



# West Virginia National Coal Heritage Area Evaluation Findings

Tina Marshall, Ph.D.  
Debra Rog, Ph.D.  
Abiola Ogunbiyi, B.S.  
Johanna Dubsy, A.A.

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Prepared for:  
United States National Park Service  
Washington, DC

Prepared by:  
Westat  
1600 Research Boulevard  
Rockville, Maryland 20850-3129  
(301) 251-1500

**Westat**

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## Executive Summary

### Purpose of the Report

In 1996, United States Congress through Public Law 110-229 officially designated nine National Heritage Areas (NHAs). An NHA can be any size and is intended to encourage historic preservation and an appreciation of the unique natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that represent a nationally important American story. The National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA) in West Virginia is one of the nine designated areas. NCHA began receiving Federal funds in 1998.

In May 2008, Congress mandated that an evaluation, under the auspices of the Secretary of the Interior, be conducted of each of the nine NHAs to review accomplishments made since inception. Based on the findings from each evaluation, the Secretary of the Interior will prepare a report to Congress with recommendations regarding the future role of NHAs with respect to NPS.

### Key Evaluation Questions

The key findings from the NCHA evaluation are organized by the three questions introduced in Section 1 and derived from the legislation, Public Law 110-229, that serve as a framework for this evaluation:

1. Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the heritage area achieved its proposed accomplishments?
2. What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government and private entities?
3. How do the heritage areas management structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to its sustainability?

## Key Findings

### **Evaluation Question 1: Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the heritage area achieved its proposed accomplishments?**

NCHA Federal authorizing legislation (PL 104-333) specifies that the NCHA management plan should guide the NCHA towards the following goals:

1. The development and implementation of integrated cultural, historical, and land resource management policies and programs in order to retain, enhance, and interpret the significant values of the lands, water, and structures of the Area.
2. The preservation, restoration, maintenance, operation, interpretation, and promotion of buildings, structures, facilities, sites, and points of interest for public use that possess cultural, historical, and architectural values associated with the coal mining heritage of the Area.
3. The coordination of activities by Federal, State, and local governments and private businesses and organizations in order to further historic preservation and compatible economic revitalization.
4. The development of guidelines and standards for projects, consistent with standards established by the National Park Service, for the preservation and restoration of historic properties, including interpretative methods, that will further history preservation in the region.

NCHA has remained true to the overall mission outlined in the original legislation and operationalized in the management plan. In moving forward with specific plans as laid out in the management plan, NCHA staff encountered financial and other challenges that rendered some activities infeasible such as the development of a state-of-the-art interpretative and education complex. **NCHA was able to accomplish approximately half of the key objectives outlined in the four phases of the management plan** (see Section 3.1.2 for detail). Examples of objectives that remain in progress or were not yet initiated include:

- Development of a permanent headquarters located within the NCHA
- Development of a strategic fundraising plan

- Development of an integrated database of coal heritage resources and other cultural and natural resources
- Development of workforce and hospitality training initiatives and partnerships
- Formation of a non-partisan Coal Heritage Caucus that will serve as the voice to the NCHA in the WV House and Senate
- Establishment of incentive-based development guidelines
- Initiation of a National Coal Museum feasibility study
- Development of interpretative walks and tours in Itman, Thurmont, and Welch

**Evaluation Question 2:      What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal, and local government and private entities?**

The data shows that NCHA has not fully utilized Federal investments. Since 1998, NCHA received \$1,537,217 in Federal NPS funds. An estimated \$304,287 was returned to the Treasury by 2004. Since 2003, NCHA has carried over five years of funding each year. The NCHA director indicates that part of their rationale for under-spending funds and having an annual carry-over is to respond to possible fluctuations in NPS allocations. The staff also was under the false understanding even if the NPS sunsets, they could continue to spend funds that were obligated and unspent. Current regulations, however, indicates that if the funding for NHA sunsets, any obligated funds should be returned to the Federal Treasury within 1 year.

A second reason for NCHA not drawing down the complete amount of obligated Federal NPS funding is the difficulties it reportedly faced in meeting the 50 percent match requirements stipulated in the Federal authorizing legislation. It appears, however, that the NCHA may have misunderstood what can be considered as match funding. Much of obtained external or leveraged project funding was not used to meet match requirements and draw down Federal NPS funding.

**NCHA’s impact on preservation, restoration, education, and interpretation has been limited.** NCHA has supported the preservation and restoration of ten historic structures or natural resources since 1998. Between 2004-2011, the NCHA spent \$383,566 on these ten projects, the bulk of which (\$250,000) was spent on the Raleigh County Exhibition Coal Mine. In addition to difficulties meeting the Federal match requirement, NCHA faced a number of local barriers that delayed or stymied its ability to carry out program activities. For example, the Logan County

Country Roads Scenic Interpretative Center was delayed for approximately 7 years due to NCHA's difficulties in obtaining property deeds. Similarly, the Summers County John Henry Heritage Park was delayed more than four years due to NCHA's extended negotiations with CSX railroad to purchase the land.

NCHA's impact in the area of interpretation and education also was limited in scope and scale. Since 2004, NCHA cumulatively spent \$108,438 on the creation of two exhibits, 12 interpretative signs, a video, a memorial and nine educational programs, workshops or conferences. Data to assess the impact of these events were limited. NCHA reported 11,800 visitors signed the Guest Book at the Bramwell Interpretative Center between 2008 and 2011 (which NCHA estimates is 30-40 percent of total visitors) and an estimated 9,419 individuals visited to the Boone County Coal Heritage Museum.

NCHA spent \$100,288 on marketing since 2004 and demonstrated increased visibility of Coal Heritage and Coal Heritage Sites through its website with a reported 1.2 million total hits between August 2008 and January 2012. Web hits in 2012 were three times higher than those captured in 2008. The Geocache has also drawn approximately 1,120 visitors since 2010.

It appears that the challenges faced in supporting preservation and restoration projects has led NCHA to prioritize technical assistance and support over the past two years. Programmatic expenditures reflect that NCHA spent almost five times the amount on planning, technical assistance, and support as it did on preservation and restoration activities. Since 2003, NCHA has provided a range of technical assistance and support on the local level both directly and through the VISTA program. NCHA serves as an umbrella VISTA organization helping to coordinate VISTA placements and support and mentor VISTAs. The VISTA and other technical assistance activities have been aimed at:

- Increasing the amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming
- Diversifying the local economy (e.g. entrepreneur and small business development).
- Building capacity of communities
- Fostering future stewardship of Coal Heritage sites and resources
- Increasing the quality of life for residents living in Coal Heritage Areas

NCHA's support stimulated the creation of three non-profit organizations and stakeholder interviews indicate that these activities have helped towns and communities.

**Evaluation Question 3:      How do the NCHA coordinating entity's management structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to its sustainability?**

**Evaluation results raise questions about NCHA's prospects for sustainability.** Since 1998, NCHA's management structure has changed three times. While NCHA's partnership with the CHHA has allowed it to have a stronger and more stable staff capacity since the two organizations joined together in 2004, CHHA cannot be considered a resource for NCHA's long-term sustainability. CHHA's initial earmarked funding of \$6 million has \$830,000 remaining, almost all of which (\$729,000) is designated for the restoration of the Houston Company Store. CHHA funds will not be renewed.

NCHA lacks a strong Board that is trained, experienced, and engaged in fulfilling the specified functions of the Board of the Directors. Many board members, appointed by the Governor, have not been engaged in the work of the NCHA. NCHA bylaws require Board approval for all actions undertaken by NCHA. Therefore, in addition to approving the annual budget, the Board must review and approve all projects before they are initiated. Lack of participation in Board meetings has resulted in difficulty obtaining a quorum, which resulted in business being delayed. NCHA has taken numerous steps to strengthen the Board including approaching the Governor for new appointments. Three new Board members were recently appointed by the new WV Governor, which may strengthen Board participation and involvement.

NCHA's management related to project oversight and record keeping raises some concern. The evaluation team experienced difficulty obtaining basic program information from NCHA such as a description of each project, date started and completed, and accomplishments. NCHA is a part of a state agency, and as such does not have ultimate control over the manner in which financial records are organized. NCHA financial information is not easily accessible.

Partnerships, the second factor examined that contributes to sustainability, is the strongest of the factors considered, owing in part to the skills of the current Executive Director. NCHA's Executive Director was cited as having both respect and credibility in the community and for being able to get things done. NCHA has many community partners across the region, including county, city and



town governments; state agencies; convention and visitor bureaus; universities; regional organizations; community groups; and others. Some of the partnerships are for preservation, in which the NCHA either assists with funding projects, providing technical assistance, or providing support through the assignment of a VISTA worker. Other partnerships are for promoting the region and may involve joint advertising, other promotional activities, or strategic planning efforts to revitalize the community and region. Overall, interviewees report a great deal of collaboration in the region.

For the third factor, current funding, the NCHA shows little promise of sustainability. NCHA is dependent on Federal NPS funds, in part due to the economic climate of its state. West Virginia is the fourth poorest state in the U.S. with a poverty rate of 15.7 percent<sup>1</sup>. The reduction of NCHA funding would likely result in staffing reductions that would impact both NCHA and CHHA as NCHA and CHHA currently split the operational and staffing costs. The consistent view of interviewees is that the sunseting of NPS funds would likely result in the elimination of the NCHA coordinating entity. Staffing could not be sustained without funding for operations and there are no other likely sources of funds or other organizations in the region that could provide that type of support.

Although NCHA has a range of partners, no other organization provides resources for preservation, restoration, education, and interpretation activities. Several organizations noted that the absence of the NCHA would have an impact on their work. The local NPS at New River Gorge indicated that there would likely be more demand on their staff to provide resources, signage, and other supports if the NCHA did not exist. The Convention and Visitors Bureaus and the Division of Tourism will carry on marketing and advertising activities but indicated that NCHA plays an important coordinating role that is unlikely to be replaced. Additionally, without NCHA these partners indicated that they would have less “product to sell”, making tourism to the area more difficult to market.

One prospect with helping NCHA’s financial sustainability is the National Boy Scout of America (BSA) project. It is expected that NCHA can make valuable contributions to educating up to 40,000 scouts that attend each Boy Scout Jamboree about Coal Heritage and promote economic development in the area by assisting with the coordination of Coal Heritage-related community service activities to help scouts fulfill their 8 hours of community service (up to 240,000 hours per

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Jamboree). For example, while scouts are not allowed to work with machinery, the BSA has agreed to fund contractors to work alongside of the scouts to assist with the preservation and restoration of dilapidated buildings. NCHA is already making use of its VISTA workers in the community to generate proposals for Coal Heritage projects for BSA to consider. Finally, BSA activities will likely enhance NCHA and local partners' ability to compete for private funding as it has implications for promoting business development and increasing tourism. This may make it easier for local partners to meet the 50 percent Federal match requirements.

## Structure of the Report

The report is divided into 5 sections:

**Section 1** defines and describes the National Heritage Areas (NHA) and NHA coordinating entities in general as well as provides a short overview of the West Virginia National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA), which is the focus of this evaluation report. The section also describes the evaluation methodology, its limitations, and the roles and functions of key stakeholders involved in the development of this report.

**Section 2** describes the area prior to the official designation as an NHA as well as the current heritage area and provides a map of the NCHA geographic boundaries. Section 2.2 introduces the NCHA coordinating entity's structure and organization, including the roles and responsibilities of NCHA staff. This introduction is followed by Section 2.3 which provides an overview of the relationships that exist between and among the NCHA coordinating entity, stakeholder/partners organizations, and the National Park Service (NPS).

**Section 3** explores the first evaluation question, "Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the heritage area achieved its proposed accomplishments?" Section 3.1 describes the NCHA coordinating entity's goals and objectives as required by the authorizing legislation and original and revised management plan. This section provides the logic model created by NCHA and Westat that outlines the resources and partnerships of the NCHA, how they lead to program areas and activities, and in turn, how the activities lead to outcomes and impacts the NCHA desires to achieve. Section 3.2 describes the NCHA's programs and activities that have been conducted since receiving the NCHA designation and an analysis of whether the NCHA's programs and activities are fulfilling the intent of the authorizing legislation and the current management plan.

Section 3.3 describes the NCHA coordinating entity’s relationships with various NPS organizations and how these relationships compare to what is outlined in the authorizing legislation and current management plan.

**Section 4** explores the second evaluation question, “What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government and private entities?” Section 4.1 provides an overview of the investments made in the NCHA coordinating entity since its inception, broken down by major categories. Section 4.2 provides an analysis of how the NCHA coordinating entity has used the investments. Section 4.3 describes the impact of the NCHA’s investments including short and long-term outcomes.

**Section 5** explores the third evaluation question, derived from legislation (P.L. 110-229), “How do the coordinating entity’s management structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to the NHA’s sustainability?” Section 5.1 defines important management roles and functions and examines the extent to which they exist formally or informally within the NCHA. Section 5.2 defines the partnerships and interrelationships that are needed to achieve sustainable results and discusses the extent to which they exist within the NCHA including NPS’s current role. Section 5.3 describes the role that the NHA funding has played and continues to play in the NCHA coordinating entity. Section 5.4 defines financial resources needed and their role in sustaining the NCHA coordinating entity and NCHA. Section 5.5 assess whether other organizations or mechanisms exist outside of the NHA coordinating entity can contribute to accomplishing NCHA goals and objectives post sunset or in the case that funding is reduced.

## Section 1: Introduction

This section of the evaluation report defines and describes the National Heritage Areas (NHAs) and NHA coordinating entities in general as well as provides a short overview of the West Virginia National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA), the focus of this evaluation report. The section also describes the evaluation methodology, its limitations, and the roles and functions of key stakeholders involved in the development of this report.

### 1.1 National Heritage Areas

An NHA is a designation given by the United States Congress to an area that has places and landscapes that collectively represent a unique, nationally important American story. An NHA can be any size and is intended to encourage historic preservation and an appreciation of the natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that have been shaped by the area's geography and history of human activity.

“...National Heritage Areas (NHA) are places where natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1996, Congress officially designated nine NHAs, with Federal funds provided over subsequent years. Oversight of the heritage areas was assigned to the National Park Service (NPS), with the exception of one NHA, Silos and Smokestacks NHA, that was originally assigned to the United States Department of Agriculture in 1996 and then to NPS in 2000.

A coordinating entity or management entity is typically the organization within the NHA boundary that is tasked in the authorizing legislation with bringing together diverse interests, goals and activities, resources, and efforts to define and work collectively toward common goals. The coordinating entity is charged with the responsibility for developing and implementing a management plan that will achieve the goals specified in the heritage area's enabling legislation. It also manages the Federal funding provided to the NHA. The coordinating entity may be a Federal

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<sup>2</sup> National Park System Advisory Board. “Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas.” Available online at <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/NHAreport.pdf>

commission, state agency, local university, local government, or nonprofit organization. The coordinating entity usually creates working groups with balanced representation of diverse interests, disciplines, backgrounds, and ethnicities to plan and implement actions that meet the requirements of the heritage area legislation and plans. Members of the working groups may include elected officials, nonprofit practitioners, business representatives, librarians, historians, preservationists, planners, architects, naturalists, landscape architects, educators, and civic organization leaders.

## 1.2 Report Purpose

In May 2008, Congress mandated that an evaluation, under the auspices of the Secretary of the Interior, be conducted of each of the nine NHAs authorized in 1996 to review accomplishments made since its inception. Based on the findings from each evaluation, the Secretary of the Interior will prepare a report to Congress with recommendations regarding the future role of NHAs with respect to NPS.

The Center for Park Management (CPM) conducted the first of the nine evaluations in 2009 of the Essex National Heritage Commission in eastern Massachusetts. Westat, under contract to CPM, conducted two additional evaluations: Augusta Canal NHA (ACNHA) in Augusta, Georgia and the Silos and Smokestacks NHA (SSNHA) in the Northeastern section of Iowa that serve as models for this set of NHA evaluations.

Currently, Westat is contracted to conduct evaluations of six NHAs including the one that is the focus of this report: the National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA) in Oak Hill, West Virginia. The other sites include:

- Hudson River Valley
- Rivers of Steel
- Ohio and Erie Canalway
- South Carolina National Heritage Corridor
- Tennessee Civil War

## 1.3 West Virginia National Coal Heritage Area

The West Virginia National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA) was designated as an NHA in 1996 (PL 104-333) and first received funding in 1998. NCHA encompasses 5,300 square miles, spanning 13 counties in southern West Virginia. NCHA's overarching goals fall within 4 domains:

- **Preservation:** To promote the protection and preservation of the region's rapidly vanishing artifacts, structures, and sites from the mining era of the late 19th and 20th century;
- **Interpretation:** To interpret the history, culture, and technology of the mining era;
- **Education:** To foster an ethic of pride and stewardship among area residents to understand the importance of coal mining history; and
- **Economic Development:** To develop southern West Virginia coalfields into a destination for "heritage tourism" and stimulate tourism/economic development.

Five of the 13 counties within the NCHA also benefit from the National Scenic Byway designation. In 1998, the Coal Heritage Trail from Bluefield to Beckley was designated as a National Scenic Byway. The National Scenic Byway designation was extended in 2009 from Beckley through Fayette County to Ansted. It is managed by the Coal Heritage Highway Authority (CHHA). In short, this designation provided a south-north transportation corridor on the eastern side of the NCHA. See map in Section 2.1.

For a variety of reasons specified in Section 2, the management and oversight of NCHA changed three times between 1998 and 2004. Currently, NCHA is classified as a Board and Commission which means that it functions as a state agency with its employees being state employees and management and fiscal oversight provided by a Board of Directors appointed by the Governor. NCHA is managed by CHHA who through a Memorandum of Understanding in 2004 agreed to use existing staff and rented office space to manage both organizations. The organizations have separate Boards, regulations, funding, and financial records. The Director of the CHHA is the Executive Director of NCHA and eight part or full-time staff work 50-50 for both organizations.

## 1.4 Purpose of Evaluation

Public Law 110-229, enacted on May 8, 2008, directs the US Secretary of the Interior to evaluate each of the nine NHAs that were established in the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996<sup>3</sup> no later than three years before the date on which authority for Federal funding terminates. P.L. 110-229 describes the impetus for this evaluation, which is intended to inform the Secretary's report to Congress as follows:

- (a) **In General.** For the nine National Heritage Areas authorized in Division II of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996, not later than three years before the date on which authority for Federal funding terminates for each National Heritage Area, the Secretary shall —
  - (1) Conduct an evaluation of the accomplishments of the National Heritage Area; and
  - (2) Prepare a report in accordance with subsection (c).
  
- (b) **Evaluation.** An evaluation conducted under subsection (a)(1) shall—
  - (1) Assess the progress of the local management entity with respect to—
    - (A) accomplishing the purposes of the authorizing legislation for the National Heritage Area; and
    - (B) achieving the goals and objectives of the approved management plan for the National Heritage Area;
  - (2) Analyze the investments of Federal, State, Tribal, and local government and private entities in each National Heritage Area to determine the impact of the investments; and
  - (3) Review the management structure, partnership relationships, and funding of the National Heritage Area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the National Heritage Area.

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<sup>3</sup> See P.L. 104-333, 110 Statute 4093.

(c) Report.--Based on the evaluation conducted under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary shall submit a report to the Committee on Natural Resources of the United States House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate. The report shall include recommendations for the future role of the National Park Service, if any, with respect to the National Heritage Area.

See Appendix 1 for more detail on the evaluation legislation.

### **1.4.1 Context**

This evaluation follows two major NHA evaluation projects. In 2005, the NPS Conservation Study Institute (CSI) began the process of developing an evaluation strategy for NHAs that culminated in a 2008 report titled *Development of a National Heritage Area Evaluation Strategy: Report on Phase 1*. This report was based on CSI's experience conducting evaluations of three Heritage Areas (Blackstone River Valley NHA, 2005; Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, 2006; and Cane River National Heritage Area, 2008), as well as substantial input from the Alliance of National Heritage Areas (ANHA) Peer-to-Peer Committee. The evaluation model articulated in the CSI report provides a comprehensive overview of the core ingredients, guiding strategies, implementation activities, and accomplishments of a sample heritage area.

In 2009, the National Park Conservation Association's Center for Park Management (CPM) undertook the evaluation of the Essex National Heritage Commission. This was the first congressionally mandated evaluation of the nine NHAs authorized in Division II of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 and built on the structure and content of the program models developed by CSI during its evaluations. CPM's evaluation of Essex National Heritage Commission differed from the CSI evaluations in its objectives and focus. CSI's evaluations were focused on the processes that heritage areas use to accomplish their goals. It concentrated primarily on the role and benefits of partnership and collaboration. CPM's evaluation, because of the Congressional mandate, focused on outcomes as they related to the authorizing legislation and general management plan, the impact of financial investments, and the role of partnerships in the sustainability of Essex National Heritage Area.

CPM contracted with Westat to evaluate Augusta Canal NHA and Silos and Smokestacks NHA. These evaluations built on CPM's methodology used in the evaluation of the Essex National



Heritage Commission. The focus of these two evaluations continued to be on outcomes as they relate to the authorizing legislation and general management plan, the impact of financial investments on accomplishing these outcomes, the role of partners helping the NHA to accomplish its goals, and the sustainability of the NHA. Unlike the first evaluation, however, these two evaluations did not include large-scale surveys due to cost and OMB Paperwork Reduction Act issues. Based on these two evaluations, a replicable model of evaluation was developed. This model served as the guide for the current evaluations.

## **1.5 Evaluation Methodology**

In order to comply with the Congressional mandate for evaluation of the NHAs, NPS National Coordinator for Heritage Areas contracted with Westat to conduct this evaluation. NPS's mission related to NHAs is to promote and enhance management capacity by fostering community stewardship of the nation's heritage (<http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FAQ/>). In addition, NPS provides technical, planning assistance and funding to the NHAs. Westat is an employee-owned research firm with expertise in conducting evaluations across a broad range of subject areas. The evaluation team was guided by NPS and the previous year's work of the NPS Evaluation Working Group, a group of NPS coordinators for NHAs and a Park Superintendent. In the following sections, we describe the evaluation methodology, role of each party in the evaluation, and the context within which the evaluation was conducted.

### **1.5.1 Methodology**

The methodology was designed to maximize both the use of existing data and the ability to measure specific outcomes of the NCHA's activities. The period covered by the evaluation is the 15 years during which the NCHA has received Federal funding, 1998-2011.

The following three questions—derived from the Congressional mandate—guided the evaluation:

- Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the coordinating entity achieved its proposed accomplishments for the NHA?
- What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government and private entities in the NHA?
- How do the coordinating entity's management structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to the NHA's sustainability?

The evaluation used a case study design to address these evaluation questions. This design allowed for the examination of multiple variables of interest and multiple sources of data. The evaluation also incorporated a collaborative approach with project stakeholders to ensure that the findings are grounded in the local knowledge of the site. NPS National and Regional Coordinators for Heritage Areas reviewed the methodology, as well as the NPS Panel of Experts for NHA. The tailored data collection tools and this report reflect the comments provided by NPS and the NHA evaluation site. The following sections describe each phase of the evaluation.

### **1.5.2 Site Introduction**

During the initial phase of the evaluation process, Westat and NPS staff contacted NCHA to discuss preliminary planning details and initial background research requests. Multiple email exchanges and several telephone conversations occurred during December 2011 and January 2012. A two-day in person meeting, the Meet & Greet Visit, was held at the site in January 2012 to both orient the Westat team to the site, introduce the NCHA staff to the evaluation team and methodology (Appendix 3), and discuss roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in the evaluations.

During this visit, we met with staff to learn more about the history and operations of the NCHA, toured key destinations in the site near the program office, and worked with NCHA staff to develop a logic model. Specifically, we conducted a session in which we led staff through a process of detailing the NCHA goals, resources/inputs, organizations, strategies/activities, short-term outcomes and long-term outcomes. We then developed a draft logic model that was shared with and revised by the NCHA Executive Director. The final logic model, displayed in Figure 3.1, guided the development of the domain matrix and data collection protocols (Appendix 4) that also were shared with staff prior to their use in the evaluation.

### **1.5.3 Data Collection**

Data collection methods for the evaluation included reviews of documents and financial documents, in-person and telephone interviews with key informants from the NCHA and its coordinating entity and partner and stakeholder organizations, and community conversations with individuals visiting the NCHA area. Community conversations were held at Tamarack and New River Gorge Visitors' Centers in March 2012. A domain matrix guided the data collection, outlining the domains and

measures of interest to collect from each identified source (i.e., prospective interviewees, program documents, financial documents, legislation). During data collection, evaluation staff used topic-centered guides for conducting interviews and abstracting documents.

Data collection began in December 2011 and was completed in May 2012. Numerous documents were reviewed to understand the background of the NCHA (e.g., legislative documents, plans, by-laws), its staffing and structure (e.g., employee handbooks), funding received and expenditures (e.g., financial reports, memorandums of understanding), and strategies and activities conducted (e.g., annual reports, progress reports, newsletters, news releases, milestones). These documents also provided information on the outcomes that have occurred from NCHA activities.

Individual interviews were conducted with NCHA staff including former and current executive directors, financial managers and Chief Financial Officers, managers and coordinators. These interviews helped the evaluators gain an understanding of the background and history of NCHA, the coordinating entity's activities and investments and their associated outcomes, and the coordinating entity's contribution to NCHA's sustainability.

Interviews were conducted with representatives from 21 stakeholder and partner organizations. These interviews discussed the genesis of the organization's relationship with NCHA; perceptions of the influence and impact that the NCHA has made in the community; additional ways the NCHA could serve the needs of the region; and the impact of reducing funding or sunseting funds for the NCHA. Stakeholder interviewees were selected by Westat from a list of organizations that have partnerships or other relationships with the NCHA and that have a vested interest in the work of the NCHA.

Interviews were conducted with:

- State-level partners such as key staff in the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Division of Tourism, Department of Natural Resources, and the Division of Natural Resources;
- University partners such as individuals from West Virginia Graduate College, West Virginia State University, Marshall University, and West Virginia University;
- Local and regional NPS staff;
- Board members;
- County commissioners and mayors;

- A VISTA volunteer;
- Consultant who developed the management plan, Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision; and
- Other partners such as, Convention and Visitors Bureau staff, Economic Development Organization staff, Boy Scout of America staff, and individuals from local community organizations.

In March 2012, evaluation staff approached members of the public at Tamarack and New River Gorge Visitors' Centers and conducted community conversations. Conversations were very brief contacts guided by a set of topics, rather than a set of interview questions. Topics included:

- Familiarity with the history and messaging of the NCHA;
- Familiarity with NCHA sites and activities;
- Experience visiting NCHA sites and/or using NCHA resources; and
- Impact NCHA sites and activities have had on the community (i.e., economic, cultural, historic, restorative).

All 30 individuals that were approached agreed to participate. In order to obtain as representative a sample as possible, evaluation staff approached individuals of different ages, genders and races, when possible. Variability on race was minimal (i.e., the sample was largely Caucasian). Participants were shown a copy of the NCHA logo and brochure that describes the NCHA and select sites to assess their familiarity with the NCHA signage, activities and programming. As a part of the conversation, participants also were asked where they resided (i.e., to determine if they were local, in-state or out-of-state residents).

## **1.5.4 Data Analysis**

The focus of the data analysis was to document the extent to which NCHA had achieved its organizational and programmatic goals as articulated in the mandating legislation and the NCHA foundational documents. Where feasible, findings discussed have been triangulated; that is, information has been documented from multiple sources. In addition, efforts have been made to ensure that the information gathered from key informants also has been substantiated with data from documents and other written sources.

Some sections of the evaluation report, however, rely on single data sources. For example, facts and dates related to the background and history rely primarily on steering committee minutes since few individuals remain with the NCHA from those early years. Information on specific outcomes was available for some NCHA activities.

We experienced difficulty obtaining information from NCHA on activities that have been completed, such as a description of programs, dates started and completed, and accomplishments. Gathering this information for both current and historic projects required reviewing multiple program files and submitting written and verbal requests to NCHA staff. We understand that the NCHA employee that maintains these files was on extended medical leave and unavailable during the evaluation.

NCHA, as a part of a state agency, is part of a large and complex accounting system that is difficult to navigate. NCHA staff undertook enormous effort to assemble documentation of both the match and external match or leveraged funding. Financial records were not organized in a manner that provides easy accessibility to the information. The lack of specific audits for CHHA and NHCA (since both are encompassed within the state audit) made it difficult to access specific information. Although most operational expenses are maintained separately, accounts for programs shared between NCHA and CHHA are not separated and in some cases expenses are paid out of the CHHA account and CHHA is reimbursed by NCHA. Distinguishing which programs were supported by NCHA required much discussion with NCHA staff. NCHA was reorganized in 2003 (see Section 2.2.3 for detail). Detailed programmatic and financial information from 1998-2003 was moved to off-site storage, and therefore, not available.

## **1.6 Limitations**

One limitation of the methodology is the limited data collection from the members of the public. As noted, community input was collected through the completion of topic-centered qualitative interviews with a total of 30 individuals. Although the individuals interviewed at the Visitor's Centers likely represent individuals with no vested interest in the NCHA, they represent a "convenience sample" rather than a representative sample of all tourists, local residents, and volunteers. Time and resource limitations prevented a broader selection of community representatives. The data thus provide insights into community awareness of the NCHA, but do

not provide a definitive understanding of the extent to which the NCHA has had an impact on community knowledge, attitudes, and involvement in the NCHA.

A second limitation of our methodology, which applied to all NHAs, is the ability of the evaluation design to provide definitive evidence of the achievement of outcomes, especially attributions to the NPS funding and NHA designation. The historical growth and development of the region since its designation as an NHA provides some indication of the role of the funding and designation, but it is confounded with other factors that contribute to the growth of the NHAs. This limitation to make attributions to the NHA funding and designation is especially relevant for NCHA since the NHA designation and the designation of the Coal Heritage Trail as a National Scenic Byway occurred over a similar time period. Both designations benefit Coal Heritage. Consequently, it is hard to attribute outcomes to a specific designation (either NHA or National Scenic Byway).

Furthermore, the two separate organizations that coordinate activities related to the designations (NCHA and CHHA) are co-managed and share staff, programs, and activities. Whereas the NCHA relationship with CHHA has positive implications for NCHA's mission, it also confounds the evaluation, specifically our ability to make conclusions on the extent to which the NCHA may have been successful in receiving funding and achieving similar outcomes without the NPS resources and NHA designation. Many individuals interviewed were not able to distinguish between NCHA and CHHA activities demonstrating the close relationship of the work of these two organizations. In short, while stakeholder interviews and intercept conversations provided valuable feedback on the impact of Coal Heritage activities, it is not possible to separate the role of the NCHA from CHHA, and therefore, impossible to attribute any outcomes solely to the NHA designation and NPS resources.

## **1.7 Roles**

### **1.7.1 Westat**

Westat served as the external evaluator. Westat used the revised methodology from Augusta Canal National Heritage Area in Augusta, Georgia, and the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area in the Northeastern section of Iowa, including the format for a logic model to guide the evaluation and the template of the data collection protocols. Westat collected and analyzed the data and prepared this document.

## **1.7.2 National Park Service**

Various staff within NPS provided advice and resources for the evaluation team and oversight of the entire evaluation process. NPS representatives included the NPS National Coordinator for Heritage Areas, the NPS Assistant National Coordinator for Heritage Areas, the NPS Regional National Heritage Area Coordinator for the Midwest Region, the NPS Regional National Heritage Area Coordinator for the Southeast Region, and the NPS Regional National Heritage Area Coordinator for the Northeast Region. NPS National and Regional Coordinators for NHAs met as needed throughout the evaluation process, involving Westat as needed.

The NPS representative from the Northeast Regional Office who oversees the NCHA participated in our initial calls and email exchanges with the site and joined us in the Meet and Greet Site Visit in January 2012. NPS National Coordinator for Heritage Areas, NPS Assistant National Coordinator for Heritage Areas and the NPS representative from the Northeast Regional Office also reviewed the logic model, domain matrix, data collection protocols, and this report.

## **1.7.3 National Coal Heritage Area Coordinating Entity**

The staff of NCHA played key roles in facilitating this evaluation. They provided data and documents, helped with scheduling and planning site visits, identified a pool of contacts for interviews, and participated in interviews. NCHA staff also collaborated with the evaluation team to develop the logic model. NCHA was not involved in the development of the methodology or data collection protocols though they were provided an opportunity to comment. Westat also consulted with NCHA staff for the review of financial documents and for assistance in filling in gaps in knowledge. NCHA staff had the opportunity to review this document for factual accuracy after the draft was completed by Westat in May 2012.

## **Section 2: National Coal Heritage Area Coordinating Entity Overview**

This section begins with a background description of the NCHA area prior to the official designation as a NCHA as well as a description of the current heritage area including a map of the NCHA geographic boundaries. Section 2.2 includes an introduction to the NCHA coordinating entity's structure and organization including the roles and responsibilities of NCHA staff. Section 2.3 provides an overview of the relationships that exist between and among the NCHA coordinating entity, stakeholder/partners organizations, and the National Park Service (NPS).

### **2.1 Introduction to the NCHA**

#### **2.1.1 Background**

Coal contributed to the rise of the American industrial era by serving as the main source of fuel for many activities, from steel production in Pittsburgh to shipbuilding in Baltimore and Norfolk. Coal mining history shows a number of boom periods during which coal production increased in West Virginia. Increases were due in part to the expansion of the railroad across different sections of the state which allowed transportation to areas that were previously inaccessible. The increases in coal mining brought with it questions about miner's rights and safety. Many lessons were learned through labor struggles and as a result of coal mining disasters. The experience of coal mining bonded individuals from disparate ethnic groups who worked 10-14 hour days side-by-side in tight conditions, making this region unusually intermixed during the post-Civil War period when much of America struggled to redefine relationships between White and African Americans. The following are a few highlights from the NCHA history:

- **Early 1800s:** Salt makers turn to coal mining.
- **1850:** First Coal Boom. Several companies acquire vast land holding along the Coal River
- **1858:** First significant railroad is built in Boone County
- **1863:** WV became a state



- **1867:** 490,000 tons of coal are produced
- **1873:** C&O railroad is built; connects WV with East Coast
- **1880:** Coal miners hold 1st strike
- **1881:** N&W railroad is built; connects WV with the Pocohantas Coalfield which becomes most valuable coal producing region in world
- **1887:** 4.9M tons of coal are produced
- **1890:** United Mine Workers of America is formed
- **1892:** Bluefield's population grows from 600 to 11,188 in 20 years; Bramwell becomes the home of millionaires
- **1907:** Worst coal mine explosion occurs in Monongah
- **1909:** Virginian Railroad is built; connects previously unreachable coal reserves
- **1917:** 90 M tons of coal are produced in WV. State population reaches 446,000 (compared to 93,000 20 years earlier)
- **1950:** Automated loading machines eliminate most WV mining jobs. State population exceeds 2 million.
- **Since 1950:** WV has lost 797,001 people to out-migration; average of 15,940 residents per year. Some of the heaviest losses are in the NCHA, where in many areas 20-40 percent of the population live under the poverty level.

## 2.1.2 NHA Designation

Three reports helped to lay the foundation for the development of the NCHA. The idea of the NCHA first emerged in the late 1980s when NPS in cooperation with the West Virginia Division of Culture and History completed the Coal Heritage Study to evaluate significant "historic, cultural, natural and recreational resources" to determine the "feasibility of protecting coal mining and related resources in southern West Virginia". The study authorized by PL 100-699 was initiated by Congressman Nick Rahall II. It recommended the development of the Coal Heritage Area (precursor to NCHA) and the Coal Heritage Road (precursor to the National Scenic Byway) as strategies for preserving, protecting, and promoting West Virginia's rich coal heritage.

In 1989, Marshall University's Center for Regional Progress released a report based on a survey that they had conducted called; *The Coal Road: A Survey of Southern West Virginia Mining Tourism Potential*. The report further stimulated interest in this area. In 1993, Concord University in collaboration with the National Trust also released a report entitled, *Southeast West Virginia Heritage*.

The three reports outlined a number of nationally significant resources in the NCHA. Historic resources include:

- Coal mines and mine portals;
- Coal camps;
- Company stores;
- Train depots; and
- Coal miners' memorials.

The NCHA contains community resources such as National Registry districts, parks, and archives/collections. Other resources include environmental resources such as hiking and walking trails, driving tours, mountains, and rivers.

Prior to the Federal designations as an NHA and National Scenic Byway, many of these nationally significant resources resided in remote locations with access restricted due to inadequate roadways. The region was caught in a cyclical dynamic. The value of investments in preserving and protecting resources was questioned if access to visiting these resources was limited. The value in investments in developing roads was questioned if there were no preserved landmarks, site, or other reasons for opening access to that area.

Interested stakeholders such as Congressman Rahall and local historians, academics, and others began working on both fronts. In 1991, the National Scenic Byways Program was established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. The Coal Heritage Trail from Bluefield to Beckley was designated as a National Scenic Byway in 1998. In 2009, the National Scenic Byway was expanded from Beckley through Fayette County to Ansted.

Congressman Rahall led the effort to apply for the designation as a National Scenic Byway and for the designation as an NHA. In November 1996, the US Congress passed into law the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act (PL 104-333), which officially designated the region as an

NCHA. The Act was amended three times (PL 106-176, 110-229, 109-338) for language corrections and to expand the NCHA geographic region in 2006. Figure 2.1 portrays the NCHA geographic area. NCHA encompasses 5,300 square miles, spanning 13 counties in southern West Virginia, including:

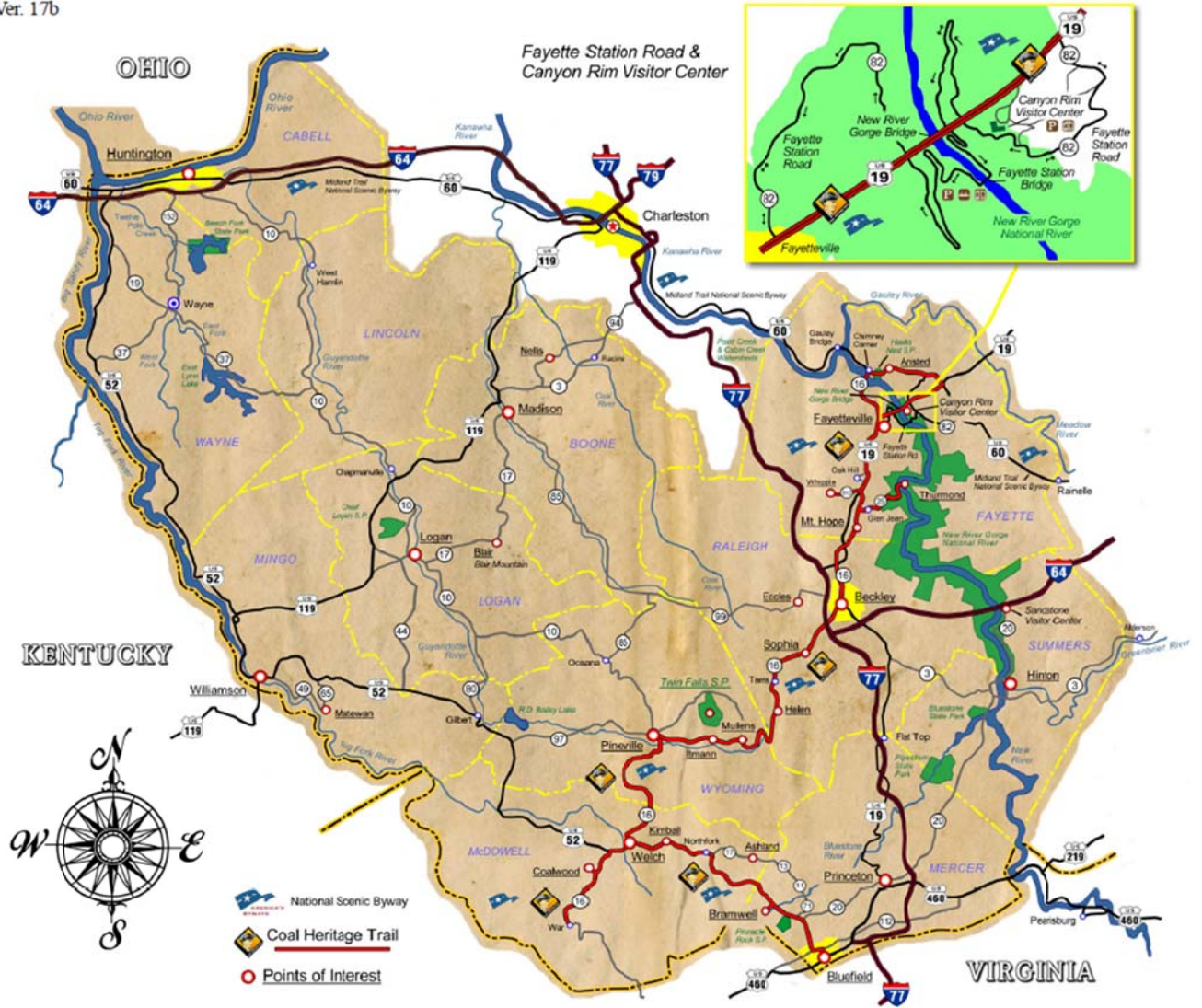
- Boone
- Cabell
- Fayette
- Logan
- Lincoln\*
- McDowell
- Mercer
- Mingo
- Raleigh
- Summers
- Wayne
- Wyoming
- Paint Creek and Cabin Creek watersheds\* (located in southern Kanawha County)

\*Geographic regions added in 2006 through PL 109-338

See Appendix 2 for more details on the authorizing legislation.

Figure 2.1 Diagram of the National Coal Heritage Area

Coal Heritage Area Map  
Ver. 17b



RGB Ver. @ 300 dpi (pdf @ 125 dpi)

The Walkabout Company - 2008

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## **2.2 Overview of the NCHA Coordinating Entity**

### **2.2.1 Early Leadership**

An employee of the Division of Tourism (housed within the WV Department of Commerce), was assigned part-time to lead the NCHA effort. Since the impetus for obtaining the NHA designation came from the Congressman and the Governor, a 22-member steering committee was formed to introduce the concept to local stakeholders, obtain their buy-in, and allow local input to guide the management plan development. Individuals were appointed to the steering committee by the Governor. Early steering committee meetings were held every 6 weeks through 1999 to discuss issues related to NCHA mission, identify the most significant resources, identify interpretative themes, and formulate and oversee early action projects or demonstration projects that were to be defined and implemented through the early planning process.

Recognizing that the effort to direct the NHA required more than part-time leadership, the Executive Committee (consisting of representation from NPS, the WV Division of Culture and History, and the WV Division of Tourism who oversaw NCHA) decided to hire the NCHA project manager as a full-time Director in 1998. The WV Division of Culture and History provided office space for the new position. Early Board minutes indicate that the cost for the office space and the position salary were used as in-kind support from the state to meet the Federal match requirements for the NHA funding.

### **2.2.2 Management Plan**

The management plan, developed by a consultant firm with experience in the coal region, was officially approved in 2009, after 10 years in development. Several factors led to the delay in having a final approved plan, including restructuring of the NCHA, changes in NPS policies and apparent miscommunications between NCHA and NPS. A draft plan was completed in December 2000 and submitted for steering committee and NPS feedback. A change in NPS policy required the completion and submission of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) along with the management plan before seeking approval from the Secretary of Interior. The same consultant was rehired in 2001 to complete the EIS. The firm also revised the management plan based on feedback from the steering committee and NPS. NCHA submitted the management plan, draft Record of

Decision (ROD) and EIS to NPS in 2002. The EIS was approved by NPS and released for public comment in 2002.

According to interviews and Board minutes, NCHA expected that the management plan would be submitted by NPS to the Secretary of Interior by July 2002 after the 2-month public comment period was completed. Due to impending changes in the NCHA's organizational structure (see Section 2.2.3), NPS waited to submit the plan pending the reorganization. After a new director was in place in 2004, NPS requested additional updates and revisions to the plan. In 2005, NCHA was notified that a ROD was required before final approval could be given for the management plan. Interviews suggested that there may have been a mix-up in locating the draft ROD from 2002. In 2007, NCHA rehired the same consultant to reassemble the data and redraft the ROD. The management plan was approved by the Secretary of Interior in 2009.

Due to the passage of PL 109-338 in 2006 in which the geographic boundaries of the NCHA were expanded to include Lincoln County and Paint and Cabin Creeks, NCHA was tasked in FY2009 to conduct a new EIS and to revise the management plan. This task has not yet been completed.

### **2.2.3 NCHA Reorganization**

As noted earlier, when the NHA designation was received in 1998, NCHA was managed by an employee of the WV Division of Tourism. He was hired as the NCHA Director in 1998 and provided office space by the WV Division of Culture and History. The position and the work were overseen by an Executive Committee consisting of representation from NPS, the WV Division of Culture and History, and the WV Division of Tourism. Although this arrangement allowed for a partial match for the NPS funds through both the coverage of the Executive Director position and the provision of office space, the NHA continued to experience problems in:

- Fulfilling the match requirements;
- Having oversight by two separate state divisions;
- Obtaining the buy-in from local leaders and other constituents in the 13 county area; and
- Having a director who resided outside the 13 counties and did not have local connections and ties.

In 2001, work began between the NHA Director and Congressman Rahall's office to reorganize the NHA and create new management under state bill S29-27. Congressman Rahall had been instrumental in creating the Federal legislation to authorize the NHA and was committed to obtaining a large impact for WV from NCHA activities. With the passage of this statute in 2002, NCHA became a separate public body classified as a Board and Commission and functioning as a state agency that reports to the Governor.

As part of the reorganization, the steering committee was dissolved and a citizen Board was appointed by the Governor in early 2003. NCHA's new Board of Directors was comprised of 17 members as specified in the State statute. Eleven members are representatives from each of the 11 counties named in the original Federal legislation. They serve 4 year terms with a 2 term limit. The remaining members are ex-officio representatives from six state agencies. Approximately four or five ex-officio and two voting members, including the new Board Chair, were members of the NCHA steering committee.

According to the authorizing legislation, the Board is to meet on a quarterly basis. As discussed more in Section 5, the Board experienced difficulties in achieving a quorum especially in the first year due to lack of participation and attendance of Board members. These difficulties translated into an inability to move forward on key issues. For example, in the early years, the lack of a quorum meant that the Board could not vote on hiring a new Executive Director and finding new office space. In early 2004, still in need of an Executive Director and office space, the Board approved the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NCHA and the Coal Heritage Highway Authority (CHHA). The MOU, dated May 2004, allowed CHHA to use existing staff to manage NCHA and to use existing office space. The Executive Director of the CHHA also assumed the directorship of the NCHA. Having served as an ex-officio member of the Board since its formation in 2003, this individual was familiar with NCHA and its history.

As described more in Section 4, NCHA's inability to meet the match requirements and draw down Federal funds left a considerable carry-over by the time that NCHA was reorganized. According to Board minutes, by 2003, NCHA was carrying over \$713,000 in unmatched Federal funds. Funds could only be carried over for 5 years. Consequently, the NCHA was faced with the task of trying to draw down funds from those early years before they were returned to the Federal Treasury. NCHA finances were further complicated by changes in fiscal agents.

In 2004, the financial record-keeping of the NCHA were transferred to the Office of the Secretary of Arts and Education from the Division of Tourism as outlined in the MOU between NCHA and CHHA. Funding, invoices and reimbursements continued to be passed through the Divisions of Tourism and Culture and History until after the passage of PL 109-338 in 2006. Beginning in FY07, NPS contracted directly with NCHA. Fiscal oversight continued to be provided by the Secretary of Arts and Education. Financial oversight was transferred to NCHA in FY2011 once the financial assistant assumed the functions of CFO. Table 2.1 provides a timeline of key events in the administration and management of the NCHA.

Table 2.1 Timeline of Key Events: NCHA Administration and Management

Year	NCHA Administration and Management Timeline
1996	NCHA designated as an NHA (PL-104-333)
1997	NCHA was managed part-time by an employee of the WV Division of Tourism Division of Tourism served as the NCHA fiscal agent Division of Tourism (within the Department of Commerce) and the Division of Culture and History provided management oversight to NCHA
1998	NCHA hired its part-time manager as a full-time Director Coal Heritage Trail from Bluefield to Beckley designated as a National Scenic Byway
1999	Steering committee formed and met every 6 weeks; 4 subcommittees to guide development of management plan Consultant hired to write management plan (September)
2000	NCHA funded first two early action projects; Nellis Church and John Henry (December) Consultant completed draft management plan (December) NPS notified NCHA that EIS was required (December)
2001	Consultant hired to complete the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
2002	Consultant completed EIS and NPS sent for public comment NPS Regional office delayed submitting the management plan to the Secretary of Interior pending NCHA reorganization WV legislature passed S29-27 creating new management entity for NCHA (called the National Coal Heritage Authority) NCHA Executive Director became Acting Director Steering committee dissolved and replaced by new Board
2003	NCHA Acting Director resigns Board Chair resigns and new Chair appointed (December)



Year	NCHA Administration and Management Timeline
2004	<p>NCHA and CHHA sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to allow CHHA to use existing staff to manage NCHA using existing office space (May)</p> <p>CHHA Director becomes NCHA Executive Director working 50 percent on CHHA and 50 percent on NCHA.</p> <p>Office of the Secretary of Arts and Education becomes NCHA's fiscal agent working with the Division of Tourism.</p>
2005	NPS asked NCHA to complete a Record of Decision
2006	<p>Federal amendment PL 109-338 passed recognizing two new geographic areas and NCHA as the contracting authority</p> <p>NCHA authorized to contract directly with NPS instead of through the WV Division of Culture and History and Division of Tourism.</p>
2007	Consultant hired and completed draft Record of Decision
2008	<p>NPS Regional approved Record of Decision (February)</p> <p>NCHA tasked to conduct a new EIS and revise the Management plan to reflect the new geographic area</p>
2009	<p>Management plan approved by the Secretary of Interior (January)</p> <p>National Scenic Byway expanded from Beckley through Fayette County to Ansted</p>

A detailed description of the NCHA's activities and programs and their adherence to the legislation and the NCHA Management Plan are provided in Section 3.

## 2.2.4 Current Organizational Structure: NCHA Board

As noted, NCHA Board of Directors' is a citizen board appointed by the Governor comprised of 17 members. Eleven members are full, voting members. They represent each of the 11 counties named in the original Federal legislation. Additionally, they must reflect the following interests:

- Tourism
- Coal Industry
- United Mine Workers Association (UMWA)
- Economic development
- Historic preservation
- Higher Education

They serve 4 year terms with a 2 term limit. Because WV S29-27, which created the Board was passed before PL 109-388, which expanded the geographic area to Lincoln County and Paint and Cabin Creek Watersheds, these new areas do not have representation on the Board. The NCHA Executive Director seeks input and involvement from these two areas on a more informal basis by serving as an ex-officio member on the Board of Directors for the Paint Creek Watershed and through other outreach activities (see Section 3.2.4).

The six remaining Board positions are ex-officio representatives from State Agencies including WV Divisions of Tourism, Culture and History, Development Office, Education and Arts, Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of Natural Resources. Ex-officio members do not have voting rights.

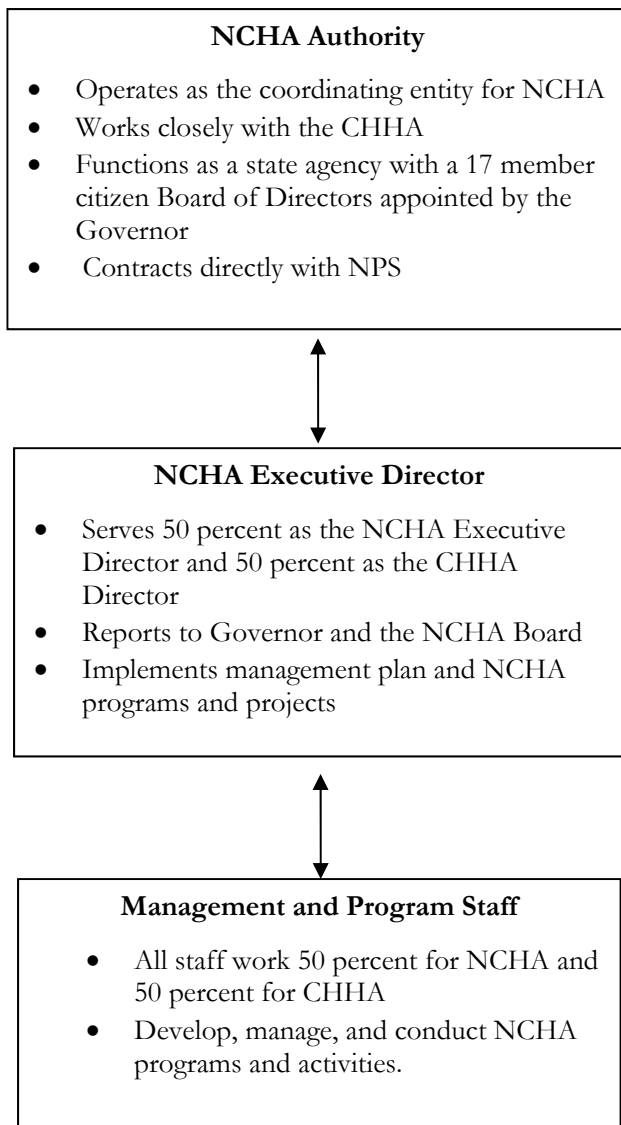
The Board of Directors provides oversight for NCHA activities by approving all projects, grants, contracts, and the overall budget. The Board meets quarterly. Subcommittees or standing committees were formed in 2004. Due to challenges of maintaining a quorum, the Board is not currently meeting in subcommittees.

## **2.2.5 Current Organizational Structure: Coordinating Entity and Staff**

NCHA is comprised of 2.95 full-time equivalent staff, all of whom work 50 percent for NCHA and 50 percent for CHHA. These include an Executive Director (.5), a Chief Financial Officer (.4), an administrative assistant (.5), a financial assistant (.4), a site manager for Bramwell Interpretative Center whose position also includes project management and marketing (.5), two part-time employees at Bramwell (.5 in total), and a AmeriCorp VISTA Special Projects Coordinator (.15).

Figure 2.2 shows an organization chart for the NCHA Coordinating Entity.

Figure 2.2: Organizational Chart



## **2.3 NCHA Relationships with NPS and Partners/Stakeholders**

### **2.3.1 NCHA Relationship with NPS**

NCHA is overseen by staff in the NPS Northeast Regional Office. From 1998 to 2002, NPS Regional Office staff worked closely with the NCHA Director and the steering committee by attending full steering committee meetings, some other subcommittee and planning meetings. NPS staff provided technical assistance, guided the development of the management plan and gave substantial comments and feedback. NPS Regional Office staff involvement with NCHA waned in 2002 as the NCHA was organizationally restructured and the NPS Regional office assumed oversight responsibility for up to 20 NHAs. Technical assistance was targeted to new NHAs to guide management plan development due to travel and budget restrictions. Currently, the NPS Regional Office's oversight includes the review of NCHA's cooperative agreements and workplans.

NCHA also has a strong relationship with the local NPS at New River Gorge. The Deputy Superintendent has provided technical assistance and support for financial and administrative issues since 2004. In FY2007 through 2009, the Northeast Regional Office also transferred oversight responsibility for managing NCHA's cooperative agreements to the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent at the local NPS. The local NPS wrote two contract modifications that helped to clarify misunderstandings about the approval process of the management plan and allow funds to be re-allocated to cover the costs of its finalization. Due to personnel shortages, this responsibility was transferred back to the NPS Northeast Regional office in 2010.

NCHA has worked with specific programs of NPS including River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program and the National Register of Historic Places program. NCHA collaborated with RTCA on a project to assess trails and develop a trail plan (see Section 3.2.3). NCHA worked with the National Register to designate properties in the heritage area.

NCHA also worked with Preserve America Communities, which is a national initiative in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; the U.S. Departments of Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, and Education; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities; and the President's Council on Environmental Quality. Two towns in the heritage area, Hinton and Bramwell, were designated as Preserve America Communities.

### **2.3.2 NCHA Relationship with Partners and Stakeholder Organizations**

The NCHA has few formal partners but many connections with stakeholders who have investments in the heritage area. The NCHA's main partnership is with the Coal Heritage Highway Authority (CHHA). NCHA and CHHA share an Executive Director, staff, and office space but maintain separate funding and a separate Board of Directors. Where the two authorities' missions overlap, they also share projects and products. For example, NCHA and CHHA are marketed together as Coal Heritage and many community stakeholders cannot distinguish one organization from the other.

NCHA has a strong relationship with the WV Division of Tourism. NCHA's first Director was an employee of the Division of Tourism and oversight was provided for NCHA until 2002. NCHA continues to work closely with this Division, receiving grants from the Matching Advertising Partnership Program and collaborating on marketing activities. The Commissioner also is a long standing ex-officio member of the NCHA Board.

NCHA also was overseen by the Division of Culture and History until 2002 and the Director position was housed in this office. To date, the relationship with this Division remains largely an oversight role. Staff from the Division serve as ex-officio members of the NCHA Board and review NCHA projects to determine potential effects to cultural resources as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Similarly, Section 106 reviews are completed by the WV Department of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources and the Division of Highways. NCHA also has connections and receives input from WV Development Office, Bureau of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Education and Arts, and the Department of Natural Resources through their ex-officio memberships on the NCHA Board.

NCHA has partnered on specific projects with local stakeholders including city officials and community groups in Beckley, Mount Hope, Bluefield, Welch, Ansted, Sophia, Mullens, Bramwell, Helen, and the Logan County Economic Development Authority.

NCHA has relationships with a number of coal experts located at WV State University and Marshall University, and Concord University. Some of the experts were involved in early studies and assessments that laid the foundation for applying for the NHA designation. Experts also were involved in early planning efforts through the steering committee that met from 1998-2002 and continue to be involved through specific projects.

NCHA has a long standing relationship with several Conventions and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) in the heritage area. WV has 22 certified CVBs across the state including local Visitors Bureaus in nine counties. NCHA has a strong relationship with the Southern WV CVB, which is the only regional organization within the state and overlaps with the heritage area. The NCHA Executive Director

serves on the SWV CVB Board and the two organizations partner on marketing to ensure consistent messaging.

NCHA has established relationships with local foundations such as the CW Benedum Foundation and the Beckley Area Foundation. NCHA has also established relationships with regional and local community and advocacy groups such as:

- Alliance of National Heritage Areas
- Preservation Alliance of West Virginia
- National Parks Conservation Association
- Southern WV Brownfields Assistance Center
- WV Association of Scenic and Historic Byways
- WV Music Hall of Fame
- WV Humanities Council
- Central Appalachian Empowerment Zone

NCHA also works together with the Corporation for National and Community Service, WV Commission on National and Community Service and WV Citizens Conservation Corp. specifically related to the Volunteers In Service for America (VISTA) program.

## **Section 3: Fulfillment of the Authorizing Legislation and Management Plan**

This section explores Question #1 of the evaluation, “Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the heritage area achieved its proposed accomplishments?” Section 3.1 describes the NCHA coordinating entity’s goals and objectives as required by the authorizing legislation, original management plan, and revised management plan. This section also provides the logic model created by NCHA and Westat that outlines program areas of current NCHA activities. Section 3.2 provides an overview of the NCHA’s programs and activities over time and an analysis of whether the NCHA’s programs and activities are fulfilling the intent of the authorizing legislation and the current management plan. Section 3.3 describes the NCHA coordinating entity’s relationship with NPS and how it compares to what is outlined in the authorizing legislation and current management plan.

### **3.1 NHA Authorizing Legislation, Mission & Vision**

#### **3.1.1 NHA Authorizing Legislation**

NHA Federal authorizing legislation (PL 104-333) specifies that the NCHA management plan should guide the NCHA towards the following goals:

1. “The development and implementation of integrated cultural, historical, and land resource management policies and programs in order to retain, enhance, and interpret the significant values of the lands, water, and structures of the Area.
2. The preservation, restoration, maintenance, operation, interpretation, and promotion of buildings, structures, facilities, sites, and points of interest for public use that possess cultural, historical, and architectural values associated with the coal mining heritage of the Area.
3. The coordination of activities by Federal, State, and local governments and private businesses and organizations in order to further historic preservation and compatible economic revitalization.

4. The development of guidelines and standards for projects, consistent with standards established by the National Park Service, for the preservation and restoration of historic properties, including interpretative methods, that will further history preservation in the region.

### 3.1.2 NHA Management Plan

NCHA's Management Plan includes the following mission statement:

“The National Coal Heritage Area preserves, protects and interprets historic, cultural and natural resources associated with West Virginia’s coal mining heritage to help stimulate tourism and economic development, thereby enhancing the quality of life for the region’s residents.”

Eleven goals in nine categories were identified during the planning process to guide the growth of the NCHA:

- **Interpretation:** Interpret the history, culture, and technology of the mining era and, in a compelling and thought provoking manner, tell the story of the people of the region.
- **Visitor Services and Community Development:** Foster a relationship between WV’s hospitality and tourism industry and visitors and provide assistance that will enable service providers to exceed visitor expectations, both in terms of quality and location of services.
- **Organizational Structure:** Create an organizational structure that will provide adequate financial, staff, and other resources to ensure NCHA’s ability to implement this plan and maintain the NCHA’s long-term viability.
- **Capacity Building and Partnering:** Develop cooperative partnerships that nurture capable project sponsors and viable grass roots organizations that build human, technical and financial capacity to support plan implementation within the NCHA region.
- **Resources Protection, Preservation and Growth Management:** Promote the protection and preservation of the region’s rapidly vanishing artifacts, structure and sites from the mining era of the late 19th and 20th centuries. Encourage projects that balance conservation and growth issues to provide for economic development while protecting resources.
- **Education:** Foster an ethic of pride and stewardship among Area residents, who will understand the importance of coal mining in regional and national history.



- **Access and Circulation:** Encourage improvement of linkages between coal heritage visitor destinations in gateway counties and improve access and linkages to destinations in non-gateway counties.
- **Identity, Marketing, and Promotion:** Develop a strong “brand name” that provides ready recognition as a heritage tourism destination. Develop and implement a marketing and promotional campaign focused on coal heritage destinations targeted to a diverse group of visitors.
- **Project Development:** Implement a phased strategy of linked coal heritage experiences that engage visitors of varying levels of knowledge and interest while advancing cultural and resources conservation in the NHCA.

A four phase implementation plan was recommended in the management plan.

### **Phase I: Organizational Realignment, Partnership, Outreach and Identity Development**

#### ***Key objectives of Phase I include:***

- Implementation of the management structure of the NCHA
- Provision of management training and enhancement of NCHA staff capability
- Development of a permanent headquarters located within the NCHA
- Continued support of local initiatives
- Creation of an NCHA identity and image; and
- Enhancement of the official NCHA website.

### **Phase II: Visitor Attraction, Resource Protection, Marketing and Education**

#### ***Key objectives of Phase II include:***

- Development of collaborative partnerships with current West Virginia and NPS Visitor’s center as well as with adjacent state;
- Advancement of key destination center projects (the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine, the Bramwell to Coopers to Pocohontas Journey, and the Nellis Archives);
- Development of a strategic fundraising plan;
- Development of interpretative materials for use in area schools;
- Development of an integrated database of coal heritage resources and other cultural and natural resources;
- Development of workforce and hospitality training initiatives and partnerships;
- Formation of a non-partisan Coal Heritage Caucus that will serve as the voice to the NCHA in the WV House and Senate;
- Development of a marketing plan; marketing materials and an events directory; and
- Establishment of incentive-based development guidelines.

### **Phase III: Expanding Preservation and Interpretative Initiatives**

#### ***Key objectives of Phase III include:***

- Enhancement of Coalwood, Holden, and Matewan as Destination Centers;
- Initiation of a National Coal Museum feasibility study
- Development of a local assistance loan program; and
- Initiation of a physical resource conditions survey.

### **Phase IV: The Health of Coal County**

#### ***Key objectives of Phase IV include:***

- Development of interpretative walks and tours in Itman, Thurmont, and Welch.
- Protection and conservation of key physical structures and artifacts in these areas;
- Development of an state- of- the-art interpretative and education complex; and
- Development of a signature coal heritage demonstration project.

### **3.1.3 Coordinating Entity’s Mission and Vision for the NCHA**

The NCHA follows the mission statement outlined in the Federal legislation and management plan to promote economic and cultural heritage tourism development throughout the 13 county NCHA through preservation, interpretation, and promotion of coal heritage resources. It has pursued the activities outlined in the management plan and sought additional activities that are in line with the mission and vision of the NCHA through its participation in state and local activities, events including membership on multiple Boards and committees of partner organizations.

### **3.1.4 Coordinating Entity’s Goals and Objectives**

Currently, NCHA’s overarching goals fall within four domains:

- **Preservation:** To promote the protection and preservation of the region’s rapidly vanishing artifacts, structures, and sites from mining era of the late 19th and 20th century.
- **Interpretation:** To interpret the history, culture, and technology of the mining era.
- **Education:** To foster an ethic of pride and stewardship among area residents to understand the importance of coal mining history.

- **Economic Development:** To develop southern West Virginia coalfields into a destination for “heritage tourism” and stimulate tourism/ economic development.

Table 3.1 provides a crosswalk between the purposes for the NCHA as specified in the authorizing legislation and the goals established for the NCHA as stated in the current management plan. The table also describes how NCHA currently outlines its overarching goals as defined in the logic model (see Figure 3.1).

Walk of Heritage Area Purposes, Goals, and Current Activities

Mission	Management Plan Goals	Current Goals/ Activities
<p>Implementation of cultural, and land policies and programs, in, enhance, and values of the resources of the Area.</p> <p>Education, interpretation, research, structures, and sites of interest for cultural, historical, and archaeological associated with the Area.</p> <p>Activities by Federal, State, and private organizations in order to promote economic development and revitalization.</p>	<p>Interpret the history, culture and technology of the mining era and in a compelling and thought provoking manner, tell the story of the people of the region.</p> <p>Implement a phased strategy of linked coal heritage experiences that engage visitors of varying levels of knowledge and interest while advancing cultural and resources conservation in the NHCA.</p> <p>Promote the protection and preservation of the region’s rapidly vanishing artifacts, structure and sites from the mining era of the late 19th and 20th centuries.</p> <p>Foster an ethic of pride and stewardship among Area residents, who will understand the importance of coal mining in regional and national history.</p> <p>Foster a relationship between WV’s hospitality and tourism industry and visitors and provide assistance that will enable service providers to exceed visitor expectations, both in terms of quality and location of services.</p> <p>Develop cooperative partnerships that nurture capable project sponsors and viable grass roots organizations that build human, technical and financial capacity to support plan implementation within NCHA region.</p> <p>Encourage projects that balance conservation and growth issues to provide for economic development while protecting resources.</p> <p>Encourage improvement of linkages between coal heritage visitor destinations in gateway counties and improve access and linkages to destinations in non-gateway counties.</p> <p>Develop a strong “brand name” that provides ready recognition as a</p>	<p>To interpret the history, culture, and technology of the mining era.</p> <p>To promote the protection and preservation of the region’s rapidly vanishing artifacts, structures, and sites from mining era of the late 19th and 20th c.</p> <p>To foster an ethic of pride and stewardship among area residents to understand the importance of coal mining history.</p>

Purposes as Specified in Legislation	Management Plan Goals	Current Goals/ Activities
<p>The development of guidelines and standards for projects, consistent with standards established by the National Park Service, for the preservation and restoration of historic properties, including interpretative methods, that will further history preservation in the region.”</p>	<p>heritage tourism destination. Develop and implement a marketing and promotional campaign focused on coal heritage destinations targeted to a diverse group of visitors.            Create an organizational structure that will provide adequate financial, staff, and other resources to ensure that NCHA’s ability to implement this plan and maintain the NCHA’s long-term viability.</p>	<p>To develop southern WV coalfields into a destination for “heritage tourism” and stimulate tourism/ economic development</p>

## NCHA Logic Model

During the Meet and Greet visit at the NCHA in January 2012, Westat project staff worked with NCHA staff to develop a logic model for NCHA activities. The logic model outlines NCHA's current overarching goals, resources, organization and partnerships, strategies and activities and short and long term outcomes. The logic model, provided in Figure 3.1, group current activities into four program areas.

The four program areas of current NCHA strategies and activities serves as the structure for reporting on NCHA projects for this section of the report. Table 3.2 provides a side-by-side comparison of the NCHA's overarching goals and current program areas/strategies and activities to show how NCHA has implemented the authorizing legislation and goals stated in the management plan. NCHA's current program areas/strategies and activities correspond generally to the NCHA's overarching goals.

Figure 3.1 National Coal Heritage Area Logic Model

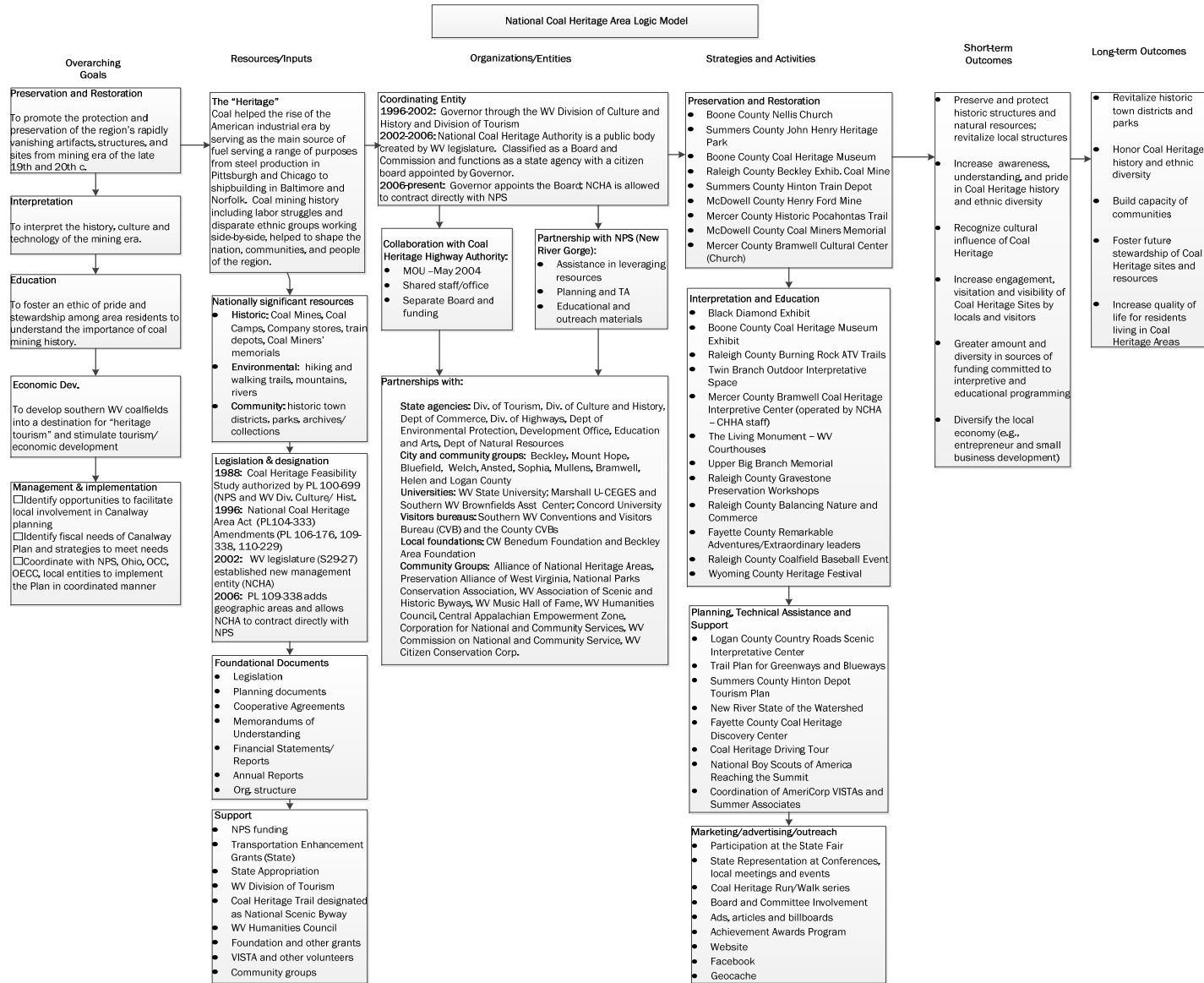


Table 3.2 Comparison of Overarching Goals and Current Program Areas/Strategies and Activities

Overarching Goals	Current Program Areas/Strategies and Activities
Preservation	Preservation and Restoration
Interpretation	Interpretation and Education
Education	Interpretation and Education
Economic Development	Planning, Technical Assistance and Support Marketing, Advertising and Outreach

## 3.2 NCHA Program Areas

Since receiving the Federal NHA designation, the NCHA has undertaken activities in four program areas including preservation and restoration; interpretation and education; planning, technical assistance and support; and marketing, advertising and outreach.

### 3.2.1 Program Area #1: Preservation and Restoration

NCHA awarded funds through two grants programs: Early Action Grant Program (2000) and Partnership Grant Round Program (2004). Both programs were designed to provide support on local level for preservation, restoration, and interpretation projects. Additionally, NCHA assisted with equipment removal to preserve and restore mining equipment. Table 3.3 shows the recipients for the Early Action Grants along with their accomplishments, the amount of funding received, and the year that the project was completed.

Table 3.3 Early Action Grantees, Accomplishments, Funds Awarded, and Year Completed

Grant Recipient	Accomplishment	Funds Awarded	Year Completed
Boone County Nellis Church	Restoration of a historic church	114,180	2003
Summers County John Henry Heritage Park	Fencing and statute relocation	22,000	2004/2012
Boone County Coal Heritage Museum	Roof repair	25,000	2004
Raleigh County Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine	Roof replacement	2,500	2005



## **Early Action Grant Descriptions**

**Boone County Nellis Church:** NCHA supported the restoration of this historic church built in 1926 by ARMCO Steel and Coal Company. Restorations included waterproofing the basement, creating a new drainage system, resolving asbestos contamination, plastering, and replacing stained glass windows. The project received a match of \$130,540 from the Boone County Commission, Governor's Contingency Fund, in-kind and private contributions and received \$114,180 from NCHA in 2000. Restoration was completed in 2003. The Church serves as a Visitor Center and houses the Coal Heritage Archives that tell the story of the community's relationship with ARMCO. It is also in the vicinity of a National Miners Memorial established in 1999.

**Summers County John Henry Heritage Park:** NCHA supported the construction of an 8-foot fence to protect visitors from an active CSX line and the relocation of the John Henry Statue to a new site. These steps were a part of a larger effort to purchase 26 acres of land and develop a park that will include a replica train depot that will serve as an interpretative center, hiking trails, campsites, a restaurant and amphitheater. The park is intended to honor John Henry, the legendary figure who beat the steam-powered drill in a contest of man-versus machine during the creation of the Great Bend Tunnel, which is located near this site. The project was funded \$22,000 in 2000 and the fencing, a requirement of the land purchase, was installed, which allowed Summers County to buy the land from the railroad, CSX, in 2004. The relocation of the statute was delayed due to the discovery of an archeological site but completed in 2012. Summers County received \$88,000 in match from the WV Department of Transportation and \$7,500 in private contributions. NCHA remains involved in the project in an advisory capacity. The Steering Committee has secured additional funding of \$280,405 since 2006 for the planning and construction. Phase I construction is completed.

**Boone County Coal Heritage Museum:** NCHA supported a roof repair Bituminous Coal Heritage Museum in Madison that opened in 1999. The museum located in one of the earliest coal mining areas shows how coal was mined from 1920-1970. Bituminous Coal Heritage Foundation received a match of \$25,000 from Boone County Economic Development Authority the Sheriff of Boone County and private contributions. The work was completed in November 2004 and NCHA provided \$25,000 in 2005.

**Raleigh County Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine:** NCHA supported the replacement of the tin roof of the Superintendent’s House with a historically accurate roof. This early support was a part of plans for large enhancement of the Exhibition (see below). The City of Beckley received a match of \$2,500 private contributions. NCHA provided \$2,500 and the work was completed in 2005.

The Partnership Grant Round Program began in 2004. Six projects were completed between 2006 and 2009. Table 3.4 shows the recipients for the Partnership Grant Round along with their accomplishments, the amount of funding received, and the year that the project was completed.

Table 3.4 Partnership Grant Round Grantees, Accomplishments, Funds Awarded, and Year Completed

Grant Recipient	Accomplishments	Funds Expended	Year Completed
Summers County Hinton Train Depot	Stabilization and preservation of the exterior structure	16,000	2006
McDowell County Henry Ford Mine	Restoration and stabilization of mine portal	730	2009
Mercer County Historic Pocahontas Trail	Design and early stages of development an interpretative hiking trail	11,979	2009
McDowell County Coal Miners’ Memorial	Repair a coal miners’ memorial	1,944	2006
Mercer County Bramwell Cultural Center	Partial restoration of historic church	32,757	2006
Raleigh County Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine	Construction of the Tipple/Company Store as the Exhibition’s new interpretative and visitor’s center	250,000	2008

**Partnership Grant Round Descriptions**

**Summers County Hinton Train Depot:** NCHA supported a portion of the restoration of the Hinton Depot, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Restoration included the stabilization and preservation of the exterior structure and improving the appearance of the Depot. The City of Hinton received a match \$40,375 from the Hinton Area Foundation, the Hinton Railroad Museum and the City Building Commission. NCHA provided \$16,000 and the restoration was completed in 2006.

**McDowell County Henry Ford Mine:** NCHA supported the restoration and stabilization of mine portal once owned by Henry Ford. The mine portal is located on 118.6 acres of reclaimed mining land donated to the Citizen's Conservation Corps of WV (CCC) by Pocahontas Land Company. The CCC received a match of \$2,000 from the Skewes Foundation. NCHA provided \$730 and the work was completed in 2009.

**Mercer County Historic Pocahontas Trail:** NCHA supported the design and early stages of development an interpretative hiking trail that would span from Bluestone Junction to the VA state line connecting Pocahontas to Bramwell. Historic Pocahontas Inc. received a match in the amount of \$11,979 from the Mercer County TTA and in-kind donated services. NCHA provided \$11,979 and early stages of trail development including clearing of brush were completed in 2009. NCHA remains involved as the development of the trail continues.

**McDowell County Coal Miners' Memorial:** NCHA supported the repair a coal miners' memorial located in Bradshaw. The memorial consists of a statue of a miner surrounded by granite tablets engraved with the names of McDowell County coal miners. Sandy River District secured \$1,620 from the Governor's Community Partnership Grant and \$3,111 in-kind labor. NCHA provided \$1,944 and work was completed in 2006.

**Mercer County Bramwell Cultural Center:** NCHA supported the partial restoration of a historic church built in 1893 that will serve as a cultural center for the community. The church was deconsecrated in 1952 and donated to the Town of Bramwell by the Episcopal Diocese of WV. Restoration included stabilization of the foundation, drainage, and replacement of stained glass. The Town of Bramwell received match of \$32,757 from the Bramwell Development Authority, the State of WV and in-kind donations. NCHA provided \$32,757 and work was completed in 2006. NCHA remains involved as additional repair to the church is needed before it can be opened and used.

**Raleigh County Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine:** NCHA supported a part of a large enhancement of the Exhibition. The original Exhibit was an underground tour of the Phillips family drift mine. The enhancement included a coal camp house, miner's shanty, coal camp church, superintendent's house, coal camp school, and a 15,000 square foot visitor's and interpretative center themed as a company store. NCHA funds were used for the construction of the Tipple/Company Store as the Exhibition's new interpretative and visitor's center. The new structure includes an expanded interpretative space with new displays, expanded gift shop,

restrooms and a food service area and outdoor interpretative signs that describe the history of the coal camp structures on site. The project, strongly supported by Congressman Rahall, totaled approximately \$3.5 million. The City of Beckley received a match from CW Benedum Foundation (\$180,000), Beckley Area Foundation (\$8,000), and Carter Family Foundation (\$200,000). NCHA provided \$250,000. Other aspects of the enhancement were also supported by the City of Beckley, WV Division of Highways, and the Federal Highways Administration. CHHA also provided \$1M of funding for the enhancement. The new Exhibition was opened in June 2008.

## **Equipment Removal**

NCHA was also called upon by the WV State Historic Preservation Office and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to remove and preserve abandoned mining equipment. Examples include:

- **2006:** NCHA received permission from Bluestone Coal Company to remove and secure a historic mining car from their property. The mine car was used to create a static interpretive display located at the entrance to the community of Ashland in McDowell County. NCHA facilitated in-kind labor for this task and no NCHA funds were expended.
- **2008:** NCHA was asked as a part of a MOA with Sundial Refuse and Mine Complex to remove and secure three historic mining cars, a Jeffrey cutter and two corrugated panels from the head house. Equipment is stored in Fayette County Mount Hope where it will be displayed. NCHA was compensated \$2,000 from DEP for this task.

## **Preservation and Restoration Outcomes**

Short- and long-term outcomes examined related to preservation and restoration include:

- Preserve, protect, and revitalize historic structures and natural resources;
- Revitalize historic town districts and parks

Since 2003, NCHA has supported the preservation and restoration of ten historic structures or natural resources. While the scale of the activities is small, stakeholder interviews suggest that NCHA activities have revitalized communities:

“Towns have dropped in population from 5,000 to 1,500 and so many dilapidated buildings bring the community down. [NCHA Executive Director] knows the community revitalization side and how to make something positive happen in the community.”

“Many communities in rural areas are overlooked. This program with relatively minor expenditures can make a hugh difference... Who has heard of Helen? If you do a cost analysis – for small dollars – you are making a difference here.”

### 3.2.2 Program Area #2: Interpretation and Education

NCHA’s involvement in Interpretation and Education activities began early and has grown steadily. NCHA has supported the creation of exhibits, interpretive signage, the operation of Bramwell Interpretative Center, and educational tools, events and conferences. Table 3.5 summarizes NCHA’s interpretation and education activities.

Table 3.5 Interpretation and Education Activities 1998-2012

Type	Number	Attendees
Exhibits	2	NA
Interpretative Signage	12	NA
Bramwell Interpretative Center	NA	11,800 (2008-present from guest book)
Boone County Coal Heritage Museum	NA	9,419 (2006-present)
Educational Tools/Structure	2	NA
Educational Programs or Workshops	5	465
Conferences	4	625

#### **Exhibits**

NCHA provided support for the creation of two exhibits: Black Diamond Exhibit and the Boone County Heritage Museum Exhibit.

- **Black Diamond Exhibit:** In 2001, NCHA partnered with the WV Division of Culture and History to create a traveling educational display called the Black Diamond Exhibit featuring three interactive, hands-on stations, interchangeable panels providing county-specific coverage. The exhibit offers a historical glimpse of how coal was mined and the life of early coal miners. The audiovisual component consists of recollections of early coal miners and photo vignettes along with a hands-on experience with simulated coal equipment. The display was completed in 2002. In 2003, the exhibit was displayed at five schools in four counties and at five regional events. An estimated 13,000 people in 9 counties had seen the exhibit in 2003. In support of the exhibit, WV Division of Culture and History developed a teacher’s guide aligned to 8th grade Instructional Goals and Objectives and a Web site providing technical information about the exhibit. The

exhibit currently resides at the museum in Logan County where it was on display for 3 years.

- **Boone County Coal Heritage Museum Exhibit:** NCHA supported the development of a 2,000 square-foot interactive exhibit to be permanently installed in the museum. The exhibit includes a simulated company store, a miner's home, a locker room where miners changed for work and an area where visitors can get a feel for underground mining. The interactive portion was designed for children. Bituminous Coal Heritage Foundation received a match of 10,000 from the Boone County Commission. NCHA provided \$10,000 and the exhibit opened in 2005. Additionally, this grant supported the installation of historical markers at the Boone County Court House, which was completed in 2006. An estimated 9,419 individuals have visited the museum since 2006.

### ***Interpretative Signs***

NCHA has supported two projects that are targeted to developing interpretive signs in towns, trails or roadways.

- **Raleigh County Burning Rock ATV Trails:** NCHA supported the development of nine interpretive signs installed at historic sites along the Burning Rock ATV Trails. The signs inform visitors of mine reclamation, types of coal and methods of coal mining, coal camps in the area, immigration and life in the coal fields. WV Citizens Conservation Corp received a match of \$4,500 from Beaver Coal Company. NCHA provided \$4,500 and the signs were completed in 2012.
- **Twin Branch Outdoor Interpretative Space:** NCHA supported the design and creation of three cultural heritage signs for the historic coal mine portal located at the McDowell County Henry Ford Mine. CCC received \$11,625 in match from the WV Department of Highways Recreational Trails Program. NCHA provided \$1,536 and the design was complete in 2012. Installation is underway.

### ***Mercer County Bramwell Coal Heritage Interpretative Center***

Bramwell, once the home of coal barons and called the "Town of Millionaires" with a population of 8,000 has significant coal history. However, Bramwell's population has been steadily decreasing with a total of 2,000 residents in 1970 and 356 residents in 2012. The falling population and corresponding lack of tax revenue has made it difficult for Bramwell to sustain its preservation efforts including the management of the historic Bramwell Train Depot/Coal Heritage Interpretative Center. In early 2008, the Town of Bramwell requested that NCHA and CHHA take

over the Center. NCHA-CHHA agreed to lease the building for \$1 per year and operate and manage the Center. The Center was also in need of repairs including the heating and cooling system necessary to sustain Coal Heritage artifacts. NCHA-CHHA assumed responsibility for the repairs and ongoing maintenance. The Center was restored with funding from the CHHA and WV legislature and has been in operation since 2008.

Currently, NCHA and CHHA split the costs of operating the Center, which is managed by a NCHA-CHHA staff member and two part-time employees. The Center includes an exhibit, gift shop with many products and books on the history of the region. Interpretative signs and historic rail cars are located outside. In 2009, a speeder car was acquired and refurbished and has been on display in front of the Center since 2010.

Center staff are involved in many of the events that draw visitors to the town each year including:

- May Tour of Homes in Bramwell weekend
- Memorial day festival and parade
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival
- Oktoberfest
- Bramwell Theater Corp summertime weekend performances
- December Home Tour

Table 3.6 provides a summary of the number of individuals who signed the visitors' guest. NCHA estimates that approximately 30-40 percent of visitors sign the guest book.

Table 3.6 Bramwell Interpretative Center Visitors Who Sign the Guest Book by Year

Year	Number of Visitors from Guest Book
<i>Prior to 2008</i>	<i>Estimated 600 annually</i>
<b>2008</b>	1600
<b>2009</b>	4000
<b>2010</b>	4000
<b>2011</b>	2200

## **Educational Tool/Structure**

NCHA supported the development of a video entitled, “The Living Monument – West Virginia’s Courthouses.” The video is a tribute to the architecture and history of the State’s county courthouses in five counties of the NCHA. The project was matched with private contributions of \$2,500 and NCHA provided \$2,500 to WVACo Courthouse Video Fund. The video was broadcast on WV Public Broadcasting Stations in 2011 and received the Spirit of West Virginia award from the WV Division of Tourism in the same year.

NCHA also supported the construction of the Upper Big Branch Memorial honoring 29 miners killed in a disaster near Whitesville on April 5 2010. NCHA provided \$10,000 and text for the interpretative signs. The memorial was completed in 2012. The Community group raised close to \$500,000 from the following contributors:

Alpha Natural Resources	Martin Engineering	CSX
Joy Manufacturing	Cliffs Strata Worldwide	Chapman Technical Group
Appalachian Power	Patriot Coal	Boxley Construction
Boone County Development Authority	Terracon	Pray Construction
Phillips Machinery	Brickstreet	Kentucky River Properties, LLC
Norfolk Southern	Walker Machinery	Fairchild International
	Princeton Speedway	



## **Educational Events**

NCHA has supported five educational events including:

- **Raleigh County Gravestone Preservation Workshops:** NCHA supported two workshops that provided hands-on gravestone restoration instruction in two cemeteries in Raleigh County. Raleigh County Historical Society received a match of \$1,925 from the Beckley Area Foundation. NCHA provided \$1,925 and the workshops were conducted in 2010 with 73 people in attendance.
- **Raleigh County Balancing Nature and Commerce in Communities that Neighbor Public Lands:** NCHA supported a two-day workshop for 72 people in 2010 in Beckley, WV on building tourism and improving the quality of life for WV residents. Participants were from four NCHA counties and regional stakeholders. The workshop engaged participants in action planning to identify potential projects that boy scouts maybe engaged in during the Boy Scout Jamboree in 2013 such as projects related to natural resources, cultural resources, recreational resources, commercial services or physical infrastructure. The Conservation Leadership Network's National Conservation Training Center received a match of \$10,000 from Southern West Virginia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the National Parks Conservation Association, and the Beckley Raleigh County Convention Center. NCHA provided \$10,000.
- **Fayette County Remarkable Adventure/Extraordinary Leaders:** NCHA partnered with NPS New River Gorge, Southern WV Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the WV Division of Tourism to create, implement, and staff a display tent at the National Boy Scout Summit site on Coal Communities, Coal Miners, and Coal Camps. The event took place in 2011 with approximately 800 out of state visitors and local dignitaries in attendance.
- **Raleigh County Coalfield Baseball Event:** NCHA sponsored a one-day event at Tamarack in Raleigh County celebrating the traditions of coalfield baseball. Presenters shared baseball registry forms, oral histories and exhibits of coalfield baseball and memorabilia along with the airing of the WV Public Broadcasting film Extra Innings: A History of Coalfield Baseball. NCHA provided \$526 to cover room rental, audio-visual equipment, honorariums, and hospitality which was matched through state appropriations. CHHA also contributed to the event, which took place in 2009 with 120 attendees including over 25 former coalfield baseball players. Concord University students assisted with registration, captured oral histories and added 27 names to the baseball registry.
- **Wyoming County Heritage Festival:** NCHA displayed the Music of the Coalfields exhibit at the Heritage festival at Milam Creek. Friends of Milam Creek received a match of \$1,600 from the WV Humanities Council. NCHA provided \$1,500 to cover the costs of stage construction. The event took place in 2010 with 200 of attendees.

NCHA and CHHA worked together with various partners over the years to sponsor annual conferences to promote coal heritage. NCHA also engaged community members and partner organizations through its Achievement Awards Program and often presented the awards during these annual conferences. Table 3.7 provides NCHA’s partners and number of attendees to annual Coal Heritage-related conferences.

Table 3.7 Partnerships for Coal Heritage Annual Conferences by Year

Year	Conference	Partner	Attendees
2007	Creating Coal Communities Conference, Chief Logan State Park in Logan County	WV Development Office	100
2008	Preservation Alliance of WV Coal Heritage Conference, Oak Hill, Fayette County	Preservation Alliance of WV	95
2009	Miner’s Conference, Beckley, Raleigh County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mine Safety Technology Consortium at Bridgemont Community and Technology College</li> <li>• Marshall University (CEGAS)</li> <li>• WVU Community and Technical College</li> <li>• Women’s Business &amp; Training Center</li> </ul>	175
2010	Miner’s Conference, Glade Springs, Raleigh County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mine Safety Technology Consortium at Bridgemont Community and Technology College</li> <li>• Marshall University (CEGAS) Workforce WV</li> <li>• Women’s Business &amp; Training Center</li> </ul>	350
2012	Miner’s Conference, Tamarack Conference Center, Raleigh County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WV Coal Association</li> <li>• Marshall University (CEGAS)</li> <li>• United Mine Workers</li> <li>• WV Department of Energy</li> <li>• WV Department of Environmental Protection</li> </ul>	TBD

## **Education and Interpretation Outcomes**

Short- and long-term outcomes examined related to education and interpretation include:

- Increase awareness, understanding, and pride in Coal Heritage history and ethnic diversity
- Recognize cultural influence of Coal Heritage
- Honor Coal Heritage history and ethnic diversity

Cumulatively, NCHA has supported the creation of two exhibits, 12 interpretative signs, a video, a memorial, and nine educational programs, workshops or conferences. The operational support for the Bramwell Coal Heritage Interpretative Center has led to a six-fold increase in visitors in 2009 and 2010.

The region has experienced additional Coal Heritage education and interpretation activities through the work supported by CHHA. CHHA supported the creation and installation of interpretative signs and kiosks in a number of locations in the NCHA including Bramwell, Ashland, Twin Falls, Sophia and Mount Hope and the creation of two additional exhibits, Coal Communities and the History of Coal and Southern WV Coal Mining Now and Then.

Stakeholder interviews and intercept conversations indicate that the impact of education and interpretation activities is mixed. Some stakeholder interviews suggest that NCHA activities have increased awareness:

“NCHA had a positive impact on how people view coal mining history.”

“Coal Heritage was previously unknown and now when he meets people most know something about it. The message is out.”

Intercept conversations suggest that awareness and understanding of the NCHA is limited. Few (5 of 30) in the convenience sample of individuals with whom we spoke indicated that they had visited a NCHA site. Less than half (12 of 30) were familiar with the Coal Heritage signs. Of those familiar, half were local or in-state residents and half were out of state residents. About a quarter (8 of 30) were familiar with some of the Coal Heritage history or interpretation materials. Six of the 8 were local or in-state residents and 2 resided out-of-state.

### 3.2.3 Program Area #3: Planning, Technical Assistance, and Support

NCHA engaged in a variety of planning, technical assistance and support activities to further the NCHA’s goals and objectives. This section describes those activities and outcomes achieved.

#### **Planning Activities**

In addition to creating the NCHA Management Plan, Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (described in Section 2), NCHA supported seven planning activities. Table 3.8 provides a summary of the activities followed by project descriptions for each.

Table 3.8 Planning Activities, Accomplishments, Funds Awarded and Year Completed

<b>Planning Activities</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>	<b>Funds Expended</b>	<b>Year Completed</b>
Logan County Country Roads Scenic Interpretative Center	Design plans for an interpretative center	60,000	2007
Trail Plan for Greenways and Blueways	inventory of trails available in the NCHA and sites for potential trails and linkages	5,000	2010
Summers County Hinton Depot Tourism Plan	Tourism and usage plan for the Hinton Depot	1,299	2011
New River State of the Watershed	Water quality analysis and subwatershed priorities	5,000	2011
Fayette County Coal Heritage Discovery Center	Environmental evaluation and clean up and business plan for new permanent office for NCHA and CHHA	\$0	2011
Coal Heritage Driving Tour	Scoping tours have been completed and 5 routes are proposed for development and installation of 155 signs	\$0	2012

National Boy Scouts of America Reaching the Summit	Ongoing planning for community service involvement for 2013 National Boy Scout Jamboree	\$0	ongoing
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### **Planning Activities Project Descriptions**

- **Logan County Country Roads Scenic Interpretative Center:** NCHA supported the development of a design and interpretative plan for the construction of an Interpretative Center for the County Roads Byway. Logan County received \$240,000 in match from the WV Department of Transportation. NCHA provided \$60,000 and the work was completed in 2007. The Center is currently under construction with \$480,000 in support from Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds.
- **Trail Plan for Greenways and Blueways:** NCHA supported the development of a report that would assess the current inventory of trails available in the NCHA and gain information from the community about sites for potential trails and linkages. Guided by Steering and Advisory Committees, an in-depth study was conducted between 2006-2009 to identify existing and potential trails, including 6 public input and mapping workshops with over 80 people and a survey of 200 trail users, elected officials and public land managers. NPS Rivers and Trails Program was provided \$5,000 directly in unmatched funds as referenced in the FY2006 Cooperative Agreement. The 200-page report was completed in 2010 along with a map of existing and potential trails
- **Summers County Hinton Depot Tourism Plan:** NCHA supported the development of a tourism and usage plan for the Hinton Depot. The City of Hinton received a match of \$1,299 from in-kind donations. NCHA provided \$1,299 and the plan was completed in 2011.
- **New River State of the Watershed:** NCHA supported water analysis and the development of a report to summarize the research findings and develop subwatershed priorities. The National Parks Conservation Association received a match of \$5,000 from the WV Department of Environmental Protection. NCHA provided \$5,000 and the report was completed in 2011. The plan was featured in 2012 issue of the National Parks magazine.
- **Fayette County Coal Heritage Discovery Center:** NCHA/CHHA has taken a number of steps since 2008 to plan for a new permanent office. It obtained a building free of charge from the City of Mount Hope, which is also the site of the future home of the National Boy Scout Jamboree and permanent Boy Scouts of America(BSA) High Adventure Camp. Central Appalachian Empowerment Zone (CAEZ) is currently holding the building until NCHA takes possession. The building is in need of a roof replacement, window repair, and other restoration. NCHA partnered with WV Brownfields Assistance Center at Marshall University and Department of Environmental Protection to conduct an environmental evaluation and cleanup, such as

the removal of underground storage tanks. NCHA obtained \$5,000 from CW Benedum Foundation and created a business plan in 2011 along with technical experts from the WV State University Extension Center and an additional \$12,000 to create marketing materials. NCHA-CHHA submitted two grant proposals for funding for restoration and construction.

- **Coal Heritage Driving Tour:** NCHA partnered with the WV Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, for the development of 155 signs that will be located along five routes that have identified historic sites. For each route there will be 1 gateway sign (total 5), 20 wayfinding signs (total of 100), and 10 informational signs (50 total). NCHA completed two scoping tours with the contractor and the routes proposed. Marketing publications and a web-based geo-tour of the routes will also be developed. This project is funded through a \$148,000 Transportation Enhancement Grant with \$37,000 of matching NCHA funds.
- **Reaching the Summit:** The NCHA Executive Director has served on Community Development subcommittee involved in the development of Mt. Hope as the new permanent home of the National Boy Scout Jamboree and a permanent BSA High Adventure Camp. She presented and participated in the Ground Breaking Ceremony in 2010. NCHA is serving as a key partner in the creation of public/private partnerships that will engage Boy Scout visitors in volunteer projects that “polish, protect, and promote the region” for the benefit of the community. Each Boy Scout attending the jamboree will be required to complete a six-hour local Community Service Project (estimated 240,000 community service hours expected). Projects are intended to inspire boy scouts to become stewards of their public lands. NCHA has been a part of briefing counties and developing a system for submitting, ranking and selecting potential volunteer projects. NCHA has also tasked VISTA volunteers to work with locals to submit applications for volunteer projects.

### ***Technical Assistance and Support***

The reduction in population in the NCHA region brings with it challenges in reduced local tax revenue and decreased manpower. NCHA staff have met this challenge by offering technical assistance and support and developing an umbrella organization for Volunteers In Service for America (VISTA) within the NCHA-CHHA office.

CHHA began working with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) in 2003 to become a VISTA umbrella organization. Annual contracts with CNCS have allowed NCHA to place AmeriCorps VISTA members and summer associates with community organizations working to promote economic development through the preservation, enhancement and promotion of significant historic and natural resources. VISTAs serve one year and are given the option to renew for a second or third year of service. In return, VISTAs agree to live at poverty level receiving \$864

per month compensation to understand the hardship of the area in which they are serving. At the end of their service, VISTAs can elect to receive a \$5,500 education award or \$1,500 stipend.

For the first 5 years, the VISTA umbrella organization was managed by the Executive Director with assistance of a VISTA Leader. Since 2008, NCHA splits the costs of 30 percent of VISTA Coordinator position with CHHA; 70 percent is covered by funds received through the VISTA contract.

As an umbrella VISTA organization, NCHA offers the following types of supports:

- Reaches out to local stakeholder to encourage VISTA participation;
- Reviews concept papers from organizations interested in obtaining a VISTA;
- Coordinates VISTA placements;
- Works with approved organizations to create an assignment description and one-year plan;
- Conducts site visits;
- Convenes monthly group phone meetings with VISTAs to discuss issues and offer support;
- Offers training tailored to group needs (for example, in 2008 NCHA provided a grant writing workshop for 30 VISTAs) ; and
- Submits monthly reports to CNCS on VISTAs progress.

The majority of VISTAs and summer associates work on beautification projects such as litter sweeps, cleaning up storefronts of abandoned businesses, addressing dilapidated buildings and removing unnecessary signage (i.e., when a school is closed but the signs are still up). Additional examples of VISTA projects that specifically promoted NCHA's goals of preservation, interpretation and education are provided below. Table 3.9 provides a summary of VISTAs and Summer Associates by year followed by descriptions of specific VISTA activities that have benefited the NCHA.

Table 3.9 VISTAs and Summer Associates by Year

Year	VISTAs	Summer Associates
2003	25	
2004	25	
2005	27	
2006	26	
2007	20	
2008	35	14
2009	39	12
2010	23	1
2011	17	
2012	19	
<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>27</b>

Examples of technical assistance and support provided by VISTAs, Summer Associates include:

**McDowell County Kimball War Memorial:** The memorial, built in 1928, is a Nationally Registered Landmark. It originally served as a community center and a museum to honor African Americans who served in World War I. In 1992, the Building burned and lost many of the artifacts that had been on display. Support for restoring the building was received from CHHA (\$240,000) and WV Legislature (\$200,000). While the building was restored, it was empty.

NCHA provided technical assistance and support and arranged for a VISTA volunteer in 2006. The VISTA helped to develop a Board of Directors for the Memorial and establish an endowment fund with the Beckley Area Foundation that now contains \$19,791. In 2007, NCHA linked faculty and students from WV State University with Board members from Kimball War Memorial. The group expressed interest in working with locals to create an exhibit honoring local African American coal miners and coal miners who served in the World Wars. In 2008, NCHA supported one of the students as a VISTA volunteer to coordinate the effort. The VISTA was involved in the following tasks:

- Research at the National Archives
- Creating the exhibit content
- Hiring contractors to construct the exhibit walls and install the exhibit



- Participating in Board meetings
- Events planning for the exhibit opening
- Liaison with the community partners and professors and students

The exhibit was completed in 2010. The VISTA completed her one-year term but remains engaged in the Memorial and community undertaking enhancements to the exhibit. NCHA supports marketing and promoting the exhibit (see Section 3.2.4). NCHA remains involved and is currently recruiting another VISTA to support continued work.

**Raleigh County Helen’s Baseball Field:** NCHA provided technical assistance and support to Winding Gulf Restoration Organization (W-GRO) a community organization in Helen, an intact coal camp. NCHA was involved in the following tasks:

- Assisted W-GRO in obtaining their 501c3 status
- Trained locals to submit grants to restore the Coal Miners’ Baseball field
- Assisted with the hosting the dedication of the baseball field

VISTA summer associate also supported this work by securing the lease for the baseball field and obtaining cost estimates for construction.

**Paint Creek:** In 2009, a VISTA assisted Paint Creek Scenic Trail Association in organizing a volunteer cleanup day, developing a website, rack card and brochure and receiving their 501c3 non-profit status. The brochure was funded through a WV Division of Tourism grant for which he applied. The VISTA also worked with the WV Parkways Authority to secure permission for the development of interpretative kiosks and oversaw their installation at Mossy and Tamarack. He also wrote and received a Scenic Byways Grant that supported the development of the kiosks and a roadside interpretative park along Paint Creek that is now in design.

**Raleigh County Sophia Historic District:** In 2004 VISTAs organized several trips for students from the University of Charleston to survey buildings in Sophia and met with locals to learn of Sophia’s importance as a service town for area coal camps. The students used this information to create a nomination package that led to Sophia’s designation on the National Register of Historic Places in 2006.

**Groundwork Wyoming County:** Since 2006, VISTAs placed in Wyoming County have established community collaborations and formed a nonprofit organization called Groundwork Wyoming County (GWWC) aimed at revitalizing and protecting physical resources. One former VISTA was hired as GWWC's Executive Director in 2010. The VISTAs and GWWC have engaged in stream clean up, lake revitalization, and the restoration of the Itmann School within the coal camp of this remote former company town.

**Fayette and Summers Counties:** In 2009, NCHA was selected as a service site for a team from the National Civilian Community Corps, a campus based AmeriCorps program. The 10-person team worked in Fayette and Summers Counties to expand hiking and biking trails, remove trash and debris including at the John Henry Heritage Park, and build a wetlands boardwalk at Wolf Creek Park.

An example of a technical assistance and support provided by NCHA staff includes:

**Heartland Corridor Project:** The Heartland Corridor project is intended to improve intermodal freight from VA to OH by creating double-stack clearance through existing tunnels and bridges. It was found to have an adverse effect upon contributing resources. Memorandum of Agreement among the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration and the WV, VA, KY, and OH State Historic Preservation Offices was created to offset the adverse effects. NCHA acted as a reviewer and signatory of the MOA. The MOA calls for the creation of 10 interpretive signs and the distribution of the book, *Through the Coalfields* as a stipulation of the MOA. NCHA provided technical assistance and support to the WV State Historic Preservation Office and its contractor, to advise on the creation of the signs and identify the placement. Signs were installed in 2012. The book has been distributed to over 60 individuals and groups including libraries, museums, and historical societies.

### ***Planning, Technical Assistance and Support Outcomes***

Short- and long-term outcomes examined related to planning, technical assistance and support include:

- Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming

- Diversify the local economy (e.g. entrepreneur and small business development).
- Build capacity of communities
- Foster future stewardship of Coal Heritage sites and resources
- Increase quality of life for residents living in Coal Heritage Areas

Since 2003, NCHA has provided a range of technical assistance and support on the local level both directly and through the VISTA program. These activities have been aimed at the short and long term goals stated above. For example, NCHA’s support stimulated the creation of at least three non-profit organizations. Stakeholder interviews indicate that NCHA activities have helped towns and communities:

“We wouldn’t be anywhere without them. They got us started”

“I think what they are doing is important. People go to NCHA for support. In last 5-8 years, many more people are getting grants and VISTAs are helping in these communities.”

### 3.2.4 Program Area #4: Outreach, Marketing, and Advertising

#### **Outreach**

The NCHA coordinating entity undertakes a wide range of outreach activities to remain at the center of coal heritage activities, engage partners, develop new projects, leverage funds, and promote the NCHA.

Outreach includes:

- **Participation at the State Fair:** Since 2005, NCHA has manned a booth each year for 2–3 days at the WV State Fair. Staff distribute information and tokens depending on the year such as small bags of coal.
- **State Representation at Conferences:** NCHA serves as a representative for WV at conferences such as US Cultural Heritage Tourism Summit (2005) and National Trust for Historic Preservation (2006).
- **Local Meetings and Events:** NCHA attends up to 10 meetings quarterly around the heritage area to provide information about NCHA activities. Examples include: Wyoming County Day, McDowell County Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting,

National Parks Superintendent's and Director's meeting, Meetings with officials at Fayetteville and Mullens, Meeting with Southern WV Community and Technical College, Meeting of the WV Tourist Train Association, Mine Technology Safety Consortium.

- **Coal Heritage Run/Walk series:** Annually since 2008, NCHA partnered with Twin Falls State Park and Wyoming County Convention and Visitors Bureau to sponsor the first in a series of four 5K runs in each municipality and at Twin Fall State Park.

**Board and Committee Involvement:** The NCHA Executive Director serves on a number of boards and committees including:

- On-Trac Committees in Mt. Hope and Oak Hill (a program to mobilize community members in small towns to restore and revitalize their downtown areas);
- Southern WV Convention and Visitor's Bureau;
- Mercer County Convention and Visitor's Bureau;
- 4-C Economic Development Authority;
- Preservation Alliance of West Virginia;
- National Capital Investment Fund Advisory Board;
- Chamber of Commerce; and
- Southern Brownfields Assistance Center Advisory Board.

### ***Marketing and Advertising***

NCHA staff routinely write press releases to advertise educational events, major changes with the NCHA Board, and grant programs. Press releases have generated media coverage in local newspapers, TV and other community publications. Table 3.10 summarizes these activities.

Table 3.10 Marketing and Advertising Activities by Year

Year	Marketing and Advertising Activities
2004	Two-page joint spread WV State Travel Guide (NCHA and CHHA) Two pre-application workshops for Partnership Grant Program (Logan and Beckley)
2006	Created a new joint logo for CHHA-NCHA Promotional clip created for <i>Coal Camp Memories</i> DVD
2007	Coal Heritage Power Point presentation
2008	Billboard for the Bramwell Interpretative Center. National Geographics and the Appalachian Regional Commission produced a Driving Tours of Appalachia that included information on the Coal Heritage Trail and a map.
2009	Washington Post wrote an article on Bramwell that was picked up by approximately 15 other newspapers in the mid-Atlantic region New brochure Ads in the WV State Travel Guide, Southern WV Convention and Visitor's Bureau County Guide Coal Heritage Calendar for sale regionally
2010	Ads in WV State Travel Guide, Southern WV CVB and Mercer County CVB travel guide and Midland Trail travel guide. SWCVB Motorcycle travel guide Coal Heritage Calendar for sale regionally Article in AAA Travel on Coal Heritage Trail
2011	Coal Heritage Calendar for sale regionally Ads in WV State Travel Guide, Southern WV CVB travel Guide, American Road, Blue Ridge Country, Long Weekends, and Midland Travel Visitors Guide Partnered with faculty and students from WV State University to develop promotional materials for the Kimball War memorial's new exhibits Soldiers of the Coalfields. 5,000 rack cards were printed and distributed. Promoted Gateways, Highways and Byways: Navigating the National Coal Heritage Area (created by CHHA)

### Website

As a part of an enhanced marketing effort, NCHA completed an update of the Coal Heritage website, set up a Facebook page, and advertised on a number of websites including Tripinfo.com

and National Historic Trust’s Historic Travel website. Table 3.11 shows Website Statistics since 2008. Current Facebook statistics show over 1,100 followers.

Table 3.11 Coal Heritage Website Page Views, Page Visits and Hits

Timeperiod	Page Views	Page Visits	Hits
8/08-1/09	18,000	8,000	110,000
2/09-1/10	60,000	35,000	377,000
2/10-1/11	69,000	33,000	393,000
2/11-1/12	57,000	29,000	321,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>204,000</b>	<b>105,000</b>	<b>1,201,000</b>

### **Geocache**

NCHA and CHHA partnered with a professor and two students at Concord University to develop and place a series of geocaches at sites along the Coal Heritage Trail. Geocaching is a global treasure hunt in which participants use Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers to find “caches” hidden throughout the world. Most caches are physical containers that can be any size and contain a log book where participants log their visits and may collect small treasures. Currently, over 1 million geocaches are located in more than 100 countries worldwide.

The NCHA GeoTrail completed in 2010 consists of 16 caches located at sites of historic, cultural, or natural significance. Descriptions of each site may be found at [www.coalheritage.org](http://www.coalheritage.org). Geocache statistics show that the sites have drawn 1,120 visitors since 2010.

### **Achievement Awards Program**

- **2007:** NCHA also established the Achievement Awards Program in 2007 as a part of the Creating Coal Communities Conference in Logan (described earlier) to acknowledge members of the community who have made contributions to the preservation of Coal History. Six individuals and organizations received awards. The awards were also listed in the NCHA-CHHA Annual Report.
- **2008:** Six individuals and organizations received awards at the White Oak Country Club in Oak Hill as a part of the Coal Heritage Conference. The awards were also listed in the NCHA-CHHA Annual Report.

## **Outreach, Marketing, and Advertising Outcomes**

Short- and long-term outcomes examined related to outreach, marketing, and advertising include:

- Increase engagement, visitation, and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites by locals and visitors
- Increase quality of life for residents living in Coal Heritage Areas

NCHA has increased visibility of Coal Heritage and Coal Heritage Sites through the Website with a reported 1.2 million hits between August 2008 and January 2012. The Geocache has also drawn approximately 1,120 visitors since 2010. NCHA report 11,800 visitors to the Bramwell Interpretative Center between 2008 and 2011.

Analysis of the impact of outreach, marketing and advertising activities is mixed. Intercept testing does not reflect widespread understanding of NCHA or NCHA activities as described in Section 3.2.2. Some stakeholder interviews suggested that NCHA activities have engaged community members and increased the focus on Coal Heritage socially and professionally:

“She [NCHA Executive Director] has grown the social chatter on this topic.”

“Coal and Railroad heritage [tourism] are both huge and growing.”

“NCHA have engaged the communities that they touch so they feel that this isn’t just an effort of outsiders that are bringing tourists from Charleston. The community members know it’s a benefit for their own community.”

### **3.3 NPS and NCHA Relationship**

Cooperative agreements between NPS and NHCA indicate the following:

“The National Park Service will provide technical and financial assistance to the State to develop and implement the management plan; assist the management entities in coordinating other Federally supported activities in the Heritage Areas, and provide administrative, marketing, and public relations support.”

Interviews with NPS and NCHA staff indicate that the NPS Regional Office was very involved in the development of the management plan, Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision. By 2002, involvement from the NPS Regional Office waned in part due to travel restrictions and the additional of numerous new NHAs. Consequently, NPS has provided little support for the implementation of the management plan nor provided marketing or public relations support. Cooperative Agreements reflect six changes in contracting officers, which NCHA staff reportedly found challenging.

Between 2004 -2010, the local NPS at New River Gorge provided substantial support and technical assistance related to financial and administrative issues. Staffing shortages has lessened their involvement over the past two years, however, relationships between NCHA and the local NPS remain strong.

### **3.4 NCHA and Partner Relationship**

NCHA has established strong partnerships on the Federal, state and local levels. Partnerships are described in Section 2.3.2. Table 3.12 provides an overview of NCHA partners and the type of support that they provide.



Table 3.12 NCHA Partners and Types of Support Provided

Partner	Support Provided
Coal Heritage Highway Authority	Shared staff, office space, marketing, and some programming
WV Division of Tourism	Provided oversight until 2002; collaborator for Coal Heritage Tourism; ex-officio member of the Board
WV Division of Culture and History	Provided oversight until 2002; ex-officio member of the Board; Section 106 reviews; collaborator on preservation activities such as equipment removal
WV Department of Environmental Protection	Ex-officio member of the Board; Section 106 reviews
WV Division of Highways	Provides state matching funds; ex-officio member of the Board; Section 106 reviews
WV Development Office, Education and Arts, and Natural Resources	Ex-officio member of the Board; collaborator on local projects
County and city officials and community groups	Collaborators on local projects
University groups	Collaborators on early studies, assessments, and planning efforts; collaborators on local projects
Conventions and Visitors Bureaus	Joint marketing
Local foundations and advocacy groups	Donations and support, collaborators on local projects

### 3.5 Summary

Since receiving the Federal NHA designation, the NCHA has remained true to the overall mission outlined in the original legislation and operationalized in the management plan. It has undertaken activities in four program areas including preservation and restoration; interpretation and education; planning, technical assistance and support; and marketing, advertising and outreach. Due to financial and other challenges, NCHA was able to accomplish only approximately half of the key objectives outlined in the four phases of the management plan. The work has included:

- preservation and restoration of ten historic structures or natural resources.
- creation of two exhibits, 12 interpretative signs, a video, a memorial, and nine educational programs, workshops or conferences

- a range of technical assistance and support on the local level both directly and through the VISTA program
- a range of outreach activities to remain at the center of coal heritage activities, engage partners, develop new projects, leverage funds, and promote the NCHA.

The scale of the activities and demonstrated outcomes were limited and across each of these areas. There is some evidence, primarily through stakeholder interviews that NCHA's efforts have helped to revitalize communities and assist nonprofit organizations, and have helped to draw visitors to the area and engaged community members. Data through intercept conversations with people in the general public suggests that awareness and understanding of the NCHA and the Coal Heritage area is not widespread.

NCHA has strong relationships with a range of Federal, state, and local organizations. In NCHA's early years, the NPS Regional Office had been very involved in assisting the NCHA, but there has been little technical assistance provided in recent years. The relationship between the local NPS at New River Gorge and the NCHA has remained strong throughout the years, though with less involvement in the past two years.

## Section 4: Public/Private Investments in NCHA and their Impact

The legislation that created NCHA mandated the following concerning Federal appropriations:

- **IN GENERAL**—There is authorized to be appropriated under this title not more than \$1,000,000 for any fiscal year. Not more than a total of \$10,000,000 may be appropriated for the Area under this title.
- **50 PERCENT MATCH**—Federal funding provided under this title may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of any assistance

This section explores the second evaluation question, “What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government and private entities?” Section 4.1 provides an overview of the investments made in the NCHA coordinating entity since its inception, broken down by major categories. Section 4.2 provides an analysis of how the NCHA coordinating entity has used the investments. Section 4.3 describes the impact of the NCHA’s investments including short and long-term outcomes.

### 4.1 Investments in NCHA Coordinating Entity and Activities

The financial investments that support NCHA activities can be divided into the following categories:

- **NPS Funding allocated directly to NCHA:** Funding provided to NCHA through NPS since 1998; and
- **NPS Funding allocated to NCHA through NPS Regional:** The portion of NPS funding allocated to NPS regional for technical assistance and support. NPS Regional provided guidance, expertise, and coordination to facilitate the management plan’s approval by the Secretary of Interior.

Cooperative Agreements between NPS and the State of West Virginia indicate that since 1998 NPS obligated \$2,839,764 to NCHA of which \$2,608,764 was allocated directly to NCHA and \$230,000 was allocated to NPS Regional. Between 1999 and 2012, NCHA requested and received 1,537,217. NPS allowed NCHA to carry-over allocated funds for up to 5 years. From the information received, we estimate that \$304,287 was returned to the Treasury in 2003 or 2004. NCHA is currently carrying over \$768,260 in funds allocated between 2008 and 2011. Details are provided in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 NPS Funds Allocated, Received, Returned and Carried Over by Year

Year	Total NPS Funds Awarded	NPS Funds allocated to NPS Regional	NPS Funds allocated to NCHA	NPS Funds Received****	Returned Funds	Carry-over***
1998	349,000	N/A	250,000 99,000*	--	--	-
1999	275,000	N/A	250,000 25,000**	109,713	--	-
2000	248,000	N/A	248,000	218,102	--	-
2001	244,000	135,527.85 18,472.15	90,000	38,622	--	-
2002	210,000	15,000	195,000	207,573	--	-
2003	209,000	15,000	194,000	154,000	304,287	-
2004	121,000	16,000	104,000	175,703	0	-
2005	121,000	10,000	111,000	359,000	0	-
2006	95,529	5,000	90,529	90,529	0	-
2007	118,235	15,000	103,235	103,235	0	-
2008	116,000	N/A	116,000			\$116,000
2009	116,000	N/A	116,000	80,740		35,260
2010	322,000	N/A	322,000			322,000
2011	295,000	N/A	295,000			295,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,839,764</b>	<b>230,000</b>	<b>2,608,764</b>	<b>1,537,217</b>	<b>303,287</b>	<b>768,260</b>

\*These funds were specified as not requiring a match and were allocated for the finalization and printing of the management plan.

\*\*These funds are specified as not requiring a match.

\*\*\*Note: Funds were carried over each year but may only be carried over for 5 years.

\*\*\*\*Note: Reflects the year funds were awarded not the year that funds were drawn down (i.e. in 2012 NCHA drew down funds from 2009 and 2007).

By Congressional instruction, NCHA must match its Federal assistance equally with non-NPS dollars. To do this, the expectation is that NCHA will leverage its Federal assistance funds to secure additional funding in support of its mission. Interviews and Board minutes indicate that NCHA has experienced difficulty meeting the 50 percent Federal funding match requirement.

Documentation of NPS funds received and how the funds were matched from 1998 to 2004 was not available through NCHA. Limited information used in Table 4.1 was received from the NPS Regional Office. NCHA provided documentation to show that since 2005, \$883,049 in Federal NPS funds were matched with \$ 1,750,185 of which \$702,109 was revenue appropriated through the State of West Virginia Legislature and provided through the Department of Transportation Division of Highways to support NCHA's operations and \$1,048.076 was external funding or leveraged

funding that local partners secured from state, county/local, foundation, and in-kind sources. . .  
 Details are provided in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 NPS Funds Received and Matching Contributions Per Year

Year Drawn Down	Year Awarded	NPS Funds Received	State Match for Operations	State Match for Programs	County / Local	Foundation	In-Kind	TOTAL
2005	FY01 FY00-05 FY04	38,622 248,000 19,450	100,000	--	12,500	--	--	418,572
2006	--	--	100,000	14,120	50,695	2,180	10,868	177,863
2007	FY02	31,139	100,000	240,000	--	-	-	371,139
2008	FY03 FY04 FY05	154,000 91,874 65,938	50,000	154,000 41,874 65,938	--	388,000	-	857,624
2009	FY04	13,126	97,000	--	-	-	2,000	112,126
2010	FY05	45,062	92,150	--	10,175	-	1,269	148,638
2011	FY06	90,529	92,150	5,000	3799	5,000	--	196,478
2012	FY07	85,309	70,809	14,500	26,158	--	--	111,467
<b>Total</b>		<b>883,049</b>	<b>702,109</b>	<b>535,432</b>	<b>103,327</b>	<b>395,180</b>	<b>14,137</b>	

## 4.2 NCHA Utilization of Investments

NCHA uses its revenue to support its programmatic initiatives and operational activities. Official documentation of how funds were used between 1998 and 2003 was not available. Expenditure reports from 2004 -2011 indicate that \$744,772 (51 percent) was used for operational expenses. Documentation from program files reflects that \$725,696 (49 percent) was used for program expenses.

Table 4.3 NCHA Coordinating Entity Spending by Year

Year	Operational Expenses	Program Expenses	Total
2004	64,366	59,661	124,027
2005	71,926	22,113	94,039
2006	65,191	73,518	138,709
2007	75,631	81,494	157,125
2008	106,855	282,132	388,987
2009	85,164	65,335	150,499
2010	214,471	80,746	295,217
2011	61,168	60,697	121,865
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$744,772</b>	<b>\$725,696</b>	<b>1,470,468</b>

Per 2004 Joint Operating Agreement between the NCHA and the Coal Heritage Highway Authority (CHHA), the two organizations share rented office space and staff, and split the costs equally. NCHA and CHHA may have also accrued additional operating expenses that were unique to NCHA or CHHA that were not divided such as staff development or specialized equipment. Marketing that promoted Coal Heritage in general was conducted jointly and costs were divided equally between CHHA and NCHA. Table 4.4 shows that CHHA spent \$584,477 in operational expenses and \$64,130 in marketing expenses from 2004 to 2011. Tables 4.3 and 4.5 show that NCHA spent \$744,772 in operational expenses and \$100,288 in marketing expenses over the same time period.

Table 4.4 CHHA Spending by Year

Year	Operational Expenses	Marketing
2004	61,557	10,856
2005	64,189	10,133
2006	68,417	9,480
2007	66,105	5,949
2008	92,697	12,615
2009	81,739	4,789
2010	92,442	8,218
2011	57,331	2,090
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$584,477</b>	<b>\$64,130</b>

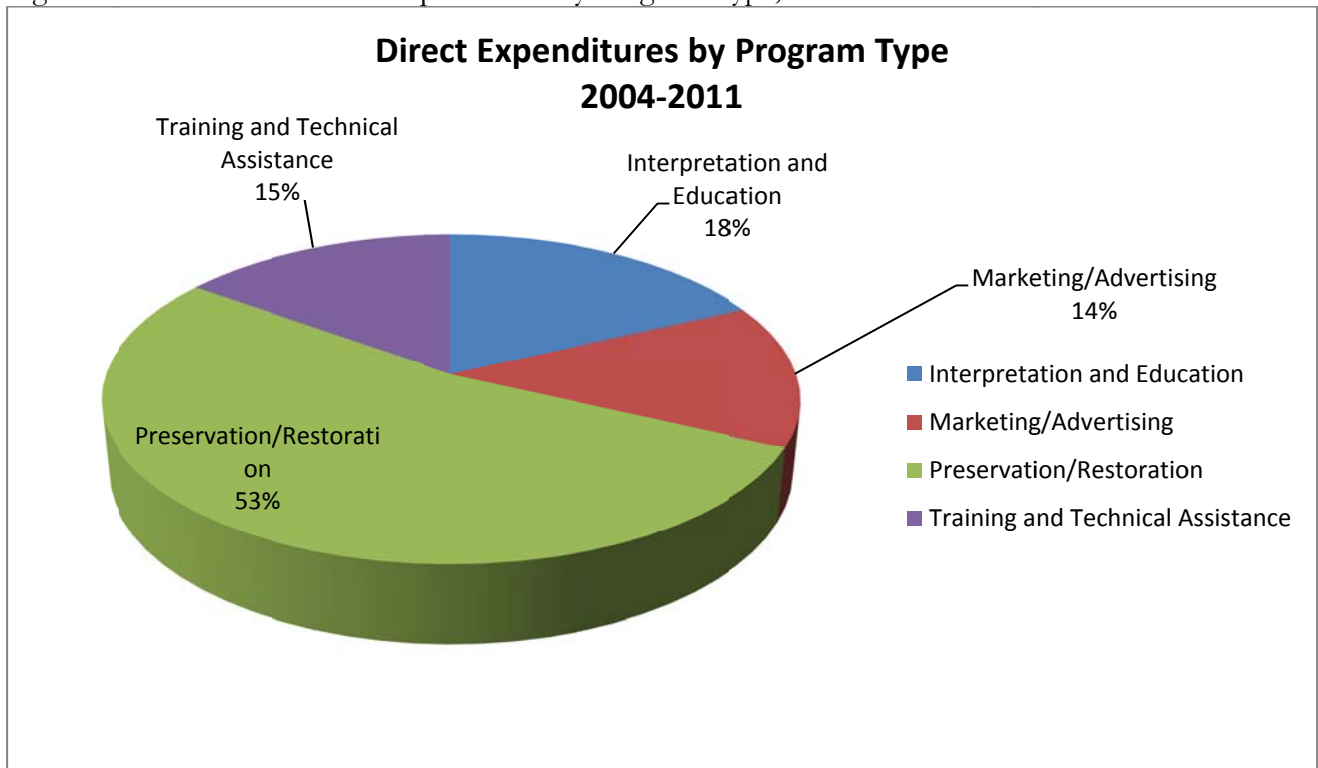
With respect to program expenditures, the greatest expenditures occurred in the area of preservation and restoration (53 percent) with \$250,000 of the \$383,566 spent on the Raleigh County Exhibition Coal Mine. Planning, technical assistance (TA) and support accounted for 18 percent of expenditures; interpretation and education accounted for 15 percent; and marketing, advertising and outreach accounted for 14 percent. Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1 present program expenditures for only 2004 to 2011. Prior to 2004, documentation was not sufficient to generate data at this level.

Table 4.5 NCHA Programmatic Expenditures by Year

Year	Preservation/Restoration	Interpretation/Education	Planning, TA, Support	*Marketing/Advertising
2004	47,000	1,744	1,744	9,173
2005	5,650	10,000	5,621	842
2006	54,451	1,875	5,345	11,846
2007	1,888	1,888	71,586	6,130
2008	252,213	11,822	7,631	10,466
2009	15,933	19,855	11,110	18,439
2010	3,207	41,492	15,914	20,132
2011	3,224	19,762	14,453	23,260
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$383,566</b>	<b>\$108,438</b>	<b>\$133,404</b>	<b>\$100,288</b>

\*Since 2004, NCHA and CHHA were marketed jointly. 50% of expenses are shown here.

Figure 4.1 NCHA Direct Expenditures by Program Type, Total 2004-2011



CHHA also contributed to several programs that were also funded by NCHA. Examples include:

- **Mercer County Bramwell Coal Heritage Interpretative Center:** In addition to sharing operating expenses for the Center since 2008 (reflected in Tables 4.3 and 4.4), CHHA supported the Center’s restoration with a grant of \$442,120 in 2003.
- **Raleigh County Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine:** CHHA supported the enhancement of the Exhibition, which opened in 2008 with a grant of \$1 million.
- **McDowell County Kimball War Memorial:** CHHA supported the restoring of the Memorial building with a \$240,000 grant.

CHHA also supported the creation and installation of interpretative signs and kiosks in a number of locations in the NCHA including Bramwell, Ashland, Twin Falls, Sophia and Mount Hope and the creation of two additional exhibits, Coal Communities and the History of Coal and Southern WV Coal Mining Now and Then.



### 4.3 Impact of Investments

The evaluation assessed the investments made to NCHA promoting the work of the heritage area and the impacts of these investments in helping accomplish the purpose of the legislation. The data shows that NCHA has not fully utilized Federal investments. Since 1998, NCHA received \$1,537,217 in Federal NPS funds. Five years of funding has been carried over each year and NCHA is currently carrying over \$768,260. The NCHA director indicates that part of their rationale for underspending funds and having an annual carry-over is to respond to possible fluctuations in NPS allocations. They were also under the false understanding that these funds could continue to be spent if NPS funding is sunsetted or reduced. Current regulations, however, indicates that if the funding for NHA sunsets, any obligated funds will be returned to the Federal Treasury within 1 year.

NCHA's impact on preservation, restoration, education, and interpretation has been limited. NCHA has supported the preservation and restoration of ten historic structures or natural resources since 1998. Between 2004-2011, the NCHA spent \$383,566 on these ten projects, the bulk of which (\$250,000) was spent on the Raleigh County Exhibition Coal Mine. In addition to difficulties meeting the Federal match requirement, NCHA faced a number of local barriers that delayed or stymied their ability to carry out program activities. For example, the Logan County Country Roads Scenic Interpretative Center was delayed for approximately 7 years due to NCHA's difficulties in obtaining property deeds. Similarly, the Summers County John Henry Heritage Park was delayed 4 years or more due to NCHA's extended negotiations with CSX railroad to purchase the land.

NCHA's impact in the area of interpretation and education also was limited in scope and scale. Since 2004, NCHA cumulatively spent \$108,438 on the creation of two exhibits, 12 interpretative signs, a video, a memorial and nine educational programs, workshops or conferences. Outcomes data to assess the impact of these events was limited. NCHA reported 11,800 visitors signed the Guest Book at the Bramwell Interpretative Center between 2008 and 2011 (which NCHA estimates is 30-40 percent of total visitors) and an estimated 9,419 individuals visited to the Boone County Coal Heritage Museum.

NCHA spent \$100,288 on marketing since 2004 and demonstrated increased visibility of Coal Heritage and Coal Heritage Sites through its website with a reported 1.2 million total hits between August 2008 and January 2012. Web hits in 2012 were three times higher than those captured in 2008. The Geocache has also drawn approximately 1,120 visitors since 2010.

It appears that the challenges faced in supporting preservation and restoration projects has led NCHA to prioritize technical assistance and support over the past two years. Programmatic expenditures reflect that NCHA spent almost five times the amount on planning, technical assistance, and support (\$14,453 and \$15,914) as it did on preservation and restoration activities (\$3,224 and \$3,207). Since 2003, NCHA has provided a range of technical assistance and support on the local level both directly and through the VISTA program. NCHA serves as an umbrella VISTA organization helping to coordinate VISTA placements and support and mentor VISTAs. The VISTA and other technical assistance activities have been aimed at:

- Increasing the amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming
- Diversifying the local economy (e.g. entrepreneur and small business development).
- Building capacity of communities
- Fostering future stewardship of Coal Heritage sites and resources
- Increasing the quality of life for residents living in Coal Heritage Areas

NCHA's support stimulated the creation of three non-profit organizations. Stakeholder interviews indicate that these activities have helped towns and communities. These types of activities, which are included in NCHA's management plan are an example of NCHA's resourcefulness in addressing NCHA's difficulty in meeting the 50 percent Federal funding match requirements for program activities. Interviews suggest that there may be some misunderstandings between NCHA and NPS on what constitutes match funding.

Barriers that NCHA has faced in meeting the match requirements are varied and complex. These include:

- **Misunderstanding of what could be used as match:** Much of the external or leveraged project funding was not used to meet match requirements and draw down Federal NPS funding. For example, in several cases, NCHA's financial support for a project was to meet the 20 percent matching requirements that local partners were applying for through a state Transportation Enhancement Grant. The local partner provided NCHA with documentation that the state grant was received and that was used to meet the 50 percent match requirement to draw down the Federal NPS funds.
- **Competing grants with lower match requirements:** Some local individuals and organizations who considered applying for NCHA grants indicated that they were simply unable to meet the 50 percent Federal match requirement. Some indicated that

other sources of funding such as CHHA funding was more attractive because it required a 20 percent match. Others, however, could meet the match but opted to compete for other grants with lower match requirements to better leverage their funding.

*Example: CSX railroad donated the Hinton Depot to the town of Hinton. The town used the depot as an in-kind match to receive funding from the WV Transportation Enhancement Program. There was a \$50,000 overmatch. Steering committee members approached the Mayor of Hinton in 1999 and engaged him in multiple discussions about the possibility of an NCHA Early Action Project. After more than four months of discussions, the mayor decided to retain the overmatch for use in applying for future transportation grants because the match for these grants is 80-20 and would thus be able to support a greater number of projects or projects of a larger magnitude.*

- **Inconsistent support from the state:** NCHA statutory organizational restructuring through S29-27 in 2002 was intended, in part, to improve NCHA’s ability to secure matching funds. According to Board minutes, the first NCHA Director had limited success lobbying legislators and state officials within the Division of Culture and History and Division of Tourism for state matching funds. By 2003, NCHA was carrying over \$713,000 in unmatched Federal funds. Consequently, NCHA’s new Executive Director in 2004 was faced with the task of trying to draw down funds from those early years before they were returned to the Federal Treasury. Overtime, oversight was changed from the Governor of the State of WV acting through the Division of Culture and History and the Division of Tourism to the Governor acting directly through NCHA.
- **Low population density:** Substantial decreases in population across Southern WV have resulted in low population density, which negatively impacts locals when they try to compete for private funding (i.e., foundation grants) since funders question the cost effectiveness of the investment. Low population density has other implications including decreased workforce (less capacity to manage programs at the local level), and less tax revenue for use in meeting match requirements.

Other reported barriers that explain in part, NCHA’s limited success with preservation and restoration activities over the past 12 years and the more recent prioritization of technical assistance and support activities include:

- **Land ownership:** As described by the WV Humanities Council, “A large majority of WV’s privately held land is owned by relatively few individuals or firms, many of them from outside the state. The largest private landowners are coal, timber, natural gas companies and electric utilities, and railroads. Land ownership is most concentrated in the historic southern coalfields south of Charleston. These land-ownership patterns, deeply rooted in the past, have long influenced the politics, economic growth, and social development of our state.” (Retrieved from <http://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1293>). NCHA has experienced difficulties completing preservation and restoration projects due to delays in obtaining property deeds.

- **Industry resistant:** There is some indication that members of the coal industry believed that preservation efforts could get in the way of active coal production and made efforts to block NCHA activities.
- **Low population density:** Substantial decreases in population across Southern WV have resulted in a larger number of abandoned buildings and homes. This makes it difficult for NCHA to determine which properties to preserve or restore including deciding which locations were truly good investments due to inaccessibility issues (i.e. lack of roadways).
- **Poverty in the state:** WV is the fourth poorest state in the U.S. with a poverty rate of 15.7 percent<sup>4</sup>. Both the prosperity and the impoverishments of the region are attributed to coal mining. Consequently, the NCHA mission of creating a unifying vision that Coal Heritage is a source of pride for residents in the NCHA is a challenge.

## 4.4 Summary

The data shows that NCHA has not fully utilized Federal investments. Since 1998, NCHA received \$1,537,217 in Federal NPS funds. Five years of funding has been carried over each year and NCHA is currently carrying over \$768,260. Over \$300,000 was returned to the Treasury in 2003 or 2004. NCHA has experienced difficulty meeting the 50 percent Federal funding match requirement, which may in part be due to a misunderstanding of what could be used as match.

NCHA's impact has been limited. NCHA spent just shy of \$400,000 the preservation and restoration of ten historic structures or natural resources, over half of which was spent on one project. Difficulties in meeting the Federal match requirement as well as a number of local barriers (such as difficulties in obtaining property deeds, extended negotiations to purchase properties, competing grants with lower match requirements, inconsistent support from the state, poverty in the region) delayed or stymied their ability to carry out program activities. Approximately \$108,000 was spent in the area of education and interpretation, and approximately \$100,000 was spent on marketing and outreach. Limited outcome data suggest that these activities may have contributed to increases in visitation and interest in the area. NCHA has focused its resources over the past two years on technical assistance, with reports of their activities having helped to revitalize communities and create three new organizations.

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Section 5: NCHA Sustainability

### 5.1 Defining Sustainability

The third question guiding the evaluation, derived from legislation (P.L. 110-229) asks “How does the coordinating entity’s management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to the NHA’s sustainability?” To guide the assessment of sustainability, we have adopted the definition developed by NPS, with the assistance of stakeholders from a number of NHAs. Sustainability for an NHA is as follows:

“...the National Heritage Area coordinating entity’s continuing ability to work collaboratively and reciprocally with Federal, state, community, and private partners through changing circumstances to meet its mission for resource conservation and stewardship, interpretation, education, recreation and economic development of nationally significant resources.” Critical components of sustainability for a National Heritage Area include, but are not limited to:

- The coordinating entity and NPS honoring the legislative mandate of the NHA;
- The coordinating entity’s management capacity, including governance, adaptive management (such as strategic planning), staffing, and operations;
- Financial planning and preparedness including the ongoing ability to leverage resources in support of the local network of partners;
- Partnerships with diverse community stakeholders, including the heritage area serving as a hub, catalyst, and/or coordinating entity for on-going capacity building; communication; and collaboration among local entities;
- Program and project stewardship where the combined investment results in the improved economic value and ultimately long-term quality of life of that region; and
- Outreach and marketing to engage a full and diverse range of audiences.”

### 5.2 Honoring the Legislative Mandate of the NHA

As stated in P.L. 104-333, the National Coal Heritage Area was established:

“For the purpose of preserving and interpreting for the educational and inspirational benefit of present and future generations certain lands and structures with unique and significant historic and cultural value associated with the coal mining heritage of the State of West Virginia and the Nation”.

This section of the document describes and assesses how NCHA’s management, leadership and relationships with NPS and with stakeholder organizations aid in the development and sustainment of the National Heritage Area. The following sections address each of the components of the NPS definition of sustainability, drawing on the data provided throughout the report.

## **5.3 NCHA’s Management Capacity**

### **5.3.1 Governance, Leadership, and Oversight**

#### **Board Members**

As discussed in Section 2, NCHA is overseen by a Board of Directors appointed by the Governor. This Board structure was established in 2003 as part of the creation of the new management entity for NCHA under state bill S29-27. It replaced a 22 member advisory Steering Committee also appointed by the Governor.

The NCHA Board of Directors is comprised of 17 members, 11 full voting members and 6 ex-officio members. The 11 full voting members represent each of the 11 counties named in the original federal legislation, as well as reflect the interests of tourism, coal industry, United Mine Workers Association (UMWA), economic development, historic preservation, and higher education. Members serve 4 year terms with a 2 term limit. The six -officio members represent state agencies, including the Divisions of Tourism, Culture and History, Development Office, Education and Arts, Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Natural Resources. Ex-officio members do not have voting rights.

Although there are likely a multitude of criteria that can be used to assess and evaluate a Board of Directors, one set of criteria that helps in assessing sustainability is the extent to which the Board of Directors has a clear understanding of its roles and responsibilities and fulfills these roles.

According to the NCHA bylaws, Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Managing NCHA affairs by attending quarterly meetings

- Overseeing NCHA's finances
- Approving all actions undertaken by NCHA

### ***Managing NCHA Affairs***

NCHA Board meetings are held quarterly and require six voting members in order to conduct business. Attendance at the Board meetings is variable; several individuals noted problems in getting a quorum necessary to approve actions. Since members are located in diverse locations, it is difficult to get members to come to meetings. The organization has tried to meet in different locations, but it generally means some individuals have to drive long distances. The Board currently meets in Tamarack in Beckley and has achieved a voting quorum for the last few meetings.

According to interviews with staff and Board members, lapses in appointing replacement Board members has, at times, made it difficult to have a full Board participation. At the time of our visit, the Governor was interested in moving people off the Board who had not been participating and making new appointments. For example, three new appointments had recently been made at the time of our visit in March 2012.

The lack of ability to achieve a quorum has, at times, held back the Board's ability to fulfill its role and responsibilities. For example, Board minutes from 2003 and 2004 reflect that, due to the lack of quorum, the Board was unable to develop the Executive Director's job position and move forward with the hiring process. Moreover, the Board has, at times, developed subcommittees for the purposes of planning or development. Subcommittees have been dissolved due to difficulties in maintaining a quorum for full Board meetings.

### ***Overseeing NCHA's Finances***

The NCHA Board of Directors is charged with reviewing and approving NCHA's annual budget and overseeing the NCHA's financial position and operations. Board meeting summaries captured that Board members received annual budgets and that the budgets are presented and approved during routine Board meetings each year. Interviews with staff and Board members indicated that involvement in financial oversight is limited. Several members indicating that they do not read the

Board packet materials. Other Board members indicated that they were uncertain how funding decisions were made.

### ***Approving NCHA Actions***

The NCHA Board has an ongoing role in approving the direction of the staff, generally through review and approval of all contracts, grants and projects. Based on our interviews with staff and Board members, it is clear that Board members are kept abreast of program developments and progress, largely through the Board meetings held quarterly. Interviews with staff and Board members indicated that some Board members were unclear of NCHA's mission and activities. Discussion with one Board member showed little experience or understanding of Coal Heritage.

### ***Executive Director***

NCHA's Executive Director has been with the organization since 2006. Prior to joining NCHA, she served as the director of the CCHA. She now splits her time equally between the two organizations.

Interviewees uniformly noted the skills and strengths brought to the position by the current Executive Director. Skills and strengths often cited were her long-standing relationship in the community, her familiarity with the NCHA region, her skills in negotiating with groups, and the leadership she conveys. She was cited as having both respect and credibility in the community and for being able to get things done. She has connections with many local and state groups and sits on a number of organizations' Boards and committees.

The initial Director assumed the position after serving as a part-time project director as an employee of the WV Division of Tourism. Hired as the full-time Director in 1998, he became an Acting Director in 2002 with the passage of S29-27, in which NCHA was reorganized (see Section 2.2.3 for detail). He resigned in 2003. Interviews indicated that the reorganization was undertaken in part to replace the Director with a stronger local manager who was connected in the community.



### 5.3.2 Staffing and Operations

Staffing, office space, and operations are equally split between the NCHA and CCHA. In addition to the Executive Director, other staff of the NCHA include an administrative assistant (.5 FTE), a financial manager who also is in charge of purchasing (.4 FTE), a manager of the Bramwell Coal Heritage Interpretive Center whose position also includes project management and marketing (.4 FTE), and an AmeriCorp VISTA Special Projects Coordinator (.15 FTE). There are also two part-time employees at the Bramwell Depot and a consultant who is hired for specific projects such as writing for interpretive signs.

NCHA staff has been taxed responding to local challenges. The NCHA region is geographically dispersed with widespread poverty, low population density, land ownership issues, and restricted workforce capacity. NCHA staff have responded to local challenges in several ways. For example, the use of NCHA staff at the Bramwell Coal Heritage Interpretive Center was in response to learning from locals that the Center would otherwise need to close due to lack of funding. In order not to lose the investment made into this site, NCHA leased the site for \$1 per year and took over its operations. This duty, however, takes away from NCHA staff's ability to move forward with other programming that could benefit other areas of the NCHA.

Other ways that NCHA has responded to local challenges is through its participation in the AmeriCorp VISTA program. CHHA's involvement in the VISTA program began in 2003. Since 2008, NCHA splits the costs of 30 percent of the VISTA Coordinator position with CHHA; 70 percent is covered by funds received through the VISTA contract. NCHA-CHHA has supported 283 VISTAs and Summer Associates since 2003 (see Section 3.2.3 for detail).

The NCHA appears to gain considerable capacity from the work of the VISTA volunteers throughout the region. Nearly all individuals interviewed mentioned the importance of the VISTAs to the region. VISTAs promote a greater connection with the community; broaden support for NCHA in the community; identify new issues, opportunities and community needs; provide manpower to respond to local challenges, provide continuity to accomplish long-term goals; and develop donors and supporters to help local areas meet the match requirements. In short, VISTA have increased workforce capacity and enhanced the impact of NCHA in the region.

### 5.3.3 Strategic Planning and Adaptive Management

NCHA has remained true to the overall mission outlined in the original legislation and operationalized in the management plan. In moving forward with specific plans as laid out in the management plan, NCHA staff encountered financial and other challenges that rendered some activities infeasible such as the development of a state-of-the-art interpretative and education complex. NCHA was able to accomplish approximately half of the key objectives outlined in the four phases of the management plan. Examples of objectives that remain in progress or were not yet initiated include:

- Development of a permanent headquarters located within the NCHA
- Development of a strategic fundraising plan
- Development of an integrated database of coal heritage resources and other cultural and natural resources
- Development of workforce and hospitality training initiatives and partnerships
- Formation of a non-partisan Coal Heritage Caucus that will serve as the voice to the NCHA in the WV House and Senate
- Establishment of incentive-based development guidelines
- Initiation of a National Coal Museum feasibility study

### 5.3.4 Monitoring and Record Keeping

We experienced difficulty obtaining basic program information from NCHA such as a description of each program, date started and completed, and accomplishment. Gathering this information for both current and historic projects required reviewing multiple program files and written and verbal requests to NCHA staff.

NCHA is a part of a state agency and, as such, does not have ultimate control over the manner in which financial records are organized. NCHA financial information is not easily accessible. The lack of specific audits for NCHA and CHHA (since both are encompassed within the state audit) makes it difficult to access specific information. Accounts for programs shared between NCHA and CHHA are not separated and in some cases expenses are paid out of the CHHA account and CHHA is reimbursed by NCHA. Distinguishing which programs were supported by NCHA

required much discussion with NCHA staff. NCHA staff undertook enormous effort to assemble documentation of the match both for operational and program expenses.

It was noted that the financial record-keeping has improved since the current Executive Director assumed the position, and attention was placed on getting the financial records into order (including the hiring of a financial manager) and establishing some principles (such as drawing down previous funds before current funding). Detailed financial information from 1998-2003 was not available.

NCHA provided visitation data for Bramwell Interpretative Center and Boone County Coal Heritage Museum as well as sign in sheets or other documentation of attendees for annual conferences. Data on the number of VISTAs, Website and Geocache statistics were also provided.

## **5.4 NCHA Partnerships**

NCHA has many community partners across the region, including county, city and town governments; state agencies; convention and visitor bureaus; universities; regional organizations; community groups; and others. Some of the partnerships are for preservation, in which the NCHA either assists with funding projects, providing technical assistance, or providing support through the assignment of a VISTA worker. Other partnerships are for promoting the region and may involve joint advertising, other promotional activities, or strategic planning efforts to revitalize the community and region. Overall, interviewees report a great deal of collaboration in the region.

NCHA has a particularly strong relationship with the NPS New River Gorge, who has provided technical assistance for financial and administrative issues since 2004. NPS New River Gorge assisted NCHA in creating some accountability and financial management structures that improved their ability to remain sustainable.

Interviews with NCHA partner organizations indicated that NCHA activities are important to the region and that their organization's mission would be negatively affected if the NCHA partnership were withdrawn. For example, NCHA's partners at Marshall University indicated that without NCHA there would be no organization to partner with for educational events on coal heritage and they would lose a key resource for understanding community needs related to preservation and restoration.

Most partners identified the National Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Project as a key development in the region affecting the sustainability of NCHA. BSA has purchased 10,600 acres of land outside of Mt. Hope, which is surrounded by NPS New River Gorge on 3 sides extending the park lands to 70-100,000 acres of accessible land. This site is located in the heart of the NCHA.

BSA plans to use the land as the home for the Permanent Jamboree, a leadership center, a adventure-based summer camp, and for college groups or elder groups in the Spring and Fall. Additionally, the site will be used for the 2019 World Jamboree.

BSA raised \$250 million in phase I and expect to raise \$400 million in total for the project. They are building four lakes, housing for 40,000 scouts and 10,000 volunteers, an island, a lego center, robotics camp, mountain biking trails, canopy tours, zip lines, and a skate boarding park. The project is expected to raise tourism in the area, promote business development, and facilitate continued infrastructure development such as the development of roadways. For example, ATT has obligated \$50 million in cell services to allow technology to be brought to the region.

Boy scouts attending the Jamboree (40,000 scouts expected) will be required to participate in 8-hours of community service and learn about the region. Most partners identified NCHA's mission as integral to this charge since "coal is at the heart of Southern West Virginia." NCHA recognized that Coal Heritage will likely be a focus of what the BSA will teach incoming boy scouts. NCHA has been an active participant in the planning effort and is fostering relationships to promote partnerships with BSA. NCHA's preservation, restoration and education activities offer good community service opportunities for boy scouts and NCHA has used VISTA volunteers who are working with locals in NCHA region to generate and submit proposals to BSA.

## **5.5 Financial Sustainability, the Importance of NPS Funds, and the Importance of NHA Designation**

As noted earlier, there are several critical components to NHA sustainability, including but not limited to financial sustainability. In order for an NHA to be financially sustainable it must have sufficient funds to cover its operating and programmatic expenses and demonstrate financial stewardship where combined investment results in outcomes related to the NCHA mission.

The data shows that NCHA has not fully utilized the Federal investments it has been obligated. Since 1998, NCHA received \$1,537,217 in Federal NPS funds. An estimated \$304,287 were returned to the Treasury in 2003 or 2004. Five years of funding has been carried over each year and NCHA is currently carrying over \$768,260.

Documentation is missing and little information is available to show how the \$654,168 in Federal NPS funds received from 1998-2004 were utilized. Board minutes reflect that the funds were largely used for planning and developing the management plan. Documentation provided for program activities from 2004 to present show that activities were limited in scope and scale. NCHA did not demonstrate significant program outcomes related to the NCHA mission.

Table 5.1 presents NCHA’s NPS funds received, State funds received as revenue for operational expenses, and total expenses by year. As the chart shows, the amount of Federal NPS allotted fund that NCHA requested and received has ranged from a low of \$13,126 in 2009 to a high of \$311,812 in 2008. Between 2005 and 2011, NPS and State combined revenue totaled \$1,429,040 and NCHA expenses totaled \$1,470,468.

Table 5.1 Federal NPS Revenue, Non-NPS Revenue, Total Revenue and Expenses by Year

Year	NPS Revenue	State Revenue	Total Revenue	Expenses
2005	306,072	100,000	406,072	94,039
2006	--	100,000	100,000	138,709
2007	31,139	100,000	131,139	157,125
2008	311,812	50,000	361,812	388,987
2009	13,126	97,000	110,126	150,499
2010	45,062	92,150	137,212	295,217
2011	90,529	92,150	182,679	121,865
<b>Total</b>	<b>797,740</b>	<b>631,300</b>	<b>1,429,040</b>	<b>1,470,468</b>

It is unclear whether the State funding would continue if the Federal NPS funding is discontinued. Whether NCHA will be able to overcome barriers to utilizing Federal NPS funding is also unclear. BSA activities will likely enhance NCHA and local partners’ ability to compete for private funding as it has implications for promoting business development and increasing tourism. This may make it easier for some local partners to meet the 50 percent Federal match requirements. Three new Board

members were recently appointed by the new WV Governor, which may strengthen Board participation and involvement. The extent to which these new developments can strengthen NCHA's sustainability is unclear, however.

While NCHA's partnership with the CHHA has strengthened its impact on Coal Heritage since the two organizations joined together in 2004, CHHA cannot be considered a resource for NCHA's long-term sustainability. CHHA earmarked funding of \$6 million has \$830,000 remaining. Of that, 729,000 is designated for the restoration of the Houston Company Store. CHHA funds will not be renewed.

### **5.5.1 NHA Coordinating Entity Need for Financial Resources**

NCHA is dependent on Federal NPS funds. The reduction of NCHA funding would likely result in staffing reductions that would impact both NCHA and CHHA since NCHA and CHHA currently split the operational and staffing costs. The consistent view of interviewees is that the sunseting of NPS funds would likely result in the elimination of the NCHA coordinating entity. Staffing could not be sustained without funding for operations and there are no other likely sources of funds or other organizations in the region that could provide that type of support.

No other organization provides resources for preservation, restoration, education and interpretation activities. Several organizations noted that the absence of the NCHA would have an impact on their work. The local NPS at New River Gorge indicated that there would likely be more demand on their staff to provide resources, signage, and other supports if the NCHA did not exist. The Convention and Visitors Bureaus and the Division of Tourism will carry on marketing and advertising activities but indicated that NCHA plays an important coordinating role that is unlikely to be replaced. Additionally, without NCHA these partners indicated that they would have less to "product to sell", making tourism to the area more difficult to market.

### **5.5.2 NHA Need for Financial Resources**

The NCHA provides an umbrella function coordinating Coal Heritage activities for the region. Creating the vision for Coal Heritage in Southern WV is difficult. Both the prosperity and the impoverishments of the region are attributed to coal mining. The NCHA mission of creating a unifying vision that Coal Heritage is a source of pride for residents in the NCHA is a challenge. NCHA has made progress towards achieving that vision. It is the consensus of those interviewed

that if NCHA's Federal support is withdrawn that the NCHA coordinating entity will not survive and that the vision will not be achieved. Southern WV is an impoverished region and there are no other organizations that can support NCHA's operational and program expenses.

Interviews with a wide range of individuals point to this as a critical time for the region with the National Boy Scouts of America (BSA) project. While the first Jamboree is not until 2013, the BSA activities have stimulated business development in the areas with major retailers such as Dick's Sporting Goods opening in the area of the new BSA headquarters. It is expected that NCHA can make valuable contributions to educating up to 40,000 scouts that attend each Boy Scout Jamboree about Coal Heritage and promote economic development in the area by assisting with the coordination of Coal Heritage-related community service activities to help scouts fulfill their 8 hours of community service (up to 240,000 hours per Jamboree). For example, while scouts are not allowed to work with machinery, the BSA has agreed to fund contractors to work alongside of the scouts to assist with the preservation and restoration of dilapidated buildings. NCHA is already making use of its VISTA workers in the community to generate proposals for Coal Heritage projects for BSA to consider.

## **5.6 Sustainability Summary**

Evaluation results question NCHA's long-term sustainability. Although the NCHA has a range of partners to engage in activities, no other organization provides resources for preservation, restoration, education, and interpretation activities. In addition, the NCHA does not have a management structure that provides a strong basis on which to grow and thrive, especially if Federal funding is no longer available. Despite having a strong Executive Director, there are concerns about project oversight and recording keeping, and about the lack of a Board that is trained, experienced, and engaged in fulfilling the specified functions of the Board of the Directors. New appointments may strengthen the Board, but the Board's role to date has been minimal.

Finally, there is little promise of financial sustainability. NCHA is dependent on Federal NPS funds, in part due to the economic climate of its state. The reduction of NCHA funding would likely result in staffing reductions that would impact both NCHA and CHHA as NCHA and CHHA currently split the operational and staffing costs. The sunseting of NPS funds would likely result in the elimination of the NCHA coordinating entity. Staffing could not be sustained without funding for operations and there are no other likely sources of funds or other organizations in the region that could provide that type of support. The National Boy Scouts of American project may provide

increased prospects for funding throughout the region, but it is not clear if it would be able to sustain the organization.



## Appendix 1 Evaluation Legislation

**From P. L. 110-229, signed May 8, 2008**

### SEC. 462. EVALUATION AND REPORT.

(a) In General.--For the nine National Heritage Areas authorized in Division II of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996, not later than 3 years before the date on which authority for Federal funding terminates for each National Heritage Area, the Secretary shall—

(1) conduct an evaluation of the accomplishments of the National Heritage Area; and

(2) prepare a report in accordance with subsection (c).

(b) Evaluation.--An evaluation conducted under subsection (a)(1) shall—

(1) assess the progress of the local management entity with respect to--

(A) accomplishing the purposes of the authorizing legislation for the National Heritage Area; and

(B) achieving the goals and objectives of the approved management plan for the National Heritage Area;

(2) analyze the investments of Federal, State, Tribal, and local government and private entities in each National Heritage Area to determine the impact of the investments; and

(3) review the management structure, partnership relationships, and funding of the National Heritage Area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the National Heritage Area.

(c) Report.--Based on the evaluation conducted under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary shall submit a report to the Committee on Natural Resources of the United States House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate. The report shall include recommendations for the future role of the National Park Service, if any, with respect to the National Heritage Area.



## Appendix 2 Authorizing Legislation

### PUBLIC LAW 104–333 NOV. 12, 1996 110 STAT. 4243 DIVISION II

#### TITLE I—NATIONAL COAL HERITAGE AREA SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “National Coal Heritage Area Act of 1996”.

#### SEC. 102. FINDINGS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds as follows:

(1) Certain events that led to the development of southern West Virginia’s coalfields during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the early part of the current century are of national historic and cultural significance in terms of their contribution to the industrialization of the United States, the organization of workers into trade unions, and the unique culture of the Appalachian Region.

(2) It is in the national interest to preserve and protect physical remnants of this era for the education and benefit of present and future generations.

(3) There is a need to provide assistance for the preservation and promotion of those vestiges of southern West Virginia’s coal heritage which have outstanding cultural, historic, and architectural value.

#### SEC. 103. ESTABLISHMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of preserving and interpreting for the educational and inspirational benefit of present and future generations certain lands and structures with unique and significant historic and cultural value associated with the coal mining heritage of the State of West Virginia and the Nation, there is hereby established the National Coal Heritage Area (hereafter in this title referred to as the “Area”).

(b) BOUNDARIES.—The Area shall be comprised of the counties in the State of West Virginia that are the subject of the study by the National Park Service, dated 1993, entitled “A Coal Mining Heritage Study: Southern West Virginia” conducted pursuant to title VI of Public Law 100–699.

(c) ADMINISTRATION.—The Area shall be administered in accordance with this title.

#### SEC. 104. CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT.

The Secretary of the Interior (hereafter in this title referred to as the “Secretary”) is authorized to enter into a contractual agreement with the Governor of the State of West Virginia, acting through the Division of Culture and History and the Division of Tourism and Parks, pursuant to which the Secretary shall assist the State of West Virginia, its units of local government, and nonprofit organizations in each of the following:

(1) The development and implementation of integrated cultural, historical, and land resource management policies and programs in order to retain, enhance, and interpret the significant values of the lands, water, and structures of the Area.

(2) The preservation, restoration, maintenance, operation, interpretation, and promotion of buildings, structures, facilities, National Coal Heritage Area Act of 1996. West Virginia. 16 USC 461 note. 110 STAT. 4244 PUBLIC LAW 104–333—NOV. 12, 1996 sites, and points of interest for public use that possess cultural, historical, and architectural values associated with the coal mining heritage of the Area.

(3) The coordination of activities by Federal, State, and local governments and private businesses and organizations in order to further historic preservation and compatible economic revitalization.

(4) The development of guidelines and standards for projects, consistent with standards established by the National Park Service, for the preservation and restoration of historic properties, including interpretative methods, that will further history preservation in the region.

#### **SEC. 105. ELIGIBLE RESOURCES.**

The resources eligible for the assistance under paragraphs (2) and (5) of section 104 shall include those set forth in appendix D of the study by the National Park Service, dated 1993, entitled “A Coal Mining Heritage Study: Southern West Virginia”, conducted pursuant to title VI of Public Law 100–699. Priority consideration shall be given to those sites listed as “Conservation Priorities” and “Important Historic Resources” as depicted on the map entitled “Study Area: Historic Resources” in such study.

#### **SEC. 106. COAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to the contractual agreement referred to in section 104, within three years after the date of enactment of this title, the Governor of the State of West Virginia, acting through the Division of Culture and History and the Division of Tourism and Parks, shall submit to the Secretary a Coal Heritage Management Plan for the Area. The plan shall at a minimum—

(1) set forth the integrated cultural, historical, and land resource management policies and programs referred to in section 104;

(2) describe the guidelines and standards for projects referred to in section 104; and

(3) set forth the responsibilities of the State of West Virginia, units of local government, nonprofit entities, or Secretary to administer any properties acquired pursuant to section 104.

(b) PLAN APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall approve the plan submitted under subsection (a) unless he determines that it would meet the objectives of this title.

#### **SEC. 107. SUNSET.**

The Secretary may not make any grant or provide any assistance under this title after September 30, 2012.

#### **SEC. 108. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated under this title not more than \$1,000,000 for any fiscal year. Not more than a total of \$10,000,000 may be appropriated for the Area under this title.

(b) 50 PERCENT MATCH.—Federal funding provided under this title may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of any assistance or grant provided or authorized under this title.

**Public Law 110–229**  
**122 STAT. 754**  
**110th Congress**  
**May 8, 2008**

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**Subtitle E—Technical Corrections and Additions**

**SEC. 471. NATIONAL COAL HERITAGE AREA TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.**

Title I of Division II of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–333 as amended by Public Law 106–176 and Public Law 109–338) is amended—

(1) by striking section 103(b) and inserting the following:

“(b) BOUNDARIES.—The National Coal Heritage Area shall be comprised of Lincoln County, West Virginia, and Paint Creek and Cabin Creek within Kanawah County, West Virginia, and the counties that are the subject of the study by the National Park Service, dated 1993, entitled ‘A Coal Mining Heritage Study: Southern West Virginia’ conducted pursuant to title VI of Public Law 100–699.”;

(2) by striking section 105 and inserting the following:

“**SEC. 105. ELIGIBLE RESOURCES.** “(a) IN GENERAL.—The resources eligible for the assistance under section 104 shall include—

“(1) resources in Lincoln County, West Virginia, and Paint Creek and Cabin Creek in Kanawah County, West Virginia, as determined to be appropriate by the National Coal Heritage Area Authority; and

“(2) the resources set forth in appendix D of the study by the National Park Service, dated 1993, entitled ‘A Coal Mining Heritage Study: Southern West Virginia’ conducted pursuant to title VI of Public Law 100–699.

“(b) PRIORITY.—Priority consideration shall be given to those sites listed as ‘Conservation Priorities’ and ‘Important Historic Resources’ as depicted on the map entitled ‘Study Area: Historic Resources’ in such study.”;

(3) in section 106(a)—

(A) by striking “Governor” and all that follows through “Parks,” and inserting “National Coal Heritage Area Authority”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “State of West Virginia” and all that follows through “entities, or” and inserting “National Coal Heritage Area Authority or”;

(4) in section 106(b), by inserting “not” before “meet”.

### Background and Purpose

In May 2008, Congress passed legislation<sup>5</sup> which requires the Secretary of the Interior to evaluate the accomplishments of nine National Heritage Areas (NHAs) no later than 3 years before the date on which authority for Federal funding for each of the NHAs terminates. Based on findings of each evaluation, the legislation requires the Secretary to prepare a report with recommendations for the National Park Service's future role with respect to the NHA under review.

The National Parks Conservation Association's Center for Park Management (CPM) conducted the first evaluation of Essex National Heritage Area in 2008. In 2010, CPM, in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), then contracted with Westat to evaluate the next two NHA sites: Augusta Canals in Augusta, GA and Silos and Smokestacks in Waterloo, IA. Each evaluation was designed to answer the following questions, outlined in the legislation:

1. Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the Heritage Area achieved its proposed accomplishments?
2. What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government and private entities?
3. How do the Heritage Areas management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to its sustainability?

This document presents Westat's methodology for conducting the NHA evaluations for the six remaining Heritage Areas. This methodology includes: our core evaluation approach; evaluation design; associated data collection methods, sources, and measures; and analysis and reporting plans. Our methods build upon the methodology and instruments used in previous Augusta Canal and Silos and Smokestacks NHA evaluations.

In addition to outlining our core approach to the evaluation, this document describes the process Westat will use to tailor the approach for each of the specific NHA evaluations.

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<sup>5</sup> From P.L. 110-229, Section 462. EVALUATION AND REPORT, signed May 8, 2008

## Core Evaluation Approach

Our approach to the NHA evaluation centers around three basic principles – stakeholder collaboration, in-depth and triangulated data collection, and efficiencies of time and effort. The evaluation will use a case study design, examining each NHA individually. The case study design is appropriate for addressing the NHA evaluation questions since there are multiple variables of interest within each NHA and multiple sources of data with the need for convergence or triangulation among the sources. As noted below, data sources in each site will include documents, key informants from the coordinating/management entity and partner organizations, and community stakeholders. Data collection will be guided by a case study protocol outlining the domains and measures of interest using topic-centered guides for extracting data from existing sources and for interviewing key informants (individually and in group interviews).

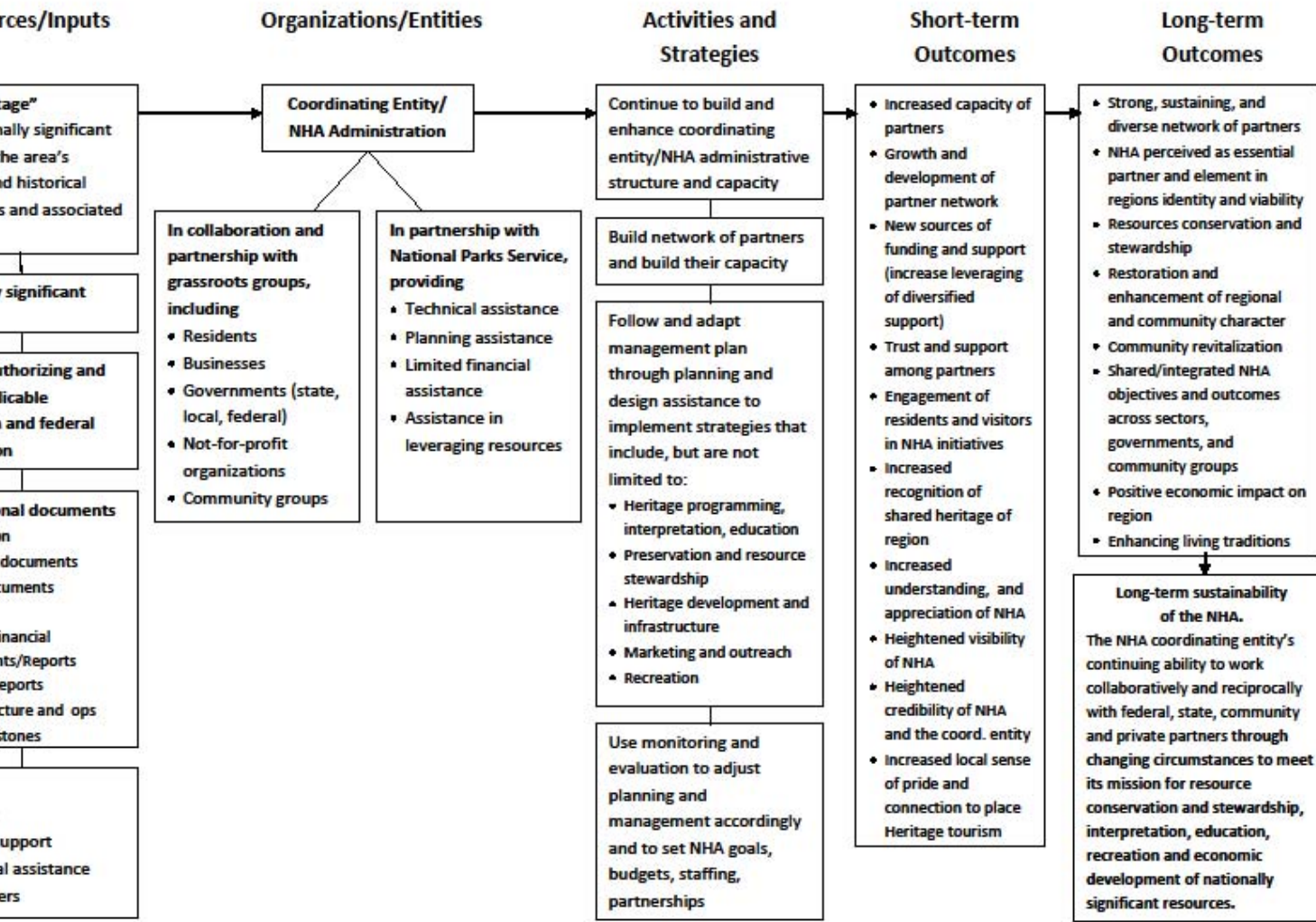
The evaluation will incorporate a collaborative approach with project stakeholders to ensure that it is relevant to all and is grounded in the local knowledge of the site as well as designed to meet legislative requirements. Therefore, in the design and implementation of each evaluation, we will include the perspectives of NPS and NHA leadership. Working products will be developed in close coordination with NPS and the NHA evaluation sites throughout the evaluation process. Involving all key stakeholders and including varying perspectives at each stage of the process will ensure that the data collection methods and indicators, the analysis, and interpretation of the findings reflect their views and concerns.

## Core Evaluation Design and Measures

Westat is developing a core evaluation design that will then be tailored for each NHA evaluation. Three tools guide the development of the core evaluation design: the NHA Logic Model (Figure 1), the NHA Domain Matrix (Appendix C of the Guide), and a comprehensive case study protocol. The basic structure of the NHA Logic Model is a visual representation of the:

- overarching goal for a NHA;
- resources and key partnerships available to help an NHA accomplish its goals;
- activities and strategies that are being implemented to accomplish the NHA goal;
- intended short- and long-term outcomes; and
- the linkages among the activities, strategies, and outcomes.

# Logic Model





The logic model provides a blueprint for the case study design, outlining the components to examine, the indicators to measure, and the relationships to investigate between the various activities and outcomes. It therefore is a key tool for outlining the data that should be collected as well as the types of analyses that might be conducted. In addition, it provides an efficient way to display the underlying logic or framework of the NHA. For the core evaluation design, the NHA logic model has guided the development of the NHA Domain Matrix, which will in turn inform the development of a case study protocol to conduct the evaluation.

The NHA Domain Matrix is designed to thoroughly address the three key evaluation questions outlined in the legislation. The left-hand side of the matrix lists the key domains and measures required to answer each evaluation question. Each of these domains and measures are cross-walked with the potential data sources. Many of the domains will be informed by more than one data source, as is typical in a case study, to provide for more valid and complete results through triangulation of multiple perspectives. The sources for data collection include: existing NHA documentation, including foundational and financial documents; interviews with NHA staff and key partners; and input from citizens in the NHA community. A later section of this methodology will provide greater detail about the selected data sources and process for data collection. A brief synopsis of the Domain Matrix and how it guides our approach to addressing the key questions follows:

**Evaluation Question 1: Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the Heritage Area achieved its proposed accomplishments?**

In addressing this question, we will collect data through interviews and documents on the nature of the proposed NHA activities; how these activities are being implemented by the local coordinating entity/management entity, partnership network and/or the local community; and, the impacts of the activities. The measures also will address whether the NHAs are implementing the activities proposed in the initial NHA designation, and if not, what circumstances or situations may have led to their adaptation or adjustment. This examination consists of in-depth interviews with staff to understand what activities have resulted from the NHA designation that was initially not intended or expected. Also, in assessing the goals and objectives of the NHA, we will try to discern if there were mechanisms in place prior to establishment of the NHA intended to achieve these goals.

**Evaluation Question 2: What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal, and local government and private entities?**

Addressing this question will begin with gathering information through interviews with key NHA management staff and a review of financial data forms. Understanding what investments have been made will involve collecting data on both financial and non-financial investments, including data on the amount, nature, and sources of these investments over time. We will also examine the impact of these investments and how they are helping the NHAs achieve their intended outcomes through data collected from reviewing NHA plans and interviews with key partners and local residents of the NHA community. In cases when an NHA has numerous investment sources, we will focus on the NHA’s “major” sources and whether these sources are restricted or unrestricted funds. To identify “major” sources of investment, we will examine the range of investment sources and characterize them by financial or time commitment thresholds.

**Evaluation Question 3: How do the NHA’s management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to its sustainability?**

Data to inform this question will be primarily gathered from interviews with key NHA management staff and a subset of NHA partners, and by performing a review and analysis of the NHA financial documents. The definition of sustainability developed by the NPS working group<sup>6</sup> will be employed

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<sup>6</sup> The National Heritage Area coordinating entity’s continuing ability to work collaboratively and reciprocally with Federal, state, community and private partners through changing circumstances to meet its mission for resource conservation and stewardship, interpretation, education, recreation and economic development of nationally significant resources.

Critical components of sustainability of a National Heritage Area include but are not limited to:

- Coordinating entity and the National Park Service honoring the legislative mandate of the National Heritage Area;
- Coordinating entity’s management capacity including governance, adaptive management (such as strategic planning), staffing and operations;
- Financial planning and preparedness, including the ongoing ability to leverage resources in support of the local network of partners;
- Partnering with diverse community stakeholders including serving as a hub, catalyst and/or coordinating entity for on-going capacity building, communication and collaboration among local entities
- Program and project stewardship where the combined investment results in the improved economic value and ultimately long-term quality of life of that region; and
- Outreach and marketing to engage a full and diverse range of audiences.

in addressing this question. We will examine the nature of management structure and partnership network and their contribution to sustainability. We will also assess the financial investments over time and their corresponding impact on the financial sustainability of those investments and their future with and without future Federal funding. Specifically, we will perform an analysis of the ratio of Federal funding to other fund sources and the change in this ratio over time overall and for specific activities. We will also interview NHA leadership and board staff to understand the extent to which fundraising activities have been prioritized for specific activities. Based on these analytic and data collection activities, an attempt would be made to determine what the likely effects on the NHA would be if Federal funding was reduced or discontinued; specifically, which activities might have a prospect of continuing with reduced or discontinued Federal funding, which would likely end with reduced or discontinued Federal funding, and therefore, which goals and objectives might not be reached. The evaluation will also examine if there are activities that support issues of national importance, and thus, should be considered for other Federal funding. Finally, the evaluation will address how other organizations that exist within the Heritage Area be effected by the sunset of Federal funds, and if there are mechanisms in place for these organizations to work toward the Heritage Area goals post-sunset.

## **Data Collection Methods**

The planned data collection methods include: topic-centered interviews with NHA management staff; topic-centered interviews with members of the NHA partner network; intercept conversations with community stakeholders; review of the NHA plans and legal documents; review of the NHA guides, brochures, websites and other descriptive documents; and review of the NHA financial data records. In the sections below, we describe each of these methods, including how we will select the data sources, what data we will collect, and the tools we will use to collect the data. For each of the methods, we will begin by developing a “generic” instrument that corresponds to the key elements outlined in the domain matrix. The process for tailoring the instruments to each of the evaluation sites include:

## **Foundation Documents Review**

A first set of documents will be reviewed to frame the decisions and actions of the coordinating entity’s role in implementing the designated NHA’s objectives. These documents provide many of

the objectives for the NHA and frame expectations for the local coordinating entity. These documents include:

- Legislation – all Federal, state and/or local legislation that provides the legal framework for the NHA
- Plans – all planning documents, including updates, developed by the coordinating entity and/or partners that are intended to deliver the legal mandates defined by Congress and/or other legislative bodies
- Legal documents – documents signed by the coordinating entity that allow it to conduct/produce routine NHA business

Another set of documents will be obtained and reviewed to understand the nature of NHA activities and their relationship with NHA objectives. These documents include:

- Guides – documents designed to define how NHA business operates
- Annual financial statements and reports – includes audits, tax returns, budget activities and performance program reports
- Annual reports – includes reports to Congress, to partners and to the NPS and others
- Organizational structure and operations – how the coordinating entity, board(s) and committees do NHA work, their roles and functions
- Key milestones – a timeline of major events that document the evolution of the NHA to include outside influences affecting your planning and implementation process

We will collaborate with each of the NHA coordinating entities and NPS to gather these materials. We will also provide sample table shells to help NHA coordinating entity staff understand evaluation data needs and identify relevant documents to share with Westat.

In reviewing these documents, we will abstract information into tables that historically documents NHA activities, such as the number of visitors or number of workshops offered per year. We will also use a case study protocol to abstract key information and make use of data analysis software, such as NVivo, to meaningfully structure the data. This review of documents will be critical in helping us tailor the specifics of the evaluation for each site, particularly in selecting NHA staff and partners to interview.

## **Financial Data Review**

Our approach to the financial data review is informed by the Augusta Canal and Silos and Smokestacks evaluations, particularly with respect to the types of data collected and the nature of the analyses performed. We will review key NHA financial data records such as audits, tax returns, budgets and performance program reports to collect data on the amount and sources of funding for the NHA, trends in funding over a 10-year period, and the impact of these resources on the economic sustainability of the NHA. We will coordinate with each of the NHA coordinating entities and NPS to gather these materials and collect supporting documentation regarding external matching contributions and use of NHA resources according to program areas. We will use a protocol to guide the review of financial data needs with each NHA site.

## **Topic-Centered Interviews with Staff of the NHA Coordinating Entity**

During a follow-up site visit, key staff from the NHA coordinating entity will be interviewed. The staff will include the Executive Director and staff in key roles identified through review of the foundational documents. For example, some of the staff selected for interviews could include managers of specific NHA activities (i.e., programming or marketing directors), or staff who work in finance, development or partner relationship functions. A topic-centered, semi-structured protocol will be used to conduct each of the interviews, obtaining information about the background of the NHA, NHA activities and investments, and their associated impacts, including their contribution to NHA sustainability. We will conduct individual interviews with the staff with the most history and scope of understanding of the NHA operations, such as the Executive Director or Finance Manager. Other staff, especially those with similar roles such as program assistants will be interviewed in groups to maximize the number of viewpoints gathered. Each of the topic-centered interviews will be semi-structured, outlining the key areas to cover and probes that are specific to the site. However, as new areas emerge, the interviews will be flexible to collect information on these areas. Although all interviews will be conducted on site at the coordinating entity, follow-up telephone conversations will be conducted as needed to capture additional information. We expect to spend 1 day interviewing up to nine staff in each NHA.

## Topic-Centered Interviews with Members of the NHA Partner Network

Members of the NHA partner network, including NPS, will be interviewed to in order to gain an understanding about NHA activities and investments and their associated impacts, including their contribution to NHA sustainability. A topic-centered, semi-structured interview protocol will guide these interviews, some of which will be conducted individually, either in person or by telephone, and others that will be conducted through group interviews to maximize the number of viewpoints gathered. If applicable for the respective site, we expect to select 15-20 partners from each NHA to interview. In determining criteria for selecting partners to interview, we will review foundational documents and web site materials for each NHA site. These criteria will likely include the level of the partner's relationship with the NHA, the extent to which they participate and/or support NHA activities, their financial relationship and their geographic representation. We will share the list of selected partners with the NHA for completeness and will incorporate the NHA's suggestions of other partners who should be interviewed. Once this list is finalized, Westat will contact the partners for interview scheduling. We expect to have a range of stakeholders and organizations participate in these interviews adding to the multiple sources of data for triangulation.

## Community Input

Members of the NHA community will be invited to provide their input about the nature and impact of NHA activities through intercept conversations with a sample of residents in the NHA community. These conversations may take place at the Heritage Area site or at an event or place within the community. Conversations will help evaluation team gain an understanding of the community's familiarity with the Heritage Area and its unique and nationally significant aspects. The intercept conversations will also provide information about the residents' awareness of and appreciation for the Heritage Area. Westat will work with the NHA management entity to develop strategies for obtaining community input.

It is important to recognize the limitations in the data that will be collected through the community input strategies. First, as we will be identifying "convenient" groups of individuals, it is likely that those involved will not be fully representative of local residents, tourists, and volunteers. Depending on how they are identified, they have more or less motivation to be interested in the NHA. In addition, the data collected will be largely qualitative. We will not be able to develop quantitative indicators of the community input, but rather collect more impressionistic input that will provide an

indication based on each respondent's background, prior involvement, and interest as to how well the NHA is enhancing community awareness of, appreciation of, and involvement in the NHA.

## **Analyze Data and Findings Document**

The analysis and synthesis of each NHA's data will be guided by the overall protocol and the Findings Document outline. Data reduction will first begin by summarizing the data within each domain area, first within each source, and then synthesizing the data across sources. Attempts will be made to reconcile any issues or discrepancies across the sources by contacting the relevant parties at each NHA. Data will be summarized within each domain and analyzed for relationships, guided by the logic model. To the degree possible, results will be displayed graphically and in tables. Findings will reflect the triangulated information – where appropriate and feasible, it will be important to ensure that the results not only reflect the perspectives of the key informants but are substantiated with data from documents and other written sources.

Results of each NHA evaluation will be communicated in a Findings Document. The findings document will be guided by a modification of the outline finalized by the NHA Evaluation Working Group. The Findings Document outline was developed according to Westat's experience with the Augusta Canal and Silos and Smokestacks evaluation, and has been streamlined to present key findings in an Executive Summary, combine sections according to the three evaluation questions, and address sustainability questions regarding the impact of the sunset of Federal funds on NHA activities. Westat will first share a draft of the findings document with the Executive Director of the NHA coordinating entity for a review of technical accuracy. The Executive Director will have the opportunity to share the findings document with other staff and stakeholders as desired, and can provide comments to the evaluation team, either in writing or via telephone discussion. Finally, if necessary to discuss differences, a joint telephone conversation involving the NHA Executive Director, NPS and Westat can be held to discuss the comments and to arrive at a resolution. Once Westat has incorporated the feedback, the NHA coordinating entity will have another opportunity to review the findings document before it is shared with NPS. Once the NHA's final feedback is reviewed and incorporated, Westat will submit the draft findings documents to NPS for review. Westat expects to have the Final Findings Document for each evaluation complete by July 2012.

## Tailoring the Evaluation Design for NHA Evaluation Sites

The core evaluation design will be tailored to the six NHA sites under evaluation. A preliminary “Meet and Greet” visit to the NHAs will largely inform how the protocols should be customized for each site, including the domains that are relevant, the probes that should be added to inquire about each domain, and the specific data sources that are relevant for the site. We will work with the Executive Director to determine the key staff to involve in individual and group interviews during a second site visit, partner organizations that should be represented, and strategies to obtain community input.

A customized logic model for each NHA will be developed during the initial site visit; detailing the respective NHA’s goals, resources, partnerships, activities and intended outcomes. This process will involve a group meeting with NHA management staff and NPS partners to get a diverse range of perspectives and obtain a complete picture of the designated NHA. In preparation for this visit, we will review existing documentation for the NHA sites. We expect these preliminary Meet and Greet visits and logic modeling sessions to involve about 2 days of travel and meeting time.

Once the tailored logic models are finalized for each NHA evaluation site, Westat will then adapt the NHA Domain Matrix and the comprehensive case study protocol that were developed as part of the core evaluation design. These tailored tools will still address the evaluation research questions identified by the legislation, but will ensure that the questions are geared toward the specific aspects of each NHA site.

Interview data collection for each NHA evaluation will occur during a second visit to each NHA site, and is expected to last 3 to 5 days depending on the scope of the site. We will use memos to keep the NHA Executive Director informed of our evaluation activities both pre- and post- site visits.

We will also work with each NHA during the second site visit, and with email and phone communications post site-visit, to collect and analyze information for the financial review. The financial data protocol will provide the NHA coordinating entity with an understanding of the data needs to address the second evaluation question guide these conversations in identifying years in which there is audit information pertinent to the evaluation and will help NHA coordinating entity staff to identify other data sources that will support the financial analysis.



## Evaluation Limitations

To the greatest extent possible, Westat has tried to ensure this evaluation methodology thoroughly addresses the three research questions. However, there are parameters to this methodology that result in a few limitations on evaluation findings. In some instances, there is a trade-off between maximizing the time and efficiency for the evaluation and the ability to thoroughly collect information from a range of stakeholders. For instance, to obtain input from community stakeholders, a survey is not possible within the current evaluation due to OMB Paperwork Reduction Requirements. Therefore, the data received from intercept conversations will be a more qualitative assessment of the community's perceptions of the NHA. As noted, limitations to the community input include convenient, rather than representative, samples of tourists, local residents, and volunteers, and impressionistic rather than quantitative data on the impact of the NHA on stakeholder knowledge, attitudes, and involvement in the NHA. Therefore, the data obtained will have to be viewed with these limitations in mind.

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## National Coal Heritage Area Management/Staff Topic-Centered Interview Discussion Guide

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for talking with me today. As part of the Federally mandated evaluation of National Heritage Area (NHA), we are talking with members of the National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA) coordinating entity staff with the most history and scope of understanding of the NCHA's operations. We developed this logic model, based off our last visit to your program, and would like to use it as a guide throughout the interview. By using this logic model as a guide, our discussion will help us gain a more detailed understanding of the NCHA, including the background and history, your different activities and investments and their associated outcomes, and their contribution to the NCHA's sustainability.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary and it should take about 1 to 2 hours to complete.

The overarching goals of the NCHA are:

1. **Preservation and Restoration**—to promote the protection and preservation of the region's rapidly vanishing artifacts, structures, and sites from mining era of the late 19th and 20th century.
2. **Interpretation**—to interpret the history, culture and technology of the mining era.
3. **Education**—to foster an ethic of pride and stewardship among area residents to understand the importance of coal mining history.
4. **Economic Development**—to develop southern West Virginia coalfields into a destination for “heritage tourism” and stimulate tourism/ economic development.

### HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

1. Could you tell us about the organizational history and evolution prior to the NCHA designation?
2. How did the NCHA designation come about? How did this designation affect your strategic planning processes and management plan?

3. What was your working relationship like with NPS? Has that relationship evolved over the time you have been working with them?

*Probe:*

- *National Parks Regional office, field offices, and park sites in the State, who are partners to the coordinating entity. Probe: Relationship with New River Gorge)*
- *American Battlefield Protection Program Grants*
- *Certified Local Governments*
- *Federal Lands to Parks Transfers*
- *Historic Preservation Tax Credit Projects*
- *Land & Water Conservation Fund Grants*
- *National Register of Historic Places (they can designate Properties; Districts; or Landmarks. NHAs can also seek National Park designation for select entities. ROS indicated this was a series progression need to check that.)*
- *Preserve America Grants*
- *Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Projects*
- *Save America's Treasures Grants*

4. How are the management and operations of the NCHA coordinating entity currently structured?

*Probes:*

- Description of executive leadership and role in organization
- Description of governance and role in organization
- Description of staffing and volunteers

5. What is the mission and vision for the NCHA? What are the goals for the NCHA coordinating entity?
6. Can you describe the various planning processes that the NCHA coordinating entity has undertaken over time? When and how did you determine a need for this and what type of engagement of the larger community was necessary?
7. What is your relationship with the National Scenic Byways Coal Heritage Trail?

*Probe: Shared staff; Board membership; funding; joint activities*

## ACTIVITIES

We'd like to get a better understanding about some of the activities that you and other staff told us about during our first site visit. We'd like to learn about how these activities fit into your overall programming and vision for the NCHA and who/what is involved in their implementation

The NCHA coordinating entity has developed a set of goals and strategies that address the overarching goals of Preservation and Restoration, Interpretation, Education and Economic Development. According to the logic model, the coordinating entity is involved in the following activities [*Choose from the activities listed below that pertain to the NHA*]

### **Preservation and Restoration:**

Activities that preserve and protect historic structures and natural resources from the coal mining era including Nellis Church, Summers County Hinton Train Depot, Henry Ford Mine, Bramwell Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, McDowell Co. Coal Miners Memorial, hiking and biking trails etc.

1. For these activities please provide the following details:
  - When did it begin? What was the impetus for starting it?
  - What has been the role of the NHA coordinating entity?
  - What has been the role of the NHA Administrative staff (coordinating, sponsoring, promoting, attending, staff service on Boards)?
  - What has been the role of the NHA's partners?
  - What has been the role of the local community (attending, promoting, supporting)?
  - Other?
  
2. What has/have been the greatest impact(s) of this activity? Do you have measures to show this impact?

*Probes:*

  - *Building restoration, Environmental, cultural and historic resources Conservation, Artifact or archive preservation,*
  - *Increased awareness, understanding and pride in Coal Heritage*
  - *Increased recognition of cultural influence of Coal Heritage*
  - *Increased engagement, visitation, and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites by locals and visitors*
  - *Greater amount/ diversity in sources of funding committed to these activities*
  - *Increased diversification of local economy (e.g. entrepreneur and small business development)*
  
3. How would this activity be affected if the Federal funding is reduced? If it sunsets? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that support the NHA?
  
4. Are there documents you could provide us that describe this activity and how it has been implemented over the years?

## Interpretation and Education

Activities and programs that tell the history, culture, and technology of the mining era and foster an ethic of pride and stewardship among area residents to understand the importance of coal mining history. (e.g. *Travelling Exhibits, Interpretive Signs; Beckley and Bramwell Interpretive Centers; Kimball War Memorial Exhibit; Children's Guide etc.*)

1. Could you provide the following details about:
  - The types of topics covered? How do you determine the interpretation/education topics?
  - Who are the recipients? Who attends? (i.e. NCHA coordinating entity staff, NPS [which] staff, partners, etc.)
  - How do you determine which region/areas receive support?
  - The role of NCHA coordinating entity staff in providing this?
  - The role of the community in implementing these activities?
  - What are the costs and funding sources for the consultation?
  - What are the goals and objectives of these education and interpretation activities?

2. How long has the organization been providing interpretation and educational activities? Overall, what was the impetus for starting this activity? *Probe- was it part of the original management plan? Seen as an unmet need in the community?*

3. How have the activities impacted:

*Probe:*

- *Recipients and Participants – increased awareness and understanding?*
- *Increased engagement, visitation and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites?*
- *Partners – their capacity, the relationships among partners - in what ways?*
- *Greater amount/ diversity in sources of funding committed to these activities*
- *Increased diversification of local economy (e.g. entrepreneur and small business development)*
- 

- 3b. Do you have measures to show this impact?

4. Could you tell us what have been the overall accomplishments of the education and interpretation activities? What challenges have you encountered in implementing these activities?
5. How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of each education and interpretation activity?
6. How would this activity be affected if the Federal funding is reduced? If it sunsets? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that support the NHA?

7. Are there documents you could provide us that describe education and interpretation activities, such as the types of assistance provided, to whom and the related outcomes?

### **Economic Development:**

Activities and programs that help to develop the NHA into a destination for “heritage tourism” and stimulate tourism/economic development.

1. For each of these activities:
  - When did it begin? What was the impetus for starting it?
  - What has been the role of the NCA?
  - What has been the role of the partners?
  - What has been the role of the local community?
  - What have been the overall accomplishments of this activity in your area? What challenges have you encountered in implementing this activity?
  - How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of it?
2. What kind of an impact do you think oversight and management of NCHA and its resources has had in the community? *Probes:*
  - *Increase engagement, visitation and visibility of NCHA Sites by locals and visitors*
  - *Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming*
  - *Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)*
3. How would this activity be affected if Federal funding sunsets? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that supports the NCHA?
4. Are there documents you could provide us that describe this activity and how it has been implemented over the years?

## Marketing and Public Outreach:

Activities that increase public use and awareness of the NHA and further its economic sustainability. Marketing and public outreach may encompass the use of guides, brochures, signage, newsletters, social media and/or participation in community events to increase public awareness of the NHA including:

- *Website*
- *Visitor's Guides*
- *WV State Travel Guide*
- *Earned Media: Articles and Radio Interviews*
- *Preservations Awards Program*
- *Geocache sites*
- *Other?*

1. For these activities could you provide us details about:

- What it entails?
- The impetus for starting the activity?
- How long it has been in place?
- The role of NCHA coordinating entity staff?
- The role of the local community?
- The role of partners?

2. How have these marketing and awareness building activities impacted: *Probe*

- *Increased awareness, understanding, and pride in Coal Heritage history and ethnic diversity*
- *Recognize cultural influence of Coal Heritage*
- *Increase engagement, visitation and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites by locals and visitors*
- *Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming*
- *Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)*

3. Could you tell us the overall accomplishments of your marketing activities? What challenges have you encountered in implementing these activities?

4. How would the marketing and outreach activities be affected if the Federal funding is reduced? If it sunsets? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide the same activities as the NCHA coordinating entity in a way that support the heritage area?

5. Are there documents you could provide us that describe the marketing and outreach activities and how they have been implemented over the years?

## **Planning, Technical Assistance and Support**

Activities that plan for and build local community capacity and assist individuals, organizations and communities who are involved in NHA activities. These activities could include planning documents, grant-making, coordination of VISTA volunteers, provision of technical assistance for grant-writing or local fundraising, or other activities.

### **Grant-making**

1. We'd like to learn more about your grant-making activities. Can you describe the different grant programs that you offer?
  - When it began?
  - The impetus for starting it?
  - The activities it supports? *Probe – how does it promote the preservation, interpretation and education and programming of America's unique story?*
  - How it is funded? Does it leverage other funding?
  - Whether the grants are provided for a specific purpose/time period and/or if they could be sustained on their own without continued NHA funding?
  - The grant-making process for this program:
    - How do organizations find out about and apply for grants?
    - What is the size of the grants?
    - What is the process for determining award?
    - What are the funding and reporting requirements?
    - What is time period of award?
2. Overall, how have the grants programs impacted: *Probes:*
  - *Build capacity of communities*
  - *Foster future stewardship Coal Heritage sites and resources*
  - *Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming*
  - *Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)*
  -
3. Are there certain grant programs that have been more successful than others in achieving the goals of NCHA? If so, why do you think these have better impacts for NCHA than others?
4. What challenges have you had in administering these grant programs? Are there certain ones that are more or less problematic? In what ways? What have you done to deal with these challenges? What has worked? What has not?
5. What challenges have grantees encountered in implementing the grants?
6. How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of your grant-making activities?



7. How would this activity be affected if the Federal funding is reduced? If it sunsets? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide grants that support the NCHA?
8. Are there documents you could provide us that describe these grant programs and how they have been implemented over the years?

## Other Activities

*Probe:*

- *Coordination of VISTAs volunteers, interpretative materials and exhibits*
- *Technical Assistance and Support for local fundraising, applications for registering historic sites (Hinton Depot – tourism and sustainability plan; Sophia- application-reg. hist. district; funds for J. Henry Hist Park; Fundraising for Helen*
- *Bluefield Historic District – walking tour and street scape enhancements*
- *Grant writing workshops*
- *VISTA led cleanup to enhance visitor's experience*
- *NCHA Trail Plan*

1. When did it begin? What was the impetus for starting it?
2. What has been the role of the NHA coordinating entity?
3. What has been the role of the partners?
4. What has been the role of the local community?
5. What have been the overall accomplishments of this activity in your area? What challenges have you encountered in implementing this activity?
  6. How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of it?
  7. How would this activity be affected if the Federal funding is reduced? If it sunsets? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that support the heritage area?
  8. Are there documents you could provide us that describe this activity and how it has been implemented over the years?

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND ADVISORY GROUPS

### Board of Trustees and Advisory Groups

1. Can you tell us about the history of and/or your role on the NCHA Board?

*Probe on composition:*

#### ***Board (17 members)***

*Rep from 11 counties (4 yr term, 2 term limit)*

*Rep from State Agencies (non-voting) including WV Dept of Tourism, Culture and History, Development Office, Bureau of Enviro., Ed and Arts, Natural Resources*

Has your/their role changed across the life of the NCHA?

2. What are the responsibilities of members? For instance, does it involve setting goals, establishing budgets and financial accountability for the NCHA's coordinating entity?
3. Are there other committees or subcommittees that advise or guide the work of the NCHA?
4. How do the skills and expertise that members bring to the table contribute to the NCHA's mission and goals?
5. Do you/ board members assist with fundraising? Contribute financially?
6. What is the process of communication between this NCHA's coordinating entity staff and Board members?
7. What activities has the NCHA coordinating entity conducted over the years to garner community support? What have been your successes and challenges?
8. Can you tell us what you think have been your greatest successes and most serious challenges across the history of the NCHA?

### **Board's Contribution to Sustainability.**

1. How do the diversity of skills and expertise that members of the Board bring to the table contribute to the NCHA's sustainability?
2. Has the NCHA's Board demonstrated a capacity for adaptive management over time (incl. changes in staffing levels, strategic planning, etc.)?
3. What kinds of investments has the Board made toward developing staff and career advancement opportunities?

4. What kind of system does the Board have in place for setting annual goals or for establishing budgets?
5. Has the NCHA's Board set clear goals for the NCHA coordinating entity with well-defined timeframes?
6. What kind of process does the Board have in place for collecting data on measurable NCHA goals and usage of those data (monitoring and evaluation)?
7. What kind of fundraising plan (immediate and long-term, sustainable impacts) is in place?
8. How does the NCHA Board maintain financial accountability for the NCHA? What kind of system is in place for this?
9. How "transparent" is the Board's system for setting goals, establishing budgets and financial accountability for the NCHA? (Is this a public or private process)?
10. What kind of plan is in place for stakeholder development?

*Probe:* - *How has the NCHA's partners grown over the years?*

11. How does the Board typically communicate with partners, members and local residents?

*Probe:* - *What kind of systems are in place for communicating with these groups?*  
 - *How "transparent" and effective are the Board's channels of communication with governance, staff, volunteers, partners, etc.?*

9. Would you say that this NCHA's Board has a leadership role with partners? If so, how?

## **PARTNERS**

### **Partners and Nature of Partnerships**

1. Who are the NCHA's key "partners"? *Probe:*

- *WV State University*
- *Marshall U- CEGES*
- *Southern WV Conventions and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and the County CVBs*
- *Cities of Beckley, Mount Hope, Bluefield, Welsh, Ansted, Sophia, Mullens, Brammwell*
- *County Commissions*
- *Southern WV Brownfields Asst Center*

***For each partner listed ask questions 1a-1c.***

- 1a. What do you see as the “purpose” of the partnership?
- 1b. Describe the level of involvement with the NCHA.
- 1c. What kinds of resources has this partner committed to the NCHA? For what? For how long?
2. Could you describe how an organization becomes a partner? What is the partner designation process? What are the requirements for becoming a partner?
3. What types of services or support do partners receive from the NCHA?
4. What types of services or support do you receive from your partners?
5. How do partners support one another?
6. How have the NCHA’s partners grown and evolved over time?
  - *Growth in number of partners and regions over time?*
  - *Different types of organizations that are partners – non-profits, volunteer-led organization, for-profits, etc.*
7. In what ways have partnerships impacted the NCHA? Do you have measures to show this impact?

*Probe:*

- *Preserve and protect historic structures and natural resources; revitalize local structures*
  - *Increase awareness, understanding, and pride in Coal Heritage history and ethnic diversity*
  - *Increase recognition of cultural influence of Coal Heritage*
  - *Increase engagement, visitation and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites by locals and visitors*
  - *Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming*
  - *Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)*
8. What challenges have you faced with your partners? For instance, have there been in challenges in identifying partners, meeting their needs, engaging partners over time?

**Partners’ Contribution to Sustainability**

1. Does the NCHA have a broad base of partners representing diverse interests and expertise?
2. How do the partners/organizations contribute to accomplishing the goals and objectives of the NCHA? Do partners collaborate and combine their investments to accomplish NCHA objectives? If yes, how?

3. How has the number NCHA partners changed over time?

*Probe:* What kind of partner retention has the NCHA had over the years?

4. What kinds of roles (if any) do NHA partners have on the NCHA Board?
5. Does there seem to be trust and support among partners?
6. How would partners (and their NCHA-related activities), be affected if Federal funding for the NHA was reduced? If it were discontinued? Would their activities continue to work towards accomplishing the goals and objectives of the NHA, and if so, how?

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. In your experience, what have been some of the major accomplishments for this NCHA?
2. Could you tell us about some of the challenges the NCHA coordinating entity has faced?
3. How would the NCHA coordinating entity be affected if Federal NHA funding were reduced? If it were discontinued?
4. How would the NCHA be affected if Federal NHA funding were reduced? If it were discontinued? *Probe:*
  - Which program areas/ activities would be affected and how?
  - What, if any, activities would continue?
  - What, if any, activities would end with the reduction or sunset of funds?
  - Are any of these activities of National importance and thus should be considered for further Federal funding?
5. What, if any, organizations or mechanisms currently exist outside of NCHA coordinating entity for accomplishing the goals and objectives of the NHA? Would these organizations or mechanisms continue to work toward the heritage area goals post-sunset?
6. Are there ways the NCHA has changed the region since its inception? How? In what ways? How has the NCHA's impact changed over time?
7. What were some of the early lessons learned or unintended consequences (e.g. issues related to collaborating rather than competing with partners) in implementing the activities and strategies for NCHA?

8. Could you tell us about any evidence of community support for NCHA? What does this look like (i.e. volunteers, funding, invitation to participate on the boards of other organizations, engagement of State leadership, etc.?)
9. What additional things would you have the NCHA coordinating entity do, if any? What changes would it be helpful for NCHA coordinating entity to make?

# National Coal Heritage Area Partner Topic-Centered Interview Discussion Guide

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us today about your organization's involvement with the National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA). We are researchers from Westat, a research company based outside of Washington DC and we are conducting a study on National Heritage Areas. Specifically, we're interested in learning about your work with NCHA and any assistance you have either received from or contributed to NCHA. We are interested in collecting information about your relationship with the NCHA coordinating entity, how it has evolved and how NCHA has changed over time.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary and it should take about an hour to complete.

## BACKGROUND

1. Describe your organization overall? *Probe:*
  - *What is the type of organization (i.e. museum, historical society, etc),*
  - *What does it do,*
  - *Who does it serve,*
  - *Size of the organization (staffing, number of active volunteers, budget),*
  - *Length of time it's existed.*
2. What is your position and role in the organization? How long have you been with the organization? Other positions held?

## WORK WITH NCHA

1. Can you briefly describe the nature of your relationship with the NCHA?
2. When and how did your partnership with the NCHA begin? What, if any, requirements are there for being a partner?
3. What factors influenced your decision to become a partner with the NCHA?
4. What is the nature of the partnership? *Probe:*
  - a. *Planning, Technical Assistance and Support (see probes below) [provider or recipient?]*
  - b. *Collaboration on Preservation/Restoration, Interpretation/Education, or Marketing and Public Outreach activities (see probes below)*

- c. *Grants (types, amount, when)*
5. Could you describe how your organization's program activities contribute or complement the NCHA's goals and mission?
  6. Could you describe how your partnership with the NCHA has affected your organization?
    - a. Has it had any effect on the types of visitors you get? The number? Why or why not? How do you know?
    - b. Has it helped you identify others to work with? Did you know of these organizations before you partnered with NCHA?
    - c. Has it helped you receive funding? In what ways? What funding have you received that you may not have without the NCHA partnership?
    - d. Has it helped you have more community:
      - a. Visibility?
      - b. Involvement?
      - c. Etc?
    - e. Does it help you identify or be in touch with other resources that you may not have known about?

## PLANNING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & SUPPORT

1. Could you describe the types of activities your organization has received from or provided to the NCHA?
  - a. What type of assistance (training, consultations, facilitated meetings, brainstorming ideas, site assessments, etc)
  - b. Who did you receive it from or provide to?
  - c. Where?
  - d. How did you find out about this assistance?
  - e. Were there requirements for participating in these activities?
  - f. Did you need to pay for this assistance/did NCHA?
7. Could you describe how this assistance incorporated or enhanced Coal Heritage into your programming?
8. How have this assistance and your activities/offerings evolved over time?
9. What does this assistance from NCHA allow your organization to do? Has it allowed you to work and collaborate with other organizations in the area? What are the advantages of receiving this assistance?
10. Do you still receive assistance from the NCHA?



## COLLABORATION

1. Could you describe the ways your organization collaborates with NCHA and its partners?

*Probes:*

- *Restoration and Preservation activities*
- *Interpretation and Education activities*
- *Marketing and Public Outreach activities*

2. How does collaboration affect your organization's ability to meet its goals?

*Probe:*

- *Has this collaboration helped you build your financial, programming or organizational capacity?*

3. Have you gained access other organizations or resources in the community because of your collaboration with NCHA? How? *Probe – NPS, other state resources*

## OVERALL IMPACT OF NCHA – To all Partners and Partnership Panel

1. How has your relationship with the NCHA coordinating entity evolved over time? Has the impact of NCHA changed over time – grown stronger, weaker or stayed the same?
2. Have you experienced any challenges as a result of your partnership with the NCHA coordinating entity? *Probe – limitations on ability to fundraise or collaborate with other organizations?*
3. What leadership roles does the NCHA coordinating entity play in the community? Convener? Organizer? Funder? Other?
4. Are there ways in which NCHA coordinating entity and the NCHA has changed the region over the past 12 years? How? In what ways? How has NCHA's impact changed over time? *Probe – were there mechanisms present before the NCHA designation?*
5. Is it important for your organization to continue working with NCHA coordinating entity? Why? What factors influence your continued relationship?
6. What additional things would you have the NCHA coordinating entity do, if any? What changes would be helpful for NCHA coordinating entity to make? In general, in what ways could they serve your needs better and the needs of the region?
7. How would your organization be affected if the Federal funds that support the NCHA were reduced? Were discontinued? Which types of activities that contribute to the NCHA mission

would continue? Which would be discontinued? *Probe if there would be an impact on the quantity or quality of these activities.*

8. What do you think would be the overall impact if the Federal funding that supports the NCHA were reduced? Were discontinued? Are there other mechanisms or organizations that could support the NCHA?

## National Coal Heritage Area Residents/Visitors Topic Centered Interview Discussion Guide

*Potential Sites:* Tamarack and/or Canyon Rim Visitors Center

Hi, my name is [INTERVIEWER NAME] and I'm working with the National Park Service to learn what visitors here know about the National Heritage Area that is located here. Do you have about 5 minutes to chat with me? I'm interested in getting your opinions rather than your personal information. We can stop our conversation whenever you wish and you are free to move on at any time. Also, feel free to skip any questions you would rather not discuss.

Conversation Topics:

1. Residency:       Local resident     State resident     Out-of-state
2. Note approximate age/race
3. Have you visited one of the NCHA destination sites? Show brochure.

*Probes: When? Reasons for visiting? Once or multiple?*

4. Familiarity with NCHA's history and messaging

*Probe: Coal Mining from this region had a big impact on American industrialization. Do you have a sense of how Coal Mining impacted this area and our nation?*

*Probe on source of knowledge*

5. Familiarity with National Coal Heritage Area Interpretation and Education activities

*Probe: Have you seen NCHA interpretative signs (Bramwell, Ashland, Twin Falls, Sophia, Mt. Hope, Coalwood). When? Where? Once or multiple?*

6. Impact of NCHA activities

*Probe: Has the information that you received at the destination centers or the interpretative signs changed your understanding of Coal Heritage? If so, how?*

*Have the NCHA had an impact on the local area and community? If so, how?*

## NCHA Domain and Source Crosswalk

Research Question, Domains, Measures	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Websites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
<b>Evaluation Q.1: Has the NHA coordinating entity accomplished the purposes of the authorizing legislation and achieved the goals and objectives of the management plan?</b>						
<b>Preservation and Restoration – Activities and programs that preserve and protect historic structures and natural resources and revitalize local structures</b>						
<b>Nature of NHA activities</b>						
Description of preservation and restoration activities	x	x		x	x	
<b>Implementation of each activity</b>						
Role of NCHA	x	x		x	x	
Role of National Scenic Byways CHT	x	x		x	x	
Role of the partners	x	x		x	x	
Role of the local community	x	x	x	x	x	
<b>Impact of activities</b>						
Building restoration	x	x		x	x	
Environmental, cultural and historic resources conservation	x	x		x	x	
Artifacts and archives preservation	x	x		x	x	
Increase awareness, understanding, and pride in Coal Heritage	x	x	x			
Recognize cultural influence of Coal Heritage	x	x	x			
Increase engagement, visitation and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites by locals and visitors	x	x	x	x	x	
Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming	x	x		x	x	x
Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)	x	x		x	x	x

Research Question, Domains, Measures  Evaluation Q.1: Has the NHA coordinating entity accomplished the purposes of the authorizing legislation and achieved the goals and objectives of the management plan?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Websites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Interpretation and Education– Activities and programs that tell the history, culture, and technology of the mining era and foster an ethic of pride and stewardship among area residents to understand the importance of coal mining history.						
Nature of NHA activities Description of interpretation and education activities.	x	x		x	x	
Implementation of each activity Role of NCHA Role of National Scenic Byways CHT Role of the partners Role of the local community	x x x x	x x x x		x x x x	x x x x	
Impact of activities Increase awareness, understanding, and pride in Coal Heritage Recognize cultural influence of Coal Heritage Increase engagement, visitation and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites by locals and visitors Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)	x x x x	x x x	x x	x x x	x x x	x x
Economic Development – Activities and programs that help to develop the National Heritage Area into a destination for “heritage tourism” and stimulate tourism/economic development.						
Nature of NHA activities Description of economic development activities and community impact	x	x		x	x	
Implementation of each activity Role of NCHA Role of National Scenic Byways CHT Role of the partners Role of the local community	x x x x	x x x x	x	x x x x	x x x x	

Research Question, Domains, Measures	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Websites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
<b>Evaluation Q.1: Has the NHA coordinating entity accomplished the purposes of the authorizing legislation and achieved the goals and objectives of the management plan?</b>						
Impact of activities						
Increase engagement, visitation and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites by locals and visitors	X	X	X	X	X	
Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming	X	X		X	X	X
Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)	X	X		X	X	
<b>Marketing and Public Outreach – Activities that increase public use and awareness of the NHA and further its sustainability</b>						
Nature of NHA activities						
Description of marketing and public outreach activities	X	X	X	X	X	
Implementation of each activity						
Role of NCHA	X	X		X	X	
Role of National Scenic Byways CHT	X	X		X	X	
Role of the partners	X	X		X	X	
Role of the local community	X	X	X	X	X	
Impact of activities						
Increase awareness, understanding, and pride in Coal Heritage history and ethnic diversity	X	X	X			
Recognize cultural influence of Coal Heritage	X	X	X			
Increase engagement, visitation and visibility of Coal Heritage Sites by locals and visitors	X	X	X	X	X	
Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming	X			X	X	
Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)	X			X	X	

Research Question, Domains, Measures  Evaluation Q.1: Has the NHA coordinating entity accomplished the purposes of the authorizing legislation and achieved the goals and objectives of the management plan?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Websites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Planning, Technical Assistance and Support – Activities that build local community capacity and assist individuals, organizations and communities who are involved in NHA interpretation, education, preservation and development activities						
Nature of NHA activities Description of planning, technical assistance and support activities	x	x		x	x	
Implementation of each activity Role of NCHA Role of National Scenic Byways CHT Role of the partners Role of the local community	x x x x x	x x x x x		x x x x x	x x x x x	
Impact of activities Build capacity of communities Foster future stewardship Coal Heritage sites and resources Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming Diversify the local economy (e.g., entrepreneur and small business development)	x x x x	x x x x		x x x x	x x x x	x x x x

Research Question, Domains, Measures	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Websites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
<b>Evaluation Q.2 What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal, and local government and private entities?</b>						
Financial investments:						
Amount of Federal funding over time	x					x
Amount and sources of leveraged funds over time	x	x				x
Nature/amount in grants sought and grants awarded over time	x					x
Amount/diversity of business development	x	x				x
Impact of financial investments						
Amount of dollars committed to each NHA activity over time (Preservation and Restoration, Interpretation and Education, Planning, TA and Support, and Marketing)	x	x			x	x
Revenue generated from NHA program activities	x	x			x	x
Consistency of donor support and expansion over time	x	x			x	x
Amount and diversity of sources of funding committed to programming	x	x			x	x
Diversity of local economy (e.g. entrepreneur and small business development)	x				x	x
Other types of investment						
Partnership contributions (e.g., time, staff, resources)	x	x			x	x
Community contributions (e.g., volunteerism)	x	x			x	x
Donated services and supplies	x	x			x	x
Impact of other investment sources						
Engagement, awareness, and pride in Coal Heritage	x	x			x	x
Educational impacts	x	x			x	x
Marketing and promotional	x	x			x	x
Staffing/labor enhancement	x	x			x	x



Research Question, Domains, Measures	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Websites	Financial Data Forms
<b>Evaluation Q.3 How do the NHA management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to its sustainability?</b>						
Nature of management structure						
Description of management structure	x			x	x	
Description of NHA mission and vision	x	X		x	x	
Description of NHA goals	x			x	x	
Description of staffing and volunteers	x			x	x	
Description of governance & role in organization	x	X		x	x	
Description of collaboration with National Scenic Byways Coal Heritage Trail.	x			x	x	
Coordinating entity's contribution to sustainability						
Commitment to legislative mandate	x	X				
Clear NHA goals with well-defined timeframes	x	X		x	x	
Capacity for adaptive management over time (incl. changes in staffing levels, strategic planning, etc)	x				x	
Established system of financial accountability	x			x		x
Established fundraising plan (immediate and long-term, sustainable impacts)	x			x	x	
System for setting annual goals or for establishing budgets	x	X				x
Growth and development of partner network	x	X				
Established and consistent communication mechanisms with partners, members and local residents	x	X	x			
Coordinating entity has leadership role in partner network	x	X		x		
Marketing and Public Outreach						
Systematic process for collecting data on measurable goals and usage of data (monitoring and evaluation)	x			x		
Nature of partner network						
List of partners	x	X		x	x	
Purpose of each partnership	x	x		x	x	

Research Question, Domains, Measures	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Websites	Financial Data Forms
<b>Evaluation Q.3 How do the NHA management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to its sustainability?</b>						
Partners' involvement with NHA Resource commitment from partners (for what? for how long?)	x	X		x	x	
Partners' contribution to sustainability						
Broad base of partners representing diverse interests and expertise in the NHA	x	X		x	x	
Partner collaboration and combination of investments to accomplish NHA objectives	x	X		x	x	
Number of partners over time	x	X		x	x	
Trust and support among partners	x	X		x	x	
Financial sustainability						
Amount of dollars committed to each NHA activity over time	x				x	
Allocation of Federal funds over time	x				x	
Sources and amount of leveraged funds over time	x	X			x	
Activities that can continue with reducing in funds and/or post-sunset of Federal dollars	x				x	
Economic impact on sustainability						
Resource stewardship resulting in improved economic value of NHA	x					
Improved earned income over time	x				x	x
Trends in return on fundraising investment	x				x	x
Trends in contribution and grants ratio - indicates dependence on voluntary support	x				x	x
Trends in debt ratio	x				x	x
Trends in average annual operating revenue	x				x	x

