

CHAPTER THREE: HERITAGE RESOURCE INVENTORY OF THE BRNHA



INTRODUCTION

The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area is an extraordinary place. It is significant primarily because of the quality and uniqueness of its natural assets, native and early American cultural history, musical traditions, world renowned artistry and hand craftsmanship, and rich agricultural way of life. Indeed, the BRNHA's authorizing legislation recognized these five central characteristics as contributing notably to the region's unique personality. These resources contain intrinsic value and serve as both the backdrop and focus of numerous recreational pursuits. While this rich heritage defines the area's past, this management plan intends to ensure that it remains alive and well, contributing to a sustained economic vitality for the region.



Thunderhill Overlook

This chapter attempts to comprehensively document to a degree that is practical, given time and budgetary constraints, some of the more notable heritage resources that reflect the five heritage themes for which the BRNHA is responsible for managing. It serves as a baseline from which additional inventory efforts can build. It is intended to serve as a reference over time in BRNHA's internal planning and decision making. It should remind BRNHA of what specifically is significant about this Heritage Area, particularly within the context of its authorizing legislation. It can help inform the establishment of priorities and annual operational plans. This inventory should also prove useful for potential implementation partners as they formulate proposals to help preserve, develop, and interpret these resources. Finally, this list has been used in the analysis of potential environmental impacts from various possible management alternatives explored under the environmental assessment process. The EA is discussed later in this document.

METHODOLOGIES EMPLOYED TO CONSTRUCT THE HERITAGE RESOURCE INVENTORY

The challenge of constructing a meaningful heritage resource inventory of a 25 county region and an Indian reservation is enormous. From a geographic perspective, the area itself is very large, increasing the probability that there are a substantial number of important heritage resources that need to be considered for inclusion. The variations within the region in topography, land cover, land use, and historic land ownership patterns amplify this probability. From a social perspective, the sheer number of counties, municipalities and tribal interests represented across the region increases the number and diversity of stakeholder interests. This circumstance, combined with the five heritage themes at the core of the BRNHA, can create many differing perspectives about what should or should not be included in the inventory.

Data about potential heritage resources considered for inclusion in the inventory were obtained from a) local heritage councils formed in each of the 25 counties and on the Qualla Boundary; b) state and federal agencies with management responsibilities in the region; c) councils of government, acting as representatives of counties and municipalities in the region; d) private organizations and interests; and e) through the consultant's independent research. Sources of data are described in Appendix 1, preceding the inventory list compiled for each heritage resource category.

A three-step screening process was devised to help bound the resource inventory. The resulting documentation is intended to be manageable in terms of its bulk for end users of the product. The inventory should also satisfy the specifications that the NPS has for all Heritage Areas and should have direct relevance and meaning to the five core themes expressed in the authorizing legislation for the BRNHA. By exercising a certain amount of discretion over resources selected for inclusion, the inventory should help to truly define the unique character of the region. Otherwise, this list of truly distinctive resources could become diluted with the inclusion of numerous other less significant assets or assets only tangentially related to the BRNHA authorizing legislation and mission. Bounding the inventory should also help the management plan better achieve its purpose as a decision making tool. As written, BRNHA decision makers can have confidence that when faced with difficult decisions over the next 10 years, they can reference the inventory and be reminded of what is important in the region and from the perspective of its congressional authorizing legislation.

The screening process is described in greater detail below and is graphically illustrated in Figure 3-1.

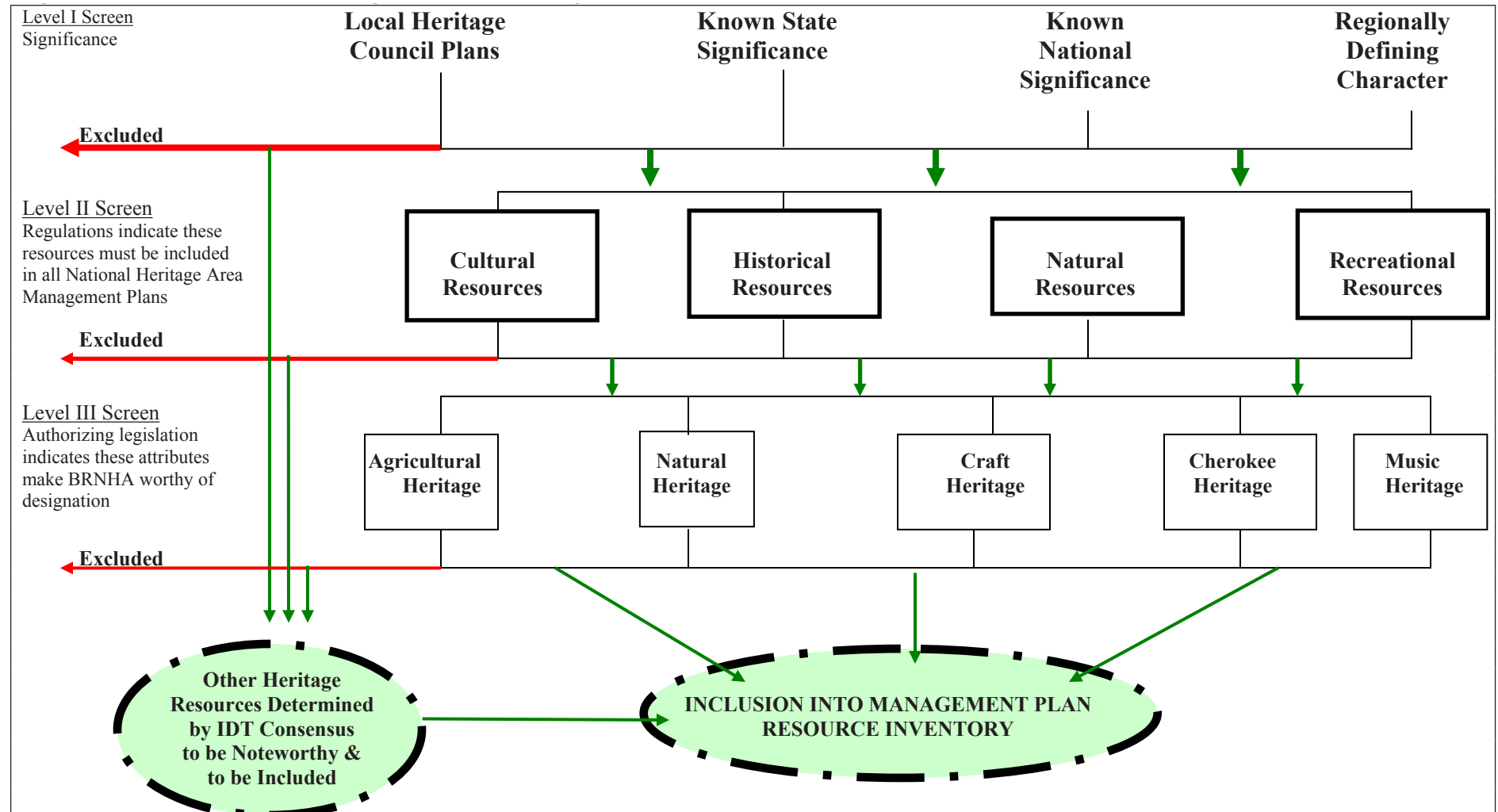
1. Level I Screen - Essentially any resource considered a 'heritage' resource by any number of wide definitions could be considered for inclusion into the heritage inventory. For a resource to pass through the Level I screen, it must have either already been documented in existing local heritage council plans, recognized as having national or state significance, or considered a regionally

defining element. The state and national recognition is fairly objective while some subjectivity is inherent with the regionally defining criterion. Professional judgment and feedback from IDT members and the BRNHA's heritage officers was used to finalize the list of regionally defining resources that should pass through the Level I screen.

2. Level II Screen - By regulation governing the construction of management plans for all National Heritage Areas, the resource inventory must include cultural, historical, natural, and recreational resources. Those resources passing through the Level I screen that do not fit these criteria were excluded from further consideration. However, in such a large region as the BRNHA, applying this rule without any further screening criteria would result in an enormous, unmanageable inventory that may have little meaning due to its inability to distinguish what is significant. Therefore, a third screening level was employed.
3. Level III Screen - The authorizing legislation established five core themes around which the BRNHA was to be organized. These include natural, Cherokee, craft, music, and agricultural heritage. A resource that has passed through the first two screens was eliminated at this stage if no direct relationship with a heritage theme could be established.

There were a few heritage resources screened at one of the different levels that the IDT and public input made clear should be included in the inventory. These include Scots-Irish heritage, major military campaigns and expeditions into the region, railroads, tourism, and Daniel Boone. Each of these not only have intrinsic historical value, but they also have a direct association with at least one of the heritage themes.

Figure 3-1:
Illustration of the Heritage Resource Screening Process



IMPORTANT NOTE - The Heritage Resource Inventory has been conducted at one specific point in time (Spring - Fall 2007). Some resources not included in this inventory may qualify for future listings as time passes and they grow in historic value or as society's priorities shift. Additionally, some resources not yet identified or of slight significance will become known and grow in significance as time progresses.

NATURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

The BRNHA hosts extraordinary natural treasures that distinguish it at the state, regional, and national level. Among many other things, the BRNHA contains:

- The two most visited units of the National Park System (the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway)
- The highest peak east of the Mississippi River (Mount Mitchell)
- The deepest gorge east of the Mississippi River (Linville Gorge)
- One of the oldest rivers in North America (New River)
- The highest waterfall east of the Rocky Mountains (Whitewater Falls)
- The Southeast's most popular whitewater river (Nantahala River)
- The world's only privately owned International Biosphere Preserve (Grandfather Mountain)
- The Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest, part of the 17,394 acre Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness, which contains one of the most notable tracts of virgin timber in the Appalachian mountain range
- Approximately 300 miles of the Appalachian Trail, which runs 2,175 miles from Georgia to Maine
- Roan Mountain, which boasts the world's largest natural Catawba rhododendron garden
- The Cradle of Forestry, the first forestry school in America
- Chimney Rock Park, home to 404-foot Hickory Nut Falls and its "hanging valley" microclimate

Appendix 1-A lists these and numerous other natural heritage assets by location within the BRNHA. Descriptions of some of the more prominent assets are described in greater detail below.

Geological Features

It is impossible to describe the BRNHA region without first discussing the underlying geological formations that have nourished the other heritage assets. The natural heritage depends on the habitats that are created first by the soils and minerals from underlying parent geology. Traditional mountain music and handcrafting skills of the Cherokee and European settlers are rooted in the self reliance that was required for basic survival in these rugged, isolated hills. These cultural traditions remained intact for so long and are still viable to this day because the Blue Ridge Mountain range - often referred to as the blue wall - essentially kept 'mountain people' separated from the rest of United States until the last few generations. It is the geologically diverse mountain terrain that also figures foremost in the rich and unique agricultural heritage of these mountains. Few places can boast of their land's ability to grow such diverse crops as apples, Christmas trees, burley tobacco, and grapes.

When one travels to the Western North Carolina mountains from the east, the Blue Ridge escarpment looms into view, giving the region its name. Grandfather Mountain is one of the highest prominent peaks on the escarpment and can be seen from many of the piedmont counties in NC that are adjacent to the BRNHA. In similar fashion, Pilot Mountain and Stone Mountain, while not as high, are also regionally prominent especially to those in



Grandfather Mountain

Surry, Allegheny, and Wilkes counties. Chimney Rock is not as widely visible, but is a distinctive geological feature on the escarpment to those in Rutherford County. Deeper into the southwestern portion of the BRNHA, some of the more prominent geological outcroppings include Looking Glass Rock, Shining Rock, Devil's Courthouse, and Whiteside Mountain - the highest vertical drop east of the Mississippi River. Some of these geological features can be seen from over 100 miles away. Additionally, there are 55 mountain peaks over 6,000 feet in elevation above mean sea level. Most of these are located within the Black, Balsam, and Great Smoky Mountain Ranges. Prominent geological features and their location within the BRNHA are listed in Appendix 1-A and are illustrated in Map 1.

Rivers, Streams, and Lakes

Water has historically been and is continuing to this day as a dominant force in the BRNHA. The mountain peaks of the BRNHA form the headwaters of nine river basins - four of which flow to the Atlantic Ocean and five of which flow to the Gulf of Mexico via the Tennessee, Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. While it would not be accurate to say that they are all pristine, the region does boast more streams of higher purity than anywhere else in North Carolina - due in part to the largely forested mountain landscape from which they spring. Fishing enthusiasts, boaters, whitewater rafters, and sightseers of all kinds can find most any recreational need met by the water resources of the BRNHA.



Rocky Broad River

Major Rivers & Tributaries

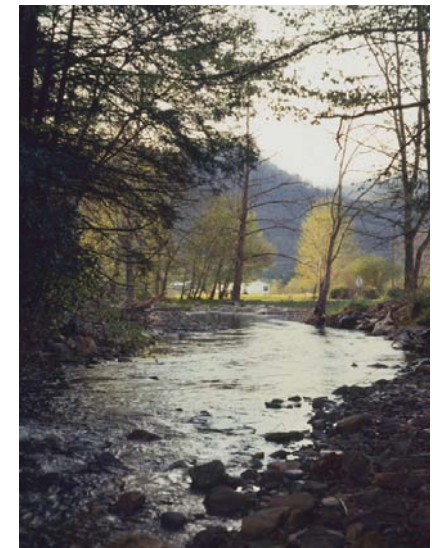
Appendix 1-A lists some of the more prominent rivers and streams in the BRNHA in terms of size and drainage area. Their locations are illustrated in Map 2. Neither the list nor the map is an exhaustive

compilation of all stream and river resources in the region. A more complete hydrological accounting of water resources and their classification can be found from the NC Division of Water Quality (<http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/bims/reports/reportsWB.html>). There are some rivers and streams within the region that are of particular distinction, including its outstanding resource waters (ORW), wild and scenic rivers, and trout waters.

Outstanding Resource Waters

The heritage inventory has identified 27 watersheds containing over 500 individual streams or river bodies that have received the outstanding resource water designation by the State of North Carolina (Appendix 1-A). This is a supplemental classification intended to protect unique and special waters having excellent water quality and being of exceptional state or national ecological or recreational significance. To qualify, waters must be rated *Excellent* by the North Carolina Division of Water Quality *and* have one of the following outstanding resource values:

- Outstanding fish habitat or fisheries;
- Unusually high level of water-based recreation;
- Some special designation such as NC or National Wild/Scenic/Natural/Recreational River, National Wildlife Refuge, etc.;
- Important component of state or national park or forest; or
- Special ecological or scientific significance (rare or endangered species habitat, research or educational areas).



Dillingham Creek

Streams with exceptionally high quality water are not mere isolated occurrences within the BRNHA. ORW rivers and streams are located on the Qualla Boundary and in 18 of the 25 counties that comprise the BRNHA. These locations are depicted in Map 3.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Five rivers have received either a state or national scenic or wild designation, or a combination of these classifications (Appendix 1-A). Those include 26.5 miles of the South Fork New and New River in Ashe and Allegheny Counties; 4.2 miles of the Horsepasture River in Transylvania County; 10 miles of the Chatooga River in Jackson and Macon Counties; 13 miles of the Linville River in Burke County; and 7.5 miles of Wilson Creek in Caldwell County. Of these, Wilson Creek and the New River are also outstanding resource waters. The New River is also believed to be one of the oldest rivers in North America (<http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/visit/neri/home.html>). Natural, wild, and scenic rivers are depicted in Map 3.

Trout Waters

There are over 300 wild or hatchery supported trout streams in the BRNHA (NCWRC). Streams that support trout populations generally possess higher quality water and habitat. Even more so than ORW, trout waters are ubiquitous across the BRNHA. Only one county - Yadkin - is lacking any trout water within its boundary. A list of trout streams is located in Appendix 1-A. Map 3 also shows the locations of the hatchery supported and wild trout streams in the region.



Price Lake

Lakes

The rugged terrain conducive to wild and scenic river status and trout habitat has also historically held appeal for hydroelectric power generation. As a result, the area now boasts over a dozen lakes that were constructed primarily

for energy production but that also provide numerous recreational opportunities. Thirteen of the larger lakes in the region are shown in Map 2. These and other smaller, but still prominent lakes are listed in Appendix 1-A.

Waterfalls

There are numerous guidebooks and photo albums of the waterfalls of Western North Carolina. Waterfalls are a distinguishing natural heritage feature of the region. An incomplete list of some of the more prominent waterfalls is located in Appendix 1-A. The waterfalls are not mapped in this plan.

National and State Parks and Forest Lands

National Parks

Five units of the national park system are located in the BRNHA - the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Park), the Blue Ridge Parkway (Parkway), the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (AT), the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT), and the Carl Sandburg National Historic Site. The locations of the Park and Parkway are illustrated in Map 4. The locations of the AT and OVNHT are illustrated in Map 8. The Carl Sandburg home is not mapped but is located in the Village of Flat Rock in Henderson County. These park units are discussed further below and also listed in Appendix 1-A under the Qualla Boundary and those counties in which they are located. In addition, some



Linn Cove Viaduct on Blue Ridge Parkway

discussion is given to the NPS' Trail of Tears National Historic Park, though national park unit status has not yet been granted to affected counties in North Carolina.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park forms the southwestern anchor of the BRNHA. The Park covers a total 521,085 acres, and of that, 276,343.88 acres are in North Carolina - within Graham, Swain, and Haywood Counties and the Qualla Boundary. The Park received more than 9 million recreational visits in 2006, which is the highest visitation of any of the 57 national parks. The economic impact on surrounding communities from these tourists is estimated at over \$1 billion a year. Almost all of the estimated 2,115 miles of stream are home to wild or hatchery supported trout and are considered ORW. There are over 800 miles of trails within the park, including 70 miles of the Appalachian Trail. There are more than 100 backcountry campsites located along these trails. In addition, the Park maintains 1,000 campsites scattered in 10 different campgrounds.

Blue Ridge Parkway

The North Carolina portion of the Parkway occupies 46,580 acres of land in the western part of the state, touching or traversing 16 of the 24 BRNHA counties and the Qualla Boundary. With 252 miles of roadway within the state, including 11 miles within the Qualla Boundary, the Parkway has more than 560 miles of boundary within the BRNHA. It includes portions of six river basins and borders two national forests and two state parks. Hundreds of road and utility crossings bisect natural features. Like beads on a necklace,



Blue Ridge Parkway near Water Rock Knob

innumerable vistas, 134 paved overlooks, four developed camping areas, more than two dozen recreational areas and 11 maintenance facilities line the Parkway to accommodate visitors. With annual use approaching 20,000,000 people, it is the most highly visited unit in the National Park System.

Parkway natural resources include 400 miles of streams with at least 150 headwaters, 1,250 vascular plants species (50 rare or endangered), six rare or endangered animals, a variety of slopes (mostly steep) and exposures, an elevation range of over 4,000 vertical feet, and 100 exotic plants. The Parkway also bisects 47 natural heritage areas, which includes more than half of the high-elevation wetlands known in North Carolina.

Appalachian National Scenic Trail

The AT footpath traverses nine of the BRNHA counties for 292 miles of its 2,175 mile span across eastern North America. The AT passes 66 significant natural heritage areas and crosses at least 201 major perennial streams as it winds through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. There are 32 trail shelters and over 96 designated campsites. Approximately 1,200 thru-hikers on their way from Georgia to Maine (or the reverse) pass through the BRNHA each year. An untold number of people use the AT recreationally on weekends and day hikes. The AT is unique among public lands in that it is managed under a cooperative agreement system involving the NPS, non-profit Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), volunteers from local trail maintaining clubs, the USDA Forest Service, and other public land managing agencies. Over 1,000 volunteers contributed roughly 27,000 hours to Trail related activities in 2006 in just that section of the AT that passes through North Carolina and Tennessee (personal communication, Julie Judkins, ATC). In Appendix 1-A, the AT is listed under each county in which it is located.

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail

The OVNHT commemorates the heroic efforts of the 'overmountain men' of east Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and Western North Carolina to assemble, march, skirmish, and finally do battle with the British occupiers led by Major Patrick Ferguson at the Battle of Kings Mountain. This was a decisive campaign in the American Revolution and played a critical part in turning the tide in the colonists' favor. Of the 330 total miles of the historical route, 220 miles traverse nine counties of the region and many historic sites are located along that route. The OVNHT is administered by the NPS, which has developed various partnerships along the route to assist

in the construction, preservation and interpretation of the trail and its resources. Each year, the Overmountain Victory Trail Association performs a re-enactment of the march along the route and educates the public of this historic event. The OVNHT and known associated sites are listed in Appendix 1-E and are depicted in Map 19.

Carl Sandburg National Historic Site

Carl Sandburg is a Pulitzer prize winning, former Poet Laureate of the United States who lived most of his adult life in Flat Rock, North Carolina. His home and farm, called Connemara, have been preserved by the NPS and is open to the public for tours and visitation. Being unique among heritage resources, it is not mapped nor listed in the Appendix of this plan.

Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

The NPS is currently engaged in a feasibility study to extend routes into North Carolina from the existing Trail of Tears National Historic Trail located in Tennessee, Alabama, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. While the region figured prominently in this historic event, there is currently no NPS designated park unit in North Carolina. The counties historically affected by the Trail of Tears have been identified in Appendix 1-B and 1-E. Those counties and historical sites associated with the Trail of Tears are illustrated in Map 19.

National Forests

Two national forests are located in the BRNHA - the Nantahala National Forest (NNF) and the Pisgah National Forest (PNF). Together, they occupy portions of 19 counties. They abut and buffer all of the NPS park units except the Sandburg Home, providing a vast, contiguous expanse of open space and wildlife habitat. These forests are a significant defining element of the BRNHA. These forests and their location within the BRNHA can be seen in Map 4 and in Appendix 1-A.

Nantahala National Forest

There are 525,507 acres of Nantahala National Forest located within eight counties of the BRNHA. The NNF is divided into three ranger districts - the Nantahala, Cheoah, and Tusquitee. There are 17 day use recreation areas. Two of those also offer overnight camping.

There are an additional 18 public campgrounds on NNF lands. Both the Southern Nantahala and the Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock National Wilderness Areas are located in the NNF. There are five recognized backcountry areas within the NNF where hundreds of miles of trails pass through relatively pristine areas with limited evidence of silviculture or other resource extraction.

Pisgah National Forest

There are 519,036 acres of Pisgah National Forest located within 11 counties. The PNF is divided into three ranger districts - the Appalachian, Pisgah, and Grandfather. There are 12 day use recreation areas located within the PNF. Five of those areas also offer overnight camping. There are six additional campgrounds on PNF lands. The Linville Gorge and Shining Rock/Middle Prong National Wilderness Areas are both located in the PNF. There are five recognized backcountry areas within the PNF where hundreds of miles of trails pass through relatively pristine areas with limited evidence of silviculture or other resource extraction.



Pisgah National Forest

State Parks, Forests, and Natural Areas

There are eight state parks, four state forests, and four state natural areas located within the BRNHA. Combined, they total over 68,000 acres. Eleven counties in the region are affected by these public lands. These state owned or managed properties are listed in Appendix I-A and depicted on Map 4.

State Parks

There are over 52,000 acres represented in the NC state park system within the BRNHA. The state park system in Western North Carolina includes Gorges, Lake James, Mount Mitchell, New River, Pilot Mountain, South Mountains, Stone Mountain, and the recently created Chimney Rock State Parks. Each is noteworthy in its own way, and additional information can be obtained from the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation (<http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/ncparks.html>), which is responsible for their management. Several of them possess some significant attributes that without question help to define the BRNHA region.

Gorges State Park in Transylvania County is located on the Blue Ridge escarpment and contains an extraordinary series of rivers and waterfalls, including the National Wild and Scenic Horsepasture River. The park receives 80 inches of rain per year on average. The rugged terrain drops 2,000 feet in elevation within only four miles. The geology, rainfall, and relatively undisturbed isolation of the area combine to host a nationally prominent concentration of rare, threatened, and endangered species.

The New River State Park in Allegheny and Ashe Counties is located on the New National Wild and Scenic River. Not only is this considered by some to be the oldest river in North America, it features a nationally renowned smallmouth bass fishery. The state park land and the river that it surrounds are home to over a dozen rare plants and animals and high quality rich cove forest. The pastoral scenery viewed from the New River is a rich example of Western North Carolina's agricultural heritage.

Mount Mitchell State Park in Yancey County is home to the highest mountain peak in eastern North America and is also an international

biosphere reserve. The peak and surrounding mountains host remnant spruce-fir forest communities and an alpine environment more typical of northern New England. This environment is also critical habitat for the federally listed spruce fir moss spider. Mount Mitchell has become a symbol to many in North Carolina and the world over of the detrimental impacts on high elevation forests of air pollution and invasive exotic species.

State Forests

There are approximately 13,500 acres of state forest within the BRNHA. More information about these forests can be obtained from the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources (<http://www.dfr.state.nc.us/>), which is responsible for their management. Three of the state forests - Holmes, Tuttle, and Rendezvous Mountain - are managed for educational purposes designed to teach the public, especially school children, about the forest environment. Dupont State Forest is used for hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. Dupont State Forest surrounds several spectacular waterfalls, some of which became nationally famous in the film 'Last of the Mohicans' (<http://www.ncwaterfalls.com/dupont1.htm>).

State Natural Areas

There are four state natural areas in the region managed by the NC Division of Parks and Recreation. These are located in the northwestern portion of the BRNHA. Each hosts significant habitats. Their locations are shown in Map 4 and they are listed in Appendix 1-A.



Old Growth

Other Prominent Protected Lands

Local governments and the regional land trust community have been instrumental in protecting through easement or purchase other important natural and open space areas in the region. These are too numerous to mention in this document. Additionally, there are many private landowners who do not want the existence or location of their protected properties widely publicized. Therefore, these are not mapped nor are they listed in the Appendix. However, a few key tracts where there are no privacy concerns do warrant discussion due to their size and contribution to the region's quality natural resource base.

Several watershed scale preservation projects bear particular mention. They include the Bee Tree, Montreat, and Woodfin Watersheds in Buncombe County; Brackens Creek Watershed in Transylvania County; and Rough Creek and Waynesville Watersheds in Haywood County. Most of these tracts have been preserved in order to maintain high quality water, but public recreational activities are also allowed in some cases. Most of these tracts border public land or other protected private lands, providing valuable ecological and scenic connectivity.



Vasey's trillium

Significant Natural Areas, Critical Habitats, and Rare Species

Significant Natural Areas

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program has catalogued close to 300 significant natural areas in 13 counties of the BRNHA. This number will increase substantially when the program completes its inventories for

the remaining 12 counties. Wetlands and bogs, aquatic habitats, and fine examples of natural woodland, cliff, and meadow communities - many of them rare - are all well represented in the region. Significant natural areas are listed in Appendix 1-A and are shown in Map 5. The map does not associate names of these areas with their location in a particular county. The map is intended to merely illustrate how distinctive the BRNHA region is in terms of sheer numbers and widespread dispersion of significant natural areas.

Critical Habitats and Plants and Animals of Conservation Significance

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has identified and designated critical habitat in 11 counties for at least one of three federally endangered species that occupy the region (spruce-fir moss spider, Appalachian elktoe freshwater mussel, and the spotfin chub). While critical habitat has been designated for those three species, there are 15 other endangered species that have yet to receive that designation. Additionally, dozens more plants and animals are considered threatened or are labeled federal species of concern. The concentration of this number of rare, threatened and endangered species makes the Western North Carolina region truly distinctive. An approximate location of federally listed endangered, threatened, and species of concern are shown in Map 6 and they are listed in Appendix 1-A.

Public Hunting and Fishing Opportunities

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission manages almost 20 state gamelands in the region in addition to the Pisgah and Nantahala national forests, which it manages for public hunting through a cooperative effort with the National Forests in North Carolina. Public hunting opportunities through the gamelands program are available in every county except for Yadkin and on the Qualla Boundary. Many private landowners also allow hunting on their properties, but due to privacy concerns, they are not included in this inventory. Gamelands are listed in Appendix 1-A and are depicted on Map 7.



Canoeing on Price Lake

The public can fish essentially in every navigable river and stream in Western North Carolina and in any water body on the national forests. Rivers, streams, and lakes have been discussed earlier in this document. A list of public fishing access areas and community fishing programs managed by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission is located in Appendix 1-A. The list includes three other sites on the Qualla Boundary managed by the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians. The public fishing access areas are shown on Map 7.

Trail Assets

There are literally thousands of miles of recreational trails in the region - including hiking, biking, horseback riding, boating, and multi-use trails. It would be impractical to document them all in this management plan. A list of select trails is compiled in Appendix 1-A. The NPS' Appalachian National Scenic Trail and North Carolina's own Mountains to Sea Trail are perhaps two of the most prominent hiking trails in the region. The Bent Creek/Mills River complex and

Tsali area in the Pisgah and Nantahala national forests both contain world renowned mountain biking trails. The region is also unique in that it hosts four officially recognized paddle trails. Map 8 shows the location of these trails and other trail networks throughout the national forests and national park units. It is possible that the BRNHA contains more trail assets per square mile than any other region in the nation.

Scenic Attributes

The agrarian and wild forested scenery of the region is outstanding. This is one of the primary reasons that Congress chose Western North Carolina as the route for the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Western North Carolina landscape figures prominently also in the views from the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. While these pathways are nationally significant, there are other scenic byways located throughout the region that also exhibit the region's natural, Cherokee, agricultural, music, and craft heritage. The NC Department of Transportation has officially designated 21 state scenic by-ways in the region (http://www.ncdot.org/doh/Operations/dp_chief_eng/roadside/scenic/



Scenic view from Wayah Bald

pdf/sb.pdf). In addition, the Blue Ridge Parkway is a nationally renowned scenic byway that attracts millions of visitors from outside of the region every year. Every county in the BRNHA and the Qualla Boundary are touched by at least one scenic drive. Scenic byways are listed in Appendix 1-A. They are depicted in Map 9. In addition to scenic byways for vehicular travel, there are also four paddle trails and three scenic bicycle routes that feature outstanding scenery. These are shown in Map 8.

CHEROKEE HERITAGE RESOURCES

The Cherokee, unlike most other people living in the Southern Appalachians, believe they have always been here. Their myths and legends mention Pilot Knob in the Shining Rock Wilderness near the Blue Ridge Parkway as the home of Kanati and Selu, the first man and woman, and they refer to the Kituwah mound site near Bryson City as the location of the mother town of the Cherokee people.



Cherokee Sequoyah Statue

Even to outsiders, it is clear that members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians are descendants of people who have been in the region for a very long time. The archaeological record reveals a period of human habitation in the Southern Appalachians dating back more than 11,000 years. According to linguists, the Cherokee language, part of the Iroquoian language family, evolved as a separate language by at least 1500 B.C., and by 1000 A.D. a distinctively Cherokee way of life had emerged. By that point, Cherokee people had established cultural patterns that continue to influence their communities: permanent villages, cornfields

and gardens, dances, games, ceremonies, the sacred fire, council houses, social organization based on the clan system, and a well-developed system of beliefs and practices.

Europeans entered the outskirts of their territory as early as 1540 when Hernando de Soto's expedition passed through. By the 18th century, increasing contact between Europeans and the Cherokees had given rise to extensive trade and cultural exchange, but had also resulted in the decimation of the Cherokee population by smallpox epidemics, the destruction of many of their towns by military campaigns, and the loss of much of their ancestral territory through treaties.

Between 1759 and 1839 - a period historians refer to as the Cherokee Renaissance - the Cherokees made a remarkable recovery from defeat and devastation. They became a civilization with written language, schools, churches, farms, business enterprises, a written constitution, representative government, and a bilingual newspaper. However, none of those accomplishments protected them from removal. In 1838, federal and state militia began moving most of the Cherokee nation to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. Only about 1,000 managed to avoid removal and remained in North Carolina: those who had successfully applied for citizenship, and others who hid in the mountains. A few others escaped from the Trail of Tears or walked back to the mountains from Oklahoma.

Today, approximately 10,000 members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians live on the Qualla Boundary, where they maintain their rich cultural traditions and greatly contribute to the identity of the BRNHA region.

Prominent Cherokee People

Crafters and Musicians

Traditional Cherokee craft, music, and song are still practiced in the BRNHA. Over 55 individual artists and musicians and five groups practicing those crafts have been identified on the Qualla Boundary and in different counties by the Museum of the Cherokee Indian. Some



NC Heritage Award Recipient, Jerry Wolfe

artists are also listed as musicians and vice versa. The handcrafters and musicians are listed in Appendix 1-C (Craft Heritage Theme resources) and 1-D (Music Heritage Theme resources) with other handcrafters and musicians throughout the region. Codes are applied to the list to illustrate the dominant craft(s) practiced by those artists and musicians. Their numbers per county in which they reside are depicted in Map 12 and Map 14. They are important resources because they perpetuate traditional dance and

song, music, and storytelling. Traditional techniques are still applied in their art. It is through the elders and younger generation, such as those identified in this inventory, that traditional Cherokee craft will continue into the future.

Historically Prominent Leaders

History has marked the achievements of several Cherokee individuals as significant to the national story. Three exceptional leaders who are ancestors of the modern Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation are noted here. Through the efforts of Yonaguska, several families of Ocunaluftee Citizen Indians were successful in their attempts to remain on their lands during the forced relocations of the 1830's. In the War of 1812, Junaluska was credited with saving Andrew Jackson's life only to see his protests about the forced relocation policies of the national government refused years later by the President. Junaluska eventually acquiesced and traveled the Trail of Tears to Oklahoma. Eventually, he walked back to his native born lands and remained here until his death. Several places in the region are named after Junaluska and his gravesite is marked with a memorial and museum in Graham County. Tsali was born and lived in the Nantahala area and was noted for his resistance to the forced relocation of the Cherokee. Tsali eventually agreed to capture and execution - a sacrifice that

enabled his people to stay on their historic lands. A number of sites in the BRNHA bear the Tsali name. A listing and map of historically prominent leaders is beyond the scope of this inventory.

Publicly Accessible Cherokee Sites

Because the Cherokee historically inhabited large portions of Western North Carolina, eastern Tennessee, north Georgia, and upstate South Carolina, significant Cherokee heritage sites are not just confined to the Qualla Boundary. They are located throughout many counties in the region, with a notable concentration in the far southwestern corner of the BRNHA. The locations of publicly accessible Cherokee heritage sites are depicted in Map 10 and are listed in Appendix 1-B.

Towns or Villages

Over 50 historic Cherokee towns or villages are located within the region. Settlements typically were established along the banks of the major rivers near the confluence with key tributaries. The 'Middle Towns' located in what is now Macon County were located largely in the Little Tennessee River watershed. The 'Valley Towns' located in what is now Clay and Cherokee Counties were located largely in the Hiwassee River drainage. The 'Out Towns' were located in Jackson County and in the current Qualla Boundary along the Tuckesegee River and key tributaries. Often, mounds were associated with these towns or villages. Some of the more prominent mounds in the area include the Nikwasi Mound in Franklin on the banks of the Little Tennessee River; the Cowee Mound downstream on the Little Tennessee River; and the Peachtree and Spikebuck Mounds located on the banks of the Hiwassee River. Kituwah, located on the banks of the Tuckesegee River, is acknowledged by the Cherokee of today as the first Cherokee village. According to legend, the Kituwah Mound is the center of the Cherokee world and their place of origin.

Geological Sites of Cultural Importance

The geology and natural features of the region are closely associated with Cherokee belief systems. Many geological features already discussed under the natural heritage resource theme also hold special significance to the Cherokee - both from a geological and a historical perspective. The inventory has documented at least 35 important geological features in the region. The exposed rock dome of Whiteside Mountain on the lower Blue Ridge escarpment in Jackson County was the home of Spearfinger, a dreaded monster in Cherokee lore. Devil's Courthouse is otherwise known to the Cherokee as the dance hall of the giant Judaculla. Clingman's Dome was known to the Cherokee as the Mulberry Place, a place where bears gathered to dance before retiring for winter hibernation. Shining Rock was notable as the home of the first man and woman. Waterrock Knob, Wayah Bald, and Chimney Rock are but three of numerous other geologically prominent sites that figure significantly in Cherokee heritage.

Historical Sites of Cultural Importance

The Rutherford Trace and the Trail of Tears are but two unfortunate historical campaigns undertaken by the American government designed to exterminate or remove the Cherokee people and their culture from the southern Appalachians. Each of these events has left its mark on the landscape and the Cherokee people themselves. Historical sites associated with these events are listed in Appendix 1-B. The routes of the Rutherford Trace and counties most prominently affected by the Trail of Tears, and important sites associated with those events, are depicted in Map 19.

Rutherford Trace

The Rutherford Trace was an expedition initiated in 1776 during the American Revolution and undertaken by General Griffith Rutherford to punish the Cherokee for their alliance with the British government and their attacks on colonial settlements in this frontier region. Rutherford's forces killed many men, women, and children during their destruction of at least 36 Cherokee towns and villages and their fields and livestock. Historical markers along many state highways in the BRNHA document and remind us of this event. Rutherford's

Trace passed through each of present day Rutherford, McDowell, Buncombe, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Clay, Cherokee, Graham, and Swain Counties and the Qualla Boundary.

Trail of Tears

President Andrew Jackson's forced relocation to Oklahoma in 1838 of roughly 16,000 Cherokee people from present day Western North Carolina, east Tennessee, and north Georgia has come to be known nationwide as the 'Cherokee Trail of Tears'. A large portion of present day Macon, Jackson, Swain, Clay, Cherokee, and Graham Counties and the Qualla Boundary were affected by this event. Five forts established in the region to control the Indian population were used to facilitate this forced relocation along the old Unicoi Turnpike (now the Joe Brown Highway). Those included Fort Hembree (Clay County), Fort Butler and Fort Delaney (Cherokee County), Fort Montgomery (Graham County), and Fort Lindsay (Swain County). While the sites of these forts are known and some artifacts have been collected from them, none of these forts exist at this time. The NPS has partnered with multiple federal, state, and local interests to designate and administer a Trail of Tears National Historic Trail though it has yet to include affected portions of Western North Carolina. Currently the trail consists of 2,200 miles of land and water routes across portions of nine states.

Museums and Institutions

Twelve different museums or institutions exist within the BRNHA that house significant collections of artifacts and other memorabilia and tell the story of the Cherokee people. These sites are shown in Map 10.

Cherokee Heritage Events

Due to the deep and abiding presence of the Cherokee people and their influence on Western North Carolina, literally dozens of festivals held each year in the BRNHA region have some element of Cherokee culture represented. Thirteen annual events or festivals have been identified in this inventory that devote the majority of effort to



SE Tribes Fest

the celebration of Cherokee culture and history and serve to perpetuate Cherokee traditions. The locations of these events are illustrated with other regional heritage festivals and events in Map 15 and are listed in Appendix 1-B. Events range from

the theatrical production 'Unto these Hills' (an outdoor drama held on the Qualla Boundary) to day long events such as the Fading Voices Festival (Graham County) dedicated to traditional Cherokee food, music, crafts, and stick ball games. There are other more general heritage festivals that occur throughout the region where Cherokee heritage may also be featured. These are identified in Appendix 1-F and are also included in Map 15.

CRAFT HERITAGE RESOURCES

The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area is home to over 4,000 craftspeople, both full-time professionals and second-income producers, who contribute \$122 million annually to the region's economy.



Weavers

This concentration of craftspeople is the third largest in the United States, surpassed only by the New York/Hudson River Valley and the San Francisco Bay area. Both the traditional craft movement (1800's - early 1900's) and the contemporary craft movement (1930's - 1950's)

originated here. The region hosts two world renowned craft schools, the Penland School and the John C. Campbell Folk School. Other longstanding and nationally known craft institutions in the region include the Southern Highlands Craft Guild and Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual, as well as numerous small local guilds for weavers, spinners, quilters, and others. The area is also home to HandMade In America, a nonprofit corporation established in 1995 to implement sustainable economic and community development based on the heritage of the handmade industry in the region. It is recognized as one of the premier crafts organizations in the country.

Important People to Handcrafting Heritage

This inventory has identified close to 100 well recognized handcrafters living and practicing their craft in the region though there are literally thousands more that are not documented in this plan. The Qualla Boundary and 22 of the 25 counties are well represented by the population of handcrafters. Of those, three have received a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. These awards are given only to those exceptional traditional artisans on a one time basis "to honor and preserve our nation's diverse cultural heritage". The fellowship award winners include blacksmith Bea Hensley (Mitchell County); weaver Bertha Cook (Watauga County); and instrument maker Stanley Hicks (Watauga County). Thirteen handcrafters have won a North Carolina Heritage Award from the North Carolina Arts Council. Instrument makers, weavers, and potters comprise the vast majority of handcrafters listed. These award winners and numerous other handcrafters are listed in Appendix 1-C and depicted in Map 11.



Penland potter

Handcrafting Sites & Institutions

Two of the nation's most venerable craft schools are located in the region. The John C. Campbell Folk School, located near Brasstown in Clay County, was established in 1925 and offers weekend and weeklong classes year-round in traditional arts and crafts. The Penland School, near Spruce Pine in Mitchell County, was established in 1923 and is a national center for education in contemporary and traditional craft. It offers one-week and two-week classes in the summer and eight-week sessions in the spring and fall. Other longstanding and nationally known craft institutions in the region include the Southern Highlands Craft Guild (established 1930) and Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual (established 1946), as well as numerous small local guilds for weavers, spinners, quilters, and others. In addition to those noted above, this inventory has identified nineteen schools or learning institutions spread over 12 of the BRNHA counties where handcrafting traditions are perpetuated. These are listed in Appendix 1-C and are depicted in Map 12.

The inventory has also identified over 60 other sites where handcrafts or objects created using traditional handcrafting methods are on display. These sites are listed in Appendix 1-C and also depicted in Map 12. These sites include public museums and historical society collections but do not include private venues where such objects may also be on display or made available for purchase.

HandMade In America is another craft institution in the region of particular note. It is neither a school nor a museum but a nonprofit corporation established in 1995 to implement sustainable economic and community development based on the heritage of the handmade industry in the region. It has become nationally recognized as one of the premier crafts organizations in the country. HandMade developed a twenty-year strategic plan with the goal of establishing Western North Carolina as the geographic center of the handmade object in the United States. It has brought an awareness of the importance of the arts and crafts to the economy of the BRNHA and has laid the foundation for a successful craft trail system throughout the area. HandMade's offices are in Buncombe County but its influence is felt throughout the entire region. It is not listed in the craft Appendix nor mapped in this plan.

Handcrafting Festivals and Events

This inventory has identified 23 festivals or events held on a regular basis throughout the region where handcrafting traditions are the heritage resource of focus. Many of these are events where artists can demonstrate their craft or sell their wares. Their locations are illustrated in Map 15 and they are listed in Appendix 1-C. The Qualla Boundary and 19 of the 25 counties each host at least one craft festival or fair every year. There are other more general heritage festivals that occur in the region where regional handcrafting heritage is likely to also be featured. These are identified in Appendix 1-F and are also included in Map 15.

MUSICAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

The BRNHA is home to music that has gained not only national but also international accolades. Distinctive styles of string band music, bluegrass, unaccompanied ballad singing, blues, and sacred music such as a capella lined-out hymn singing, shape note singing, and gospel music have flourished in the region over the past 200 years. Noted music historian Ralph Rinzler observed that "Western North Carolina has long been recognized as one of the richest repositories of folk song and lore in the Southeastern United States." (Citation)

The musical heritage of the region is a product of a blending of influences, primarily from Europe, the British Isles and Africa. Whatever the origins of the music were, it is clear that a remarkable number of American musical forms have roots in this place. Moreover, active practitioners of traditional music forms can still be found in almost every community in the region. The traditional fiddle and banjo duet still thrives here, much to the delight of audiences and dancers. The area is also showcases a particularly fine array of old-time string bands and bluegrass bands. There is no place in the world where traditional Appalachian music is more alive today than in the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

Important People to Music Heritage

This inventory has revealed over 200 traditional musicians or musical groups from the region that have had or continue to have a significant impact to the broadcast and perpetuation of traditional mountain music, dance, dance calling, and storytelling. Each county has at least one prominent person included in the inventory. The entire list is provided in Appendix 1-D. The National Endowment for the Arts has awarded prestigious National Heritage Fellowships to six people from the Blue Ridge Mountains, more than from any other region in the nation. The fellowship award winners include storyteller Ray Hicks (Avery County); singer Etta Baker (Burke County); musician Doug Wallin (Madison County); musician Tommy Jarrell (Surry County); musician Doc Watson (Watauga County); storyteller and musician Stanley Hicks (Watauga County); and dancer and singer Walker Calhoun (Qualla Boundary). Nineteen musicians and singers have won a North Carolina Heritage Award from the North Carolina Arts Council. While these award winners and numerous other musicians and singers are listed in Appendix 1-C and depicted in Map 14, there are certainly other artists practicing traditional Appalachian music that this inventory has not formally recognized.



Master fiddler Nick Hallman

Musical Institutions, Media, and Other Places

The resource inventory has identified 21 important institutions in the BRNHA that serve as repositories for and broadcasters of traditional Appalachian music. These are listed in Appendix 1-D and depicted in Map 13.

Music Festivals, Jam Sessions, and Other Events

On any given day there is always a festival or venue where traditional mountain music can be heard, from Asheville's long-running Mountain Dance and Folk Festival to



Young musicians performing at Burgiss Barn

North Wilkesboro's relatively new Merlefest, and literally hundreds of others. In fact, this inventory has identified close to 140 different jam sessions, music festivals and other events where traditional mountain music is the featured heritage resource on display. These events are spread ubiquitously across the Qualla Boundary and every county in the BRNHA. Jam sessions, music festivals, and other music events are listed in Appendix 1-D. The number of known jam sessions that can be experienced in each county are depicted in Map 13. Music festivals and events are depicted in Map 15. There are other more general heritage festivals that occur in the region where regional musical heritage is likely to also be featured. These are identified in Appendix 1-F and are also included in Map 15.

AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

The agricultural heritage of the region dates back to the Cherokee Indians, who farmed the fertile bottomlands along streams and rivers where the soil was enriched by periodic flooding. The men burned forested areas to open up small clearings and fertilize the soil. Women were the primary farmers, planting corn, beans and squash together in large mounds or hills of earth. This provided good drainage during wet months, simplified weeding and allowed uniform spacing of crops. In the late 1700's English, German, Scots-Irish, French, Welsh and African settlers adopted the agricultural practices of the Cherokees and introduced their cultural patterns of raising livestock for both food and trade.

The BRNHA is fortunate to still have 12,000 working farms in the region. Agriculture is not a thing of the past to be depicted in a museum - it is a living, breathing sector of Western North Carolina's culture. Today's farmers are exploring a combination of strategies including diversifying crops, preserving farmland, and increased marketing to the regional community. Vegetable crops, ornamentals, Christmas trees, mushroom and trout farming, viticulture, and medicinal herbs have become increasingly important parts of the diversification. The region contains the largest number of specialty crop farms in North Carolina. Farming for the region's future will be a cultural evolution, and the heritage of working the land in the region will continue.

Agricultural Commodities and Their General Growing Regions

Generally speaking, the main cash crops historically raised in the mountains of North Carolina have been burley tobacco, Christmas trees, and apples. The bottomlands of Buncombe, Madison, and Yancey counties are notable in their ability to produce fine quality burley tobacco. The alpine environment encountered on the high side slopes and mountain peaks of primarily Mitchell, Avery, Ashe, and Watauga counties are noteworthy as a fine place to grow America's favorite Christmas tree - the Frazier fir. And Henderson and Wilkes Counties have been leaders nationwide in apple production for decades. In all areas of the BRNHA, cattle have historically roamed the countryside



North Carolina Chardonnay Grapes

with wooden and barbed wire fences separating one family's cattle from another. Many a mountain farm family has earned a good living from the land raising cattle and trees, cattle and apples, or cattle and tobacco or a combination of them all.

Market forces and other external dynamics are placing pressures on the agricultural landscape. Ornamental horticultural crop production has fast assumed a dominant role in mountain agriculture. These crops have proven to be profitably grown in almost every county of the BRNHA but with a significant concentration in Henderson, McDowell, Burke, Caldwell, Yancey, and Avery counties. Grapes are proving to be an alternative crop, particularly in the Yadkin River basin in Allegheny, Surry, Wilkes, and Yadkin counties. Horse lovers long ago found an appreciation for the more gentle rolling grasslands of Polk and Rutherford Counties, but even more are fast discovering this asset.

Map 16 is intended to illustrate in a general manner the qualitative variations in agricultural heritage across the Western North Carolina landscape. These variations are not recorded in the agricultural Appendix.



Farmers Markets

Map 16 is also used to illustrate the location of farmers markets across the region. There is a list of these markets in Appendix 1-E. More information on these markets can be obtained from the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (<http://www.buyappalachian.org/tailgate.php>). Nearly each county in the region has a local tailgate market and some counties have multiple markets. Locally grown agricultural crops are emphasized. Perhaps the largest market is the Western NC Farmers Market managed by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Local produce, other crops, and value added products are sold but out of state sources may also be featured here.

Farming Communities

While soils, historic farms, and agricultural commodities are good indicators of the significant agricultural heritage of the region, it is the communities where each of these intersect that create the cultural vitality that is so valuable. These are the places in which many of the handcrafting and musical traditions were nurtured. A list of important agricultural communities that are indicative of the agricultural heritage of the BRNHA has been compiled in Appendix 1-E. Those deemed significant by farmland preservation groups or that are on the National Register of Historic Sites listing are depicted in Map 17. Within each county, voluntary agricultural preservation districts and a categorization of prime agricultural soils are illustrated on this map as well.

Historic and Century Farms

There are over 220 historic or Century Farms located within the BRNHA. 'Historic' farms are those which have received a National Register of historic sites designation. Any farmland owner who believes his or her farm to have historic merit can exercise the

initiative to pursue that designation. A farm can qualify for this designation pending review and approval by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. 'Century' Farms are those farms that have been owned and operated by the same family for 100 years or more (<http://www.ncagr.com/paffairs/century/history.htm>). Not all century farm owners have pursued the historic designation, though some of these farms likely have more historic value than some of the listed historic farms. Regardless, there is a long tradition of family farming in the region. These sites often contain some of the more valuable agricultural soils and are likely the location of other significant cultural and historic artifacts. Historic and Century Farms are listed in Appendix 1-E and are depicted in Map 18.

Agricultural Festivals

Twenty six festivals and other events were identified in the region where agriculture is the dominant heritage resource on display. The agricultural centered festivals are listed in Appendix 1-E and depicted in Map 15. There are other more general heritage festivals



Agricultural market

that occur in the region where regional agricultural heritage is likely to also be featured. These are identified in Appendix 1-F and are also included in Map 15.

OTHER IMPORTANT CULTURAL OR HISTORICAL INFLUENCES

Although the natural, Cherokee, craft, music, and agricultural themes were emphasized in the authorizing legislation, the history of the BRNHA is rich in many other ways. The following influences have been deemed by the IDT and BRNHA much too important to neglect in the heritage inventory. Each of these have had important direct influences on at least one of the heritage resource themes. Of these, only the military campaigns and expeditions are listed in Appendix 1-F. Military campaigns and expeditions are also depicted in Map 19.

Scottish Ancestry and Influence

Through a series of events set in motion by England's James I (ruled England 1603-1625, and ruled Scotland 1567-1625 as James VI), the Scots-Irish became the predominant European settlers in the mountains of North Carolina. Although legend has it that they chose to settle in this region because of its resemblance to the Scottish Highlands, the cession of Indian lands and subsequent opening of the trans-Appalachian frontier may have equally as likely fueled the migration of Scots-Irish into the mountain region during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Their culture would have a lasting influence on the region; indeed, many of their surnames are still frequently found on mailboxes and in telephone directories in the area. They and their mountain neighbors have long been characterized by a fierce independence and tenacity, especially when called to arms. This has been repeatedly demonstrated in our nation's history, from the Overmountain Victory Campaign of the Revolutionary War, through the Civil War, and to the present day.

Scots-Irish heritage elements have been included in all aspects of the heritage inventory and are listed in Appendices 1.A - 1.E according to the themes in which they fit. Three of the more prominent institutions and events in the region include the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, the Foothills Scottish Highland Games, and the Scottish Tartan museum. In Avery County, Grandfather Mountain is famous worldwide as the host for the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, a 51 year old tradition. In Henderson County, the Foothills Scottish Highland Games and Festival has been held annually for the last seven years. In Macon County, the Scottish Tartans Museum was created by the 45 year old Scottish Tartans Society to display and educate the public about Scottish dress and other aspects of the culture.



*Grandfather Mountain
Highland Games*

Military Campaigns

Since colonization, the Western North Carolina mountains and its people have experienced four distinct military campaigns - now marked or known as the Overmountain Victory Trail, Rutherford Trace, Trail of Tears, and Stoneman's Raid. The Overmountain Victory Trail was discussed previously under the NPS section of



Overmountain Victory Trail Association Member

the Natural Heritage resource theme. The Rutherford Trace and Trail of Tears were discussed previously under the Cherokee heritage theme. Stoneman's Raid is discussed below. The known routes and prominent historic sites associated with each of these events are illustrated in Map 19 and listed in Appendix 1-F.

Stoneman's Raid

In 1865 at the end of the Civil War, General George Stoneman and his 6,000 man army moved into Western North Carolina from Tennessee. The raid was conducted in the same spirit as Sherman's march through Georgia. The goal was to plunder and destroy towns, railroads, bridges, and other infrastructure and seize crops and livestock from the countryside to keep these assets from being used by remnant confederate forces. Stoneman's raid hit the Town of Boone in Watauga County first before moving into Wilkesboro in Wilkes County and then into Virginia. Six hundred miles later, Stoneman's army was near Asheville, NC in Buncombe County in April 1865 when General Joseph Johnston surrendered the last remaining confederate armies. All told, six counties in the BRNHA experienced this destructive action.

Railroads

The railroad at the turn of the 20th century had a very powerful impact on at least four of the five heritage themes at the focus of the BRNHA. The railroad brought tourists to the region seeking clean, healthy mountain air and spectacular scenery and recreational opportunities. These tourists fell in love with mountain handcrafts and music, which created a market place for these goods that are still in high demand today. The railroads also made it possible for entrepreneurs to ship agricultural and forest products to eastern markets. Railroad tracks were laid from the piedmont of North Carolina into the mountains through Caldwell, Burke, McDowell, Buncombe, and Henderson Counties. From here, several were extended through Madison, Avery, Haywood, Jackson, and Swain counties. The 'Saluda Grade' in Henderson County is one of the most important features in all of commercial railroading in the United



Tweetsie Railroad

States. The grade at Saluda is 4.7 percent, the steepest mainline route in the United States until it closed in 2001. Normally a 2 percent grade is considered steep. In 1995, "Trains Magazine" listed the Saluda Grade as one of the 10 most sacred spots (for railroading) in America.

Almost every county in the BRNHA has an historic depot that is an historic and architectural artifact of this important historical trend. Many could possibly qualify for a national historic listing. Many of the local heritage councils have identified the railroad depots in their towns as important heritage resources. Some are restoring them and using them as centers of economic re-development. Tweetsie and the Great Smoky Mountains Railway are two private ventures that celebrate the 'narrow gauge' railroading history. Tweetsie is currently located outside of Boone, NC in Watauga County. It originally traveled river bottoms and narrow mountain passes along the East Tennessee and Western NC Railway route through Watauga and Avery Counties. The Great Smoky Mountain Railway courses through Jackson and Swain Counties through the Nantahala River gorge. Both are important drivers of tourism in the region today.

Tourism

The same natural landscape which protected the Cherokee and stole the hearts of the Scots-Irish coaxed many 19th-and early 20th-century visitors into the region for inspiration, health and spiritual renewal. Two famous visitors who built their homes here include America's poet laureate Carl Sandburg who built his modest farm Connemara and George Vanderbilt who built the extraordinary Biltmore Estate - the largest private home in the United States. Others built sanitariums for sufferers of tuberculosis and other respiratory problems. This interest in wellness and inner revitalization became an important component in the strong present-day tourism economy of the region. A 2005 study conducted by the BRNHA determined that there are currently over 1,300 tourism industry firms in the Heritage Area, generating tens of thousands of jobs and having a combined primary and secondary economic impact of over \$2.8 billion annually (Evans et al, 2006 and 2007).



Tourist shopping at the Grove Arcade in downtown Asheville

Daniel Boone

Daniel Boone is perhaps 'the' symbol of the American pioneer in the 18th century. Boone hunted and explored several of the Western NC counties while a resident in the Yadkin River basin of Wilkes County. Boone's trail opened up westward expansion through the rugged Western NC terrain passes near Boone in Watauga County. The town of Boone is named after Daniel Boone.