Management Action Plan 2022-2026

ENDLESS MOUNTAINS HERITAGE REGION







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- Summary of Survey Responses
- Baseline Assessment Report
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- Full Strategic Action Plan



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RS&S appreciates the opportunity to partner with EMHR on this process. We commend the entire Board of Directors along with Executive Director Cain Chamberlin for their leadership and willingness to engage the staff, Planning Committee, key partners and community leaders in a comprehensive and inclusive planning process.

We express particular thanks to the Planning Committee for their leadership, regular discussions, and passion for the mission in guiding the development of the new Management Action Plan.

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The efforts of all who contributed to this document are greatly appreciated.







Executive Summary



Credit: EMHR 1

The Endless Mountains Heritage Region (EMHR) celebrates the rich, varied, and vast natural, cultural and historic resources within the four counties of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, and Wyoming. Encompassing 2,850-square miles, EMHR connects residents and visitors alike to the present via its natural and recreational attributes and to its heritage and historic past, which is deeply rooted in agriculture and industry. By encouraging stewardship and appreciation of the environmental, historical, cultural, and recreational opportunities provided to residents and visitors, EMHR supports the region's economic and community development.

Fully leveraging the advantages and possibilities of the shared heritage and natural resources of the Endless Mountains region requires planning, goal setting and relationship building with a wide range of partners throughout the region. With the establishment of the Endless Mountains Heritage Region in 1998, in accordance with Pennsylvania's requirements of state heritage areas, a Management Action Plan was completed to define the organization's mission, vision, goals and strategies. This plan guided the organization until 2016/2017 when the plan was updated.



Now, this new Management Action Plan: 2022-2026 honors the legacy of these earlier plans, continuing with the theme of Living with the Land. This plan also provides EMHR the opportunity to evaluate progress made against the 2016/2017 goals, establish new benchmarks and milestones, and reconfirm our commitment to continue leading the region in leveraging the economic development, recreational and heritage opportunities of our Heritage Area.

The planning process also offered the opportunity to convene key stakeholders to redefine the purpose of EMHR and imagine an ambitious future. Through active engagement and thoughtful discussion with Board members, key stakeholders, and community members, EMHR created updated mission and vision statements and goals for 2022 to 2026.



Updated Mission Statement: To celebrate, preserve and enhance the unique rural

character and culture of the Endless Mountains.



Vision Statement: Through diverse partnerships, the work of the Endless Mountains Heritage Region leads to an appreciation for and investment in our heritage, culture, natural resources, and outdoor recreation opportunities, fostering both community pride and economic vitality in the counties of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Wyoming.

Management Action Plan Goals

Regional Leadership & Advocacy: Build connections and champion regional priorities to enhance EMHR's position as a leading and expert resource for heritage, outdoor recreation, and the promotion of the culture and history of the Endless Mountains.



Credit: EMHR 2

As an organization situated at the intersection of outdoor recreation, conservation, heritage, agriculture, arts and culture, tourism and more, EMHR intends to take full advantage of its broad mission to elevate its role as a champion, advocate and connector within the region. In this capacity, EMHR will lead conversations with local leaders to ensure they fully appreciate the importance of EMHR and the tenets of its mission. It will continue to maintain a productive, collegial relationship with DCNR. EMHR will also strive to serve as a key advocate and champion for increased trail development, cultural heritage programming and more to advance the natural and cultural resources within the region.



Partnerships & Community Impact: Leverage investment and grow partnerships in the Endless Mountains region to create greater community impact.



Credit: EMHR 3

In tandem with a commitment to greater regional leadership, EMHR will also expand its investment in the region through greater effectiveness, efficiency and, eventually, funding of the mini-grant program. It will also fully leverage its relationships with partners to carry the message of EMHR's impact. In growing partnerships, EMHR is also committed to engaging the next generation of stewards of the region's natural resources and heritage.

Awareness & Engagement: Substantially increase awareness of EMHR as a community resource.



Credit: EMHR 4

To fully establish it as a leading regional advocate and make the best use of its investment in the region, EMHR needs to grow its awareness within the region. EMHR will explore a new location that offers not only more visibility for the organization, but a more direct connection to its mission by being located in proximity to a trail, heritage site or other space that offers visitors an interpretive experience. Tools such as membership, the current Google grant, and events will be closely evaluated to ensure they are being maximized to support growth in awareness of EMHR.

Organizational Excellence: Advance leadership, staff resources and internal practices to ensure EMHR's continued excellence and position the organization for long-term sustainability.



Credit: EMHR 5

With a small, but passionate staff, EMHR will work to ensure its internal operations are effectively supporting the organization in achieving its other goals. EMHR is committed to maintaining a strong relationship with the Board and to utilizing that asset to support mission and awareness-building efforts. EMHR will also diversify its sources of funding both by identifying new sources of earned revenue and enhancing fundraising efforts. It is also committed to making greater use of technology as a means of supporting and supplementing staff resources and bandwidth.



Introduction

History of the Endless Mountains

Located in Northeast Pennsylvania, the Endless Mountains are part of the Appalachian Mountain chain distinguished by their incredible scenic vistas with sweeping views; a robust trail system and waterways, including gorgeous waterfalls; and awe-inspiring natural beauty. It is believed that George Washington is responsible for referring to the region as "Endless Mountains," and it is easy to see why.

The Endless Mountain region includes the counties of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Wyoming. The region is rich in history, having originally been home to several Native American peoples, including the Munsee-Lenape, Susquehannock, and Iroquois. Following the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix between the British and the Iroquois, large groups of British, Irish and German families moved into the area and developed various industries including mining, lumbering, and guarrying.



Credit: EMHR 6

The region's high quality blue stone remains a valuable commodity, and there is some coal mining as it is situated on the edge of Pennsylvania's coal belt. Though much of the land in this region is incredibly steep, there are still a number of active farms, with some being operated by Mennonite and Amish families who moved northward as development encroached on their former homelands. The region's economy is now largely based on agriculture, forestry, tourism, and more recently natural gas.

The region has a musical claim to fame as songwriter Stephen Foster lived in the area for a while, and Bradford County's Camptown is immortalized in his song "Camptown Races".

Across the four counties, the area is rich in natural resources. The Susquehanna River runs through the region. There are large swaths of state game lands, state forests, and a number of state parks. Outdoor recreation is integral to daily life in the region and serves as a major draw for tourists. During the Pandemic, the region saw a significant increase in visitors.

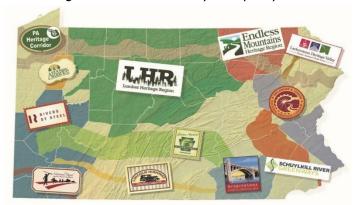
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What is a Heritage Area?

The Pennsylvania Heritage Areas Program, which is administered by DCNR's Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, is a region-based economic development program rooted in the Commonwealth's natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources, places, and stories.

Heritage Areas were established to create dynamic partnerships to enhance a region's "sense of place" and strengthen the local economy and quality of life. These partnerships are foundational to maintaining



Credit: DCNR 1

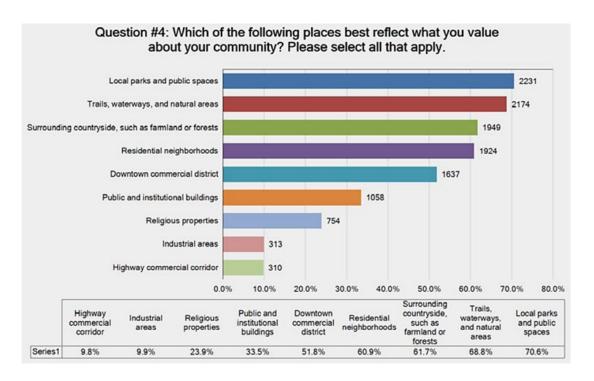
vibrant communities around the state while also preserving and promoting each region's unique history. These partnerships then help to attract private investment and serve as a draw for tourism.

There are 12 Heritage Areas in Pennsylvania, which together, operate in 57 of 67 counties throughout the commonwealth. Each of these Heritage Areas is independently operated and reflects the unique make-up and assets of its area.

In support of a state-wide goal to protect clean air, clean water, and public health and conserve working farms, forests, and natural lands, the DCNR allocates annual program funding through the Pennsylvania state budget's heritage and other parks line item and this funding is then administered through DCNR's Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

These organizations are especially important – while they play a critical role in advancing state-wide conservation efforts, they also support and strengthen significant quality of life assets in the communities they serve. In developing the Pennsylvania Statewide Historic Preservation Plan, developed by the PA Historical & Museum Commission, public surveys asked, "Which of the following places best reflect what you value about your community?" As illustrated in the graphic below, top responses tie directly into the work of PA's heritage areas.





PHMC 1

A similar finding was echoed in the PA Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Public surveys that informed that plan noted that "visiting historic sites [places] was the #3 most popular outdoor activity."

Economic Impact of Pennsylvania Heritage Areas

As a key economic driver in their respective regions, the economic impact of a heritage area can be quite robust.

A 2014 report from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania found that:





Tourists spent an estimated 7.5 million days and nights in Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas, purchasing more than \$2 billion worth of goods and services.



70 percent of this spending was purely reliant on heritage-related attractions.



The total contribution of heritage visitor spending to the state economy was 25,708 jobs and \$798 million in labor income.

In fact, a recent study conducted by Southwick Associates for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership found that outdoor recreation, ranging from biking and snow sports to camping and fishing, generated almost \$59 billion in economic activity in Pennsylvania in 2020. This was up 26% from four years prior.

In addition, the study found that over 2.5 million Pennsylvanians participated in trail sports like biking, hiking, and ATV riding. These trail users spend over \$6.5 billion per year, support more than 87,000 jobs, and generate over \$900 million in annual state and local tax revenue. Overall, trail sports generate over \$10 billion in total economic output.

EMHR's Economic Impact

In partnership with the Economic Impact Group, an economic impact study was conducted as part of this Management Action Planning process. Key findings include:

- Published work on tourism impacts in Pennsylvania indicate direct visitor expenditures in the four-county region of \$470 million. Assuming 75% of visitor expenditures are tied to heritage, historical, or outdoor visits would suggest that total direct visitor expenditures could be as much as \$352.5 million.
- The economic impact study focused more narrowly on visitors who stay overnight and participate
 in outdoor recreational activities. We estimate the direct local spending from this subset of
 visitors alone to be \$156.7 million.



• The subset of outdoor overnight visitors alone supports more than \$166 million in locally produced goods and services, 1,932 local jobs, and more than \$51 million in local labor income. In total, this economic activity support almost \$6 million in county and local tax revenue.

The impacts reported illustrate the economic importance of heritage and outdoor tourism in the Endless Mountains Heritage Region. The economic importance, in turn, speaks to the critical need to strategically maintain, develop, and promote the natural resources and heritage sites unique to the region. EMHR's Management Action Plan will provide the "roadmap" for enhancing its efforts to build greater awareness of the region and its assets while also championing their further development and preservation.

The full economic impact study is included as an **appendix** to this report.



Current Situation

About EMHR

The Endless Mountain Heritage Region (EMHR) was established in 1998 as a nonprofit, membership-based organization within the PA Heritage Areas Program. Serving a 2,850-square mile area encompassing Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties, EMHR also acts as the water trail manager for the upper North Branch Susquehanna River, a national recreation trail and official gateway to the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network.

EMHR is operated with a small staff including the Executive Director, Administrative Assistant, and Fiscal Coordinator, and reports to a Board comprised of representatives from each of the four counties it covers, as well as a number of at-large members representing the regional planning and development commission and the regional visitors' bureau and tourism promotion agency.

The region's identity is deeply connected to the land itself and relies heavily on its natural attributes as the basis for its economic stability and desirability as a place to live and visit. EMHR's agricultural theme of "Living with the Land" has guided the organization since its founding and remains relevant today as demonstrated in the region's draw as a place of incredible natural beauty, as well as in its industrial base of forestry, energy, agriculture, and mining.

With a mission to maintain and enhance the unique rural character and culture of the Endless Mountains,



Credit: EMHR 7

EMHR seeks not only to encourage tourism across the four-county region, but also to enhance the quality of life for the area's residents. EMHR approaches its mission-driven work, in collaboration with a broad network of partners, focusing on five key program areas: greenways, trails and conservation; agriculture heritage; partnership grants; education, interpretation, and heritage tourism; and heritage partnerships and outreach.

In its nearly 25-year history, EMHR has provided financial and capacity-building support to partner organizations through its mini-grant program. In addition, through its advocacy, outreach, and fundraising efforts, EMHR has accessed more than \$2.5 million in state funding and applied it to critical needs in the region including historic and agricultural preservation initiatives, outdoor recreation development and improvement projects, scenic enhancements, and heritage asset promotion.



As a regional lead organization of the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, EMHR supports and directs various greenway, land conservation, and trail initiatives in the area, as well as scenic byways and vista enhancements.

Past MAP Goals & Assessment of Progress

EMHR's first Management Action Plan was developed in 1998 with the organization's founding. This first plan articulated the core theme that would guide the organization: *Living with the Land*. This theme has continued to serve as the backbone of the organization and was reaffirmed in its 2017/2018 MAP update.

1998 Management Action Plan

The 1998 Management Action Plan established and defined the framework for the Endless Mountains Heritage Area. It detailed how and why it came to be created and outlined the areas of focus for the heritage area: historic development, education and interpretation, tourism and recreation, economic development, agriculture, and community planning. These were the most relevant themes at the time of the heritage area's creation.

These core focus areas were linked by the overarching theme of *Living with the Land, the Changing Cultural Landscape of the Endless Mountains*. According to the first MAP, this theme represents the evolving relationship of people to the land. In EMHR, "history sets the stage for the future."

With these key focus areas in mind, five goals were established to guide EMHR's activities through the course of its first ten years of operation.

Goal 1: Goal 2: Goal 3: Goal 4: Goal 5: Establish a Reinforce and Conduct public Address Be a "keeper of the flame": focus point expand outreach, in specific where partners existing habits order to raise leadership and Maintain an can exchange of regional organizational accounting of public information, thinking and development the progress of awareness develop needs of the heritage cooperation. about the projects, seek heritage region heritage region region, and create a and its partners. through common pool initiatives. regular of resources. reference to the vision and this MAP by providing a 'scorecard" for the successes of all partners.



Assessment of Progress on the 1998 MAP

With the guidance of the five above goals, the MAP outlined a detailed framework of strategies within each of EMHR's core focus areas. These early strategies helped to cement EMHR as a crucial organization within the community, working to enrich the community for residents and visitors by promoting the enjoyment of unique cultural and natural resources.

While the 1998 plan outlined a framework to guide the first decade of EMHR's operations, another Management Action Planning update process didn't begin until 2015-2016. An update was then completed in 2017.

2017 Management Action Plan Update

The 1998 Management Action Plan laid the foundation for EMHR's operations. While many of the themes and core focus areas continued forward with this MAP, there were also new interpretive opportunities that had emerged in the time between the two plans. The Plan Update proposed additional topics that could be addressed including forests and woodlands, rivers and mountains, industry, local arts and culture, regional history and the natural gas industry.

The 2017 MAP Update details five program areas:

- 1. Greenways, Trails, Conservation
- Living with the Land Agricultural Heritage
- 3. Partnership Grants
- 4. Education, Interpretation, Heritage Tourism
- Heritage Partnerships and Outreach

A number of objectives and strategies were identified with these five program areas in mind. Below, we summarize the objectives and strategies and provide an overview of progress against each of them.

Objective	Strategy	Progress
Establish a strong identity and "brand" for the Heritage Region	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	EMHR has met and exceeded this goal. The Executive Director is a prominent and visible member of the community who has done extensive outreach to build the brand and visibility of EMHR.



Tell the	Heritage
Story	

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.

This is an area of opportunity for EMHR. While there has been extensive outreach, a comprehensive "story" about the heritage area hasn't necessarily been codified and disseminated throughout the community.

Identify, Protect and Improve Heritage Assets

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.

The success of achieving this objective is most clearly illustrated through the minigrants program. Through this program, over \$2.5 million has been invested in EMHR's 23-year history.

Facilitate New Heritage and Outdoor Recreation Sites & Events

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 agrotourism initiatives in support of the Heritage Region's "Living with the Land" theme and national interest in local food production and sustainable communities.

There has been significant progress against this objective. Currently underway is the development of a bike-packing route that will span all four counties. EMHR is also intimately involved in the Route 6 Alliance, as well.

Build Partnerships to Protect and Improve the Heritage Tourism Infrastructure

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.

While outreach efforts and greater visibility help to build the knowledge base on heritage development topics, this hasn't necessarily involved incorporation in external plans. However, there are plans to begin hosting workshops on heritage related topics, particularly for museums, historical societies, etc.

Improve Organizational Sustainability

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.

The membership program has grown, but with the pandemic, revenue hasn't grown much alongside it. This is a key area of opportunity that will be fully addressed in the new Management Action Plan update.



Overview of the Management Action Planning Process

The leadership of the Endless Mountains Heritage Region is in the midst of a three-phase effort to update their Management Action Plan. In the first phase, which is complete, EMHR engaged the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations' (PANO) Consultant Collaborative and The Mudita Collective to evaluate the landscape for funding and membership development and offer strategies and recommendations to diversify funding and support long-term financial sustainability.

The PANO/Mudita Collective report is included as an **appendix** to this report and summarized in an earlier section.

RS&S was then engaged to facilitate the completion of Phase II of updating the Management Action Plan. Phase III will focus on the printing and distribution of the fully updated Management Action Plan for EMHR.

Below, we detail the process for updating EMHR's Management Action Plan (Phase II) to guide it over the next five years.

A: Project Initiation/Information Gathering

RS&S began the planning process with extensive discovery, during which we collected background materials about EMHR. EMHR staff and Board leadership also convened a Phase II Map Planning Committee (Planning Committee), a group of EMHR staff, Board members and volunteers to oversee the planning process. The individuals of the Planning Committee included:

- Kevin Abrams, EMHR Board President, Northern Tier Regional Planning
- Cain Chamberlin, EMHR Executive Director
- Christine Dettore, DCNR Northeast Regional Advisor to the EMHR Board
- Lynnelle Farber, Wyoming County Planning Director
- Donna Iannone, EMHR Board Member, Sullivan County Commissioner
- Brian Lione, EMHR Board Member, Lione Heritage Consulting
- Melly Norton, Sullivan County Historical Society
- Jean Ruhf, EMHR Board Member, Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau
- Barb Warburton, EMHR Board Member, Bradford/Sullivan County Farm Bureau
- Roy Williams, Susquehanna Depot Borough Council President
- Katie Prichard, Economic Development Program Manager, Northern Tier Regional Planning
- Art Coolbaugh, EMHR Water Trail Manager, Susquehanna Kayak & Canoe Rentals



Internal Interviews

To further build our background of EMHR, we conducted one-on-one interviews with the following individuals:

Staff	Advisory Committee	Other Stakeholders
Emily Baldauff, Water Trail Coordinator	Kevin Abrams, EMHR Board President, Northern Tier Regional Planning	David Palmer, EMHR Board Member
Vanessa Billings-Seiler, Administrative Assistant	Christine Dettore, EMHR Board Member, DCNR	Erica Rogler, EMHR Board Vice President
Cain Chamberlin, Executive Director	Lynnelle Farber, Wyoming County Planning Director	
Rick Hiduk, Communication Coordinator	Donna Iannone, EMHR Board Member, Sullivan County Commissioner	
Dave Hindman, Finance Coordinator	Brian Lione, EMHR Board Member, Lione Heritage Consulting	
Water Trail Managers – Keith Brown & Art Coolbaugh	Melly Norton, Sullivan County Historical Society	
	Jean Ruhf, EMHR Board Member, Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau	
	Barb Warburton, EMHR Board Member, Bradford/Sullivan County Farm Bureau	
	Roy Williams, Susquehanna Depot Borough Council President	

These conversations enabled the planning team to gain a better understanding of the issues to be explored, as well as the scope of goals and vision, for the updated Management Action Plan.



Board & Partner Surveys

Using key findings from the internal interviews, RS&S developed two surveys – one for the EMHR Board and the other a survey for EMHR's heritage partners. Our goal was to identify key strategic opportunities and challenges facing EMHR as well as foster a sense of inclusiveness during the planning process. Surveys were sent out electronically via Survey Monkey and were conducted in a confidential manner.

Board Survey

- Invitations to participate were sent to 15 Board members
- Received 10 responses
- 67% response rate

Partner Survey

- Invitations to participate were sent to approximately 150 partners, both past and present
- Received 45 responses
- 30% response rate

The summaries of the survey responses are attached as an *appendix* to this report.

B: Analysis of Issues & Opportunities

During this phase, informed by the insights gained in Phase A, we analyzed EMHR's issues and opportunities. In doing so, we:

- Reviewed our knowledge and understanding of EMHR against progress on the previous
 Management Action Plans (2008, 2016, 2017) and identified outstanding issues that remain
 relevant, are no longer relevant, and any additional opportunities gleaned from our experience or
 our Phase A findings.
- Reviewed findings from other local/county/regional planning efforts and identified areas of synergy with EMHR.
- Facilitated our first meeting with the Planning Committee to review all findings to date and begin
 to discuss and focus EMHR's emerging strategic issues and opportunities. In this discussion, we
 also began to define the core elements of EMHR's vision for the future and the goals that might
 enable EMHR to realize that vision.



C: Update Interpretive Framework

In this phase, we worked with the Planning Committee and EMHR staff leadership to update the mission statement, develop a new vision and organize the MAP goals and associated objectives that would detail what EMHR would focus on over the next five years to achieve the newly defined vision.

During this phase, we also facilitated a Board Retreat to share interview and survey findings and to continue discussions around the mission, vision, and goals. At this meeting, we also had two subject matter experts present to the Board members to provide greater context related to opportunities that emerged during our discussions and interviews. Our subject matter experts included:

- Silas Chamberlin, Ph.D, Vice President of Economic & Community Development, York County Economic Alliance
 - Silas provided background information about the current landscape for trail development across the state as well as key considerations as EMHR continues discussions about what its role should be related to trail development within the Endless Mountains region.
- Elizabeth Vehmeyer, Action Program Manager at the National Heritage Areas Program, National Park Service
 - Elizabeth provided background related to the process for becoming designated as a National Heritage Area.

Through our discussions during this phase, we developed a draft updated interpretive framework, which provides the "roadmap," specifically detailing the action steps EMHR will take over the course of the next five years.

Benchmarking

To further frame our strategic conversations and test the opportunities identified in the course of the planning project, we identified four individuals who could offer background and new thinking around many of the opportunities and challenges EMHR is facing. RS&S worked with the Executive Director to identify these benchmarks.

While it is important to note that no two organizations are alike, the benchmarking information can be used as a frame of reference and to help inform future strategic discussions.

In this benchmarking analysis, we spoke with the following individuals:



Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area	
Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director	
Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area	
•Elaine Paul Schaefer, Executive Director	
Susquehanna National Heritage Area	
Mark Platts, President	
PA Trout Unlimited	
•Rachel Kester, PATU Program Director	

A summary of the finding from the discovery phase along with the benchmarking findings is attached as an **appendix** to this report.

D: Proposed Priority Projects, Programs

In this phase, we continued to work closely with the EMHR Executive Director to refine the interpretive framework to ensure that the action steps were clear, comprehensive, and would move EMHR toward achieving its vision.

Once the framework was largely complete, we then engaged the community once again to solicit their reactions and feedback to the framework. In soliciting external input, we conducted two focus groups as well as one-on-one or small group discussions with the Commissioners from each of the counties EMHR serves.

- Focus Group #1: June 2, 2022 at Dietrich Theater, Tunkhannock
 - o 8 participants
- Focus Group #2: June 3, 3033 at Tommy Fairchild Park, Towanda
 - o 10 participants

In facilitating conversations with the county commissioners, we spoke with the following individuals:

Bradford County	Sullivan County	Wyoming County
Daryl Miller	Darlene Fenton	Ernest King
Doug McLinko	Brian Hoffman	Thomas Henry
John Sullivan	Donna Iannone	Richard Wilbur



Note: While Susquehanna County commissioners did not participate in these conversations, the EMHR Executive Director did speak with several commissioners one-on-one about EMHR and the County's role in supporting the organization.

E: MAP Business & Operational Impacts

At this time, we facilitated another discussion with the Planning Committee to share the findings from the public input sessions and to gain further feedback on the interpretive framework. In response to this discussion and the public input, we updated the interpretive framework again.

With the interpretive framework largely complete, we then began to define the organizational and business impacts of the plan. We also conducted an economic impact study, in partnership with the Economic Impact Group.

The full economic impact study is included as an **appendix** to this report and is summarized in an earlier section of this report.

We also outlined the business and operational impacts of the new Management Action Plan. These impacts are summarized later in this report.

F: Management Action Plan

This report represents the culmination of all elements of the process detailed above, with the particular support and input from our network of partners and provides the full Management Action Plan for the Endless Mountains Heritage Region over the next five years.



Credit: EMHR 8



EMHR's Management Action Plan: 2022-2026

The Endless Mountains Heritage Region's next Management Action Plan strives to honor the original charge of its founding and in doing so, has kept with the original theme of "Living with the Land." With a strong foundation, EMHR is operating from a position of profound strength and aims to build on that to elevate itself as a leader in the community, advocate across all domains of its mission, and expand its impact and investment in the region.

The arrival of Cain Chamberlin as Executive Director in 2018 ushered in a new, positive era for EMHR, one focused on inclusive collaboration, transparent operations, and active engagement between and among staff, Board, partners, advocates, community leaders, and residents. This fresh approach and active leadership served to build confidence within and about the organization, ultimately reinvigorating EMHR's Board and key partners.

Building outward on this momentum, the Executive Director focused on outreach and on building trusting relationships with the community. Through this process of creating and promoting a positive image of EMHR, the Executive Director successfully positioned EMHR as a more public-facing organization which has now grown to be considered an active and committed pillar of the community and a valued and valuable asset to the region. These efforts have also succeeded in establishing and cultivating a deeply engaged community that has a solid understanding of and a deep respect for EMHR and its mission.



Credit: EMHR 9

In creating the new vision for EMHR,

staff, Board, and the Planning Committee imagined a bold future: one that not only expands upon its work and impact in the community with its extensive network of partners, but that also positions it as a leader and key element to maintaining consistently high quality of life and economic vitality in each of the counties it serves.



Mission & Vision

A **mission statement** is a succinct expression of purpose that articulates what an organization does and why they do it. A mission statement is a fundamental building block upon which the Management Action Plan is developed.

A **vision statement** reflects a futuristic view of what an organization wants to become.

Together, the vision and mission unify an organization at all levels and galvanize positive action. They bring stakeholders together to work toward achieving shared goals and establish a unified brand understood by external stakeholders such as partners, funders, and community leaders.

During the planning process, the staff, Board and Planning Committee revised the mission statement and developed a new vision statement.

Mission Statement

During the planning process, the existing mission statement was carefully reviewed: *Maintain and enhance the unique rural character and culture of the Endless Mountains*. There was a sense that this statement was passive and that the words "maintain" and "enhance" were somewhat contradictory. The Planning Committee felt that the mission didn't fully capture the full range of EMHR's work. Staff, Board, and the Planning Committee reworked the language and agreed upon the following mission statement:

To celebrate, preserve and enhance the unique rural character and culture of the Endless Mountains.

Vision Statement

In developing this vision statement, there was a strong desire to clearly capture the multi-faceted nature of what EMHR does, particularly in the sense that its work is largely conducted through partnership, and clearly convey its role in fostering community pride and contributing to the economic well-being of the four-county region. With this intention, staff, Board and the Planning Committee agreed upon the following vision statement:

Through diverse partnerships, the work of the Endless Mountains Heritage Region leads to an appreciation for and investment in our heritage, culture, natural resources, and outdoor recreation opportunities, fostering both community pride and economic vitality in the counties of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Wyoming.



The Direction Forward – 5-Year MAP Goals

Empowered with a bold new vision, RS&S worked with staff, Board and the Planning Committee to identify four strategic goals that provide the framework for the Management Action Plan and connect every objective and action step within the plan to the vision.

Although each goal is singularly significant, their relationship to one another is key to realizing the plan's vision for meaningful and lasting impact. The goals are compelling and focus on advancing EMHR's mission in measurable ways that will drive its achievements over the next five years and position the organization for sustainable growth. While the execution of these goals will be coordinated and overseen largely by EMHR, much of it will rely on the support of its partners, who are key to realizing the vision over the next five years.

Each of the strategic goals outlined in the plan focuses on striving towards the highest levels of excellence. Key highlights include:

- Regional Leadership & Advocacy: As an organization situated at the intersection of outdoor recreation, conservation, heritage, agriculture, arts and culture, tourism and more, EMHR intends to take full advantage of its broad mission to elevate its role as a champion, advocate and connector within the region. In this capacity, EMHR will lead conversations with local leaders to ensure they fully appreciate the importance of EMHR and the tenets of its mission. It will continue to maintain a productive, collegial relationship with DCNR. EMHR will also strive to serve as a key advocate and champion for increased trail development, cultural heritage programming and more to advance the natural and cultural resources within the region.
- **Partnerships & Community Impact**: In tandem with a commitment to greater regional leadership, EMHR will also expand its investment in the region through greater effectiveness, efficiency and, eventually, funding of the mini-grant program. It will also fully leverage its relationships with partners to carry the message of EMHR's impact. In growing partnerships, EMHR is also committed to engaging the next generation of stewards of the region's natural resources and heritage.
- Awareness & Engagement: To more fully establish it as a leading regional advocate and make
 the best use of its investment in the region, EMHR needs to grow its awareness within the
 region. EMHR will explore a new location that offers not only more visibility for the organization,
 but a more direct connection to its mission by being located in proximity to a trail, heritage site
 or other space that offers visitors an interpretive experience. Tools such as membership, the
 current Google grant, and events will be closely evaluated to ensure they are being maximized to
 support growth in awareness of EMHR.



Organizational Excellence: With a small, but passionate staff, EMHR will work to ensure its
internal operations are effectively supporting the organization in achieving its other goals. EMHR
is committed to maintaining a strong relationship with the Board and to utilizing that asset to
support mission and awareness-building efforts. EMHR will also diversify its sources of funding
both by identifying new sources of earned revenue and enhancing fundraising efforts. It is also
committed to making greater use of technology as a means of supporting and supplementing
staff resources and bandwidth.



Implementing the Management Action Plan



Credit: EMHR 10

To ensure productive and measurable progress towards achieving the MAP goals, as well as the overall vision, the action plan detailed below will serve as a living document, supported with specific, coordinated, and timed action items. These sequentially organized actions form the work plan on which to track progress towards the goals. In addition, metrics have been identified as a means of measuring specific progress against each of the goals over time.

As a living document, this action plan should be reviewed and updated at least annually so that staff and Board leadership have a timely and responsive annual work plan to consult at every step of the way from now through 2026. By reviewing the plan on a regular basis, the timeframes and sequence detailed below can be updated to reflect current circumstances, resources and opportunities.

The full strategic frameworks for each goal are also included as an appendix to this report.



Goal 1: Regional Leadership & Advocacy

Goal Statement: Build connections and champion regional priorities to enhance EMHR's position as a leading and expert resource for heritage, outdoor recreation, and the promotion of the culture and history of the Endless Mountains.

1.1. Fully leverage a thriving partnership with DCNR a our region	and strategic	ally implement its vision in
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
1.1.1 Evaluate eligibility for other grants to both increase revenue and serve as a match for DCNR funding	Ongoing	Funding received from DCNR year over year
1.1.1.1 Apply for relevant grants with a focus on funding to support securing a new site location	Ongoing	
1.1.2 Establish a close working relationship with the new PA Heritage Areas Coordinator via regular meetings and inviting them to participate in events to get to know the Board/staff and region	Ongoing	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		
No new cost or investment required beyond staff time		

1.2 Continue to serve as a leader for trail development and to support the expansion and maintenance of land and water trails		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
1.2.1 Encourage counties to have and maintain up-to- date Outdoor Recreation, Greenways, and Trails Plans	Ongoing	Amount of mini grant funding specifically
1.2.2 Continue to partner with other water trail managers along the Susquehanna River	Ongoing	supporting outdoor recreation and historic
1.2.2.1 Identify and cultivate relationships with other water trail/outfitter type businesses and organizations	Ongoing	preservation Number of stakeholders
1.2.2.2 Encourage more outfitters businesses with the region to support economic development here	Ongoing	joining EMHR organized/led recreation roundtables
1.2.2.3 Improve the quality and frequency of communication with water trail managers and outfitters	Ongoing	Number of new bicycle friendly businesses engaged annually
1.2.2.4 Continue to host regular meetings with managers and outfitters	Ongoing	Percentage of counties with updated outdoor recreation
1.2.2.5 Use website as better tool to share news about 444 events and activities	Ongoing	plans
1.2.2.6 Expand awareness of and partnership with the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail	Ongoing	Activities with water trail managers



1.2.2.7 Engage water trail managers and outfitters in planning week-long sojourn	2022	Number of outfitters within the region
1.2.3 Attend NEPA Trails Forums and Trails Summits	Annually	Percentage of regional
1.2.4 Serve as a vocal advocate for more trails and greater access/connectivity across state game lands	Annually	outfitters in which EMHR has a working relationship
1.2.5 Identify potential new River access points and/or improvements to existing river access points.	Annually	
1.2.6 Help create the Endless Mountains Gravel Bikepacking Loop (EMGBL) and host the landing page/maps on the EMHR website	2022	
1.2.6.1 Explore PennDOT partnership maintenance of the bikepacking loop	2023	
1.2.6.2 Support tourism bureaus to work with their local businesses to identify and execute strategies that create bicycle friendly businesses	Ongoing	
1.2.7 Nominate North Branch of Susquehanna River as PA River of the year	2022	
1.2.8 Convene an outdoor recreation roundtable, specifically focused on the Endless Mountains Region	2023	
1.2.9 Partner with regional healthcare providers to develop strategies and programs to more strongly connect outdoor recreation to health and wellness initiatives	2023	
1.2.10 Expand the mini grants program to enable grants on two tracks: one specifically for recreation and one for heritage preservation	2027	
1.2.10.1 Explore PHMC funding to support expansion of program	2027	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		

1.3 Advocate for continual cultural heritage programming, highlighting the diversity within the region **Action Step** Year **Measurable Impact** 1.3.1 Advocate for and champion the development of Number of efforts and interpretive signage and programming with culturally initiatives to commemorate Ongoing accurate information throughout the Endless Mountains Native American culture Region within the region 1.3.1.1 Create relationships with Native American tribes/representatives to encourage, develop and fund Percentage of interpretative Ongoing signage that is culturally interpretive signage pertaining to the history of indigenous people in the region accurate

Cost of 25th anniversary sojourn



1.3.1.2 Encourage organizations that can support cultural heritage programming, especially related to diversity, to apply for mini grants	Annually	Trackable progress on planning efforts around an
1.3.2 Expand partnership with the Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust (DFCLT)	Ongoing	industrial museum
1.3.2.1 Continue to attend annual DFCLT symposium	Annually	
1.3.2.2 Look to host more events at DFCLT	Ongoing	
1.3.2.3 Advocate for construction for their museum at the DFCLT site	2024	
1.3.2.3.1 Support their efforts to match their grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities	2024	
1.3.3 Explore role of an ambassador tour program to help local residents, leaders, and youth learn about the history and heritage in their own community	2025	
1.3.4 Be a champion/convener for a future industrial museum in the region	2025	
1.3.4.1 Convene partners to create a path forward	2025	
1.3.4.2 Gauge feasibility through partners	2025	

Estimated Cost/Investment Impact

No new cost or investment required beyond staff time

1.4 Develop strategies to strengthen and maintain partnerships with municipal leaders and legislators so that they can make informed decisions that support the region's culture, heritage, and natural resources

meritage, and matarar resources		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
1.4.1 Inform municipal leaders about the Partnership/Mini- Grant program	Ongoing	Number of municipal leaders met with annually specifically
1.4.2 Advocate at the State Level for the Heritage PA program, particularly with the aim of securing financial support for heritage areas	Ongoing	about EMHR either by staff or Board members
1.4.2.1 Attend legislative days in Harrisburg	Annually	Number of hours/days spent
1.4.3 Meet and build rapport with legislators – make sure they are aware of the importance of heritage areas, particularly EMHR	Ongoing	in Harrisburg or on the phone working on state government relations
1.4.3.1 Prioritize newly elected officials (county and state legislators)	2022/ Ongoing	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		

Estimated Cost/Investment Impact

No new cost or investment required beyond staff time



1.5 Explore the viability and feasibility of seeking National Heritage Area (NHA) designation to solidify the national significance of the region

Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
1.5.1 Establish relationships with individuals whose leadership and support would be necessary for supporting a future designation effort	Ongoing	
1.5.2 Join National Alliance of Heritage Areas	2023	Trackable progress on the
1.5.3 Begin to articulate the tenets of a nationally significant "story" that would form the foundation of an NHA designation	2024	NHA designation if desired
1.5.4 Explore the cost and steps involved in completing a feasibility study to support NHA designation in the future	2024	

Estimated Financial Impact

Cost of joining National Alliance of Heritage Areas Investment in feasibility study to support NHA designation, if desired



Goal 2: Partnerships & Community Impact

Goal Statement: Leverage investment and grow partnerships in the Endless Mountains region to create greater community impact.

2.1 Maximize the impact of the mini-grant program.		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
2.1.1 Leverage the Board to advocate for the mini grant program and to make connections with other organizations within the region	Ongoing	Number of mini grant
2.1.1.1 Ask Board members to spread awareness to their own network/communities	Ongoing	Number of mini grant applications submitted successfully Survey results from mini grant applicants with feedback on the program Number of applicants specifically associated with Board member outreach and/or relationships Percentage of mini grant recipients submitting success stories
2.1.1.2 Ask Board members to attend the Grants workshop	Ongoing	
2.1.2 Collect more success stories to highlight impact of program, using the "success story template"	Ongoing	
2.1.3 Share a template and strong examples of applications during the Grants Workshops	2023	
2.1.4 Share and clearly explain the criteria used for evaluating applications	2023	
2.1.5 Ensure high levels of satisfaction with EMHR's execution of the program through an annual survey to all applicants, seeking feedback about the process	2023	
2.1.6 Require grant recipients to identify the source of funding for projects through the use of EMHR and DCNR logos, signage, etc. to assist in elevating awareness of both brands	2023	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		
No new cost or investment required beyond staff time		

2.2 Convene key stakeholder groups for leadership discussions to advance regional priorities		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
2.2.1 Participate in local conservation-oriented stakeholder groups	Ongoing	
2.2.2 Convene outdoor recreation based organizations: Endless Mountains Outdoor Recreation Roundtables	2022	Number of different roundtables organized and supported by EMHR
2.2.3 Convene and facilitate an historic preservation roundtable with historical associations/societies	2024	
2.2.3.1 Leverage the heritage management workshops as a catalyst for the roundtable and to inform the initial agendas	2024	Number of participants at each roundtable year over year
2.2.4 Collaborate with Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewardship program	2024	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		



No new cost or investment required beyond staff time

2.3 Support the delivery of educational programming directly and through partnerships		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
2.3.1 Establish relationships to engage the next generation of youth within the region	Ongoing	Number of EMHR activities specifically focused on
2.3.1.1 Host an annual youth sojourn	Ongoing	educational outreach annually
2.3.1.2 Continue to partner with conservation districts with Earth Day and field days	Ongoing	Number of participants in EMHR events with
2.3.1.2.1 Use EMHR developed learning games for their county/region	Ongoing	educational focus
2.3.1.3 Continue to sponsor agriculture lab at regional schools	Ongoing	Number of EMHR youth oriented events annually
2.3.1.4 Support school districts in the four counties to help them determine where to go for field trips in their own communities/region	Ongoing	, ,
2.3.1.5 Support the promotion of Historic Preservation Month (May)	Annually	
2.3.2 Continue to integrate educational messages and storytelling into all EMHR events/programs	Ongoing	
2.3.3 Continue to host heritage management workshops across the region	Annually	
2.3.4 Integrate indigenous culture/stories into North Branch sojourns.	Ongoing	
2.3.5 Host weeklong sojourn to celebrate 25th anniversary of EMHR	2023	

Estimated Cost/Investment Impact

Cost of organizing new events for youth Cost of supplies for heritage management workshops



Goal 3: Awareness & Engagement

Goal Statement: Substantially increase awareness of EMHR as a community resource.

3.1 Review membership structure and benefits to ensuand profitability	ure highest s	atisfaction, participation,
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
3.1.1 Facilitate an annual meeting/gathering for members	Annually	
3.1.2 Assess the relationship of membership to collect names/donors versus as a launch for formal fundraising appeals	2023	Number of members year over year
3.1.3 Determine potential new benefits for when membership returns to a paid structure	2024	Revenue associated from members either from paid
3.1.4 Offer an ambassador tour for members to get stakeholders to better know all four counties	2025 (Use Board mtgs/even ts for this)	membership program and/or fundraising appeals Percentage of members renewing year over year Number of members participating in events annually
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact Cost to host an annual meeting/gathering for members		

3.2 Define needs and explore potential sites for a new location		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
3.2.1 Vet potential sites against that criteria	Ongoing	
3.2.2 Determine site feasibility and identify the funding to secure the site, whether through outright purchase, rent, partnership, etc.	Ongoing	Trackable progress on exploring a new site for EMHR
3.2.3 Create a matrix of criteria in an ideal new site	2022	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact Investment in formal site feasibly study or other related planning		



3.3 Define clear and consistent messaging about EMHR using the vision as a filter		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
3.3.1 Update organizational brochure/promotional materials to align with new vision statement and MAP	2023	Number of staff, Board and others trained on key messages about EMHR
3.3.2 Develop key message points to ensure consistency in communication about EMHR	2023	
3.3.3 Ensure staff, Board members and key partners are trained on the key messages about EMHR	Ongoing	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		
Cost of design and printing of new EMHR promotional		
pieces		

3.4 Create a communications plan for outreach to engage key audiences		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
3.4.1 Facilitate an annual public engagement meeting to solicit and sustain buy-in from commissioners	Ongoing	Number of active engagements with county
3.4.1.1 Continue in all counties to build greater awareness of EMHR and its impact in the community	Ongoing	commissioners annually
3.4.2 Leverage mini grant program through success stories	Ongoing	Number of times EMHR is covered in the press annually
3.4.3 Attend other events to stay informed about efforts throughout the community and to serve as an ongoing resource and leader	Ongoing	Number of EMHR hosted events
34.3.1 Create a strategy and targeted list of organizations, audiences and prioritize the events to attend (i.e., Conservation districts – youth events; school districts, etc.)	2023	Number of attendees in total at all EMHR events annually
3.4.5 Develop a toolkit for mini grant recipients to encourage growth in the mini grant program and consistent discussion points about EMHR	2024	Number of social media followers Number of website hits
3.4.6 Develop a strategy for building awareness and engaging key audiences in EMHR and its impact in community press releases and e-newsletters	2024	
3.4.6.1 Include plans for leveraging press releases, social media, e-newsletters and other publications as a tool for building awareness	2024	
3.4.7 Continue to leverage Google Grants to ensure more visitors to EMHR's website	Ongoing	
3.4.7.1 Complete Google Grants training so can manage in-house	2022	
3.4.7.2 Revise mini-grant forms to better explain program and match criteria	2023	
3.4.8 Leverage events to grow awareness of EMHR	Ongoing	



3.4.8.1 Annually assess events to determine return (financial and mission) relative to use of resources	2023
3.4.8.2 Celebrate EMHR's 25th anniversary and leverage the celebration through special events and communication	2023
3.4.8.2 Ensure key message points about EMHR are shared at all events, including clear connections between the event and the mission	2024
3.4.8.3 Evaluate opportunities for hosting more Hikes & Bikes, Park Series type events as well as walking tours, architecture tours, etc.	Ongoing
3.4.8.4 Expand the Caring for Collections(Heritage Management Workshops) to the other3 counties	2024
3.4.8.5 Reevaluate the Parks series to determine the role of partners to expand engagement and where this might be most successful (i.e., Wyoming County)	2024

Estimated Cost/Investment Impact

Cost of hosting new EMHR events



Goal 4: Organizational Excellence

Goal Statement: Advance leadership, staff resources and internal practices to ensure EMHR's continued excellence and position the organization for long-term sustainability.

4.1 Seek new sources of revenue for greater financial sustainability		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
4.1.1 Leverage commissioners to provide more of that funding, particularly around outdoor rec programming and for heritage partners	Ongoing	Amount of revenue from new sources annually Percentage increase in
4.1.2 Evaluate more opportunities for increased county funding (i.e., Act 13 fundings)	2023	
4.1.3 Launch EMHR apparel line for sale	2023	
4.1.4 Seek additional private donors and corporate sponsorships through targeted outreach	2023	revenue year over year
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		
No new cost or investment required beyond staff time		

4.2 Develop strategies to add staff capacity both in the short- and long-term		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
4.2.1 Explore internship or university partnerships to add project-based temporary staff support	2023	
4.2.2 Identify all areas of staffing resource need (i.e., technology support, office management, etc.)	2024	Investment amount in staffing resources
4.2.3 Secure funding to hire additional staff resources	2024	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		
Investment in staffing resources		

4.3 Staff training and professional development opportunities		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
4.3.1 Identify staff training and professional development opportunities, both internal and formal external	Ongoing	Number of trainings/hours of training for EMHR staff
4.3.2 Continuously improving internal communication	Ongoing	
4.3.2.1 Continue to have weekly staff meetings	Ongoing	
4.3.3 Work with staff and broader volunteers to build a culture that supports diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility	Ongoing	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		
Investment in staff training		



4.4 Commit to ongoing board Development		
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
4.4.1 Policy development – in collaboration with staff	Ongoing	
4.4.2 Performance evaluation for staff	Ongoing	
4.4.3 Regularly review bylaws and update, as needed	Ongoing	Board member attendance
4.4.4 Retool meetings to be more strategic and to shift away from only reporting out of information	2023	Board member giving/membership support
4.4.5 Revisit committees to align with strategic plan	2023	Board self-reported satisfaction with Board
4.4.6 Update nominating, recruitment and onboarding processes	2023	experience
4.4.7 Facilitate an annual retreat of the Board	2024	
4.4.8 Regular one-on-one meetings with executive director, executive committee, and members to better understand member interests and skills and to build the relationship	2024	
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact		1
Cost of annual Board retreat		

4.5 Launch fundraising efforts to build a donor base and	philanthro	ppic revenues
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
4.5.1 Execute other relevant recommendations from the PANO/Mudita Collective report (MAP Update - Phase I)	Ongoing	
4.5.2 Regularly review the prospect list with the Board and gain their support in building relationships	Ongoing	
4.5.3 Create a corporate giving program	2024	Amount donors annually
4.5.4 Conduct a wealth screening of the membership base to better understand their financial capacity	2024	supporting EMHR
4.5.5 Build an individual giving program to generate annual operating support (volunteers) and major donor support of specific initiatives	2024	Amount of philanthropic and sponsorship support annually

Estimated Cost/Investment Impact

Cost of mailings for appeals

Cost of fundraising consultant to write appeals

Cost of wealth screening



4.6 Build a volunteer base to support EMHR operations, 6	events and	l programming
Action Step	Year	Measurable Impact
4.6.1 Actively recruit volunteers to support identified volunteer opportunities	Ongoing	
4.6.12Identify a list of all potential volunteer opportunities	2024	Number of volunteers annually
Estimated Cost/Investment Impact Cost for volunteer appreciation efforts		



Integration of The Mudita Collective/PANO Recommendations

The Mudita Collective report details recommendations around three key areas: revenue generation, membership development, and awareness raising. These three areas are included in action steps in the above "roadmap".

Many of the recommendations in The Mudita Collective report are specific and tactical. Below, we summarize key recommendations from that report that align with action steps within the "roadmap" and that could support and inform the implementation of those steps.

For reference, the full report is included as an *appendix* to this report.

Revenue Generation

Objective/Action Step from the New MAP	Recommendation from The Mudita Collective Report
1.1.1 Evaluate eligibility for other grants to both increase revenue and serve as a match for DCNR funding	Collaborative applications and creative partnerships that demonstrate cooperation and community economic development opportunities are a strong strategy.
4.5.1 Create a corporate giving program4.6 Build a volunteer base to support EMHR operations, events and programming	Establish and maintain a structure to pursue matching gift opportunities. Language about matching gifts should be woven into an individual giving program from the beginning. When an individual gift is solicited/received is an ideal time to encourage a donor to investigate if their employer matches giving. Establish a system to track and follow up on this potential revenue.
	Corporate giving may include event/program sponsorship or grants. Solicitations for either are enhanced with proposals that demonstrate a program's ability to impact an audience that a corporate prospect is also invested in. Consider developing proposals for companies, even if they do not have established giving programs.
	Solicit companies with established giving programs. Establishing relationships is key, so capitalize on business relationships being established through Chambers of Commerce and other business engagement.
	Set goals to have at least 1-2 conversations each month with prospective business donors.
	Explore establishing a corporate volunteer programs, inviting business to volunteer with EMHR through a giving day or sharing



	information with HR about how employees can volunteer with EMHR.
4.5.4 Build an individual giving program to generate annual operating support (volunteers) and	Begin building an audience through those that are already close to EMHR.
major donor support of specific initiatives	Purchasing a mailing list is one strategy for growing an individual giving program.
	Set realistic and measurable goals for initial growth of an individual giving program and retention of individual donors year over year.
	Take the time and set goals to have at least 1-2 conversations each month with prospective individual donors. Listen to interests, values, and explore what it would take to make a financial contribution.

Membership Development

Objective/Action Step from MAP	Recommendation from The Mudita Collective Report
3.1 Review membership structure and benefits to ensure highest satisfaction, participation, and profitability	Make membership personal. Track how individual engage with EMHR so that you may reference those points of engagement when inviting them to become a member or renew their membership. Personalize multi-media strategies whenever possible to acknowledge engagement and acknowledge/solicit membership post-engagement. Incentivize new membership or membership upgrades in personalized invitations to events or other communications. Engage current members in membership campaigns, featuring them and their endorsement of EMHR membership. Consider an incentivized referral program that rewards current members for reaching out to their sphere of influence to recruit EMHR members. Be intentional about how new members are welcomed and engaged. Engage others in your membership development efforts.



	Identify existing members who are especially close to and engaged with EMHR.
	Identify individuals or groups who engage with EMHR but have not yet become a member.
	Reach out to a mix of individuals and groups so that you have a mix of membership perspectives and voices — individuals, families, employers, grantees, other businesses, or more.
	Invite members to play a role in events and highlight them in electronic and print publications, recognizing members and giving them the opportunity to give voice to the value of EMHR membership.
1.3.5 Explore role of an	Create VIP Experiences.
ambassador tour program to help local residents, leaders, and youth learn about the history and heritage in their own community	Build experiences that support a "local" focus, tapping into those who want to stay and invest in their local areas. A local campaign is an opportunity to create partnerships throughout the business community.
	Create opportunities to experience EMHR throughout the entire region, encouraging people to move within their own and neighboring counties.
	Collaborate with grantees to create unique opportunities that combine experience and mission impact while crosspromoting organizations.
	Collaborate with other businesses in the area to create unique experiential opportunities available only through an EMHR membership that also support economic development.
3.4 Create a communications plan	Confidently market EMHR
for outreach to engage key audiences	Caption photos on the website and other marketing materials with descriptions of unique experiences and events available at different membership levels, emphasizing the value of EMHR membership.
	Make marketing materials available at physical sites throughout the region that include images and descriptions of how that location is uniquely experienced with an EMHR membership.
	Collaborate with EMHR grantees and other community partners to distribute membership marketing materials.



1.1.1 Evaluate eligibility for other
grants to both increase revenue
and serve as a match for DCNR
funding

Seek sponsorship and/or grant funding to support a membership campaign and materials that cross promote EMHR, grantees, and other community businesses.

Awareness Campaign

Objective/Action Step from MAP	Recommendation from The Mudita Collective Report
 3.3 Define clear and consistent messaging about EMHR using the vision as a filter 3.4 Create a communications plan for outreach to engage key audiences 4.5 Launch fundraising efforts to build a donor base and philanthropic revenues 	Identify an audience. Select a county within EMHR and focus on that county's population. Purchasing mailing lists by zip code gives broad access via print. Identifying a sponsor in the specific area may mitigate the cost of the list, print and postage costs. Identify an activity or location that is well trafficked. The timing of this approach may be seasonally dependent. Design a campaign based on this specific persona.
	Clarify communications channels to reach audience. Build budget for direct mail pieces and other branded collateral for distribution. Translate message for website, social media, and as many other channels as possible.
	Create a call to action. Determine a cause-focused call to action that drives an audience to EMHR. Ensure pathways into EMHR by mail, email, website, QR code, or other channels. Capitalize on this opportunity to begin a personal relationship by using campaign language unique to EMHR that builds a positive and personal relationship. Utilize relevant data and responses from the surveys (Mudita) to identify previously successful strategies for engagement and to inform this and future actions. Create next steps or moves management that aligns with membership development and fundraising goals.



Have prospective donor conversations with new individuals engaging with EMHR. These conversations could also explore their interest in membership.
Add newly engaged individuals into membership development strategies.



Business & Operational Impacts of the Management Action Plan

Below we summarize the business impacts based on the sequence of the MAP goals and key activities outlined within the plan.

	2023	2024	2025	2026 & Beyond
MAP New Revenue Impacts	 25th Anniversary Celebrations – Events & Fundraising ++ Return of Paid Membership ++ Launch of branded merchandise + 	Expansion of Fundraising Program ++ Expansion of Paid Events Revenue +	Expansion of Fundraising Program ++ Expansion of Paid Events Revenue +	 Expansion of Fundraising Program +++ Expansion of Paid Events Revenue + Federal funding from becoming a national heritage area (could be 10+ years out) +++
MAP New Expense Impacts	 25th Anniversary Celebrations – Events + Investment in fundraising tools + Update EMHR marketing collateral + Investment of expanded EMHR events, especially for youth + Continued investment in heritage management workshop supplies as program grows + Join Alliance of National Heritage Areas + Addition of more staff resources ++ 	 Investment of expanded EMHR events, especially for youth + Continued investment in heritage management workshop supplies as program grows + Launch an annual meeting for members + Investment in new site feasibility ++ Continued investment in fundraising tools + Addition of more staff resources ++ 	 Investment in National Heritage Area Feasibility Study +++ Investment of expanded EMHR events, especially for youth + Continued investment in heritage management workshop supplies as program grows + Continued investment in fundraising tools + Addition of more staff resources ++ 	 Investment in resources (i.e. lobbying) to help with securing national heritage designation +++ Investment of expanded EMHR events, especially for youth + Continued investment in heritage management workshop supplies as program grows + Potential move to new site +++ Continued investment in fundraising tools + Addition of more staff resources ++



additional \$300- 500,000 for special
--

Key

+ < \$10,000

++ \$10,000 to \$50,000

+++ >\$50,000



Growth Potential of the Operating Budget

- Membership \$10,000 to \$20,000 in revenue annually if returning to paid membership in 3 years
- Fundraising \$30,000 to \$50,000 in revenue annually with commitment to building an individual giving program using direct mail for multiple appeals per year, emails and in-person solicitations in 3 years
- Event Revenue \$10,000 to \$15,000 in revenue annually if continued growth in EMHR events

The most significant growth in revenue potential is associated with the launch of a comprehensive individual fundraising program and securing a national designation. These are both on a 10-year+timeline to achieve significant growth in operational capacity. The fundraising could be launched aggressively in 2023 around the 25th anniversary celebration and continuously expanded year over year to support the necessary investments in staff, programming, exploration of a new site and the pursuit of the national heritage designation.



One-Year Action Plan

Given that the five-year action plan is extensive and will require a great deal of work, below we outline the action steps that will be prioritized in the calendar year 2023. Quite a number of action steps in the full plan are listed as an "ongoing" or "annual" timeframe. Many of those steps are either steps already in progress or that can be addressed in existing programming, meetings, conversations, etc. The steps listed below are those specifically projected to occur in 2023 and will occur in addition to the "ongoing" and "annual" items.

It is important to note that there are over 50 partners actively working with EMHR to advance these action steps. EMHR will continue to rely on its partner relationships for ongoing input and support in executing the steps below and within the full Management Action Plan over the next five years and beyond.

Objective/Action Step from the New MAP

- 1.2.6.1 Explore PennDOT partnership maintenance of the bikepacking loop
- 1.2.8 Convene an outdoor recreation roundtable, specifically focused on the Endless Mountains Region
- 1.2.9 Partner with regional healthcare providers to develop strategies and programs to more strongly connect outdoor recreation to health and wellness initiatives
- 1.5.2 Join National Alliance of Heritage Areas
- 2.1.3 Share a template and strong examples of applications during the Grants Workshops
- 2.1.4 Share and clearly explain the criteria used for evaluating applications
- 2.1.5 Ensure high levels of satisfaction with EMHR's execution of the mini grant program through an annual survey to all applicants, seeking feedback about the process
- 2.1.6 Require grant recipients to identify the source of funding for projects through the use of EMHR and DCNR logos, signage, etc. to assist in elevating awareness of both brands
- 2.3.5 Host weeklong sojourn to celebrate 25th anniversary of EMHR
- 3.1.2 Assess the relationship of membership to collect names/donors versus as a launch for formal fundraising appeals
- 3..4.3.1 Create a strategy and targeted list of organizations, audiences and prioritize the events to attend (i.e., Conservation districts youth events; school districts, etc.)
- 3.4.7.2 Revise mini-grant forms to better explain program and match criteria
- 3.4.8.1 Annually assess events to determine return (financial and mission) relative to use of resources
- 3.4.8.2 Celebrate EMHR's 25th anniversary and leverage the celebration through special events and communication



- 4.1.2 Evaluate more opportunities for increased county funding (i.e., Act 13 fundings)
- 4.1.3 Launch EMHR apparel line for sale
- 4.1.4 Seek additional private donors and corporate sponsorships through targeted outreach
- 4.2.1 Explore internship or university partnerships to add project-based temporary staff support
- 4.4.4 Retool meetings to be more strategic and to shift away from only reporting out of information
- 4.4.5 Revisit committees to align with strategic plan
- 4.4.6 Update nominating, recruitment and onboarding processes

Implementing these action steps will occur largely in collaboration with EMHR's partners. Below are some of the partner organizations with whom EMHR will continue working. While not an exhaustive list, the organizations below have and will continue to provide crucial support and partnership to EMHR.

- Bradford County Tourism Promotion Agency
- County Commissioners
- Endless Mountain Outfitters
- Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau
- Five Mountain Outfitters
- Heritage PA
- Keystone College
- Keystone Trails Association
- Lackawanna College
- National Park Service
- Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

- Pennsylvania Environmental Council
- Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission
- Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation
- Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
- Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers
- Progress Authority
- Rail-Trail Council of Northeast Pennsylvania
- Susquehanna Greenway Partnership
- Susquehanna Kayak & Canoe Rentals
- Outdoor Recreation Partners
- Heritage Areas
- Local Municipalities
- Local Nonprofit Organizations
- Local Landowners



- County Planning Offices
- Local Parks & Recreation Departments
- Museums & Historical Societies

- County Conservation Districts
- Regional Farm Bureaus
- Local Volunteer Programs



Conclusion

This document represents more than a year's worth of thoughtful discussion, systematic planning, detailed analysis, and inspired thinking.

The Endless Mountains Heritage Region entered this process fully committed to putting in the hard work required for production of a viable, and ultimately, successful Management Action Plan.

EMHR's goals are ambitious, as they should be in keeping with not only with the momentum of the organization but also with the important role the natural, historic, agricultural, and cultural resources the region have played in contributing to quality of life and economic vitality.

It is EMHR's intent and expectation that the goals and action steps outlined in this Management Action Plan report will put us in good stead so that in 2026, EMHR will be ready and well-positioned to chart a continuing an even stronger course through the next five years.



Credit: EMHR 11

ENDLESS MOUNTAINS HERITAGE REGION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY of Management Action Plan update – Phase I Performed by PANO and The Mudita Collective

The Endless Mountains Heritage Region (EMHR) engaged the services of the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations' (PANO) Consultant Collaborative and The Mudita Collective to conduct a special purpose study. The intention was to identify opportunities to diversify funding, understand the funding landscape and membership development, and contemplate awareness-raising strategies that might support a thriving future.

The COVID-19 pandemic dominated 2020 and will have yet-to-be-defined impacts on the nonprofit sector. EMHR has been able to benefit from the recommendations of health professionals that have driven individuals and families to become more active in the out-of-doors. The impact on current and potential funding streams is unknown. A key opportunity will be to continue to engage and build on newly acquired audiences as EMHR moves into 2021.

Survey Analysis

EMHR conducted surveys of key stakeholders and members to enhance understanding of what has worked or is working, successful engagement strategies, and opportunities to explore.

Revenue Generation

EMHR has depended on government grants, with over 90% of budget revenue coming through this avenue. It is wise to continue to tap into state funding opportunities while leveraging successes to make a strong case for support for federal funding and other foundation opportunities. Successful diversification will include implementation of both an individual and corporate giving program.

Membership Development

EMHR has seen growth in its membership program during recent years. Building on that success and new individual engagements during 2020 will develop a sense of belonging and deep relationships that may amplify impact throughout and beyond the region.

Awareness Raising

EMHR has the opportunity to building enthusiasm and support for the organization and its mission, as well as leveraging support for grantees and regional heritage projects. The increase in recognition and engagement would also support the goals of diversifying fundraising and increasing membership.

This special study is a call to action, an opportunity to build on progress achieved during the last several years and momentum from 2020.

The Endless Mountains Heritage Region (EMHR) was created in 1998 as a nonprofit membership organization within the PA Heritage Areas Program. It is one of 12 current heritage areas in Pennsylvania designated by the DCNR. Known for its unmatched pastoral landscapes shaped by centuries of farming and timbering as well as land conservation, the EMHR embraces its agricultural theme of "Living with the Land," and its mission to "maintain and enhance the unique rural character and culture of the Endless Mountains."

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SURVEY ANALYSIS

Over the course of multiple weeks in July, the Endless Mountain Heritage Region (EMHR) conducted two surveys – one of key stakeholders and a second of members. The intention of these surveys was to explore potential, both existing and untapped. Building on organizational strengths is a motivational and effective strategy for growth. EMHR has enjoyed successes during recent years, which will help inform steps to take in the future. Additionally, soliciting feedback from key stakeholders and members demonstrates that EMHR values their opinions, while affording EMHR the opportunity to learn more about strategies viewed as successful by others.

EMHR, like everyone else, is in an interesting period. The global pandemic influences individuals, organizations, communities, and perceptions. Priorities may shift. New opportunities exist. This significance of this time should be one of EMHR's considerations.

A key goal of the survey was to achieve an enhanced understanding of:

- What has worked or been working?
- What is engaging new audiences? Where? How?
- Where might there be potential? Are there existing ideas that should continue? New ideas to explore? Other ideas still to be identifies?
- What attention-catching examples are out there that EMHR might learn from and explore?

Seven (7) individuals responded to the Key Stakeholder survey. Twenty-seven (27) individuals responded to the Member survey.

FEEDBACK FROM KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Key stakeholders of the EMHR responded to, "What is really important for the Endless Mountains Heritage Region? What do you want to accomplish as an organization?" The intention of this question was to understand what internal stakeholders believe EMHR could make possible for the region. Responses included:

- "Continue to market and develop our recreational and historic assets as tourism destinations to support local economies."
- "Increase awareness of our heritage among our residents."
- "Enhancing and preserving the history of the Endless Mountains Region. Improving our outdoor recreation locations."
- "I believe EMHR is hugely important in the preservation of the region's heritage and promotion
 of said heritage and events surrounding it. I would like to continue to see EMHR gain members,
 increase events and volunteer/organization participation, and continue to promote the great
 historic assets such as the river and outdoor trails."
- "It is really important for EMHR to preserve, protect and help our region and visitors embrace our region's cultural heritage and history. I would like to see EMHR continue taking a more active role in the region and on projects and to provide/be a part of more events that showcase or teach our region's history. I would like to see the organization become more sustainable – not having to almost fully rely on government support especially now."
- "Become less dependent on DCNR funds."
- "Work to keep promoting the beauty of our area while maintaining our heritage."

Key stakeholders of the EMHR responded to, "What strategies do you believe have been successful at engaging new and existing audiences? What do you believe made them engaging?" The intention of this question was to identify what has worked to build on existing or past strengths. Responses included:

- "Partnering with local businesses and community groups."
- "Increase membership as a result of new management."
- "Partnerships! Cain and his team are exceptional at building relationships with partnering organizations and following through with their actions/plans. They are great at updating/educating the board and also working with organizations across the region to expand their opportunities."
- "Hands-on activities at events where we have a table or booth."
- "I think EMHR's participation in and presenting local history/heritage programs/events has been a successful way for EMHR to engage new and existing audiences. I think it gives audiences a tangible and direct link to our heritage and to the organization."
- "The summer parks series was a great project to take the show on the road so to speak. It
 was a great way to utilize and market County assets creating repeat visits as well as
 showcasing other historic places and programs that might not have been known to the
 masses."

• "Getting the accomplishments and future plans of the organization more recognized in the region. Making the EM Heritage Assoc. the go to organization for planning. Cain Chamberlain has been excellent in his role as Executive Director."

Key stakeholders of the EMHR responded to, "Where do you believe there is untapped potential for securing funding and engaging prospective members?" The intention of this question was to identify areas of opportunity. Responses included:

- "I am unsure regarding the funding as I'm perpetually searching those areas myself. Engaging members I feel will come through the work/efforts of the events and partnering organizations. Being a member of a largely growing civic organization, we frequently are asked HOW are you growing so much? Quite simply, we ask people to join us!"
- "Larger organizations in our region. Keeping people engaged in programs and ways to help the EMHR accomplish its goals."
- "Foundations."
- "Colleges and trade schools and their students."
- "Further interaction with the Chambers of Commerce who may be a better avenue into conversations and identifying unfulfilled needs for our downtowns/businesses. Also, continue projects/initiatives with partnership organizations such as the Route 6 Alliance, Susquehanna Greenways and other surrounding organizations to leverage multi-jurisdictional funding."
- "I think there is untapped potential for funding from corporate and individual donors. I think the organization is currently on the right track of engaging members by being involved in many regional projects and at the community events."

Key stakeholders of the EMHR responded to, "What thought or idea have you had but kept to yourself because you believe others will think it outrageous?" The intention of this question was to bring out those ideas that have yet to be shared, but may inspire new opportunities. Responses included:

- "A parade float"
- "I don't keep them to myself but I always am working with Cain on county participation and initiatives to tie directly into the management action plan and we will continue to do so."
- "Hosting events at heritage locations and promoting activities."
- "Continue to work to develop trail facilities to interconnect existing assets across the region."

Key stakeholders of the EMHR responded to, "Are there other organizations you are aware of that the Endless Mountains Heritage Region could learn from or work alongside to improve upon itself? Be sure to note why you chose these organizations." The intention of this question was to identify examples that EMHR might learn from to build its own strengths. Responses included:

 "Churches. Their histories are part of our heritage, and the older churches need to be preserved."

- "I feel Cain is doing an outstanding job I would always say there is room for improvement: ie reaching out to other heritage regions, other local organizations that are continuously promoting/developing their areas (Troy Sale Barn?)"
- "The necessary partnerships have been established."
- "The two tourism bureaus, the area chambers because of their membership bases."
- "Countryside Conservancy While they receive government grants, they are also great at fundraising, having a public presence and showing their value to the region. They also have a strong volunteer base that shows additional buy in from the community. These are all things I think we as an organization can improve upon."

FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS

Members of the EMHR responded to, "What do you value most about being a member of the Endless

Mountains Heritage Region? Why?"
The intention of this question was to identify and build on perceived value. Responses included:

Heritage promoted Mission value organization local **grant** Opportunity

region offered EMHR history networking well area members

- "Being a member of a regional organization offers greater opportunities to preserve our rural character and culture much more so than on an individual basis."
- "Access to a variety of regional personnel."
- "We value the benefit to collaborate and be a part of a recognized Heritage region in the state of Pennsylvania. The Dennis Farm cannot overstate the value and support we receive from the EMHR and its members."
- "I like the networking with others regarding our region's resources."
- "Grants. Finally a granting agency that helps a four-county, under-funded area and covers more than museums and historical agencies. Very easy application."
- "Keeping us connected with our neighboring counties and what they have to offer our isolated county residents and visitors."
- "Accessibility and assistance with various questions."
- "I most value being a participant in the grant programs that have allowed our small organization the Clifford Township Historical Society to accomplish so much more than we could have over the last ten years if we had to hold fundraisers for all our projects."
- "Networking and partnerships."
- "The opportunity to influence the preservation actions of history and legacy in the region."

Members of the EMHR responded to, "What do you feel is necessary for the Endless Mountains Heritage



Region to be successful in the future? What improvements can the organization make to ensure that success?"The intention of this question was to identify areas of opportunity. Responses included:

- "To make sure EMHR is recognized as an entity not only in the region but also statewide and the surrounding states as a travel and tourism destination."
- "Exposure. Although more known than before, feel like many people still don't know who we are and what we do."
- "Continue with current efforts, expand networking."
- "You need to advertise your benefits to those organizations that can benefit from what you
 have to offer. I suggest having a representative come and speak to those organizational
 boards."
- "Educate the public as much as possible."

- "Continue to market the region for its natural beauty and historical significance. Make the Endless Mountains name well-known. Hold events (when able) to celebrate the region."
- "Continue with current efforts, expand networking."
- "Promotion of our local historical and environmental treasures. We should continue to learn about and to treasure the contributions of Black persons who lived in our region and contributions of other ethnic groups."
- "I think you do a great job."

Members of the EMHR responded to, "In your opinion, why is the Endless Mountains Heritage Region beneficial to the community." The intention of this



question was to identify the perceived benefit to the broader community. Responses included:

- "The EMHR provides support and awareness of the diverse travel and tourism offerings of the region. The offerings and mutual support have been invaluable to the Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust. The awareness raised is an economic benefit to the entire community."
- "It provides education and outreach opportunities."
- "Promotes the beauty of our region."
- "Our rural heritage and character is the most valuable asset that our region has and we need to strengthen and capitalize on this."
- "Strengthening knowledge."
- "It is beneficial to the residents who love the area and want to keep it as natural as possible. It is beneficial to tourists who, now more than ever, need to escape congested areas and breathe fresh air in the mountains."
- "It keeps the idea of heritage in front of the public."



Members of the EMHR responded to, "What do you feel is the best reason for visiting or living in the Endless Mountains region? (i.e. its history; outdoor recreation; landscapes; agriculture; etc.)" The

intention of this question was to identify what members perceive as the draw to the region. Responses included:

- "The rural landscape but close enough to metropolitan areas. Great local and regional history and living in the Keystone commonwealth so important to the beginnings of the country."
- "Scenic beautiful, rural landscape and the pride local residents have that keeps them motivated to preserve the history and beauty of the region."
- "Outdoor recreation connected to its history."

- "The history and unchanging landscape."
- · "Quality of Life."
- "Landscapes and leisure lifestyle free of urban pollution and stress."
- "Outdoor recreation is tops on the list for living and visiting."
- "Living in the Endless Mountains is a reason, in itself, to never leave. Added to your list is "friendly, helpful and caring people.""
- "I think our region's outdoor recreation, cultural opportunities, and history are the best reason to visit the region."

Members of the EMHR responded to, "If asked about the Endless Mountains Heritage Region by someone considering membership, how would you respond?" The intention

history join region better EMHR membership SUPPORT great organization organization local

of this question was to identify how others might market EMHR. Responses included:

- "Go for it. You will not be disappointed. In fact pleasantly surprised about the organization's accomplishments since 1998."
- "I would explain to them how much the EMHR does to help local organizations achieve their goals that add to the preservation of history and shared knowledge about that history."
- "It is a good investment for our region."
- "Our investment in our region will pay off for our region's economic and environmental future."
- "Please support the mission of the EMHR to maintain and celebrate our unique landscapes the mountains, the fields and streams, the forests."
- "Good networking and educational opportunities."
- "Great organization that supports the region and the environment."

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE FURTHER

- ➤ EMHR builds strong, valued relationships. What would it take to deepen the existing relationships that exist? What would it take to expand the pool of potential partners by looking beyond the physical and programmatic "borders" of the EMHR? Who else might need, want, or benefit from what the EMHR has to offer?
- ➤ EMHR leverages access to audiences for other partner organizations. What would it make possible for people living, working, and learning in the region if EMHR built on this strength to engage new audiences?
- ➤ EMHR builds connections that reduce isolation. What would it take to maximize connection building and enhance access to the region? What avenues and tools exist to enhance access and connection? Particularly in a time of encouraged distancing, what would it take to connect people to the wealth of resources available in the region? What would it make possible for those who become connected?
- ➤ EMHR improves quality of life. Who else might care about improving quality of life? Who else may want to improve their quality of life or the quality of life of people they know?
- EMHR provides access to financial resources that have a direct positive impact. What would it take to build more bridges between those with resources who want to have direct impact and those with needs?
- ➤ EMHR has connected audiences to history and heritage. What would it take to continue to make these connections and invite new audiences to "events"? What would it take to enhance access to experiences? Who has not yet been engaged?

REVENUE MIX

Diversifying revenue sources has long been a recommendation for nonprofit organizations. Depending on a single source of income presents risks. Any revenue type comes with varied levels of reliability and costs. An organization needs to determine when and to what degree diversification makes sense at any given time.

The impact of COVID-19 has been globally extraordinary. Nonprofits will not escape having some impact, although the impact is likely to vary depending to the industry. Some industries have seen revenue increases, potentially aligning with increased demand. Stimulus and other funding may have mitigated or delayed financial impacts.

EMHR is heavily dependent on government grants, with over 90% of budget revenue projected to come through this avenue. Government funding continues to be difficult to predict because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Agreement on stimulus strategies is elusive and pandemic coasts are being incurred that will need to be paid. Every effort will need to be made to preserve existing government investment, identify and pursue continuation funding, and take advantage of new opportunities that may present themselves.

Simultaneously, EMHR has the opportunity to build up other revenue sources and to consider creative strategies to strengthen applications for state and federal dollars. Government funds will need to leverage greater impact in communities. Collaborative applications and creative partnerships that demonstrate cooperation and community economic development opportunities are a strong strategy. While EMHR has demonstrated success with government grant funding, collaborative applications may provide access to other sources such as:

Historic Preservation Fund – African American Civil Rights Preservation Grant Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Historic Preservation Fund – History of Equal Rights Preservation Grants Department of the Interior National Park Service

Historic Preservation Fund – Save America's Treasures Preservation Grants Department of the Interior National Park Service

Historic Preservation Fund – African American Civil Rights History Grants Department of the Interior National Park Service

Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions National Endowment for the Humanities

Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections National Endowment for the Humanities

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) Keystone Historic Preservation Planning Grants

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) Keystone Historic Preservation Construction Grants

A list of potential grant opportunities based on a subject and geographic search of Foundation Directory Online is attached at the end of this report.

Grow an individual giving program. Individual giving often feels like a slow strategy to develop, although the rewards may be significant. An individual giving program may support another revenue development strategy – feeding into a corporate matching program, leveraging a volunteer grant, boosting a membership campaign, and/or demonstrating engagement in support of a foundation application.

- Begin building an audience through those who are already close to EMHR. This may include Board, volunteers, staff, members, and others connected or engaged in some way.
- Purchasing a mailing list is one strategy for growing an individual giving program. It may also be utilized for awareness raising. If a decision is made to invest in a mailing list, the intentions should be clear in advance to get the best return on the investment.
- Set realistic and measurable goals for initial growth of an individual giving program and retention of individual donors year over year.
- Strong individual giving programs are built on solid relationships. Take the time and set goals to have at least 1-2 conversations each month with prospective individual donors. Listen to interests, values, and explore what it would take to make a financial contribution.

Grow a corporate giving program. Corporate giving would further diversify EMHR's revenue mix. Strategies vary in terms of administrative cost and labor intensity, both of which should be considerations when deciding to move forward.

- Establish and maintain a structure to pursue matching gift opportunities. Language about matching gifts should be woven into an individual giving program from the beginning. When an individual gift is solicited/received is an ideal time to encourage a donor to investigate if their employer matches giving. Establish a system to track and follow up on this potential revenue.
- Corporate giving may include event/program sponsorship or grants. Solicitations for either are enhanced with proposals that demonstrate a program's ability to positively impact an audience or community that a corporate prospect is also invested in. A corporate prospect

may also be interested in potential positive exposure that can be achieved. Consider developing proposals for companies, even if they do not have establish giving programs.

- Solicit companies with established giving programs. For new prospects, a modest introductory solicitation may open new doors. Establishing relationships is key, so capitalize on business relationships being established through Chambers of Commerce and other business engagement.
- Like individual giving programs, corporate giving programs is strengthened through good relationship building. Take the time and set goals to have at least 1-2 conversations each month with prospective business donors. Listen to interests, values, and explore what it would take to make a financial contribution.
- Explore establishing a corporate volunteer program, inviting businesses to volunteer with EMHR
 through a giving day or sharing information with human resources or other appropriate
 department about how a business could encourage their employees to volunteer with EMHR.
 Building the volunteer relationship may provide a point of entry for giving.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

While membership campaigns can be challenging and feel labor-intensive, they are often critical to the continued success of an organization. Membership is about belonging. Membership is about intentionally developing a deep relationship with your constituents. These relationships amplify your message and impact and create a pool of organizational ambassadors.

Membership marketing can employ several strategies, which may feel overwhelming. Make the work manageable and focus on quality over quantity. Work in phases if necessary. In the case of EMHR, this may mean, for example, building and testing a strategy or strategies in a particular county rather than implementing a campaign across the entire region. Consider where there is the greatest support or interest, start there, and build. One size rarely fits all, so pay attention to nuances that may be particular to an audience and apply them appropriately.

Set initial goals that are clear and achievable and measure them. This is both motivational and inspiring. If you secure grant funding or identify a sponsor, communicating this progress back demonstrates return on investment and lays a foundation for leveraging additional funds. If you have suggested a benefit to a sponsor, measure that so there is an ability to report this progress and identify strategies to maximize it.

Multiple touch points and consistent, repetitive messaging is key to any campaign. Plan to cross-promote your campaign, building a budget that includes paid advertising and other collateral. These can be essential complimentary components to social media, email, and other online strategies, particularly if you are reaching an audience that may be interested in "disconnecting."

Make membership personal. Whether marketing to prospective members or existing members who you want to remain in the EMHR family, personalizing communications in as many ways as possible can make a difference.

- Track how individuals engage with EMHR so that you may reference those points of engagement when inviting them to become a member or renew their membership.
- Personalize multi-media strategies whenever possible to acknowledge individual engagement and acknowledge/solicit membership post-engagement.
- Incentivize new membership or membership upgrades in personalized invitations to events or other communications.
- Engage current members in membership campaigns, featuring them and their endorsement of EMHR membership. Consider an incentivized referral program that rewards current members for reaching out to their sphere of influence to recruit EMHR members.
- Be intentional about how new members are welcomed and engaged, ensuring their expectations
 are met and the experience is one that they have the opportunity to and would, immediately and
 in the future, recommend to others.

Create VIP experiences. Identify unique experiences to offer members at different levels. With each increased level of pricing, offering a new and different experience may entice members to "move up".

- Build experiences that support a "local" focus, tapping into those who want to stay and
 invest in their local areas. A local campaign is an opportunity to create partnerships
 throughout the business community.
- Create opportunities to experience EMHR throughout the entire region, encouraging people to
 move within their own and neighboring counties. While individuals are often locally focused,
 exposure to regional opportunities are still an incentive and align with EMHR's mission.
- Collaborate with grantees to create unique opportunities that combine experience and mission impact while cross-promoting organizations.
- Collaborate with other businesses in the area to create unique experiential opportunities available only through an EMHR membership that also support economic development.

Confidently market EMHR. Individuals are considering membership or have previously become members because they like what EMHR is doing and has to offer. Make this mission front and center in all marketing. Focus on what EMHR is making possible.

- Caption photos on the website and other marketing materials with descriptions of unique experiences and events available at different membership levels, emphasizing the value of EMHR membership.
- Make marketing materials available at physical sites throughout the region that include images and descriptions of how that location is uniquely experienced with an EMHR membership.
- Collaborate with EMHR grantees and other community partners to distribute membership marketing materials.

Seek sponsorship and/or grant funding to support a membership campaign and materials that cross promote EMHR, grantees, and other community businesses. In addition to funding the cost of the marketing materials and membership campaign, treat cross-promotion as a community and economic development opportunity.

- Explore opportunities for cost sharing or sponsorship with Chambers of Commerce, other members of Chambers of Commerce, and corporations in the region.
- Be mindful of any additional COVID stimulus funds that may become available in coming months.

Engage others in your membership development efforts. Membership development requires energy. Others in the EMHR sphere may be willing and able to help. Invite others to participate on an ongoing committee and/or in time-limited campaign development.

- Identify existing members who are especially close to and engaged with EMHR.
- Identify individuals or groups who engage with EMHR but have not yet become a member.
- Reach out to a mix of individuals and group so that you have a mix of membership perspectives and voices – individuals, families, employers, grantees, other businesses, or more.
- Invite members to play a role in events and highlight them in electronic and print publications, recognizing members and giving them the opportunity to give voice to the value of EMHR membership.

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

A well-orchestrated awareness campaign increases enthusiasm and support for your organization and mission. In the case of EMHR, it may be able to leverage additional support for grantees and other heritage projects throughout the region.

A primary purpose to an awareness campaign is to reach out to the public regularly and motivate that public to take some sort of action. Awareness is often a first step, increasing recognition. From there, other objectives may include generating support for a particular initiative, increasing engagement, and/or raising funds. Over time, raising awareness may become a passive, tertiary goal.

An awareness campaign for EMHR has the opportunity to tie into different organizational goals, including diversifying fundraising and increasing membership.

In building an awareness campaign, identifying measurable metrics at the start helps to ensure a well-designed campaign stays on track. With defined parameters, EMHR can build a budget, timeline, and milestones. As with membership development and fundraising efforts, setting a clear goal at the start helps to test which strategies are the most effective. Testing a campaign in a specific county may inform approaches in other parts of the region.

Identify an audience. Narrowing an audience may be a wise first step to an awareness campaign. In the absence of a clearly defined audience, testing a few different strategies may be insightful.

- Select a county within the EMHR and focus on that county's population. Purchasing mailing lists by zip code gives broad access via print. Identifying a sponsor in the specific area may mitigate the cost of the list, print, and postage costs.
- Identify an activity or location that is well trafficked. The timing of this approach may be seasonally dependent. Design a campaign based on this specific persona.

Clarify communications channels to reach audience. Multi-channel campaigns provide the broadest reach and likelihood of touching the intended audience.

- Build budget for direct mail pieces and other branded collateral for distribution.
- Translate message for website, social media, and as many other channels as possible.

Create call to action. A simple call to action helps measure the effectiveness of outreach strategies for an awareness campaign. As this is an effort to build audience, EMHR wants to be able to capture information such as names, mailing addresses, and email addresses.

- Determine a cause-focused call to action that drives an audience to EMHR.
- Ensure pathways into EMHR by mail, email, website, QR code, or other channels.

- Capitalize on this opportunity to begin a personal relationship by using campaing language unique to EMHR that builds a positive and personal relationship. (example: "I am Endlessly Better")
- Utilize relevant data and responses from the survey to identify previously successful strategies for engagement to inform this and future actions.

Create next steps or moves management that aligns with membership development and fundraising goals. As new engagement occurs, be prepared to incorporate individuals into engagement strategies.

- Have prospective donor conversations with new individuals engaging with EMHR. These conversations could also explore their interest in membership.
- Add newly engaged individuals into membership development strategies.

For any organization, EMHR included, it is vital to remain purpose-focused and engage the broader audience around vision and mission. It is easy to fall into the trap of only talking about the organization and its need. EMHR has the ability to illustrate clearly the value of investment people are making when it paints the picture of what it makes possible for the region. The initial survey findings articulate many strengths, which lay a strong foundation for resource development.

EMHR has a history in building strong, valued relationships. This strength can information conversations about funding and membership. An audience has called out the value of being in relationship with EMHR. Invite those individuals to be ambassadors in fundraising build the chorus of voices that champion the importance of EMHR.

This is a time, and there is opportunity, to build collaborative relationships to expose people to the region's heritage. This can support locally based awareness raising initiatives, while making the beauty of the region and the work of EMHR more accessible through such things as video tours, online heritage talks, and other programming. Such collaborative programming is appealing to funders.

As EMHR moves to this next level, remember that investing in EMHR is investing endless connections.

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FOUNDATION DIRECTORY ONLINE - GRANT SEARCH RESULTS

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The Philadelphia Foundation		http://www.philafound.org
The William Penn Foundation	(215) 988-1830	http://www.piniaround.org
M&T Charitable Foundation	716-848-7303	https://www.milamperimoundation.org
Connelly Foundation		http://www.nco.com/about-mi/community-mvoivement/chantable-contributions
Richard King Mellon Foundation	(412) 392-2800	- · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Philadelphia Cultural Fund, Inc.		http://www.philaculturalfund.org
Pennsylvania Humanities Council	(215) 925-1005	http://www.pahumanities.org
The Hamilton Family Foundation		http://hamiltonfamilyfoundation.org
The Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc.	(800) 218-9946	http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation/index.cfm
McCune Foundation		http://www.mccune.org
Hillman Family Foundations		http://hillmanfamilyfoundations.org
The McLean Contributionship	. ,	http://fdnweb.org/mclean
The Heinz Endowments		http://www.heinz.org
The PNC Foundation		https://www.pnc.com/en/about-pnc/corporate-responsibility/philanthropy/pnc-foundation.html
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Allegheny Foundation	(412) 392-2900	http://www.scaife.com/alleghen.html
The Barra Foundation, Inc.	(610) 964-7601	http://www.barrafoundation.org
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The Grable Foundation	(412) 471-7550	http://www.grable.org
Samuel S. Fels Fund	(215) 731-9455	http://www.samfels.org
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National Park Service	(202) 208-6843	https://www.nps.gov
Claneil Foundation, Inc.	(610) 941-1131	http://www.claneil.org
Eden Hall Foundation	(412) 642-6697	http://www.edenhallfdn.org
The Century Fund Trust	(610) 434-4000	
Donald B. and Dorothy L. Stabler Foundation	(717) 231-6639	http://www.stablerfoundation.org
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Harry C. Trexler Trust	. ,	http://www.trexlertrust.org
The Anne L. and George H. Clapp Charitable and Educational Trust	(412) 234-1634	
John R. McCune Charitable Trust	(216) 257-4701	
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Independence Foundation	. ,	http://independencefoundation.org/about-us
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The Lenfest Foundation, Inc.		http://www.lenfestfoundation.org
Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation		http://pottstownfoundation.org
1772 Foundation, Inc.		http://www.1772foundation.org
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Crystal Trust	(302) 651-0533	
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First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania	(570) 321-1500	https://www.fcfpartnership.org/
PPL Foundation		https://www.pplweb.com/communities/ppl-foundation/
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The Rosenlund Family Foundation	(215) 419-6000 http://rosenlundfamilyfoundation.org
Robert C. Hoffman Charitable Endowment Trust	(412) 768-5898
Richard L. Yuengling Jr. Charitable Foundation	(570) 622-5010
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Sidney and Sandy Brown Foundation, Inc.	(856) 679-4486
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Richard and Dana Green Philanthropic Foundation	(412) 391-2920
Thrivent Foundation	(612) 844-7143 https://www.thrivent.com/foundation
The Lee F. & Phoebe A. Driscoll Family Foundation	(484) 770-8530
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Nimick Forbesway Foundation	(412) 562-1843 http://www.nimickforbeswayfoundation.org
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The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Inc.	(414) 291-9915 http://www.bradleyfdn.org/
PPG Industries Foundation	(412) 434-2962 http://www.ppgcommunities.com/Home.aspx
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The Mark and Mitzi Hofmann Foundation	(412) 762-5157
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Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh	(412) 681-8000 http://www.jfedpgh.org
The H. Glenn Sample, Jr., M.D. Memorial Fund	(412) 768-9969 http://see footnotes
Irene C. Shea Charitable Foundation	(412) 762-3792
Communities Foundation of Texas, Inc.	(214) 750-4222 https://www.cftexas.org/
Gardner Family Foundation	(717) 245-0040
M. J. Surgala Trust	(814) 838-4921
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S & T Bancorp Charitable Foundation	(724) 465-1443
The Thomas H. and Mary Williams Shoemaker Fund	(302) 798-3078 http://www.shoemakerfund.org
The Air Products Foundation	(610) 481-2978
Babcock Charitable Trust	(302) 428-6099
The Beneficial Foundation	(215) 864-6000 https://www.thebeneficial.com/foundation-mission.asp
Dollar Bank Foundation	(412) 261-3062
Pembroke Foundation	(814) 368-7110
The Ahmanson Foundation	
Francis Beidler Foundation	(310) 278-0770 http://www.theahmansonfoundation.org (312) 922-3792
Marilyn K. Kiefer Foundation	(724) 887-8330
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Ralph E. Cades Family Foundation	(215) 546-0404
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P. A. Staples Testamentary Trust	(717) 534-3225
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David S. Cammack Foundation	(703) 836-8801
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	(202) 857-0166 http://www.nfwf.org
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Welfare Foundation, Inc.	(302) 683-8245
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High Foundation	(717) 293-4444
The Drumcliff Foundation	(215) 849-9080
Adams County Community Foundation, Inc.	(717) 337-0060 http://www.adamscountycf.org
Dexter F. and Dorothy H. Baker Foundation	(610) 533-2837
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Centre Foundation - Pop Up Ave	(814) 237-6229 https://www.centre-foundation.org/
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W. P. Snyder III Charitable Fund	(412) 281-6090
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Willary Foundation	(570) 961-6952 http://www.willary.org
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Giant Eagle Foundation	(412) 963-6200
The Foundation for Enhancing Communities	(717) 236-5040 http://www.tfec.org
United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania	(412) 261-6010 https://uwswpa.org/
Crawford Heritage Community Foundation	(814) 336-5206 http://www.crawfordheritage.org
Bridge Builders Community Foundations	(814) 677-8687 http://www.bbcf.org
The Rail Heritage Trust	(913) 259-2110
Ethel Sergeant Clark Smith Memorial Fund	(800) 352-3705 https://www.wellsfargo.com/privatefoundationgrants/smith
Rebecca Swartzlander Testamentary Trust f/b/o Swartzlander Community High School	888-730-4933
Martha Mack Lewis Foundation	(412) 768-9969
Northampton County Bar Association Charitable Fund	(610) 351-5353 http://www.lehighvalleyfoundation.org
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Milton G. Hulme Charitable Foundation	(412) 781-5660
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