

WILKES COUNTY Heritage Development Plan

September 2008 Update



Tharpe's Mill

**Prepared by
The Wilkes Heritage Council**

**Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
Wilkes County Heritage Council**

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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

Wilkes County, a place where the skies seem broader and bluer and the rolling hillsides blend into the majestic Blue Ridge Mountains and beyond. Settled in 1750, Wilkes is known as one of the most historical counties in the scenic region of northwestern North Carolina. It was officially formed in 1777 and was named after a prominent member of the British Parliament, and at one time, Lord Mayor of London, John Wilkes.

The timeless mountains and sweeping valleys created a wildness appreciated by a host of famous adventurers. Among them was Daniel Boone, who called Wilkes his home prior to launching his Kentucky expeditions. The intrepid Colonel Benjamin Cleveland, who bravely led forces from the area into the “Battle of Kings Mountain” during the Revolutionary War, also rested his war-torn spirit in the soothing hills of Wilkes.

In 1752, a Moravian surveying party passing through the area documented that a Cherokee Indian Village known as Mulberry Fields once stood in the location of the Town of Wilkesboro, established in 1800. The Cherokee translation for Mulberry Fields is “Keowee,” and this was a place often used by the Cherokees during the colonial period. The Town of North Wilkesboro was a result of the ambitious construction of the railroad linking Wilkes County to an abundance of nearby destinations. The railroad, built north of the mighty Yadkin River, brought development of business and industry and thus the town was established.

Today, visitors come to Wilkes to enjoy the recreation of W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir, Yadkin River Greenway, Stone Mountain State Park, Rendezvous Mountain State Educational Park, and the adventurous canoeing along the Yadkin River. Wilkes heritage can be revisited through the many historical attractions located throughout the county. Remnants of Wilkes are experienced during the Old Wilkes Walking Tour through historical Wilkesboro touring the Old Wilkes Jail Museum where Tom Dooley was once housed for the murder of his beloved, Laura Foster experiencing the life of the 1700’s by visiting the home of Robert Cleveland, father of seventeen children.

A wonderful historical site is Whippoorwill Academy and Village located in the Ferguson community of Wilkes. The academy is a one-room schoolhouse built in 1880 now used as a museum of many historical items on display including civil war memorabilia. The village has a replica of Daniel Boone’s cabin, the Chapel of Peace built from logs of an 1800’s log cabin, and a blacksmith shop.

Other historic sites to enjoy are the Hutchinson Farm, where early farm life can be revisited. This located at the foot of the dramatic 600 foot granite dome known as Stone Mountain. . Drama portraying the past entertains crowds throughout the year at historical Benton Hall, home of the Wilkes Playmakers. Americana music travels

through the foothills in late April as MerleFest comes alive with performers from around the world and brings more than 82,000 attendees annually into the area.

The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area management entity challenged Wilkes County to develop a collaborative community-driven heritage development plan. The county Heritage Council was formed with the goal of identifying sustainable projects that preserve, conserve and celebrate the unique natural, cultural, historic, recreation and agricultural resources of our county. The council members came together for their first meeting in February 2005, and have met on a regular basis since to formulate the Wilkes Heritage Plan. The council gathered ideas from community leaders and members, and began formulating plans by first building an inventory of heritage sites and attractions that correlate with the thematic areas identified in the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area legislation. The Wilkes Heritage Plan incorporates initiatives that specifically identify projects that will stimulate private investment and coordinate opportunities for partnership and collaboration, as well as tell the story of Wilkes County. The initiatives identified address small business development, entrepreneurship, regional partnerships, sustainability of existing heritage tourism attractions and events, include plans for revitalization of downtowns and railways, and utilize the recreational opportunities of the Yadkin River.

In order to build the community support necessary to implement many of these projects, the council will schedule and conduct focus groups, and meet with community organizations and county leadership to develop a comprehensive action plan for the community, region, and the BRNHA.

WILKES COUNTY PROJECT SUMMARY CHART

BLUE RIDGE NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Initiative Name	Estimated Costs
Americana Homeplace Concept	\$ 75,000
Area Events Coordinator Position	60,000
Benjamin F. Long, IV Fresco Partnership Trail (complete) (Received BRNHA grant of \$14,400 in 2005)	25,725
Blue Ridge Music Project Exhibit (complete) (Received BRNHA grant of \$7,016 in 2006)	15,233
Educational Outreach of Appalachian Heritage	84,900
Events Coordinator Position	60,000
Environmental Education Center, W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir	500,000
Forest Edge Amphitheater, Fort Hamby Park Phases I-III (complete) (Phases I-III includes lighting, sound, seating, parking and new bathroom facility)	350,000
Forest Edge Amphitheater, Fort Hamby Park Phase IV (Phase IV includes paving, safety lighting, landscaping, & ramp)	75,000
Fort Hamby Park Civil War Interpretative Trail	35,000
Heritage Agri-Tourism Development	65,000
Historic Downtown North Wilkesboro Continued Revitalization	1,445,000
Historic Downtown Wilkesboro Revitalization Project	40,000
MerleFest TV Special, DVD, and Book (complete - Received BRNHA grant of \$8,800 in 2005)	35,000
Northwest North Carolina Visitor's Center	100,000
Develop Strategic Plan for North Wilkesboro Speedway	30,000
Poultry Exhibit, Wilkes Heritage Museum	20,000
Preserving Wilkes County Heritage through Outdoor Drama	20,000
Regional Convention/Resort Center for Northwest North Carolina (Feasibility Study)	30,000

Save Our Wilkes County History	20,000
(Received BRNHA grant of \$5,000 in 2006)	
Swan Creek American Viticultural Area (complete)	10,500
Whippoorwill Academy and Village Brochure Production	2,000
Wilkes Heritage Museum	2,400,000
Yadkin River Heritage Corridor	10,000
(Completed feasibility study received BRNHA grant of \$20,000 in 2006)	

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Americana Home Place Concept
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Project Narrative:	<p>The Americana Home Place initiative leverages existing and emerging assets of the Wilkesboros, Wilkes County, and northwestern North Carolina to develop and brand the area as a year round tourist attraction. Wilkesboro will stand as the primary destination to experience a broad range of Americana music – old-time, blues, bluegrass, singer-songwriter, roots country, and jam band – throughout the region.</p> <p>The Wilkesboros will thus serve as a hub for vacationers seeking a music experience while exploring northwest NC, southwest VA, southeastern KY, and northeast TN.</p> <p>This branding will enhance the visibility of other BRNHA initiatives in Wilkes County and northwestern NC. Those efforts will provide a wealth of activities and experiences for those drawn by the music.</p> <p>Existing Assets:</p> <p>Festivals serve as the primary calling card which promotes the county and brings people interested in Americana music to the Wilkesboros – MerleFest, Carolina in the Fall, Singing in the Foothills. The surrounding areas are also rich with Americana music events including the Mt. Airy Old Fiddlers Convention, the Galax Fiddlers Convention, the Ashe County Fiddlers Convention, FloydFest, the Boone Bluegrass Festival, Fiddlers Grove in Union Grove, Ralph Stanley’s Homecoming Festival on Memorial Day Weekend, the Sugar Grove MusicFest, the Wayne Henderson Music Festival in Mouth of Wilson, the Alleghany County Fiddlers Convention and others.</p> <p>The Wilkesboros connect to the Blue Ridge Music Trail, the Overmountain Victory Trail, and the Yadkin Valley Greenway. US 421 provide a 4-lane highway through Wilkesboro, while I-77 passes just to the east of Wilkes County. The Blue Ridge Parkway courses along the western edge of the county. From the Wilkesboros, one can visit Virginia’s Crooked Road Heritage Music Trail, the Blue Ridge Music Center near Galax, the Birthplace of Country Music Museum in Bristol, the Ralph Stanley Museum in Clintwood, the Carter Family Fold in Hilton, Heritage Records in Woodlawn, the Friday night “Bluegrass Backroads” concerts in Galax, the Yadkinville Bluegrass Contest & Fiddlers Convention, and County Sales in Floyd.</p> <p>The Wilkesboros already offer a wealth of musical activity beyond the big festivals. Each Friday morning from 7 until 9, live music from the Hometown Opry airs on WKBC-AM with the lively participation of some 75 to 100 folks in the audience. The Wilkes Acoustic Folk Society proves one of the most active picking clubs around. A number of other jam sessions and gospel sings occur regularly in the Wilkesboros and Wilkes County, with many more in the</p>
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surrounding region. The Walker Center, Benton Hall, and the old courthouse all serve as performance venues. Benton Hall presents plays about the heritage of Wilkes County, while the Walker Center offers a number of adult concerts and school shows throughout the year. The Coffee Tavern and Banjos Café at Meadowlark Landing intend to offer live Americana music on a regular basis. Whippoorwill Academy in southwest Wilkes included the Tom Dooley Museum, open on weekends. The Kingston Trio's recording of the "Ballad of Tom Dooley" sparked the folk music revival of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Old Wilkes Jail museum, open daily, displays the cell in which he was held as well as Otto Wood, who inspired the song, "Otto Wood the Bandit." Boone hosts the Appalachian Cultural Museum.

Several acoustic instrument dealers, including Minton's Pawn Shop, which hosts the Hometown Opry, can be found in the Wilkesboros. Nearby are such leading craft luthier shops as those of Tom Barr and Wayne Henderson. The region serves as home to a large number of outstanding acoustic musicians.

The counties adjacent to Wilkes, and thus an easy drive from the Wilkesboros, offer a wealth of music related attractions. Caldwell County is home to Sims Country BBQ with live music on Fridays and Saturdays and regular jam sessions at Bolick Pottery and the Lenoir Mall. Three churches in Alexander County open their shape note singings to the public each month, while the Hiddenite Center provides a catalyst for the traditional arts. Watauga County hosts the Mountainhome Music Program, Woodlands BBQ & Pickin' Parlor, gospel sings, and clogging events. In Yadkin County one can find live music on Friday and Saturday nights at O'Henry's Restaurant and Halls Barbeque, with jam sessions open to the public each Friday at the old Union Grove Schoolhouse. The Mountain Music Jamboree in Glendale Springs in Ashe County, serves as a popular weekend music destination year round. In Alleghany County, Sparta hosts the Alleghany Jamboree, a participatory celebration of mountain dance, each Friday and Saturday. WPAQ-AM in Mount Airy, Surry County, has offered the live music of the Merry-Go-Round show for half a century each Saturday in an area rich with regular jam sessions and old-time and bluegrass concerts at the Andy Griffith Playhouse.

Emerging Assets

The forthcoming state Visitors Center on US 421 will provide a powerful vehicle for introducing tourists the Wilkesboros and the region as the home place for Americana music. The Amphitheatre under construction at the Fort Hamby section of the W. Kerr Scott Reservoir will bring an outdoor venue to Wilkesboro. The Train Depot in North Wilkesboro may become a performance venue. The proposed PBS fundraiser program, DVD, and coffee table book arising from MerleFest's 20th Anniversary in 2007 will offer exceptional promotion for the Americana Home Place and the BRNHA.

In order to begin branding the region as the Home Place of Americana Music, a

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Area Events Coordinator Position
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Project Narrative:	There are numerous events held within the region annually. Planning, scheduling and determining the best way to market and promote events requires an individual with strong marketing and organization skills. The position of a regional coordinator will assist event planners with scheduling, planning and promotion. The position will have responsibility for sporting and recreational events, concerts and outdoor festivals, wine tastings, and socials, and cultural art programs. This individual would work closely with event organizers and collaborate with area agencies to prevent over booking and to assure inclusiveness.
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Goal:	To secure funding for administrative overhead of an area events coordinator
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Linda Cheek	\$60,000 – Salary, benefits, and travel expenses of individual hired.	2009 Calendar Year – Work within the Wilkes Visitor’s Center

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s Responsible:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure funding for the position. 2. Interview candidates to fill position. 	Funding. Candidate with good communications skills.	Wilkes Chamber of Commerce

Performance Measures:	Improved planning of events, greater awareness to public, increased attendance and increased revenues.
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Status:	Proposed
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Benjamin Long, IV Fresco Partnership Trail
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Project Narrative:	<p>The Ben Long Frescoes have served as major tourist attractions since their completion in 2002. Through a strategic partnership with other <i>Ben Long Frescoes</i> sites in the region, a <i>Ben Long Frescoes Trail</i> and interpretive/educational materials will be developed to promote the frescoes as a destination for visitors, as well as a destination for colleges and universities, and schools in the region. A website will be used as a tool for education on Old Master's fresco painting and allow for maximum exposure linking the participating counties, the Ben Long website and Old Master's fresco painting information.</p> <p>With the help of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area grant of \$14,400 received in 2005 the brochure has been created, a website has been designed and is in operation, and a DVD has been created for educational materials. Wilkes County Schools has also agreed to list the frescos as a possible site for field trips.</p>
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Goal:	Fresco brochure, website, and educational materials.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Cathy H. McKenzie	25,725	Completed (1.5 years)

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
N/A		

Performance Measures:	Completed
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Status:	Brochure, website and educational materials have all been created with the help of a Blue Ridge National Heritage Area grant of \$14,400 in 2005. Wilkes County Schools have also agreed to list the frescos as a possible site for field trips.
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Blue Ridge Music Project Exhibit and Corresponding Educational Program
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Project Narrative:	<p>The Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame committee, a subset of the Old Wilkes Inc., a private non-profit, is seeking funding to design, fabricate, and install the Blue Ridge Music Exhibit, and to research and develop a corresponding educational program for school-age children, encompassing northwest North Carolina and surrounding area. The committee consists of representatives from the museum, the Wilkes Acoustic Folk Society, area scholars, and MerleFest. This project is intended to form a partnership between these entities to strengthen music tourism and education in Wilkes County and the greater region. We will research the history of music along the Blue Ridge region, roughly defined as the mountains and surrounding areas from northern Virginia to north Georgia. Musicians, songwriters, producers, promoters, scholars, and teachers will be identified for inclusion in the exhibit. The permanent exhibit in the museum will consist of cases, text panels, instruments, images, and an interactive music kiosk. Cases will contain pictures and memorabilia about specific people, and can be changed periodically to showcase a wide range of individuals and groups influential to Blue Ridge area music. Text panels will tell the history of the music including its geography, significant people, types of instruments and their history and construction. We plan to procure authentic instruments for display. The music kiosk will have a touch screen to allow guests to choose a song, artist, or genre from the Blue Ridge and hear the music.</p> <p>An educational program will be created to complement this exhibit. Following the research necessary to complete the room, the museum educator will develop a program which can be implemented by volunteers and museum staff. This interactive element will be available to school groups at the museum, as well as being an outreach program to schools and other groups who are unable to attend the museum. This will consist of showing children the instruments used to create Blue Ridge music and playing an assortment of songs. Students will be encouraged to examine the instruments and explore the types of sounds they make. They will be asked to determine what instruments were used in the songs they listen to. Students will be asked about the feeling of the songs – are they happy or sad? How do these instruments make such different sounds? What sort of story do you think is being told in this song? Further funding will be sought to train volunteers and to purchase supplies for this program.</p> <p>The Blue Ridge Music Project is providing another crucial venue for music</p>
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	heritage and appreciation in this region. Music tourism is growing in Wilkes and the surrounding counties. The museum has already welcomed visitors from around the state, nation, and other countries. This project has the potential to draw significant attendance from these areas. It will also have the potential to encourage music appreciation among students at a time when these programs are rapidly disappearing from the classroom. The Blue Ridge Music Project will preserve the unique music heritage of the Blue Ridge Area, make this history accessible to the public, and promote music education among school-age children.
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Goal:	The goal of Old Wilkes, Inc. is to obtain funding for the research, development, and production of the Blue Ridge Music Room, and the development of the Blue Ridge Music Education Program.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Jennifer Furr, Director	\$15,233.00	10 months Now completed

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
The Blue Ridge Music Project has already established a committee and sub-committees to work on various different aspects of the exhibit area.	Grant sources such as the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area	The director, fundraiser, curator, and members of the Blue Ridge Hall of Fame Committee.

Performance Measures:	Completion of the room, planning of educational program, increased attendance at museum and interest in educational programs by teachers and students.
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Status:	The Blue Ridge Music Exhibit is completed. Old Wilkes, Inc. hosted an exhibit opening on Thursday, May 29, 2008 at the Wilkes Heritage Museum and recognized the exhibit sponsors – Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, Wilkesboro Tourism Development Authority, and The American Express Foundation.
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Educational Outreach of Appalachian Heritage
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Project Narrative:	<p>Continue working with local agencies to enhance the educational outreach programs for school age children. All students will be able to attend, at no cost, programs through the John A. Walker Center’s Educational Outreach Program, the Appalachian Studies Program, Heritage Museum, the Art Gallery, the Public Library, the James Larkin Pearson library, the Department of Forestry, the Agri-tourism Industry, the Cultural Arts Council and all our State parks. Plans are under way to add an educational auditorium and a community building to Stone Mountain State Park. These additions would allow space for the Envirothon program for the students in this region. Students will be exposed to the art of hand crafting musical instruments, hand crafting furniture, ceramics, weaving, beekeeping and alternative methods of farming such as cheese making, wine making, apple farming, etc.</p> <p>The educational programs will be designed to celebrate our rich mountain heritage and to educate children about our mountain culture and traditions. Included in all programs will be students from Wilkes, Ashe, Alleghany, Surry and Yadkin counties.</p>
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Goal:	To enrich the lives of the children of Wilkes County through Heritage programs throughout the region, to preserve our mountain culture and traditions and to share this with the visiting public.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Nancy Wilson Dennis Huggins Wilkes County Schools/Wilkes Community College	\$84,900.00	3 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s Responsible:
Fund and promote school events to Walker Center, Art Gallery, Heritage Museum, etc.	\$65,000.00	Nancy Wilson

Purchase of legendary acoustic musical instruments for our schools	\$11,900.00	Nancy Wilson
Kilns for pottery making for high schools	\$8,000.00	Nancy Wilson

Performance Measures:	
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Status:	Continue to work with agencies to partner with the schools. Wilkes County Schools now has a 600 seat state of the art Performing Arts Center that has been community funded and will be used by all students in our county. Much community support has been given, additional funding would enhance the arts in our schools.
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**Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET**

Initiative Title:	Environmental Education Center, W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir
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Project Narrative:	<p>An Environmental Education center (EEC) is in the process of construction at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir with the target date set for June 2009. The EEC will contain 10 working hands-on lab stations, a classroom with smart board and seating facilities for 50 students, and an outdoor trail featuring species native to the area. This environmental center is being constructed in the basement of The W. Kerr Scott Reservoir Visitor's Assistance Center. The Visitor Center which contained an unfinished area was ideal for conversion to an environmental education center.</p> <p>Phase I consisted of the EEC Engineering design and the construction of the entrance doorway and ADA access ramp to the facility. The Corps of Engineers provided \$25,000.00 and an additional \$25,000.00 for Phase I included a Cost Share from Friends of W. Kerr Scott Lake, with assistance from grants and sponsors.</p> <p>Phase II, currently under construction, involves the completion of exhibits and learning lab at a cost of \$400,000. The Corps of Engineers, in an effort to achieve the best possible approach in the interpretive exhibits, has reviewed approaches at the Cradle of Forestry and at other Federal/State parks and regional nature/science centers in North Carolina. Phase II is underway as of September 2008 with the interior walls installed in the exhibit rooms. In addition, sewer lines and plumbing pre-work has been completed. The exhibits will be installed during the winter/spring of 2009.</p> <p>Phase III will conclude the project with the completion of the native species trail at a cost of \$50,000.00. Project completion and grand opening is set for June 1, 2009. The project is poised to become a leading provider in environmental education in Western North Carolina through an on-going partnership with public schools within a seven county region surrounding the lake. Currently, there are no environmental educational centers in the immediate area, and when completed, the Environmental. Education Center at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir will serve as valuable asset in the Blue Ridge Heritage Area of Northwest North Carolina.</p>
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Goal:	Completion of Environmental Education Center At W. Kerr Scott Reservoir
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Terry Ramsey	\$500,000.00	June 1, 2009

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Phase I (preparation of entrance doorway and re-wiring/ and entrance doorway and ADA access) Status – Completed May 2008	\$50,000.00 - from Friends of W. Kerr Scott Lake and Corps of Engineers (construction by Eureka Contractors)	Corps of Engineers
Phase II (installation of exhibits, classroom, fixtures and indoor restroom facilities)	\$400,000.00 - from grants, sponsors and budget allocations for the Corps of Engineers – (construction by Eureka)	Corps of Engineers
Phase III (installation of native species nature trail adjacent to EEC)	\$50,000 (construction by Eureka)	Corps of Engineers
Project Total	\$500,000.00	

Performance Measures:	Environmental Education Center (all three phases Completion date of June 1, 2009).
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Status:	As of June 2008, Phase I completed, Phase II and III are under construction.
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**Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET**

Initiative Title:	Forest Edge Amphitheater Fort Hamby Park – Phases I-III (Completed) Phase IV
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Project Narrative:	<p>Fort Hamby Park Amphitheater was constructed at Fort Hamby Park at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir during the period of summer 2005 to June 2006. The facility, re-named “Forest Edge Community Amphitheater,” consists of an outdoor community amphitheater with a seating capacity for 850 persons. The purpose of an outdoor amphitheater stage is to provide a lasting outdoor facility capable of accommodating uses for community outreach activities and programs. Opportunities will include gatherings at the amphitheater such as drama, music, environmental education, park interpretation, and special events. Within the last two years, US Highway 421 has been converted to a busy four-lane highway and serves as a major corridor into Northwest North Carolina. The presence of a large community outdoor amphitheater at Fort Hamby Park will increase visitation to W. Kerr Scott Reservoir and the surrounding region. The completion of the park amphitheater is part of the renovation of Fort Hamby Park which is a on going renovation effort. The amphitheater currently provides recreational opportunities and connects visitors with the cultural and historical resources of the North Carolina Appalachian Mountains. The Forest Edge Amphitheater is now open and is promoting regional heritage tourism by providing a well-designed multi-use outdoor special event facility in a pristine lakeside setting.</p> <p>The Corps of Engineers carried out the initial amphitheater construction (Phase I and II) through its principle contractor Eureka, Inc. However, funds will have to be raised to complete Phase III, which consists of parking lot paving, picnic shelter renovation, and the construction of a new bathroom facility.</p> <p>A three way partnership between the US Army Corps of Engineers and non-profits Wilkes Playmakers and Friends of W. Kerr Scott Lake Inc. has been established. The goal of the partnership is to use the site for annual performances of the production <i>Tom Dooley, A Wilkes County Legend</i> by writer Karen Reynolds, an annual summer concert series, and an environmental educational outreach program. Wilkes Playmakers was formed in 1990 and today manages Benton Hall Playhouse, in North Wilkesboro. Wilkes Playmakers is an independent, non-profit community theater company dedicated to the cultural enhancement of the children, adults and senior citizens of Wilkes County through theater. Friends of W. Kerr Scott Lake was formed in 2006 and is a non-profit group which purpose is to preserve and enhance the park facilities and the Natural</p>
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	<p>Resources at W. Kerr Scott Lake.</p> <p>The old Amphitheater site was utilized in 1979 and 1980 when an original outdoor drama “<i>The Legend of Tom Dooley</i>” was held at the park. In the mid-1980’s when the site was leased by Wilkes County, the amphitheater structures were torn down and replaced with park playground equipment. Fort Hamby Park is no longer leased by Wilkes County and is operated by the Corps of Engineers.</p> <p>The original 1980 Amphitheater site minus the original structures remains ideal for reconstruction of the community amphitheater. Isom and Associates of Wilkesboro developed the structural and civil engineering plans. Wilkes Playmakers also supported the project by providing funding for the concept drawings. And Friends of the Lake raised approximately 300k towards the completion of the Amphitheater.</p> <p>Fort Hamby Park Amphitheater will have a strong economic impact on the community and surrounding businesses. It is estimated that annual user fees collections and visitation at Fort Hamby Park will increase by 70%. The project will be a key link in moving heritage tourism via. US Highway 421 into the region. The completed Forest Edge Amphitheater in Fort Hamby Park will provide a lasting vehicle through which large numbers of tourists and visitors can be introduced in a positive way to heritage opportunities in the region.</p> <p>Phase I, the initial construction was completed in February of 2006 and Phase II, the sound, seating lighting and interior finishing was completed in time for the grand opening on June 23, 2006. Representative Congresswoman, Virginia Foxx, along with other representatives and dignitaries addressed the large group of partners and project sponsors at the grand opening. The huge event was also celebrated with a Kingston Trio concert and performance of the Tom Dooley A Wilkes County Legend on June 23. Target date for the sound and lighting phase of the construction is June 1, 2006. Since the grand opening, in 2006, the facility has been the location of another large play, Moonshine and Thunder, by Wilkes Playmakers, and has also been the site of several out door musical concerts, large corporate events and site for large youth workshops.</p> <p>Currently Phase III, the construction of a new bathroom facility along with paving of adjacent parking lots and installation of walkway lighting was implemented during winter/spring of 2008. In addition, the phase IV (scheduled for completion by 2010), consists of the completion of the paving of the remaining parking lots and adjacent landscaping, lighting for safety of ingress/egress, and installation of ADA ramp access to Amphitheater seating.</p>
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Goal:	Complete Phase IV – Paving of Adjacent Parking Lots at Fort Hamby Park/
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	Landscaping of adjacent area, lighting for safety of ingress/egress, ADA ramp access to Amphitheater seating.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Terry Ramsey	\$75,000.00	2 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paving of Parking lot 50K 2. Installation of lighting improvements 10 K 3. Installation of ADA Ramp 10K 4. Installation of landscaping 5 K 	All coordinate as: Contracted from Eureka Inc. With fundraising support from Friends of Lake	Corps of Engineers

Performance Measures:	Completion of paving, lighting improvements, ADA ramp access, and landscaping by June 1, 2010
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Status:	Completed Phases I-III Currently in planning and budget planning process for Phase IV.
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Fort Hamby Park Civil War Interpretative Trail
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Project Narrative:	<p>Fort Hamby Park Amphitheater was constructed at Fort Hamby Park at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir during the period of summer 2005 to May 2006. It opened in 2006, and continues to promote regional heritage tourism by providing a well-designed, multi-use outdoor special event facility in a pristine lakeside setting. The facility, re-named “Forest Edge Community Amphitheater,” consists of an outdoor community amphitheater with a seating capacity for 850 persons and a state-of-the-art sound system. The purpose of an outdoor amphitheater stage is to provide a lasting outdoor facility capable of accommodating uses for community outreach activities, cultural/artistic programs and productions. Open since summer 2006, the amphitheater has been booked consistently by community organizations, performance groups, church events and for private corporate trainings/reunions.</p> <p>Some of the most significant events/performances occurring at the amphitheater have included: Open-air theater—Tom Dooley: A Wilkes County Legend; The Junior Johnson Story; Concerts—a summer concert series organized by Friends of the W. Kerr Scott lake; Blue Grass concerts sponsored by Rendezvous Mountain; Fundraising events—Friends Water Fowl Habitat improvement fundraiser; and youth education—weeklong Forestry Education Camp, and Native American Pow-Wows.</p> <p>Following the initial opening of the Amphitheater, through several generous grants, other upgrades to the facility/area have been accomplished: increased paving and parking lot improvements; restroom upgrades/ lighting additions.</p> <p>As anticipated, the presence of a large community outdoor amphitheater at Fort Hamby Park has increased visitation to W. Kerr Scott Reservoir and the surrounding region. The completion of the park amphitheater is part of the renovation of Fort Hamby Park which is a on going renovation effort. In a comparison of estimated users of 2006 and 2007, there was a 65% increase in numbers of individuals attending functions at the amphitheater.</p> <p>The proposed initiative—Fort Hamby Park Area Civil War Interpretative Trail, is one of the projects needed to truly enrich the Fort Hamby park site. Historically, within this area, at the end of the Civil War, a group of criminals and deserters from the Union army constructed a base camp in the Hamby farm site. From that home base, they left to steal and murder throughout Wilkes Co. A group of local citizens and confederate soldiers</p>
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	<p>decided to eliminate this group. They attacked the site, burnt down the house and hung the captives.</p> <p>There has been an archaeological study of the site. But visitors to the site do not know what they are looking for, nor do they know the history. The trail leading to the site is approximately one mile, and there are few remnants of the farm that was burned. This historic event is a prominent scene in the Tom Dooley play that is held at the amphitheater each June/July.</p> <p>The Forest Edge Community Amphitheater at Fort Hamby has proven to have a strong economic impact on the community and surrounding businesses. It is estimated that annual user fees collections and visitation at Fort Hamby Park increased by 65%. The Fort Hamby Park Civil War Interpretative Trail will be an asset in moving heritage tourism via. US Highway 421 into the region. It will provide another heritage-related activity to the rich list of activities within the county, encouraging out-of-town tourists to remain longer in the area/region.</p> <p>This initiative will involve an ongoing partnership between the US Army Corps of Engineers and the non-profit Friends of W. Kerr Scott Lake, Inc. The Friends organization supports natural, environmental, cultural and historical activities on the lake and adjacent land. Since its inception in 2005, and subsequent agreement with the Army Corps, Friends conducts fundraising/grant writing initiatives in support of strategic projects and coordinates a group of volunteers dedicated to support these initiatives.</p> <p>The creation of a Civil War Interpretative Trail would entail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Planning for the course of the trail ○ Development of historical curriculum ○ Trail construction/materials and lighting ○ Partial historical reconstruction of the farm site ○ Manufacturing and installation of interpretative signage ○ Development and printing of interpretative trail guides ○ Development/production of interpretative CDs and purchase of CD players (visitors would borrow the CDs from the Ranger at the gate to Fort Hamby area)
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Goal:	To construct a civil war history trail at Fort Hamby and to develop multiple interpretative media to explain the trail/history—CDs, brochure, trail signage.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Terry Ramsey	\$35,000	1 year

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Planning for the course of the trail	Historic consultation--\$500	Terry Ramsey will oversee project.
Development of historical curriculum	Historic consultation--\$500	Members of the Friends of the W. Kerr Scott Lake, Inc., will coordinate and provide
Trail construction/materials and lighting	Trail design--\$3,000 Materials--\$10,000 Volunteer hours to construct/maintain trail--\$10,000	volunteer hours, and will continue to raise funds in support of this project.
Partial historical reconstruction of the Farm site	Materials--\$15,000 Historic consultation--\$2,000 Architectural design--\$5,000 Volunteer hours to work on reconstruction--\$10,000	
Manufacturing and installation of interpretative signage	\$10,000 Volunteer hours to work with consultant and manufacturer--\$3,000	
Development and printing of interpretative trail guides	\$2,000 writing/design/printing Volunteer hours to oversee trail guide project--\$500	
Development/production of interpretative CDs and purchase of CD players (visitors would borrow the CDs from the Ranger at the gate to Fort Hamby area)	Historic consultation--\$2,000 Taping/tape duplication--\$1,500 Purchase of 10 CD	

	players--\$400.	
	Total: \$75,400	

Performance Measures:	<p>Performance measures would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *timely completion of each phase of the project (action items) *tracking CD usage, map usage, civil war trail log, to estimate number of individuals using the trail for the first year following trail completion. A conservative estimate would be 2,000 users.
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Status:	This project is currently in the planning stages, initial stages of fundraising. Completion of this project would occur within a year of obtaining the funding.
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Heritage Agri-Tourism Development
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Project Narrative:	<p>In this region, there are some existing agri-tourism sites that are actively teaching and promoting the heritage of agriculture. The potential exists to develop many more heritage agri-tourism projects and enhance existing sites. In order to do this effectively, funds are needed for education, marketing, and project development.</p> <p>Multi-county educational seminars will be organized and the focus would be on start-up of heritage agri-tourism sites. The seminars would feature national and regional speakers, as well as resource persons to assist participants with potential and existing agri-tourism sites. Educational tours to existing agri-tourism sites throughout North Carolina and other states will be organized and provided to interested individuals. There will be a resource library established within local Extension Centers of each of the three counties with educational resources relating to issues in agri-tourism. Resources on taxation, liability, planning, and operating agri-tourism sites would be included.</p> <p>The funds will provide mini-grants for existing and new agri-tourism site operators to receive grants of \$500 - \$3000. The mini-grants will be used for marketing, web-site development, signage, and other qualifying supplies and services.</p> <p>The initiative funding may assist with 500 hours of contract labor to assist with the organizing and cataloging of resource materials, and to research possible grant opportunities for agri-tourism projects.</p> <p>The initiative will assist with the start-up funding for development of heritage agricultural projects located at the Alan C. Davis heritage demonstration farm, owned by North Carolina State University in Wilkes County. This project includes a heritage apple plot featuring heritage apple varieties and display area for antique farm and home implements. The farm will be used for teaching and promotion of agri-tourism.</p>
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Goal:	Acquire funds to implement educational opportunities to assist farmers interested in pursuing heritage agri-tourism projects.
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Person/Organization	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to
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Responsible:		Complete:
Donna Edsel, Wilkes	\$65,000	1 year

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize multi-county educational seminars • Provide educational tours • Establish a resource libraries at Extension Centers • Establish mini-grants for existing and new agri-tourism site operators • Seek funding for 5000 hours of contract labor • Seek start-up funding for heritage agricultural projects at Alan C. Davis demonstration 	<p>\$1,000</p> <p>\$2,500</p> <p>\$1,500</p> <p>\$45,000</p> <p>\$5,000</p> <p>\$10,000</p>	<p>Cooperative Extension</p> <p>(CES)</p> <p>(CES)</p> <p>(CES)</p> <p>(CES)</p> <p>(CES)</p>

Performance Measures:	Increase in agri-tourism sites and industry in the region. Establishment of funding pool for start-up operations. Establishment of resource libraries in local extension offices.
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Status:	Concept
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**Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET**

Initiative Title:	Historic Downtown North Wilkesboro Continued Revitalization to develop, promote, manage and enhance the quality of life and commerce in the downtown through the “Main Street Approach.”
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Project Narrative:	<p>One of the primary goals of the Town of North Wilkesboro and Historic Downtown North Wilkesboro (HDTNW) has been the revitalization of the downtown area of North Wilkesboro. By making Downtown North Wilkesboro a vibrant and attractive center of activity not only for the citizens of Wilkes County, but as a tool for economic development to attract tourism to the downtown area.</p> <p>In April 2000, Governor Jim Hunt and the North Carolina Main Street Program established North Wilkesboro as a Main Street Town. This program operates under a 4-component structure of design, economic restructuring, organization, and promotions. The organizational structure needed to qualify as a Main Street town helps to assure the group will be continuous over time, rather than be dependent on the interest of a few individuals. This program became a tool for HDTNW to use to accomplish downtown goals. This has been a great source of pride within our community. As a Main Street Town, the Town of North Wilkesboro and HDTNW has completed many of the Main Street recommendations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established and adopted Design Guidelines and implemented an Architectural Review Board to administer the Façade Improvement Grant Program. ➤ In July 2003, North Wilkesboro was awarded our National Historic District. ➤ Proudly, we are now home to five festivals, the Wilkes Art Gallery, Wilkes County Public Library, and Benton Hall and draw over 250,000 people to our downtown area each year. <p><u>Downtown Design</u> Downtown North Wilkesboro is very unique in that it has a large collection of early 20th century commercial buildings that are, for the most part, still occupied with active businesses and offices. Our goal is to enhance the visual quality of the downtown through streetscape such as: Improvements to the entrances of the downtown from major highways, new sidewalks, underground wiring, directional signage, parking deck improvements, and other beautifications like decorative garbage cans, benches, and flower pots. We will also continue to expand upon the Façade Grant program.</p> <p><u>Recreation Development</u> A nice collection of small parks, the Yadkin River Greenway, and sports</p>
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	<p>fields are included or adjacent to the downtown area. The beautiful landscape and two rivers flowing through the downtown are wonderful assets. With this in mind we would also like to continue to advocate, help ease the financial burden through donations and grants, and work with downtown property owners to achieve our mutual goals. The Brushy Mountain Ruritan Park is a great example of recreational goals for the downtown. This park will become a focal point of community activity. The Park will consist of a permanent stage that will have lighting and sound for community activities. The park will also have lots of green landscaping and areas to sit and relax. Another recreational goal is improvements to Main Street Park as a family oriented park with interactive entertainment for children.</p> <p><u>Business Recruitment and Retention</u> To strengthen existing economic assets of the downtown district while diversifying the economic base. To sharpen the skills of current business owners and merchants. To recruit new businesses and find new uses for existing buildings. Development of a convention center. Continue to support and work toward the utilization and improvement of the American Drew property. Also continue to support downtown business owners in their efforts to bring downtown living to area.</p> <p><u>Downtown Promotions and Tourism</u> Continue to organize and support festivals in the downtown. Work with the downtown parks to host free monthly music concerts. Define image and develop an overall marketing campaign. Work with merchants to implement quarterly sales promotions.</p>
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Goal:	Successful downtowns take years and years to build. The Town of North Wilkesboro and Historic Downtown North Wilkesboro will work together to lay the groundwork for years of success.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joshua Harrold, Town of North Wilkesboro Planner ○ Melissa Smithey, Historic Downtown ○ North Wilkesboro Downtown Property Owners 	\$1,455,000	6 – 10 Years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Develop a Master Plan for the downtown	\$10,000	North Wilkesboro &

Streetscape Including: Improvements to the entrances of the downtown from major highways and other beautifications like decorative garbage cans, benches, and flower pots.	\$60,000	HDTNW (complete) North Wilkesboro & HDTNW (Partially complete)
New sidewalks and underground wiring	\$700,000	North Wilkesboro & HDTNW
Develop old Railroad Depot into a restaurant / entertainment venue	\$100,000	Downtown Property Owner
Parking Deck Improvements	\$10,000	North Wilkesboro & HDTNW
Completion of Brushy Mtn. Ruritan Park for use as a music / entertainment venue	\$250,000 capital \$250,000 maintenance	Brushy Mtn Ruritan Club (in progress)
Full time staff positions	\$60,000	North Wilkesboro & HDTNW (in place)
Promotion of the Downtown through advertisements, billboards, and website	\$15,000	HDTNW (in progress)

Performance Measures:	Completion of action items
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Status:	Planning & Implementation
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Historic Downtown Wilkesboro Revitalization Project - Master Plan for first 50 acres (Wilkesboro, 1800 A.D.) - Main Street & Museum Small Area Plan
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Project Narrative:	<p>The Town of Wilkesboro, with an estimated population of 3,195, is a small community located in the foothills of both the Blue Ridge and Brushy Mountains. Wilkesboro is approximately 55 miles from Winston-Salem, 33 miles from Boone, and 85 miles from Charlotte. Wilkes Heritage Museum is the centerpiece of the Town's Historic Downtown Business District. Development of a detailed small area plan for the area surrounding the Wilkes Heritage Museum in conjunction with a Master Plan for the original 50 acres of the Town of Wilkesboro is the ultimate purpose of this initiative.</p> <p>Implementation of a 'Downtown Master Plan' will enhance the image of the town, the community, and Wilkes County, serving to increase the general public welfare and attract tourism. An overarching vision for the future of the town will help tie individual projects together through unifying architectural patterns and design consistency. Community assistance & grant programs, such as the National Main Street program or the North Carolina Rural Center Small Town Economic Prosperity demonstration, may play a significant role in the process through technical & creative assistance. The private sector will play a role as well - a Request for Proposals for a small area plan is under development. We may seek assistance from the private sector for grant writing as well.</p> <p>The intention of the master planning process is to create a better quality of life for citizens and visitors and to help provide the opportunities that come with healthy small town economies. We are making an effort to preserve small-town character while reviving the rural built environment in an historically significant and strategic locale for northwestern North Carolina. Town of Wilkesboro staff & work forces are anticipated to handle a substantial amount of the project implementation workload.</p> <p>Expectations for the project include respectfully utilizing local knowledge while pursuing outside assistance & expertise from larger regional efforts, such as the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. Wilkesboro planning staff intends to pursue the triple bottom line approach; striving to achieve economic stability, environmental stewardship, and social justice simultaneously. The four-point, National Main Street approach will be utilized as well, and is outlined in the final paragraph of this narrative. Open-mindedness, mediation, and good listening skills will help facilitate</p>
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	<p>community involvement. We will actively seek information from all entities wishing to provide input into a collaborative planning process.</p> <p><u>Four Point Approach</u></p> <p>Rejuvenating Historic Downtown Wilkesboro through a Program such as the NC Small Town Main Street program would greatly assist the Town. The four points of the National Main Street approach are: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization - Building partnerships to create a consistent revitalization program and develop effective management and leadership downtown. Diverse groups-merchants, bankers, public officials, the chamber of commerce, and civic groups must work together to improve downtown. ○ Promotion-Reestablishing-downtown as a compelling place for shopper, investors, and visitors. This means not only improving sales but also rekindling community excitement and involvement. Promotion ranges from street festivals to retail merchandising, from community education to aggressive public relations. ○ Design-Enhancing the visual quality of downtown. Attention must be given to the elements of the downtown environment-not just buildings and storefronts, but also public improvements, rear entries, signs, landscaping, window displays, and graphic materials. ○ Economic Restructuring-Strengthening the existing economic assets of the business district while diversifying its economic base. Activities include market analysis to understand the changing market place; adaptive reuse of vacant structures as entertainment or cultural facilities; sharpening the competitiveness of Main Streets traditional merchants.
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Goal:	Excellence in design of the Historic Downtown Wilkesboro Master Plan. Pragmatic resourcefulness in financing, procurement of materials, and implementation phase.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Town of Wilkesboro John Frey, Town of Wilkesboro Planner	\$40,000	1-2 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
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Complete Small Area Plan RFP	\$1000	Town Officials
Complete NC STEP application	Staff *completed*	Planning Department
Complete 'Main Street' application	Staff	Planning Department
Part Time staff position	\$20,000	Town of Wilkesboro
National Register of Historic Places -	\$15,000	Historic Preservation
National Historic District Designation		Commission
State Historic Preservation Office	\$4,000	Historic Preservation
Local Historic District Designation		Commission

Status:	Ready to begin Master Planning Process
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	MerleFest TV special, DVD and Book (received BRNHA grant of \$8,800 in 2005)
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Project Narrative:	<p>MerleFest, an internationally known Americana music festival attracting over 80,000 music lovers to Wilkesboro every spring, will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2007. As part of this celebration, and to raise additional funds, the anniversary festival will be filmed by UNC-TV and developed into the 20th Anniversary of MerleFest Public TV special. UNC-TV will air major segments of the 2007 festival, as well as interviews with the founders and musicians, as a pledge special with companion DVD and book.</p> <p>In addition to increasing the visibility and attendance of MerleFest, this special also offers a unique opportunity to showcase and promote the rich music heritage of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.</p> <p>We have fulfilled the \$8,800 grant requirement and UNC-TV is in possession of the MerleFest footage. We are waiting for UNC-TV to develop a proposal on how they would like to use the footage before other plans are in action. We are not currently pursuing any funding for the project.</p>
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Goal:	Completed TV special, DVD and book shown on UNC-TV.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Ted Hagaman	\$35,000	Two Years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Pre-production	\$20,000	Michael Sheehan
Funding Development	\$10,000	Art Menius
Project conceptualization and planning	\$5,000	Art Menius/Michael Sheehan

Performance Measures:	Production, DVD and book completed; receive UNC-TV proposal.
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Status:	Waiting for proposal from UNC-TV on how footage would like to be used.
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

	Northwest N.C. Visitor Center
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Project Narrative:	<p>Wilkes County, selected by the Department of Transportation Visitor Center, is in the process of constructing a North Carolina Visitors Center. The Wilkes Center, a state of the art facility, located along U.S. Hwy 421 just east of Wilkesboro. As one of the most traveled highways in NC from the east to the mountains, Hwy 421 serves as the <i>Gateway to the High Country</i>. The facility will be fully staffed to provide information to the traveling public coming into the High Country of NWNC. The center will be on approximately 20 acres and feature outdoor picnic tables and shelters and offer the public a place to rest and relax as well as discover interesting facts about the area. The Visitor Center will be the state’s first site built to meet the US Green Building Councils Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. LEED standards are designed to limit wastes, conserve energy and water and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The Department of Transportation allocated 9.9 million dollars to construct the facility. The County of Wilkes and the towns of Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro will purchase the property and transfer it to the State of NC. The County purchased the property and submitted an operational budget to the state. 2006-07.</p> <p>As the <i>Gateway to the High Country</i>, the Wilkes Visitor Center will be an excellent opportunity to showcase the natural attractions and many diverse festivals of NWNC. The proposed Wilkes Visitor Center has the opportunity to be a standout facility and much more than a “cookie cutter” center. Highlighting arts and crafts from the surrounding area through interpretive exhibits, and providing a sight and sound area that would enable tourists to do a virtual tour of the region. The Center could be a wonderful promotional tool for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.</p> <p>Some of the wonderful assets in this region include the Yadkin River Greenway, Fort Defiance, Old Wilkes and Wilkes County Heritage Museum, Town of Lenoir, Town of Wilkesboro, MerleFest, Christmas Tree Farms; Vineyards, Tweetsie, the New River, Grandfather Mountain, and other points of interest in Ashe, Alleghany, Avery, Mitchell, and Watauga counties. In addition, the Wilkes Visitor’s Center could house a smaller version of the “maps in motion” being developed for the Blue Ridge Parkway Destination Center.</p>
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Goal:	To increase and enhance tourism travel into Northwest NC and the High Country by providing better information and communication to the traveling public about points of interest in a six county region.	
Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Eddie Barnes – Wilkes Co. Planner Linda Cheek - Wilkes Chamber of Commerce	\$9.9 million for construction	September 2009 County & Towns have

	\$150k annual operating expense	partnered to acquire land and develop infrastructure
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Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
	Implement contacts	Dept. of Transportation County of Wilkes Town of Wilkesboro Town of N. Wilkesboro Wilkes Chamber of Commerce

Performance Measures:	Plans that incorporate space for regional crafts, interpretive exhibits, regional events, and attractions
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Status:	Construction is underway.
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Strategic plan for North Wilkesboro Speedway Center
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Project Narrative:	<p>The North Wilkesboro Speedway closed in 1996, depleting annual regional revenue from races to Wilkes and surrounding counties of approximately \$8M. Other than the property taxes paid to the County of Wilkes, the track has not been an income generating facility since the day of closing. Appalachian State University completed a survey at the track on Saturday, April 8 and Sunday, April 9, 1995. They found the crowd attending the North Wilkesboro Speedway Race was estimated at 56,000 for a Sunday event, indicating the facility could easily host an audience of more than 57,000 when utilizing the infield area.</p> <p>The North Wilkesboro track continues to receive attention within current NASCAR events. Many articles have appeared in local, state, national and international publications, recalling the “great ones” of the racing industry. The track, built in 1947 hosted its first NASCAR race in 1949. It is a track with history of the beginning of racing and memories of Winston Cup series.</p> <p>With appropriate upgrading and additions to the existing seating, restrooms, outbuildings, and parking lots, this facility could serve as a major regional venue for various outdoor events. Plans for the track include acquiring ownership from the current property owners, securing funds to remodel the property, and meeting the suggested requirements for an outdoor entertainment venue. In completing this restoration, the heritage of the track and racing could be preserved and displayed for attendees to visit and enjoy. The North Wilkesboro Speedway Center would be geared toward the music and entertainment industry, and utilized for outdoor product shows such as automobile, boat, and recreational vehicles. In addition, the property would be marketed throughout the southeast for multiple uses.</p> <p>The Speedway Center offers a wonderful economic development opportunity for the region. An outdoor multi-use facility could certainly tie in with other initiatives such as branding the Wilkesboros and the region as “Americana Music Capital.”</p>		
	Goal:	To purchase and refurbish the North Wilkesboro Speedway for multiple purpose use	
	Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
	Linda Cheek, Wilkes Chamber of Commerce	\$8 Million to purchase track, \$2M to remodel facility for multi-purpose use	5 - 7 years
	Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Negotiate contract for ownership \$30,000 2. Investigate property for architectural and multi-purpose requirements 3. Develop business plan 4. Negotiate contract for ownership \$30,000 5. Investigate property for architectural and multi-purpose requirements 6. Develop business plan 	<p>Responsible: Linda Cheek</p> <p>Linda Cheek</p>		
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Performance Measures:</td> <td> Ownership of speedway Development of EIS/Business plan Establishment of multi-purpose facility for NWNC </td> </tr> </table>	Performance Measures:	Ownership of speedway Development of EIS/Business plan Establishment of multi-purpose facility for NWNC	
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Status:	Concept			

**Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET**

Initiative Title:	Poultry Exhibit Completion at the Wilkes Heritage Museum
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Project Narrative:	<p>Old Wilkes, Inc., a private, non-profit organization formed in 1968, has taken on the responsibility of renovating the 1902 Wilkes County Courthouse into the Wilkes Heritage Museum. The Wilkes Heritage Museum has been open to the public since November 2005 and is considered a “work in progress” while each exhibit room is professionally completed. There are currently artifacts and temporary text panels on display in each room. Five of the exhibits have been professionally completed. The American Revolution Exhibit is in the process of being professionally completed at this time. The next exhibit focus for the Wilkes Heritage Museum will be on the rich poultry history of Wilkes County.</p> <p>The Wilkes Heritage Museum is seeking funding to design and fabricate the Poultry Exhibit. This exhibit will showcase the importance of the poultry industry, which was established in Wilkes County and the surrounding areas during the depression. At the time the need for inexpensive food became more prevalent. Chickens from broiler houses were one of the greatest demands because of their cheap market value. Other than moonshine running, the poultry industry helped establish a new means of financial support to the people in Wilkes County and enable them to use their farms for further production of poultry. The history of the poultry business in Wilkes County encompassed the years between the 1920s and the late 1960s. The Poultry exhibit will comprise of informational panels about the poultry industry and showcase artifacts from businesses like Lovette Poultry Co., Champion Farms and Holly Farms Poultry Industries, Inc. These artifacts will consist of items from the early farm hatcheries and feed businesses, to the development of branded products sold nationally throughout the eastern United States.</p> <p>Currently, the museum offers tours to many groups of children and adults, teaching them the importance of the poultry business to Wilkes County in terms of financial benefits and the outgrowth of support businesses to this industry. Some do not know the history and struggles as early farms merged into a vertically integrated international business located in this county.</p> <p>The room displaying the poultry exhibit (chicken house, various artifacts, scales, coops, feeders, etc.) as well as color panels telling the history of the poultry industry, will cost approximately \$20,000 from design to completion.</p> <p><u>Poultry Exhibit for the Wilkes Heritage Museum:</u></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"><u>Description</u></th> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"><u>Quantity</u></th> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"><u>Total Cost</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>			
<u>Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>					

Display cases	4	\$5000.00
Large Pedestals	6	\$3000.00
Small Text Panels	6	\$3000.00
Large Text Panels	4	\$2400.00
Large Sign	1	\$1600.00
Graphic Panels	4	\$1460.00
Interactive Kiosk	1	\$2500.00
Research	80hrs @ \$13.00hr	\$1040.00
Total Project Cost (Phases I-III)		\$20,000

Goal:	The goal of this project for Old Wilkes, Inc. is to share with the visiting public the rich poultry history of the county through interactive exhibits, special programs, and establishing further recognition to the county, region, and its many features.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Jennifer Furr, Director of Old Wilkes, Inc.	\$20,000	10 months

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Old Wilkes, Inc. has employed a full-time Curator to oversee all of the exhibits from design and research to implementation of each exhibit.	Grants, donations of money and artifacts.	The Director, Curator and the Exhibit Chair person.

Performance Measures:	Completion of the exhibit room, planning of educational programs related to the poultry industry, increased attendance at the museum and interest in educational programs by teachers and students.
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Status:	The preliminary research has begun. Artifacts have been acquired such as the first Lovette Family Chicken House, an egg-grader, chicken plucker, scales, chicken coops, feeders and drinkers, and Holly Farms memorabilia.
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Preserving Wilkes County Heritage through Outdoor Drama
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Project Narrative:	<p>In order for outdoor dramas to be successful in today’s tourist marketplace, marketing and promotion are key. Marketing and promotion funding is desperately needed to widen an aggressive campaign that would reach North Carolina as well as surrounding states. Wilkes Playmakers is dedicated to the continued preservation of our area’s heritage and the support of tourism through theatre. Our goal is to continue to be an integral part of our regional community – offering support and opportunities to our citizens and continually bringing tourists to our area. Wilkes Playmakers perform both dramas at Forest Edge Ampitheatre in Fort Hamby Park.</p> <p>This initiative addresses the need to increase the marketing outreach for Wilkes Playmakers' annual performances, “Tom Dooley: A Wilkes County Legend” and “Moonshine and Thunder”. By increasing the marketing, and thus awareness, the shows can bring in more tourist dollars to the area while also highlighting the rich cultural heritage of the area. Wilkes Playmakers wishes to expand the marketing and advertising plan for these two annual performances by finding new print and media outlets to promote the shows. Additionally, the organization would like to add billboards and television advertising to the marketing plan.</p> <p>Wilkes Playmakers was founded in 1990 by a dedicated group of local citizens who recognized a growing need to provide additional opportunities for area residents in all aspects of community theater. Even today, all actors and artists are dedicated volunteers who give of their time and talent freely. The organization is committed to expanding both the availability of and interest in the arts and drama in the greater Wilkes region of Northwestern North Carolina. The Wilkes Playmakers home is Benton Hall, which is the old North Wilkesboro elementary school located at 300 D Street, North Wilkesboro, North Carolina. Wilkes Playmakers is a proud member of the Institute of Outdoor Drama in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.</p> <p>Wilkes Playmakers is best know for the historical outdoor drama, “Tom Dooley: A Wilkes County Legend,” and most recently “Moonshine and Thunder”. People nationwide have been fascinated and intrigued with the Tom Dooley story for over a century. The murder of Laura Foster in the Elkville community, now known as Ferguson, NC, was one of the nation’s first highly publicized crimes of passion. Tom (Dula) “Dooley” was hanged for the crime but many questions were left unanswered. The Kingston Trio catapulted Tom Dooley to fame again in the 1960’s with the song “Hang Down Your Head Tom Dooley.” Visitors still travel from far and wide to visit the graves and tour the countryside where the story took place. “Tom Dooley: A Wilkes County Legend” fills many gaps for serious Tom Dooley fans. Scenes are tied together with authentic acoustic and bluegrass music from the foothills.</p> <p>“Moonshine and Thunder,” <i>The Junior Johnson Story</i> is a celebration of the people living in the foothills of North Carolina. It will be told with respect for the people who shaped this area and put Wilkes County on the map. The show is historical fiction and chronicles the</p>
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early life of Junior Johnson from running shine in Wilkes County and surrounding NC counties. Set in Wilkes County, once known as the moonshine capital of the world, the story takes place in the 1930s and into the 1940s during the Great Depression. Jobs were scarce everywhere, and the independent minded Scotch-Irish of the North Carolina mountains saw no reason to change who they were and never mind the government monopoly on liquor sales.

Both dramas are a beautiful celebration of Northwestern North Carolina and the area now known as the Blue Ridge. A survey conducted by Wilkes Playmakers show that more than 60% of their drama attendees come from counties surrounding Wilkes and states bordering NC. Wilkes Playmakers is requested funding to continue promoting the rich heritage of greater Wilkes through outdoor dramatic theater.

Goal: To raise awareness of Wilkes County heritage through tourism marketing and outdoor dramas performed by Wilkes Playmakers.

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Wilkes Playmakers, Inc.	\$20,000	Ongoing

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
1) Create marketing and advertising plan to include Wilkes and all surrounding counties	\$1,000	Wilkes Playmakers staff and volunteers
2) Enhance regional presence on Wilkes Playmakers website	\$1,000	
3) Strengthen historical connection between dramas and other areas of regional, especially Fort Hamby's Civil War importance	\$2,000	
4) Creative and placements for brochures, billboards, TV advertising	\$15,000	
5) Develop survey tool to evaluate reach of programs	\$1,000	

Performance Measures: 1) Attendance at both shows. 2) Attendee survey results that show more people are coming to the greater Wilkes area for heritage programs.

Status: Both dramas are an ongoing and critical part of Wilkes Playmakers. "Tom Dooley: A Wilkes County Legend" is performed annually in July and "Moonshine & Thunder" is performed annually in October.

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Save Our Wilkes County History
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Project Narrative:	<p>The need to record oral histories of Wilkes County residents is urgent. Approximately 10,000 World War II veterans reside in the county and recording their stories before they fade away is vital to preserving an important element of Wilkes County history. In 2002, a Pearl Harbor Day celebration hosted by the Wilkes County Public Library and the VFW drew scores of World War II veterans and their contemporaries, proving that Wilkes possesses a large number of individuals eager to reminisce about their experiences. Another segment of the population is aging: the intrepid moonshine runners who transported illegal alcohol on curving mountain roads and invented the sport of NASCAR racing. Wilkes County was for years home to this illicit trade, and even now grandfathers entertain youngsters with tales of speedy chases.</p> <p>This oral history project will compliment the Save Our History project that will result in a video history of Wilkes County available to all Wilkes County citizens through its placement in each of the public school media centers, the Wilkes County Public Library, the Wilkes Heritage Museum, the Wilkes Community College Library, the Northwest North Carolina Visitors' Center, and the Wilkes Chamber of Commerce. 2006-2007 is the right time to begin the Preserve America: Save Our History project. Wilkes County citizens are proud of their community's heritage and are enjoying visiting area attractions. A visitors' center is due for construction along US highway 421 in 2008. A video production promoting Wilkes County's historic, cultural, recreational, natural, and agricultural assets will continue this enthusiasm and has the potential to generate interest for years to come.</p> <p>The Save Our Wilkes County History Committee is continuing to schedule and produce interviews of the citizens of Wilkes County, the agriculture crops, the native Americans, the African-Americans, and the Yadkin River corridor.</p>
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Goal:	To produce DVDs on Central Wilkes County, African-Americans, Native Americans, Yadkin River Corridor. Agriculture crops. To produce 100 oral histories.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Save Our Wilkes County History Committee Dr. Fay Byrd, Wilkes Community College R. G. Absher, US Army Corps. of Engineers	\$20,000 initial investment \$5,000 (to complete project)	One year

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Schedule interviews. Script. Film. Produce	Finances and actual video production	Fay Byrd

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
<p>1. Identify, contact, and schedule interview candidates. Interviewed over 206 individuals.</p> <p>2. Contract a video producer to interview and film the oral histories. John Litschke filmed and Teresa Litschke completed the productions.</p> <p>3. Duplicate the videos for each participating agency. Wilkes Community College has duplicated in excess of 400 tapes for the museum, public library, Cultural Arts, public schools, and the College.</p>	\$5,000 – Spend in excess of \$60,000 on total project.	Fay Byrd, Wilkes Community College

Performance Measures:	Filmed copies to be produced and distributed to each participating entity. Completed with the exception of three productions: Yadkin River Heritage Corridor, Central, and Native Americans.
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Status:	The Committee has been responsible for over 200 interviews including some that were used for “North Carolina Now” such as Charlie Klein, a World War II pilot; veterans of wars, places, events, towns that no longer exist such as Grandin and Doughton. A masterpiece has been completed on the Agriculture in Wilkes County. All objectives have been completed except the final production for the Yadkin River Corridor to go in the Visitor’s Center in 2009, the Central part of Wilkes, and the Native Americans. They will be completed in 2009.
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**Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET**

Initiative Title:	Swan Creek American Viticultural Area (approved in Spring of 2008)
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Project Narrative:	<p>Establishment of the Swan Creek American Viticultural Area (AVA) will greatly enhance visitation and tourism to the area. A petition filed with the U.S. Tobacco and Firearms Bureau to secure this national designation has been approved. The petition establishes a viticultural area encompassing portions of Wilkes, Yadkin, and Iredell counties, known as Swan Creek. The boundaries of the Swan Creek American Viticultural Area (AVA) include a section of the Yadkin Valley American Viticultural Area (YVAV) established on December 9, 2002. Much like YVAVA, the Swan Creek AVA is located in the northwestern Piedmont area of the state and is entirely contained within the Yadkin River Watershed.</p> <p>The boundaries of this viticultural area encompass approximately 150 square miles (96,000 acres). At present there are three wineries, one wine producer and seven vineyards with approximately 75 acres planted. There are plans for another fifteen acres to be planted within the next year and four additional wineries are scheduled to open. Further vineyard and winery growth is anticipated.</p> <p>Raffaldini Vineyards has taken a lead role in pursuit of this recognition and has hired and paid expenses of Patricia McRitchie, attorney, and Matthew Mayberry, geologist, to assist with this procurement. The application has been completed, filed and approved Spring 2008. The North Carolina and U.S. legislators representing the Swan Creek region supported this AVA effort.</p>
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Goal:	To use this designation to increase tourism and visitation to the Swan Creek area and the viticulture industry of the Yadkin Valley.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Jay Raffaldini – Raffaldini Vineyards	\$10,500	Granted Spring 2008

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Official application completed.	Attorney fees	Jay Raffaldini or Thomas Salley
	Geologist fees	

Performance Measures:	Designation of Swan Creek AVA
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Status:	Received designation Spring 2008
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Whippoorwill Academy and Village Brochure Production
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Project Narrative:	<p>Whippoorwill Academy and Village is a non-profit organization that is principally funded through the contributions and donations of the visiting public and ownership of the property. The site features the heritage of the one-room schoolhouse, the history of Wilkes County's Tom Dooley and the murder mystery surrounding his life, unique replicas of the pioneer home and furnishings related to Daniel and Rebecca Boone, and detailed history of the Cherokee Indians and their lifestyle within this region. In addition, the heritage spiritual life is featured in the Chapel of Peace and the arts and crafts of several local artists are displayed in the Village's Smokehouse Gallery.</p> <p>The Academy and Village welcomed over 6,000 visitors during 2005. Visitors consisted of school groups, senior citizens, area civic groups, and individual tourists. In an effort to expand the visitor experience and provide visitors an opportunity to discover the beauty and charm of the Whippoorwill area, the Village added canoe trips along the adjacent Yadkin River in 2005.</p> <p>An attractive brochure is needed to assist with marketing of the Whippoorwill site and educating the public on the historical significance of the buildings and contents.</p>
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Goal:	To have an attractive informational and promotional brochure for Whippoorwill Academy and Village.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Edith Carter	\$2,000	Three months

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Secure funding for the design and publication of brochure to market Whippoorwill Academy and Village	Defined description of site and adequate images to be used in the design of brochure.	Edith Carter, Owner and Director of Whippoorwill Academy and Village

Performance Measures:	Increased awareness and visitation of Whippoorwill Academy and Village site.
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Status:	Proposed and seeking funds
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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Wilkes Heritage Museum
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Project Narrative:	<p>Old Wilkes, Inc., a private, non-profit organization formed in 1968, has taken on the responsibility of renovating the 1902 Wilkes County Courthouse into the Wilkes Heritage Museum. The new museum showcases the history of Wilkes County, including early settlers, military history, and the history of economic and industrial contributions in poultry, lumber, furniture, agriculture and business. In addition, the intriguing story of moon shining, thunder road and the origin of NASCAR is a featured story line in the interpretive exhibits. The Wilkes Heritage Museum contains rotating exhibits, which will keep up with the changing interests of the visiting public. This project has restored the 1902 Wilkes County Courthouse to its historic appearance, and is the hub of cultural, civic, educational and tourist activity in Wilkes County.</p> <p>The Wilkes Heritage Museum preserves the history and culture of Wilkes County while sharing it with local residents and visitors. This is a crucial time in Wilkes County when tourism can bring in high revenue while the industries of the county are moving to new locations or shutting their doors permanently. Wilkes County must seize the opportunities that will generate additional tourism and business into the county. The museum is expected to draw 50,000 people the first year and grow rapidly annually, provide a quality field trip that relates to the school-based curriculum for both k-12 grades and the collegiate school system as well. Additional revenue to the Wilkes County economy is gained through visitation to the museum and gift shop. People who visit the museum are more likely to visit local retail shops, restaurants, and hotels. The museum also creates new jobs as tourism gains an additional centerpiece in Wilkes County.</p> <p>The benefits of education are widespread. The museum has a potential to reach over 10,000 students in Wilkes and up to 66,000 in surrounding counties. Over 24,000 students are being reached through the local colleges and universities. The Wilkes Heritage Museum offers an average of four field trips in related study areas between grades k-12, featuring living history events, recognized speakers, authors, artists and historians as well as interactive exhibits that encourage the study of history and research among students from elementary through college.</p> <p>Connectivity to other attractions also plays an important role in the success of the Wilkes Heritage Museum. The museum provides visitors who attend special events such as Merlefest, Brushy Mountain Apple Festival and the Wilkes Heritage Festival with the major focal point of a visitor's center and introduction to Wilkes County history. An increase in "spill over" visitation from nearby attractions like the Blue Ridge Parkway, W. Kerr Scott Reservoir, Stone Mountain State Park, and Rendezvous State Educational Park has the potential to keep visitors in the county for a longer period of time therefore increasing the rate in which people spend the</p>
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	<p>night in local hotels and take advantage of local restaurants and retail stores. The Wilkes Heritage Museum actively works to be an additional designated stop for area bus tours when visiting other attractions. The museum and other Old Wilkes properties also connect with the Yadkin River Greenway and Over Mountain Victory National Historic Trail.</p> <p>In conclusion, the completion of the Wilkes Heritage Museum benefits Wilkes County in various ways – increase visitation into the county, creates an interactive learning center for area school children, connects with other local attractions, and brings in tourism dollars to the co Here is the budget sheet for the necessary completion of the project:</p> <p><u>Phase III - Museum Development:</u></p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Description</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Quantity</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Total Cost</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Retire Debt</td> <td>lump sum</td> <td>\$ 30,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total needed to retire the debt:</td> <td></td> <td>\$ 30,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Project Cost (Phases I-III)</td> <td></td> <td>\$2,400,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">***All debts of \$2.4 million have now been paid in full as of 5/29/08***</p>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	Retire Debt	lump sum	\$ 30,000	Total needed to retire the debt:		\$ 30,000	Total Project Cost (Phases I-III)		\$2,400,000
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Retire Debt	lump sum	\$ 30,000											
Total needed to retire the debt:		\$ 30,000											
Total Project Cost (Phases I-III)		\$2,400,000											

Goal:	The goal of the Wilkes Heritage Museum is to share with the visiting public the vast and varied history of the county through interactive exhibits, special programs, and events in a way that will bring more recognition to the county, region, and its many features.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Jennifer Furr, Director of Old Wilkes, Inc.	\$2.4 million (Total Project)	\$30,000 was paid to complete the project 5/29/08. However, fundraising will be a continuous task to maintain the operation of the museum.

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Old Wilkes, Inc. has employed a full-time curator to help with the completion of Phase III. One part-time staff member is also employed to help with educational programs and special events.	Grants, pledges, donations of money and artifacts as well as other fund-raisers (i.e. brick sales, calendar sales, print sales).	The staff and board of trustees of Old Wilkes, Inc.

Performance Measures:	Press releases; visitation records; feedback from staff, volunteers, and visitors; time-lines have been established for the completion of the various exhibit rooms.
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Status:	Old Wilkes, Inc. has completed Phase I & II of the Wilkes Heritage Museum project and is currently implementing Phase III-museum development. The Museum development Phase of the project consists of completing all of the exhibit space in the museum.
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**Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
PRIORITY INITIATIVE WORKSHEET**

Initiative Title:	Yadkin River Heritage Corridor (partnered with Yadkin River Greenway)
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Project Narrative:	<p>The Yadkin River Heritage Corridor is a regional trail initiative developed from response to enhancing eco-tourism in Northwest NC. The corridor is a 126 mile corridor of walking, hiking, biking and paddle trail following a one-mile wide corridor along the upper Yadkin River. The project involves a four county region, Caldwell, Wilkes, Surry and Yadkin counties. The four counties involved have formed a partnership of local, state and federal government officials as well as local citizens. The partnership was awarded a \$20,000.00 matching grant from BRNHA in January 2007 for the development of an Economic Impact Study. This study was completed by consulting firm DESS from Boone, NC in December 2007. The study was very supportive of the potential to develop a recreational heritage corridor and estimated the finished trail system could produce 75,000 visitors with estimated annual revenue of \$4.5 million and provide an additional 75 jobs to the area.</p> <p>The partnership has also secured a technical assistance grant from the National Park Service RTCA program to help establish and implement a Master Plan for the corridor. Completion of the Master Plan is scheduled for Fall 2008.</p> <p>The partnership is currently applying for additional grant monies to fund a Corridor Coordinator position to oversee the implements of the project with at least a two year contract. Work on the Yadkin River Heritage Corridor Project is continuing.</p> <p>Two-year Budget Yadkin River Heritage Corridor Coordinator</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">\$100,000</td> <td>coordinator salary</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$ 24,000</td> <td>office space</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$ 10,000</td> <td>travel (17,094 miles x \$0.585/mile)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$ 10,000</td> <td>supplies</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$144,000</td> <td>TOTAL PROJECT COST</td> </tr> </table> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">\$100,000</td> <td>ZSR request</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$ 24,000</td> <td>W. Kerr Scott Reservoir office space (in-kind)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>[is this the name to use, or should it be U.S. Army Corps of Engineers?]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$ 10,000</td> <td>Caldwell County Pathways (cash)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$ 10,000</td> <td>Yadkin River Heritage Partnership</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$144,000</td> <td>TOTAL INCOME</td> </tr> </table>	\$100,000	coordinator salary	\$ 24,000	office space	\$ 10,000	travel (17,094 miles x \$0.585/mile)	\$ 10,000	supplies	\$144,000	TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$100,000	ZSR request	\$ 24,000	W. Kerr Scott Reservoir office space (in-kind)		[is this the name to use, or should it be U.S. Army Corps of Engineers?]	\$ 10,000	Caldwell County Pathways (cash)	\$ 10,000	Yadkin River Heritage Partnership	\$144,000	TOTAL INCOME
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Goal:	To plan and establish a 126 mile heritage and recreational corridor along the upper Yadkin River to enhance eco-tourism in a four county area of northwest NC.
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Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Bill Clifton, Yadkin River Heritage Corridor Edward Barnes, Wilkes County Planning Department	unknown	unknown

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Develop Master Plan Corridor Coordinator salary and expenses to oversee project – 2 year contract.	\$10,000 \$144,000	YRHCP

Performance Measures:	Completion and implementation of Master Plan. Position of corridor coordinator in place.
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Wilkes County Heritage Development Inventory

Natural Assets

A. Land Mass

1. Blue Ridge Parkway
2. Stone Mountain State Park
3. Rendezvous Mountain State Educational Park
4. Whiteface Mountain
5. Mulberry Fields
6. Hickory Knob
7. Pore's Knob
8. Gobbler's Knob
9. Brushy Mountains
10. Little Brushy Mountains
11. Buck Mountain
12. Wells Knob
13. Thompkins Knob
14. Burke Mountain
15. Fitches Knob
16. Owens Knob

B. Trails

1. Yadkin River Greenway
2. Dark Mountain Bike and Hiking Trail
3. Walking Trail at Wilkes Community College
4. Cub Creek Walking Trail
5. Berry Mountain Park Trail

6. Stone Mountain Trails
7. Rendezvous Mountain State Park
8. Overmountain Victory Trail
9. Leatherwood Mountain Trail
10. Blue Ridge Mountain Trails
11. River's Edge Walking Trail
12. W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir Trails

C. Bodies of Water:

1. W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir
2. Yadkin River
3. Reddies River

4. Roaring River and waterfalls
5. Elk Creek River
6. Elkin Creek and waterfalls
7. Buggaboo Creek and waterfalls
8. Lewis Fork Creek
9. Stony Fork Creek
10. Falls Creek
11. Beaver Creek
12. Mulberry Creek
13. Fishing Creek
14. Hunting Creek
15. Swan Creek
16. Moravian Creek and waterfalls
17. Wilderness Canoe and Kayak Tours
18. Lake Herring
19. Willow Creek and waterfalls
20. Garden of the Senses

Cultural Assets

1. Wilkes Art Gallery
2. Cultural Arts Council of Wilkes
3. Wilkes Playmakers
4. Wilkes Quilting Guild
5. East Meets West – Celebration of NC Pottery
6. Whippoorwill Academy

7. St Paul's Fresco by Ben Long
8. Wilkes County Public Library
9. Wilkes Heritage Museum
10. Old Wilkes Jail Museum
11. Northwest Artist League
12. Brushy Mountain Apple Festival
13. Wilkes Art and Heritage Festival
14. MerleFest
15. Carolina In the Fall
16. John A. Walker Center Events
17. Hometown Opry
18. Wilkes Community College Dinner Theatre
19. Benton Hall Performances
20. Historic Downtown North Wilkesboro Wine Festival
21. Battle of the Bands
22. Light-up Downtown North Wilkesboro and Wilkesboro
23. Old Fashion Day
24. Old Wilkes Walking Tours
25. Wilkes Art Gallery Garden Tours and Christmas Home Tours
26. Wilkes Art and Supplies

27. Wilkes Senior Center
28. Tom Dooley Drama
29. Artists in Action
30. Daniel Boone Day
31. Wilkes Chamber Singers
32. Singing In the Foothills
33. Coffee Tavern Events
34. Meadowlark Landing
35. Wilkes Acoustic Society
36. Elkville String Band
37. R. G. Absher and Extra Measure
38. Celtic Connection
39. Stone Mountain Country Store
40. Old Traphill Mill Inn and Resort
41. Saddlebrook Inn

Agricultural Assets

1. A H & W Farm
2. Big R Orchards
3. Hareapple Farm
4. Lowell Hendren Orchards
5. Parker's Orchard
6. McKinney Orchard & Gardens
7. Perry Lowe Orchards
8. Tevepough Orchards

9. Benny Parsons Rendezvous Ridge Wine and Museum
10. Windy Gap Vineyards
11. Raffaldini Vineyards and Winery
12. Elkin Creek Vineyards and Winery
13. Grassy Creek Vineyards
14. Mathis Family Farm
15. Stone Mountain Valley Cheese
16. Brushy Mountain Bee Farm
17. Miller Bee Farm and Supply
18. S & N Farms

Sports and Recreation Assets

1. North Carolina Wildlife Reserve for hunting
2. Lowe's Park at River's Edge (13 soccer fields, 3 baseball fields (one lighted), horseshoe pits, skateboard park, BMX Bike track and radio-controlled airplane field)
3. Brushy Mountain Cyclists Rides throughout Wilkes
4. Leatherwood Mountain Stables
5. Leatherwood Mountain Endurance Races

6. Mountain View Riding Stables
7. White Oak Stables
8. Memorial Ball Park and tennis courts
9. Ruritan Ball Parks throughout county
10. Stone Mountain Golf Course
11. Rock Creek Golf Course
12. Oakwoods Golf Course, pool, and tennis courts
13. Forest Pines Golf Course
14. Countryside Golf Course
15. Wilkesboro Raceway
16. Worth Tomlinson Fairgrounds
17. Cub Creek Ball Fields
18. Westwood Hills Ball Park
19. Smoot Park Skateboard Park and Pool
20. Wilkes County Public Schools Ball fields, soccer fields, and football stadiums

Campgrounds and Cabins

1. Stone Mountain State Park
2. W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir
3. Wilkesboro Campground
4. Blue Ridge VFW Campground
5. Moravian Falls Family Campground
6. Leatherwood Mountains
7. Fall Creek Cabins
8. Old Traphill Mill Inn and Resort

9. Slip Away Haven
10. The Hideaway
11. Apple Hill Lodge and Cabins
12. Frog Hollar and Lyons Cabins

Educational Assets

1. Rendezvous Mountain State Educational Park Visitor's Center, Edwin McGill Sawmill Exhibit, and talking trees
2. Hutchinson Homestead at Stone Mountain State Park and Visitor's Center
3. Mountain Artists Program
4. MerleFest Artists Outreach
5. John A. Walker Center School Events
6. Wilkes County Public Library
7. James Larkin Pearson Library at WCC
8. Appalachian Studies Program
9. W. Kerr Scott Dam and Reservoir Visitor's Center
10. Wilkes County 4-H Programs
11. Wilkes Senior Center
12. Wilkes Community College
13. Wilkes County Schools

14. Gordon Christian School
15. Millers Creek Christian School
16. Harvest Time Christian School
17. The Montessori Learning Center of Wilkes, Inc.
18. Whippoorwill Village Tours and Exhibits

Historical Assets

1. Old Wilkes Jail Museum
2. Robert Cleveland Log Home
3. Wilkes County Heritage Museum
4. Overmountain Victory Trail
5. Wilkes County Mills: Tharpe's Mill, Elkin Creek Mill, Brewer Mill, Old Traphill Mill, Moravian Falls Mill
6. National Railroad Historic Society
7. Wilkes Historical Society
8. Genealogical Society
9. North Wilkesboro Speedway
10. Trail of the Eagle Museum
11. St. Paul's Episcopal Church
12. New Covenant Baptist Church
13. Garden Baptist Cemetery
14. Wilkesboro Presbyterian Baptist Church
15. Wilkesboro Cemetery
16. The Brown-Cowles House
17. The Smithey Hotel

18. Wilkes Federal Building

19. The Carl Lowe House

20. Finley Law Office

21. The J.T. Ferguson Store

22. The Johnson-Hubbard House

23. Cowles Law Office

24. Benton Hall

25. Old Traphill Mill

26. Elkin Creek Mill