Ashli Workman Director of Tourism Allegany County Government

ALLEGANY COUNTY TOURISM, 13 CANAL STREET, CUMBERLAND, MD 21502





mdmountainside.com



Elkins-Randolph County Tourism, CVB

Elkins Depot Welcome Center CVB, Inc.

315 Railroad Avenue, Elkins | West Virginia

ELKINS DEPOT WELCOME CENTER

(304) 635-7803 | elkinswelcomecenter@gmail.com

March 28, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Executive Director Baxter:

The Elkins-Randolph County Tourism Convention and Visitors Bureau and Welcome Center is fully committed to the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) Management Plan's goals, especially involving sustainable tourism and continued collaboration.

As the primary marketing organization for the enhancement of tourism development, the CVB has felt and continues to feel that our involvement in this plan and the future activities of the program are essential to community and economic development. This is evident by my Board of Directors' support in my serving on the AFNHA Board of Directors, many hours of involvement in the development of the Management Plan and the hosting of an AmeriCorps member. I was also involved in the initial Mon Towns discussions and chair the WV Community Hub Communities of Achievement Program for Elkins and Randolph County which emphasizes tourism development.

As the implementation of the Management Plan becomes the major focus of AFNHA, collaboration will be an essential element to its success. We will continue our involvement as a partner with this organization through the distribution of information as front line tourism managers and encouragement to explore the National Heritage Area. We recognize the importance of forest heritage, interpretive signage, conserving and enhancing recreational assets and educating the public regarding stewardship.

We strongly support the AFNHA Management Plan and look forward to working together to increase interpretation, broaden the publics knowledge of the forests' recreational and heritage assets as well as enhancing community and economic impact on future development.

Should you have any questions or need assistance with any aspect of the plan, please do not hesitate to contact me.

annat. Beardslos

Anne F. Beardslee Executive Director



April 19, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

Greenbrier County Convention & Visitors Bureau's mission is to drive the tourism economy in our county, thereby enhancing the quality of life for residents while preserving the resources and assets that make us unique. As a destination marketing organization within the region, we are an active member of the Potomac Highlands Creative Economy team that brings regional tourism assets together under the AFNHA umbrella.

Tourism marketing is a critical piece in growing awareness and sustainability in the national heritage area. With our expertise in marketing, it's the component of the Management Plan where our organization can be most impactful. We strongly support AFNHA's efforts in sustainable tourism and will continue to seek out ways that we can collaborate on behalf of Greenbrier County and the national heritage area as a whole.

Kind regards, Kara D. Dense

Executive Director Greenbrier County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Greenbrier County Convention & Visitors Bureau P.O. Box 1107 • Lewisburg, WV 24901 www.greenbrierwv.com • 304-645-1000 • 800-833-2068



Hampshire County Convention & Visitors Bureau 91 S High Street, Romney, WV 26757 304-822-7477 www.ComeToHampshire.com

April 7, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

The mission of the Hampshire County Convention & Visitors Bureau (HCCVB) is to market the area globally as a leisure, convention, and business destination for the continual economic benefit of the community while respecting its culture and history.

I've recently been notified that the HCCVB was awarded grant funding from the Creative Economy Tourism Development Grant through the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA). The upcoming Hampshire County Farm Crawl will benefit local farms, businesses, restaurants, and lodging facilities by increasing the number of tourists who will visit Hampshire County to participate in the event. This grant will have a *significant* impact on this event and our local businesses, which positively impacts all of the citizens in this community.

The Potomac Highlands Creative Economy meetings provide invaluable information to me in my position as Executive Director of the HCCVB. The connections I've made during the meetings and the information shared in those meetings has let me to new tourism insights as well as a new focus on community development here in Hampshire County.

I am pleased to be a partner in the AFNHA and fully support the Management Plan of the AFNHA.

With Kind Regards,

line & fadd Tina R. Ladd

Executive Director

July 21, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241



2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS Toni Mathias Harvey – President David Workman – Vice President Mary Burgess – Treasurer Marlene England Jean Flanagan Rick Freeman Peter Sullivan Amanda West Hunter Williams Michele Mouré-Reeves–Ex Director

Dear Ms. Baxter,

The Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau (HCCVB), tasked with the responsibility to promote the visibility of our county's tourism assets, greatly appreciates the efforts of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) to enhance and strengthen the tourism industry of Hardy County, the Potomac Highlands, and our State.

In addition to promoting our tourism industry, HCCVB supports existing tourism businesses and assets and develops new tourism related experiences, working to build a viable tourism industry while enriching the quality of life of our residents. Being involved with community and economic development projects has found our destination marketing organization engaged with the county's historic, cultural, and recreational assets, exploring their relevance to Hardy County's heritage, and freshly interpreting their stories.

AFNHA has been an encouraging partner as we have moved these projects along in their development and we work to sustain our county's economy. We look forward to returning that support, to partnering with AFNHA to implement the goals of their Management Plan and to collaborating with Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area on our and their future projects.

Sincerely,

M. Mouré-Leeves

Michele Moure-Reeves Executive Director

HARDY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU Mailing Address: PO Box 10, Mathias, WV 26812 304-897-8700 www.visithardywv.com visithardy@gmail.com VISIT MOUNTAINEER COUNTRY.COM

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

April 8, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

The Visit Mountaineer Country Convention and Visitors Bureau (VMCCVB) supports the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's (AFNHA) management planning, goals, and implementation with key industry partners and stakeholders.

As the official tourism organization and Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO) for North Central West Virginia, the VMCCVB directly represents Preston County and supports its various initiatives to grow Mountaineer Country both at the local and visitor levels. The AFNHA directly contributes to driving our tourism and destination management efforts.

Previously, our organization has attended several AFNHA planning sessions to serve as the voice for tourism and CVBs in North Central West Virginia. As such, we have supported the AFNHA and provided destination best practices and insight for planning efforts and will continue to do so in the future.

As the AFNHA moves into the implementation stage of their management planning, the VMCCVB stands by ready to offer support and guidance in order to best serve the destination and highlights its unique tourism offerings in the world of outdoor recreation and scenic beauty.

We look forward to continuing working with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area to implement the goals of the Management Plan while advancing Preston County and Mountaineer Country to be a great place to live and visit.

meddle

Susan Riddle, President and CEO Visit Mountaineer Country Convention and Visitors Bureau



Natures MOUNTAIN PLAYGROUND

POCAHONTAS COUNTY, WV®

July 21, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

**RE: AFNHA Management Plan** 

Dear Ms. Baxter;

The Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) looks forward to continuing to work with the AFNHA to achieve goals outlined in the Management Plan. Their continued work supports a robust economic development program through tourism enhancement in Pocahontas County, WV. It has been a pleasure to work with the team at AFNHA to become a national heritage area and to work with them to implement the management plan. The elements of the plan support the CVB's values toward preserving our heritage and sharing our history.

Pocahontas County, WV's economy is strongly supported by the tourism industry and offers an abundance of recreation and tourism-based assets. Fifty percent of our county lands are Monongahela National Forest (MNF) which is about one third of the forest. The county is rural with no interstate highways but offers scenic beauty around every turn. The tourism services that support the significant travel industry are found in MNF gateway communities where the economy has transitioned from forest product industries and a natural resources economy to a tourism-based economy.

The Pocahontas County CVB is the county's destination marketing organization and our primary function is to develop and implement effective marketing strategies to grow visitation and overnight stays. The CVB also operates visitor centers around the county and helps facilitate tourism based economic development projects and programs that enhance the recreational, historic and natural tourism assets.

The CVB has worked with AFHNA for many years through a number of different programs including more recently the creative economy initiative and developing the management plan. The CVB has found tremendous benefit in working with AFNHA through sharing of information, resources to support programs, networking with partners and generally the collaborative nature they foster among our many communities and counties.

The Pocahontas County CVB fully supports the AFNHA and the continued implementation of the management plan. Please feel free to call me, if you have any questions or would like more information. Again, AFNHA has been and continues to be highly valuable to our communities that are impacted greatly by the forest.

**Executive Director** 



Tucker County Convention and Visitors Bureau Po Box 565, Davis, WV 2626 304-259-5315 <u>www.canaanvalley.org</u>

July 27, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

This letter is to express our, the Tucker County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), for the Management Plan of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA). We look forward to continue working with Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area to implement the goals of their Management Plan. We've have partnered with AFNHA through the years on many projects and continue to believe in their mission and the work they have accomplished.

The Tucker County Convention and Visitors Bureau, a private, non-profit sales and marketing corporation mission is to support, sustain and assist in the growth and enhancement of the Tourism Industry in the county. More than 50% of the land mass in our county is part of protected land, a large portion of that is the Monongahela National Forest. Our primary tourism attraction is outdoor recreation. We fully support all 5 of AFNHA goals, specifically in preserving and enhancing heritage tourism and community development. Our area continues to see tourism growth and our community is thriving because of this. But with all this growth comes growing pains that need assistance.

We excited for future collaboration with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area and implanting their Management Plan.

r llaldo

Jessica Waldo Executive Director Tucker County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr. Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford Lt. Governor

#### **Authority Members**

Janice Keene Evergreen Heritage Center, Chair

Jeremy Bender ServiceMaster of Allegany County

Tina Cappetta U.S. Department of the Interior, NPS

Stuart Czapski Allegany County Chamber of Commerce

> Al Feldstein Maryland Historical Trust

> Bradford Nixon Frostburg State University

**Ray Morriss** Mayor, City of Cumberland

Rebecca Ruppert Allegany College of Maryland, Vice-Chair

Robert Smith Allegany Aggregates

Deidra Ritchie Executive Director



July 21, 2022

Ms. Phyllis Baxter **Executive Director** Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Phyllis:

I am writing on behalf of the Canal Place Preservation & Development Authority (CPPDA) to express our full support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) and the draft management plan. As a member of the AFNHA Board of Directors and as the Executive Director of the Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area (PWPHA), I cannot emphasize enough the many benefits the AFNHA plan will provide. From telling stories of the past to preserving and enhancing the natural and historical integrity of the ANFHA, I recognize the positive impacts the approved plan will have on all the counties included within the boundaries of the heritage area.

Allegany County, Maryland has seen increased tourism and economic impacts within the PWPHA. The inclusion of Allegany County into the AFNHA will only increase heritage tourism in our region. We are excited to have the AFNHA management plan approved so we can continue to work with our West Virginia partners, and continue to make a significant difference in heritage tourism.

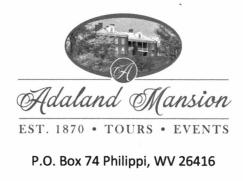
Thank you for all your hard work on this project. I look forward to the approval of the management the plan.

Sincerely,

Deides Z. Ritche

Deidra L. Ritchie **Executive Director CPPDA/PWPHA** 

Western Maryland Railway Station, 13 Canal Street, Suite 301, Cumberland, Maryland 21502 Phone: 301-724-3655 **\*** Fax: 301-724-3659 **\*** Toll Free: 800-989-9394 **\*** TTY/TDD: 800-735-2258 Email: canalplace.mail@maryland.gov Website: www.passagesofthepotomac.org



304-516-1124 cell, 304-457-1587

July 11 2022

Adaland Mansion is nationally registered historic home in the outskirts of Barbour County, WV. Built in 1870 the 23 room house is fully restored where visitors can tour mansion house, carriage house and barn and 22 acres of land with developed gardens. We host over 5,000 tourist annually to our venue for weddings, dinners, cultural events like our quilt show, Murder Mystery Dinner Theater and house tours. Our goal is to continue to educate locals and travelers about the history of West Virginia and what life was like at the turn of the century. As a small non-profit we have a staff of 5 and a volunteer base of around 17 that help us share in our mission to preserve the property for future generation.

As a partner with Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area we are fortunate to have access to their AmeriCorps program that helps to provide man power for projects that would otherwise go unfinished. It is always a challenge to bring educated volunteers to such a rural areas and AFNHA is always assisting small organizations with this. We are grateful that AFNHA has years of valuable experience directing the program that benefits thousands in the rural communities in West Virginia & Maryland.

Adaland also represents the local tourist/ cultural economy on the AFNHA board of directors. The director of Adaland Mansion (JoLynn Powers) is a second term board member of AFNHA and a former AFHA 3 year AmeriCorps Service Member. She works on the Personal Committee and works directly with the volunteers to make sure their experience in West Virginia & Maryland is a rewarding one. Her first hand personal experience observing the impact that AFNHA can have on local communities and the benefit a National Heritage Area will have in the future of West Virginia feeds her commitment to this organization.

The board of Adaland Mansion and all of our volunteers are excited to be part of this new National Heritage Area. We are committed to sharing our wealth of knowledge and expertise to others throughout the region and hope to make valuable connections that grow in the future of the Heritage Area. We believe that we can do a better job growing together then each organization can do alone. So are happy to support the creation of a new National Heritage Area that show cases our Appalachian culture and history.

**Executive Director** 

tawer executive Director adaland Mansion JoLvnn Powers



Arthurdale Heritage, Inc. 18 Q Rd. | PO Box 850 Arthurdale, WV 26520 https://arthurdaleheritage.org/

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

May 27, 2022

Dear Ms. Baxter,

Arthurdale Heritage, Inc. is pleased to support the Management Plan of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA). Arthurdale Heritage has been a partner of AFNHA for many years and directly benefits from the AFNHA AmeriCorps program. With the official designation of the highlands of West Virginia and western Maryland as a National Historic Area in 2019, AFNHA and its partners are poised for continued success.

Arthurdale Heritage, Inc. (AHI) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, located in Preston County, West Virginia. Founded in 1985, AHI is committed to the preservation of Arthurdale the nation's first New Deal homestead community—and educating the public about this important piece of national history. AHI operates a small but impactful museum on our historic campus. In addition to offering tours, AHI hosts community events and activities including children's art classes, educational seminars, volunteer workdays, square dances, family movie nights, and much more. AFNHA AmeriCorps members allow us to provide tours to school children, tourists, and community members every day of the week. Their management of volunteers and community educational programs is particularly helpful since we have a small staff.

When faced with growth and success, it is always important to step back and enter into a planning process. AFNHA has tackled this enormous task so that the organization—and our region as whole—can better plan for the next 15 years. As a cultural site and museum, we at AHI are particularly pleased with the inclusion of preservation of historic and natural assets as well as heritage tourism and community development in the Management Plan. Tourism is now the top industry in West Virginia, and we agree with AFNHA that we must "care for the region, enhance its assets, and share stories...to welcome visitors, keep communities vibrant, and grow a healthy economy." Historic preservation, heritage tourism, and community development are at the core of Arthurdale Heritage's mission and vision. We gladly support AFNHA's Management Plan and look forward to further collaboration.

atterfuld Elizabeth P. Satterfield

Curator and Director of Education

July 23, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins WV 26241

RE: AFNHA Management Plan

Dear Ms Baxter,

ArtSpring looks forward to continuing to work with AFNHA to achieve goals outlined in the AFNHA Management Plan. ArtSpring is a steward of Tucker County (WV) arts with the mission of supporting and nurturing local artists and continuing to grow Tucker County as a regional arts tourism destination. Tucker County's economy is strongly supported by the tourism industry and second homeowners; we offer an abundance of arts, recreation and tourism-based assets.

ArtSpring fully supports the AFNHA and the continued implementation of the Management Plan. AFNHA has been and continues to be highly valuable to our communities and to our efforts.

Sincerely,

Elaine George President, ArtSpring



**Mission** 

ArtSpring is a steward of Tucker County Arts. We support learning, emerging, and established artists across the spectrum of contemporary and traditional creative arts. We offer resources to artists, engage the community in the arts, act as a gateway and promote Tucker County as an arts destination.





Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

5 April, 2022

Dear Mrs. Baxter,

After having reviewed the Management Plan for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, I am excited to throw my full support behind this plan and its implementation. As Executive Director of the Beverly Heritage Center, we face many operational challenges and being a part of the discussions in this process has thus far led to many productive dialogues.

The Beverly Heritage Center itself houses a museum of local history, a visitor center, a community center, and a branch of the local library – we serve a lot of roles our community desperately needs, but we are also stretched very thin as a result of such a need. Our partnership with AFNHA allows us to succeed in our mission, particularly with regards to our educational mission as well as with our community engagement. AmeriCorps members matched at our site through AFNHA have done incredible things, such as creating exhibits about local foodways and African-Americans in Randolph County, researching and promoting our town's Civil War-era graffiti, rehabilitating our historic homes and buildings, and opening up a new hiking trail at our local Civil War Battlefield. The training and technical assistance that AFNHA provides for the AmeriCorps members is a crucial part of ensuring that such projects we aspire to are done in an efficient manner that still remains within our very limited budget.

The Beverly Heritage Center has given back to AFNHA as well by providing technical assistance to our partner sites as well as by loaning objects in our own collection for use at other sites within the National Heritage Area. We see ourselves contributing to this partnership network in the future by continuing to provide input regarding interpretation as well as sharing our institutional knowledge with other sites as far as grant-writing or educational partners goes. Spelling out the specific goals of AFNHA in this management plan will help us and our partner sites plan for future growth and stabilization instead of reacting to events after they happen.

We are very pleased to be a part of this and we look forward to working with you in the future. Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

Christopher Mielke, PhD Executive Director, Beverly Heritage Center

September 25, 2022

The Honorable Debra A. Haaland Secretary of the Interior United States Department of the Interior 1849 C Street NW Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

I am pleased to hear that the Board of Appalachian Forest Heritage Area Inc. (Board), the coordinating entity assigned responsibility for Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA), has submitted a Management Plan for this important local, state, regional and national resource.

We understand that the Board has led a multi-faceted planning team and public engagement process to gather input and develop this plan. The resulting plan, which we have viewed, lays out the common mission, vision, and goals to protect, enhance, interpret, and share the Appalachian Forest heritage of our region, through engagement with an active partnership network working together toward those goals, for the benefit of our environment and our communities.

The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation has prior and on-going commitments to support the work of AFNHA. Currently, AFNHA has an active grant "Growing the Highlands Regional Creative Economy" to expand economic opportunity and community development based on the region's creative economy and human, cultural, heritage and natural assets. This effort has helped attractions and entrepreneurial businesses recover from the Covid pandemic while building capacity to attract and serve tourists and community residents. This project strives to build individual skills and capacity, strengthen attractions and businesses, and create networks to coordinate activities and promotions which create a more resilient and enjoyable destination.

The regional approach of the Board and their work in the AFNHA builds capacity and support community growth by enriching the community's ability to care for and promote their local assets. I am happy to provide any additional information necessary during the review of their proposal. We look forward to working with AFNHA to implement the goals of the Management Plan.

Sincerely,

filli Jordood

William J. Woodrum Senior Program Officer Community and Economic Development

1400 Benedum-Trees Building
223 Fourth Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222
Telephone 412/288-0360
Facsimile 412/288-0366
From West Virginia 800/223-5948



April 12, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

This letter is to express support from Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation for the AFNHA Management Plan and its goals. As a participating partner, we support and urge funding for this grant request.

The Evergreen Heritage Center (EHC), located on 130 acres of Federal Hill in Allegany County, is an historic Maryland farm that pre-dates the Revolutionary War. The property is on the National Register for its architectural significance and its role in the early settlement of Western MD. In addition, the EHC is managed under both a Dept. of Natural Resources conservation easement and forest stewardship plan. The EHC Foundation, a 501(c)(3) public charity, was founded in 2008 to utilize this historical property to provide hands-on enrichment programs in Western Maryland counties. The Foundation and its partners have developed multiple award-winning programs and heritage experiences for the benefit of the Western Maryland community and to fulfill its mission of education, conservation and preservation.

The EHC Foundation has been involved with AFNHA through its Creative Economy program as well as the development of the Management Plan as a committee member. Through the implementation of the management plan, the EHC Foundation will see a three-fold benefit including strengthening our ability to attract and serve visitors; building a stronger and more resilient tourism destination for our rural area; and increasing our capacity and resilience through the efforts of the AFNHA.

The EHC Foundation contributes to many activities discussed in the Management Plan, in particular the Development and Promotion of Outdoor Recreation Opportunities and enhancing Forest Heritage Assets. In addition, by preserving and conserving resources, the EHC Foundation also has a focus on developing a variety of culture, heritage, and nature tourism products and activities which leads to sustainable tourism.

We are pleased to be a partner in the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area and affirm our commitment to the vision and goals of the AFNHA as set forth in the Management Plan.

Sincerely,

Jamise diene

Janice Keene

President Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation



Garrett County Trails, Inc. P.O. Box 62 McHenry, MD 21541 director@garrettrails.org

301-387-3013

8/8/22

The Honorable Debra A. Haaland Secretary of the Interior United States Department of the Interior 1849 C Street NW Washington, DC 20240

Secretary Haaland,

Garrett Trails is pleased to support the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Areas management plan and looks forward to working with them to accomplish their goals of sharing stories of our forest heritage through education, interpretation, and experiences and supporting sustainable tourism and community economic development to benefit rural communities.

Garrett Trails is a nonprofit, volunteer organization dedicated to the development of a well-used network of high-quality, sustainable trails that provide access to Garrett County's historic, municipal, and environmental treasures. We believe outstanding trails are important to the economic development of the county and will promote good health and well-being for county residents.

During the management planning phase, we participated in several information exchanges hosted by AFNHA. At each meeting the efficiency of the organization allowed us to quickly connect with partners from all over the region and share how sustainable trail building can create positive opportunities for their communities. We also learned about the good work of those partners and brought their experiences back to Garrett County to share with our network.

As a board member for AFNHA I have had the opportunity to collaborate with the management planning team on several elements of the plan and am confident in their capacity to meet their goals. We are eager to see the plan approved and will continue to work with our neighbors in West Virginia to, "conserve, interpret, and promote forest heritage to enhance landscapes and communities in the highlands of West Virginia and Maryland."

Sincerely,

**Executive Director** 



Kump Education Center Post Office Box 1106 401 S. Randolph Ave. Elkins, WV 26241

July 17, 2022

Phyllis Baxter appalchianforestnha.org

Dear Phyllis,

I am delighted to write this letter in support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan. The process of learning to interpret the story of our beautiful West Virginia landscape and lifestyle has been slow and carefully executed by the AFNHA leadership in collaboration with many local people. We have been engaged in this process for at least 20 years, and we have learned how to see the truth about our region and understand how it can best be appreciated by visitors.

My natural passion for this place is based on family history and habits. As a child, my parents encouraged me to walk in the woods and recognize the value in our great variety of animals and plants in these mountains, and my family taught me to love the creative and hard-working people who live here. When I got a little older, the jokes about hillbillies really upset me. Now I am so glad the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan offers us a way to let the world know that West Virginia is a special place and the people here are intelligent and inventive.

At Kump Education Center we are "building a brighter future" by teaching about local history and environmental sustainability. We like to mix traditional and digital experiences. Last summer kids had the opportunity to discover candlewick plants in the Kump Wetland and find the plants on the *i-Naturalist* app. In the winter we worked with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders on their basic skills by offering "Targeted Tutoring" in our learning lab for students who had been struggling with online learning during the pandemic. They explored the historic Kump home one room at a time at the end of each lesson. Then our friend "Eleanor Roosevelt" came for tea with our students on their last day.

I believe the new Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan helps us to understand our past and to find ways to make our region more accessible for future generations.

Thank you to the National Park Service for helping us articulate and structure our local efforts to improve our future.

Sincerely,

etter R. Biola

Heather R. Biola, Kump Education Center Director



Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Garrett County Chamber of Commerce 15 Visitors Center Drive McHenry, Maryland 21541

July 21, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter:

On behalf of the Garrett County Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area (MMGTW) we would like to express our continued support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) and your mission and goals outlined in the AFNHA Management Plan.

The Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area in Garrett County became certified in 2011 and we have made an economic impact to the county of over \$155 million and contributed over \$12.5 million in state and local tax revenues. In order for the MMGTW Heritage Area to fulfill our mission we must work closely with partners such as the AFNHA. Garrett County sees over 1.4 million visitors per year and tourism is the largest economic driver in the county. The Heritage Area is just one key market the county tourism office targets. Bringing in heritage tourist through preserving and promoting our natural history throughout the county.

Garrett County is rich in natural resources and is home too three state forests, Garrett, Savage, and Potomac. These forests drive a tremendous amount of our natural resource tourism. These forests are home to some of the best class five whitewater in the country and rafters and kayakers come from all over to take on these challenging courses. Garrett County offers over 100,000 acres of public lands for visitors and locals to enjoy all of our natural recreation.

The MMGTW Heritage Area looks forward to collaborating with the AFNHA on projects to secure funding and preserve and promote our natural resources and heritage. On behalf of the Heritage Area for Garrett County I am happy to provide you with this letter and our full support of AFNHA Management Plan and the goals set forth within.

Sincerely,

Kim Folk

Kimberly Folk Heritage Area and Groups Director Garrett County Chamber of Commerce Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area



July 21, 2022

AFHA Inc. Board, Bob Johnson, President and Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

To those it may concern;

Today, local leaders and regional partners, such as The Mon-Forest Towns Partnership (MFTP), see the recreational economy as a key to the future of Marlinton, and our region. The Snowshoe Highlands Ride Center is the first and only International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Ride Center in West Virginia. The Snowshoe Highlands Area Recreation Collaborative (SHARC), another regional partner, see a fantastic future for bike-optimized trail networks. Collectively, once completed, the region is poised to see significant increases in non-local visitors (specifically, mountain bikers), coming to use these trails.

Recent estimates from economists at West Virginia University (WVU) Extension (Eades, 2022), project the greater Ride Center could see up to 72,500 riders annually, resulting in \$24.2 million in total economic activity, and 304 new jobs totaling \$7.8 million in wages in Pocahontas County (alone).

The MFTP shares common goals with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. These include sharing the Stories of Forest Heritage through Education and the Experiences of recreational activities within the forest. The partnership is making tremendous strides toward Sustainable Tourism. The MFTP share interest in Cultural Heritage and Ecotourism.

The AFNHA staff, based in Elkins, is in the heart of the Mon-Forest Town region. Working toward these common goals will provide capacity to achieve the broader vision of growing local and state recreation economies, while enhancing the Assets that Reflect Forest Heritage. We look forward to future collaboration with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area.

We affirm our commitment to the vision and goals of the AFNHA as set forth in the Management Plan to Support Sustainable Tourism and Economic Development to Benefit Communities, which is closely linked with MFTP Goal #7 to Develop a Sustainable Partnership Framework.

Therefore, as Mayor and MFT Chair, I/we are pleased to be support the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area and support the Management Plan of the AFNHA.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Felton, Mayor Town of Marlinton Mon-Forest Towns Partnership (MFTP), Chair PH; 304/799-4315



#### 07/22/2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Subject: Letter of Support for Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's Management Plan

Dear Ms. Baxter,

The Preservation Alliance of West Virginia (PAWV) is the grassroots, statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to historic preservation. PAWV is committed to preserving West Virginia's unique cultural heritage for current and future generations. PAWV and the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) are established partners that collaborate through our organizational AmeriCorps programs and in long-term planning for both organizations to achieve our visions of a sustainable cultural heritage tourism economy in our Mountain State. PAWV is pleased to continue its partnership with AFNHA and looks forward to working together to implement the goals of the Management Plan.

PAWV has attended several of the Management Plan's planning sessions in 2021 and 2022 and has provided comments on the draft of the management plan, as well as feedback on areas for future collaboration between the two organizations. Through participation in these meetings, as well as working alongside the executive staff of AFNHA, it is with great pride that I have reviewed the final draft of the Management Plan and identified key areas of strength and future collaboration between AFNHA and PAWV. Specifically, the plan is comprehensive and well-organized - outlining important facets of the organization's vision for the national heritage area and its goals for developing a tourism economy built on the principles of inclusivity.

The Management Plan is easy to digest and accessible for partner organizations to adopt and for new staff to on-board and continue the work of AFNHA as outlined through this plan. This document will be a revolutionary directive for the organization to build on its existing reputation of excellency in outreach, interpretation, and conservation. The four new interpretive themes were critical updates that will tell more stories of the peoples who have populated the Appalachian Forest region in both prehistoric and historic times. These interpretive themes will be an important guide for expanding cultural heritage tourism opportunities in the region, many of which were identified as assets in the plan. Through the planning process, AFNHA has identified assets focused on a variety of interest areas that demonstrate their thoughtful approach to building a successful economic force for the region.

PAWV looks forward to continuing its partnership with AFNHA, and we affirm our commitment to the vision and goals of the AFNHA as set forth in the Management Plan. We are excited to partner in a number of ways including:

- The training of AmeriCorps members to better carry out the Management Plan at their respective sites;
- Providing hands-on historic trades training to people within the region in order to ensure our population has the skill set to preserve our cultural and historical assets;
- Offer financial assistance, in the form of microloans and grants, to historical sites within the region;

Preservation Alliance of West Virginia



- Supply historic preservation technical assistance to property owners in the region with the goal of further enhancing the region's historical assets; and
- Work with AFNHA's executive leadership to ensure the management plan is followed and considered in future projects.

PAWV is truly excited about the ideas brought forth through the AFNHA Management Plan and look forward to being a key partner in its implementation. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about this letter.

Thank you,

Dermelle Pake

Danielle Parker, Executive Director Preservation Alliance of West Virginia



Richwood Community Center 20 Avenue B. Richwood, WV 26261

The Richwood Community Center 20 Avenue B. Richwood, WV 26261

August 11, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

The Richwood Community Center recognizes the importance of enhancing opportunities for outdoor recreation in the forests throughout our region and the state. At the Richwood Community Center we manage activities at the Richwood City Park, Richwood City Pool, the Disc Golf course, and the gym in our facility. We work closely with the Richwood Area Chamber of Commerce and the Richwood CVB and are excited for future collaboration with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA).

We have worked with AFNHA through the Americorp program as well as various humanities programs with our partner organization, Mill Whistle Arts and Richwood Heritage Center. The AFNHA is a valuable partner to us in their role as coordinators of multiple efforts to promote tourism in the National Forest.

We look forward to future collaboration with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area.

Sincerely,

Mary Jame Welian

Mary Jane Williams, President The Richwood Community Center



Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

July 21, 2022

Dear Ms. Baxter,

#### West Virginia Board of Trustees

Chair

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The Nature Conservancy has enjoyed a productive and long-term partnership with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, and strongly supports the Management Plan. The Nature Conservancy has identified the Appalachians as one of our four global priority areas, alongside places like the Amazon and Kenyan grasslands (see https://www.nature.org/enus/about-us/where-we-work/priority-landscapes/appalachians/). The Appalachians play a critical role in protecting biodiversity, storing forest carbon to limit warming, and enabling native plants and animals to shift across a diverse, resilient landscape to adapt as climate changes. In West Virginia, TNC's work with AFNHA and AmeriCorps members has focused on conserving Appalachian forests and ecosystems, enhancing and reconnecting high elevation red spruce forest habitats, facilitating efforts by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources and local conservation partners to implement the 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan in 21 local Conservation Focus Areas, expanding recreational opportunities and strengthening stewardship of our Preserves, and organizing volunteer participation in conservation activities in critical landscapes. This work supports many of the goals described in the Management Plan, including Conserving and Enhancing Natural Resources, Scenic and Recreational Assets (Goal 1), Educational and Interpretive Activities (Goal 2), Supporting Sustainable Tourism and Economic Development to Benefit Communities, and Developing and Promoting Outdoor Recreation Opportunities (Goal 3). Through our work together, TNC also supports the goal of Connecting and Supporting Partners (Goal 4), including many of those identified in the Management Plan.

We look forward to continuing our work with AFHNA to implement the Management Plan as we pursue our own vision of A World Where People and Nature Thrive.

Sincerely,

Todd Miller

**Director of Conservation Programs** 

The Nature Conservancy in West Virginia

435 Wilson Street Elkins, WV 26241 **Tel:** (304) 637-0160 **Fax:** (304) 637-0584

nature.org/westvirginia



424A Shrewsbury St. Charleston, WV 25301 304-533-1077 wvhub.org

August 1, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Ms. Baxter,

I am writing this letter in support of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area's (AFNHA) Management Plan Draft. This draft management plan seeks to fulfill the legislatively mandated requirements set forth in th John D. Dillinger, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act

The WV Community Development Hub is committed to driving forward community revitalization and growth through strategies that invest in local leadership, community-based projects, and community-driven change. We do this by working directly with community teams, individual leaders, and key partners like you that are committed to the long-term work that catalyzes community development in West Virginia.

Our organization currently works with leaders in six communities in the Mon Forest Towns initiative through our HubCAP program: Cowen, Franklin, Elkins, Marlinton, Petersburg, and White Sulfur Springs. All of these communities fall within counties included in the AFNHA's stated geographic service area. The AFNHA's priority of enhancing collaboration and support efforts of partner organizations and supporting communications, as stated in Chapter 5, is instrumental in supporting community development on both local and regional levels and aids in increasing cross-jurisdictional projects to support the general health of the community development system. Through the AFNHA's ongoing support of existing programs and initiatives, such as HubCAP and Main Streets, it is able to support community economic development efforts and to build significant social capital within the region. This enables communities to work towards their own development goals while viewing themselves as part of an interconnected community with shared goals.

The preservation of historic buildings and properties, as delineated in Chapter 2, is paramount in ensuring the conservation and enhancement of historical assets that benefit communities and creates new opportunities for funding capital projects through public and private sources. Community economic development is maintained through the development complex capital derived from various sources. By raising awareness about available resources and providing support and technical assistance to leaders undertaking preservation projects, community teams are able to leverage larger funding opportunities to support their development. In turn, this enhances the cultural assets that reflect the shared history and culture of the communities as they move forward in their shared development.

We are pleased to be a partner in the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, and we are looking forward to working with the AFNHA to implement the goals of the Management Plan.

Very best,

Stephanie Tyree Executive Director





# **West Virginia Forestry Association**

2008 Quarrier Street, Charleston, WV 25311 \* 681-265-5019 \* Email: wvfa@wvfa.org

July 18, 2022

Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

**RE: AFNHA Management Plan** 

On behalf of the West Virginia Forestry Association, I wanted to offer our letter of support for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. Our staff and members have been participating in the planning process that has evolved into this management plan. The West Virginia Forestry Assoction is a nonprofit membership organization promoting the value of forest and forest products. Our membership includes forest owners, loggers, truckers, foresters, suppliers, and forest products manufactures. The Appalachian Forest National Heritage Region is the core of our membership and contains the bulk of manufacturing that employees thousands and provides nearly \$2 billion in economic contributions, making it the dominate industry in the region.

We are concerned the plan and subsequent program will interfere with the forest products industry by emphasizing tourism and recreational development on both public and private lands throughout the region. We are pleased the plan recognizes that concern and acknowledges the historical importance of the forest products industry as the legacy industry that provided early settlers the jobs and shelter to develop the region. The plan also recognizes the 21<sup>st</sup> century forest management is sustaining the Appalachian Forest through widespread employment and in sustainable forest practices that will sustain the forest's future.

We support the plan as a dynamic document that will evolve as the programs are developed and implemented throughout the region, adjusting to the successes and opportunities for advance the value and continued productivity of the forest products industry and sustainable forest management throughout the region.

Sincerely,

Eric Carlson

**Executive Director** 



July 24, 2022

Phyllis Baxter Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

By email: <u>phyllisb@afnha.org</u> <u>planning@afnha.org</u>

RE: Comments on Management Plan and Letter of Support of the Plan for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area

Dear Ms. Baxter:

West Virginia Rives Coalition is pleased to reiterate our comments to the Management Plan (MP) we submitted on April 13, 2022. Our comments are set out in detail in the previous comment. We would like to repeat that the Management Plan is thorough and comprehensive, and involves many diverse stakeholders. The MP weaves the history, settlement, interactions between land and people, the idea of the 'crucible of isolation,' the unique cultural heritage, and some of the challenges in the Appalachian Highlands to show in compelling and clear language the importance of thoughtful protection of the forest resources critical for recreation and economic opportunities in the area.

We appreciate the MP including our suggestions regarding the importance of West Virginia waterways in the MP list of land, water, historic, social, and cultural assets in the region. The U.S. Forest Service has determined that segments of the Shavers Fork, Dry Fork, Blackwater, Glady Fork, Laurel Fork, Otter Creek, Red Creek, South Branch Potomac and North Fork of South Branch Potomac, Seneca Creek, Williams, and North Fork Cherry as eligible for protections as wild, scenic, or recreational rivers. Other waterways in West Virginia are in included in the National Park Service's Nationwide Rivers Inventory (<u>Nationwide Rivers Inventory - Rivers (U.S. National Park Service)</u> (<u>nps.gov</u>)). Your MP emphasizes the importance of these headwaters and other waterways to the Chesapeake and Ohio watersheds.

WV Rivers is the statewide organization focused on promoting the overall health of West Virginia's waters and their downstream benefits. WV Rivers was founded by outdoor enthusiasts who care deeply about the Mountain State's renowned free-flowing waters, scenic beauty, and recreational opportunities. Our mission is to conserve and restore West Virginia's exceptional rivers and streams - from the headwaters in the Mon Forest and throughout Appalachia to wherever water flows in West Virginia. We believe that clean water is the foundation of life, and that all people should respect and be able to enjoy clean West Virginia rivers and streams. We also advance policy to protect our federal, state, and local public lands in West Virginia. WV Rivers coordinates West Virginians for Public Lands, an alliance of individuals, businesses, and organizations working to enhance and protect our public lands and waters. Public lands in the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) are the birthplace of our exceptional rivers and streams; and provide drinking water for thousands of West Virginians and for people throughout the Eastern United States. These headwaters truly are the heartbeat of West Virginia.

WV Rivers supports the Management Plan of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. Again, we compliment you on the comprehensive Plan, and appreciate the opportunity to comment on the MP. We look forward to working with and finding ways to collaborate with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area.

Sincerely,

Angie Rosser Executive Director West Virginia Rivers Coalition



Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

July 21, 2022

Re: support for AFNHA's proposed Management Plan

I am writing on behalf of the Woodlands Development Group and Woodlands Community Lenders, a regional Community Development Corporation (CDC) and Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) respectively, to express our support of the proposed Management Plan of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA).

With its relatively new status as a national heritage area, AFNHA continues to be viewed as both a trusted and an extremely competent partner across the spectrum of community groups AFNHA collaborates with, and continues to initiate and manage complex and long-term projects among many stakeholders. AFNHA provides vital support for natural, recreational, cultural, heritage, tourism, and community development initiatives, and helps build crucial capacity for rural community organizations such as ours.

Between our CDC and CDFI work, Woodlands serves 9 counties in AFNHA's footprint. We are a community-based nonprofit real estate developer that supports communities by developing affordable housing, supporting redevelopment/revitalization efforts in downtowns, developing community facilities (including trails and parks), and facilitating community planning efforts. The small communities we serve have little to no staff capacity for necessary community and economic development work. Additionally, they have very scarce additional revenue, matching funds, or other financial resources to further their community goals. Woodlands has utilized many AmeriCorps members from AFNHA's program in the past to great success (having hired several as permanent employees over the years), mostly to provide these small towns with some needed capacity for volunteer engagement, planning efforts, revitalization efforts, downtown redevelopment work, and hands-on historic preservation work.

We are excited to continue to partner with AFNHA in our community work, to continue to serve local communities by hosting AmeriCorps members, and to partner on strategic projects/programs to further the Heritage Area's Management Plan goals. The new resources to the area that come with AFNHA's new status will be invaluable to our communities. Many of the objectives in Goal 3: Support Sustainable Tourism & Community Development and Goal 4: Connect & Support Partners will be natural collaboration opportunities for our organizations. We are already partnering on several initiatives, projects, and programs related to community development, sustainable tourism development, trails, regional tourism marketing efforts, and small business/entrepreneurship development.

Woodlands supports the Management Plan as proposed by AFNHA and was proud to be actively involved in parts of the management planning process. We affirm our commitment to the vision and goals of the AFNHA as set forth in the Management Plan and look forward to working with AFNHA to implement the Plan in the years to come.

Dave Clark Executive Director Woodlands Development & Lending

316 Railroad Avenue, Suite 310, Elkins, WV 26241 Tel: (304) 404-2912

w o o d l a n d s w v . o r g An equal opportunity provider; employer and lender:

# Engagement, Feedback, and Comments:

# Schedule of Management Plan Engagement and Comment Opportunities

5/6/19 May - August 2019 8/5/19 6/16/20 6/29/20 7/1/20 July - Sept 2020 Nov 2020 – April 2021 9/30/20 Fall 2020 11/16/20 Winter 2020-21 1/13/21 1/27/21 4/13/21 April - June 21 5/17/21 6/2/21 6/24/21 6/18/21 7/26/21	AFNHA Stakeholder Meeting and Planning Kick-off – Keyser, WV Website survey available to join planning process Management Planning Working Group Meeting - Elkins, WV Management Planning Public Meeting - Virtual Organization Task Group - Virtual Interpretation & Visitor Experience Task Group - Virtual Planning team site visits including partner meetings Planning team stakeholder and partner interviews Interpretation & Visitor Experience Task Group - Virtual Organization survey Stewardship Task Group - Virtual Tourism provider survey Stewardship History & Culture sub-group – Virtual Stewardship Nature & Recreation sub-group – Virtual Visitor Experience sub-group Virtual Virtual and in-person outreach to county groups Management Planning Public Meeting – Situational Report Visitor Experience sub-group - Virtual Organization sub-group - Virtual Planning Fultion Sub-group - Virtual Management Planning Public Meeting – Situational Report Visitor Experience sub-group - Virtual Organization - mission sub-group Management Planning Exchange - Camp Pioneer, Randolph Co
8/3/21	Management Planning Exchange – Virtual
8/5/21	Management Planning Exchange –Virtual
8/25/21	Organization - mission sub-group
9/20/21	Stewardship Task Group - Virtual
9/22/21	Regional Partners Roundtable - Hybrid, Elkins + Virtual
9/27/21	Interpretation & Visitor Experience Task Group - Virtual
11/1/21 & 11/2/21	Public meetings to present Goals - Virtual
11/12/21	Organization Task Group - Virtual
April - May 22	First draft review available on-line, comments solicited
6/24/22	Public Review Draft available for comment
6/28/22	Management Planning Review Draft Public Meeting – Philippi, WV
6/29/22	Management Planning Review Draft Public Meeting - Virtual
7/24/22	Close of formal Public Review period
8/11/22	Close of comments acceptance
8/15/22	Management Plan submitted for NPS approval

## Summary of Public Engagement:

Over the three-year planning process prior to releasing the Public Review Draft, the AFNHA planning team received considerable input and draft reviews from the National Park Service, Tribal consultant, task group and planning participants, stakeholders, and partners. Engagement is discussed in Chapter 1 and engagement opportunities and meetings are detailed above.

Outreach during the three year planning process included:

- 1,166 notified by emailed newsletter about public meetings, monthly updates, and review
- 275 on planning specific email list received notifications about meetings
- 186 on the Creative Economy email list received tourism and interpretive updates
- Appalachianforestnha.org website recorded 17,007 visits during the 3 year planning period, with 1404 of those specifically on the "planning" pages.
- Four different press releases were sent to a distribution list of 28 media outlets, resulting in press stories from a number of them. The daily newspaper serving 8 of the AFNHA counties, circulation 10,315, printed stories from each press release, and a regional TV station did news stories at least twice.
- Total meeting attendance and feedback is estimated at over 890, representing at least 350 unique individuals who attended one or more meetings or submitted written feedback.

The official 30 day public review comment period was June 24 through July 24, 2022. Comments were accepted both before and following this period, up until the submission date. For this public review period summer 2022:

- Planning and public meeting website visits (which included viewing the draft plan) were 512. Facebook reach during the public review period exceeded 4,000.
- Printed copies of the plan were available in public libraries in each of our 18 counties.
- Plan presented in both in-person and virtual public meetings

### 30-Day Public Review Comments:

Comments received prior to June 2022 were incorporated into the Public Review Draft.

Comments during or following Public Review were considered or incorporated in the final version submitted to NPS in August 2022. Only a few comments were received during the Public Review Period. AFHA attributes this to the extensive review and comments addressed earlier in the process. The Public Review comments were addressed as follows:

Comments	How Addressed
Comments from NPS staff including NPS units within AFNHA	Responded directly to NPS, incorporated suggestions in final plan or Appendices
Comments from Maryland Department of Planning	Responded directly to reviewer, incorporated some suggestions in final plan or Appendices
Comments from Tribal Partner with Seneca Nation	Incorporated suggested language in final plan
Comments from partners, mostly by email, with corrections or added information about partner descriptions and assets information.	Corrected or added information included in final plan and in Appendices.
Comments from public by email, in public meetings, online survey, or written note. Comment topics included interpretation suggestions, community engagement suggestions, and tourism audience comment.	Comments or new information Incorporated in final plan as appropriate; responded individually when possible
Support letters	Letters included. Comments Incorporated in final plan or Appendices as appropriate

# Plan Comment Letters Attached:

Maryland Department of Planning

West Virginia Rivers Coalition

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office Section 106 Review Letter



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

July 25, 2022

Ms. Phyllis Baxter Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

Re: Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan Review Draft June 2022

Dear Ms. Baxter,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the June 2022 draft Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan (AFNHA). The Maryland Department of Planning (Planning) would like to commend the organization for a well written, comprehensive management plan and recommends the organization consider including or discussing the recommendations from this plan in its next management plan update.

#### **Departmental Comments:**

The draft plan highlights and notes:

- Overall, this is a thorough plan that addresses management of the AFNHA holistically, with a needed focus on capacity building. The plan is appropriately ambitious and spread out over a 12-year time horizon. Partnerships, funding, and direct technical assistance will be necessary to successfully implement the plan. In multiple places, the plan mentions that the details of implementation measures will be developed in the first couple of years after plan approval. In Appendix G, the action to "Establish short and long term funding plan with strategies to ensure financial stability with diverse income sources for organization and the NHA use NHA funding to leverage grant and private resources for match" appears to be scheduled for completion by year 3, and is currently underway. The timeframe for this may need to be accelerated. Funding is addressed regularly throughout the plan, but not always in great detail and not often tied to specific actions in detail.
- The plan could provide more detail on the HPP and NHA funding. Page 128 discusses the funding generally, but with an increase from \$157,000 to \$500,000 annually expected after plan approval, more could be included about how that funding will be applied to plan implementation. Page 128 also says "All HPP funds received must be matched equally by non-federal funds and in-kind contributions, as described in the Financial Projection (Appendix H)." However, this is not clearly described in the appendix.
- The plan would benefit from more diagrams and maps to quickly describe and display concepts.
- The plan could describe the benefits of the Maryland Heritage Areas designation in Garrett County in greater detail. What successes has that designation already brought to the study area?

Maryland Department of Planning • 301 West Preston Street, Suite 1101 • Baltimore • Maryland • 21201

- How do the various local comprehensive plans inform the management plan and the area? Does this plan align with them? Contradict in any way?
- The plan addressed conservation areas and noted benefits of such areas. Consider possibly expanding on how historic preservation contributed to economic development. Many times, people think that a historic resource isn't as valuable because they may need to provide property maintenance and may be subject to specific regulations, but when the positive impacts of preserving such sites and assets are factored in there is a direct benefit to economic development.
- Clear benchmarks may be needed for some goals to clearly delineate progress. For example, the strategy on Page 28 notes, "Enhance recreational opportunities for quality user experience and sustainability." The text does a good job explaining existing ways to improve sustainability and suggests even creating a plan for sustainable management, which may be where future measurable accomplishments could be articulated to implement the plan.
- The strategy on Page 34 "to preserve historic buildings" could be expanded to include additional partners who specialize in historic renovations. Partners could be listed as well as funding sources that may help this strategy succeed more long term. The plan lists some, but partners such as ARC and DHCD have been heavily involved in preservation projects recently and their goals align with this strategy.
- Heritage areas and centers, such as the Evergreen Heritage Center, on Page 37 should be listed as they continue to teach Appalachian ways of life and practices. The goals of these centers are to educate and expand on the cultural and historic resources that exist in the area. Funding and promoting these heritage areas will be key to passing on historical knowledge to future generations.
- Expanding outreach has proven to be difficult for many different groups and organizations. Partners, such as AmeriCorps, and other volunteers are key to maintaining the historic assets in the region. Expanding outreach to include a variety of groups and organizations should be considered as a future strategy. Expanding outreach to the public will be key and getting creative, by using social medial or other techniques, may be a way to reach a larger audience.
- Are there any statistics to support the comment that ecotourism and cultural heritage tourism are among the most prominent travel industry segments? (Page. 69)
- Are there any statistics on tourists that visit both West Virginia and Western MD? Does the MD Office of Tourism have a staff member who focuses on Western Maryland? (Page 71)
- The existing Creative Economies Tourism Grant is described on page 114, but not in Chapter 4, which is focused on tourism.
- Are there any programs or examples in which the two state tourism agencies, or county agencies, collaborate? (Page 72)
- There are plans for enhancing US Route 219, which could be included on page 74 in the discussion of that route.
- A map of all the gateways, routes, and destinations described on pages 74-75 would be helpful.
- Are the survey results described on page 75 different from previous studies/surveys? It would be interesting to compare. A graphic displaying the survey results would also be helpful.
- Is data on the tourism audiences discussed under the picture on page 76 tracked? Can it be shared here with potential objective numbers to reach?
- AFNHA should provide ready-made messages and marketing materials that county offices can distribute quickly. (Page 79)

- With labor shortages around the country, the strategy on page 81 to help tourism partners expand personnel will be tough. A more detailed strategy should be considered. Can volunteers be incentivized? How do the average salaries of personnel compare to other regional industries?
- Consider links to or more information about the organizations. Listed in the second paragraph of page 82. I would guess that funding rather than information is the primary barrier. However, if there are some reasonably priced, more easily implementable strategies, they could be prioritized?
- Is there a preliminary planning or commitment step prior to AFNHA assistance on branding (page 83)? Do sites commit to quality and accessibility criteria to then become eligible for AFNHA assistance?
- How will the plan partner with the Appalachian Regional Commission? It is mentioned on page 89 and a few other places, but details are not provided.
- A cross reference of plans is apparent in many different goals listed in this plan. For example, on Page 100 the 5-year strategic plan of the Mon Forest Towns Partnerships is referenced, and many other organizations' plans are listed at a wide level. I would encourage this group to continue to pursue cross plan analysis and even investigate county comprehensive plans. This can ensure this plan's goals align with existing and future underlying plans' goals and strategies.
- Development plans are referenced on Page 103 and academic partners can be strong allies when trying to complete long term planning for land conservation. Making sure underlying land uses align with the goals of this plan should be pushed towards. The strong network of partnerships should be updated and expanded as opportunities become available.
- Main Street programs and their efforts continue to be fundamental in local downtowns. They help maintain a level of economic growth and development and should continue to be supported. Supporting strong downtowns and city centers in the more rural areas will be key.
- Volunteering efforts and the ability to do outreach will be crucial to help the success of the strategies listed in this plan. As outreach efforts slowed down due to the pandemic, many smaller organizations have stopped meeting as much or have disbanded all together and the ability to maintain a strong volunteer base should be considered as a top goal. This goal goes hand-in-hand with leadership, as strong regional leaders in Appalachia will have the ability to recruit and maintain relationships that will be helpful in preserving the regional heritage of the area.
- Our office knows the importance of technical assistance and the plan's goal to continue to provide that to help keep these partnerships is applauded. The amount of technical assistance may need may to rise to preserve these partnerships and to face the challenges of constrained financial experienced by all organizations.
- Financial grants and funding gaps will continue to expand, and these programs are targeted towards areas in land conservation/preservation areas at times. It is vital to manage these grants and to continue to seek funding opportunities as they present themselves.
- Continue to get creative in outreach efforts. These can help with future planning ideas and can help gather support and possible volunteers for this plan's efforts. Social media, hybrid meetings, public open houses, and outside community meetings at parks or other public places have been successfully attended recently and during the pandemic. Continue to explore creative strategies to reach out to the public to make sure the program and its goals remain successful.
- Since this plan cross references many different organizational plans it is good that the implementation plan is broken down into set timelines for deliverables. The short (1 to 3 year) and longest (7 to 12 years) timelines listed on Page 134 show that both short- and long-range planning has been incorporated into this plan. Staff would encourage this to continue and to possibly use longer ranges of 10-to-20-year cycles for long term projects. Comprehensive plans

are built on 10-year cycles, and with updates, these plans often make planning projections into the 10, 20, and even 30-year horizons.

- The culture of the plan lends itself to self-evaluations and surveys with partners and other community organizations, but the ability to perform public outreach to seek progress will continue to be of utmost importance in future years. Establishing creative progress measurements and holding regular public events or meetings to report on the plan's progress and continuing to allow surveys as benchmarks will be crucial in evaluating the effectiveness of the plan and determining what needs to be adjusted. Public engagement should be integral to the plan's implementation and should be a cornerstone of accountability.
- As noted on Page 136 the public/private nature of this program helps ensure the longevity and success rate for achieving the plan's goals as stakeholders are invested in seeing the goals and actions of the plan are implemented and that the success of the program is continued for future generations. Working with landowners and with public organizations provides a unique opportunity to take advantage of programs that may be limited to non-profits. Using these programs and grant opportunities will help the plan's overall goals and will also benefit individual landowners.

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Mr. Joe Rogers at 301-338-0529.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Boyd, AICP Director, Planning Coordination

cc: Jason Dubow; Joseph Griffiths; David Cotton; Joe Rogers; Planning



April 11, 2022

Phyllis Baxter Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area PO Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241

By email: phyllisb@afnha.org

RE: Comments on the draft Management Plan prepared for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area

Dear Ms. Baxter:

West Virginia Rives Coalition is pleased to offer comments on the draft Management Plan (MP) prepared for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area. WV Rivers is the statewide organization focused on promoting the overall health of West Virginia's waters and their downstream benefits. We also advance policy to protect our federal, state, and local public lands in West Virginia. WV Rivers coordinates West Virginians for Public Lands, an alliance of individuals, businesses, and organizations working to enhance and protect our public lands and waters. Public lands in the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) are the birthplace of our exceptional rivers and streams; and provide drinking water for thousands of West Virginians and for people throughout the Eastern United States.

We would like to commend the Management Plan for being so thorough and comprehensive. The MP weaves the history, settlement, interactions between land and people, the idea of the 'crucible of isolation,' the unique cultural heritage, and some of the challenges in the Appalachian Highlands to show in compelling and clear language the importance of thoughtful protection of the forest resources necessary for recreation and economic opportunities in the area. You have effectively engaged various groups and stakeholders to build strong local support first for creating the AFNHA and now for drafting the prospective management for the AFNHA. We support the general precepts of the draft Management Plan of the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area.

You have assembled an impressive list of 749 land, water, historic, social, and cultural assets in the region. We noted the numerous mentions in the MP of the headwaters in the MNF for both the Potomac Chesapeake area and the Ohio River, recognition that these headwaters are indeed "the birthplace of rivers," and the large US population ultimately dependent on keeping these headwaters pristine for safe drinking water. We would like to call to your attention a report done by the USFS in 1995. [USDA Forest Service. 1995. *Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Report and Environmental Impact Statement on Twelve Rivers in the Monongahela National Forest.*] This report named 12 stream segments in the Mon National Forest as potentially eligible for designation under the Wild and Scenic River Act. The USFS has managed these streams with care, but we suggest that attention be paid to the possibility of W&S protections for these waterways. Including these waterways in the asset list would call attention to preserving their unique attributes.

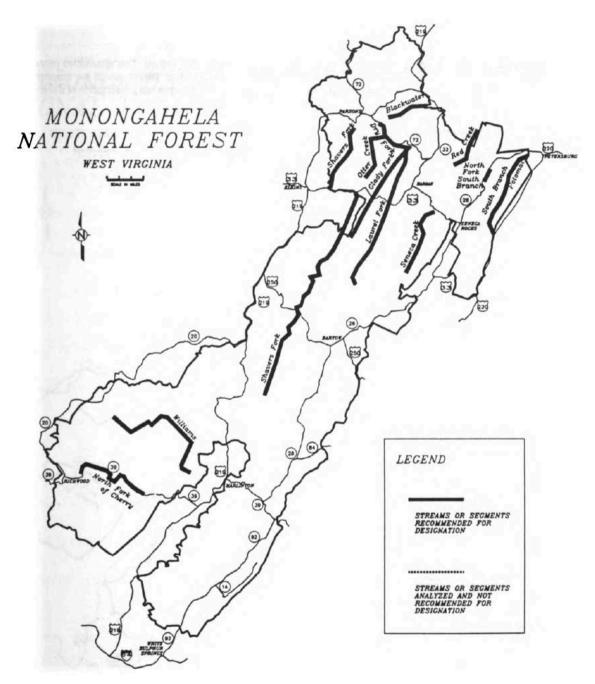
We propose that these 12 waterways be included in the list of regional assets; and referenced in Chapter 2, Goal 1, as "natural and scenic assets." Specifically, the assets we propose be considered for the asset list includes portions of the Shavers Fork, Dry Fork, Blackwater, Glady Fork, Laurel Fork, Otter Creek, Red Creek, South Branch Potomac and North Fork of South Branch Potomac, Seneca Creek, Williams, and North Fork Cherry. Figure 4-1 of the USFS report (which we attach to this comment) shows the locations of these headwaters. All of these waterways appear to be in the AFNHA.

Again, we complement you on the comprehensive Plan; and thank you for the opportunity to present comments on the draft Management Plan prepared for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area.

Sincerely,

Aji Prosen

Angie Rosser Executive Director West Virginia Rivers Coalition



WILD AND SCENIC STUDY RIVERS <u>ALTERNATIVE A</u>

Fig. 4.1

The Culture Center 1900 Kanawha Blvd., E. Charleston, WV 25305-0300



AND HISTORY

Randall Reid-Smith, Curator Phone 304.558.0220 • www.wvculture.org Fax 304.558.2779 • TDD 304.558.3562 EEO/AA Employer

May 2, 2022

Phylis Baxter Executive Director Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area P.O. Box 1206 Elkins, WV 26241 Via email: phyllisb@afnha.org

RE: Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Management Plan FR#: 22-498-MULTI

Dear Ms. Baxter:

We have reviewed the above-referenced project to determine potential effects on cultural resources. As required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800: "Protection of Historic Properties," we submit our comments.

According to the submitted information, the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFNHA) published a draft of a management plan in accordance with the enabling legislation (John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, 2019). According to law the management plan must be approved within 3 years of the enabling legislation.

The AFNHA encompasses approximately 270 properties in West Virginia that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Within the management plan, AFNHA states that "historic preservation is a key activity in NHAs." We support the preservation activities discussed in the document, and the proposed cooperation with the National Park Service, including the NPS visitor interpretive center at the western end of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal.

The NPS makes up just one avenue for partnerships between the AFNHA and historic preservation organizations. We applaud your efforts to connect with local Certified Local Governments (CLGs) in order to increase preservation efforts throughout the region. Specifically the strategies listed in the document connect the work of historic organizations to the broader mission of the AFNHA. We believe that efforts by the AFNHA and stakeholders will prove to benefit historic properties throughout the region.

Overall the management plan draft submitted to this office outlines a set of priorities that our office believes will support historic preservation efforts throughout the region. Our office supports the efforts of the AFNHA

May 2, 2022 Ms. Baxter FR# 22-498-MULTI Page 2

and the planned efforts submitted to this office. We look forward to working with the AFNHA, NPS, CLGs, and other stakeholders to increase public engagement with the historic resources of the region.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service. If you have questions regarding our comments or the Section 106 process, please contact Stephen L. Gifford, Structural Historian, at (304) 558-0240.

Sincerely, Mierce usan

Susan M. Pierce Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

SMP/SLG

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