

OIL HERITAGE REGION MANAGEMENT PLAN AUGMENTATION ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Prepared for the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism



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prepared by

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in association with

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Credits

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1. Purpose and Need

1.1. Introduction

In 2004 the U.S. Congress enacted legislation to create the Oil Region National Heritage Area to recognize the historic, cultural and natural resources of this part of Northwestern Pennsylvania and their importance to the nation's history. This region bears the imprint of the oil industry: from the town centers that were developed with oil profits to the oil leases and equipment that dot the landscape and are often plainly visible from the road. The Oil Region has functioned as a Pennsylvania State Heritage Area since 1994 and has an active cadre of individuals and organizations committed to the preservation, promotion, development and support of destinations within the Oil Region, interpretation of the themes of the region's unique history at a variety of sites, as well as advancing quality of life improvements for its residents through increased activity in the region.

In order to take advantage of National Heritage Area (NHA) designation, the Oil Region's current Management Plan must be updated to accommodate changes appropriate to the NHA status and the Secretary of the Interior must accept the plan. This Environmental Assessment has been prepared to consider the environmental impacts of such federal action, in compliance with relevant federal guidelines.

1.2. Project Location

The Oil Heritage Region includes 708 square miles that in 2000 had 65,591 residents in 33 municipalities. The area encompasses all of Venango County, plus the City of Titusville and Oil Creek Township in eastern Crawford County in rural northwestern Pennsylvania. The story of oil is interpreted in many venues, ranging from the state-operated Drake Well Museum, a National Historic Landmark on the site where the initial well was drilled, to small locally managed museums and collections. The area has a dramatic natural landscape oriented to the Allegheny River and its tributaries, including the Oil Creek Valley, the locus of "oil fever" in the second half of the 19th century.

1.3. Background

The initial plan for the Oil Heritage Region was prepared in 1994 (more commonly referred to as the Management Action Plan for the Oil Heritage Region) by a consulting team assembled by Lane, Frenchman and Associates, Inc. in collaboration with the Oil Region Heritage Park Council, County of Venango, and the State Heritage Park Interagency Taskforce. Since then, the Oil Heritage Region has incorporated, was classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, and has carried out or is midway through detailed planning of many of the studies and projects recommended in the 1994 Management Action Plan (MAP).

In 1998, the "Interpretive Prospectus for the Oil Heritage Region" was prepared by a consultant team assembled by Christopher Chadbourne and Associates in collaboration with the OHR, Inc. Board of Directors in order to provide an expanded interpretive framework and more detailed plans for the various interpretive projects and venues in "the valley that changed the world."

In 2004, a major Update to the OHR MAP was prepared for the Oil Heritage Region, Inc. and its successor organization, the Oil Region Alliance, by ICON architecture, inc. Almost immediately following the completion of the 2004 Plan Update, the U.S. Congress designated

the Oil Region as a National Heritage Area, bringing some important new opportunities to the region, but also requiring some augmentation to its Plan to comply with federal requirements and to reflect its larger importance and potentials.

1.4. Purpose

The purpose of the Environmental Assessment is to evaluate the probable impacts of the proposed future actions recommended by the augmented plan. The Oil Region Alliance (ORA) is submitting the prior plans plus an augmentation to these documents, accompanied by this Environmental Assessment, for review and approval by the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor of Pennsylvania. The proposed federal action authorized by the Act is the Secretary's review and approval of the plan, enabling a continued flow of federal funds and/or technical assistance pursuant to the approved plan.

1.5. Governing Regulations

Requirements of Public Law 108-447 establishing ORNHA

The legislation creating the ORNHA has several key requirements that must be met in this Plan Augmentation. In this section, the 1994 Plan, as modified by the 2004 Update, and as further augmented by the 2006 Plan Augmentation, are referred to collectively as the ORNHA Plan.

The ORNHA Plan must comply with procedural requirement of the National Park Service (NPS), must respond to specific requirements defined in Public Law 108-447 (also known as the Oil Region National Heritage Area Act or the "Act"), and must incorporate an Environmental Assessment that complies with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The broad purpose of the "Act" is to " . . . enhance a cooperative management framework to assist the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, its units of local government, and area citizens in conserving, enhancing, and interpreting the significant features of the lands, water, and structures of the Oil Region, in a manner consistent with compatible economic development for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the United States."

The Act requires that the ORNHA Management Entity (ORA) produce a Management Plan that:

- (1) Presents comprehensive strategies and recommendations for conservation, funding, management, and development of the Heritage Area;
- (2) Takes into consideration existing state, county, and local plans and involves residents, public agencies, and private organizations working in the Heritage Area;
- (3) Includes a description of actions that units of government and private organizations have agreed to take to protect the resources of the Heritage Area;

¹ The text in this section is largely excerpted from a report commissioned by the National Park Service in 2000 that recommended support for designation of the Oil Heritage Region as a National Heritage Area.

² Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, August 13, 2004

- (4) Specifies the existing and potential sources of funding to protect, manage, and develop the Heritage Area;
- (5) Includes an inventory of the resources contained in the Heritage Area, including a list of any property in the Heritage Area that is related to the themes of the Heritage Area and that should be preserved, restored, managed, developed, or maintained because of its natural, cultural, historic, recreational, or scenic significance;
- (6) Describes a program for implementation of the management plan by the management entity, including plans for restoration and construction, and specific commitments for implementation that have been made by the management entity and any other persons for the first 5 years of implementation;
- (7) Lists any revisions to the boundaries of the Heritage Area proposed by the management entity and requested by the affected local government; and
- (8) Includes an interpretation plan for the Heritage Area.

The Act specifies that “. . . the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Governor of Pennsylvania, shall approve or disapprove such management plan not later than 90 days after receiving such plan. In approving the plan, the Secretary shall take into consideration the following criteria:

- The extent to which the management plan adequately preserves and protects the natural, cultural, and historical resources of the Heritage Area.
- The level of public participation in the development of the management plan.
- The extent to which the board of directors of the management entity is representative of the local government and a wide range of interested organizations and citizens.”

The substantial planning and implementation work that has been recently completed within the Oil Region over the last dozen years has addressed many of these concerns. The key topics that must be addressed in the Plan Augmentation include: (1) a definition of key resources, updating the information from the 1994 Plan; (2) amplification of the preservation element of the plan, building on the 1994 Plan and associated implementation actions since that time; (3) expansion of the partnership elements of the 2004 Plan, recognizing the potential for new partners with federal recognition and the relatively recent formation of the Oil Region Alliance (see Section 2.3), and; (4) adaptation of the action agenda, costs, and phasing of the 2004 Plan to reflect several significant changes since its completion as well as any changes necessitated by items (1) through (3).

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321-4347)

This law requires the consideration of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of all federally funded projects. All federal agencies are required to prepare detailed studies of impacts and alternatives to large actions by the federal government. NEPA also requires that the interested and affected public be involved in the study process before decisions are made. This Environmental Assessment has been prepared under NEPA guidelines to determine if the proposal has the potential for significant impacts, and is expected to lead to the preparation of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470)

This section requires that federal agencies with direct or indirect jurisdiction over a federal, federally assisted, or federally licensed undertaking afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the state Historic Preservation Office a reasonable opportunity to comment on undertakings that affect properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places before the agency's approval of such an action.

National Park Service (NPS) Director's Order 2: Park Planning (1998)

This guidance describes the decision-making process that results in the goals and actions for the national park system and those units of the national trails system administered by the National Park Service.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543)

This act requires consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Services on any federal action that may affect endangered or threatened species or candidate species, or may result in adverse modifications of critical habitat.

Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 regarding Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection

These orders direct the NPS to avoid, to the extent possible, the long-and short-term adverse impacts associated with modifying or occupying floodplains and wetlands. The orders also direct the NPS to avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain or wetland development whenever there is a practicable alternative.

Executive Order 12898 regarding Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations

This order directs federal agencies to assess whether their actions have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations.

Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act (AHPA), 1974 (16 U.S.C. 469)

The AHPA addresses impacts to archaeological and historic resources by federal dam construction or any alteration of the terrain caused as a result of any federal construction project or federally licensed activity or program. The act directs federal agencies to notify the Secretary of the Interior when they find that a federal or federally assisted, licensed, or permitted project may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, prehistoric or archaeological data.

1.6. Relationship to Other Planning Efforts

The Oil Region Heritage Area has been a designated Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Heritage Area for a dozen years; the boundary of this area is identical to that established with the designation of the ORNHA. County, state, and municipal entities are all represented on the Board of ORA and on the Heritage Advisory Council, whose members are noted on the credits of this plan and whose functions are described in Section 4.1.1, below. Regional and local planning initiatives are well coordinated with the ORNHA because of this overlap and include the following:

- **ORA Work Plan** (2006 and ongoing) – ORA's economic development group is placing significant emphasis on attracting new industry and supporting existing

businesses across the region. In the heritage group of ORA, several significant projects are underway, with assistance from the state as well as from private and other public sources, including several preservation initiatives (see Chapter 5) and improvement to recreational trails and resources, including interpretation. The Route 8 & 62 Corridor Project is an initiative that could cross-cut economic development and preservation, including an analysis of multiple buildings along a corridor including Franklin and Oil City and prototype proposals to encourage private owners to undertake adaptive reuse. The entity is undertaking a cooperative marketing plan to increase and supplement tourism, including a branding effort to increase the visibility of ORA and ORNHA.

- **Drake Well Museum (DWM) rehabilitation plan** (ongoing) – In compliance with the 2004 Plan, but fulfilling a long-intended desire of the state, planning and design is underway for a multi-million dollar expansion and rehabilitation of the exhibits and museum facility at DWM. This effort will incorporate proposals of the 2004 Plan to increase boomtown interpretation at this major regional destination, ranked 7th in visitation out of the 26 sites and museums that PHMC administers.
- **Venango County Comprehensive Plan (2004)** – This plan was undertaken by the county and deals with large scale infrastructure (water, sewer, and transportation), general land use, housing needs, community facilities, and the inter-relationships of the multiple entities engaged with these services and/or facilities. The key actors are the Venango County Commissioners and the Venango County Planning Commission; the plan is consistent to the maximum extent possible with the existing municipal planning documents. The plan recognizes the role of ORA in dealing with industrial and business development, preservation, and several of its other recommendations. The plan explicitly supports the implementation of the Oil Heritage Region’s Management Action Plan to more fully utilize cultural resources in the county as an economic development resource.
- **Crawford County Comprehensive Plan (2005)** – This plan, recently updated from a 2000 version, has a similar topical coverage to the Venango County Comprehensive Plan, but proposes a preferred land use pattern that emphasizes a “centers” concept that encourages more concentrated development in order to reduce sprawl and strip development, encourage community formation, coordinated land use and services development, and conservation of open space. As Titusville and Oil Creek Township (the only parts of Crawford County within the boundary of the ORNHA) are located at the southeastern corner of the county, no specific recommendations are included in this broad document that deal with ORNHA, excepting a call for coordinated inter-governmental action and coordination with adjacent jurisdictions.
- **Oil Creek Region Comprehensive Plan (2000)** – This plan was prepared by a common effort of the City of Titusville, the Boroughs of Centerville, Hydetown, and Pleasantville, and the Townships of Allegheny, Cherrytree, Oil Creek (Crawford County), Oil Creek (Venango County), and Southwest. This group includes portions of Crawford, Venango, and Warren Counties and partially overlaps with the boundary of the ORNHA. The intent was to undertake coordinated planning for communities that share a set of resources that are centered on Titusville (which has approximately half the population of the study area) and to encourage cooperative action from the many municipal and special purpose entities within this area. Oil Creek, Route 8, and

railroad connections link these areas and are topics of common concern. The plan generally supports the improvements proposed to DWM, encourages more effective historic preservation and related ordinances, supports rehabilitation of historic properties in Titusville, and incorporates reference to the recreational and regional bike trail linkages referred to in the OHR Management Plan Update.

- **River Management Plan (1996)** – This plan was prepared by the Allegheny National Forest within the U. S. Department of Agriculture with extensive public input prior to its adoption. Three distinct sections of the Allegheny River are officially classified as “Recreational,” which is defined as areas “that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment in the past (U.S.P.L. 90-542, 1968).” The two recreational segments located within the Oil Region are from Franklin downstream to the former refinery at Emlenton, a 32-mile stretch; and from Alcorn Island just north/upstream of Oil City proceeding upriver to the Hunters Station Bridge at the Forest/Venango County line, a river distance of approximately 7 miles. The plan explicitly supports the implementation of the Oil Heritage Region’s Management Action Plan and identifies possible project partners for specific endeavors ranging from river safety improvements to increased public recreational access, to cultural preservation of historic sites and oil artifacts, to promotion of river resources.

Other concurrent planning activities in process include: (1) study of a possible white water installation along the Oil Creek in Oil City; (2) downtown marketing strategies for Oil City and Franklin; (3) potential reuse of the former Rouseville refinery property for a bio-diesel plant; (4) expansion of the regional recreational trail system by a combination of non-profit and public entities; and (5) various improvements to the OC & T RR rolling stock and facilities.

1.7. Need

The plan update will enable ORA to strengthen its capacity to carry out the activities mandated in the 2004 Act. Submission of the plan for review by the Secretary of the Interior will allow ORA continued access to federal heritage support funding until fifteen years after the initial provision of federal funds to ORA under the Act.

1.8. Environmental Assessment Scoping Issues

On December 14, 2005, ORA staff hosted a public meeting at Parish Hall, Christ Episcopal Church, in Oil City, Pennsylvania at which staff from ICON presented the work plan for the Management Action Plan Augmentation for the Oil Region NHA and solicited comments to identify environmental issues of concern that should be addressed in the Environmental Assessment. Over the course of the meeting, citizens shared ideas about the preservation and partnership aspects of the Plan Augmentation and identified three environmental topics of concern:

- **Riparian zones on rivers & creeks** – a concern was expressed about protection of water quality. The concern was for projects that adjoin rivers and/or creeks to insure that proper methods to protect the environment are used. These might include erosion control, protection of water quality from run-off, and adherence to any state permit requirements.

- Landscape preservation – a concern was expressed that landscape quality along riverfronts be protected, as well as visual character of ridgelines to protect views from intrusion from inappropriate structures, such as cell towers.
- Public access to key resources – a concern was expressed that public access be maintained particularly along edges of area rivers and water bodies.

1.9. Impact Topics Retained for Further Analysis and Dismissed from Analysis

The Oil Heritage Region has been in the process of implementing its plans for over ten years; during that time, there have been a number of implicit concerns expressed by citizens, including preservation of key resources, encouragement of positive economic development, and reinforcement of existing cities and towns across the region. In general, the plans and development projects resulting from this ongoing heritage planning process have been well received with few, if any, environmental concerns expressed about implemented projects. This Plan Augmentation is the first effort requiring an environmental assessment, so there is not a long history on topics of concern.

Further, as a broad-based Plan Augmentation dealing with many efforts that are already underway, the actions immediately specified in document are general and programmatic in nature, meaning that specific project based impacts at a site level cannot at this point be determined at this time. Further, only three environmental topics were touched upon in the scoping meeting of December 14, 2005. Accordingly, this document takes a broad brush and inclusive approach to environmental assessment topics, without removing any such topics from consideration at this time.

2. Alternatives

2.1. Introduction

The alternatives described in this Section take the recent 2004 Management Plan Update for the Oil Region as a point of departure. Three alternatives are proposed, including a “No Action” approach that assumes that the federal government does not take the action to approve a revised Management Plan. The purpose of the No Action option is principally to provide a basis of comparison to which the action alternatives can be compared. The social, economic, and environmental impacts of the three alternatives are compared in the Environmental Assessment at a broad conceptual level commensurate with the scale of the actions defined in the Management Plan.

2.2. *Alternative 1 – No Federal Action (Retain Current Management Plan)*

In this alternative, the existing Management Plan would be unchanged without further response to the requirements of the Oil Region National Heritage Act. If elements of the Management Plan are not developed to respond to the Oil Region NHA Act, further federal funds for coordination, interpretation, preservation, and development purposes will be doubtful. Despite taking no federal action, this alternative would include considerable action by non-federal entities – the state, region, localities, private entities, and ORA – to follow through on implementation of the 2004 Plan Update recommendations. This cooperation would be consistent with what has taken place over the last decade. Key aspects of this alternative include:

- No further Department of the Interior federal funding support would be assumed.
- Funds external to ORA would have to be sought from the same types of sources that have been used in the Oil Region in the past.
- ORA will continue to coordinate implementation through conventional sources, and the existing partnership arrangements in the region would continue.
- The action agenda as defined in the 2004 Plan Update would remain unchanged excepting that, in this option, the Weaver Building implementation elements would be removed from the program, eliminating a significant new attraction in Oil City as well as projected costs of over \$5.4 million.
- This alternative, described in depth in the 2004 Management Plan Update, includes significant improvement actions regarding recreation, interpretation, and accommodations in the region.

2.2.1. Recreation Elements of this Alternative

The 2004 Management Plan Update recommended an ambitious program of recreational trail and facility improvements, intended to strengthen regional linkages and to enable cross-marketing of heritage resources to the significant number of visitors drawn to the region's excellent recreational attractions. Key recommendations of the Update that would remain part of this Alternative, as shown in Figure 1, include:

- **Continued expansion of the recreational trail system.** The highest priority actions of the Update were completion of the trail gaps between Petroleum Centre and Oil City and the trail connection to Emlenton, which will require agreements to traverse the former Rouseville and Emlenton refinery sites. Additionally, the Update recommended extended connections of the trail system to activity centers at the edges of the OHR boundary and beyond, including linkages to Spartansburg in Crawford County, Clarion County, Mercer County, along the Allegheny River, and to Foxburg. Another element of the trail system was the addition of spur trails to connect to destinations, such as Two Mile Run County Park, area downtowns, and other destinations of interest. In combination, trail completions, extensions, and spurs could add as many as 100 miles of additional trails over time, and should be supplemented with trailheads, support services, and scenic overlooks.
- **Improvements to enable more intensive use of the Allegheny River for boating and fishing.** These improvements included additional river access points in Emlenton, Kennerdell, and President and new community castways in core communities to expand recreational opportunities close to existing centers of population and recreational activity.

2.2.2. Interpretation Elements of this Alternative

The emphasis of the 2004 Plan Update was to build upon the strengths of these core attractions and to build linkages among attractions in the region, including the following major recommendations that would remain part of Alternative 1, as shown in Figure 2:

- **At Drake Well Museum,** large-scale changes to improve interpretation were recommended and are being implemented by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. These will include a Boomtown installation within the museum, reorganization of exhibits, a new audio-visual experience, and supplemental site interpretation.
- **Enhancement of other core interpretive sites** with supplemental exhibits, audio interpretation, and supplementary guide materials, including Rynd Farm, Perry Street Station, the Oil Creek & Titusville Railroad, the Petroleum Centre area, and Oil Creek State Park. Relatively modest cost improvements at each of these venues could improve the visitor experience and take advantage of the inherent quality of these sites and their existing interpretation.
- **A feasibility study is recommended for a natural gas museum or exhibit.** The collection of artifacts from the United Natural Gas Company offers significant interpretive potential, and the study will determine the most effective approach to develop exhibits and archives for these resources.

Additionally, the 2004 Update recommended strengthening the **brand and identity of the region** and expanded regional signage.

2.2.3. Other Elements of the 2004 Update incorporated into Alternative 1

The 2004 Update considered several other actions that should be considered part of Alternative 1. These included: (1) a feasibility study for supplemental archive space in the region; (2) a series of measures to interpret the Boomtown history of the region; (3) creation of an accommodations initiative for specialty accommodations to increase the region's supply

by approximately 60%, including technical and financial assistance; (4) a broadly defined, unspecified grant program for preservation and educational projects, and (4) management support for the foregoing activities.

2.3. Assumptions Common to All Action Alternatives

In comparison to many other National Heritage Areas that have prepared Management Plans, the Oil Region starts with a relatively recent Plan Update (2004) and a twelve-year history of effective planning and resource analysis, going back to the first Plan for the state heritage park in 1994. Moreover, the Oil Region has implemented many recommendations from these predecessor plans in a systematic way, due to the leadership of Oil Heritage Region, Inc. (OHR) and its recent successor, the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism. (ORA)

The following assumptions apply to the action alternatives (Alternatives 2 and 3, below) in the Plan Augmentation:

1. ORA will continue to increase its effectiveness in integrating heritage planning and implementation with economic development and tourist support activities and programs.
2. Federal funding from the Department of the Interior will be provided over time, up to limits defined in Public Law 108-447 (the “Oil Region National Heritage Area Act”).
3. The following key recommendations of the 2004 Management Plan Update remain valid and will continue to be major elements of the ORNHA agenda:
 - a. Regional recreation and trail improvements, at the scale and approximate location defined in the 2004 Plan Update.
 - b. Interpretation improvements, generally defined in the 2004 Plan Update, including the assumption that major exhibit and museum expansion plans for the Drake Well Museum will be funded and implemented.
 - c. Aggressive implementation of accommodations recommendations, including the interim goal of additional specialty units and a coordinated program of incentives and technical assistance to reach the goals defined in the 2004 Plan Update.
4. The funds allocated to the Weaver Building would be redirected into other preservation and economic development initiatives.

2.4. Alternative 2 – Modify Current Plan to Expand Preservation and Economic Development Program to Address Opportunities Across the Region

This Alternative incorporates all common assumptions cited in the preceding section and represents an opportunistic approach to preservation and economic development that would orient towards potential projects across the entirety of the NHA where ORA would partner with willing owners or cooperating public entities who are prepared to commit funds to preservation and rehabilitation projects that meet the guidelines defined in Section 5. The idea would be to support the “best” projects that have willing partners, wherever they are located. The intent of this Alternative is shown in Figure 3.

This approach would modify the current plan by developing regional technical assistance tools and methods that would be widely useful across the region. Additionally, this approach would

include the capability to provide catalyst assistance to partner projects that can attract private commitments across the region.

In this option, all elements from the Recreation, Interpretation, and Accommodations parts of the 2004 Update would be included. Examples of preservation programs and project types that would be consistent with this approach might include:

- Resource documentation assistance to notable properties across the region, potentially with a special focus on sites that are particularly linked to the oil and/or gas industry.
- Building conservation technical assistance emphasizing making expertise and information about techniques and services accessible to owners and contractors in the region.
- Education and recognition programs that provide assistance to large and small communities, as well as to other entities in developing innovative curricula, marker programs, etc. ORA investment/partnerships in rehabilitation projects – potentially including loans and/or grants that emphasize assistance to private owners and/or public entities who are willing to partner with ORA communities to make significant investments in properties. For example, in this scenario, investment in buildings along the Route 8 & 62 corridor where owners are prepared to partner with ORA might be encouraged, even if these sites are not within designated historic districts.
- Regulatory tools to preserve cultural resources – development of sample ordinances for local historic districts, demolition delay, and/or easement protection that could be applied by localities across the region.

2.5. Alternative 3 – Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them

Similar to Alternative 2, Alternative 3 would incorporate all common assumptions cited in Section 2.3, but would modify the 2004 Plan to add significant preservation and economic development assistance focused on strategic investments in the region's core communities, along Oil Creek State Park, and towards the linkages that connect these resources. The idea of this alternative is to target preservation and related economic development assistance to core areas where such technical and/or financial assistance will achieve cumulative positive impact and reinforcement. Although these areas are strongly linked to the oil industry and its evolution, the focus of this approach might be more urban in nature, particularly compared to that of Alternative 2. The intent of this Alternative is shown diagrammatically in Figure 4.

This approach would modify the current plan to provide planning assistance and/or planning grants, as well as financial assistance to core communities to “make the most” of heritage resources as a means to achieve community revitalization.

In this option, all elements from the Recreation, Interpretation, and Accommodations parts of the 2004 Update would be included. Examples of preservation programs and project types that would be consistent with this approach might include:

- Resource documentation assistance targeted to the core regional communities of Titusville, Oil City, Franklin, and Emlenton.

- Emphasis on planning assistance to core communities, including Main Street efforts, charrettes, and/or preservation and revitalization plans. A specific initiative towards smaller communities – perhaps on a demonstration basis in one locale, would be consistent with this approach.
- Building conservation technical assistance focused on specific implementation projects within the core communities, but with parallel efforts to communicate findings and results of these efforts, in order to make lessons learned available to other comparable projects.
- Education and recognition programs that provide assistance to large and small communities, as well as to other entities in developing innovative curricula, marker programs, etc.
- ORA investment/partnerships in rehabilitation projects – potentially including loans and/or grants that are tied to specific revitalization strategies within the core communities. Examples would include projects comparable to the Towne Square effort in Titusville in other communities (potentially those identified in the Route 8 & 62 Corridor Project), support for unique accommodations facilities in core areas, and a “This Old House” program within a NRHP district. Direct grants to individual owners might be accompanied by downstream revenue recapture efforts, potentially contributing a long-term revenue stream to ORA.

Regulatory tools to preserve cultural resources – consistent with this approach, it would make sense for ORA to provide specific technical assistance within a core area to develop a specific ordinance or to provide related public education support, with the expectation that a positive outcome would be beneficial to other jurisdictions finding this approach of interest.

2.6. *Summary of Environmental Consequences and Benefits of the Alternatives*

Table 1 summarizes the long-term environmental impacts of the alternatives on the affected environment. In some cases, potential short-term adverse impacts may occur during construction of future projects; such impacts are noted in the detailed discussion of impacts in Chapter 3.

2.7. *Preferred Alternative*

Nearly all the recommendations from the 2004 Management Plan Update, which constitutes Alternative 1 and serve as a base line for all the alternatives, received detailed review and discussion during the preparation of that document. The approaches described in Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 have been presented to the public and discussed in depth by the Board of the Oil Region Alliance.

Based on this consideration, the Board has clearly expressed a preference for Alternative 3: Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them, for the following reasons:

- Alternative 3 incorporates the recommendations of the 2004 Plan Update.
- The emphasis of Alternative 3 on the core communities will enable a focus on areas where resources and economic activities are concentrated, as compared to Alternative 2, which does not articulate a geographic focus. The idea of focusing energy on key venues took

very high priority in the Board's deliberations, inasmuch as, in the absence of such focus, there is a risk that efforts of ORA will be too scattered and will not have the cumulative positive impact that the Board desires.

- Alternative 3 recognizes that the linkages among the core communities are important and will enable some assistance to resources within smaller communities along these routes.

Table 1: Summary of Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives

Environmental Consequences and Benefits	Alternative 1 No Federal Action (Retain Current Management Plan)	Alternative 2 Modify Current Plan to Expand Preservation and Economic Development Program to Address Opportunities Across the Region	Alternative 3 Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them
Natural Resources			
Land Form and Physiography	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>
Water Resources	<i>Moderate beneficial impact</i>	<i>Moderate beneficial impact</i>	<i>Moderate beneficial impact</i>
Air Quality	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>
Vegetation and Endangered Plant Species	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>
Fish and Wildlife and Endangered Animal Species	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>
Open Space and Recreational Resources	<i>Major beneficial impacts</i>	<i>Major beneficial impacts</i>	<i>Major beneficial impacts</i>
Socio-economic Resources			
Area Demographics	<i>Minor beneficial impact</i>	<i>Moderate beneficial impact</i>	<i>Moderate beneficial impact</i>
Tourism and the Visitor Experience	<i>Moderate beneficial impact</i>	<i>Major beneficial impact</i>	<i>Major beneficial impact</i>
Land Use	<i>Minor beneficial impact</i>	<i>Minor beneficial impact</i>	<i>Minor beneficial impact</i>
Transportation	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>	<i>Negligible impact</i>
Cultural Resources			
Historic Resources	<i>Minor beneficial impact</i>	<i>Moderate beneficial impact</i>	<i>Major beneficial impact</i>
Archeological Resources	<i>Minor beneficial impact</i>	<i>Minor beneficial impact</i>	<i>Minor beneficial impact</i>
Other Cultural Resources	<i>Moderate to major beneficial impact</i>	<i>Moderate to major beneficial impact</i>	<i>Moderate to major beneficial impact</i>

Oil Heritage Region



Venango & Crawford Counties, Pennsylvania

ORA Recreation Program Initiatives

Inform travel and outdoors writers of recreational events and activities
Coordinate marketing of region at large recreational venues outside of region
Encourage and be involved in implementation of master plans for region's recreational venues
Co-sponsor fishing tournaments or multi-activity outdoor sports theme festivals
Help coordinate extension of OC & T RR into Oil City and Franklin
Administer low interest small business loans for outdoor recreation businesses
Monitor privately funded construction of trail to Foxburg
Sponsor geocacher events
Encourage outfitters to widen shuttle services to also include bicyclists, and hikers.

Two Mile Run County Park

Watchable wildlife platforms
Pave lakeside trail at minimum for bicyclists
Link park trail to Allegheny River Trail & OCSF
Increase environmental education programs
Add outdoor amphitheatre along lakeshore
Expand winter sports and archery
Castway
Indoor recreation center

Allegheny River Trail

Extend trail east from Oil City to Tionesta and into Allegheny National Forest (20 miles) and Two Mile Run County Park
Install interpretive signage at appropriate sites, including waterfalls and iron furnaces
Develop trailheads at Emlenton, Kennerdell, near St. George and Dotter
Watchable Wildlife Platforms

Franklin Vicinity

Castway
Riverfront Park improvement
Complete trail through area
Develop Spur Trail in downtown
Develop scenic overlooks
Install bike racks near downtown attractions

Franklin

Titusville Vicinity

Castway
Riverfront Park development or improvement
Complete trail through area
Develop Spur Trail in downtown
Install bike racks near downtown attractions

Titusville

Oil Creek State Park

Castway
Watchable Wildlife Platform
Complete trail south
Extend OC&T RR south to Oil City
Ski rentals

Oil Creek

Oil Creek State Park

Shamburg

Pithole City

Patrolmen Centre

Rynd Ferry

Rouseville

Oil City

Oil City Vicinity

Castway
Riverfront Park development or improvement
Complete trail through area
Develop Spur Trail in downtown
Develop scenic overlooks
Install bike racks near downtown attractions
Develop White Water area
Continue safety improvements at Oil City Rapids
Augment Oil City marina amenities

Oil City

Oil City Vicinity

Oil City

Oil City

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Oil City

ORA

Support development of spur trails to increase regional connectivity

Sandy Creek Trail

Encourage extension of Sandy Creek Trail from Belmar Bridge west to Mercer County and Van East to Clarion Highlands Trail
Interpretive signage where trail crosses SGL 45

Emlenton Vicinity

Castway
Trailhead
Riverfront Park development or improvement
Complete trail through area
Develop Spur Trail in downtown
Develop scenic overlooks
Install bike racks near downtown attractions
Increase parking for boat trailers

Emlenton

Emlenton

Emlenton

Emlenton

Emlenton

Emlenton

Emlenton

Emlenton

Emlenton

Emlenton

Figure 1

Alternative I No Federal Action: Recreation Elements

Legend

- Existing Rail Trail
- Proposed Rail Trail
- Proposed Oil Heritage Route
- Proposed Oil Country Trail
- State Game Lands
- OC & T Railroad

Oil Region National Heritage Management Plan Augmentation and EA

Prepared for
Oil Region Alliance of Business,
Industry, and Tourism

Prepared by
ICON architecture, inc
in association with
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Date: February 2006



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Oil Heritage Region



Venango & Crawford Counties, Pennsylvania

OC & T RR

Interpretive plan for train ride and stations
Update brochure racks to connect sites on a map
Prepare self-guided illustrated booklet for sale
Updated marketing strategy to determine media that best attracts riders
Enhance orientation at Perry Street Station

Walking and driving tours

Highlight walking tours with occasional interpreted tours

Oil Creek State Park

Complete master interpretive plan for entire park
Partner with other regional attractions on joint programs
Develop better signage at trailhead
Produce park guide in preferred DCNR format

Rynd Farm

Prepare interpretive plan for entire site
Plan interior exhibits to accommodate a small number of people
Provide more panels outside to accommodate larger groups
Present story of Rynd Farm and association with railroad on outdoor panels near station
Install OHR linking kiosk to advertise other regional attractions

Drake Well Museum

Complete planned interpretive exhibits and programs
Develop 3-D film with recreated boomtown area in museum interior
CD/DVD audio tour of entire museum property
Install OHR linking kiosk to advertise other regional attractions

Oil Heritage Route

Develop self-guided tour booklet for oil-related sites
Develop CD/DVD self-guided driving tour
Install interpretive signage at key sites on tour

Tyred Wheels Museum

Relate cars and other artifacts to oil and gas history and local people and events where possible

Pithole City

Develop updated interpretive plan for entire site
Build apartment and employ onsite caretaker
Update outdoor signage
Use photo of diorama to guide visitors on site
Upgrade interior exhibits to tell more provocative stories about the people
Develop new marketing brochure
Install OHR linking kiosk to advertise other regional attractions
Continue and expand lantern tours and other night walks

Petroleum Centre station area

Develop exhibit panels to focus on a single theme
Develop exhibits that focus more attention on diorama
Install and show Visitor Center introductory video at the station

Dan Hardesty's Wild West Museum

Relate artifacts to local people and events where possible

Venango County Historical Society Museum

Post test current exhibits and programs
Pre test proposed exhibits and programs

Venango County Historical Society Museum

Post test current exhibits and programs
Pre test proposed exhibits and programs

Venango Museum of Art, Science and Industry

Post test current exhibits and programs
Pre test proposed exhibits and programs
Add gallery guides for special groups

Venango Museum of Art, Science and Industry

Post test current exhibits and programs
Pre test proposed exhibits and programs
Add gallery guides for special groups

DeBence Antique Music World

Relate musical instruments to local people and events where possible

Allegheny River Trail

Install interpretive signage at interesting sites

Oil Country Trail

Provide trailblazer signage for route
Install interpretive signage for key sites on route

Oil Region Alliance

Establish supplementary archive
Perform feasibility study for a natural gas museum

OHR Visitor Orientation Center, Crawford Center

Post test current exhibits
Pre test future exhibits

Pumping Jack Museum

Post test exhibits
Develop gallery guides for special groups

Legend

- Existing Rail Trail
- Proposed Rail Trail
- Proposed Oil Heritage Route
- - - Proposed Oil Country Trail
- State Game Lands
- OC & T Railroad



OHR Attractions



Other OHR Attractions

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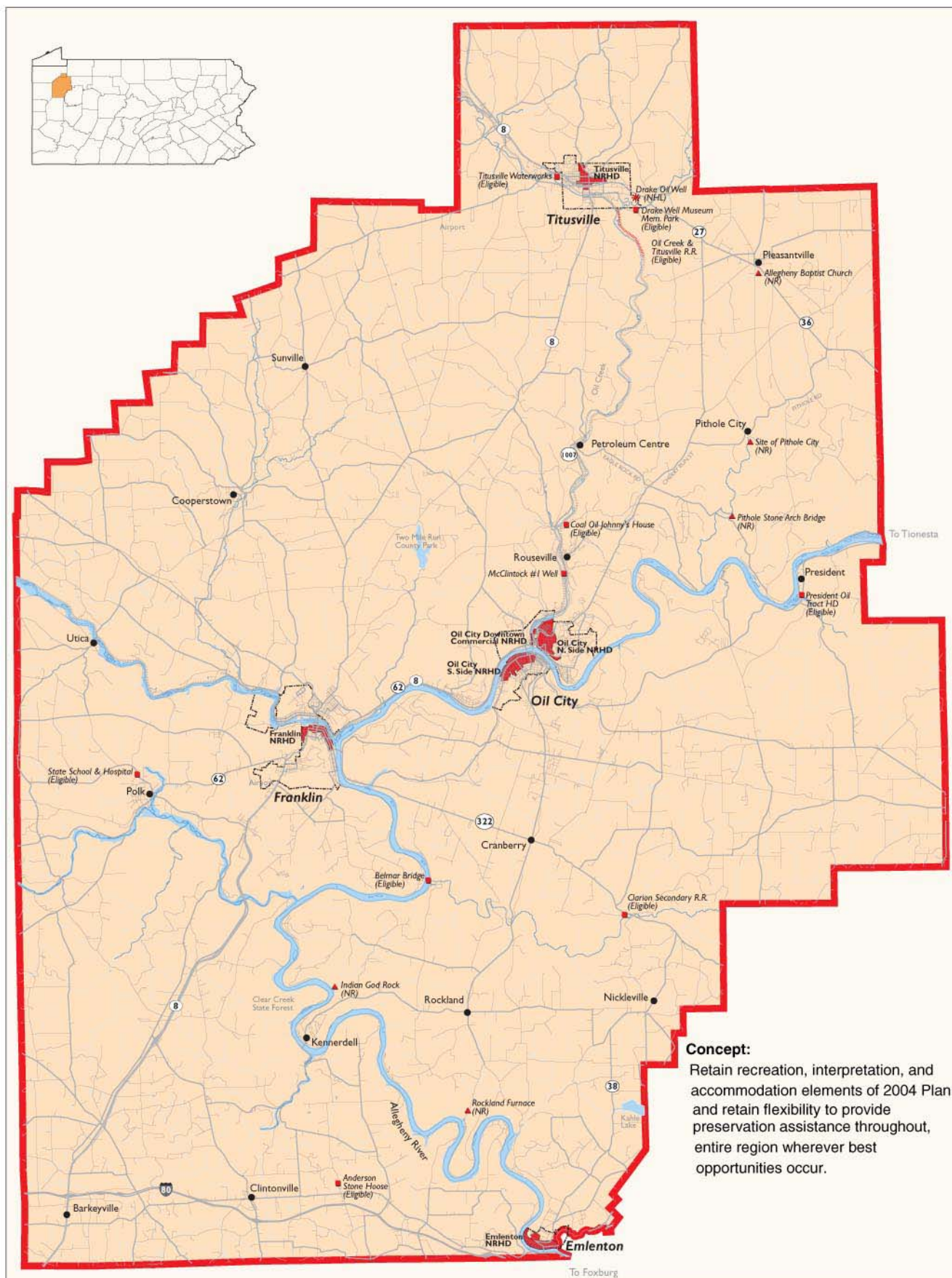


Figure 3
Alternative 2 Region
Wide Opportunities:
Preservation & Economic
Development Elements

Key Map

- National Register Historic District
Note: Individual properties within Titusville, Oil City, Franklin, and Emlenton shown on separate maps
- ▲ National Register Individually Listed Properties
- ✳ National Historic Landmark
- Potential Small Community Initiative
- National Register Eligible Properties

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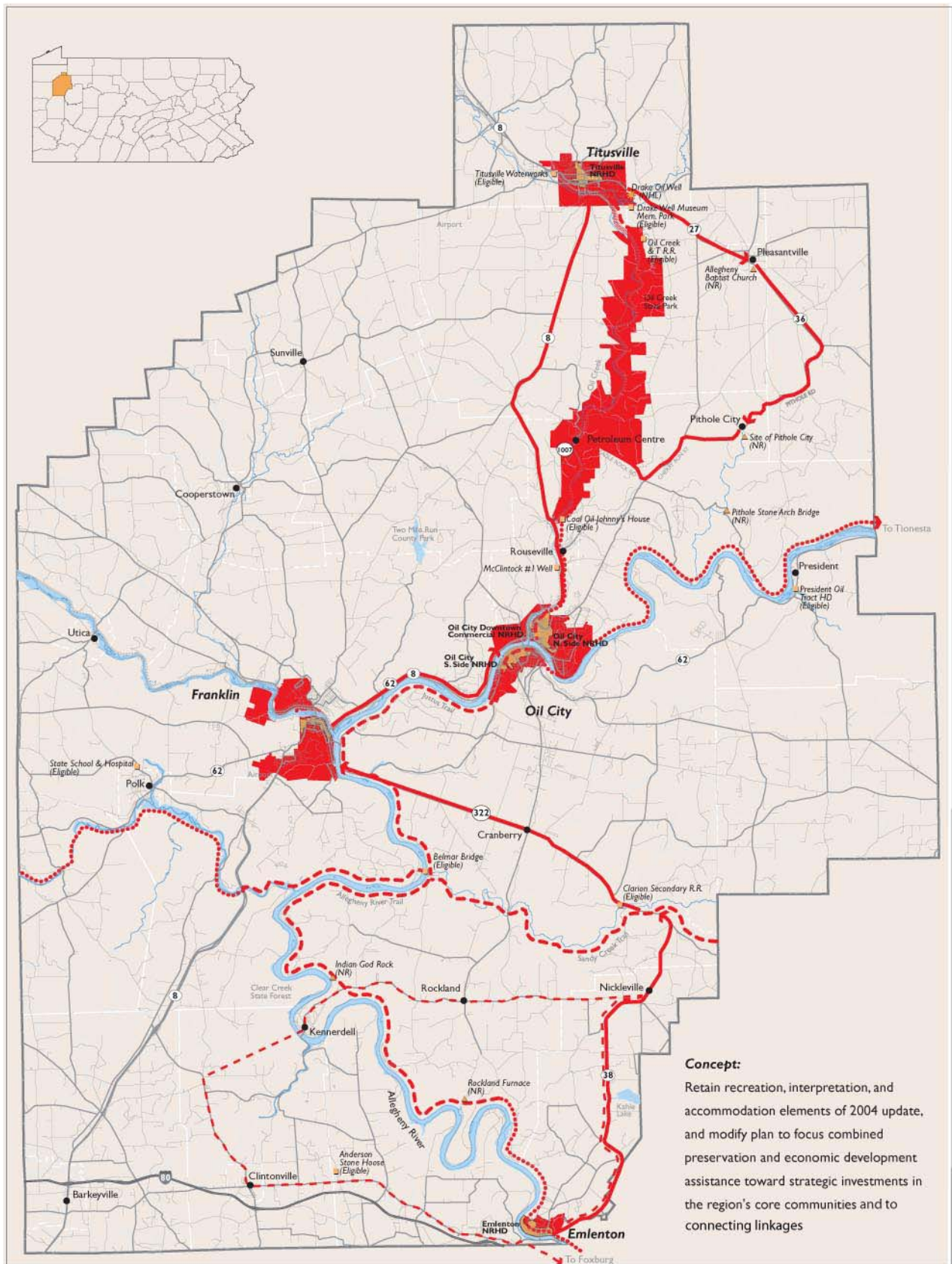


Figure 4
Alternative 3 Core Historic Areas & Linkages Between Them: Preservation & Economic Development Elements

- Priority Area**
- Existing Rail Trail
 - Proposed Rail Trail
 - Proposed Oil Heritage Route
 - Proposed Oil Country Trail
 - OC & T Railroad
 - Potential Small Community Initiative
- National Register Historic District**
Note: Individual properties within Titusville, Oil City, Franklin, and Emlenton shown on separate maps
- National Register Eligible Properties
 - ▲ National Register Individually Listed Properties
 - ★ National Historic Landmark

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3. Affected Environment & Environmental Consequences

3.1. *Introduction*

The Oil Region National Heritage Area Plan Augmentation describes policies, programs, and potential projects that are broadly programmatic in scope. Therefore, the potential environmental impacts and benefits are more strategic than specific. While some of the impacts identified are quantifiable and measurable, most are not. This chapter first describes each identified resource in the region and then discusses the kinds of impacts that could be associated with the strategies and action items emphasized by each of the alternatives. Because no site-specific projects have progressed to a level of design, there is no discussion of impacts at the site-specific project level. In the future, if individual projects are undertaken in the Oil Region National Heritage Area with federal assistance, such projects may require separate, more detailed environmental evaluations when their design characteristics are better defined.

In general, the impacts on environmental resources that might result from implementation of this plan are expected to be positive because of the Plan's overall emphasis on resource preservation and enhancement. To the degree that the Plan results in increases in visitors to the region, there could be the potential for impacts due to increased use of the resources. However, the Plan's emphasis on community revitalization through preservation makes it highly likely that most development resulting directly from actions recommended by the plan will be positive and intended. Moreover, given the relatively low density and large extent of the area and its history of modest visitor volumes, it is likely that any increases in visitation will be modest, resulting in minimal adverse impacts, and will be outweighed by the positive effects of improved economic vitality and natural, cultural, and recreational resource preservation and enhancement.

Inasmuch as the Oil Region National Heritage area encompasses both Venango County in its entirety and the small portion of Crawford County containing the city of Titusville and Oil Creek Township, in the text below the overall area will be referred to as the NHA area.

3.2. *Summary of Key Differences Among the Alternatives*

Under **Alternative 1 - the No Action Alternative**, the existing Management Plan from the 2004 Update would be unchanged. Further federal funds for coordination, interpretation, preservation, and development purposes would be doubtful. Although this alternative would include considerable action by non-federal entities to follow through on implementation of the 2004 Plan Update recommendations, most especially increased recreation trail expansion, river access, new accommodations, and interpretive improvements, the recommended program has a modest level of resources identified for heritage protection and enhancement, could result in a longer implementation period, and therefore would also result in reduced extent and quality of implementation, although the aggregate impact on the environment would be expected to be beneficial. The biggest difference between Alternative 1 and the action alternatives, aside from the absence of federal funds, is a lower programmatic and financial commitment to preservation programs in the existing plan, as compared to what has been proposed for the two alternatives for the NHA plan.

The two action alternatives, **Alternative 2 - Modify Current Plan to Expand Preservation and Economic Development Program to Address Opportunities Across the Region**, and

Alternative 3 - Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them, would each have long-term beneficial impacts on most resources and would encompass recreation, interpretation, and accommodations initiatives that would be substantially the same as Alternative 1. Both action alternatives would encompass a significantly expanded preservation and related economic development capability that could benefit the economy of the area, although Alternative 3, with its focus on core communities would have the potential for larger economic and preservation ripple effects on these urban centers, potentially encouraging related economic activity in these communities. Overall area visitation may vary by small amounts – from the lowest in Alternative 1 to the highest in Alternative 3 – but would, for any of the alternatives, be strongly affected by factors that are common to all the alternatives: planned expansion at the region’s largest heritage attraction, Drake Well Museum (identical for all alternatives), and enhancement of the recreation trail and river access systems increasing their attractiveness for regional users and visitors. It is likely that for Alternatives 2 and 3 that implementation may progress at a faster pace than Alternative 1, since federal funds would supplement other funding sources. For both of the action alternatives, federal assistance is likely to help residents and visitors to have a greater recognition of and appreciate for the breadth of resources in the Oil Region National Heritage Area compared to Alternative 1.

The adoption of the Plan Augmentation for the Oil Region National Heritage Area would not itself require mitigation, as it is a policy document and no irretrievable or irreversible actions are suggested at this level of planning. However, individual projects, programs, and structures recommended in the plan may require mitigation. These projects would undergo review and impact evaluation as they are developed and appropriate mitigation would be proposed at that time. Although there is a commitment to mitigate the adverse impacts of any project or program proposed in the plan, the long-term nature of the plan and different ways that the plan could ultimately be implemented means that specific mitigation measures associated with uncertain actions cannot be determined at the present time.

3.3. Methodology for Assessing Impacts and Determining the Need for Impact Mitigation

The Oil Region National Heritage Area Management Plan is programmatic and broad in scope. Therefore, the Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences sections deal with the type of impacts that could be implied with the overall strategies and investments types emphasized by each of the alternatives. A broad description is provided of each category of Affected Environment and judgments are offered regarding potential impacts of each type on that environment; these judgments are based upon the general attributes of each alternative, including: proposed levels of funding; types of locations for improvement generally implied by each alternative; and the potential for elements of the plan to serve as catalysts for general or place-specific investment or change. It is important to note that no impacts are reviewed at a site-specific level, although future detailed actions may require supplementary review prior to implementation as required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

The majority of the impacts of the environment from all alternatives are expected to be beneficial, due to the general emphasis of the Plan on resource protection and enhancement. The following terms are used to describe the comparative environmental impacts of alternatives:

- *Negligible* – The impact is barely perceptible or not measurable.
- *Minor* – The impact is slightly detectable and measurable but is either localized or would not adversely affect resources.
- *Moderate* – The impact is clearly detectable and could have appreciable effect on resources.
- *Major* – The impact is substantial and highly noticeable or measurable.
- *Short-term* – The impact is less than one year.
- *Long-term* – The impact lasts one year or longer.
- *Beneficial* – The impact is generally positive.
- *Adverse* – The impact is generally negative.

3.4. *Natural Resources*

3.4.1. Land Form and Physiography

Affected Environment

The study area is 708 square miles and is situated on the Allegheny Plateau in the northwestern section of Pennsylvania, about halfway between Erie and Pittsburgh. Within the study area there are several centers, including Oil City, Franklin, and Emlenton, and just over the Crawford County line, Titusville, that sprung up in response to industrial growth in the region in the mid 19th century. Much of the area is still characterized as rural, marked by agricultural fields, broad swaths of forests, and spectacular natural beauty. There is an abundance of forested lands within the area, most of which are Appalachian Oak Forest. This forest is a tall broadleaf deciduous forest, characterized by white oak, and northern red oak as the dominant trees. The topography is generally flat to moderately sloped, but is punctuated by river or creek valleys and the accompanying rolling to sometimes steep hills. The flat to moderate terrain is well suited to agricultural activity, as well as residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Impacts

All alternatives would have negligible impacts on physiography and land form in the NHA area. The alternatives deal with management issues and opportunities in terms of programming and policy. If specific projects proposed in the future are identified that have significant adverse effects on physiography and land form, these would be assessed at a later time through supplemental, project-based environmental evaluations.

3.4.2. Water Resources

Affected Environment

The Allegheny River is the study area's most significant river, and is a federally designated Wild and Scenic River (1992). It is fed by four significant tributaries, Oil Creek, French Creek, Sandy Creek, and Sugarcreek, which also constitute the runoff channels for five of the seven major drainage basins in the county. These major watersheds are: Slippery Rock Creek, Allegheny River, French Creek, Oil Creek, Sandy Creek, East Sandy Creek and Sugar Creek.

Oil Creek originates in Crawford County, northwest of Titusville, and runs east just below that city before turning south through Venango County where it intersects with and is absorbed by the Allegheny. These creeks originate in Crawford, Mercer, Clarion and Forest Counties.

There are two major impoundments located in Venango County. One is Justus Lake, a 144-acre lake situated in the middle of Two Mile Run County Park in Oakland Township and Sugarcreek Borough. The other is Kahle Lake, with an area of 250 acres and is located in Richland Township, Venango County and Salem Township, Clarion County (See Figure 6).

Because of the climate in Northwest Pennsylvania, which can include significant precipitation at any time throughout the year, floods are a constant concern in the region. Flash flooding is a serious concern, especially in the summer when sudden thunderstorms can deposit rain at such an excessive rate that even the smallest creeks are transformed into overflowing water courses. Also, in the early spring or late winter, a combination of a thaw and a period of rainy weather can cause flooding. The local streams will sometimes develop ice jams, which hold back water flow and cause localized flooding.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection maintains four water quality network stations in Venango County where it regularly monitors water chemistry parameters, aquatic insects, and, every five years conducts fish tissue sampling for heavy metals and PCBs. These stations are located on the Allegheny River at Kennerdell, on French Creek at Utica, on Oil Creek at Rynd Farm, and on Sandy Creek at Pecan. Over the past ten years, as part of the State Surface Waters Assessment Program, the department has evaluated every named and unnamed river, creek, and stream for its water quality, aquatic life, and surrounding habitat and assigned a determination of impaired or not impaired.

Throughout the County, but especially in the southernmost tier, water quality has been impaired by a phenomenon called Acid Mine Damage, at the root of which are abandoned, unplugged wells. Groundwater flows through rock layers filled with aluminum and magnesium before it reaches the surface via the intact abandoned well casing, thus bringing abnormal amounts of these heavy metals into runoffs. The majority of degraded stream miles occur in the three southernmost townships in Venango County and in isolated instances throughout the northern part of the County. There are a host of projects underway to plug these wells, which is the most effective way to stem this damage. Remediation projects in the Hemlock Creek, East Sandy Creek, and South Sandy Creek watersheds are ongoing, funded at the state level by Pennsylvania's "Growing Greener" legislation.

Impacts

Alternative 1—No Federal Action supports a broad range of regional recreation improvements that are intended to expand utilization of the rivers (as defined in the 2004 Plan Update), including additional river access points in Emlenton, Kennerdell, and President and new community castways in core communities to expand recreational opportunities close to existing centers of population and recreational activity. Despite increased use, moderate long-term beneficial impacts are expected in this alternative due to an infusion of resources to repair and maintain natural resources being used and to encourage greater public awareness and involvement with the river resources.

Any construction activities adjacent to rivers and creeks, including dock, ramp, and visitor parking adjacent to the water have the potential to result in short-term, minor adverse impacts to surface water and should be reviewed when design characteristics are further defined. It is expected that these effects would be mitigated by proper control of erosion, protection of

surface water from run-off, and that projects would comply with any state permitting requirements. Potential long-term impacts from such improvements would be addressed during their design – such as run off control and mitigation, possible fill, etc.

Ongoing efforts by Department of Environmental Protection to mitigate problems such as Acid Mine Damage will not be affected by any proposed actions within the Oil Region, except to the extent that greater interest in the area increases public interest, and possibly support, in actions currently being taken to reverse damage to water quality.

Alternative 2 - Modify Current Plan to Address Opportunities Across the Region and Alternative 3 - Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them have recreational improvements that would be identical to those defined in Alternative 1; thus the potential impacts would be identical to Alternative 1: moderate beneficial long-term impacts due to an infusion of resources to repair and maintain natural resources being used, with the potential for short-term minor adverse impact, requiring review of specific project proposals for localized impact and mitigation, as noted for Alternative 1, above.

3.4.3. Air Quality

Affected Environment

Venango and Crawford Counties are part of the state's Air Quality Region 6—the Northwest region—that also includes Butler, Clarion, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, and Warren Counties. The Bureau of Air Quality (a branch of Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection) is responsible for testing air quality and implementing plans to obtain higher standards of air quality. The region's air quality is monitored daily for several pollutants, including carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and particulate matter of 10 microns and 2.5 microns or less. The region's air quality is consistently given the highest rating – “Good.” The Environmental Protection Agency has categorized both Venango and Crawford Counties as “not designated non-attainment,” which means that the area has not exceeded the standards for the presence of any of the above pollutants.

Impacts

Air quality can be affected by several activities: in the long term by the potential increase of vehicular traffic to the region and, potentially, from short duration impacts from any construction activity that could occur. For each of the alternatives, minor short-term adverse impacts to air quality may result from increased vehicle emissions and dust caused by construction projects attributable to NHA activity, although the location and timing of such activities may vary and cannot be predicted at this time. Long-term impacts on air quality are expected to be negligible or minor for all alternatives, due to the relatively good current air quality and the relatively dispersed location of heritage and recreational venues throughout this large area.

Alternative 1 - No Federal Action will likely result in the lowest level of visitors to the region and least concentrated new economic activity, potentially resulting in the negligible long-term impact on air quality from increased vehicular traffic.

Alternative 2 - Modify Current Plan to Address Opportunities Across the Region calls for an opportunistic approach to preservation and economic development throughout the NHA, as well as expansion of the recreational trail system. Visitation resulting from activities

and attractions proposed in **Alternative 2** could contribute to very minor increases in automobile traffic on local roads and increased vehicle emissions, but the aggregate impacts on air quality would still be expected to be negligible.

Alternative 3 - Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them calls for focused strategic investments in the region's core communities, along Oil Creek State Park, and on the linkages that connect these resources. By promoting the restoration, maintenance, and promotion of core areas, including Main Street efforts, **Alternative 3** could be associated with modest increases of vehicular traffic in these core, historic areas, and by modest increases of vehicular traffic by visitors traveling from one core area to another. It is possible that increased pedestrian activity will have a minor long-term beneficial effect on air quality, as there will be fewer episodes of short vehicular trips within core communities. However, higher rates of visitation resulting from activities and attractions proposed in **Alternative 3** could result in additional automobile traffic on local roads and increased vehicle emissions, although within a setting that is not considered highly vulnerable and, thus, resulting in negligible long-term air quality impacts.

3.4.4. Vegetation and Endangered Plant Species

Affected Environment

Much of Venango County is covered by Appalachian Oak Forest, which is a tall broadleaf deciduous forest, characterized by white oak and northern red oak as the dominant trees. Other tree species that are native to the area include sugar maple, sweet birch, bitternut hickory, beech, tulip poplar, white pine, scarlet oak, scrub oak, chestnut oak, and black oak.

Table 2 is a list of plant species that have at one point existed in the Oil Heritage Region and which are now considered to be threatened to some extent, compiled using the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program database. The Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) is made possible through cooperation between the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and The Nature Conservancy. Correspondence from the PNHP is found in section 4.2 following the meeting notes. The database contains a list of rare species tracked throughout the state by the government. Table 5 is a list of the Federally Endangered and Threatened Species.

Impacts

All alternatives have similar proposals for improvements to the regional recreational trail system, including completion of connections, extensions, and spurs. Typically, these trails follow existing rail and other corridors and would have negligible adverse long-term impacts on vegetative resources for this reason. Short-term adverse impacts should be negligible to minor and may include clearing of brush or overgrowth along such rights of way. Detailed mapping of the incidence of various rare and/or endangered vegetative species is not available; but in the case of future construction projects that do not follow already disturbed rights of way, assessment of existence of such species should be done prior to construction to identify probable impacts and mitigation measures.

3.4.5. Fish, Wildlife, and Endangered Animal Species

Affected Environment

Table 3 is a list of the bird, fish, vertebrate, invertebrate, reptilian and bivalve species that have at one point existed in the Oil Heritage Region and which are now considered to be threatened to some extent, compiled by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy using the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program database. Table 5 is a list of the Federally Endangered and Threatened Species.

Impacts

All alternatives have similar proposals for improvements to the regional recreational trail system, including completion of connections, extensions, and spurs. Typically, these trails follow existing rail and other corridors and would have negligible long-term adverse impact and negligible to minor adverse short-term on fauna for this reason. Detailed mapping of the incidence of various rare and/or endangered fauna is not available; but in the case of future construction projects that do not follow already disturbed rights of way, assessment of existence of such species should be done prior to construction to identify probable impacts and mitigation measures.

Table 2: Plant Species List for the ORNHA from the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program Database

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global rank	State Rank	PA Status
<i>Aletris farinose</i>	Colic-root	G5	S1	TU
<i>Baptisia australis</i>	Blue False-indigo	G5	S3	N
<i>Bromus Kalmii</i>	Brome Grass	G5	S3	N
<i>Cyperus engelmannii</i>	Engelmann's Flatsedge	G4Q	S2	PR
<i>Cypripedium calceolus</i> var. <i>parviflorum</i>	Small Yellow Lady's slipper	G5	S1	PE
<i>Eleocharis compressa</i>	Flat-stemmed Spike-rush	G4	S1	PE
<i>Elymus trachycaulus</i>	Slender Wheatgrass	G5	S3	N
<i>Festuca paradoxa</i>	Cluster Fescue	G5	S1	PE
<i>Filipendula rubra</i>	Queen-of-the-prairie	G4/G5	S1/S2	TU
<i>Helianthemum bicknellii</i>	Bicknell's Hoary Rockrose	G5	S2	PE
<i>Helianthus microcephalus</i>	Small Wood Sunflower	G5	S3	N
<i>Isotria medeoloides</i>	Small-whorled Pogonia	G2	S1	PE
<i>Lonicera oblongifolia</i>	Swamp Fly Honeysuckle	G4	S1	PE
<i>Lupinus perennis</i>	Lupine	G5	S3	PR
<i>Orontium aquaticum</i>	Golden Club	G5	S4	PR
<i>Poa languida</i>	Drooping Bluegrass	G3/G4	S2	TU
<i>Podostemum ceratophyllum</i>	Riverweed	G5	S4	TU
<i>Polygala incarnata</i>	Pink Milkwort	G5	SH	PE
<i>Polygonum amphibium</i> var. <i>stipulaceum</i>	A Water Smartweed	G5/T5	S4	TU
<i>Potamogeton illinoensis</i>	A Water Smartweed	G5	S4	TU
<i>Potamogeton richardsonii</i>	Red-head Pondweed	G5	S3	PT
<i>Prenanthes crepidinea</i>	Crepis Rattlesnake-root	G3/G4	S4	PE
<i>Quadrula cylindrical</i>	Rabbitsfoot	G3	S1	
<i>Ranunculus aquatilis</i> var. <i>diffuses</i>	White Water-crowfoot	G5/T5	S3	
<i>Ranunculus fascicularis</i>	Tufted Buttercup	G5	S1/S2	PE
<i>Salix serissima</i>	Autumn Willow	G4	S2	PT
<i>Salix x subsericea</i>	Meadow Willow	G5	SNA	TU
<i>Scirpus pedicellatus</i>	Stalked Bulrush	G4	S1	PT
<i>Scleria pauciflora</i>	Few Flowered Nutrush	G5	S2	PT
<i>Scutellaria saxatilis</i>	Rock Skullcap	G3	S1	TU
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	Hard-leaved Goldenrod	G5	S1	TU
<i>Swertia caroliniensis</i>	American Columbo	G5	S1	PE
<i>Tradescantia ohiensis</i>	Ohio Spiderwort	G5	S4	TU

N.B. – refer to Table 4 for definitions of rankings

Source: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy using the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program database

Table 3: Species List for the ORNHA from the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program Database

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global rank	State Rank	PA Status
Fish				
<i>Etheostoma camurum</i>	Bluebreast Darter	G4	S2	PT
<i>Etheostoma maculatum</i>	Spotted Darter	G2	S2	PT
<i>Etheostoma tippecanoe</i>	Tippecanoe Darter	G3/G4	S2	PT
<i>Noturus stigmosus</i>	Northern Madtom	G3	S2	PE
<i>Percina copelandi</i>	Channel Darter	G4	S2	PT
<i>Percina evides</i>	Gilt Darter	G4	S1/S2	PT
<i>Percina macrocephala</i>	Longhead Darter	G3	S2/S3	PT
<i>Umbra limi</i>	Central Mudminnow	G5	S3	PC
Mussels				
<i>Alasmodonta marginata</i>	Elktoe	G4	S4	
<i>Amblema plicata</i>	Three-ridge	G5	S2/S3	
<i>Cyclonaias tuberculata</i>	Purple Wartyback	G5	SX	
<i>Epioblasma torulosa rangiana</i>	Northern Riffleshell	G2/T2	S2	PE
<i>Epioblasma triquetra</i>	Snuffbox	G3	S1	
<i>Fusconaia subrotunda</i>	Long-solid	G3	S1	
<i>Lampsilis ovata</i>	Pocketbook	G5	S3/S4	
<i>Lasmigona compressa</i>	Creek Heelsplitter	G5	S2/S3	
<i>Plethobasus cyphus</i>	Sheepnose Mussel	G3	S1	
<i>Pleurobema clava</i>	Clubshell	G2	S1/S2	PE
<i>Pleurobema sintoxia</i>	Round Pigtoe	G4	S2	
<i>Utterbackia imbecillis</i>	Paper Pondshell	G5	S3/S4	
<i>Villosa fabalis</i>	Rayed Bean Mussel	G1/G2	S1/S2	
<i>Villosa iris</i>	Rainbow Mussel	G5	S1	
<i>Lampsilis fasciola</i>	Wavy-rayed Lampmussel	G4	S4	N
Lamprey				
<i>Ichthyomyzon bdellium</i>	Ohio Lamprey	G3/G4	S2/S3	PC
<i>Ichthyomyzon greeleyi</i>	Mountain Brook Lamprey	G3/G4	S2	PT
<i>Lampetra appendix</i>	American Brook Lamprey	G4	S3	PC
Birds				
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	G5	S2B	PT
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey	G5	S2B	PT
<i>Tyto alba</i>	Barn-owl	G5	S3B, S3N	
Vertebrates				
<i>Neotoma magister</i>	Allegheny Woodrat	G3/G4	S3	PT
<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Northern Myotis	G4	S3B, S3N	
Snake				
<i>Sistrurus catenatus catenatus</i>	Eastern Massasauga	G3/G4	S1/S2	PE
Insect				
<i>Gomphaeschna antilope</i>	Taper-tailed Darner	G4	SH	

N.B. – refer to Table 4 for definitions of rankings

Source: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy using the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program database

Table 4: Basic Rank Codes and Definitions for Global, State, and Pennsylvania Status Listings for Plants, Mammals, Wild Birds, Fish, Amphibians, Reptiles, and Aquatic Organisms.

Global Rank Definitions	
GX	<i>Presumed Extinct</i> —Believed to be extinct throughout its range.
GH	<i>Possibly Extinct</i> —Known from only historical occurrences. Still hope of rediscovery.
G1	<i>Critically Imperiled</i> —Critically imperiled globally because of extreme rarity or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extinction. Typically 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals.
G2	<i>Imperiled</i> —Imperiled globally because of extreme rarity or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extinction. Typically 6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals.
G3	<i>Vulnerable</i> —Vulnerable globally either because very rare and local throughout its range, found only in a restricted range (even if abundant at some locations). Typically 21 to 100 occurrences or between 3,000 and 10,000 individuals.
G4	<i>Apparently Secure</i> —Uncommon but not rare, and usually widespread. Possibly cause for long-term concern. Typically more than 100 occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
G5	<i>Secure</i> —Common, typically widespread and abundant. Typically with considerably more than 100 occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
Q	<i>Questionable Taxonomy</i> —Taxonomic status is questionable; numeric rank may change with taxonomy.
T	<i>Intraspecific Taxon</i> —The status of infraspecific taxa (subspecies or varieties) are indicated by a “T-rank” following the species’ global rank.
State Rank Definitions	
SX	<i>Extirpated</i> —Element is believed to be extirpated from the “state.”
SH	<i>Historical</i> —Element occurred historically in the state, perhaps having not been verified in the past 20 years, and suspected to be still extant.
S1	<i>Critically Imperiled</i> —Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals or acres.
S2	<i>Imperiled</i> —Imperiled in the state because of rarity or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically 6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals or acres.
S3	<i>Vulnerable</i> —Vulnerable in the state either because rare and uncommon, or found only in a restricted range (even if abundant at some locations), or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation. Typically 21 to 100 occurrences.
S4	<i>Apparently Secure</i> —Uncommon but not rare, and usually widespread in the state. Typically more than 100 occurrences.
S5	<i>Secure</i> —Demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure in the state, and essentially ineradicable under present conditions.
SA	<i>Accidental</i> —Accidental or casual in the state (i.e., infrequent and outside usual range).
B	<i>Breeding</i> —Basic rank refers to the breeding population of the Element in the state.
N	<i>Non-Breeding</i> —Basic rank refers to the non-breeding population of the Element in the state.
Pennsylvania Status Definition	
PE	<i>Pennsylvania Endangered</i> —Species in imminent danger of extinction or extirpation throughout their range in Pennsylvania if the deleterious factors affecting them continue to operate.
PT	<i>Pennsylvania Threatened</i> —Species that may become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout their range in Pennsylvania unless the casual factors affecting the organism are abated.
PR	<i>Pennsylvania Rare</i> —Species that are uncommon within this Commonwealth.
PC	Animals that could become endangered or threatened in the future. All of these are uncommon, have restricted distribution or are at risk because of certain aspects of their biology.
TU	<i>Tentatively Undetermined</i> —A classification of plant species which are believed to be in danger of population decline, but which cannot presently be included within another classification due to taxonomic uncertainties, limited evidence within historical records, or insufficient data.
N	No current legal status but is under review for future listing.

Table 5: Pennsylvania Species listed in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Threatened and Endangered Species System

Listing	Common Name	Scientific Name
Plants		
E	Bulrush, Northeastern	<i>Scirpus ancistrochaetus</i>
E	Coneflower, smooth	<i>Echinacea laevigata</i>
T	Joint-vetch, sensitive	<i>Aeschynomene virginica</i>
T	Orchid, eastern prairie fringed	<i>Platanthera leucophaea</i>
T	Pogonia, small whorled	<i>Isotria medeoloides</i>
T	Spiraea, Virginia	<i>Spiraea virginiana</i>
Animals		
E	Bat, Indiana	<i>Myotis sodalist</i>
E	Beetle, American burying	<i>Nicrophorus</i>
E	Butterfly, Karner blue	<i>Lycaeides melissa</i>
E	Clubshell Entire Range; Except where listed as Experimental Populations	<i>Pleurobema clava</i>
E	Curlew, Eskimo	<i>Numenius borealis</i>
T	Eagle, bald lower 48 States	<i>Haliaeetus</i>
E	Fanshell	<i>Cyprogenia stegaria</i>
E	Mucket, pink (pearlymussel)	<i>Lampsilis abrupta</i>
E	Pigtoe, rough	<i>Pleurobema plenum</i>
E	Pimpleback, orangefoot (pearlymussel)	<i>Plethobasus cooperianus</i>
E	Plover, piping Great Lakes watershed	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>
E	Puma (=cougar), eastern	<i>Puma (=Felis) concolor</i>
E	Riffleshell, northern	<i>Epioblasma torulosa</i>
E	Ring pink (mussel)	<i>Obovaria retusa</i>
E	Squirrel, Delmarva Peninsula fox Entire population, except Assawoman Wildlife Area in	<i>Sciurus niger cinereus</i>
T	Tiger beetle, northeastern beach	<i>Cicindela dorsalis</i>
T	Turtle, bog (=Muhlenberg) northern	<i>Clemmys muhlenbergii</i>
E	Wedgemussel, dwarf	<i>Alasmidonta heterodon</i>
E	Wolf, gray lower 48 States, except MN and	<i>Canis lupus</i>

3.4.6. Open Space and Recreation Resources

Affected Environment

The forests, rivers and creeks of Venango County offer a variety of recreational opportunities and have been viewed as major regional assets by local residents, as well as attractions to visitors from outside the area. There are over 33,500 acres of major public recreation lands in the Oil Heritage Region, shown in Figures 5, 6, and 7. These public recreation lands include Oil Creek State Park, the Kennerdell Tract of Clear Creek State Forest, five state game lands, Two Mile Run County Park, the Drake Well Museum site, Pithole City, Fish Commission accesses and waterways, and a portion of the Crawford County Forest. Smaller municipal parks are also located in Titusville, Oil City, Franklin, Emlenton, and Cranberry Township.

Oil Creek State Park, shown on Figure 7, is the only state park within the region. Interpretation in the park tells the story of the early petroleum industry and the environmental recovery of the region from the early methods of oil extraction and refining. Historical tableaux and interpretive signage portray the valley during the boomtown years while the forested hillsides, diverse wetlands, and trout streams illustrate the present tale of recovery. Oil Creek State Park has many recreational activities, including hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing trails that weave through the valley, complemented by self-guided tours and interpretive signage. The National Audubon Society also designates Oil Creek State Park as an “Important Bird Area” as it is home to over 20 species of breeding warblers and up to 34 warbler species in migration.

The Kennerdell Tract of Clear Creek State Forest is a 3,200-acre tract of land with six miles of shoreline along the west bank of the Allegheny River. Elements of the region’s history, from the last Ice Age to Native American use, to the farming, timber, iron making and oil industries can be found in this state forest. The state forest also offers hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding trails, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, primitive camping, hunting, and fishing. Canoe, kayak, and jetboat users on the Allegheny River can spend a night at the designated primitive camping area along the river.

The 23,000+ acres of state game lands within the OHR are a significant resource for hunters, trappers, anglers, hikers, horseback riders, and bird and wildlife watchers. Five state game lands are located in the region: SGL 39, SGL 45, SGL 47, SGL 96, and SGL 253. SGL 39 and SGL 45 both have designated routes allowing horseback riding and mountain biking and the Sandy Creek Trail runs adjacent to SGL 39 and SGL 45. Pithole Creek, East Sandy Creek, Prather Creek, and Little Sandy Creek are all Approved Trout Waters designated by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission that run through state game lands.

Two Mile Run County Park, featured in Figure 8, is another exceptional recreation site located within Venango County. This 2,695-acre park provides a well-rounded recreational package in a single location. The park provides activities such as fishing, hiking, cross country skiing and ski rentals, miniature golf, camping, a beach with water toys and floats, “the world’s largest sandbox,” beach volleyball and canoe, pedal boat and rowboat rentals. Picnic pavilions, playgrounds, restrooms, and parking are available. Two Mile Run County Park has not yet finished the process of updating its trail system that will result in a total of 33 miles and more loop trails throughout the park. In 2003 the park suffered a microburst that damaged nearly 600 acres of the park’s forest, and is still completing the cleanup of fallen timber. The Oil Region Astronomical Society operates a public stargazing observatory in the park, including free monthly educational programs. Fishing is available at Justus Lake, a 144-acre

lake, on either a floating pier or on a boat. The park has overnight accommodations that range from tent camping sites to cottages.

Waterways

The Allegheny River is Venango County's most significant river. It is fed by four significant tributaries, Oil Creek, French Creek, Sandy Creek, and Sugarcreek, which also constitute the runoff channels for five of the seven major drainage basins in the county. These waterways, shown in Figure 6, are major angling resources.

Fishing opportunities draw a large number of recreational users to the region. Angling in both warmwater and coldwater fisheries is rated as one of the top recreational uses in the region. Figure 5 shows the wealth of angling resources in the region, including over 56 miles of the Allegheny River and over 12 miles of warmwater fishing on French Creek; approximately 150 miles of Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) Approved Trout Waters (i.e., streams stocked annually with trout) or Class A Wild Trout streams; and 57 streams that sustain natural trout reproduction. In addition, Justus Lake in Two Mile Run County Park and Kahle Lake are designated Big Bass lakes by the PFBC and provide excellent fishing for bass and other species. Dennison Run, designated by the PFBC as a Wilderness Trout Stream, is contained almost entirely within the Kennerdell Tract of Clear Creek State Forest. This designation is based on "the provision of a wild trout fishing experience in a remote, natural, and unspoiled environment where man's disruptive activities are minimized."

The only significant navigational hazard on the Allegheny River within the county is the Oil City Rapids. Located under the Veterans' Bridge in Oil City, these Class 3 rapids are the only rapids of any kind in the region. This approximately 300-foot stretch of rapids invites experienced kayakers, but is a concern to boaters, anglers and canoe paddlers. Currently, there are plans to place warning signs along the rapids indicating the potential dangers and to create a safe chute for boaters to use.

Wild and Scenic River

The Allegheny River is federally designated a Wild and Scenic River in the Recreational Category from the Kinzua Dam above Warren south to Emlenton, excluding the portion from Oil City to Franklin. This designation was based on the outstanding and remarkable values within the area that need to be protected or enhanced (Allegheny National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, 1996). One of the identified values is the presence of aquatic, avian, and floral species and habitats of special concern within the river corridor. Also of extreme importance is the presence of a relatively undisturbed riparian ecosystem along the river. As recommended in the River Management Plan, these systems are critical in protecting the river and its habitats and should be conserved.

As described in the 1996 National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, the portion of the Allegheny River from Tionesta to Emlenton is relatively undeveloped, in natural condition, and limited in access. Only six boat launches are currently located along the 49-mile stretch. The major recreation uses along this section are boating, canoeing/kayaking, boat fishing, shore fishing, and swimming. A scenic view of the river at the Kennerdell Overlook in Rockland Township provides what some consider the best view in Venango County.

Land Trails

Land trails include both rail-trails and hiking trails. Land trails within the region accommodate a wide range of recreational users including bikers, mountain bikers, hikers, inline skaters, horseback riders, and cross-country skiers. Figure 5 shows that over 50 miles of paved rail-trails are now completed within the region including the Samuel Justus Trail and part of the Allegheny River Trail from Oil City to Rockland Tunnel. The east-west Sandy Creek Trail is also completed and paved from the Allegheny River to Van, including the Deep Valley Tunnel, which has since been fully rehabilitated and made suitable for riding again. From Van to the Clarion Highlands Trail to the east, the trail is not graded but is passable and, according to the Allegheny Valley Trails Association (AVTA), is open for use. The portion of the trail to the west of the Allegheny River from the Belmar Bridge to State Route 8 opened in 2004 and is graded but does not have a paved asphalt surface, which is the standard that OHR, Inc. has set for rail-trails within the region. Continuing this section from State Route 8 to Polk, this portion of the trail is not graded but is passable according to AVTA.

The OHRNHA also has over 70 miles of hiking trails, mostly within Oil Creek State Park as shown in Figure 7, as well as in Two Mile Run County Park, and the Kennerdell Tract of Clear Creek State Forest. Mountain bikers also use some of these trails at Two Mile Run County Park and in the State Forest. In addition, horseback riders are welcome within designated routes in State Game Lands (SGL) 39 and SGL 45, and have also created their own informal riding network along Venango County's unpaved roadways. Cross-country skiing is available on dedicated trails in Oil Creek State Park and along the Samuel Justus and Allegheny River Trails and in Two Mile Run County Park, which is the only public location with ski rentals.

Interpretive signage is located along the portion of bike trail within Oil Creek State Park (approximately 20 locations total) and at four locations along the stretch of the Allegheny River Trail in Oil City. These signs highlight features such as former boomtown locations, extant artifacts related to the oil industry, and other items of interest (e.g., railroads and a sewage treatment plant) to users of the trails. In addition, twenty-two interpretive signs are located along the Emlenton walking tour, and plans are underway for twenty wayside interpretive signs along the Titusville walking tour, a self-guided historic downtown trail. ORA intends to research, produce, and install additional interpretive signage along the expanded trail system and at trailheads and accesses as they are developed within the Oil Region.

The map displays the Shenandoah River Watershed, a large area in western Virginia. The river is shown as a prominent blue line winding through the landscape. Major towns and cities are labeled, including Harrisonburg, Staunton, and Shenandoah. The map is divided into counties, with names like Shenandoah, Warren, and Frederick visible. A legend in the bottom right corner provides details on symbols for land use (e.g., forest, agriculture), water bodies, and transportation (e.g., roads, trails). A small inset map in the top left corner shows the location of the watershed within the state of Virginia.



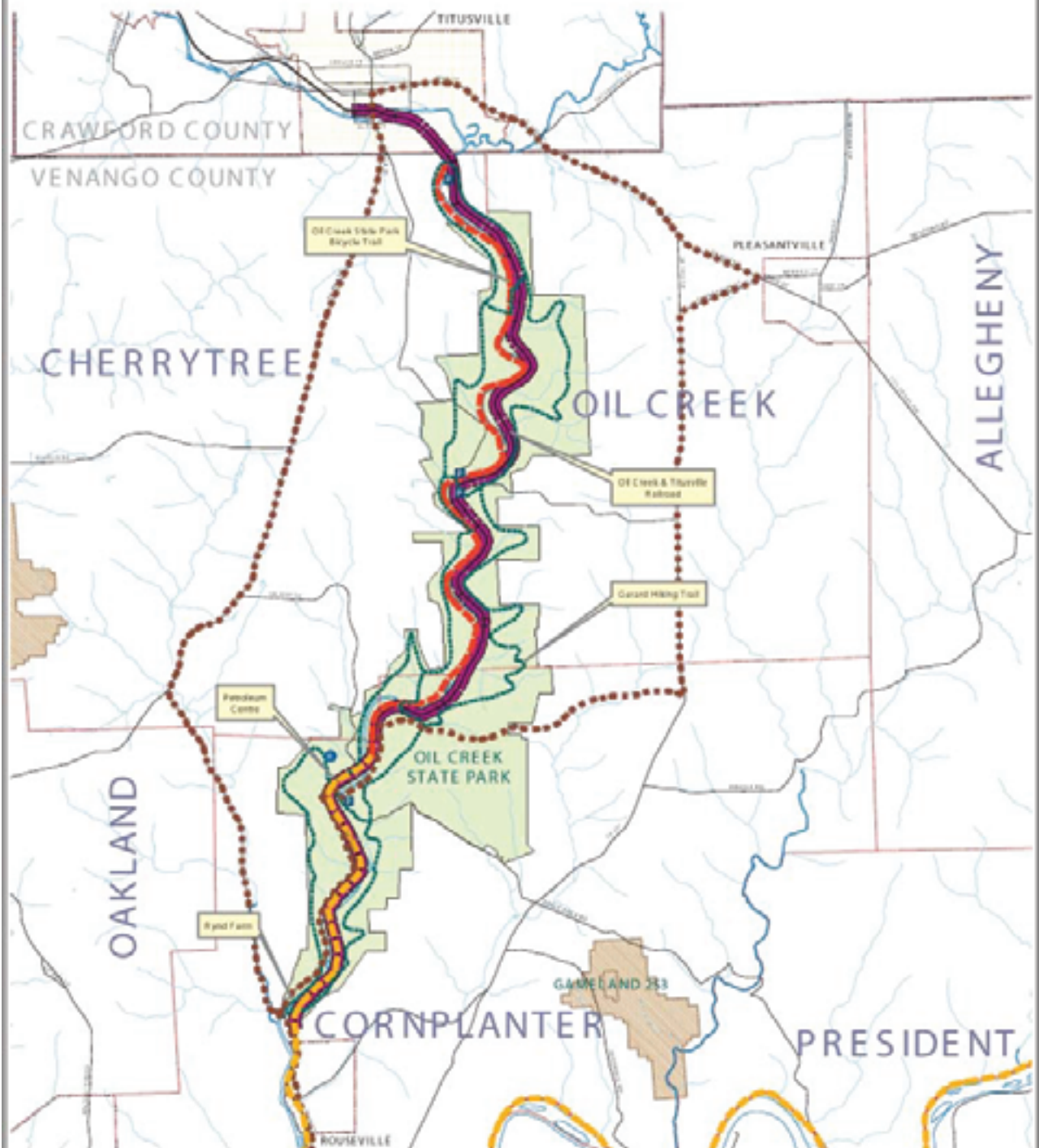
FIGURE 6
EXISTING WATER-BASED
RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

[illegible]

OIL HERITAGE REGION, PENNSYLVANIA

Mackin

FIGURE 7
OIL CREEK STATE PARK
EXISTING LAND BASED
RECREATIONAL RESOURCES



Legend

- Active Railroad
- Active Railroad
- State Road
- Road
- Oil Creek & Titusville Railroad
- Trail Head
- Stop Marker
- State Park
- State Game Land
- State Forest
- Crawford County Forest
- Two Mile Run County Park
- Trails
- Grand Hiking Trail
- Oil Creek & Titusville Railroad
- Oil Creek State Park Bicycle Trail
- Oil Creek & Titusville Railroad
- Oil Creek State Park Bicycle Trail
- Oil Creek State Park Bicycle Trail

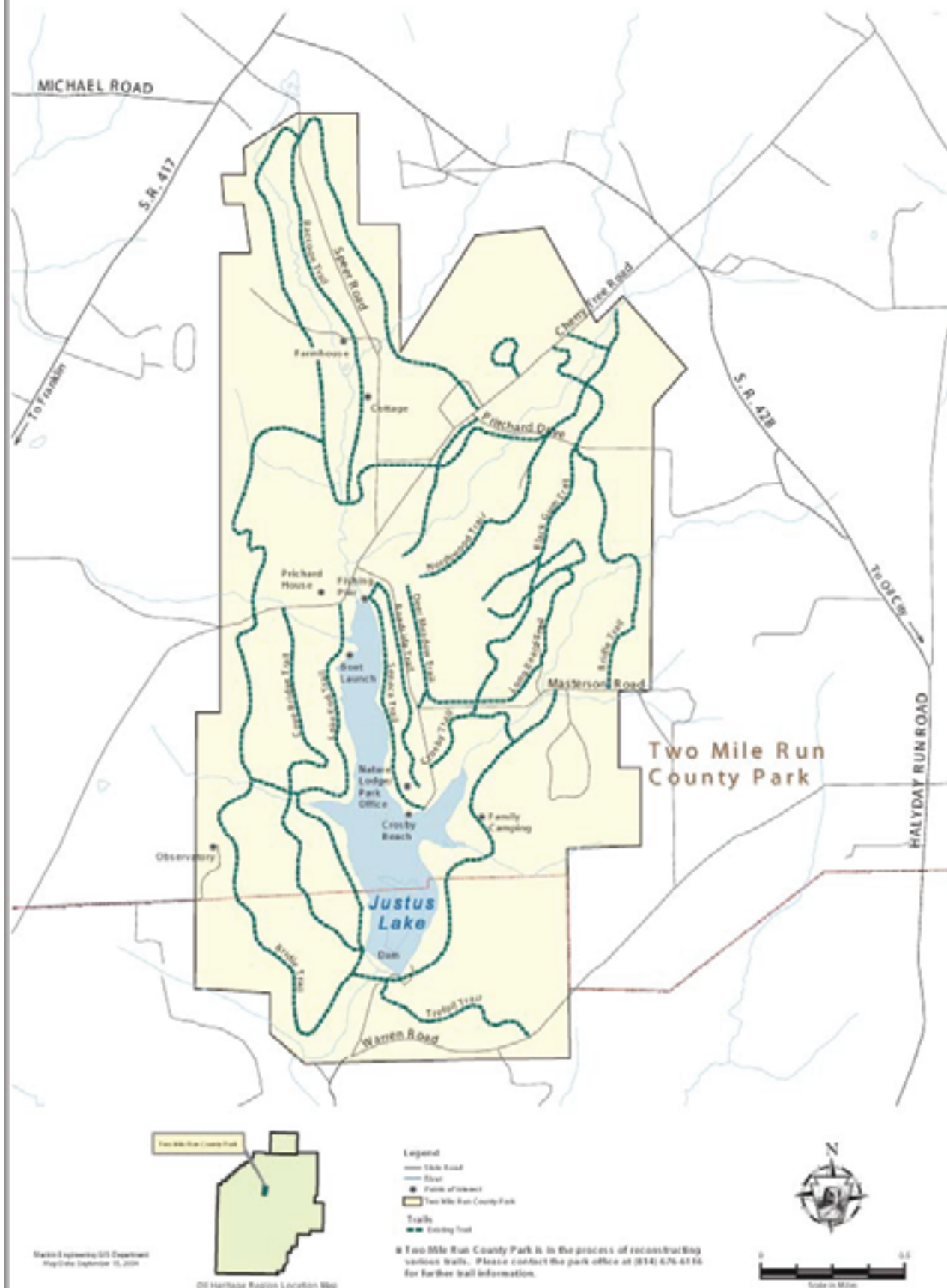


Scale

OIL HERITAGE REGION, PENNSYLVANIA

FIGURE 8

TWO MILE RUN COUNTY PARK EXISTING RECREATIONAL RESOURCES



Impacts

All alternatives include identical trail, recreational, and water access features, as these are all an integral part of the current Management Plan Update as defined in **Alternative 1 - No Federal Action** and would be incorporated into both **Alternative 2** and **Alternative 3**. With the addition of as many as 100 miles of connected trails throughout the OHR, residents and visitors will experience major long-term beneficial impacts to regional recreational opportunities.

3.5. Socio-economic Resources

3.5.1. Area Demographics

Affected Environment

The Oil Region National Heritage Area includes Venango County and two municipalities in eastern Crawford County - the city of Titusville and Oil Creek Township. In the text below, reference to the “Oil Region” includes the population of the entirety of the above jurisdictions that comprise the Oil Region NHA.

Population and Age

The population of the Oil Region in 2000 was 65,591 according to the Bureau of the Census. This was a decrease of 2,293 persons or about 3.0 percent of the 1990 population. This population loss continues a trend of the last few decades. The population of the Oil Region has decreased by over 10 percent since 1980.

The populations of both the Oil Region and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are aging rapidly. The median age—an indicator for population age change—increased from 34.0 years to 38.0 between 1990 and 2000. In the Oil Region, over fifty-percent of the population is over 40, while only 24 percent of the population is under 18. If current patterns prevail, for the next ten years the population will continue to decrease, but the available workforce will remain constant. However, between 2010 and 2020, almost 19 percent of the state population and over 20 percent of the study population will reach 65 (the last of the baby-boomers) and the potential labor force will start to decline.

Households

There were 26,018 households in the Oil Region in 2000. Seventy percent of these households were considered to be families: 54.7% were married couples, 10.1% were female householders with at least one adult family member cohabiting, and 6.1% were female householders living with dependent children under 18. Of the 31% of households that were non-family in the study area, 13.1% were composed of single adults 65 or older.

Income

Income levels in the Oil Region since 1990 have increased quite favorably outpacing income growth in Pennsylvania. Since 1990 median family incomes increased over 40%, while Pennsylvania's grew at 38%. Significant growth income levels included a 100% growth in families earning \$50-75,000 annually and tremendous increases in those earning \$75,000 or more. Although the number of families making less than \$10,000 annually decreased since 1990, nearly 12% of the region's families still fall into this poverty challenged income bracket. The median household income in the Oil Region in 1999 was \$32,257, just 80 percent of the Pennsylvania median of \$40,106. Since households are slightly larger in the

study area than the state average, per capita incomes are an even a lower percentage of the state average. This is a reflection of several factors: relatively high unemployment, a larger number of retired persons, a low labor force participation rate, and a high concentration of persons dependent on other sources of income.

Poverty

Poverty levels for Oil Region in 2000 were higher than in Pennsylvania. Of particular concern were the poverty levels of women who are single parents with very young children; nearly 70% of such households were considered below poverty. Families in general with young children have significantly less income than Pennsylvania families as a whole. Over one-third of families with young children were considered below poverty.

Education

Education is a primary measure of the quality and flexibility of a community's labor force. In the post manufacturing, service-oriented economy of today, it correlates highly with income. Generally, the population of the region can be characterized as moderate advanced educational levels. Whereas in 2000 almost 82% of all persons over the age of 25 in Pennsylvania had high school diplomas, 81% of Oil Region's residents possessed high school diplomas.

The disparity with the Commonwealth grows larger for college educations. Over 28% of the Commonwealth's citizens over 25 years of age have attained an Associate Degree or higher, while 18.5% of the county's residents have earned such an occurrence of advanced education. Reflected in this statistic are the employment opportunities available in the area. Furthermore, in 2000, 22.4% of state residents had completed at least a bachelor's degree compared to only 13.1% of the region's residents. The latter is of concern because many of the new jobs being created today require college educations; communities which are perceived to have a low attainment rate are often not considered for locations of high-tech or information service firms.

Occupation

In Pennsylvania in 2000, 32.6 percent of employed workers were classified as managers or professionals; by contrast only 25.7 percent of Oil Region workers were in this category. On the other hand all blue-collar production occupations in the Commonwealth comprise only 25.7 percent of the workforce, while locally this group is 33.7 percent. Sales and office workers were 27 percent of the state and 24 percent of the Region. Service sector workers, other than managers or sales and office workers, were 14.8 percent of the state total and 16.7 percent of the Oil Region workforce. Hence, the labor profile of the Oil Region is heavily weighted toward blue collar and service personnel and substantially below the state in managers and other white-collar occupations.

Impacts

One objective of the Oil Region National Heritage Area is to generate positive economic impacts for the entirety of the Oil Region, including Venango County, Titusville, and Oil Creek Township. These economic benefits can be created in a number of ways, including through increased numbers of visitors and increased visitor expenditures and through construction and/or preservation activities that create jobs and also serve as catalysts for additional area investment. Each conceptual alternative implies somewhat different characteristics in terms of potential for visitation and the resultant impact from visitor expenditures, as well as financial contribution to ORNHA's sustainability.

Alternative 1 - No Federal Action. This alternative assumes no additional federal heritage funds for coordination, interpretation, preservation, and development purposes. Although many improvements are defined within this base alternative - including increased access to the Allegheny River, expansion of the recreational trail system, and enhancements to core interpretive sites, including the Drake Well Museum, the Oil Creek & Titusville Railroad, and Oil Creek State Park – it is possible and likely that such improvements may proceed at a more measured pace under **Alternative 1** than might be possible under the action alternatives. It is likely that these types of improvements would result in minor long-term beneficial economic impacts to the region, causing related effects on the region’s residents. Such impacts would be felt by increases in recreational and heritage tourist visitors, as well as through potential related indirect investments in historic properties and settings across the region, creating construction as well as permanent employment.

Alternative 2 - Modify Current Plan to Address Opportunities Across the Region would enable local and state funding to be supplemented by federal heritage funds, creating an expanded capability for preservation and related economic development activities. The increased scale of this alternative coupled with the availability of federal funds, in comparison to **Alternative 1**, would enable a more accelerated pace of development and would also support diverse project activities throughout the region, thus creating and maintaining more economic activity and job opportunity. This consistent positive activity will raise the region’s profile, attract more visitors, and increase visitor expenditure. The economic benefits to the region are likely to be moderate, long term, and beneficial.

Alternative 3 - Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them is an approach that meets the requirements of the NHA legislation and therefore ensures the availability of federal funding for preservation programs and plans. The focused resource appropriation efforts of this plan on urban core districts and linkages between them will contribute to preservation and interpretation of the physical resources of the region’s economic centers, thus heightening their attractiveness to residents and visitors. By focusing attention on established centers, the ORNHA will benefit from other economic development initiatives launched in these urban cores, creating opportunities to attract more local and visitor-related economic activity to these centers. The likely economic benefits to the region and its people will be moderate, long term, and beneficial.

3.5.2. Tourism and the Visitor Experience

Affected Environment

The ORNHA has a challenging market area, as its surrounding area (100-mile radius) has a relatively low density toward the center, with more dense areas to the north, west, and south, and a sparsely populated region to the east. The 2003 population of the Oil Region was estimated at 63,472, and is expected to shrink to 62,074, or 2.2% by 2008. Total population within a 100-mile radius of Oil City was about 6.6 million in 2003. Of this amount, only about 0.8 million, or about 12% fell within 50 miles of Oil City. Population density for the 0-to-50 mile radius segment was about 106 people per square mile, versus 246 people per square mile for the 50-to-100 mile segment, indicating that the outer segment is over twice as densely populated as the inner segment. Population of the 100-mile-ring surrounding Oil City is expected to decrease by about 1.5%, to roughly 6.5 million by 2008.

The metropolitan areas surrounding the Oil Region are experiencing similar population declines, with the biggest metropolitan population, Pittsburgh, declining by 1.5%; Erie, PA and Akron, OH declining by 1.2% and 1.7% respectively; while the populations in Cleveland and Youngstown remain relatively stagnant, declining just slightly by .2%.

With a relatively sparse population within the NHA area, participating in a broad regional trend of population aging and net negative growth, key daytrip markets lie in the 50-to-100 mile radius and beyond, primarily to the north, south, and west. Critical mass is therefore an issue if the region is to be successful in drawing from a market that is relatively distant. Overnight visitor markets are also relatively modest.

Visitor Use Patterns

Paid visitation at key OHR cultural/heritage attractions is modest, yet consistently strong given the relatively small core market. Paid annual visitation at the Drake Well Museum, the OC&T Railroad, and the Barrow Civic Theater typically each fall in the 15,000 – 20,000 range.

Visitation at key OHR recreation attractions is significantly higher than visitation at the region's major cultural/heritage sites. For example, Oil Creek State Park is estimated in the 95,000 – 170,000 range, with large annual visitation swings largely in response to prevailing weather. Two Mile Run County Park estimated 2003 visitation of 125,000.

Major event participation (over a limited span of days) ranges from a reported 5,000 visitors for First Night ® Oil City to a reputed 80-90,000 for Franklin's Applefest ®, with several other events in Franklin on the order of 10-15,000 people. These visitor numbers are not spread across the year, but are concentrated in small periods of time.

This relationship reflects the fact that outdoor recreation is in general a more popular activity than visiting museums or historical sites, and that fees are charged by the recreational facilities only for certain special events or particular activities, with most facilities provided free of charge. In the U.S., about 17% of all person-trips involve outdoor activities and 10% of all person-trips involve visits to national and state parks, while 14% of person-trips involve visits to historical places and museums.

Demographic information for OHR's neighboring Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), in conjunction with average participation rates for popular outdoor activities, suggests that a significant outdoor activity market exists in the region. In addition, conversations with outdoor recreation clubs (hiking, biking, etc.) in eastern and central Ohio indicate that the Allegheny National Forest is a popular weekend destination for various types of outdoor recreation. Visitors traveling from Ohio to the Allegheny National Forest typically report traveling on I-80 or I-90 past the OHR to enter the forest from the south or north, where the forest boundary is relatively near to the interstate highway.

Infrastructure and/or marketing investments targeting this recreation market have been relatively successful to date in the Oil Region and, because of this factor, were an important element of the ORNHA plan to attract visitor interest. However, recreation travelers tend to spend less than cultural/heritage travelers, so attempts to pursue the recreation market should involve explicit strategies to maximize the value of each visit. On average, households taking historic/cultural trips spend \$623 per trip, versus \$539 per average outdoor activity trip and \$457 for the average U.S. trip.

Impacts

As noted in Section 3.4.6, all Alternatives will include substantial expansion of the regional trail and recreational network, resulting in significant improvement of the regional visitor experience. The extent of such expansions plus the addition of interpretive content to these trails will expand visitor understanding of the region and the factors which have influenced its development, over time, resulting in a moderate beneficial impact to the visitor experience and potential improvement of the region's attractiveness for visitors. The other major difference that may be reflected in impacts to the visitor experience would be that **Alternative 1 - No Federal Action**, includes a very modest investment in specific preservation programs and projects, and may have only a modest beneficial impact on the quality of environment and setting in the region's core communities. However, for **Alternative 2 - Modify Current Plan to Address Opportunities Across the Region** and **Alternative 3 - Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them**, significant resources will be allocated to a broad-based pro-active preservation program, including technical and financial assistance. Both of these action alternatives should result in an increased level of attention to historic resources throughout the region, resulting in protection of core historic resources that contribute to the visitor experience and visitors' understanding of local history. In addition to the positive impacts on the visitor experience and tourism expected from the recreational improvements noted above, both action alternatives should result in major beneficial impacts to the regional visitor experience, with Alternative 3 the more effective, because of its concentration of likely investment in historic core communities.

3.5.3. Land Use

Affected Environment

The NHA area is largely a rural, wooded area with low population density outside the major communities in the middle of the county – Franklin, Oil City, Cranberry Township, and Sugar creek Borough – and the Titusville and Emlenton communities at the north and south extremities.

Residential

In step with the region's population decrease, the housing stock has also decreased by .21% since 1990 (to a total of 26,904 units). The largest municipalities in the county—Oil City and Franklin—saw most of the housing decrease, while the offsetting increases were spread throughout fifteen townships and four boroughs, mostly a product of suburban and rural housing starts. The county's 15.5% vacant housing rate is far above the state average (9.0%), but can be accounted for, in part, by the high number of seasonal units in the county (62.2% of the vacant units are seasonally occupied).

Commercial/Office/Retail

Commercial and industrial development continued to be a small part of overall growth in the NHA area. While the Oil Region Alliance continues to acquire new land for industrial growth, regional access is not ideal. Aside from the Interstate 80 corridor along the southern perimeter of the County, there is not an arterial network in place. While small businesses and manufacturing companies have proliferated throughout the rail and river corridors between Franklin and Oil City, they have done so without the benefit of regional access, although some businesses in the region, including in Titusville, take advantage of short line rail service.

The introduction of public utilities to the interchange area of Barkeyville (State Route 8) and Interstate 80 in the later 1990's has increased the availability of land dedicated to industrial development, and similar infrastructure improvements are projected for the Clintonville interchange area. While these areas may attract development first because of access from Interstate 80 to regional markets, older industrialized areas of the County have relied on "adaptive reuse" and structural retro fitting to accommodate a changing industrial sector. Taken in the aggregate, however, a number of sites employing only a few people can have the same effect as one large facility, and have less of an impact on the existing public utilities and roadway network.

ORA's economic development group is placing significant emphasis on attracting new industry and supporting existing businesses across the region. The Route 8 & 62 Corridor Project - one project outlined in the ORA Work Plan (2006) - is an initiative that could cross-cut economic development and preservation, including an analysis of multiple buildings along a corridor including Franklin and Oil City and prototype proposals to encourage private owners to undertake adaptive reuse.

Industrial / Mining

Some 1,019 acres in Venango County and Oil Creek Township are still mined, but this sector employs less than 1% of the county's workforce. Of the other 12,906 mined acres for which the Department of Mining Operations maintains records, 8,050 acres have been fully reclaimed, meaning that all holes have been completely filled in, the site has been planted, and all bonds have been released. An additional 113 acres are in the process of achieving reclaimed status. The remaining 4,650 acres are classified as bond forfeited, which means the operating corporation has abandoned the mine and left the state. The State of Pennsylvania has assumed responsibility for these sites and will ultimately ensure that these sites achieve "complete reclamation" status.

Agricultural

"Farms are a key piece of the Commonwealth's heritage that contribute significantly to the state's economy and help to define the landscape of many Pennsylvania towns. Farmland provides habitat for game and non-game species and it also provides open areas for rain and ground water to seep into underground rivers or aquifers, which in turn supply the water for year-round wells. As such, the large open spaces of a community's agricultural area provide many, often intangible, benefits to a municipality's citizens."³

Under the criteria defined for a 1972 survey of farmlands conducted by the Soil Conservation Service under direction of the United States Secretary of Agriculture, Venango County contains 103,585 acres of Prime Farmland and 118,090 acres of Additional Farmland of Statewide Importance. In total, there are 240,215 acres of Important Farmlands out of a total land area of 432,451 acres in the county.

From these figures, it is calculated that over half (55%) of the County's land area is classified as "important farmland" and one-quarter of it can be labeled "prime farmland".

The greatest amount of good agricultural land is found prominently in the northwestern corner of Venango County and the lower southern tier of the NHA area, with appreciable amounts also in Allegheny, Pinegrove, and Mineral Townships.

³ Venango County Plan: Section 6: p. 32

Institutional Uses

Clarion University—a mid-sized university of 6,000 students located in Clarion, PA—has a satellite campus located in Oil City that serves approximately 650 full and part time students each year. The school’s curriculum is geared towards educating first time and returning adult students in professional fields such as allied health, nursing, criminal justice, applied technology, early education, and legal business studies. The University of Pittsburgh also operates a campus in Titusville.

The delivery of healthcare in the Venango County region is just now emerging from a period of transition. University of Pittsburgh Medical Center now operates or is affiliated with both major hospitals in the region. After merging with the County’s previous health care provider and facility operator, Northwest Health System, UPMC closed the two small health care facilities in Franklin and Oil City and built a new \$65 million hospital in Cranberry Township—UPMC Passavant Cranberry. In January 2006, Titusville Area Hospital, a hundred year old, 83-bed acute care facility with an ICU and 24-hour ER, reached an agreement with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Health Plan and is now a part of their growing network of contracted facilities and physicians.

Impacts

All the alternatives are likely to have minor beneficial impacts on long-term patterns of land use within the NHA area, as projects and investments will be intended to build on and reinforce existing characteristics of open spaces and built-up areas, but the emphasis on open space and recreational improvements will enhance existing land uses. Any of the alternatives may result in short-term minor adverse impacts to land use associated with project construction disruption.

3.5.4. Transportation

Affected Environment

Road System

Venango County’s overland transportation network evolved from Native American paths used for hunting and trapping and farm lanes that linked productive lands to emerging markets; these were all influenced by the county’s hilly topography and river basins. Interstate-80, which runs along the southern border of the NHA, is the only highway in the county that runs in an east-west direction. The other three major highways weave through the county, more or less diagonally. U.S. Route 62 runs through Franklin and Oil City and connects Mercer and Forest Counties. U.S. Route 322, which passes through Franklin, crosses the county from the northwest to the southeast to connect Crawford and Clarion Counties. State Route 8, which also passes through Franklin and Oil City before shooting north to Titusville, connects Butler and Crawford Counties.

Air

The Venango Regional Airport is located two (2) miles south of downtown Franklin and serves Venango County and other parts of Northwestern Pennsylvania. The airport is the primary business airport within the I-80/Erie corridor, and supports daily flights to Pittsburgh International Airport.

Rail

The Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad operates the former Conrail route from Pittsburgh, northeast to Meadville and Oil City. It serves approximately eight (8) to ten (10) customers in the Oil City/Franklin area, including businesses in the former Pennzoil-Quaker State refinery in Rouseville.

Affiliated with the New York and Lake Erie Railroad and Trillium Railway Company, Ltd., Oil Creek and Titusville Lines (OCTL) began operating in 1985 between Rouseville and Titusville, and was formerly operated by Conrail. The OCTL has provided freight service between Rouseville and Titusville to thirteen (13) industrial businesses, ranging from hardwood lumber mills to plastic pipe manufacturing, on seventeen (17) miles of tracks between the two (2) communities. The OCTL is considered a line haul carrier, and connects with the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad at Rouseville, providing transportation for a variety of industries including hardwood lumber, plastic resins, sand, petroleum, wax and fertilizer.

The OCTL also operates passenger excursion service for the Oil Creek Railway Historical Society. The Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad (OC & T RR), a nonprofit organization, provides two and one half (2 ½) hour trips through the Oil Creek Valley to not only entertain, but also to educate travelers about the rich history of the valley. In addition to providing educational and historical tours, the OC & T RR also hosts murder mystery dinner and train rides, and seasonal rides for Easter, Halloween and Christmas.

Bikeways/Pedestrian paths

Within the OHR, trails are by far the most widely recognized recreational resource. The region's trails not only encourage multiple recreational uses, but also provide an important link between towns and interpretive sites along the way. They also provide an enjoyable way for users of all ages and abilities to view scenic areas and wildlife. The trails in Venango County can be separated into two major categories: land trails and water trails. See Section 3.4.6 for a full description of these resources.

Public Transportation

Venango County operates and maintains a bus system called the "Go-bus." The bus runs three routes: the Oil City route; the Franklin route; and the Inter-City route, which connects Cranberry, Franklin, and Oil City. The busses run every hour on the hour from 7:10 am to 5:30 pm. Taxi service is also available throughout the county, but this service is privately owned and operated and a substantially more expensive option. The Crawford Area Transportation Authority operates several fixed-route busses in the cities of Meadville and Titusville as well as a shared ride program that operates countywide and offers door-to-door service that is demand responsive to senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Titusville has two fixed-route busses that run hourly and serve community, retail, and residential destinations.

Impacts

The alternatives are likely to have small impacts on regional transportation within the NHA area, because of the large scale of the area and the relatively modest levels of visitation.

The long-term impacts of **Alternative 1 - No Federal Action** and **Alternative 2 - Modify Current Plan to Address Opportunities Across the Region** on transportation are likely to be negligible, although short-term adverse impacts may occur in connection with festivals, events, or other unique heritage-based activities.

Alternative 3 - Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them may have minor increases on local traffic in core areas, to the extent that revitalization and preservation efforts are successful, attracting additional businesses and visitors to core areas. However, it is unlikely that such impacts would be any greater than adverse, as traffic in these areas is unlikely to approach the levels that were associated with the period when each core area was more fully occupied and commercially active.

3.6. Cultural Resources

In Venango County and Titusville the preponderance of cultural resources resulted in the formation of the Oil Heritage Region in 2004 and its subsequent elevation to a National Heritage Area. Across the region's landscape are unique natural and man-made resources that are intertwined with the history of the oil industry and its remarkable heritage of boom and bust, spoils, and recovery. The permanent effects of economic prosperity that the oil industry brought are most evident in the four largest communities of the region—Titusville, Oil City, Franklin, and Emlenton. Each of these areas features extant oil related settings, landmarks, and distinctive residential, commercial and industrial architecture.

3.6.1. Historic Resources

Affected Environment

The recognized historic resources in Venango County and Titusville are numerous, with six historic districts in the area's four major cores—Emlenton, Franklin, Oil City, and Titusville—ten properties listed in the National Register, and one National Historic Landmark. In addition, there are nineteen properties determined eligible for the National Register. Table 9 includes a list of National Historic Landmarks, National Register Historic Districts, Individual Properties listed in the National Register, and Properties determined Eligible for the National Register. The location of these sites is shown in Figure 9.

Impacts

There are a significant number of nationally recognized historic resources within the NHA area; most are intimately connected with the history of oil, oil exploration, and oil-related prosperity. All alternatives recognize and build upon these resources, with varying effectiveness. **Alternative 1 - No Federal Action** would leave the coordination networks that have been established in the ORNHA over the past twelve years intact, allowing for continued implementation of the plan, but implementation would be limited due to the absence of federal funding support. Since this alternative includes significantly less allocation of funds to specific preservation activity support, this alternative would be likely to result in minor beneficial impact to historic resources as a whole, although some elements of the program are targeted for interpretive investments at various historic sites, which would experience major beneficial impact.

By meeting the requirements of the NHA legislation, **Alternative 2 - Modify Current Plan to Address Opportunities Across the Region** would ensure that federal funding would be available to support a diverse range of programs and policies that could be used throughout the ORNHA to support preservation and additional interpretive efforts at individual sites. This alternative's opportunistic approach to preservation provides the flexibility to direct preservation resources and efforts toward the most worthy or the most urgent cases. The impact on historic resources throughout the region would be moderate, long-term, and

beneficial, although it would not necessarily be focused upon areas where such resources are clustered.

Alternative 3 - Modify Current Plan to Focus Preservation and Economic Development Activities on Historic District Communities and Corridors Linking Them also meets the requirements of the NHA legislation and therefore ensures the availability of federal funding for preservation programs and plans. The focused preservation efforts outlined in this plan would allow entire districts to benefit from preservation planning initiatives through development of guidelines or procedures that would be applicable to numerous structures with similar characteristics within a particular district, and would also likely result in targeting of financial and technical assistance to such districts. The impact of this alternative on the historic resources of the NHA area would likely be major, long term, and beneficial. However, this alternative allows for the possibility that other resources not located in core areas or within linkage corridors might not receive the same level of attention.

Table 6: Properties listed in or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
Venango County

National Historic Landmarks	
Cherry Creek Township	Drake Oil Well
National Register Historic Districts	
Emlenton	Emlenton Historic District
Franklin	Franklin Historic District
Oil City	Oil City Downtown Commercial National Register
	Oil City North Side National Register Historic
	Oil City South Side National Register Historic
Properties individually listed in the National Register	
Cornplanter Township	Site of Pithole City
Franklin	Samuel Dale House
Oil City	National Transit Building & Annex
	Oil City Armory
	Oil City U.S. Post Office
Pleasantville Borough	Allegheny Baptist Church
President Township	Pithole Stone Arch Bridge
Rockland Township	Rockland Furnace
Properties determined eligible for the National Register	
Cherry Tree Township	Drake Well Memorial Park
Cherry Creek Township	Oil Creek Railroad (Pennsylvania Railroad) East Line
Cornplanter Township	Coal Oil Johnny's House
Franklin	Franklin Rolling Mill & Foundry
	513 13 th Street
	206 11 th Street
Oil City	Christ Episcopal Church
	Imperial Works of the Oil Well Supply
	C.F. Kramer Building
	National Transit Pump & Machine Company
	United Natural Gas Company
	Oil City Library
Polk Borough	State School and Hospital
Rockland & Scrubgrass Township	Belmar Bridge , Franklin & Clearfield Railroad
Rockland Township	Indian God Rock Petroglyph
Scrubgrass Township	James Anderson House

Crawford County

National Historic Districts	
Titusville	Titusville Historic District
Properties individually listed in the National Register	
Titusville	Titusville City Hall
Properties determined eligible for the National Register	
Oil Creek Township	Titusville Waterworks
Titusville	Titusville Junior-Senior High School
	U.S. Post Office

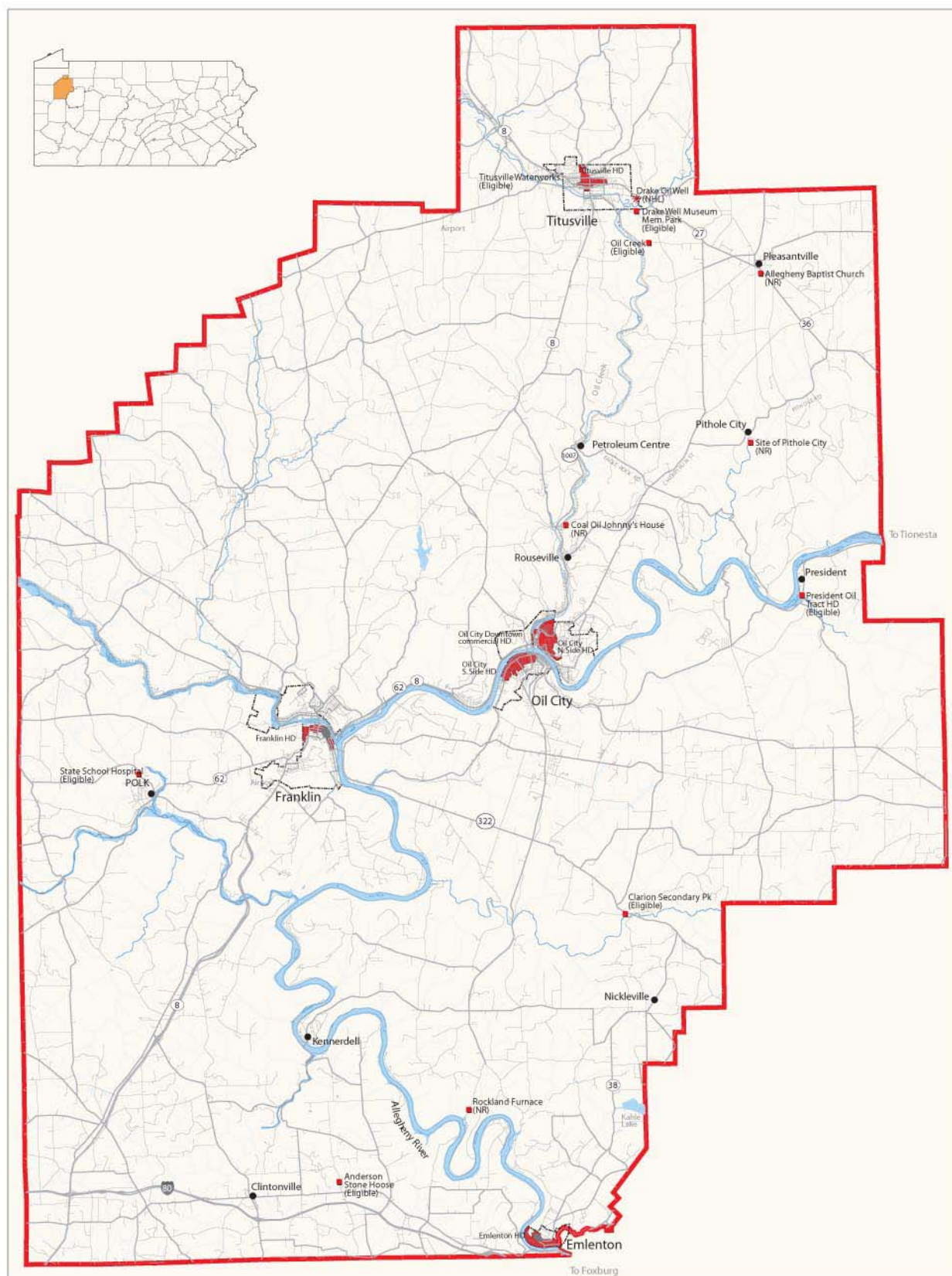


Figure 9
National Register
Sites & Districts

3.6.2. Archeological Resources

Affected Environment

Two archaeological sites are officially designated in Venango County and listed in the National Register (see Figure 8): Indian God Rock Petroglyph in Rockland Township, and Pithole City Archeological Site in Cornplanter Township. The Indian God Rock Petroglyph Site is a massive, free-standing boulder seven meters long and four meters wide with carvings covering most of the west face. The rock face contains at least 56 glyph designs; most notable are glyphs Nos. 15 and 25, which are the only true American Indian representations of bows and arrows recorded in the petroglyph studies of the Ohio Valley. Pithole is an individual site managed by the PHMC, including visitor support facilities and on-site interpretation. Many other archeological opportunities exist across the region, including, for example, multiple boomtown locations in Oil Creek State Park, some of which have received detailed study and research.

Furthermore, many Native Americans inhabited the area prior to the mid 1800s. Notably, the Iroquois and Delaware Indian tribes populated the land along the Allegheny River and the French Creek.

Impacts

All of the alternatives would result in minor beneficial impact to archeological resources, inasmuch as improvements to listed archeological sites, such as Pithole, will be done in conformance with required procedures by the PHMC. Additionally, proposed improvements within Oil Creek State Park done by the state would adhere to similar protocols, but ongoing research on specific oil-related sites in the park may reveal details that can be interpreted for visitors and increase their understanding of the value of these archeological resources.

The area within the ORNHA is of great importance and sensitivity to the Seneca Nation of Indians (see section 4.2 for attached correspondence). There are no known sites of archeological importance, but further development must guard against the possibility of destroying or affecting archeological resources.

3.6.3. Other Cultural Resources

Affected Environment

There are many other historic and cultural resources in the region that are culturally significant. These resources include museums, interpretive parks, festivals, performances, and other unique resources that add to and celebrate the historic fabric of the region. Below is a list and brief description of such resources in Venango County. The location of each site or event listed below is marked on Figure 10. These sites include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Drake Well Museum** (*Oil Creek Township, Venango County*). Drake Well Museum tells the story of the beginning of the modern oil industry with orientation videos, exhibits, operating oil field machinery, and historic buildings in a park setting. The museum hosts a

variety of special events, educational programs, memberships, volunteer, and shopping experiences on site for visitors to enjoy.

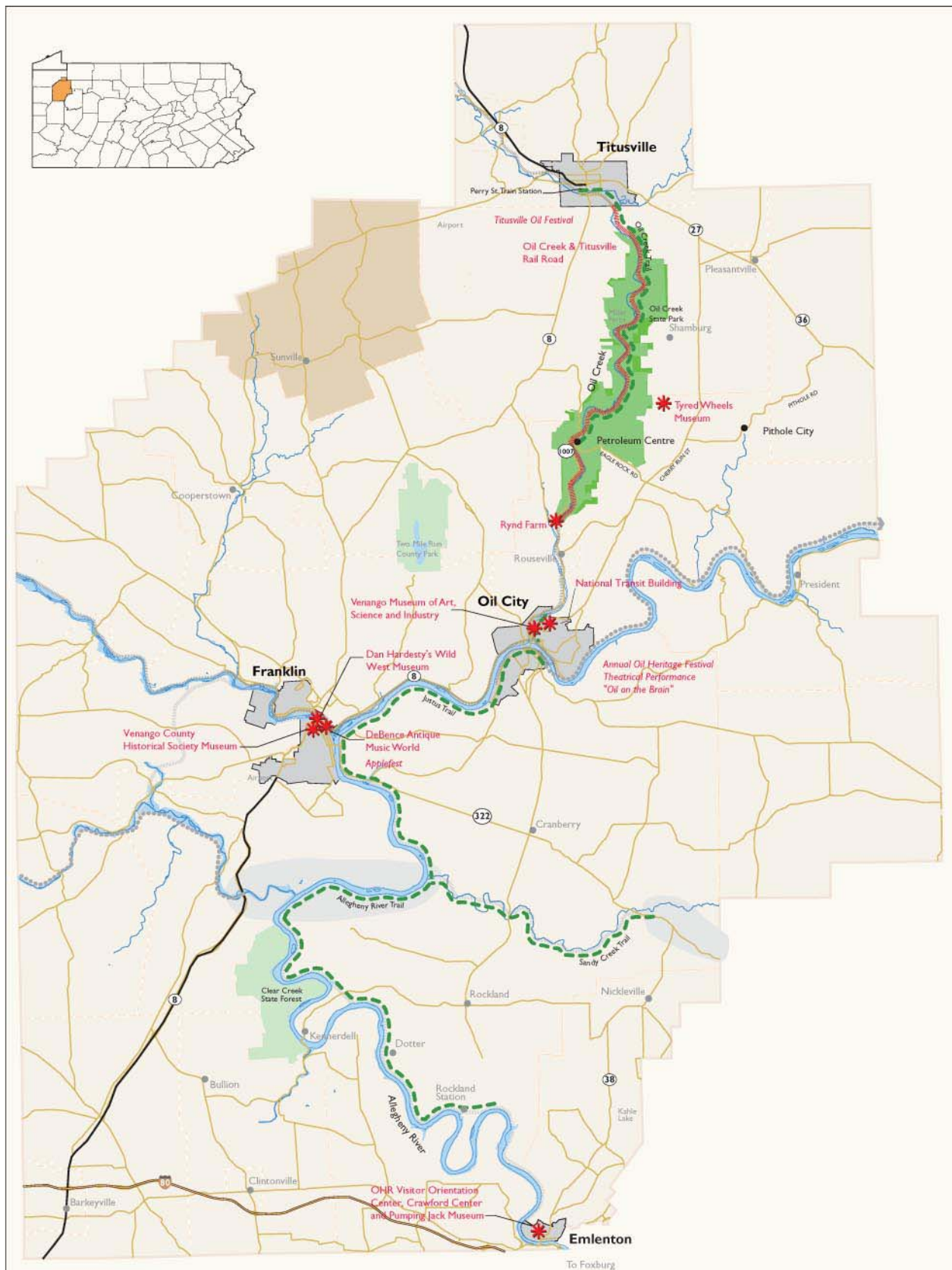
- **Oil Creek State Park** (*Cherrytree and Cornplanter Townships, Venango County*). Oil Creek State Park encompasses 7,096 acres along Oil Creek, north of Oil City, in “the valley that changed the world.” The park seeks both to preserve the dramatic natural beauty of Oil Creek and its surrounding environs and to tell and interpret the story of the development of the early petroleum industry by interpreting oil boomtowns, oil wells and early transportation. The park includes hiking and biking trails and hosts the Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad, which runs through the park.
- **Pithole Historic Site** (*Cornplanter Township, Venango County*). The Pithole Historic Site is the site of an oil boomtown originally settled in 1865 and, at its peak, home to 15,000 people; three years later, in 1868, the town had been completely abandoned. There is currently a museum and interpretive walkway on the site.
- **Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad** (*from Perry Street in Titusville, Crawford County to Rynd Farm in Venango County*). The OC&T Railroad originates in Titusville and runs along Oil Creek through the scenic Oil Creek State Park, where it terminates at Rynd Farm. The scenic ride lasts two and one half hours and stops at several points of historic interest, including Drake Well, Petroleum Centre, and Rynd Farm.
- **Coal Oil Johnny House**, (*Rynd Farm, Cornplanter Township, Venango County*). This house belonged to John Washington Steele (1843-1921), more commonly known as "Coal Oil Johnny," who was the oil boom's prodigal prince. John inherited the estate, which included well royalties of \$2,000 to \$3,000 per day, when his adopted mother died and he became incredibly wealthy, seemingly overnight. After several long stretches of heavy drinking and poor management, he declared bankruptcy, lost the estate, and moved his family to the Midwest.
- **The Venango Museum of Art, Science and Industry** (*Oil City, Venango County*). This museum is a private, non-profit general museum that offers a combination of permanent and changing exhibits. Annual offerings include musical and performance programs, summer children's programs, regional art shows, tours to historic sites, lectures, and a changing annual "hands on" science exhibit for children.
- **DeBence Antique Music World** (*Franklin, Venango County*). This museum houses an extensive collection of automatic music machines spanning two centuries. The collection includes nickelodeons, intricate, beautifully tuned music boxes, created by nineteenth-century German and Swiss craftsmen, and merry-go-round band organs, among others.
- **Barrow Civic Theatre** (*Franklin, Venango County*). This meticulously rehabilitated theatre is on Franklin's main street and offers a variety of performances ranging from local productions to out-of-town attractions.
- **Dan Hardesty's Wild West Museum** (*Franklin, Venango County*). This museum houses and represents a very large private collection of Wild West memorabilia and antiques.
- **Tyred Wheels Museum** (*Pleasantville, Venango County*). This museum houses the unique, lifetime collection of cars and memorabilia of Gene and Cora Burt. The collection includes over 5,000 die-cast cars, old toys, and antiques and attracts visitors from all over the world.

- **Venango County Historical Society** (*Franklin, Venango County*). Visitors to the Venango County Historical Society will see a wide array of interesting artifacts and memorabilia, including clothing, household furniture, tableware and other unique items that tell the story of Venango County. The Society houses a collection of Native American crafts. There is also a genealogical library tracing the roots of some Venango County inhabitants.
- **Pumping Jack Museum and Historical Association** (*Emlenton, Venango County*). This small museum has been developed by local collectors and includes exhibits and artifacts related to the oil and gas history of the area located in the Crawford Center, an adaptively reused former school building.

Additionally, various performances, events, and festivals are important regional traditions. These include theatrical performances of materials written about the oil industry, such as “*Oil On the Brain*,” “*Melba, the Toast of Pithole*” and other pieces based on Oil Region history, the **Annual Oil Heritage Festival** in Oil City, the **Titusville Oil Festival**, and **Applefest**, held each fall in downtown Franklin.

Impacts

All of the alternatives would result in moderate to major beneficial impact to regional cultural resources, inasmuch as many of the interpretive improvements that are part of all options are focused on many of these sites and their general settings. The degree of benefit will vary at each venue, depending on the specific scale of improvement defined in the plan.



3.7. Environmental Justice

Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, agencies must ensure that programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance that affect human health or the environment do not directly, or through contractual or other arrangements, use criteria, methods, or practices that discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Agencies must analyze the environmental effects including human health, economic, and social effects, of its actions including their effects on minority communities and low-income communities.

All three alternatives will positively affect the economic welfare of the general population. To the extent that an alternative creates more job opportunities it will have a beneficial effect for minority/low income populations. None of the alternatives would have disproportionate impacts on this segment of the population. **Alternative 1- No Federal Action** may result in slower implementation, because of the fact that no federal heritage funds would be forthcoming, and may result in fewer opportunities for revitalization and job creation for underserved populations.

Alternatives 2 and 3 both incorporate more comprehensive preservation programs that commit larger resources to these efforts and would be more likely to have larger opportunities for job opportunities that could have a major, long term beneficial impact for minority and low income populations, as compared to **Alternative 1**.

3.8. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

Adoption of any of the alternatives for the Oil Region will require the commitment of funding, personnel time, and materials to implement elements of the plan, as well as commitment of assistance from local, state, and federal agencies. It is unlikely that such use of these resources will have a significant adverse effect upon their availability in the future. Additionally, the general thrust of all options is towards community revitalization, heritage tourism, and expanded recreational use; none of which are focused on the development of vacant lands or the removal of historic or other existing uses or properties.

There is some potential in Alternative 1 for historic resources to get lesser attention due to lower allocated budgets to this goal and the absence of federal heritage funding and involvement. To the extent that some resources are overlooked or could not be addressed in a timely fashion, they could potentially be irreversibly committed to other uses in the future.

3.9. Relationship between the local short-term use of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity

The combined emphasis in all alternatives on expanded recreational tourism and use, coupled with expanded interpretation of heritage resources, may lead to increases in visitation to sites and areas within the NHA area over the short and long term. Such increases could, if substantial, result in slight deterioration of highly visited sites, although such utilization should be able to be addressed with normal maintenance. Moreover, to the extent that increased utilization lead to an improved business and investment climate, it has the potential to improve long-term economic conditions within the area and to cause positive impacts.

The recognition associated with all options of heritage sites may not cause short-term preservation; however, over the long-term higher visibility of the area, particularly under

Alternatives 2 and 3, will likely lead to improved prospects for preservation and revitalization, strengthening the local economy and viability of its core areas.

Construction along trails and at heritage venues may cause temporary disturbances to natural resources, increase noise or air pollution levels, or affect traffic and parking near population centers. Such impacts would be temporary and would expect to result in long-term benefit for the affected sites and their adjacent settings.

3.10. Energy Requirements and Conservation Potential

The emphasis within the Oil Region on hiking and bicycle trails is likely to encourage additional use of non-motorized transport and to have a positive effect on energy conservation for both visitors and residents.

Aspects of the plan that may have an effect on energy consumption include historic rehabilitation and other construction activities, increased visitation to the extent that it leads to additional traffic and automobile usage, and possible encouragement of travel between heritage venues.

3.11. Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

The augmentation of the Oil Region Plan is one of several current initiatives in this area that seek to invest in community assets and to attract more visitors to the region. For example, the parallel initiatives of the Oil Region Alliance in economic development and tourism have the potential, coupled with heritage initiatives, to produce regional positive cumulative effects. Such effects could include expansion of revitalization and community reinvestments efforts in the region's core areas. Similarly, the Allegheny Valley Trails Association continues to work to expand the recreational opportunities throughout the region and has already achieved great success and contributed to cumulative positive effects with efforts of OHR, Inc. over the years. No adverse cumulative impacts are anticipated.

3.12. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No unavoidable adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of any of the alternatives considered in the Oil Region plan. Inasmuch as the plan is largely programmatic in scope, consideration of subsequent site-specific actions may require consideration of such impacts at a later date.

4. Consultation and Coordination

4.1. *Planning process*

The 2004 Plan Update was completed over a six (6) month period with intensive engagement with the OHR, Inc. Board, key stakeholders, and the public, including public meetings at key points in the process and regular interaction with the OHR, Inc. Board and a Management Plan Update Steering Committee. For the ORNHA Plan Augmentation, a similar process was followed, working with the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism.

The process started with over a dozen stakeholder meetings, located in all the principal communities of the region with a wide list of invitees to identify key issues, concerns, and ideas.

The work was organized around a series of three public meetings, each advertised in local media and supplemented with follow-up mail and e-mail invitations to current and prior participants. Interspersed and coordinated with these meetings, the consultants reviewed findings and proposals with the ORA staff, the Heritage Advisory Council, and its committees.

- The first public workshop was held in December 2005 to present the schedule and work plan as well as to identify concerns about the plan and its impacts. This meeting served as the “scoping” meeting for the Environmental Assessment.
- The second public workshop, held in February 2006, presented initial findings regarding the preservation element of the plan as well as alternatives for review and comment.
- At the third public workshop, held in May 2006, final recommendations were presented prior to publication of the Plan Augmentation and the highlights from the Environmental Assessment were shared with the public.

Additionally, the consultant team, with review and oversight from ORA staff, prepared a project website (www.oilheritage.com) where general information about the process was available and where interim study documents were posted to enable review and comment by the public.

The notes from all the public workshops are attached.

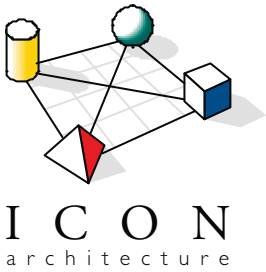
4.2. *Agency contacts*

Key contacts included:

- Joe Brancato, Department of Environmental Protection, State of Pennsylvania, Meadville Office, information about water quality testing procedures in Venango County.
- Greg Czarnecki, Office of Conservation Science, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Harrisburg Office.
- Robin Myers, Service Representative, Knox Department of Mining Operations, information about mining in Venango and Crawford Counties.

- Kathleen Mitchell, Seneca Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, information about Sacred Sites.
- Kierstin Carlson, Conservation Data Manager, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, information on endangered and threatened species.

Additionally, the correspondences from Ms. Mitchell and Ms. Carlson are attached.



To: File
From: Jonathan Lane
Subj: Public Meeting, on Oil Region National Heritage Area Management Plan
Held at Parish Hall, Christ Episcopal Church, Oil City
Date: December 14, 2005

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Purpose of the presentation was to introduce the Management Action Plan Augmentation for the Oil Region NHA and to receive comments on environmental impacts of concern for the Environmental Assessment and to review scope of the update and solicit comments on that topic.

Attendees

Marilyn Black, ORA
Barbara Zolli, Drake Well Museum
Peter Samuel, National Park Service
Larry Puleo, Allegheny Valley Trails
Association
Sonja Hawkins, Oil City Council
Margo Mong, Oil City
Clarence Pelaghi, Oil City

Lois McElwee, Oil City and ORA
Neil McElwee, Oil City
Bill Bowen, Oil City
David Strickland, Architect
Kim Harris, ORA
Jonathan Lane, ICON
Rita Walsh, VHB

Notes

1. Marilyn Black introduced the Management Plan Augmentation and highlighted reasons why this is being done.
2. Peter Samuels of NPS explained NPS role, general process concerns, and the current situation where NPS resources to support the 14 NHA's in the Northeast region are highly competitive. These areas are not owned nor managed by the U.S. Government. This includes the second NHA established and the majority of the 27 that have been designated nationally. Once designation occurs, appropriations come with cooperative agreements through the NPS. The legislation requires several beginning steps, including approval of the Management Plan by the Secretary of the Interior.
3. Jonathan Lane and Rita Walsh presented an overview, with a recap of elements of the 2004 Plan Update, topics of concern for the NHA Plan augmentation, and request for scoping comments of topics of environmental impacts of concern about the plan. Lane emphasized that this amendment would be a "tune-up" of the 2004 Update, not "trading it in for a new model." Augmentation needs to consider changes since the 2004 Update and elements required by NHA legislation, particularly preservation.
4. Comments on environmental impacts of concern:
 - a. Will riparian zones on rivers and creeks be considered? EA should mention that any waterside projects should include proper erosion control, protection from run-off, and comply with any state permit requirements.
 - b. Will plan recommend preservation of landscapes, especially those along rivers? Plan should include sensitivity to protection of ridge lines. Do cell phone towers have to be so visible? Why not make them look like derricks, or hide them inside steeples?

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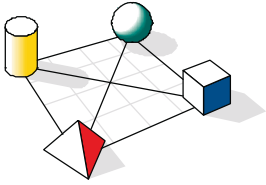
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This is somewhat a general planning topic for communities, although suggestions could be made to county or planning agencies to review zoning provisions. Criteria could also be incorporated into requirements of partners receiving NPS \$. An example is the mouth of Oil Creek. Municipalities may want to protect viewscales.

- c. Need to be aware that property rights movement people are fearful of any NHA doing land management policies. ORNHA is prohibited from interfering with or preempting local zoning.
 - d. Include concern for public access.
5. Comments on preservation:
- a. Upgrade technical assistance by ORA staff and subcontractors.
 - b. Include access to groups such as the National Trust and others.
 - c. Some NHA's do rehabilitation guidelines; others encourage historic district overlays and provide assistance with specific or model ordinances. Some NHA's have staff who advise on rehabilitation and have architects either on staff or under contract to advise in these matters.
 - d. NPS Cultural Resources program can help with training sessions; thus strengthening local capacity.
 - e. Property owners need guidance in accessing help, applying for tax credits, etc.
 - f. Provide assistance to owners, investors, and architects thinking about new infill construction within historic districts.
 - g. Oil-related occupations and cultural groups should be encouraged to tell their stories.
 - h. Consider rehabilitation of the Annex of National Transit – Oil City Civic Center is opening a small museum in this space to deal with history of National Transit Company.
 - i. Lane commented that most NHAs set the vision of desired quality and then structure incentives to encourage economic development that meets preservation goals and vision.
6. Comments on Partnerships in the plan:
- a. Share a grantwriter as an example of technical assistance.
 - b. More actively encourage entities outside the boundaries to participate in ORNHA (e.g. – for non property based programs or activities)
 - c. Mention explicitly that in 2008 ORA will conduct a feasibility study of enlarging boundaries of ORNHA.
 - d. Explicitly indicate that education and other events and publications can and will involve settings outside ORNHA.
 - e. What is lacking is active Heritage Development – plan is heavily weighted towards recreation. The “still living” towns in the region are, in actuality, oil boomtowns – Pleasantville, Plummer, etc. – and maybe ORA should identify and promote them as such. Perhaps something broader based, using whole communities. Consider

tiny Volant Village and its retail as a tourist mecca for quaintness of specialty gift shops, etc. This would combine preservation, development, promotional, and entrepreneurial potentials. Tell oil history not just in the museums. Perhaps combine with OHR “training house.” This would relate to the designated driving tour. Ex – Dempseytown teacher did a local history booklet. Community visioning has been done in Oil City and Franklin, but not in the smaller communities.

- f. Recreation – in Oil City please revise routing of bike trail so it does not share West Front Street.



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To: File

From Jonathan Lane

**Subj: Public Meeting, on Oil Region National Heritage Area Management Plan
Franklin Emerging Technology Center of Franklin Industrial and Commercial
Development Authority**

Date: February 16, 2006

Purpose of the presentation was to introduce the Management Action Plan Augmentation for the Oil Region NHA and to receive comments on environmental impacts of concern for the Environmental Assessment and to review scope of the update and solicit comments on that topic.

Attendees

Marilyn Black, ORA
Gary Hutchison, Venango County Commissioner
Sue Smith, Venango County Commissioner
Betty McElhatten, Franklin Historic Preservation Association
Ronnie Beith, FICDA
Greg Finch, WKQW Radio
Deb Lutz, ORA
Lahr Shawgo, doing research on transportation in PA
Gage Allam, Historic Franklin Preservation Association
Debbie Frawley, Venango County Regional Planning Commission
Barbara Zolli, Drake Well Museum
Neil McElwee, ORA and Oil City
Jonathan Lane, ICON
Rita Walsh, VHB

Notes

1. Jonathan Lane of ICON and Rita Walsh of VHB presented status report as introduction to the meeting – including a Powerpoint show that highlighted major points of preservation program and explained the alternatives.
2. Consultants should be aware that there is a research group doing an inventory of open wells.
3. Inventory maps will be posted on the web shortly by the consultants; attendees were encouraged to comment on them to identify additional resources.
4. Venango Planning Commission plans to do a countywide inventory of historic resources that will emphasize rural resources.
5. Question - is bio-diesel at site of Rouseville refinery feasible? Jon Lane commented that this was beyond the scope or expertise of the consultants for OHR assignment. All refinery structures were demolished – the 2004 plan had mentioned saving the smokestack.
6. Will NR and NR eligible properties be incorporated into the ORNHA data base? These properties are already listed on the map and will be identified in the report. However,

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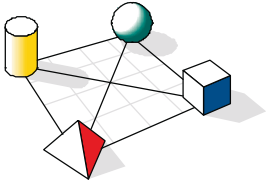
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the only eligible properties will be those that are so identified by PHMC. This list does not guarantee that there will not be more eligible properties in the future.

7. Request made to add McCintock #1 be added to the maps. ICON not clear that this is NR eligible and will check.
8. Alternative 3 may be contradictory to other projects in the county, as they are in process of doing economic priorities that are countywide.
9. There is a problem with getting tourists out to remote site like Pithole. It was noted that the site attracts 4k visitors per year.
10. Alternative 3 driving routes and trails connect all key areas; meaning that Alternative 3 actually includes many resources.
11. In Alternative 3, Emlenton and other core communities are close to other areas of the county. This would provide the opportunity to do higher “impact” projects in these locations that would still benefit nearby areas.
12. Every community could find a building to preserve. Would like ORA \$ to be available to assist in courthouse expansion, etc. Portions of Franklin Historic District are threatened – demolition is a possibility for the Orpheum Theatre. Owner is no longer listing this property with the realtor. If it ends up being demolished she wants either sympathetic architecture or preservation of façade.
13. Jon Lane noted that draft sections on alternatives and preservation are available for comment and will be placed on the web. Attendees should feel free to send comments on these to Marilyn Black.



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To: File

From: Jonathan Lane

Subj: **Public Meeting to review Environmental Assessment topics and Augmentation to ORNHA Management Action Plan**
Titusville Towne Square, Titusville, PA

Date: May 17, 2006

Jonathan Lane and Rita Walsh presented an overview of the alternatives considered, environmental assessment of these alternatives, and proposed elements of the proposed Management Action Plan Augmentation. A draft of the Environmental Assessment (EA) has been placed on www.oilheritage.com for participant review. After NPS finishes its internal review period, the Environmental Assessment can be formally advertised and a thirty-day comment period will be initiated. Following the review and acceptance of the EA, the Management Plan can be finalized and submitted for acceptance.

Attendees

Michael Allyn, Titusville
Redevelopment Authority
Holly Best, Oil Creek State Park
Marilyn Black, ORA
Leah Carter, Titusville Planning
Commission and Titusville
Renaissance, Inc.
Lynn Cochran, Titusville Chamber
Mark Gorman, PA Environmental
Council
Mike Henderson, ORA
Jim Holden, Allegheny Valley Trails
Association

Deb Kapp, Take Pride/Arts
Revitalization
Neil McElwee, ORA
Jonathan Lane, ICON architecture,
Inc.
Lee Mehlburger, Take Pride/Arts
Revitalization
Peter Samuel, National Park Service
Betty Squire, ORA
Rita Walsh, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin,
Inc.
Barbara Zolli, Drake Well Museum

Comments and Questions:

1. Question: For specific trail and other access or development projects, will a site specific EA still have to be conducted?

Answer: Yes, especially if such projects are in vicinities where the presence of endangered or threatened species is suspected or significant archeological resources are present.

2. Question: In the summary table of environmental impacts, Open space and Recreational Impacts are shown as major positive impact. Yet the same chart indicates a Negligible Impact on land use. Doesn't that seem to be contradictory?

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Answer: The intent of the chart was to indicate the Management Plan Amendment will not influence zoning or land use planning, which is prohibited under the NHA legislation. However, it is correct that the improvement of open space and recreational opportunities will have a positive impact of land use.

3. Question: It seems that open space preservation and conservation has not previously been a goal of OHR, Inc; however, the MAP Amendment seems to indicate that this is being suggested under ORA. For example, the Amendment recommends overlooks and protection of cultural landscapes.

Answer: Federal legislation to establish the ORNHA prohibits using NHA funds for land acquisition. However, donation and/or easements can be made & received by ORA.

4. Question: How closely will NPS and/or DCNR hold ORA to budgets defined in the plan?

Answer: It was remarked that actual federal appropriations vary yearly and the number of total NHA's may also change over time, affecting availability of funds. There are currently pending proposals to create 18 new NHA's, although no one could predict how many of these would be implemented. Additionally, NPS recognizes that the budgets defined in the MAP Amendments are best approximations made at the current time and that needs and priorities may change over time.

5. Comments and discussion about budgets:

- a. The budgets contain reasonable assumptions and projections that ORA will use for overall planning and grantmanship. Items are not subdivided by funding source or by fiscal year. Budgets are reviewed from year to year and the overall budget is viewed as a flexible document.
- b. ORA uses the overall budget estimates to review with state and federal legislators to illustrate goals and explore not only NPS funding but also other federal and state sources.
- c. Other ORA programs and funding streams may influence budget.
- d. At 5-year point it would be good to review carefully and adjust to new opportunities.
- e. To date, trail construction costs have mainly come from federal highway funds, plus some OHR, Inc., ORA, and DCNR funds. Those all look good for continued new grants. AVTA, ORA, and other project partners will continue to be aggressive with these sources in the future.
- f. NHA designation is helpful as a magnet for other federal dollars. ORA refers strongly to NHA designation in every grant application that is submitted.



Caitlin Bowler
ICON Architecture, Inc.
38 Chauncy Street
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March 27, 2006

RE: Species list for Oil Region National Heritage Area

Dear Ms. Bowler,

The attached excel file contains the list of the species in the area you delineated in your email of March 14, 2006 according to the heritage program database. For each species on the list, the global and state heritage rarity ranks, the official federal and state status, the suggested state status, and the current database tracking status are given, along with the date the species was last documented in the area.

The database is only used at this time for tracking rare species in the state, although it does contain information on some species that were until recently considered rare, but have been determined to be more abundant than originally thought. The column titled "Tracked as Rare in PA" is the column that differentiates the species currently recognized by the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program as rare in the state (Y) from those that are not (N) and those that we are not sure about (W).

The global and state heritage ranks are assigned by the international heritage network and the state heritage program respectively. They are defined in the attached document entitled "all rank def," along with the official federal and state status codes. The suggested state status (PBS Status in the excel table) is assigned by the Pennsylvania Biological Survey: a group of experts in each taxa who collectively make listing and ranking suggestions to the state. A separate attached document entitled "Pennsylvania Biological Survey Suggested Status Definitions" is provided to explain the various codes used.

There are also several exceptional value streams (as defined by Ch. 93 of the PA Code) in the area, but these were not included in the table. Please let us know if you would like that information as well.

PNHP CLAUSE

Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) maintains a site-specific information system that describes significant natural resources of Pennsylvania. This system includes data descriptive of plant and animal species of special concern, exemplary natural communities and unique geological features. PNHP is partnership of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

The information provided is confidential due to the sensitivity of the species to disturbance, landowner privacy, and authorship. The data have been provided to you at no charge as a conservation partner to better protect species of special

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
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Pittsburgh, Pa 15222
(412) 288-2777
www.paconservancy.org

Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry
PO Box 8552
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552
(717) 787-3444
www.dcnr.state.pa.us

The Nature Conservancy
208 Airport Drive
Middletown, PA 17057
(717) 948-3962
www.tnc.org

concern in Pennsylvania. The data are not to be distributed without prior written permission from the PNHP program. This information is provide for use in this single project and may not be applied to future projects without updates from the PNHP database.

This response represents the most up-to-date summary of the PNHP data files and is good for one year. However, an absence of recorded information does not necessarily imply actual conditions on-site. A field survey of any site may reveal previously unreported populations.

Please call (412-586-2314) or email me (kcarlson@paconserve.org) with any questions regarding this response. Thank you for your request.

Sincerely,

Kierstin Carlson
Conservation Data Manager
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy/ Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program.

attachment



Seneca Nation Tribal Historic Preservation

467 Center St. Salamanca, NY 14779
Phone: (716) 945-9427 • Fax: (716) 945-0351

March 1, 2006

Ms. Caitlin Bowler
Icon Architecture, Inc.
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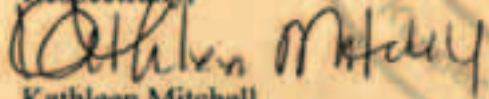
RE: Oil Region National Heritage Area, PA

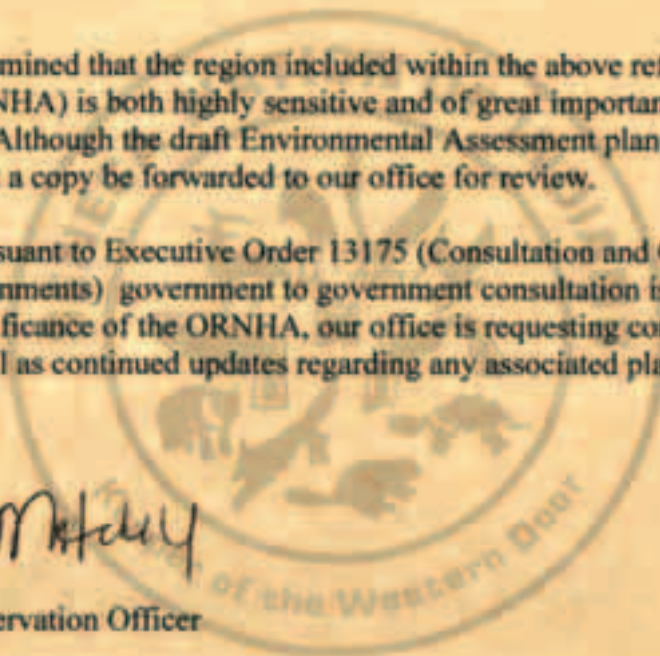
Dear Caitlin,

Our office has determined that the region included within the above referenced National Heritage Area (ORNHA) is both highly sensitive and of great importance to the Seneca Nation of Indians. Although the draft Environmental Assessment plan is available on-line, we request that a copy be forwarded to our office for review.

Please note that pursuant to Executive Order 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments) government to government consultation is a requirement. Because of the significance of the ORNHA, our office is requesting consultation opportunities as well as continued updates regarding any associated plans for this area.

Respectfully,


Kathleen Mitchell,
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer



5. Preparers

5.1. *Consultant Team*

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Jonathan Lane AIA AICP, Principal
Ahmed Kaddoum, Graphic Support
Kevin Losso, GIS and Mapping Support
Caitlin Bowler, Research Assistant
Richard Perkins, Graphic Design and Web Maintenance
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Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Rita Walsh, Senior Preservation Planner
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F: (617) 923-2336

5.2. *Client*

Oil Heritage Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism
Randy P. Seitz, President
Marilyn Black, Vice-President for Heritage Development
P.O. Box 128
206 Seneca Street, 4th Floor
Oil City, Pennsylvania 16301-0128
T: (814) 677-3152
F: (814) 677-5206

National Park Service, Philadelphia Support Office
Peter Samuel, Project Liaison
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-2878
T: (215) 597-1848
F: (215) 597-5747

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www.oilregiontourist.com (Website for the Oil Heritage Region Tourist Promotion Agency)

www.franklin-pa.org (Website for Franklin Chamber of Commerce)

www.titusvillechamber.com (Website for the Titusville Chamber of Commerce)

www.visitcrawford.org (Website for Crawford County Convention and Visitors Bureau)

www.franklinpa.net (Website presents the Community Calendar, sponsored by the Franklin Fine Arts Council)

www.twomile.org (Website for Two Mile Run County Park)