

Macon County Heritage Development Plan
produced for the
Citizens of Macon County
in collaboration with the
Blue Ridge National Heritage Area

2008 UPDATE

Macon County Heritage Tourism Development Plan

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ATTACHMENTS:

5. List of Heritage Ideas that have come out of each brainstorming session
6. Any previous county strategic plans that incorporate heritage tourism initiatives

An Overview of Macon County's Heritage and Assets

Macon County, much like other western locales, holds a wealth of cultural, historic, and natural resources. Thanks to Mother Nature and her work over the last 450 million years, Macon County has gorgeous mountains and a wealth of mineral resources. We have organizations like the Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum to help people understand what they're looking at when they see an unusual rock formation or a strange-looking crystal. The gem mining industry that traditionally drew people has declined but this remains an extremely important part of our heritage and one with great potential. We also have the Nantahala National Forest with its great wealth of plants and its annual color show. We have ancient rivers, clear streams and waterfalls. We have great resources that help with their management — the U.S. Forest Service, the Highlands Biological Station, and Coweeta Hydrologic Station, the Nantahala Hiking Club, the Bartram Trail Society, the Land Trust for the Little Tennessee, the Greenway, and Needmore.

Macon County **retains** a few remnants of the old Mississippian culture that predated the Cherokees, notably, the Nikwasi Mound, which is held in trust by the Town of Franklin. The development of Big Bear Park across the street opens an opportunity to make this landmark more visible and meaningful to visitors. The county has a rich Cherokee heritage, including mythical places and historical sites. Cherokee history includes the period of trade and exploration as well as the colonial and Revolutionary wars. The Scottish Tartans Society has made a start with guided tours of the Colonial War battle sites and with a display devoted to the Cherokee trade. The Macon County Historical Museum and the Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum also have displays of Native American material. Still, the potential in this area is largely untapped.

Macon County's pioneer history includes contributions by Scots-Irish, German, English, French and Dutch settlers. The pioneer era, which overlaps with Cherokee history, offers many possibilities for interpretive events. In addition, the black population of Macon County, though small, has had a fascinating history that should be preserved and told. Resources for the pioneer era include the Macon County Historical Museum, the Scottish Tartans Museum, and the Highlands Historical Society, which focus on different aspects of our history. We have groups like the Streets of Franklin that bring heritage events to the community.

We also have some significant historical landmarks. Of particular value is the West Mill-Cowee National Rural Historic District, which includes authentic farm and commercial buildings from the early- to late-19th century, as well as the Cowee Town site, which dates back to the Mound builders' era, the CCC-built Cowee school and an early 20th century African-American church. The county has an inventory of historical properties, including a list of those that are eligible for the National Register. These properties represent a significant and authentic resource for heritage tourism and should be preserved.

Appalachian arts, crafts and folkways continue to fascinate people. Since the closing of Maco Crafts, we no longer have a good craft outlet. However, we have several active craft groups, including quilters, weavers, basket-makers and woodturners, and many fine individual crafters. We need a way to showcase their products and help them profit from their crafts. Handmade in America would be an excellent resource.

Macon County has some excellent resources in traditional music and a venue — "Pickin' on the Square" — that has enjoyed huge success. We have good local groups and strong individual performers, and considerable variety in the type of music available here. We don't have a local clogging team anymore, so that may be something we could work on. We do have square dancing clubs, ballet schools and folk dancers.

Agriculture represents the common heritage of most Americans, not just those who live in the Blue Ridge. Think, also, of traditional mountain agricultural tasks like making syrup or hominy, drying

fruit, gathering herbs and dye plants, making tonics. Even moonshining! Also, consider Native American agriculture, and ways that traditional plants of the Cherokees could be presented to the public.

- Barbara McRae, *adapted from remarks presented during community heritage planning meeting*

An Overview of the Heritage Planning process in Macon County

The heritage planning working group from Macon County embraced the heritage planning process and this document is a testament to a number of committed individuals with a strong sense of the importance of retaining Macon County's unique characteristics. From the beginning, the heritage team was enthusiastic about the opportunity to compile, organize and create a plan regarding Macon County's heritage resources.

The overarching objectives in Macon County's heritage development plan are the conservation and celebration of the County's rich heritage resources – which include significant cultural, natural and historic resources. During the planning process, the planning team recognized the great potential for a number of conservation, education and historic preservation projects. The initiatives outlined on the following pages are the culmination of a serious review of the impact and feasibility of the many, many projects discussed.

A core team of community leaders representing the Chamber, the Historical Society, the Little Tennessee Greenway, corporate interests and others organized the content presented on the following pages. Community input was gathered at a county kick-off event held in early February 2004 with representatives from various community agencies and interested community volunteers. Despite treacherous weather, the turnout was great and dialogue energetic. In addition, the heritage planning team participated sought feed back from community organizations through one-on-one meetings and presentations to selected groups. Feedback from the community provided a valuable framework in assessing Macon County's priorities and challenges when considering the important steps required for retaining Macon County's heritage and unique characteristics.

**MACON COUNTY HERITAGE PLAN -
INITIATIVE SUMMARY CHART**

Initiative Name	Estimated Costs
Promoting Farmers' Tailgate Markets as an Agricultural Heritage Experience: Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP)	\$130,000
Cowee – West's Mill Interpretation & Preservation Efforts	330,000
Expansion & Programming on LTGreenway	2,332,500
Gem Industry Marketing and Education Campaign	20,000
Highlands Historical Society Ballad of the Moccasin War: A Street Play in 3 Acts	33,665
Let's Lick Litter	15,000
Macon County Downtown Museum Restorations	500,000
Macon County Heritage Center (with programming)	2,500,000
Blue Ridge Heritage Gardens at The Mountain: <i>Cultivating our rich heritage based on agriculture, the Cherokee tribes, traditional craft making and music.</i>	20,000
Prince House/Heritage Village in Highlands	131,395
USFS Campground and other upgrades	?
Creation of a Single Large-Format Interpretive Map of the North Carolina Bartram Trail	\$15,000 to \$17,500
Native American Cultural Site Preservation Project	\$25,000.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$6,052,560 - \$6,055,060

MACON COUNTY HERITAGE COUNCIL ROSTER

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
1.	Barbara McRae	Editor, The Franklin Press Local Historian	
2.	Tony Angel	Franklin Chamber of Commerce	
3.	Hank Shuler	Southwest Community College Little Tennessee Greenway	
4.	Linda Behr	Gem and Mineral Museum	
5.	Ben Utley	NC Mountain Made	
6.	Lisa Tallent	Smoky Mountain Host	

Additionally representation from other organizations, including...

Gem mine owners
Macon County Heritage Center
Land Trust for the Little Tennessee
Macon County Historical Society & Museum
Taste of Scotland Festival

Initiative Title:	Promoting Farmers' Tailgate Markets as an Agricultural Heritage Experience: Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP)
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Project Narrative or Description :	<p>Destination Development Consultant Roger Brooks recently told a WNC audience that visiting farmers' markets is one of the top 8 activities among baby boomer travelers. At the same time, the BRNHA contains a vast economy of family farms struggling to emerge from the tobacco buyout and the globalization of agriculture, with direct sales of farm goods to the public providing one beacon of hope.</p> <p>This ongoing initiative provides media, visitors, and locals with accurate and appealing information to help them find their way to an authentic, fun, and economy-enhancing experience buying direct from farmers at the 36 farmers' tailgate markets within the BRNHA. Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP) has a proven track record of experience in promoting local farm and food destinations including farmers' markets. ASAP does this through interaction with newspaper and magazine writers, collaboration with tourism development authorities and chambers of commerce, distribution of the ASAP <i>Local Food Guide</i>, and assistance provided to the markets themselves to aid in self-promotion and organization. A website, www.buyappalachian.org, provides searchable links to hundreds of farm-based activities and all local farmers' tailgate markets.</p> <p>Looking forward, these promotions can enhance the BRNHA by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) ASAP staff working as directed by the BRNHA to make location-specific web information and Local Food Guides available to each County Heritage Planning Team as requested, . 2) ASAP staff providing "best practices" information regarding market organization and promotion to County Heritage Planning Teams as requested. A document, the "Appalachian Grown Farmers' Market Toolkit" was completed in 2006 and gathers needed information for farmers interested in selling direct to customers at market. This can be made available. 3) ASAP cross-promoting heritage-related events to its existing audience of farmers, retail businesses, and consumers.
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Goal:	The primary goal of this project is to build economically viable markets for the BRNHA's 12,000 family farms so that they will still be working farms for many years to come. Secondary goals include providing an authentic, delicious connection to agriculture heritage for visitors and residents of our region; and assisting in the success of the BRNHA by helping bring farms into the heritage experience.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project Charlie Jackson, Executive Director Peter Marks, Program Coordinator	Basic yearly budget for these activities is \$130,000. Cost of specific initiatives mentioned above will vary depending on level of interest.	Ongoing. The Local Food Guide is printed yearly in the Spring.

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
-print Local Food Guide yearly (100,000 copies in 2007)	About \$30,000 print cost. Large amounts of ASAP staff time for design and coordination.	-ASAP staff
-distribute Local Food Guide to 250 locations and all visitor and welcome centers.	Participation by area tourism officials.	-ASAP staff, contracted distributor, welcome centers.
-work to coordinate and promote farmers' markets and expand membership in Mountain Tailgate Market Association, which provides organizational and marketing support to farmers' markets.	-meeting space, promotional budget for market promotions (\$10,000 in 2006 would need to expand to promote markets in other areas).	-ASAP staff
-share best practices for design and promotion of farmers' markets as requested by local market planners. Share "Appalachian Grown Farmers' Market Toolkit" as requested.	-ASAP staff time, meeting locations, participation by market managers throughout region.	-ASAP staff

Performance Measures:	Success of farmers' markets can be measured through customer counts, farmer surveys, counts of number of markets or numbers of farmers. Previous ASAP research has established data about the benefit of farmers' markets to surrounding businesses, and this can be applied to develop a rough guess as to broad economic impact.
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Status:	Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project makes it a priority to fund farmers' market support and promotion activities each year. Specific outreach to multiple BRNHA counties is pending funding and expression of interest. A more sophisticated and interactive web-based farm tourism planning tool is in the development stage and seeking funding. The Mountain Tailgate Market Association is currently comprised of 12 member markets and invites expansion.
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Initiative Title:	Cowee – West’s Mill National Historic District
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Project Narrative:	<p>The Cowee – West’s Mill Historic District encompasses approximate 369 acres in a scenic area six miles north of the county seat of Franklin. West’s Mill was an important trading and community center for the northern part of Macon County from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. It functioned as a busy, thriving village with homes, schools, churches, a post office, dentist office, and grist mills. The Cowee – West’s Mill Historic District is typical of rural crossroad communities of its time, but also documents settlement patterns of Native Americans in the Southern Appalachians. After Native Americans left Cowee in the early nineteenth century, white families built close to one another and established their businesses on family land to serve the community.</p> <p>Today, evidence of Native American traditions remains visible in the Cowee Mound. The history of African Americans stands proud in the Pleasant Hill Church and cemetery and history of whites in the substantial two-story farmhouses across the fertile valley. In -----, members of the Cowee community pursued and received designation on the National Register as a National Historic District in order to properly document the importance the community’s history that includes a variety of cultures.</p> <p>Since the designation there are several revitalization efforts underway in the District that are primarily private investment. The Cowee Community Club also has plans for the interpretation and celebration of the District as a whole.</p>
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Goal:	To preserve and interpret the history, structures and stories of the Cowee National Historic District.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Cowee Community Club (Claudette Dillard)	\$330,000	3 to 5 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s Responsible:
Phase 1: - Welcome sign to identify district - Stabalize Pleasant Hill AME Church - Interpretive plaques on 10 historic buildings in district Phase 2: - Develop walking and driving trail routes through district - Create companion maps/brochures/website	\$30,000 \$30,000	

Phase 3: - Preservation, interpretation and accessibility of Cowee Mound	\$300,000	
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Performance Measures:	
Status:	

Initiative Title:	Ballad of the Moccasin War: A Street Play in 3 Acts
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Project Narrative or Description:	In 1885 two bootleggers from Moccasin Township in Georgia were arrested and temporarily incarcerated in a hotel in Highlands, N.C., whereupon the Moccasin Township issued a formal declaration of war on Highlands, dispatching an army of eighteen volunteers. This historic event will be re-enacted in front of Highlands Inn by a cast of professional and local citizens at 1:00 p.m. on August 11, 2007.
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Goal:	The primary goal will be to introduce the people of the region and its visitors to a unique occurrence in Highlands history and to dramatize it authentically as it actually happened from a balanced perspective that convincingly presents both sides of the dispute.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Highlands Historical Society, Inc. Randolph P. Shaffner, Archivist	Current estimate: \$32,600 - \$33,665	7 - 9 months of applying for funding, then publicity and 9 days of rehearsals

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Script and lyrics	Free	Randolph Shaffner
Balladeer	\$650	Lee Knight
Sound technician, incl. personnel & equipment	\$5,000	Steve Hott
Producer/director, incl. per diem & travel	\$4,550	Dina Shadwell
Stage manager (plus local assist. volunteer)	\$2,150	Patrick McColery
Fight choreographer team, incl. per diem/travel	\$3,100	Armit & Blakeney
Costume designers	\$3,300	Neal Vipperman
71 Costumes	\$5,325-\$6,390	Neal Vipperman
Prof. actors, incl. 41 locals (plus 26 volunteers)	\$5,600	Furrow, Roberts, etc.
Weapon rentals and blanks	\$2,925	Dina Shadwell
Props, horse, rehearsal space	Donated	Randolph Shaffner
Publicity (both before and after)	Chamber of Commerce grant	Randolph Shaffner

Performance Measures:	Strict adherence to historical fact assured by the script, performance quality assured by professional crew, nine days of rehearsal planned and budgeted, overall supervision by Archivist of Highlands Historical Society
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Status:	Script and lyrics completed, music composed; National, State, County, and Local grants being applied for; approved by Highlands Historical Society, Inc., and Highlands Chamber of Commerce, production crew already acquired
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Initiative Title:	Gem Industry Awareness and Revitalization Campaign
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Project Narrative:	Currently there are 7 gem mines operating in Macon County – Sheffield Mine, Gold City, Macon Mine on Airport Rd, Macon Mine on Hwy 28, Rose Creek Mine, Cowee Mtn Mine, Jackson Hole, Old Presley Mine, Blue Ridge Gem Mining, Cherokee Mine and Nantahala Gorge Mine. There are approximately 4000 visitor to each mine annually. Estimated expenditures at mines alone is \$12 per visitor – this equates to an economic impact of over \$525,000 for mine owners. When other special events, lodging and meal expenditures are estimated – the annual economic impact of the Gem Industry in Macon County is approximately \$1.76 million dollars.
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Goal:	The gem industry, with the Gem & Mineral Museum as lead, is interested in working together to collaboratively promote these opportunities and raise awareness of the heritage of mining in Macon County.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Macon County Gem & Mineral Museum (Linda Behr)	20,000	1 year

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize work session of local mine owners to initiate dialogue 2. Determine specific plan of action and timeline regarding marketing and awareness campaign 3. Determine budget 4. Develop media kit with information regarding mines, history, opportunities, etc. 5. 6. 		Gem & Mineral Museum with local mine owners

Performance Measures:	
Status:	

Initiative Title:	Little Tennessee Greenway Expansion and Programming
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Project Narrative:	<p>The Little Tennessee River Greenway is one of more than a thousand such trails snaking their way across America turning old canals, abandoned railbeds and forgotten riverbanks into green recreational corridors. The Greenway represents a voluntary local strategy to preserve scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources and promotes increased public access to the Little Tennessee River through the creation of riverside parks and trails.</p> <p>The Greenway resulted from the cooperative efforts of town, county and state governments, local businesses and residents of Macon County. In 1997, representatives of Duke Power approached Franklin town leaders with a plan to take advantage of the power company's plan to construct an electric transmission line along the river. Representatives of Franklin and Macon County agreed to work with Duke Power and applied for grants that would dovetail the power line project with the establishment of a Greenway. In 1998, the Little Tennessee Watershed Association, along with Macon County as lead agency, received a nearly \$4 million grant to assist in land acquisition, preservation and restoration projects along the Trail.</p>
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Goal:	<p>The Greenway Vision is a six- mile park including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking and biking trail • Exercise activity • Historical educational areas • Environmental education areas • Boating, fishing, tubing, and rafting • Picnic areas • Wildflowers, birds, and otters
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Friends of the Greenway (FROGS)	\$2,332,500	3 to 10 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
7. Crosswalk from Greenway to Nikwasi Mound and Greenway Expansion	\$500,000	
8. Frog Quarters – retail shops and restoration of water mill	\$80,000	
9. Greenway Festival – annually	\$2,500	
10. Nikwasi Center – outdoor amphitheatre built along Greenway	\$1,750,000	

Performance Measures:	
Status:	

Initiative Title:	Let's Lick Litter
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Project Narrative:	Beer cans, soda cans, plastic water bottle, Gatorade bottle, cigarette butts, and fast food papers flourish and grow along local highways. This situation is unsightly, detrimental to tourism and dangerous.
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Goal:	To institute a 7-prong program to combat litter across Macon County. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of Magistrate's Office - Vehicle Owner Responsibility - Local Government Authority - Heavy Fines - Litter Wardens - Deposit Fees - Biodegradable Packaging
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Hank Shuler	?	

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
11. Conduct research to determine the real cost of litter for health and tourism 12. Develop NC legislative support to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Place littering in the magistrates office b. Increase the fine levels for littering and attach the fines to vehicle owners c. Allow counties to collect fines for littering and to retain those funds to support anti-litter programs d. Require use of biodegradable materials for all restaurant take-out orders 13. Enact legislation for such measures	1. An individual or firm to gather data necessary to support cost estimates. 2. A "lobbyist" to garner the support needed. 3. Survey instruments and surveyors to measure performance.	Hank Shuler

Performance Measures:	Level of litter and effect on tourism. (Some of this could be measured through surveys)
Status:	Thought stage

Initiative Title:	Macon County Heritage Center
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Project Narrative:	The vision for the creation of the Macon County Heritage Center is a multi-purpose center that showcases the heritage and culture of Macon County and surrounding areas. The MCHC would distinguish itself from other heritage museums in that it would be a living, teaching, alive center, with room for small performances, workshops, readings, storytelling and more. The MCHC is a perfect complement to other local museums and the Greenway. Working together on events, exhibits, publicity and more – the cumulative effect would have a far greater impact for local communities and for the traveling public.
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Goal:	To involve more local audiences and the traveling public with the unique and rich heritage of Macon County
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Macon County Heritage Center Steering Committee (Margaret Ramsey)	2,000,000	3 to 5 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
14. Present concept to community leaders	Completed	Macon County Heritage Center Steering Committee (Margaret Ramsey et al)
15. Present concept to community through 1 st annual Franklin Folk Festival and enlist more involvement	Completed, June 2004	
16. Ongoing research regarding facility and location options		
17. Develop mission and vision for Macon County Heritage Center		
18.		
19.		

Performance Measures:	
Status:	

Initiative Title:	Macon County Museums Restoration Project
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Project Narrative:	<p>Downtown Franklin is home to three unique heritage museums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Macon County Historical Society Museum - the Scottish Tartans Museum, and - the Gem and Mineral Museum <p>All of these museums are housed in historic downtown buildings and are in need of restorations, upgrades and repairs.</p>
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Goal:	In order to preserve and share Macon County heritage museums, restoration projects of 3 downtown museum is necessary.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
	\$500,000 (for restoration projects at all 3 museums)	3 to 5 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
20. Seek Conservation Assessment Program funding from IMLS & American Association of Museums to determine facility needs	Minimal resources required from each museum	
21. Hire architects to begin plans	\$	
22. Seek bids from professional, local contractors for restoration work		
23. Begin restoration work		
24.		

Performance Measures:	
Status:	

The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers, Inc. (a 501c3 tax-exempt organization)
P. O. Box 1299 3872 Dillard Road Highlands, NC 28741 www.mountiancenters.org
Contact: Christy Kelly, Director of Development & Marketing (828) 526-5838 Ext. 230

Title: Blue Ridge Heritage Gardens at The Mountain: *Cultivating our rich heritage based on agriculture, the Cherokee tribes, traditional craft making and music.*

Project Description

The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers is planning to design an array of gardens which will expand its market to a broader audience while serving its mission to *embrace the diversity of life, creating an environment to energize people to work for positive change*. The Heritage Gardens will not only attract new visitors but will help engage the community in hands-on learning. With an established reputation as a summit retreat and conference center (Voted by *USA Today* as one of ten great places to renew the soul); The Mountain provides learning opportunities with a focus on Appalachian and Cherokee heritage, songs and stories of the region and the unique natural environment of the area. Providing a space for the nation's youth to immerse themselves in nature and extending the joy of gardening in an accessible arena (meadows with highway frontage) within the ninety-two acres will serve as a welcome sign to both the local community and the numerous travelers to the area.

Harvests will yield supplies for the creative workshops and outdoor classrooms for the youth and Elderhostel programs held at the base area of The Mountain's property in the Crafts Barn and in the future gardens. This area is currently utilized for parking, hiking, lake sports, workshops, field games and group gatherings. Existing trails and a labyrinth will augment the planned garden spaces to give the visitor a complete experience of undisturbed native plant habitats. The gardens will be designed to provide environmental educational opportunities around the region's rich heritage and unique ecosystems.

Outline of the project:

- To create a Heritage Garden on approximately eight acres at the base of The Mountain's property to attract visitors and provide an experiential tool for youth & visitors of all ages in a natural, outdoor setting.

- To connect existing trail system with new garden areas for observing identified native species and wildlife in a natural habitat.

- To grow and harvest workshop supplies for classes in Native American skills/crafts: medicinal herb studies, reeds for baskets, gourds for drums and bamboo for flutes.

- To grow and harvest supplies for creative workshops with heritage craft and skills: papermaking, basket making, natural dyeing, flower arrangements, canning foods, etc.

- To create observation areas for existing bog area.

- To incorporate gardening into existing curricula for Elderhostel, youth camp and multigenerational workshops.

Goals

The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers would like to expand the outreach to both the local community and the growing numbers of frequent visitors/tourists by providing a teaching garden at the base area of the property that fronts Highway 106 only four miles from Highlands, North Carolina. A seasonal building called the Craft Barn is well-situated and is equipped with restrooms (handicapped accessible), electrical power, water, parking and modest housing for instructors or resident artists. Outdoor pavilions and trails are established yet need extensive development. A small garden area plot is cleared for immediate use with primitive raised bed boxes in place and acres are available for expansion. Should more space be required in the future for advanced learning opportunities, a former horse barn is located at the base and is currently used as a storage facility.

Our goal is to provide a destination for visitors and individuals of the community where learning about the region's cultural heritage is integrated into the garden experience. Guiding visitors on short hikes, offering workshops which utilize harvested goods, growing organic food for the dining hall, designing theme-oriented teaching gardens and creating the opportunity for hands-on projects would fulfill The Mountain's mission. One main interest is to become more easily accessible to the area's numerous visitors without affecting a limited one-way traffic on a cautious steep drive to the fragile environment at the summit (elevation of 4200-ft.). In a world seemingly held captive by media technology, The Mountain experience serves as a prime example for living life with a deeper understanding of ecology and the growing need to sustain nature's glory.

Cost to Implement / Time Estimates / Action Plan

We are requesting an initial BRNHA Product Development Grant for the amount of \$10,000 within the category of Nature-based Recreation. Staff time, consultant fees, land use and design layouts would be needed for the initial development stage. Six months would be required for this planning process. We would need to organize the following action plan in order to begin planting in the Spring/Summer of 2007:

- Hire consultant
- Designate staff for consolidating data and scheduling tasks
- Survey land, test soils and designate micro-environments and existing bog extensions
- Develop composting procedures
- Find additional instructors / research curricula to incorporate gardening
- Research greenhouse designs and windmill irrigation
- Seek partners
- Establish signage on highway frontage
- Identify markets and establish promotional tasks
- Request inclusion in Heritage Trail WNC

We are pursuing long-term partnerships to enable a diverse plan in many areas of interest including sustainability, alternative and renewable resource development and botanical research for sensitive areas. We are planning to utilize existing and emerging donor-based funds, once the initiative is fully planned, plus continuing to research foundation and state funding sources.

Several staff members are trained in outdoor recreation skills for The Mountain's high/low rope courses, field games and water sports in addition to skills in counselor leadership training. Frequent faculty members include George Ellison (regional naturalist), Lee Knight (collector of folk stories and songs & musician), Sheila Kaye Adams (musician/storyteller) and Laura Boosinger (traditional folk musician) and Fred & Sally Dicharry (environmental educators); all integrate nature into their programs offered at The Mountain. Whether they are presenting to a multi-generational group, teaching Elderhostel week, counseling summer campers (ages 5-18), guiding a hike, leading community building workshops or giving a concert; each instructor weaves the heritage of the region into the stories and educational material. The Mountain also works in partnership with diverse groups including the International Rescue Committee (refugees from war-torn countries), the Center for Non-Violent Communication and LEADD (Leadership Education Advancing Democracy & Diversity) and other national and international organizations.

Status: A partial Land Study of the Base area was completed in 2000. (Site descriptions above list the areas to be included in the overall development plan for the Heritage Gardens area.)

The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers began 26 years ago and is open year round as a retreat center. Staff varies seasonally with approximate 20 individuals. A Board of Directors (10) governs the center meeting four times annually.

Initiative Title:	Prince House/Heritage Village – Highlands Historical Society
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Project Narrative:	<p>The home of the Historic Society-the Prince House is the center for the activities of the Society. It is being refurbished to exhibit the décor of a house on the Plateau during the period of 1885 through 1915. Restoration of the house to this vintage is planned to be completed by year end 2004. Local citizens and Civic Groups have generously committed to undertake this restoration effort by donating items from their family collections.</p> <p>The Hudson Library, <u>the state's oldest Library building</u>, is the home of the Historical Society's museum. In a current state of restoration/rehabilitation, plans call for the museum to be open to the public beginning in the Fall of 2004. This will allow visitors and historic researchers to review the many historic records that have been donated to the Society. The museum will also house an exhibit of historic photographs of Highlands over the past 120 years. The Museum/Library will be the home of the Cultural Interpretive Center that will allow visitors and residents to learn about the early settlers of Highlands, their lifestyle, the hardships they overcame to make Highlands the wonderful destination that it is today.</p> <p>The restoration of the Library/Museum and the Prince House is contingent on the Historical Society obtaining funding for the remainder of the restoration effort (see attached budget). The residents and visitors to Highlands have generously supported our efforts via support of the various events outlined above, as well as, in-kind and cash donations. We have also been able to obtain grants in the past that have helped us get to this point in our restoration effort. Even with the grants, the in kind donations and the support of the local population through our fund raising events, there remains a significant amount of work that remains to be completed. It is paramount that the Highlands Historical Society receive support from all avenues-Regional, State, and Federal-so that we can complete this worthwhile effort.</p>
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Goal:	Mission: To provide a museum/cultural interpretive center for citizens to research historical artifacts from surrounding area; to provide a museum for public to view artifacts donated to Historical Society; to provide a storage area for artifacts not presently on display.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Highlands Historical Society (Wiley Sloan)	\$131,395	3 to 5 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
25. Completion of Archival/Storage Area	\$30,975	Highlands Historical Society
26. Museum/Cultural Center – Main Floor	\$15,920	

27. Prince House – Historical Interpretive Center	\$47,300	
28. Landscaping, Curbing, Sidewalks	\$37,2000	

Performance Measures:	
Status:	

Initiative Title:	US Forest Service Initiatives
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Project Narrative:	<p>As part of USFS regional planning, the following projects have been identified for Macon County:</p> <p>Cullasaja Gorge Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New parking areas - Rehab historic info cabin - Update day use facilities - Upgrade campground <p>And</p> <p>Standing Indian Campground</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update road/water/sewer
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Goal:	
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
USFS		3 to 5 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
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Performance Measures:	
Status:	

Initiative Title:	Creation of a Single Large-Format Interpretive Map of the North Carolina Bartram Trail
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Project Narrative:	<p>The North Carolina Bartram Trail was developed beginning in the late 1970's by a group of North Carolina residents as a hiking trail to commemorate the 1775 journey of naturalist William Bartram into Western North Carolina in what is now Macon County. The trail is located primarily on National Forest land and was constructed and is maintained pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding with the U. S. Forest Service. The North Carolina Bartram Trail Society ("NCBTS") continues to maintain and improve the trail through entirely volunteer efforts, and it provides an alternative, less crowded route for hikers and nature lovers than the Appalachian Trail, with which it intersects at two locations. The trail is more than 75 miles in length and traverses Macon County, from the Georgia border to the Nantahala River, ending at the top of Cheoah Bald in Swain County, where it intersects the Appalachian Trail. A portion of the trail in the Franklin area along the Little Tennessee River has been designated a canoe trail, and the portion that generally follows public roads in that area has been designated a biking trail.</p> <p>In the early 1990's NCBTS created and published a series of seven maps covering seven separate "sections" of the trail. These maps are cumbersome, outdated, and present inventory problems for retail outlets that currently carry the maps. Therefore, NCBTS has made it a priority to create and produce a new, single high-quality large-format map of the entire trail containing up-to-date information on trail access points, road information, water sources, campsites, points of interest and current emergency contact information. The new map would also provide background and interpretive information on the life and travels of William Bartram and the natural and cultural history of the area, including information about his contacts with Native Americans during his time. Many historians consider Bartram's <i>Travels</i> the definitive work on Native Americans in the Southeastern United States at the time of early settlement of the area, and an important aspect of the mission of NCBTS is to educate the public about William Bartram and his experiences in Western North Carolina.</p> <p>We believe this new, large-format map will afford the public an enhanced experience and will therefore attract more hikers and nature enthusiasts to the area. By including historical and interpretive background information, it will also encourage the exploration of the natural heritage and flora and fauna of the region, and by containing information about William Bartram and his experiences it will serve to educate the public about this important early American and his encounters with the Native Americans of the region. The new map would be distributed broadly to schools, libraries, hiking clubs, chambers of commerce and other outlets throughout the area and will thus be made available to a larger audience than the present set of seven maps.</p> <p>NCBTS is a section 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with approximately 200 members. It has no significant source of income other than the modest annual dues (now \$20) for membership. It has undertaken a number of past projects, including</p>
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	<p>trail improvements and the development of a free brochure on the trail, through grants obtained under North Carolina's Adopt-A-Trail program.</p> <p>The design, production and printing of a high-quality map is an expensive undertaking and is contingent on the obtaining of essential funding for the project from grants, contributions and other similar sources. We believe that this project will contribute to an enhanced experience for those using the trail, will serve to educate the public about William Bartram and will help attract more visitors to Macon and Swain Counties.</p>

Goal:	To design and produce a single large-format interpretive map of the North Carolina Bartram Trail that will provide an enhanced experience to hikers, nature enthusiasts and others attracted to the natural beauty, biodiversity and natural and cultural heritage of Western North Carolina, will promote William Bartram and his travels, and will serve to attract more visitors to this special part of the world.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
North Carolina Bartram Trail Society, Tim Warren, President	\$15,000 to \$17,500	12-18 months

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Gathering accurate GPS and on-ground distance measures	Volunteers and professional GPS services	NCBTS
Contract for design and layout of new map	Cartographer, graphic designer and historical review	NCBTS
Printing and distribution of map	Contract printer and volunteers (for distribution of map)	NCBTS

Performance Measures:	
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Status:	
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Initiative Title:	Native American Cultural Site Preservation Project

Project Narrative:	This project is to design and develop a working model for Native American cultural sites preservation, protection and education with in the boundaries of Macon County. We will use this model as a template for similar projects in the pre-colonial boundaries of the Cherokee Nation.
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Goal:	To identify, document and preserve previously unknown and/or neglected sites of cultural interest.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Steven Rice, Museum Director, Macon County Historical Society (MCHS)	\$25,000.00	1 year

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
1. Check previous surveys		MCHS
2. Enlist residents' input regarding their properties		MCHS
3. Work with county tax department to identify properties qualifying for tax break		MCHS and Macon County
4. Work with county and state to develop incentives to protect sites		MCHS, Macon County, NC Archives and History
5. MCHS will work with tribal members in Macon County and with Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) organizations previously listed to develop preservation plan		MCHS, EBCI-Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO), Cultural Preservation Office (CPO) Cherokee Preservation Foundation (CPF)
6. Develop workshops featuring culture of EBCI		MCHS, Cherokee Historical Association (CHA), THPO, and CPO
7. Develop age-relevant programs for the schools		MCHS, Cherokee Historical Association (CHA), THPO, and CPO
	\$25,000.00	

Performance Measures:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A growing list significant Native American cultural sites identified with GPS coordinates.2. A growing list of properties removed from tax roll.3. A plan for Native American site preservation by November 2009.4. Four workshops and number of participants.5. Number of educational programs developed and number of students participating.
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Status:	Work began in March 2008 and continues based on funding from CPF.
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Highland Community Heritage Forum Break-Out Discussions

Questions:

1. What are Macon County's primary assets / resources in the thematic areas?
 - a. Cherokee
 - b. Music and Dance
 - c. Craft
 - d. Agriculture
 - e. Scots-Irish/Appalachian Heritage
 - f. Natural Landscape
2. What are some specific needs for these assets?
3. What initiatives could Macon County undertake to conserve & celebrate these assets?

Facilitator:

1. Introduce yourself and recorder
2. Welcome and thank them for participating in this important project.
3. Give them the ground rules for brainstorming:
 - a. Participants have 5 minutes to jot down ideas.
 - b. Ideas will be gathered in round robin fashion – first building the inventory of assets, then some specific needs of these assets, and then some initiatives to conserve and celebrate them.
 - c. They each have a maximum of 1 minute per turn around the group.
 - d. They will introduce themselves on the first turn.
 - e. Piggybacking on one another's ideas is encouraged.
 - f. Off the wall/hair brained ideas are encouraged and will be respected, as that's where real genius is born.
 - g. If we run out of time, provide us with notes of those not covered.
4. Ask for clarification and simplification, for the recorder's benefit, when ideas are unclear or wordy, through active listening techniques.
5. Do not participate in providing ideas nor judge ideas.
6. Provide lots of thanks as ideas are given.
7. Continue making the rounds (in an orderly fashion) around the group until you have them all or have run out of time.
8. Try to wrap up each question in 12 minutes.

Recorder / Time Keeper:

1. Record each idea as stated (or restated by facilitator).
2. Leave room on the flip chart for recording needs and initiatives below each asset that is brainstormed. Use a different color marker to record a.) assets b.) needs and c.) initiatives.
3. For generic needs / initiatives, you may need to set up one or more generic categories of assets.
4. Wear a watch to assist the facilitator in keeping on track with time.



Macon County Heritage Forum

February 5, 2004

AGENDA

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| 5:30 | Welcome and Opening Remarks | Mark West
Chairman, Macon Co Board
of Commissioners |
| 5:40 | <i>"Heritage Tourism Development in Western North Carolina - Realizing Our Region's Economic & Community Potential"</i> Presentation | David Huskins
Managing Director,
Smoky Mountain Host |
| 5:55 | Macon County's Potential for Heritage Development | Barbara McRae
The Franklin Press |
| 6:05 | Review Break-Out Discussion Procedure | Hank Shuler
Southwest Community
College |
| 6:10 | Break-Out Discussions | |
| 6:50 | Concluding Remarks & Next Steps | |
| 7:00 | Adjourn | |

**Macon County Heritage Planning:
Heritage Development and/or Tourism Initiatives Under Consideration**
(organized by thematic areas, as of 3.10.04)

Music & Dance:

- Education Program in the schools
- Documentary
- Church Music Tour
- Festival of the Mountains (Festival of Festivals)
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Agriculture:

- Letters to local farmers for greater participation in Macon Co Fair
- Clean up/Rehab of fair grounds
- Farmers Market?
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Craft:

- More local events celebrating craft heritage
- Events/demonstrations along the greenway
- Develop good roster of local artists/crafters (including gems/jewelry makers)
- Craft co-op
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Cherokee:

- more information in local schools
- interpretation of Macon Co sites and stories
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Natural Landscape/Historic Structures:

- Forest Service interpretive signs
- Cowee/Wests Mill Historic District – authentic redevelopment and reuse
- Jones House?
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Pioneer Experience:

- Separate Pumpkin Fest and Pioneer Day – need 2 separate events
- Interpretive signs for Streets of Franklin
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