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# *LIVING WITH THE LAND*

*A 10-YEAR ACTION PLAN UPDATE*

## Executive Summary



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On behalf of the Endless Mountains Heritage Region Alliance, we extend a special thanks to all of our state legislators who have shown consistent support for Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas Program and the Endless Mountains Heritage Region from the beginning and to the present.

We also thank our many heritage partners who have shared their ideas and enthusiasm for our shared heritage mission.

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## About the Management Action Plan Update

In the spring of 2015, DCNR made the decision to postpone finalizing the update to EMHR's Management Action Plan (MAP) until a new director was hired to fill the position vacated in February of 2015. Although this document reflects core concepts and recommendations of the preliminary MAP Update, the Action Plan tables now include some new opportunities and partners that have emerged since its publication.

The Management Plan Update is funded by a DCNR Grant (BRC-SR-18-109). Modifications and additions were guided by DCNR representatives, input from EMHR's Board of Directors at a Retreat (July 2015) and a series of county-based focus groups. Ongoing discussions at bimonthly board meetings and numerous conversations and interviews with board members, members, partner organizations, and supporting agencies provided valuable insights into EMHR's challenges and potential.

EMHR's success in protecting, improving and promoting the region's heritage assets depends on its responsiveness to changing conditions since the organization's founding in 1998. New opportunities and issues will continue to emerge that require refinements to the update's proposed actions. Although the MAP Update is a guidance document that points to the future, it will not replace the need for the ongoing planning, self-evaluation, and course corrections that are hallmarks of successful organizations.

## Executive Summary

### Why an Update?

The MAP Update is a guidance document for both EMHR and for the many partner organizations with a role to play in Heritage Region development and promotion.

The Endless Mountains Heritage Region's first Management Action Plan (MAP) was published in 1998, the year the four-county heritage area received official designation through the Heritage Areas Program of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The original 1998 plan's vision and goals to protect, improve and promote our heritage assets remain essentially the same, but the strategies and actions require adjustment to have maximum impact in a today's social, political and environmental context.

This Executive Summary presents key-findings and recommendations from the MAP Update published in 2015. In addition, the Summary includes an overview of the Heritage Region's original designation and origins, as well as a "snapshot" of the organization's current operation and programs. Recommendations at the end of the Executive Summary are organized by program in the Action Plan Tables, and opportunities and priorities that have emerged over the last two years have been incorporated.

The purpose of the update is to reaffirm the Heritage Region's goals and objectives and to identify new directions in response to the many changing conditions, opportunities and issues that have emerged over the past 18 years.

These range from societal shifts to changes within the Heritage Region:

- Internet technologies and mobile devices have changed how people communicate, exchange information and plan trips.
- There have also been shifts in the travel and tourism industry, with new emphasis on active, experience-based travel vs. passive and observational.
- National interest in sustainable agriculture and access to locally produced farm products is at an all-time high, which touches the Heritage Region's primary heritage theme, "Living with the Land."
- The explosion of the natural gas industry throughout the four counties impacts the Heritage Region, its cultural landscape, identity and the expectation and experience of visitors.
- New destinations like the Troy Sale Barn, the Priesthood Restoration Site, and the Howland Preserve are recent additions to the Region's heritage and outdoor recreation attractions, bringing important opportunities to develop the heritage tourism infrastructure.
- Because of the turnover of local and regional decision-makers in government and non-profit organizations, many important partners are unfamiliar with the Heritage Region designation, purpose and benefits.

Completing periodic updates to a management action plan is a requirement of Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas Program to ensure that each designated heritage area defines its own strategic agenda responsive to current needs and opportunities.

### Diminishing Funds

The funding context has also changed dramatically since 1998. Significantly more state funding was provided through Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas Program in the early years, which supported EMHR and allowed the organization to fund partner projects throughout the region. EMHR has primarily served as a granting organization that passed annual DCNR heritage area grants to partner organizations for projects that advance the goals and objectives outlined in the first Management Action Plan. **To date, more than two million dollars have been distributed to grantees throughout the Heritage Region.**

Today, the state Heritage Areas Program funding is far less, although the organization still relies on annual DCNR grants to fund an estimated 90% of EMHR's annual budget. The amount received annually depends on a line item for heritage areas in the state budget. Because of Pennsylvania's strained fiscal condition, the line item is typically reduced to zero every year and requires extensive lobbying to reinstate funding.

Overall, there is vastly greater competition for diminishing state and federal funding programs, not only for heritage areas but for all types of projects at the core of heritage development, such as historic and farmland preservation, education and interpretive programs, outdoor recreation, and tourism initiatives. This hurts both the organization and its partners in advancing heritage development.

Updating the Management Action Plan provides an opportunity to refocus EMHR's use of resources to ensure that the work program and priorities are responsive to today's fiscal challenges and anticipate future trends.

### Natural Gas and the Heritage Region

Since EMHR's founding, natural gas extraction has brought new industry, employment and dollars to the Heritage Region based on a nationally and internationally significant energy resource in the Marcellus Shale formation that underlies much of Pennsylvania. Although a close and detailed analysis of impacts and issues in the four-county Heritage Region is beyond the scope of the Plan Update, the natural gas industry is a force of change that must be taken into consideration in planning the Heritage Region's future. **EMHR should investigate ways to communicate its mission to representatives of the gas industry and look for opportunities to advance objectives collaboratively.**

Some of the impacts have complex roots and long-term implications; for example, ownership of mineral rights and access have resulted in "split estates" that change how communities control and manage the landscape and farms. Other impacts are shorter-term and/or temporary that can be addressed with strategies such as those described below.

**Changes to the cultural landscape** – The natural gas industry is shaping the cultural landscape today as lumbering, agriculture, railroads and canals shaped it in the past. Like past industries, it is based on an intrinsic natural resource important to markets outside the region. The Heritage Region interprets the cultural landscape and its history through physical remains from the activities and industries of previous centuries. Interpreting the story of the discovery and rise of this new extractive industry is both appropriate and an opportunity for EMHR.

**Visual impacts** – The concrete pads of drill sites and the utility and pipeline corridors that cut through the landscape are visible from the roadways and impact the view. However, visitors can still appreciate the overall natural and pastoral beauty of the Heritage Region. At night, however, lights at the drill sites can be extremely bright and light up the sky, detracting from the experience of the Heritage Region’s starry night sky – a feature of the rural landscape that more urbanized areas lack. This can be mitigated through instituting “night sky” ordinances<sup>1</sup>, which require the use of light fixtures that offer full functionality but direct light only where it is needed.

**Changes in traffic** –Activities of the natural gas industry have dramatically increased truck traffic volumes and reduced level of service along segments and key intersections of state, county, and municipal roadways. One of the great pleasures of visiting the Heritage Region is traveling along the scenic and historic roadways to enjoy the rural beauty of farmlands and woodlands. Directing travelers along a designated network of scenic and historic roadways with less truck traffic and lower traffic volumes may be a strategy to mitigate conflicts between tourism and the impacts of the natural gas industry.

**Changes to public perception** – Controversy over natural gas extraction in Pennsylvania and beyond has received widespread attention since the onset of drilling in the Heritage Region. This has the potential to color public perception and expectations about what visitors to the Region might see as a result.

The Heritage Region’s objective is to shape public perception around heritage assets that include the historic and scenic agricultural landscape. A robust working agricultural landscape is essential to maintaining the Region’s character. Data from the USDA Agricultural Statistics Service confirm that, even with the advent of the natural gas industry, agriculture remains a predominant economic and employment element to our Region. The 2015 *Bradford County Agricultural Viability Study and Plan*, published by the Bradford County Conservation District and funded by EMHR, is among a number of studies that reached similar conclusions (Penn State University, Center for Rural Pennsylvania).

## Pennsylvania’s Heritage Areas Program Goals

The five overarching goals of Pennsylvania’s Heritage Areas Program are broad and give each heritage area the flexibility to tailor programs that fit their heritage development needs. Activities of EMHR and its government and non-profit partners help to achieve the statewide Heritage Areas Program’s overarching goals by addressing the specific heritage development needs of our Heritage Region.

Economic Development

Heritage Resource Protection

Interpretation and Education

Tourism and Recreation

Community Planning

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<sup>1</sup> Night sky ordinances are also recommended in the Route 6 Heritage Alliance Management Action Plan, 2016.

## Heritage Region Origins

### Designation and the 1998 Management Action Plan

The 1998 Management Action Plan was comprehensive in defining the Region's heritage assets, character, and potential, and it remains a valuable guidance document today. It lays out the justification for the Endless Mountains Heritage Region's official state designation, now one of twelve in Pennsylvania's heritage area collection. **The purpose of the Heritage Region's designation and its value as a tool for heritage development are as valid today as they were in 1998.**

The official designation includes 2,850 square miles encompassing four counties: Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Wyoming, a rural area with a population of 138,000<sup>2</sup>. Agriculture and lumbering were important industries common to the development of each county, but each also has unique characteristics, attractions and stories. Unlike other heritage areas, the Endless Mountains Heritage Region does not have one major heritage anchor site that draws people to the region. The Heritage Region is largely composed of many smaller visitor attractions spread out over a large area.

As stated in the 1998 MAP, *"The significance of the region lies not in a few individual landmarks of national merit, but in hundreds of local resources knit together into a single, richly textured regional blanket."*

In addition to visitor sites and central to the Region's draw are the rural beauty of the rolling hills, farms, fields, forests and natural areas, outstanding views, the scenic and the historic byways and historic "Main Streets." Collectively our architecture and cultural landscape sets us apart from more urbanized areas that have lost their heritage identity to sprawling cookie cutter development, strip malls and chain stores that have replaced their heritage identity. The Endless Mountains Heritage Region has the qualities of place that attract residents and visitors alike to live, work and play. These qualities, shaped by the Region's history of settlement, agriculture and forestry, form the basis for the designation.

As recognized in the 1998 Management Action Plan, the "regional blanket" of the Endless Mountains' heritage assets poses challenges to protecting, improving and promoting the Heritage Region. Key among them are determining where to focus limited financial resources to achieve a measurable benefit to communities; and, coordinating heritage development with numerous partner organizations that are unfamiliar with the Heritage Region concept.

**The 1998 designation under DCNR's Heritage Areas Program provides a tool to leverage the region's heritage assets to achieve economic benefits through heritage and outdoor recreation tourism.** Many of the 111 action items from the original Management Action Plan have been achieved, and over two million dollars have passed through EMHR Inc. to support heritage-related projects led by partner organizations. Although there have also been many losses over the 19 years since designation, from historic buildings to views of the cultural landscape, the "regional blanket" of heritage assets still remains, along with the Region's great potential for heritage development.

To achieve the outcomes described in the first Management Action Plan requires the efforts of a wide range of community leaders to protect, improve and promote our iconic agricultural and forested

landscapes within their spheres of influence. Both the original Management Action Plan and the Update include actions intended for partner organizations to implement.

### Endless Mountains Heritage Theme: Living with the Land

Each heritage area has a unique overarching theme based on common historic roots. The physical remnants and historic places from the past present opportunities to tell heritage stories, and can even be transformed to become new attractions; e.g. the historic D&H Railroad is now the D&H Rail Trail, one of the Heritage Region’s premier recreational trails.

**The primary interpretive theme of the Endless Mountains Heritage Region is “Living with the Land, the Changing Cultural Landscape of the Endless Mountains,” which the original MAP defines as representing the “evolving relationship of people to the land.”** As the original MAP states, the “evolving relationship of people to the land is a vital topic that has true relevance for today’s society. In this Heritage Region, history sets the stage for the future.”<sup>3</sup>

The U.S. Census of Agriculture clearly shows an increasing trend in agritourism and related recreational services...This strongly suggests that the rural United States is a popular tourist destination.

*Agricultural Marketing Resource Center, a USDA-funded initiative.*  
<http://www.agmrc.org/>

The “Living with the Land” theme highlights the region’s agricultural heritage but is broad enough to encompass the other important extractive industries that shaped – and still shape - the region’s landscapes, transportation corridors, small towns and stories. The Heritage Region’s “story” can be displayed and highlighted at strategic locations throughout the four counties.

Themes and sub-themes proposed in the first MAP are:

1. Cultivating Agriculture – Agricultural Development
2. Rich in Resource – Natural Resource Management
3. Building Community – People and Places
4. Over Hill Over Dale – Transportation and Commerce
5. Handcrafted Heritage – Culture and Tradition

The Plan Update proposes additional topics beyond agriculture that can be addressed within the interpretive framework: forests and woodlands, rivers and mountains, industry, local arts and culture, and regional history. The advent of the natural gas industry, built on the region’s enormously significant natural resource, offers new interpretive opportunities as well.

### Asset-based Economic Development

**A primary purpose of heritage development is to reap economic benefits from heritage tourism while promoting a quality of life and place that attracts people, jobs, and industry.** In addition to shopping in stores and at visitor attractions, tourists spend money on

**“Cultural Heritage Tourism”** means traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.”

*National Trust for Historic Preservation*

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<sup>3</sup> MAP, Chapter 1, “Creating the Endless Mountains Heritage Region”

gas, food, and lodging, which boosts local economies. Heritage development also helps to retain and attract residents, who are drawn to places that retain their historic and scenic character and that offer a wide range of opportunities to explore and experience features of the Heritage Region.

Economic benefits are achieved by identifying, protecting, enhancing and promoting the places and stories that make the region unique – our heritage assets.

These assets are part of a heritage tourism infrastructure that can be leveraged for economic development through tourism. Residents also benefit from investment in heritage development, as it contributes to the quality of place by protecting and improving shared heritage assets, and by increasing outdoor recreation opportunities.

The iconic historic features of the Heritage Region are the backbone of our regional identity and the basis for heritage designation. However, the constant pressures of time and changing conditions erode the cultural landscape and the historic places. It takes an ongoing concerted effort to keep them intact for the next generation. As stated in the first MAP:

*“In order to tap the economic potential of the Region’s cultural and natural heritage, communities would need to ensure that their resources were protected and managed carefully. Unlike other heritage regions, where a handful of prominent sites could carry the interpretive meaning, EMHR is predominantly reliant upon the overall integrity of its cultural landscape.”*

## A Heritage Region Alliance

**The intent of the designation was to build a coalition of supporting organizations, representing tourism, business, historic preservation, conservation, and land use planning, that would use the designation as a tool to protect, improve, and promote one of the Heritage Region’s greatest assets – our intact cultural landscape shaped over centuries of “Living with the Land.”**

The original MAP names 60 individuals on its steering committee, representing dozens of public, non-profit and private organizations. Participants included state and county elected officials, regional planning organizations, visitor site managers and many others. A core concept of the Heritage Areas Program is that local and regional partnerships define the agenda for heritage development based on the area’s unique needs and opportunities. Each supporting partner organization is intended to incorporate the Heritage Region’s goals and objectives within the organization’s sphere of influence.

Both the 1998 MAP and this Update include recommendations and actions intended for the partners whose work can affect heritage development, as well as for EMHR staff. EMHR Inc. was established as a 501c3 membership organization to advance the 1998 MAP’s implementation agenda. A 25-person board of directors<sup>4</sup> was established, institutionalizing the “partnership” of the founding organizations.

The MAP Update charges EMHR Inc. with building and facilitating a broad and diverse partnership to collaboratively develop a heritage tourism infrastructure. EMHR’s network of partners extends well beyond the board of directors. In the largest sense, the “partnership” is among all organizations within the region that have a stake in protecting, improving and promoting heritage assets. Key partners

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<sup>4</sup> Today, the Board has an additional standing position for the Bradford County Tourism and Promotion Agency

include the managers of heritage and outdoor recreation visitor destinations. EMHR Inc. filed the “fictitious name,” ***Endless Mountains Heritage Alliance***, to emphasize the collaboration required to have a significant impact and reap the benefits of heritage designation.

One of EMHR’s primary objectives is to be a resource for its heritage partners. Since 1998, EMHR Inc. has done this primarily by providing monetary support through its grant program and technical support. However, because heritage funding levels have dropped over the years, the grant program’s impact on heritage development is significantly less.

The 1998 Management Action Plan recognizes the role of EMHR in supporting partner organizations whose work advances Heritage Region objectives:

- *Establish a Focal Point where partners can exchange information, develop projects, seek and create a common pool of resources.*
- *Conduct public outreach in order to raise public awareness about the heritage region and its initiatives*
- *Be a “keeper of the flame” - Maintain an accounting of the progress of the heritage region through regular reference to the vision and this MAP and by providing a “scorecard” for the successes of all partners.*

EMHR’s role remains the same and is reinforced by the Plan Update’s implementation agenda.

## EMHR Inc. Today

**EMHR Inc. was established as non-profit membership organization to assist government and nonprofit partners in heritage development.** The role of EMHR is to develop partnership projects that protect and enhance the heritage tourism infrastructure, which supports the work of the tourism promotion agencies – to bring people to enjoy the Heritage Region’s historic and scenic places and events. EMHR’s work helps communities to reimagine everyday places and to see the potential of our iconic historic,

### ***Mission Statement***

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*EMHR is a nonprofit membership organization bringing together partners and projects to revitalize local economies by protecting, enhancing, and telling the stories behind our historic places and downtowns, and our scenic vistas and pastoral landscapes, and by developing outstanding outdoor recreation destinations in Bradford, Susquehanna, Sullivan, and Wyoming Counties.*

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scenic and natural places to attract visitors as well as businesses and residents.

As stated in the original MAP, EMHR Inc. would carry out a limited number of implementation projects, but would primarily be responsible for coordinating the heritage development activities of partner organizations, provide advice and technical assistance, and serve as a conduit for funding projects through a state-funded grants program.

EMHR Inc. continues to provide advice and technical assistance and to maintain a small grants program. However, the Heritage Region's identity, purpose, mission, goals, and objectives overall are not well understood today, even by EMHR's grant recipients. Many non-profit and government organizations that were originally involved in establishing the Heritage Region have changed leadership and staff since EMHR's founding, or are no longer involved.

EMHR also manages the Susquehanna River North Branch Water Trail, one of 27 water trails designated under the DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation River Program. EMHR's Water Trail program complements other Heritage Region's programs, and continues to raise public awareness of a major outdoor recreation destination that is an important part of the heritage tourism infrastructure.

### Funding the Organization

**EMHR's staffing, operations, projects, and small grants program are currently funded primarily through annual applications to DCNR's Partnership Grants program, which makes up approximately 90% of EMHR's annual budget.** The annual grant award is variable and dependent on a Heritage Areas Program line item in the state's annual budget, typically reduced to zero every year, and requires advocacy to reinstate adequate funding levels in the Pennsylvania budget. Pennsylvania's distressed financial state is likely to continue, so the annual funding challenge will remain.

The remaining 10% of the annual income is made up of voluntary county contributions, membership fees, and occasional small grant awards from other sources, which are restricted to finance direct costs specific to EMHR-led projects (e.g. interpretive signs, rack cards, Susquehanna Sojourns).

EMHR has an endowment fund - the Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers (CFTT) Endless Mountains Heritage Region Fund<sup>5</sup> - which has been inactive for years.

EMHR has not focused on developing a broader funding base and remains largely dependent on annual state Heritage Area funding. There is currently no organizational fundraising program. Membership is not a significant source of income.

### EMHR Management Structure

**The Bylaws of the Corporation specify 26 board member positions.** Each county has five seats, one of which is a county commissioner; the other four represent diversified heritage interests within the county. In addition, there are six standing positions for regional planning, tourism, and educational institutions: Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission, the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau and the Bradford County Tourism and Promotion Agency, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Keystone College and Mansfield University. Not all standing position seats are active.

Although the Bylaws address membership requirements, until recently EMHR has not focused on developing a robust membership program or building a strong membership base.

EMHR's current staffing includes a full-time executive director and three part-time positions: greenway coordinator, project coordinator and fiscal coordinator.

### EMHR Programs

EMHR's current activities fall under five program areas:

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<sup>5</sup> Fund opened in 2009; as of September 30, 2016, a balance of \$2,775.

1. Greenways, Trails, Conservation
2. Living with The Land – Agricultural Heritage
3. Partnership Grants
4. Education, Interpretation, Heritage Tourism
5. Heritage Partnerships and Outreach

#### 1. Greenways, Trails, and Conservation Program

**The Heritage Region should provide opportunities for a wide range of outdoor activities that appeal to families – from driving tours along scenic byways to biking, walking and hiking excursions.** Heritage tourism and outdoor recreation go hand in hand. Although the Heritage Region’s cultural and natural landscapes are among its greatest assets, the Region lacks of an extensive network of community and regional walking and biking trails for residents and visitors.

The popularity of the D&H Rail Trail, the Loyalsock Trail and the Susquehanna North Branch Water Trail point to the importance of developing trails as part of our heritage tourism infrastructure. The purpose of the Greenways, Trails, and Conservation program is to support the development of land and water trails in the Heritage Region that can serve all ages and abilities. One of the objectives of trails development is to raise awareness and promote conservation and stewardship of natural resources through education and direct experience.

**The Susquehanna River North Branch Water Trail** - The Susquehanna River runs through three of the four counties in the Heritage Region: Bradford, Wyoming and Susquehanna Counties, and is a nationally-significant<sup>6</sup> heritage and outdoor recreational trail. The Susquehanna River North Branch Water Trail is one of the Heritage Region’s great assets because of its potential to draw visitors to enjoy a wide range of outdoor recreation experiences, such as kayaking and canoeing, fishing, birding, and wildlife photography. As the official water trail manager<sup>7</sup>, EMHR’s activities focus on improving water trail user experience as well as working with adjacent municipalities to connect the river to downtowns, service providers, parks, and nearby visitor attractions.

As trail manager, EMHR works to balance the needs and values of both recreation and conservation. Raising awareness, educating people about the river’s importance to the Heritage Region’s history, and engaging people with first-hand experience of river ecology are central to EMHR activities.

Achievements include improving and installing accesses, developing maps and guides, posting safety and informational signage, and leading Susquehanna River Sojourns, kayaking and canoeing events, and river bank cleanups, to name a few. EMHR was responsible for the successful nomination of the Susquehanna River North Branch as Pennsylvania’s River of the Year in 2016. EMHR’s work has spurred tremendous increases in recreational use of the river.

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<sup>6</sup> The Susquehanna River North Branch is a designated National Recreation and Historic Trail and is also part of the National Park Service’s “Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.”

<sup>7</sup> The designation is through an agreement with the PA State Water Trail Network and the National Park Water Trails System; EMHR manages the Susquehanna River North Branch Water Trail through the Heritage Region counties and south to Berwick.

**Partners** - Over the years, EMHR has established a wide network of trails and greenways organizations, and collaborates with national, state, and regional water trail organizations, as well as colleges and universities to benefit the Heritage Region. Examples are the National Park Service, the Pennsylvania Statewide Water Trails Partnership, the Chesapeake Conservancy, the Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies<sup>8</sup>, Bucknell University, as well as local watershed organizations and municipalities within the river’s watershed.

EMHR also partners with the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership to establish “River Town” designations, a program that provides technical assistance to communities to strengthen connections between communities and the River. The goal is to develop a network of biking and walking trails along the entire Susquehanna River, bringing water trail users to nearby downtowns for services and shopping.

**Funding** - The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has provided EMHR with annual Environmental Stewardship funding (in recent years, typically \$30,000) to support EMHR’s Greenways, Trails & Conservation Program, including management and promotion of the Susquehanna River North Branch Water Trail through events such as kayaking/canoeing Sojourns and river cleanups. This funding supports staffing and projects dedicated to the Greenways, Trails & Conservation Program.

## 2. Living with the Land – Agricultural Heritage

The Heritage Region’s Theme, Living with the Land, highlights our agricultural heritage. Agriculture is the economic activity most responsible for creating and maintaining the character of the region’s communities and rural landscape. The rural cultural landscape of farms, forests and villages developed over centuries both distinguishes the Endless Mountains Heritage Region from its neighbors and is at the core of its identity. EMHR’s Agricultural Heritage Program is intended to support agricultural heritage development and encourage agritourism initiatives featuring the region’s farms and food.

Over the years, EMHR has funded a number of projects focused on the agricultural heritage theme, most recently the 2015 “Bradford County Agricultural Viability Study,” published by the Bradford County Conservation District. Until 2016, EMHR had also hosted a chapter of the “Buy Fresh Buy Local” program under the Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture, publishing a local food guide and holding Taste of the Endless Mountains events.

## 3. EMHR Partnership Grants Program

**EMHR has conducted a local grants program funded by DCNR since 1998, and has distributed over \$2,000,000 in grants for more than a hundred projects throughout the Heritage Region,** leveraging an additional \$2,000,000 in matching funds. The types of projects have varied widely, including historic preservation and visitor site improvements, interpretive exhibits and signs, historic walking tours, conferences, trail development, feasibility studies and interpretive plans.

Although the available funding from the state has declined since the organization’s beginning, EMHR’s Partnership Grant Program has continued, though at reduced funding levels. For example, EMHR has been able to allocate and distribute \$60,000 to \$70,000 through its grant program annually over the past three years.

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<sup>8</sup> a collaboration of six regional colleges and universities along the Susquehanna River

The Partnership Grant Program serves two important functions:

- Funds partner organizations to advance projects that advance Heritage Region goals.
- Provides required “matching funds” for EMHR’s annual grant application to DCNR.

EMHR includes funding requests for partner-led projects in its annual DCNR grant application. The “matching funds” provided by the partner organizations make up most of the required matching funds in EMHR’s annual grant application to DCNR.

#### 4. Education, Interpretation, Heritage Tourism

**Conveying the unique story of the Heritage Region and helping visitors to experience its historic places and its cultural and natural landscapes is central to heritage tourism development.**

EMHR’s primary role is to develop the heritage tourism infrastructure for the Endless Mountains. This includes protection and enhancement of heritage assets, but also development of the heritage story on which the Heritage Region designation is based. EMHR also highlights the heritage story and themes for the public through educational programs, from speaker series to student kayaking and canoeing events, such as annual “Susquehanna Sojourns.” EMHR collaborates with two Pennsylvania tourism and promotion agencies operating in the Heritage Region: the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau and the Bradford County Tourism and Promotion Agency.

On a case by case basis, EMHR has supported many historical societies, museums and other cultural organizations in developing interpretive exhibits, signs, and brochures, walking tours, and historical markers specific to their individual interests. For examples, EMHR recently provided funding for an interpretive plan for the Dennis Farm in Susquehanna County, a historic district walking tour in Tunkhannock, and interpretive signs along the Diahoga Trail in Bradford County. EMHR has also led projects to develop a number of wayfinding signs, most recently, a Susquehanna County heritage and outdoor recreation attraction sign placed in a prominent downtown location in Forest City.

Although it is important to support partners in communicating the region’s history and heritage, EMHR currently lacks an overarching strategy of where and how to convey a coordinated story throughout the Heritage Region. With assistance from partner organizations, a county-by-county interpretive plan would present a coordinated thematic structure and network that could be funded and implemented in phases. The plan could identify a range of interpretive strategies, from traditional methods such as signs and museum exhibits, to creative and artistic strategies such as murals and sculptures.

#### 5. Heritage Partnerships and Outreach

**The success of the Endless Mountains Heritage Region depends on the efforts of many individuals and organizations to protect its heritage assets, improve its visitor attractions, and promote it as a heritage tourism destination.** Developing a strong network of Heritage Region partners and projects is fundamental to EMHR’s success.

EMHR provides technical assistance on request to individuals and organizations working on heritage tourism and outdoor recreation projects, and has conducted grant workshops in the past to benefit partner organizations.

EMHR’s board and membership represent many public and non-profit organizations. Cultivating board and member understanding of the Heritage Region’s purpose, and providing opportunities for their

active involvement is an important organizational function. Although current membership is low, EMHR is in the process of developing a more robust membership program and communication strategy. EMHR holds an annual membership meeting as required by its bylaws.

EMHR currently uses print material (brochures) and digital tools (e-mail, website and Facebook page) to communicate with its partner network and the public. Efforts are underway to update these materials and tools, which are piecemeal and lack graphic coordination and a consistent message. EMHR typically issues press releases monthly to a number of media outlets in the region, and holds press events throughout the year to raise awareness of Heritage Region projects, events and activities.

## EMHR Tomorrow

### A Vision for the Future

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*“The Endless Mountains Heritage Region communities and local businesses are thriving from heritage tourism and outdoor recreation, drawing visitors of all ages who appreciate the Region’s stories, agricultural and natural landscapes, historic and scenic roads, outstanding land and water trails, state parks and game lands, charming historic downtowns, and year-round heritage attractions and events.”*

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A “vision” statement describes the outcomes if the Endless Mountains Heritage Region concept was fully realized through the efforts of EMHR, Inc. and its many partner organizations. The updated vision emphasizes the economic benefits that can come from leveraging our heritage assets as a strategy for community revitalization.

Success would draw heritage and outdoor recreation visitors, but would also benefit and attract residents. **Heritage tourism is part of the “experience economy.” The Heritage Region’s success will depend on the types and quality of the experiences it can offer visitors and residents.**

The Vision highlights these primary desired outcomes:

- Economic revitalization of historic towns through heritage tourism.
- Appreciation for the agricultural heritage, historic towns, natural features and extensive network of scenic drives and trails, and for the stories that can be told through these historic places and cultural landscapes.
- Understanding of the story of the people, how they “lived with land” in earlier centuries, and how we live with the land today.

### Heritage Region Goals

Goals describe what the Heritage Region must achieve to become a tool for revitalizing local economies based on the region’s heritage and outdoor recreation assets. To achieve the benefits, the Heritage Region needs to offer visitors and residents a wide range of authentic experiences of our historic towns, agricultural landscapes, and natural features. EMHR’s action agenda targets these five goals:

- **Attract visitors** to the Region’s communities, heritage attractions, and downtowns to strengthen local economies.

- **Engage residents and visitors** in appreciation of and interaction with the Region’s heritage.
- **Protect and enhance our heritage assets**, the iconic historic places and “Main Streets,” cultural landscapes, and natural features where the Heritage Region’s stories can be told.
- **Offer a wide range of heritage and outdoor recreation destinations and activities** for all ages and abilities.
- **Deliver authentic experiences** of “Living with the Land” in the Endless Mountains.

### Heritage Region Objectives

Objectives define how to reach the goals. The five statements below outline the range of objectives that the Action Plan implementation agenda is designed to address. **Together, the recommendations represent a holistic and strategic approach to developing the Heritage Region’s tourism infrastructure and to cultivating a wide network of informed and active partners.**

Below the objectives are key supporting actions that EMHR and its government and non-profit partners can take. Many of the actions below were proposed by partners or included in government and nonprofit organization planning documents. Some are based on successful heritage programs from around the state and nation.

However, the actions and their outcomes work together to result in an effective program and measurable progress. The list is not intended to be exhaustive or limiting opportunity.

Most important, the proposed action agenda does not replace, but builds on and provides strategies to increase the effectiveness of EMHR and its partners.

#### 1) Establish a strong identity and “Brand” for the Heritage Region

***Strategy:** Collaborate with the region’s tourism and promotion agencies and partner organizations to raise awareness of the Heritage Region’s purpose and value among government, nonprofit organizations, the business community, and the public; develop and use print and media products, web-based internet tools and events to highlight and promote the Region as a heritage and outdoor recreation destination.*

#### 2) Tell the Heritage Story

***Strategy:** Establish a regional framework and engage county partners to develop and communicate Heritage Region “Living with the Land” themes and stories through interpretive exhibits, art, and special events, with an emphasis on reaching student and family audiences.*

#### 3) Identify, protect and improve heritage assets

***Strategy:** Facilitate development of the Region’s heritage tourism and outdoor recreation infrastructure by working with partners and the public to identify, protect and improve high-value historic structures and viewsheds, and by supporting business development related to the Region’s agricultural heritage and heritage tourism, especially in or near historic downtowns.*

#### 4) Facilitate new heritage and outdoor recreation sites & events

**Strategy:** Establish a county-designated network of scenic and historic roadway corridors, bike routes, and multi-use trails that connect Heritage Region attractions and historic downtowns; facilitate agritourism initiatives in support of the Heritage Region’s “Living with the Land” theme and national interest in local food production and sustainable communities.

## 5) Build partnerships to protect and improve the heritage tourism infrastructure

**Strategy:** Institutionalize the Heritage Region concept, goals and objectives by incorporating its goals and objectives in regional, county and municipal plans, and establish a means of quantifying progress and achievements; build the knowledge base and capacity of public, non-profit partners and community leaders through educational programs and information-sharing on heritage development topics.

## 6) Improve organizational sustainability

**Strategy:** Expand and diversify funding streams through public and private grants, and membership campaigns; expand EMHR’s capacity and access to technical resources through volunteer programs and relationships with colleges, universities and partner organizations.

## 10-Year Action Plan Summary Recommendations

The Action Plan recommendations collectively support the six objectives above. They came from a variety of sources, including suggestions by the board, members, and partner organizations, successful initiatives by others (e.g. state, national heritage areas) and recommendations from other state, regional and county plans, including:

- *Natural Connections, PA Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2014-2019<sup>9</sup>*
- *Pennsylvania’s Heritage Areas Program: The Next Five Years, 1015-2020*
- *Moving Forward Along Route 6, Route 6 Alliance Management Action Plan, June 2016*
- *Susquehanna Greenway Partnership River Town Program Manual*
- *Bradford County Marketing Blueprint, 2016*
- *Bradford County Agricultural Viability Study & Program, August 2015*
- *Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau Strategic Plan Progress Report*
- *Northern Tier Open Space, Greenway & Outdoor Recreation Plan Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming Counties, 2010*

The Action Plan Summary Table presents an ambitious slate of initiatives that will take time, funding, and the combined efforts of EMHR and its government and nonprofit partners. The timing and success

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<sup>9</sup> HeritagePA and DCNR identified “Tourism & Economic Development” and “Resource Management” as two goal areas that PA’s heritage areas can directly support through their work programs.

of any component of the 10-year Action Plan will be dependent on establishing a base of support and attracting funding.

Some projects proposed in the Action Plan were selected because there is an alignment of three factors important to success: widespread public interest, alignment with DCNR priorities and potential funders, and opportunities to highlight the Region's heritage and outdoor recreation attractions. An example is a proposal to develop a designated and signed network of scenic and historic roads and trails that connects heritage and outdoor recreation attractions. For example, transportation investment in a designated network could improve pedestrian and bicycling access to attractions and downtowns, and be eligible for state and federal transportation funding.

The proposed actions and recommendations are not intended to be exhaustive. Unanticipated opportunities, as well as impediments, will require course adjustments. New collaborations or funding sources may lead to new projects.

#### EMHR's and Partner Roles

Although EMHR will take the lead on some action items, EMHR's primary role is to create a framework for heritage development that can be implemented on a county-by-county basis by organizations that have the local knowledge critical to program success. EMHR should also reach out to the network of museums, historical sites, outdoor recreation venues and related visitor attractions to identify ways to make them stronger, viable and more successful.

Many of the actions will require extensive planning and partner development before projects can progress to implementation. EMHR's role is to formulate projects, build support, engage partner organizations best-suited to advance the initiative, and provide technical assistance.

#### Table Organization

The Action Plan Summary Table is organized by EMHR's five programs, along with an additional category, "Organizational Strategies."

1. Greenways, Trails, Conservation
2. Living with The Land – Agricultural Heritage
3. Partnership Grants
4. Education, Interpretation, Heritage Tourism
5. Heritage Partnerships and Outreach
6. Organizational Strategies

Under each program heading are major initiatives in bold text, with more detailed actions in the rows below. EMHR and key partners are suggested for each action, whether in a lead or supporting role. Each action is identified as ongoing or short-term (1-2 years), medium-term (3-4 years), or long-term (5+ years). Note that the actions are assigned to the terms when they might begin, although they may be completed or continue well beyond. Performance measures suggest ways that progress can be measured.

<b>O</b>	Ongoing		<b>KEY</b>
<b>S</b>	Short-term	1 – 2 years	
<b>M</b>	Medium-term	3 – 5 years	
<b>L</b>	Long-term	6 or more years	

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
	<b>1 - Greenways, Trails, Conservation</b>						
1.1.0	<b>Establish a signed network of scenic &amp; historic drives, bike routes, biking, hiking &amp; walking trails, and water trails</b> <i>Objective 4: Facilitate New Heritage and Outdoor Recreation Sites &amp; Events</i>	EMHR, Counties, NTRDC, PennDOT, DCNR					Miles of designated facilities; number of new trails under development
1.1.1	Prepare an Endless Mountains historic and scenic byways and trails plan to identify trail opportunities, drawing from trail-planning efforts by regional, county and municipal governments and nonprofits, and to identify network “gaps” and regional trail opportunities	EMHR, DCNR, Counties, Municipalities, PA Environmental Council					Completed regional trails plan
1.1.2	Convene an Endless Mountains trails working group to identify trail opportunities and strategies for trail development	EMHR, NEPA Trails Forum, DCNR					Working group in place, annual meetings
1.1.3	Reinstitute and continue to develop the “Endless Mountains Heritage Trail” project (1998 Plan) that inventoried, mapped, and signed heritage tourism and outdoor attractions throughout the Region, creating a fold out map brochure	EMHR, PA Tourism Promotion Agencies, visitor site managers, DCNR					Number of participating visitor sites; Heritage Region map & brochure
1.1.4	Coordinate with the Route 6 Alliance and PennDOT to identify and facilitate the development of the Route 6 biking network	EMHR, PennDOT, Route 6 Alliance					Proposed Heritage Region trail network adopted by PennDOT & Route 6 Alliance
1.1.5	Coordinate with PennDOT and the counties to install gateway and wayfinding signs along primary travel routes to and through the Heritage Region	EMHR, Counties, PennDOT, DCNR					PennDOT approvals; number of signs installed
1.1.6	Facilitate development of the Endless Mountains Heritage Hiking Trail (Sullivan, Luzerne, Wyoming Counties) coordinating with state, county, and trail advocates	EMHR, Sullivan County, DCNR, PA Game Commission					Landowner & agency permissions secured; development strategy in place

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
1.1.7	Facilitate improvements to the pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure in downtowns and at visitor attractions	EMHR, counties, municipalities, visitor sites, SGP, PennDOT					Number of pedestrian improvement projects (“Main Streets,” visitor sites)
1.1.8	Facilitate the installation of kiosks/wayfinding exhibits along historic “Main Streets” and at major recreational and heritage venues to promote Heritage Region attractions	EMHR, chambers of commerce, municipalities, visitor sites					Number of kiosks/wayfinding exhibits
1.2.0	<b>Manage and promote the North Branch Water Trail to attract visitors to the Heritage Region</b>  <i>Objective 1: Establish a strong identity and “Brand”;</i> <i>Objective 5: Build Partnerships to protect, improve &amp; promote heritage tourism</i>	EMHR, PA Tourism Promotion Agencies, DCNR					Number of requests for water trail information
1.2.1	Hold Susquehanna kayaking/canoeing Sojourns and river clean-up events for students & the public	EMHR, SGP, municipalities, regional watershed/ conservation organizations, Conservation Districts, DCNR, PA Fish & Boat Commission, Susquehanna River Basin Commission					Hold an annual Sojourn and Number of events;
1.2.2	Update the 2004 Water Trail Map	EMHR, SGP, municipalities, NPS, DCNR, PA Fish & Boat Commission					Trail map completed
1.2.3	Further develop and promote the “444 Club” <sup>10</sup> including on-line interactive mapping and award recognition	EMHR, SGP, Chesapeake Conservancy					Updated 444 website with interactive map; program of activities

<sup>10</sup> Refers to people who have completed kayaking/canoeing the 444 miles of the North Branch Water Trail from Cooperstown to Havre de Grace, Maryland

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
1.2.4	Document and prepare a plan that outlines water trail needs, safety issues, project priorities every two years (e.g. access, wayfinding, interpretive signs and conservation initiatives)	EMHR, regional watershed & conservation organizations, Middle Susq. River Keeper municipalities, DCNR, PA Fish & Boat Commission					Bi-annual Summary Plan
1.2.5	Convene watershed organizations, government representative and advocates to identify current activities, related to water trail recreation and conservation initiatives every two years; document and publish findings	EMHR, SGP, DCNR, PA Fish & Boat Commission, Susquejann					Annual meetings
1.2.6	Support the Susquehanna Greenways Partnership (SGP) River Town Program to establish bicycling and walking facilities along the Susquehanna River and connect the water trail to downtowns and heritage attractions; participate in designation and community technical assistance programs.	EMHR & SGP, DCNR, PennDOT					Number of towns designated; number of pedestrian, bicycle projects initiated
1.2.7	Support and participate in regional, state and national river & water trail programs, including the Chesapeake Conservancy’s “Envision the Susquehanna” Project, the National Park Service’s Captain John Smith Trail development, Bucknell University’s “Stories of the Susquehanna.”	EMHR, Chesapeake Conservancy, NPS, Universities					Membership/participation: “Envision the Susquehanna” and River-related programs of Bucknell & the Heartland Coalition
<b>2 - “Living with the Land” Agricultural Heritage</b>							
2.1.0	<b>Plan and implement a region-wide strategy to inventory, map, prioritize, protect and revitalize the Region’s heritage assets and places that are part of our heritage and outdoor recreation tourism infrastructure</b> <i>Objective 3: Identify, protect and improve heritage assets</i>	EMHR, Counties, partner network, PA Dept of Agriculture					A mapped inventory of heritage assets (attractions, historic places, viewsheds, etc.; historic preservation plan
2.1.1	Conduct a geo-tourism program to engage the public in identifying and raising awareness of the Heritage Region’s heritage assets, top attractions, views and stories	EMHR, partner network					Geotourism program
2.1.2	Conduct an annual “Top 10” campaign that identifies and raises awareness of the most-valued and -threatened heritage assets and landmarks	EMHR, Historical Societies, PHMC					Top 10 campaign

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
2.1.3	Encourage and facilitate strategies to protect and improve access to iconic viewsheds, e.g. Route 6 Marie Antoinette Overlook	EMHR, French Azilum, Inc., county planning offices, PennDOT, roadway jurisdictions					Viewshed inventory and map; number of new or improved pull-offs.
2.1.4	Facilitate the protection, restoration, rehabilitation and reuse of high-value historic structures, landmarks, “Main Streets” that contribute to communicating the Heritage Region’s history	EMHR, PHMC, counties, municipalities					Number of preservation-related projects under development
2.2.0	<b>Investigate, develop and promote agritourism programs</b> <i>Objective 4: Facilitate new heritage and outdoor recreation sites</i>	EMHR, partner network					Number of agritourism initiatives under development
2.2.1	Conduct a board and member tour to explore established and successful programs in Pennsylvania as potential models.	EMHR, members, partner network					Bus tour
2.2.2	Encourage & support Farm to Table events and related initiatives that contribute to the “Living with the Land” theme	EMHR, partner network, volunteers					Number of projects supported
2.2.3	Support the development of a “Local Food Guide” as a self-sustaining initiative, listing and highlighting local farms and businesses that interface with the public directly	EMHR, PA Tourism Promotion Agencies, EMRC&D, partner network					Food guides
2.2.4	<b>Support business development initiatives that focus on local food production and goods in support of heritage tourism</b> <i>Objective 4: Facilitate new heritage and outdoor recreation sites</i>	EMHR, NTRPDC, Progress Authority, counties, municipalities					Number of projects under development
2.2.5	Extend the “Bradford County Agricultural Viability Plan” to include all four counties of the Heritage Region; assemble working groups to develop county-specific strategies.	EMHR, EMRC&D, counties, Farm Bureau, PSU Extension, PA Dept. of Agriculture					County-specific action plans

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
	<b>3 - Partnership Grants &amp; Technical Assistance Program</b>						
3.1.0	<b>Continue to conduct and manage an annual grant solicitation (based on available funding) prioritizing projects that directly advance EMHR’s objectives and action agenda</b>  <i>Objective 5: Build partnerships to protect, improve and promote heritage tourism</i>	EMHR, DCNR					Annual grant solicitation
3.1.1	Develop/ expand funding opportunities and sources	EMHR, state & federal agencies, foundations					Amount of supplemental funding from alternative sources
3.1.2	Hold an annual funding and grants workshop to assist partners and raise awareness of Heritage Region initiatives, as part of the communication and messaging outreach plan (5.3.3)	EMHR, DCNR, PHMC, other state/ federal agencies, PA Tourism Promotion Agencies					Funding and grants workshop
3.1.3	Annually publish a map and report on grant-funded projects to be included in an annual report	EMHR					Map and annual report
	<b>4 – Education, Interpretation, Heritage Tourism</b>						
4.1.0	<b>Develop the region-wide “Heritage Story” and identify locations where the story can be told</b>  <i>Objective 2: Tell the Heritage Story</i>	EMHR, historical societies, visitor sites					Interpretive framework plan
4.1.1	Hold a workshop led by an interpretive specialist; coordinate with county historical societies, and subject matter experts in developing an interpretive plan	EMHR, historical societies, visitor sites					Interpretive plan workshop
4.1.2	Encourage and support partners, the arts community, and visitor site managers in developing interpretive exhibits and displays, host educational presentations and workshops that feature the Heritage Region story	EMHR, visitor sites, arts community					Number of interpretive exhibits/ displays; number of presentations/ workshops

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
4.2.0	<p><b>Facilitate designation of a Heritage Week in each county</b></p> <p><i>Objective 1: Establish a strong identity and brand'</i>  <i>Objective 4: Facilitate new heritage and outdoor recreation sites &amp; events</i></p>	EMHR, counties					Number of county designations
4.2.1	Encourage and support heritage and recreation site managers, and downtown businesses to hold special events and activities during Heritage Week	EMHR, chambers of commerce, visitor site managers, business community					Number of participating organizations
4.3.0	<p><b>Collaborate with schools, colleges and universities, to conduct heritage-related field schools, workshops and excursions (e.g. agricultural heritage, natural or cultural history, archeology)</b></p> <p><i>Objective 2: Tell the Heritage Story</i>  <i>Objective 5: Build partnerships to protect, improve and promote heritage tourism</i></p>	EMHR, educational institutions, DCNR					Number of field schools, workshops, excursions
4.3.1	Meet with educational institutions to explore the potential for teaching opportunities and student involvement in Heritage Region activities (e.g. docent program, research projects, etc.)	EMHR, educational institutions					Number of interested schools
<b>5 – Heritage Partnerships and Outreach</b>							
5.1.0	<p><b>Work with county and municipal partners to institutionalize the Heritage Region and its goals and objectives, incorporating them into county and municipal comprehensive plans and other guidance documents.</b></p> <p><i>Objective 5: Build partnerships to protect, improve and promote heritage tourism</i></p>	EMHR, counties, municipalities					Heritage Region objectives incorporated into planning documents
5.1.1	Review county and key municipal plans and meet with planning offices to review and recommend updates related to Heritage Region goals and objectives	EMHR, counties, municipalities					Meeting with planning directors

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
5.1.2	Support the Route 6 Heritage Alliance’s “Heritage Communities” program	EMHR, Rt. 6 Alliance					Number of Heritage Communities assisted
5.2.0	<b>Conduct a heritage tourism economic impact study to establish a baseline for comparing visitation to heritage and outdoor recreation attractions and economic impacts</b>  <i>Objective 5: Build partnerships to protect, improve and promote heritage tourism</i>	EMHR, PA Tourism Promotion Agencies, NTRPDC, DCNR					Economic impact study
5.3.0	<b>Build the knowledge base and capacity of government, nonprofit partners and community leaders through events and information-sharing; raise member and public awareness of Heritage Region activities</b>  <i>Objective 5: Build partnerships to protect, improve and promote heritage tourism</i>	EMHR, partner network					Number of new members
5.3.1	Create a virtual (web-based) platform for discussion and information-sharing among members and partner organizations	EMHR					Web platform in place; number of subscribers
5.3.2	Hold an annual workshop, bringing subject matter experts and speakers to address heritage development issues and opportunities	EMHR, partner network, DCNR					
5.3.3	Prepare a communication and messaging plan that addresses outreach to members, partner organizations and the interested public	EMHR					Communication & messaging plan
5.3.4	Design a coordinated set of exhibits, brochures, maps, videos, and presentations and other collateral that communicate the Heritage Region’s mission and activities	EMHR					Number of communication products completed
5.4.0	<b>Celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Heritage Region in 2018</b>  <i>Objective 1: Establish a strong identity and brand</i> <i>Objective 5: Build partnerships to protect, improve and promote heritage tourism</i>	EMHR, partner network					Event and publication

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
	<b>6 – Organizational Strategies</b>						
6.1.0	<b>Expand and diversify funding streams to put EMHR and partners on stronger financial footing</b>  <i>Objective 6: Improve organizational sustainability</i>	EMHR, partners	■				More revenue sources; increased revenue
6.1.1	Develop a sustainability and business development plan to address the financial needs, matching funds, and financial partnerships	EMHR, DCNR		■			Business plan
6.1.2	Hold at least one annual fundraising event	EMHR, partners	■				Fundraising event
6.1.3	Promote and increase the existing endowment fund currently managed by the Twin Tiers Community Foundation <sup>11</sup>	EMHR, partners		■			Increased endowment
6.2.0	<b>Expand EMHR’s membership base</b>  <i>Objective 6: Improve organizational sustainability</i>	EMHR, partners	■				Increased membership
6.2.1	Work with EMHR’s membership committee to develop a membership program that includes a survey of partner organizations	EMHR, partners		■			Membership program
6.2.2	Conduct annual membership campaigns	EMHR, partners	■				Membership campaign
6.3.0	<b>Increase staff capacity through internships and volunteers</b>  <i>Objective 6: Improve organizational sustainability</i>		■				Number of volunteers, interns
6.3.1	Approach colleges and universities to identify opportunities for resource sharing and student internships	EMHR, educational institutions		■			Number of participating educational institutions
6.3.2	Develop a volunteer corps of supporters and advocates	EMHR, partners			■		Volunteer registry

<sup>11</sup> According to the Foundation’s rules, the endowment fund must reach \$10,000 by 2018 (10 years since its establishment) or the fund will be dissolved.

	Action/ Deliverable	EMHR/ Key Partners	O	S	M	L	Performance Measures
6.4.0	<b>Review and update EMHR’s bylaws, governance policy, personnel policy and operations every three years</b>  <i>Objective 6: Improve organizational sustainability</i>	EMHR					Updated guidance documents
6.4.1	Participate in the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organization’s (PANO) Standards for Excellence Program <sup>12</sup> (a three-stage review process for nonprofit accreditation)	EMHR, PANO					PANO Certification
6.5.0	<b>Encourage and facilitate board involvement in heritage development projects</b>  <i>Objective 6: Improve organizational sustainability</i>	EMHR					Number of board members active in advancing heritage development projects
6.5.1	Convene EMHR’s county committees at least once a year to review issues, opportunities, and strategies for heritage development in their respective counties; include county commissioners and others pertinent to the county’s heritage development objectives.	EMHR, county commissioners, partner organizations					Annual summary of county meeting(s)

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<sup>12</sup> PANO’s program is a three-staged review process for nonprofit accreditation and recognition; HeritagePA recommends PANO accreditation for all Pennsylvania Heritage Areas.