



**Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail
Long-Range Interpretive Plan**

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Long-Range Interpretive Plan

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**National Park Service
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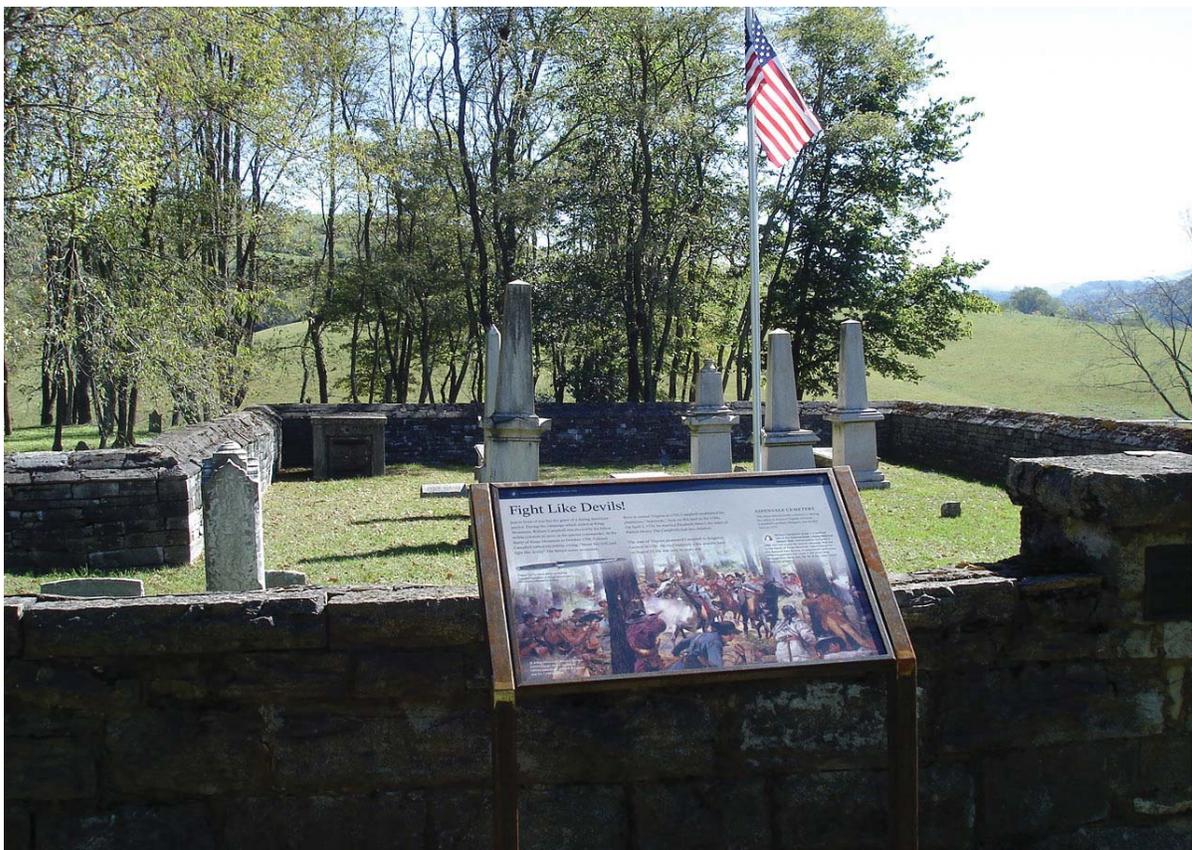
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INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail commemorates the campaign to the Battle of Kings Mountain, when more than 2,000 horse-mounted patriot militiamen – some from “over the mountains” – assembled from Virginia, what is now Tennessee, and the Carolinas in the fall of 1780 in response to a threat from a loyalist force under British Major Patrick Ferguson in the American Revolution. Over a two-week period, this horse-mounted patriot militia chased Ferguson and his army southward, gaining forces along the way and ending their journey in a bloody confrontation with 900 of the original forces against 1,100 loyalist troops at the Battle of Kings Mountain, South Carolina. At Kings Mountain, patriot militia shot Ferguson and destroyed his small army. The patriot victory at Kings Mountain proved to be a turning point in the war, derailing the British “southern strategy” and leading to final British defeat at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781.

The historic routes followed by the overmountain men are identified and preserved in the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, which includes both a Commemorative Motor Route (CMR) along major highways and a non-motorized route that closely follows the actual historic route and is still being developed. Altogether, the trail traverses four states on the route from Abingdon, Virginia, to Kings Mountain, South Carolina, and leads through two national forests, four National Park Service-administered areas, a dam and reservoir managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, several state parks, and dozens of counties and municipalities, from small towns to county seats to larger regional hubs. As of 2011, the trail includes 18 certified sites/stopping points among a list of 34 potential sites identified within the trail’s 1982 Comprehensive Management Plan as significant resources. While the entirety of the CMR is accessible to visitors by motor vehicle, the walking routes and historic sites have varying degrees of visitor interpretation and accessibility, ranging from no interpretation to wayside kiosks to fully staffed visitor centers with extensive interpretive exhibits.



Wayside Exhibit (installed 2010) for Campbell's Grave, a Certified Site 22 Miles North of Abingdon, VA

CREATING A LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN

Interpretive planning differs from other kinds of planning because it focuses not only on management, finances, facilities, or land use, but on visitors and their desired experiences at the site. Interpretive planning asks fundamental questions from a visitor perspective: Why is this site worth preserving? Why is it worth my time to visit? What is its purpose and significance? What can I do, learn, feel, and take away with me from visiting this site? Is it important to me?

Interpretive planning identifies the inherent meanings of a site or resource and lays the foundation – through themes, visitor goals, and programs/media recommendations – for how those meanings can be conveyed to the wide range of visitors who choose to spend their leisure time visiting cultural and historic sites.

This long-range interpretive plan (LRIP) has been developed by a consultant team with assistance and input from some 60 individual stakeholders and trail partners who participated in day-long planning sessions at three regional planning workshops along the trail and a fourth centrally located workshop in 2010. With review and approval by trail partners and administrators, this plan will provide guidance for interpretive services and programming for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail for the next seven to ten years.

Barring legislative changes, the foundational elements in this plan are expected to remain constant over the life of the trail. Specific recommendations about interpretive programs or media may need to be updated as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. In addition, further design documents must be produced to implement some of the recommendations set forth in the plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail offers visitors a wealth of potential in exploring and enjoying a wealth of cultural, military, and natural history; 18th-century personalities, lifeways, and commemorative events; historic settings, artifacts, and archeology; and recreational opportunities ranging from driving tours to hiking, camping, bicycling, horseback riding, and engaging in historic reenactments. To assist visitors and interpreters of the OVNHT in exploring the trail and accessing its multiple offerings and experiences, along the trail, this long-range interpretive plan addresses the following fundamentals of interpretive planning:

- It identifies five primary interpretive themes and related subthemes.
- It sets goals for optimum visitor experiences along the trail.
- It benchmarks the existing conditions of the trail's interpretive program at the time of the plan's development (2011).
- It presents a series of recommendations for interpretive programming and interpretive media to be developed in phases over the next seven to ten years.

In addressing these needs, the plan seeks to provide the OVNHT with a practical, cohesive approach to meet several distinct challenges:

- To expand the trail's interpretive services to attract visitors and increase programs year-round, beyond the well-established annual reenactment march;
- To create comprehensive trail guides and orientation materials for self-guided exploration of distinct trail segments and the entire length of the trail;
- To provide varying types of interpretive services to serve the variable venues (i.e., hiking trails, historic houses, campgrounds, museums/visitor centers, local parks, etc.) along the trail;
- To reposition/recognize the national trail as a local trail with many local communities; and
- To offer a variety of engaging, interactive experiences along the trail.

Primary Interpretive Themes

The following primary interpretive themes summarize the main messages identified by trail stakeholders and validated by the planning team in a 2010 series of regional workshops along the trail. Interpretive programs and presentations built on these themes should enable the vast majority of visitors to experience the trail and its essential meanings and stories in a memorable, enjoyable way.

Primary Theme 1:

Responding to a threat by British Major Patrick Ferguson to invade their overmountain homeland, more than 2,000 determined patriot militiamen mustered and searched for Ferguson's army for two weeks during the fall of 1780. These resolute soldiers pursued and trapped Ferguson atop Kings Mountain in South Carolina, killing or capturing the entire British force and bringing about a patriot victory that proved to be a pivotal change of course in the American Revolution.

Primary Theme 2:

As the British recruited and trained loyalist militias in the southern colonies, the revolution pitted Americans against Americans – in effect, a colonial civil war.

Primary Theme 3:

On the trail and in their daily lives, the backcountry and overmountain men demonstrated uniquely American attitudes, organizational approaches, and fighting styles derived from their experiences on the Appalachian frontier.

Primary Theme 4:

The participants in the Overmountain Campaign included many forceful, colorful personalities whose characters were shaped by the distinctive overmountain and backcountry culture of Scots-Irish, German, free and enslaved persons of African descent, American Indians in the region, and others who sought the challenges, freedoms, and opportunities of the colonial frontier.

Primary Theme 5:

In making their epic journey across the imposing natural barrier of the Appalachian Mountains, the overmountain people (both as militia and as frontier settlers) encountered a vast natural world of great beauty but also rough, wild terrain, unpredictable weather, dense forests, untamed rivers, and abundant wildlife.

Visitor Experiences Along the Trail

The planning team also sought to develop an interpretive plan that addressed the needs of all – a broad cross-section of visitors of all ages, abilities, and interests – no matter how or where they accessed the trail. Recognizing that different visitors experience the trail in different ways – driving, walking, cycling, touring exhibit spaces, going to festivals, or participating in the annual reenactment – this plan offers recommendations for enabling all visitors to explore key resources, intrinsic values, and inherent meanings of this historic American trail.

Recommendations

Recommendations for the future interpretive program of the OVNHT address personal and non-personal (i.e., media) services, research needs, and staffing.

Recommendations for personal interpretive services:

- *Expand personal services year-round.* Recommended approaches include increasing the number of ranger-led programs, championing local service events, adding automobile roving rangers on weekends, offering professional interpretive training for partners, developing an updated educational curriculum, and gradually adding a ranger presence in other locations along the trail.
- *Expand personal services during the reenactment.* Recommended approaches include adding an administrative coordinator for the march, finding increased funding for paid interpreters for K-12 programs during the march, and recruiting “local champions” for march along each segment of the trail.

Recommendations for Non-Personal Services/Interpretive Media:

- *Multi-platform self-guided materials.* Recommended approaches include creating a comprehensive trail guide in multiple formats (print, web, smartphone) and creating a series of self-guided itineraries for all segments of the trail.
- *Audiovisual materials.* Recommended approaches include creating a short overview film with localized add-ins for multiple uses, and also creating a music CD of period music for sale at multiple venues along the trail.
- *Print publications.* Recommendations include updating the NPS unigrid brochure, producing a print version of the self-guided trail guide, assisting partners in developing localized site bulletins offering in-depth interpretation for specific locations, resources, and historical events in different regions along the trail.
- *Exterior exhibits.* Recommendations include continuing the wayfinding and identity signage, developing a comprehensive wayside exhibit plan for the entire trail (to be implemented in phases), adding website prompts to all wayside signage, and identifying future vehicular pull-offs and parking for additional interpretive waysides/kiosks (as determined by a comprehensive wayside exhibit plan).
- *Interior exhibits.* Recommendations include completing the exhibits at the Abingdon visitor center, exploring new venues for interior exhibits, creating a traveling tabletop exhibit for festivals and similar uses, and reevaluating existing interior exhibits at intervals for content updates and replacement/repairs as needed.
- *Youth materials.* Recommendations include continuing the programming offering during the march and also creating a Junior Ranger program for use year-round.

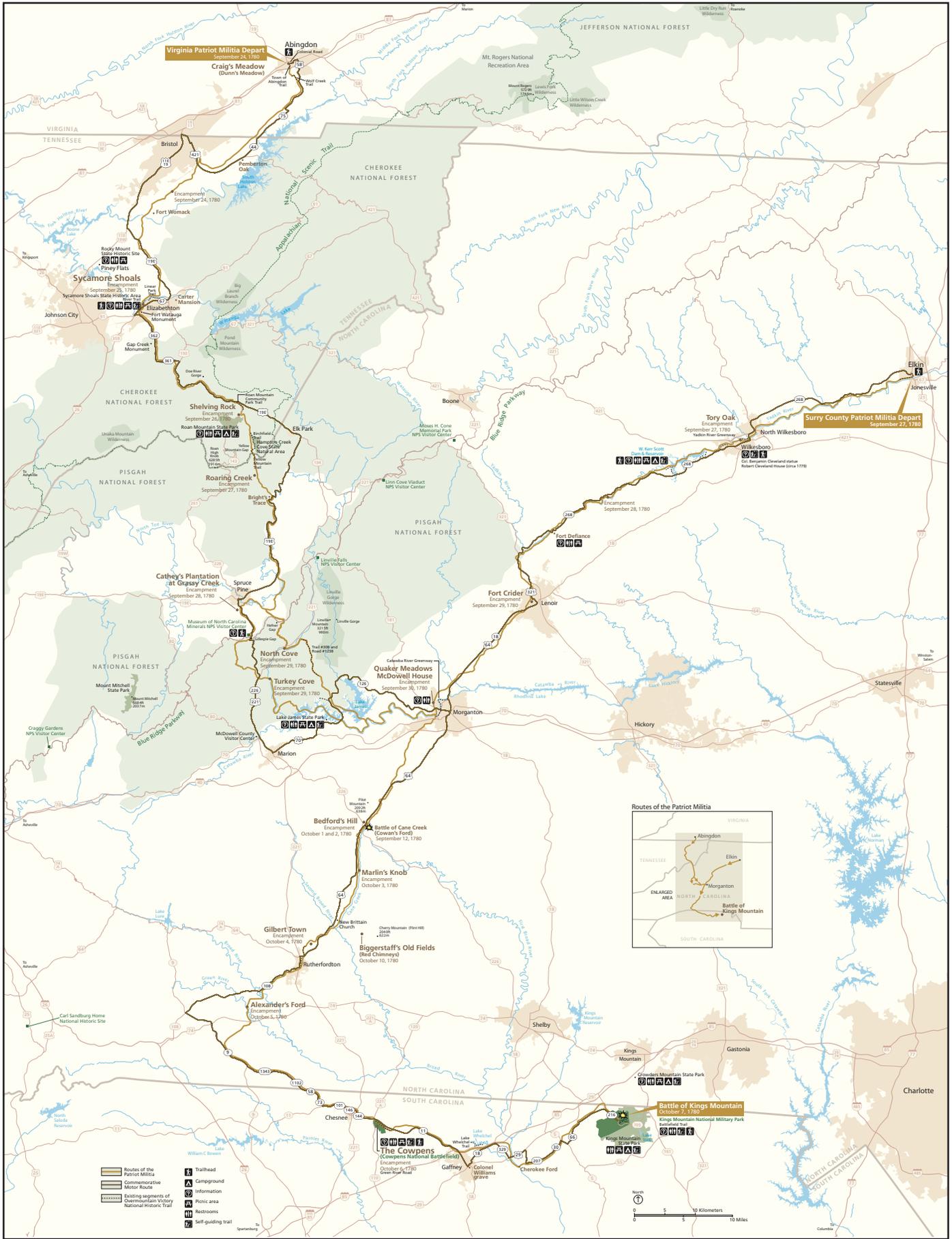
Research Needs in Support of Interpretation

- *Scholarship.* Recommendations include convening an annual scholarly conference on the Overmountain Campaign to encourage new scholarship, and then publishing the papers arising from the conference.
- *Archeology.* Recommendations include reviewing existing archeological findings (for example, at Gilbert Town) for use in interpretive programming, and assessing the need for additional archeology in support of interpretation.
- *Master planning.* Recommendations include working with McDowell County on interpretive potential for the Joseph McDowell House, and working with other trail partners and localities as needed to provide input on relevant master plans regarding greenways and connecting trails in different jurisdictions along the OVNHT.

Staffing Needs

To achieve the interpretive goals set forth in this plan over the next seven to ten years, the plan recommends adding the following OVNHT staff:

- Chief of visitor services,
- An administrative officer, and
- Maximum of three front-line interpretive rangers.



Map of Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail

FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

In 1975, as the nation prepared to celebrate its bicentennial year in 1976, a group of local citizens in the Appalachian and Piedmont regions organized to reenact a 300-mile march by their American Revolution-era ancestors, the “overmountain men.” Marching on the historic route from southwest Virginia and through the North Carolina piedmont down to Kings Mountain, South Carolina, the modern-day reenactors carried petitions along the route, collecting thousands of signatures in support of their quest to designate the “Overmountain Victory Trail” as a national historic trail.

The National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241 et seq.), passed by the U.S. Congress in 1968, provided agencies and communities with a legislative means to “promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Nation.” The 1968 Act set forth requirements for National Historic Trails and National Scenic Trails and enabled federal recognition and promotion of trails, including portions not on federal land, by providing financial assistance, support of volunteers, and coordination with states and other authorities.

Three years after their first reenactment march, the overmountain trail enthusiasts – now known as the Overmountain Victory Trail Association – succeeded in getting Congressional authorization for a feasibility study by the National Park Service to assess the merits of making the overmountain route a national trail. The NPS initial draft feasibility report found that the Overmountain Victory Trail qualified as a national historic trail. Based on a bill introduced by North Carolina Congressman James T. Broyhill before the final NPS report was issued, Congress passed an amendment to Section 5(a) of the National Trails System Act to establish the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. President Jimmy Carter signed the bill (P.L. 96-344) into law on September 8, 1980.

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail was the first national historic trail to be designated in the eastern United States and, in 2010, celebrated its 30th anniversary as one of only 19 national historic trails in the nation. In 2011, the National Trails System consists of 11 national scenic trails and 19 national historic trails, plus a network of some 1,000 national recreation trails. (Since the enactment of the National Trails Act and the initial trail designations in 1968, some 40 additional trails across the nation have been studied as possible national trails, but fewer than 25 have earned the designation.)

The trail is administered by the National Park Service in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the USDA Forest Service; the states of Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina; local governments; and historical societies and citizen groups.

TRAIL PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE

Trail Purpose

According to the National Trails System Act (Section 3(c)), the purpose of a national historic trail is clear:

National historic trails shall have as their purpose the identification and protection of the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment.

Trail Significance

Significance statements clarify the importance or distinctiveness of a site's resources and define why the site is of national significance.

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail has national significance for the following reasons:

The trail follows, protects, and preserves the historic route of the overmountain patriots in the American Revolution in their campaign leading to the Battle of Kings Mountain.

The trail is an outstanding educational, historical, and recreational resource for visitors of all ages as they explore a unique region and a pivotal time in American history.



National Historic Landmark Tablet for Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area, TN

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

According to the National Association for Interpretation, the art of interpretation is “a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource.” In essence, the themes of a given site are distillations of the key words in NAI’s rather elaborate definition – communication, connections, and meanings. Themes are the main messages or meanings of the historic resource, delivered in ways that encourage visitors to make a personal connection with the site as they experience it.

Identifying and agreeing upon main messages for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail will help partners clarify and focus their interpretations (and their dollars and work hours). As a result, the vast majority of visitors will have a more enriching, rewarding experience because they will have absorbed the essential meanings and stories of the trail.

The following interpretive themes and subthemes are based on input from trail stakeholders who shared their insights and stories in the three regional workshops in mid-summer 2010 and the stakeholder meeting in the fall of 2010.

Theme 1:

Responding to a threat by British Major Patrick Ferguson to invade their overmountain homeland, more than 2,000 determined patriot militiamen mustered and searched for Ferguson’s army for two weeks during the fall of 1780. These resolute soldiers pursued and trapped Ferguson atop Kings Mountain in South Carolina, killing or capturing the entire British force and bringing about a patriot victory that proved to be a pivotal change of course in the American Revolution.

Subthemes:

- A strong core of militiamen from the overmountain and piedmont regions joined the patriot cause when threatened – a reaction Ferguson had not anticipated.
- The arrival of the patriot militia from these regions demonstrated a determination that inspired and reinvigorated other American forces that fought at Kings Mountain.
- Numerous primary source accounts of the Battle of Kings Mountain reveal the pivotal roles of the backcountry and overmountain men.

Theme 2:

As the British recruited and trained loyalist militias in the southern colonies, the revolution pitted Americans against Americans – in effect, a colonial civil war.

Subthemes:

- The 18th-century Americans who considered themselves “patriots” and those who considered themselves “loyalists” often lived in close proximity in the same communities, sometimes even as members of extended families.
- Taking sides in the conflict required bravery and fortitude – and acceptance of the consequences – but others attempted to remain neutral.

Theme 3:

On the trail and in their daily lives, the backcountry and overmountain men demonstrated uniquely American attitudes, organizational approaches, and fighting styles derived from their experiences on the Appalachian frontier.

Subthemes:

- Their response to the bullying threat from Ferguson was an immediate, frontier-spirit resistance: they banded together to fight as a citizen militia to protect their homes and livelihoods.
- As a citizen militia in a remote region, they chose their military leaders and organized their units.
- Although they were volunteers, most were experienced “mounted infantry” who were accustomed to traveling long distances on horseback in anticipation of battle.
- Many of the group’s fighting tactics came from methods used by, and against, American Indians.

Theme 4:

The participants in the Overmountain Campaign included many forceful, colorful personalities whose characters were shaped by the distinctive overmountain and backcountry culture of Scots-Irish, German, free and enslaved persons of African descent, American Indians in the region, and others who sought the challenges, freedoms, and opportunities of the colonial frontier.

Subthemes:

- Life in the overmountain region required resourcefulness, self-sufficiency, and a wide range of frontier skills, regardless of one’s education, ethnic heritage or gender.
- Even today, many of the surnames and place names found along the overmountain route reflect the families and individuals who participated in the 1780 march.
- Several prominent participants in the Overmountain Campaign, including Shelby, Sevier, and Winston, went on to become regional and national leaders in the new United States.

Theme 5:

In making their epic journey across the imposing natural barrier of the Appalachian Mountains, the overmountain people (both as militia and as frontier settlers) encountered a vast natural world of great beauty but also rough, wild terrain, unpredictable weather, dense forests, untamed rivers, and abundant wildlife.

Subthemes:

- Many of the views, landscapes, and native plants and animals familiar to the backcountry and overmountain people can be experienced and enjoyed in the region today.
- The beauty and challenges of portions of the backcountry and overmountain terrain – and the need for caution, preparation, and survival skills – remain as relevant today as for the 18th-century settlers.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE GOALS

An effective, comprehensive interpretive program for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail should provide visitors of all ages and abilities with opportunities to have memorable, meaningful experiences along the trail. Different visitors will experience the trail in different ways – driving, walking, cycling, touring exhibit spaces, going to festivals, or participating in the annual reenactment – but regardless of what activities they choose, all visitors should be able to explore the key resources, intrinsic values, and inherent meanings of this historic American trail.

Based on analysis of trail resources and input from workshop participants, the following visitor experience goals have been identified for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.

Experiential goals: What should visitors have the opportunity to **do** when they visit the trail?

- All visitors should be able to experience segments of the trail. Visitors should have the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of the overmountain men, to stand where they stood and to see, hear, and/or touch tangible resources related to this historic route.
- Visitors should be able to see, hear, and engage in some of the activities that were typical and necessary in the lives of the overmountain men and their families in the 1780s.
- Visitors should be able to experience the natural world in this region as the overmountain people did – the beauty and solitude of the mountains, the challenges of geography in a sparsely settled land, the abundance of native plant and animal life.
- Visitors should be able to explore and enjoy the trail as a journey rather than as a destination.

Cognitive Goals: What should visitors have the opportunity to **learn** when they visit the trail?

- All trail visitors, whatever their mode of transportation, should have the opportunity to learn about the pivotal role of the Campaign to the Battle of Kings Mountain in helping the United States win the American Revolution.
- All trail visitors should have the opportunity to “meet” and learn about some of the diverse personalities involved in the campaign march and its aftermath.

Emotional Goals: How should visitors **feel** during and after a visit to the trail?

- Visitors will draw on their own feelings – fear, determination, defiance? – as they seek to understand the emotions and actions of the overmountain families when their homes were being threatened by Ferguson’s challenge.
- Visitors will be inspired by the bravery and determination of the overmountain men and their families.

Behavioral Goals: How should visitors **behave** – or change their behavior – during and after their visit to the trail?

- Visitors will respect the trail and its natural surroundings.
- Visitors will share their experiences on the trail with friends and family.
- Visitors will make return visits to explore different portions of the trail over time.
- Visitors will become stewards of the trail by volunteering, promoting, and protecting the trail.

VISITOR DATA

At present, no overall visitation statistics are available to measure annual visitation along the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, although an estimate of one million users per year can be extrapolated using data from sites with marked trail segments. To date, the trail has no log-in or registration points at trailheads, and because the trail route crosses numerous boundaries inside and outside public lands, many trail visitors may access this trail coincidentally as part of other activities.

Still, as the Overmountain Victory NHT continues to develop, it has a growing potential for significant visitor use, for several compelling reasons. First, the scenic Appalachian region ranks among the most popular tourist destinations in the eastern United States. Second, the trail is within a day's drive of an estimated 12 million people, including major population centers such as Knoxville, Asheville, Charlotte, Greenville, and Atlanta, as well as smaller cities and towns within the region. Third, the successful Overmountain March, now in its 35th year, now attracts an audience, primarily schoolchildren, of more than 11,000 people, even as its original reenactor base is dwindling.

In addition, tourism data from other public lands in the region are revealing:

- The Blue Ridge Parkway and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park are the most-visited national park lands in the United States. The parkway's North Carolina segments have more than 19 million visitors a year.
- The Appalachian National Scenic Trail, which crosses the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail at Yellow Mountain Gap, attracts an estimated 3 to 4 million visitors a year, most of whom hike short segments on day trips or short camping excursions.
- Kings Mountain National Battlefield welcomes 277,000 visitors annually.

According to the 2009 North Carolina Regional Travel Summary (Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development), the 23 counties in the NC mountain region hosted 7.3 million person-trips in 2009, and 84% of these visits were for leisure travel. More than one-fourth of these visitors (27.8%) engaged in rural sightseeing, 20.8% visited a state or national park, 16.9% visited a historic site, and 10.7% went hiking or backpacking.

All these visitors, and similarly inclined visitors to Tennessee, Virginia, and South Carolina, are potential visitors to the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.



State Wayside Exhibit about the Overmountain Men, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area, TN

OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Since an initial Comprehensive Management Plan prepared by the National Park Service in 1982 (as required by the National Trails Act), the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail as a whole has had no formal planning efforts. However, numerous partner organizations (many in conjunction with NPS and/or OVNHT assistance) along the trail have conducted a variety of planning efforts, including management and master planning, cultural resource and historic structure plans, and archeological studies.

Several of these plans have been partially or fully funded with grants from the National Park Service. Among these are:

- A master plan for the Joseph McDowell House (Pleasant Gardens) in McDowell County, NC (funded by NPS/OVNHT)
- A Gilbert Town Historic District Preservation Plan (in cooperation with the American Battlefield Protection Program, GA-2255-07-016) in Rutherford County, NC
- A master plan for the Abingdon Muster Grounds in Abingdon, VA (funded by NPS/OVNHT)
- A wayside exhibit plan for Cherokee County, SC (funded by NPS/OVNHT)

In addition, a General Management Plan for the Kings Mountain National Battlefield has been underway since 2008.

The Army Corps of Engineers is preparing an update to the W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir Master Plan with a completion target of September 2012.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The 330 miles of the two-pronged Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail extend from Abingdon, VA, and Elkin, NC, to Morganton, NC, where the two routes merge and lead to Kings Mountain, SC. The trail consists of the identified primary historic route, a CMR over state highways, and a non-motorized hiking/multiuse trail that is still in development.

Of the hiking/multiuse trail segments, the longest stretches are in North Carolina: an 11-mile course along the Yadkin River within the W. Kerr Scott Dam & Reservoir, 6 additional miles along the Yadkin River Greenway near Wilkesboro, a 5-mile hike beginning at Gillespie Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway, and an additional 5 miles along the Catawba River Greenway at Morganton, NC. Virginia, Tennessee, and South Carolina have walking segments ranging from .75 miles to as long as 3.5 miles. As more local governments seek community support and funding to preserve greenspace and create networks of multi-use trails, additional non-motorized segments will be developed.

In addition to following the trail by driving, walking, cycling, or horseback riding (in limited areas), visitors can enjoy a variety of overmountain-related sites and activities along the trail.

These opportunities include personal and non-personal interpretation such as living history presentations and reenactments during the two-week anniversary march, a narrated hayride in an historic mountain apple orchard, historic home tours, outdoor dramas, colonial-themed festivals and special events, interactive exhibits, interpretive films, and wayside exhibits at historic sites along the trail.

National Park Service Passport program participants can get “passport stamps” at four stops along the trail.



Rocky Mount State Historic Site, TN, Certified as Part of the OVNHT in 2009

SITES AND FACILITIES FOR INTERPRETATION

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail has an abundance of cultural, historical, and natural resources that interpreters can draw on to engage visitors in the stories and meanings of the trail. Some sites offer well-developed, accessible visitor experiences, while others need additional research, upgrading for safe and appropriate visitor access, and inspiring, theme-based interpretation. The following annotated list describes existing interpretive conditions for sites and facilities along the trail.

Route from Abingdon to Morganton:

William Campbell Gravesite, Seven Mile Ford, VA: Although located 20 miles from the OVNHT trailhead in Abingdon, the William Campbell gravesite, located on his historic home called Aspenvale, is a certified site of the trail. As a Colonel of the Virginia militia in 1780, Brigadier General William Campbell (1745-1781) was the commander of all the patriot militiamen at the Battle of Kings Mountain.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Grave marker with inscription
- Wayside exhibit installed in fall 2010

Abingdon Muster Grounds, Abingdon, VA: This 9-acre site, a green floodplain along Wolf Creek that served as an historic mustering ground in the 1780s, includes a ¾-mile trail section that starts at the historic 1815 house (Retirement) and extends along the creek. The OVTA begins the annual Overmountain March reenactment here every September.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- A 3-panel NPS-standard kiosk on the Overmountain Victory trail (installed in 2009) at the entrance to the property
- Granite historic marker along the main road

- 3 wayside exhibits installed in fall 2010
- An NPS Overmountain Victory NHT visitor center with a staff of two and opened in fall 2010 in a renovated garage on the property. In 2011, the NPS is working with the town and local partners to design permanent exhibits for the facility.
- An NPS archeological investigation of the site took place in mid-summer 2010.

Pemberton Oak, TN: This giant, centuries-old oak tree along the historic route was a shelter and mustering site for the patriot militia chasing Major Ferguson under command of Captain Pemberton. Unfortunately, the giant tree fell in 2002. Its stump (about 12 feet high) remains.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Commemorative plaque placed on the tree trunk by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

Rocky Mount State Historic Site

(TN): This frontier farmstead, the home of William Cobb, was a local muster ground in 1780. The overmountain men from the area mustered here before traveling to Sycamore Shoals. The property now consists of an 1820 homestead, outbuildings, a museum, and a surrounding farm of 35 acres.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Current exhibits include a reproduction kettle and a panel describing Mary Patton, “Powder Maker of the Revolution,” and her role in supplying the overmountain men with gun powder.

Future:

- The site is upgrading its museum, which will have section devoted to the Overmountain men and their campaign when it reopens in early 2011.

Choate's Ford, Bluff City, TN: This section of the trail runs along the Holston River and has a swinging pedestrian bridge.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- OVNHT logo stamped on sidewalk that overlays the historic trail
- A stone monument commemorates the overmountain men's river crossing at Choate's Ford (now altered by a dam upstream).
- Interpretive waysides installed in fall 2010 about Choate's Ford, where the Virginia militia crossed the river on the way to Sycamore Shoals; city/county partnership with funding by NPS.

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area, Elizabethton, TN: On September 25, 1780, the combined forces of more than 1,100 overmountain men assembled at the Sycamore Shoals muster site to pursue Major Ferguson and the loyalists. Here, the fiery preacher Samuel Doak evoked "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon" (Judges 7:20) to inspire the patriots to defend their homeland. A one-mile portion of the trail, also designated as a walking/fitness trail, runs along the Watauga River here. Each year the overmountain march reenactors convene here and cross the river on foot and horseback from the trail.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Several wayside exhibits describing the overmountain campaign ; marked segments of trail with logo
- Numerous colonial-themed programs and living history presentations
- Theatrical production in summer (see Interpretive Programming)
- Summer "Colonial Camp" for children in summer

The only National Historic Landmark on the trail, Sycamore Shoals is also the site of other historic events, including important battles and treaties with the Cherokee.

Shelving Rock Encampment, Roan Mountain, TN: This rock overhang, a campsite during the overmountain march on September 26, 1780, is credited with enabling the patriots to keep their new supply of gunpowder (obtained from Mary Patton's powder works) dry in a torrential rainstorm. The property is on the National Register of Historic Places but remains in private ownership.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- DAR Plaque at Shelving Rock; no road pull-off
- One large interpretive sign from the landowner in the field/flatland near the rockshelter

Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area: This site, near the Appalachian Trail at Roan Mountain, is maintained by the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy. By following this segment of the trail, hikers can experience the "Crossing of the Roan" as the overmountain men did in 1780.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- OVNHT trailhead marker
- Informational kiosk, minimal interpretation

Museum of North Carolina Minerals (Blue Ridge Parkway at Gillespie Gap), NC:

This visitor center and minerals museum on the Blue Ridge Parkway sits very near the historic route of the overmountain men as they crossed through Gillespie Gap to Lynn Gap. A walking segment of the trail leads from here to the historic apple orchard at Altapass.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- The visitor center has a substantial free-standing interpretive exhibit about the overmountain men, including a full-size, outfitted overmountain man figure, in its lobby. This exhibit, installed in 2003, is the first of several OVNHT exhibits funded by NPS.
- The visitor center bookstore has numerous volumes on the

Revolutionary War and the Kings Mountain campaign for children and adults.

- The museum and visitor center hosts an annual four-day festival one week before the annual Overmountain March; two days are devoted to school groups.
- The OVTA reenactors traditionally camp here for one night during the march.
- A seasonal worker on assignment to the visitor center (a graduate student with thesis-level work on the topic) often presents programs on the Kings Mountain campaign and the OVNHT. A new Blue Ridge Parkway curriculum guide for 4th-grade students (issued 2010) includes several pages on the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.

Hefner Gap and the Apple Orchard at Altapass:

The historic mountain orchard (owned and operated as a non-profit foundation) spreads below Hefner Gap near a segment of the historic walking trail as it crosses the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Interpretive signs highlight a railroad spur and the apple orchard, but there is no mention of the Overmountain March route.

Lake James, NC: A large reservoir on the border between McDowell and Burke counties, Lake James has a state park on its southern and eastern edges and several upscale residential subdivisions around its perimeter. One of these, the “1780” development, uses the 1780 date to honor the OVNHT and its story. Eventually 3.5 miles of certified trail will pass through the subdivision.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Trailhead signage in the 1780 community
- OVNHT trail markers

Lake James State Park, NC: A newly expanded state-administered park area here includes a one-mile section of the original route along Paddy’s Creek.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- One-mile section of certified pathway

Joseph McDowell House (Pleasant Gardens), Marion, NC:

Portions of this historic house may have been built by Joseph McDowell, one of the overmountain men. Now owned by McDowell County, its grounds stretch back to the Catawba River, where the trail connects to the county greenway trail and passes the McDowell cemetery a half-mile away.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- OVNHT Marker with logo
- Small metal historic marker along street
- In 2009, as part of a grant from the National Park Foundation to the OVNHT, the local historical association hosted 235 4th-graders to a day of interpretive activities, learning and fun as part of the foundation’s “Active Trails” grant to the OVNHT.
- NPS funded a master plan, completed in 2010, for the site. Work is ongoing to research more about the site and restore it to an earlier era, with interpretive displays focusing partly on the overmountain men and the Kings Mountain campaign.

*Route from Elkin to Quaker Meadows/
Morganton:*

Elkin, NC: The commemorative motor route and the walking route of the trail converge in Elkin. A walking-only section of the trail runs along Big Elkin Creek and leads to a floodplain along the creek identified as the Surry muster ground (now Elkin Municipal Park), where the Surry-area militia convened to start their march. The trail extends from the park south to the Yadkin River and then west to the Wilkes County line.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Two wayside exhibits describe the Surry Muster and the march; these waysides are located at a vehicle pulloff from State Route 268.
- Brown logo markers along the trail.
- Metal state historic marker installed in 2003

The Tory Oak and Old Wilkes Heritage Museum, Wilkesboro, NC:

The massive oak tree where several Tories were hanged in 1779 by Colonel Cleveland toppled in heavy winds in 1989. The Yadkin River Greenway follows a segment of the historic Overmountain trail, and the nearby museum in the restored 1902 former courthouse contains artifacts and exhibits from early Wilkes County.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- A plaque identifies the tree and its Revolutionary War connections.
- The heritage museum includes a substantial gallery (a separate room) devoted to “A Course for Freedom,” a multifaceted exhibit interpreting the overmountain men, their lifestyles, and their role in the American Revolution. At present, this installation, funded by the NPS, is the most comprehensive exhibit on the trail.

W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir, Wilkesboro, NC: 13 miles of the historic overmountain route run along the reservoir from the visitor center to a campground. The OVNHT and other connecting trails – a total of 30 miles of trails throughout the site – are used frequently by recreational bicyclists and walkers.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- A substantial exhibit – one wall of interior exhibit space in the visitor center – depicts the overmountain saga, including encased artifacts and touchable installations such as a reproduction musket and knife.
- Exterior logo signage
- Exterior kiosk on the OVNHT at trailhead

Route from Morganton, NC, to Kings Mountain, SC (combined forces)

Quaker Meadows (Charles McDowell House), Morganton, NC: At the invitation of patriot leaders Charles and Joseph McDowell, the patriot militias from the overmountain and eastern routes assembled in this broad meadow (named for a Quaker trader) beside the Catawba River, where the commanders met under a large “Council Oak” to plan the attack on the loyalist forces. Years later, Charles McDowell built the site’s imposing red brick house, now restored and managed by the Historic Burke Association.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Wayside sign on the overmountain men
- OVNHT marker

Quaker Meadows Cemetery, Morganton, NC: Quaker Meadows Cemetery is the burial site of a number of pioneer-patriots, including members of the McDowell family and other participants in the overmountain march.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Commemorative plaque on entrance gate
- Brochures and a book on the cemetery available from Historic Burke Foundation

This historic cemetery, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is situated on the edge of a small residential subdivision behind a locked gate.

Gilbert Town (Rutherford County), NC: Located a few miles north of Rutherfordton, Gilbert Town was once a thriving county seat but is now farm fields and woodlands. In 1780, Major Ferguson and his loyalist army camped here, followed by the overmountain militia on his trail. Gilbert Town has recently been listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic District and has a completed preservation plan funded by a grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- OVNHT markers
- Metal historic marker

Rutherfordton, NC: The county seat of Rutherford County, Rutherfordton is one of the few areas where the national historic trail is routed through an urban environment.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- OVNHT markers
- Metal historic markers

Alexander's Ford, Polk County, NC: The overmountain militia camped here on October 5th, 1780, and crossed the Green River in pursuit of Major Ferguson. Trail supporters in Polk County are working to preserve the 164 acres at the site.

Existing Onsite Interpretation: None as yet

The Cowpens (Cowpens National Battlefield), SC: The overmountain men gathered at Cowpens on the evening of October 6 before sending 900 men to find Ferguson at Kings Mountain. The historic trail runs along the Green River Road and through the grounds of the battlefield, where the patriots and loyalists fought again several months after the Battle of Kings Mountain.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- 3-panel interpretive kiosk at trailhead
- Wayside sign as trail crosses battlefield
- Interior exhibits in visitor center
- Bookstore
- Programming about the OVNHT during the fall anniversary
- Map of trail in picnic area

Furnace Mill, Cherokee County, SC: The national historic trail passes by this county-owned site.

Existing Onsite Interpretation: None as yet

Colonel James Williams' Grave, Gaffney, SC: This site entombs the remains of Colonel Williams, who was wounded in the Battle of Kings Mountain and died shortly afterwards. Although not Williams' original burial place, the grave is an OVNHT certified site.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Commemorative marker on tomb
- OVNHT logo sign

Kings Mountain National Military Park, SC: When the overmountain men reached Kings Mountain on October 7, they encircled the mountain and in “one heroic hour” defeated the loyalist army – including killing Major Patrick Ferguson.

Existing Onsite Interpretation:

- Visitor center exhibits describing the battle and its context in the Revolution
- Wayside exhibits describing how the battle proceeded

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Headquarters and Visitor Center: Preferred alternative selected in spring 2011: Rocky Ford, Morganton, NC

During the process of this long-range interpretive plan, the NPS was reviewing the feasibility study and environmental assessment for siting and building a permanent headquarters facility and visitor contact station. The location of the headquarters (currently housed at NPS offices at Kings Mountain National Military Park) was selected to be Rocky Ford, Morganton, NC in spring 2011. The new facility will offer additional venues for interpretation, collections, and administration.



Marked Certified Trail Segment of the OVNHT Near the Eastern Trailhead in Elkin, NC

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING

The partners of the OVNHT provide interpretive programming at sites and facilities along the length of the trail. Much of this programming, especially at historic sites with multiple stories, tends to provide a broad-based interpretation of colonial life and the American Revolution, rather than a specific focus on the overmountain march. However, certain events and partners focus exclusively on the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. Those programs are highlighted here.

The Annual March (September 23 to October 7)

By far the most concentrated interpretive programming for the Overmountain Victory trail occurs during the two-week anniversary of the march in late September and early October. Every year since 1975, the Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) has sponsored a commemorative march – actually a variable cavalcade of trail and road walking, car travel, and camping – along the campaign route from Abingdon south to Kings Mountain. As they progress, participants reenact historical events that occurred on that section of trail, usually drawing audiences of local residents, school groups, and tourists following the march. At pre-arranged times and locations during the march, OVTA and other trail partners host busloads of school children at rotating “learning stations” with activities and reenactments about different aspects of the march. According to OVTA figures, the interpretive and educational activities associated with the annual march have reached 5,700 people (adults and schoolchildren) in 2007; by the year 2009, the trail reenactors’ audiences along the trail totaled 11,123 people, 74% of them school-aged children.

Dramatic Presentations

The story of the overmountain men is interpreted as part of an outdoor theatrical production each year in the Fort Watauga Amphitheater at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area. Now in its 32nd season, Tennessee’s “Official Outdoor Drama” is titled “Liberty! The Saga of Sycamore Shoals” and typically runs Thursday through Saturday evenings for several weeks in July.

Educational Curriculum Materials

In 2003 the OVTA partnered with a local school district to develop a curricula-based education program, funded through the NPS’s Challenge Cost-Share Program and distributed to interested teachers throughout the trail’s four-state area as well as via the NPS website. The materials, which support goals of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for 4th-grade social studies, include vocabulary lessons, reading materials, quiz games, writing and math exercises, outdoor activities, and a 12-episode story, “Footsteps for Freedom,” designed to be read day by day during the two-week anniversary of the historic overmountain march.

Educational Outreach

In addition to their presentations during the annual march, OVTA members present living history programs for schools and youth groups throughout the region on an ad-hoc basis. While other trail partners also do outreach to schools and youth groups on colonial history, the OVTA programs are generally the only ones specific to the Overmountain Victory NHT.

INTERPRETIVE MEDIA

Interpretive media refers to all the assorted “tools” interpreters use to tell the stories of a site: signs, exhibits, printed materials, audiovisuals, and web-based materials.

Exhibits (interior and exterior)

As described in the Sites and Facilities section, many historic sites and segments of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail have some degree of existing interpretation onsite in the form of interior exhibits, wayside interpretive signs or kiosks, or historic markers. The earliest of these installations, primarily historic markers installed by volunteer groups such as the DAR, pre-date the designation of the overmountain route as a national historic trail. A second generation of interpretive signs dates from the mid-1980s and 1990s, within a decade after the national historic trail was established.

The number and quality of interpretive exhibits has grown significantly in the 21st century. Today the trail has three substantial interior exhibits interpreting the trail and the story of the overmountain men, plus two more exhibits in development (for the Abingdon visitor center and the Rocky Mount museum), as well as two 3-panel interpretive kiosks and several newer low-profile wayside interpretive signs.

Print media

Many trail partners have brochures and flyers interpreting specific sites along the trail. Many (though not all) of these materials display the Overmountain Victory NHT shield/logo and identify the sites as part of the trail.

In addition, the NPS administrative team provided the following print materials:

- *Exploring the Trail Today*: Unigrid Brochure
The unigrid brochure produced by NPS, updated with new text and a new map in 2007, offers a day-by-day account of the march accompanied by an oversized map of the entire trail, as well as detailed historical information



OVNHT Museum Exhibit in W. Kerr Scott Dam & Reservoir Visitor Center, Wilkesboro, NC

on the overmountain men, their motivations, and some of the personalities involved. This brochure is printed in quantities that allow it to be available for distribution at many partner sites along the trail.

- *Annual Progress Report*
Each year since 2004, trail management has prepared an annual progress report on the status of the trail. This publication, an 8-page newsletter, appears both online and in print and provides an excellent overview of trail progress during the previous 12 months.

Audiovisual media

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail has not yet produced its own audiovisual or multimedia programs. The need for such presentations was discussed enthusiastically in the workshops for this plan.

However, many sites along the trail do have audiovisual programming, web audiovisual posting, downloading capability for pod casts and smart phones, and auditorium space to show videos and multimedia presentations.

An excellent short video on Alexander's Ford (viewable on YouTube) was produced last year as a public service by SynergyPoint, an Asheville production company, on behalf of the fundraising campaign to preserve the site.

Web-based Media

The NPS website for the trail can be accessed at www.nps.gov/ovvi. The site provides basic information such as directions and maps, a downloadable educational curriculum, and a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs).

The Overmountain Victory Trail Association has its own website (www.ovta.org), as well as a more frequently updated blog site and is now on Facebook.

A partial survey of partner websites reveals relatively little web-based information or interpretation specifically addressing the Overmountain Victory NHT or providing links the NPS or OVTA sites.

In addition to websites, the OVNHT has initiated a geographic information system (GIS) modeling project with North Carolina State University to map the walking and driving routes of the trail, as well as other data.

MEDIA ASSETS

Media assets encompass all the historical and archival collections of a site that may contribute to effective, engaging interpretation. Typically, these items include such materials as original documents, archeological and historic artifacts, photographs, paintings, films, and oral history recordings and/or transcriptions. These assets make up a significant portion of a site's cultural resources.

At this juncture in its history, the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail has no designated curatorial staff and no central repository or comprehensive inventory of its media assets.

Several partner organizations have collections that may be of interest to the trail.



Homepage of OVNHT website at www.nps.gov/ovvi

PARTNERSHIPS

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail is well-served by strong, committed partners along the length of the trail. Among these partners are volunteer groups, local governments and tourism/chamber organizations, private landowners, and state and federal agencies managing public lands. In some cases, partner relationships and responsibilities are spelled out in a formal memorandum of agreement. Other partnership relationships are less formal.

In 2010, the OVNHT has more than 100 partners, with more joining every year. A list of key trail partners appears in Appendix D.

The Overmountain Victory Trail Association, established in 1975 to push for federal recognition of the trail, is the designated Friends group for the trail. An all-volunteer organization of some 200 dues-paying members, OVTA's mission is "to protect, preserve, and interpret the route of the campaign to the Battle of Kings Mountain." OVTA founded, sponsors, and organizes the annual reenactment march and associated educational activities. The group also supports trail maintenance and enhancement through volunteer work and fundraising and maintains a website and blog about the trail.



OVNHT Exhibit (installed 2002) Located in NPS Mineral Museum, Blue Ridge Parkway, NC

ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

Building a solid interpretive program for an historic resource with multiple partners in four states is a challenging undertaking that requires the collaborative efforts of many different people and organizations. The following discussion addresses a variety of factors affecting interpretation along the trail.

Two Weeks a Year – or All Year Round?

Since its designation as a national trail 30 years ago, the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail has vividly commemorated the anniversary of the overmountain march for two weeks each fall. However, enthusiasts of the overmountain story will find little personal (ranger- or volunteer-led) interpretation or living history during the remaining 50 weeks of the year.

In recent years the OVNHT administration has made consistent, successful efforts to create and install interior and exterior interpretive exhibits at key locations along the trail. These exhibits, plus brochures and maps, are available to visitors all year long. To date, however, there has been little movement toward offering interpretive programming about the trail throughout the year: ranger-led or guided tours, suggested itineraries, or events not related to the fall march.

In workshop sessions and core-team meetings for this plan, stakeholders sometimes seemed ambivalent about the prospect of introducing more trail activities and interpretive programming throughout the year. Some expressed concerns that such a year-round emphasis would dilute the popularity of the annual march or confuse visitors about the authentic historic significance of the trail and its role in the events of the autumn of 1780.

Developing a set of clear, focused interpretive themes and visitor experience goals for the trail, applicable regardless of the season, should be helpful in determining how best to assess the need for year-round programming.

Volunteers and Participation

Traditionally the annual reenactment has been the focus for volunteers working the trail. In recent years, however, the number of people performing the reenactment has been declining. Fewer than 100 people are active participants in the reenactment, complete with authentic period costumes, and of those, only a handful of enthusiasts make the entire two-week trip.

Over the course of this ten-year plan, several likely scenarios point to the need for expanded volunteerism in the future. For example, more year-round programming, increased visitation, new walking segments, revised educational curricula, and new visitor facilities will all require the talents and dedication of enthusiastic volunteers. At the same time, a new cohort of march reenactors will need to be recruited and mentored if the trail's signature annual event is to be maintained.

Trail Visibility

As numerous workshop participants observed, “The biggest issue is that people don’t know the trail is here.” The trail has a distinctive patriot logo within the shield used by all national historic trails, and where it is consistently marked, it is easy to find.

However, the problem of trail visibility is particularly acute in North Carolina, where the commemorative motor route remains without signage despite repeated offers and negotiations with the North Carolina Department of Transportation. For residents, lack of signage leaves the Overmountain Victory trail “out of mind” on a daily basis, an omission that doubtless affects stewardship and support at the local level. For visitors, the lack of signage is a frustrating and confusing issue as they cross state lines to follow a trail that is well-marked with the official National Historic Trail symbol in Virginia, Tennessee, and South Carolina – and then apparently disappears in North Carolina, its longest portion of the route. (The commemorative route was identified in all four states in the General Management Plan of 1982; highway route markers in Tennessee, Virginia, and South Carolina have been in place since the early 2000s.) The lack of North Carolina signage is detrimental not only for the trail itself, but also for the many local sites and communities along the trail who might otherwise enjoy the economic benefits of trail-related tourism.

Landscape Integrity of the Trail

Like many historic trails, the OVNHT has undergone many changes since the historic events that led to its national recognition and preservation. Many parts of the trail have been paved over by modern roads. Some parts of the route have been altered beyond recognition by modern development, by decades of agricultural use, by logging and mining, and even by submersion under the deep waters of Lake James and the reservoir at W. Kerr Scott Dam & Reservoir.

In recent years trail partners have worked to identify and restore dozens of miles of the historic route for modern-day hikers to enjoy. These miles have been added in small segments, and even today, there is no uninterrupted stretch of trail long enough for a full-day hike. In effect, the trail is in a constant state of construction or reconstruction as new miles are added.

In addition to adding miles on the ground, trail partners are engaged in efforts to make certified sites more accessible and appealing for visitors, with safe off-road parking, unobstructed views, adequate wayfinding via sign and GPS, and interpretation.

Where's the Money?

In recent years, the trail has benefited from a number of generous grants from public and private sources alike. In 2009, the OVNHT was one of only eight NPS sites in the nation to receive a National Parks Foundation “Active Trails” grant, funded by The Coca-Cola Corporation.

Over the past decade, the NPS budget for the trail has grown. In addition, the trail depends heavily on grants from a variety of public and private sources. At present, partners and projects pursue grants on an ad hoc, individual basis depending on their local situation, but not for the trail as a whole.

Recently the OVTA board and NPS have begun working together to build fundraising capacity within the OVTA.

The True Meaning of Partnership

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail is a partnership entity whose real estate is owned by a variety of partners. The National Park Service does not own any property in the name of the trail along the route. Yet the perception persists that NPS means big parcels of land owned by the government, and that trail partners should rely on the NPS to “handle” the trail and make decisions.

In today's world, NPS relies on local governments, nonprofit groups, and communities as essential partners in protecting and preserving public lands. Communities are encouraged to take the lead in public/private partnerships with NPS and to recognize public lands and sites as assets that enhance their region's economy and quality of life.

At the same time, the National Park Service is committed to educating its partners so as to protect trail resources. Where necessary, the NPS can provide technical guidance and oversight on issues such as historic preservation, visitor safety, interpretation, and appropriate use of historic properties in ways that support the site's interpretive themes and desirable visitor experiences.



Re-enactors at Campbell's Grave, Virginia

RECOMMENDATIONS: Variations on a Trail

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail offers visitors a wealth of potential in exploring and enjoying the trail's cultural, military, and natural history; its personalities, 18th-century lifeways, and events; its historic settings, artifacts, and archeology; and its recreational opportunities ranging from driving tours to hiking, camping, bicycling, horseback riding, and engaging in historic reenactments.

In making recommendations for a trailwide interpretive program over the next ten years, the LRIP planning team identified five overlapping areas of need:

- Expanding the trail's interpretive services to boost visitation year-round;
- Creating comprehensive trail guides and orientation materials for self-guided exploration of distinct trail segments and the entire length of the trail;
- Varying interpretive services to serve the variable venues along the trail;
- Repositioning/recognizing the national trail as a local trail with many local communities; and
- Providing a variety of engaging, interactive experiences along the trail.

To address these focus areas, the planning team proposed a number of interpretive strategies over the next ten years.

PERSONAL SERVICES

With 330 miles and many partners, the Overmountain Victory NHT presents unique challenges in the delivery of regular, high-quality personal interpretive services. Providing year-round services, even on a limited basis, will require sustained collaboration and coordination among partners. Furthermore, any year-round programming must complement and support, rather than dilute or compete with the established interpretive services offered during the two-week commemorative march. Accordingly, this plan proposes the following approach:

Personal Services Recommendation # 1: Services Year-Round

The Abingdon visitor contact center, opened in late 2010 at the Abingdon Muster Ground, offers an attractive space and two new staff members to greet visitors and provide interpretive services.

- *Launch local ranger-led programs.* Depending on seasonal demand, this plan proposes that the Abingdon-based staff members develop a limited menu of personal programming centered on the muster ground in the spring and summer, followed by a more expansive schedule in years to come. Such programming should enhance – and in no way compete with – the annual march.
- *Spearhead local service events* to improve local knowledge and encourage local engagement in caring for, interpreting, promoting, and sustaining the trail. Working with partners in different locales, the NPS interpretive team should serve as a catalyst (though not necessarily the implementers) to get local citizens involved through



Scene from "Liberty!", the Official Tennessee State Outdoor Drama, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area

regularly scheduled trail events two or three times a year in winter, spring, and summer.

- Each local trail event should combine some level of interpretation with other local participatory activities such as:
 - Service activities – picking up trash, trimming brush, or painting trail markers;
 - Recreational activities – fun runs, bicycle rides, family day hikes, or overnight camping;
 - Learning activities – living history presenters, mini-reenactments, or non-destructive geocaching excursions or scavenger hunts
- *Create a “roving ranger” presence by automobile.* Once the local programs are established, a more expansive schedule could include well-publicized monthly Ranger Days site visits (probably on weekends) at other sites along the trail – in effect, an occasional roving ranger by automobile rather than on foot. Ideally, these presentations should be ranger-led walking tours on selected segments of the trail and should attract both local audiences and tourists.
- *Encourage interpretive training.* In conjunction with its ranger-led programs, the NPS team should work closely with partners to ascertain their interest and capabilities in developing personal services outside the confines of the annual march. The NPS team should assist partners by sharing resources and providing or recommending interpretive training (for example, via the online Epley Institute programs) as needed.
- *Update and enhance educational programming and outreach.* After the local programming is established, interpretive staff and partners should work with educators to revise and update the trail’s educational curriculum and explore ways to deliver outreach programming in schools.
- *Expand dedicated trail ranger presence in other locations on the trail.* Ideally, over the next decade increased visitation and local support will lead to the need for additional visitor contact stations or similar venues – and additional personal services – for the middle and southern sections of the trail.

Personal Services Recommendation # 2: On the March

At present, the vast majority of personal interpretive services along the Overmountain Victory NHT occur during the two-week period of reenactment of the march. Interpretive and educational outreach activities during this event have become so successful that in recent years the OVTA volunteers who organize the event have had to contract additional personnel.

Because the march is so labor- and time-intensive, the planning team and LRIP workshop participants made the following specific recommendations for delivering high-quality personal services related to the march.

- *OVTA Needs:* OVTA members recommended that at a minimum, the OVTA will need two key elements to continue staging the march successfully for the next ten years:
 - A part-time administrative coordinator to provide logistical assistance with planning and staging the march
 - Funding to continue hiring auxiliary interpretive and living history practitioners as needed for locations along the march

- *Community Partner Needs:* Community members participating in the LRIP process proposed that each community tap a “local champion” of the trail to serve as the point person for local coordination of march publicity and events as well as other trail activities throughout the year.
 - This local leader will work closely with the NPS, the OVTA, and local chambers of commerce, visitors’ bureaus, and local businesses to plan, market, and maximize the impact of local events along the march.
 - This local leader may also have the flexibility to utilize a variety of social media such as Facebook, blogs, Twitter, Flickr image pages, and other evolving media, many of which are well-suited to organizing and promoting local events quickly and economically.

NON-PERSONAL/ INTERPRETIVE MEDIA

In planning interpretive media for the trail’s next ten years, the NPS and its partners should keep two key points in mind: (1) changing demographics, and (2) changing technology. Future visitors’ expectations and interests will reflect both these changes, as today’s demographically diverse, technology-oriented young people become tomorrow’s heritage tourists and trail supporters.

To meet these “next generation” expectations, future interpretive media can no longer be divided into traditional categories of print, audiovisuals, or exhibits. Instead, cost-effective, high-impact media should be planned and developed for multiple platforms for new generations of visitors accustomed to self-accessed, instantaneous information and multiple links allowing them to follow their own interests and

customize their experiences. While this approach may sound daunting at first, it is in fact ideally suited to the needs of a multi-partner, multi-site venue such as a national historic trail.

This LRIP recommends the following priorities for interpretive media, with the understanding that some materials may be best produced as joint ventures or collaborations among the partners and through a variety of funding sources.

Interpretive Media Recommendation #1: Multi-platform self-guides

Self-guided trail tour materials can serve hundreds of visitors in multiple locations using a variety of formats (print brochures and cell phone tours with numbered stops, smart phone apps, web downloads, podcasts, etc.), all with minimal need for staff time once the programs are developed.

- *Create a comprehensive trail guide*, including user-friendly maps, that can be distributed along the length of the trail or accessed by personal technology. The trail guide may be printed as a multi-fold brochure, a pamphlet, or a small booklet, but it should be designed as a pocket-sized guide (downloadable in segments as needed) for visitors using any or all segments of the trail.
- *Create a series of self-guided itineraries* enabling visitors to explore segments of the trail according to their available schedules, individual interests, preferred activities, and/or geographical locations. For example:
 - Itineraries spanning two hours, a half day, and a whole day;
 - Itineraries focusing on historic personalities, archeology, or historic encampments;
 - Itineraries involving hiking, bicycling, children’s activities, or reenactments/living history;
 - Itineraries centered on significant locations along the trail.

As the content and routes for each itinerary have been developed, these materials can be provided in multiple formats, including printed handouts and online downloads in both print and audio (i.e., podcasts). In addition, these materials can be distributed to commercial tour operators as promotional and training aids to inform and encourage organized bus tours using onboard or step-on interpretive guides.

*Interpretive Media Recommendation # 2:
Audiovisuals*

Professional audiovisual programs should be produced to provide visitors of all abilities and learning styles a consistently engaging, accessible, high-quality interpretive experience about the trail.

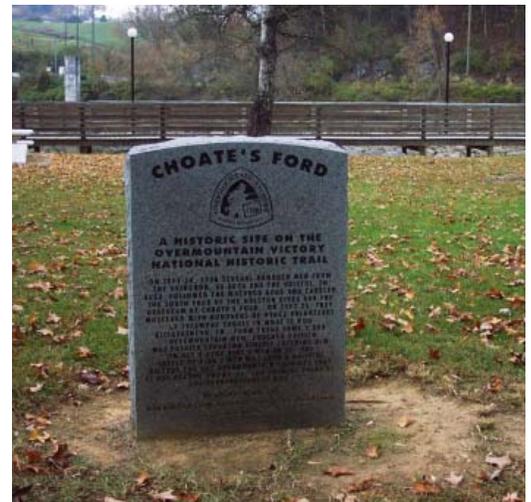
- *Create a short (7 to 8 minutes) film* to introduce visitors and potential visitors to the Overmountain Victory NHT. With planning, this central video piece can be distributed as a DVD and shown at a variety of locations along the trail – in interior (and possibly exterior) exhibit kiosks, in a small seating nook with small flat-screen TV, in a classroom or on a tour bus in advance of a visit, or in a large auditorium, as well as on the web.
- *Encourage trail partners to collaborate on localized video segments*, using the overview video as a baseline audiovisual, to spotlight specific local aspects of the trail. With planning and communication among the partners, these localized segments can be produced to integrate seamlessly into the overview piece, resulting in both overview and customized audiovisual interpretation for each trail segment.

- *Compile and produce a music CD* featuring authentic backcountry and overmountain music from the era of the march, working with local musicians, musicologists, and historians. The CD and an accompanying booklet could be used in interpretive programs and marketed to visitors as a complement to their self-guided driving or walking tours on the trail. (If possible, these materials should also be made available for electronic download.)

*Interpretive Media Recommendation # 3:
Print Publications*

Standardized print publications in consistent, easily recognizable formats should be available along the length of the trail.

- *Update the NPS unigrid brochure* to reflect the new Abingdon visitor center, new sections of hiking trail, and other changes.
- *Produce a print version of the self-guided trail tour*, as described in Recommendation # 1 above.
- *Assist partners in developing site bulletins* for topics of special interest in their local areas. These site bulletins should follow an established format – existing NPS versions can provide good models or templates – and reflect both the trail’s visual identity (logo) and partner identities.



Choate's Ford Monument

Interpretive Media Recommendation # 4: Exterior Exhibits

Exterior route signs and wayside or kiosk exhibits should be available and accessible at key visitor entrances and points of interest throughout the trail.

- *Continue to expand trail wayfinding/identity signs.* Although wayfinding is not typically considered part of interpretation, on the Overmountain Victory Trail the historic way – i.e., the trail itself – is the primary resource and should be given full interpretive support.
 - Continue to push for wayfinding/identity signage on the North Carolina portion of the Commemorative Motor Route.



Interpretive Kiosk (installed 2005) for OVNHT Trailhead on East Boundary of Cowpens National Battlefield, SC

- *Develop a comprehensive trail wayside exhibit plan,* including several hierarchal levels of interpretation and potential interactivity/alternate delivery systems, as appropriate for the variety of settings along the trail.

For example:

- A wayside plan could evaluate and recommend sites for additional kiosks at other trailheads, similar to the three-panel overview/orientation kiosks already in place in Abingdon and Cowpens.
- A wayside plan could introduce a consistent template for sites, allowing for easy identification but also differentiation among site types (campgrounds, historic structures, historic landscapes, etc.).
- A wayside plan could help partners prioritize sites and topics to replace/upgrade some of the older interpretive signs already serving the trail.
- A wayside plan could help partners prioritize locations and topics – and seek funding – for new interpretive kiosks and waysides, including new all-weather durable technologies or treatments such as audio components, tactile elements, or varying levels of interactivity, from a simple built-in viewing scope to a weather-proof touch screen.
- *Add a prompt directing visitors to the trail website* on all future exterior interpretive signs. To insure longevity, this prompt should use only the main url, rather than specific podcasts or other downloads that may become dated or obsolete.
- *Identify potential sites for vehicular pull-offs and/or parking for interpretive waysides,* and work with city, county, state and federal transportation planners to the extent possible to inform and gain support for these necessary building blocks for trail accessibility.

Interpretive Media Recommendation # 5:
Interior Exhibits

Interior exhibits and displays should be easily available and accessible to the majority of trail visitors, especially those visiting the region at times other than the annual march.

- *Complete installation and open new exhibits* at the Abingdon Visitor Center. If possible, stage a series of open-house events inviting local trail supporters and partners from all three states to see and become inspired by the new exhibits.
- *Continue to explore potential new venues* within existing sites that could accommodate exhibit segments devoted to the Overmountain Victory NHT.
- *Consider creating a traveling tabletop exhibit* offering an overview of the trail for use at community events, school festivals, and similar occasions. These inexpensive, portable set-ups could be used by both the NPS team and trail partners to provide an instant identity for the trail.

- *Reevaluate content and condition of existing interior exhibits* at five-year intervals to ensure they remain in good condition and up-to-date. Where possible, consider retrofitting existing flat-panel exhibits with touchables, audio, and other devices to broaden their appeal.

Interpretive Media Recommendation # 6:
Youth Materials

Youth programming and materials should be available for younger visitors, whether they arrive as part of a K-12 class trip, a non-school youth group, or a multi-generational group of family or friends.

- *Continue to support, refine, and expand the hands-on “field days”* associated with the annual march. These activities, presented by dozens of volunteers and paid professionals during the two-week march, reached more than 11,000 youth in recent years.
 - Where possible, seek to enrich and support hands-on learning with pre- and post-visit presentations and curriculum materials.
- *Create an NPS Junior Ranger program* for the trail. In doing so, the interpretive team should take care to make completion feasible after only one visit to one trail segment or site, while also encouraging onsite or virtual exploration of other trail sites.
 - Consider creating a virtual Junior Ranger option after the site-based program has been established.



NPS Bulletin Board at Access Point to Pathway in Abingdon, VA

RESEARCH NEEDS IN SUPPORT OF INTERPRETATION

According to knowledgeable local historians, scholars, and leaders in the OVTA, surprisingly little in-depth scholarly research has been done on the events, personalities, settings, and ramifications of the Overmountain Campaign. The most important early documentation – a book and interviews conducted by Lyman C. Draper – appeared in 1881, more than 100 years after the march. The Draper papers are archived with the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison, where Draper was president and secretary of the organization.

The planning team proposes the following approach to improving the range and depth of research in support of interpretation for the Overmountain Victory NHT:

Research Recommendation # 1:

- *Convene an annual or bi-annual scholarly conference* on the Overmountain Campaign, soliciting lectures and panel discussions from a wide range of Revolutionary War scholars and specialists in military, social, and economic history and related areas.
 - Work with local colleges to establish a venue and cohost for the conference.

Research Recommendation # 2:

- *Collect, edit, and publish selected papers* from the conference as an ongoing series of contemporary scholarship on the Overmountain Campaign.

Research Recommendation # 3:

- *Review new archeological findings* on Gilbert Town and other locations, as available, to assess possible inclusion in interpretive programming.

- *Assess the need for additional archeology* to support developing interpretation for other sites such as Shelving Rock.

Research Recommendation # 4:

- *Review interpretive potential for Pleasant Gardens*, in collaboration with McDowell County, based on the site's 2010 master plan.
- *Work with trail partners on relevant master planning* for greenways and connecting trails in jurisdictions along the OVNHT.

STAFFING NEEDS

The Overmountain Victory NHT has operated for many years with one permanent full-time employee (the trail superintendent) and a host of dedicated volunteers with the OVTA and other partner organizations. With the opening of the Abingdon Visitor Contact Station in 2010, the trail now has several seasonal employees for the 2011 season in addition to the full-time Superintendent

In order to assure the trail's interpretive viability and sustainability over the next ten years, this plan recommends the following core staff:

- A chief of visitor services
- An administrative officer
- Two or three permanent front-line rangers in interpretation

In addition, the trail will benefit from exploring all options for temporary employees, including seasonal NPS employees, participants in the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program, interns from the Student Training Employment Program (STEP), and other college internship programs. Additionally, partnering with various other sites along the trail (i.e. state parks, etc.) may provide paid staff who can devote some time to OVNHT interpretation and related activities.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The interpretive planning team proposes prioritizing new interpretive services and media to be phased in over the next ten years, with milestones marked for short, mid, and long-range implementation.

This chart prioritizes the implementation of the long-range interpretive plan with suggestions for step-by-step progress toward each major recommendation. Indicators (XX) describe each recommendation as a short-term, mid-term, or long-term goal. Entries with XX across all three timeframes should be considered as continuous, ongoing activities.

The cost projection column provides a rough guide to the estimated costs of each recommendation. The symbol \$ estimates a moderate annual cost (under \$50,000); the \$\$ indicates annual expenditures estimated between \$50,000 and \$100,000; and the \$\$\$ indicates major expenditures, usually capital expenditures such as facilities remodeling, exhibit installations, visitor transportation vehicles, etc.

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail: Priorities by Interpretive Service	Short-term 1-3 years	Mid-term 4-6 years	Long-term 7-10 years	Cost Projection
Personal Services				
<i>Recommendation # 1: Expand personal services year-round</i>	XX	XX	XX	\$\$\$
Launch a limited number of ranger-led programs in spring and summer	XX			\$\$
Spearhead local service events	XX			\$\$
Create a "roving ranger" by automobile with special programs	XX			
Encourage/support interpretive training for partners	XX			\$
Update and enhance educational curricula		XX		\$\$
Expand dedicated ranger presence in other locations (beyond Abingdon)			XX	\$\$\$
<i>Recommendation # 2: Expand personal services for the march</i>				
OVRTA Needs: Administrative coordinator	XX	XX	XX	\$\$\$
OVRTA Needs: Funding for paid interpreters for K-12 program during the march	XX	XX	XX	\$\$
Community Needs: Local champions for the trail	XX	XX	XX	\$
Non-Personal Services/Interpretive Media				
<i>Interpretive Media Recommendation # 1: Multi-Platform Self-Guided Materials</i>		XX		\$\$\$
Create a comprehensive trail guide in multiple formats	XX			\$\$
Create a series of self-guided itineraries; expand over time to cover the entire trail	XX	XX		\$\$
<i>Interpretive Media Recommendation # 2: Audiovisual materials</i>				
Create a short overview film for use in multiple venues	XX			\$\$
Encourage partners to develop localized add-on segments to the overview film		XX		\$\$
Compile and produce a music CD featuring period music		XX		\$\$
<i>Interpretive Media Recommendation # 3: Print Publications</i>				
Update the NPS unigrid brochure	XX			\$
Produce a print version of the self-guided trail guide (see above)	XX			\$
Assist partners in developing localized site bulletins	XX	XX		\$
<i>Interpretive Media Recommendation # 4: Exterior Exhibits</i>				
Continue to expand wayfinding/identity signage	XX			\$\$
Develop a comprehensive wayside exhibit plan for the entire trail	XX			\$\$
Implement the wayside plan in phases		XX	XX	\$\$\$
Add website prompts to all wayside signage		XX		\$
Identify potential vehicular pull-offs or parking for interpretive waysides/kiosks		XX	XX	\$\$

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail: Priorities by Interpretive Service	Short-term 1-3 years	Mid-term 4-6 years	Long-term 7-10 years	Cost Projection
<i>Interpretive Media Recommendation # 5: Interior Exhibits</i>				
Complete installation and open exhibits at Abingdon	XX			\$\$
Explore new venues for interior exhibits		XX		\$
Consider a traveling tabletop exhibit for festivals, etc.		XX		\$
Reevaluate existing exhibits for replacement/repair			XX	\$\$
<i>Interpretive Media Recommendation # 6: Youth Materials</i>				
Continue programming during march	XX	XX	XX	\$\$
Create NPS Junior Ranger program	XX			\$
Research Needs in Support of Interpretation				
<i>Research Recommendation # 1: Scholarship</i>				
Convene an annual scholarly conference		XX	XX	\$\$
Publish scholarship from the conference		XX	XX	\$\$
<i>Research Recommendation # 3: Archeology</i>				
Review archeological findings for use in interpretive programming		XX		\$
Assess need for additional archeology in support of interpretation		XX		\$\$
<i>Research Recommendation # 4: Master Planning</i>				
Work with McDowell County to assess potential interpretive uses for McDowell House		XX		\$\$
Work with trail partners on relevant master plans for greenways and connecting trails along the OVTA				
Staffing Needs for Interpretation				
Staffing Recommendations:				
Chief of Visitor Services		XX		\$\$
Administrative officer		XX		\$\$
Up to 3 front-line interpretive rangers		XX		\$\$\$

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Legislation

Appendix B: Certifiable Sites along the OVNHT

Appendix C: Publicly Accessible (Walkable) Sections of the Trail

Appendix D: List of Key Partners of the OVNHT

Appendix E: Workshop Participants and Planning Team

Appendix A:
Legislation

10. Overmountain Victory

PUBLIC LAW 96-344—SEPT. 8, 1980

94 STAT. 1133

Public Law 96-344
96th Congress

An Act

To improve the administration of the Historic Sites, Buildings and Antiquities Act of 1935 (49 Stat. 666).

Sept. 8, 1980
[S. 2680]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Historic Sites, Buildings and Antiquities Act, administration improvement.

* * * * *

94 STAT. 1136
16 USC 1244.

SEC. 14. The National Trails System Act (82 Stat. 919; 16 U.S.C. 1241) is amended by inserting the following new paragraph at the end of section 5(a):

“(9) The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, a system totaling approximately two hundred seventy-two miles of trail with routes from the mustering point near Abingdon, Virginia, to Sycamore Shoals (near Elizabethton, Tennessee); from Sycamore Shoals to Quaker Meadows (near Morganton, North Carolina); and from the mustering point in Surry County, North Carolina, to Quaker Meadows; from Quaker Meadows to Kings Mountain, South Carolina, as depicted on the map identified as Map 3—Historic Features—1780 in the draft study report entitled ‘Overmountain Victory Trail’ dated December 1979. The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the Director, National Park Service, Washington, District of Columbia. The trail shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior.”.

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.

94 STAT. 1137

Map, public inspection.

* * * * *

94 STAT. 1138

Approved September 8, 1980.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

SENATE REPORT No. 96-754 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 126 (1980):

- May 22, considered and passed Senate.
- July 31, considered and passed House, amended.
- Aug. 18, Senate concurred in House amendment.

Appendix B: Certifiable Sites along the Trail

Certifiable site information is current as of March 1, 2011.

*Dedicated/Certified applies to sites on federally owned property.

Site	Location	Status
VIRGINIA SITES		
Colonel William Campbell's Gravesite	Seven-Mile Ford	Certified August 14, 2003
Abingdon Mustering Grounds	Abingdon	Certified August 30, 2007
TENNESSEE SITES		
Pemberton Oak	Along Route 44	Certified September 24, 1997 (Needs Re-Certification)
Fort Womack		Not Currently Certified
Choates Ford	Bluff City	Dedicated/Certified* September 24, 2008
Rocky Mount State Historic Area	Piney Flats	Certified August 26, 2008
Fort Watauga	Elizabethton (Sycamore Shoals)	Not Currently Certified
Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area	Elizabethton	Certified May 21, 1986 (Needs Re-Certification)
Shelving Rock Encampment	Roan Mountain	Not Currently Certified
Roan Mountain State Park	Roan Mountain	Certified September 24, 1986 (Needs Re-Certification)
NORTH CAROLINA SITES		
Bright's Trace	Avery County	Not Currently Certified
Roaring Creek Historic Campsite	Avery County	Not Currently Dedicated/Certified*
Old Yellow Mountain Road	Avery County	Certified September 28, 1998 (Needs Re-Certification)
Davenport Springs		Certified September 26, 2000 (Needs Re-Certification)
Captain Robert Sevier's Gravesite	Spruce Pine, Buncombe County	Certified September 26, 2000 (Needs Re-Certification)
Cathey's Creek Historic Campsite	Route 19E near Spruce Pine	Not Currently Certified
Turkey Cove Campsite	McDowell County	Not Currently Certified
North Cove Campsite	McDowell County	Not Currently Certified
Major Joseph McDowell House (Pleasant Gardens)	Marion	Certified August 26, 2008
Colonel Charles McDowell House	Morganton	Certified August 26, 2008
Quaker Meadows Campsite	Morganton	Not Currently Certified
Quaker Meadows Cemetery	Morganton	Certified August 14, 2003
Bedford Hill	Along Route 64	Not Currently Certified
Cane Creek	Along Route 64	Not Currently Certified
New Brittain Church Cemetery	Logan community Rutherford County	Certified October 3, 2001 (Needs Re-Certification)
Gilbert Town (Several Tracts)	Rutherford County	Certified Fall 1998
Biggerstaff's Old Fields	Whitesides community Rutherford County	Not Currently Certified
Alexander's Ford	Polk County	Not Currently Certified
Round-About Homesite		Not Currently Certified

Appendix C: Publicly Accessible (Walkable) Trail Sections

These publicly accessible, walkable trail segments are current as of March 2009.

Site	Location	Status
VIRGINIA		
Town of Abingdon Segment	Abingdon	.75 miles
Stockyard & Wolf Creek Trails	Abingdon	1 mile
Stewart, Davis, McCoy, Thompson & Eades Trail Segments (all adjoining)	Washington County	3 miles
TENNESSEE		
Choate's Ford Walking Trail	Bluff City	1 mile
Elizabethton Linear Park	Elizabethton	2 miles
River Trail	Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area	1.5 miles
Roan Mountain Community Park Trail	Town of Roan Mountain	.5 miles
Birchfield Trail	Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area	3.5 miles
Yellow Mountain Trail	Cherokee National Forest	1.8 miles
NORTH CAROLINA		
Trail #308 & Road #5545	Yellow Mountain Gap, Avery County	1.5 miles
Overmountain Victory NHT	Elkin	3.75 miles
Yadkin River Greenway	Wilkesboro	6 miles
Overmountain Victory NHT	W. Kerr Scott Dam & Reservoir	11 miles
Patterson School Overmountain Trail	Caldwell County	1 miles
Gillespie Gap	Blue Ridge Parkway	5 miles
Black Bear Tract Trail	North Shore of Lake James	2.1 miles
Trail #308G & Road #1238	Pisgah National Forest	4.1 miles
1780 Community	North Shore of Lake James	1 mile
Overmountain Victory NHT	Lake James State Park	1.5 miles
Catawba River Greenway	Morganton	5 miles
Overmountain Victory NHT	Rutherfordton	3 miles
White Oak Development	Polk County	2.1 miles
Paddy's Creek Trail	Lake James State Park	1 mile
Overmountain Vineyards	Polk County	1 mile
SOUTH CAROLINA		
Green River Road	Cowpens National Battlefield	1.5 miles
Overmountain Victory NHT	Lake Whelchel	3 miles
Battlefield Trail	Kings Mountain National Military Park	2 miles

Appendix D: Key Partners of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail has many partners. As a part of the National Trails System, the OVNHT is administered by the National Park Service in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; the states of Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina; local governments; and historical societies and citizen groups.

The Key Partners of the OVNHT include:

The Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cowpens National Battlefield

Kings Mountain National Military Park

Appalachian National Scenic Trail

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

W. Scott Kerr Dam and Reservoir

USDA FOREST SERVICE

Cherokee National Forest

Pisgah National Forest

In NORTH CAROLINA

Numerous Private Landowners

State of North Carolina

Lake James State Park

Department of Transportation

Department of Cultural Resources

Department of Tourism

The Altapass Foundation

McDowell County

Wilkes County

Brittain Church

Lake James State Park

Fort Defiance Historic Site

Yadkin River Greenway—Wilkes

Yadkin River Greenway—Caldwell

Catawba River Greenway

Duke Energy Company

Crescent Land Corp.

Wilkes County Heritage Museum

Unimin Corporation

Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition

Rutherford County

Polk County

City of Morganton

City of Kings Mountain

Town of Elkin

Town of Rutherfordton

Town of Ruth
 Burke County
 Wake Forest University
 Piedmont Land Conservancy
 Foothills Land Conservancy
 Mountains to the Sea Trail
 Kings Mountain Gateway Committee
 Betchler Development Corporation
 Brushy Mountain Cyclists Club
 W. Kerr Scott Reservoir – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor
 Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
 NC State University
 White Oak Development
 Overmountain Vineyards
 The Bradley Fund, LLC
 Conservation Trust for NC
 Avery County
 Mitchell County
 High Country Council of Governments
 Caldwell County
 Surry County
 North Carolina Horse Council

In SOUTH CAROLINA

Numerous Private Landowners
 State of South Carolina
 Kings Mountain State Park
 Department of Transportation
 Department of Tourism
 Department of Parks
 Overmountain Victory Trail Committee
 Cherokee County
 Spartanburg County
 Town of Gaffney
 Carolina Backcountry Alliance
 The Palmetto Conservation Foundation
 Colonial Pipeline Company
 Cherokee County Historical Society

In TENNESSEE

Numerous Private Landowners
 Town of Bluff City
 Town of Roan Mountain
 State of Tennessee
 Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area
 Roan Mountain State Park
 Rocky Mount State Historic Site and Museum
 Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area
 Department of Transportation
 Department of Tourism
 Town of Elizabethton
 Carter County

Appendices

Sullivan County
Southern Appalachian Greenway Alliance
Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Back Country Horsemen of East Tennessee (note: Backcountry is one word)

In VIRGINIA

Numerous Private Landowners
Historical Society of Washington County
Smyth County
State of Virginia
 Virginia Department of Transportation
 Virginia Department of Tourism
 Virginia Department of Historical Resources
Town of Abingdon
Washington County

In All States

Federal Highway Administration
Daughters of the American Revolution
Sons of the American Revolution
American Hiking Society
American Battlefield Protection Program
Eastern National Monument Association
National Park Foundation
Student Conservation Association

Appendix E: Workshop Participants and Planning Team

National Park Service

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail

Paul Carson, Superintendent

Grant Hamilton, SCA Intern, Abingdon Muster Grounds

Josh Stamper, Teacher-Ranger-Teacher, Abingdon Muster Grounds

Other NPS Attendees

Jonathan Bennett, Park Ranger, Blue Ridge Parkway

Ann Childress, Chief of Interpretation, Blue Ridge Parkway

Tim Stone, Superintendent, Cowpens National Battlefield/Ninety-Six National Historic Site

Harpers Ferry Center

Peggy Scherbaum, Contracting Officer's Representative and Interpretive Planner, Harpers Ferry Center

Sam Vaughn, Associate Manager, Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center

Southeast Region

Don Wollenhaupt, Chief of Interpretation & Education

Partner/Stakeholder Participants

Donna Absher, Overmountain Victory Trail Association

R. G. Absher, Yadkin River Greenway Council, Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Helen Ruth Almond, Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor

Jennifer Bauer, Superintendent, Sycamore Shoals SHA

Alan Bowen, President, Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Mark Bowen, Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Chivous Bradley, Rutherford County Historian, Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Brad Carey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, W. Scott Kerr Dam and Reservoir

Almon Carr, Historic Burke Foundation

Myra Cook, Abingdon Convention and Visitors Bureau

Mike Dahl, Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Albert Nelson Dale III, Overmountain Victory Trail Association, McDowell County, NC

Crystal Dillard, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, W. Scott Kerr Dam and Reservoir

Dottie Erwin, Historic Burke Foundation

Jennifer Furr, Director, Wilkes Heritage Museum, Wilkesboro, NC

Bill Hendley, Overmountain Victory Trail Association, McDowell County Trail Association

Teresa Howell, Town of Elkin, Overmountain Victory Trail Association, Surry/Wilkes Chapter

Mike Howell, Overmountain Victory Trail Association, Surry/Wilkes Chapter

Garrett Jackson, Director of Planning, Town of Abingdon, VA

Randall Jones, Author/Consultant

Doug Ledbetter, Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Paul LeFrancois, Overmountain Victory Trail Association, Cherokee County, SC

Bryant Lindsey, Historic Burke Foundation, Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Ambrose Mills, Polk County Economic Development Council, Alexander's Ford Project Manager

Carol B. Price, Director, McDowell County Tourism Authority

Kenneth Robinson, Director of Public Archaeology, Wake Forest University

Jerry Stensland, Rutherford County, NC, Overmountain Victory Trail Association Foothills Chapter

Consultant Team

Faye Goolrick, Certified Interpretive Planner, Goolrick Interpretive Group
Shannon Kettering, Program Manager, Pond | Ecos

Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



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