
Goal 2: Conduct research, education and interpretation related to the MSNHA's primary themes as a means of documenting and telling the story of the Heritage Area's unique cultural heritage.

For additional detail on many of the topics covered by the supporting objectives below, please see this Management Plan's supporting Interpretive Plan.

Objective 2-A: Support and/or sponsor research into the various themes associated with the MSNHA.

As detailed in the Background Study of this management plan, there are three interpretive themes developed for the MSNHA: the River, Native American Heritage, and Music. Each of these themes has a set of supporting sub-themes.

- Leverage the University of North Alabama for conducting research into MSNHA's three interpretive themes. UNA offers both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in History, in addition to its new program in Public History that offers a master's degree. These programs offer a tremendous opportunity for the heritage area's themes to be researched. In particular, master's students needing a thesis topic could be encouraged to investigate topics relevant to the MSNHA. Also, UNA's Department of Music and Theatre should be utilized to conduct research into the MSNHA's music theme.
- Purse grants for eligible research projects pursuant to MSNHA's three interpretive themes. There are numerous foundations that fund research on historic topics, and funding should be pursued for the MSNHA. Examples of funding entities include (see the Interpretive Plan for additional entities):
 - *National Endowment for the Humanities* (America's Historical & Cultural Organizations planning and implementation grants)
 - *American Historical Association* (Bernadotte E. Schmitt Grants, the Albert J. Beveridge Grant for Research in the History of the Western Hemisphere, the Michael Kraus Research Grants, and the Littleton-Griswold Grants)
 - *American Antiquarian Society* (offers visiting research fellowships for those interested in American history from colonial times to the Reconstruction era following the Civil War)
 - *Lehrman History Scholars Summer Program* (the Teaching American History grant program awards \$100 million of U.S. Department of Education funds to help teach American history in the country's schools)
 - *Phillips Fund Grants for Native American Research* (offers grants of up to \$2,000 for the study of Native American linguistics and ethno-history)

Objective 2-B: Establish an oral history program utilizing junior high, high school and college students within the MSNHA to record histories from individuals that address the Heritage Area's primary themes.

There are multiple resources available to learn more about how to record oral histories. Just one example is the book entitled "The Oral History Workshop: Collect and Celebrate the Life Stories of Your Family and Friends" by Hart and Samson.

- Determine the issues to be documented through oral histories in accordance with MSNHA's three interpretive themes and various sub-themes. Individuals associated with the development of Wilson Dam and similar public works projects on the river are still alive and should be interviewed, but time is of the essence. Likewise, many of the Native American stories – both historic and lore - are orally-based and in need of recording. Perhaps the still most accessible oral histories are those associated with the music industry, including the Muscle Shoals recording studios' heyday of the 1970s.

Although the music itself may all be safely recorded, the stories behind those recordings need to be captured as well.

Consider an oral history program that is managed by college students, but conducted using area junior high and high school students. Since oral history documentation is an educational activity that can be performed by junior high, high school, and college students, it is recommended that all three categories of students collaborate on the research. UNA has both a History Department and a new program in Public History. As also noted previously under the topic of research, UNA's Department of Music and Theatre could perform oral history for the music theme. While Athens State University does not offer a degree in History, its College of Education offers a certification to teach high school level history. It is recommended that, working closely with the MSNHA based upon the three primary interpretive themes, college students be charged with structuring an oral history recording program that is implemented by junior high and high school students.



Oral histories are a productive and interesting method of recording and conveying history.

It is recognized that there are several potential obstacles to this concept, but it is still worth pursuing. For example, the geography of the heritage area means that multiple school districts would need to be approached. Many schools that are focused on a relatively narrow scope of curriculum and test scores to measure achievement will not have the flexibility to take on such a program. In such cases, college students might be used to conduct interviews rather than high school students. Furthermore, the idea may not appeal to the area universities. On the other hand, private schools will likely have more flexibility to accommodate an oral history program. Regardless of the potential hurdles, it is a concept worthy of further exploration because of its potential benefits to research and interpretation for the MSNHA.

Objective 2-C: Create an educational curriculum within the Heritage Area's grade schools and high schools to teach the MSNHA's primary themes, which might be supplemented with field trips.

- Work the MSNHA's three interpretive themes into the curriculum related to American History in the grade schools. Many school districts across the country place an emphasis on local history when learning about history in general. It is recommended that the MSNHA work with the local school districts to create a curriculum for grade school students that teaches them the MSNHA's themes. The 4th grade social studies curriculum should be targeted, as this is where Alabama history is taught. The learning objectives that pertain to the history of the MSNHA should be identified (Helen Keller, TVA, etc.) Once developed, these lesson plans should be placed on the MSNHA website and marketed through the In-Service Centers throughout the state, as UNA has one of the centers. At some point later the heritage area can also develop lesson plans for environmental education. Similarly, the MSNHA could work with teachers to develop school tours or field trips as a part of their curriculum.

- Pursue hands-on experiences and field trips Related to MSNHA's three interpretive themes for high school students.

Assuming the grade school level teaching of the MSNHA's themes can occur as recommended above, area high school students could build upon that foundation of knowledge learned in the class room with more hands-on experiences. For example, they could travel to various historic sites in the MSNHA and witness (and even participate in) living history demonstrations. They might also participate in crafts and projects related to the MSNHA, such as flint-knapping or pottery making at a Native American site, or recording their own music, as is/was done at the Alabama Music Hall of Fame.



Flint knapping is one of numerous hands-on experiences that students can participate in to learn about Native American heritage.

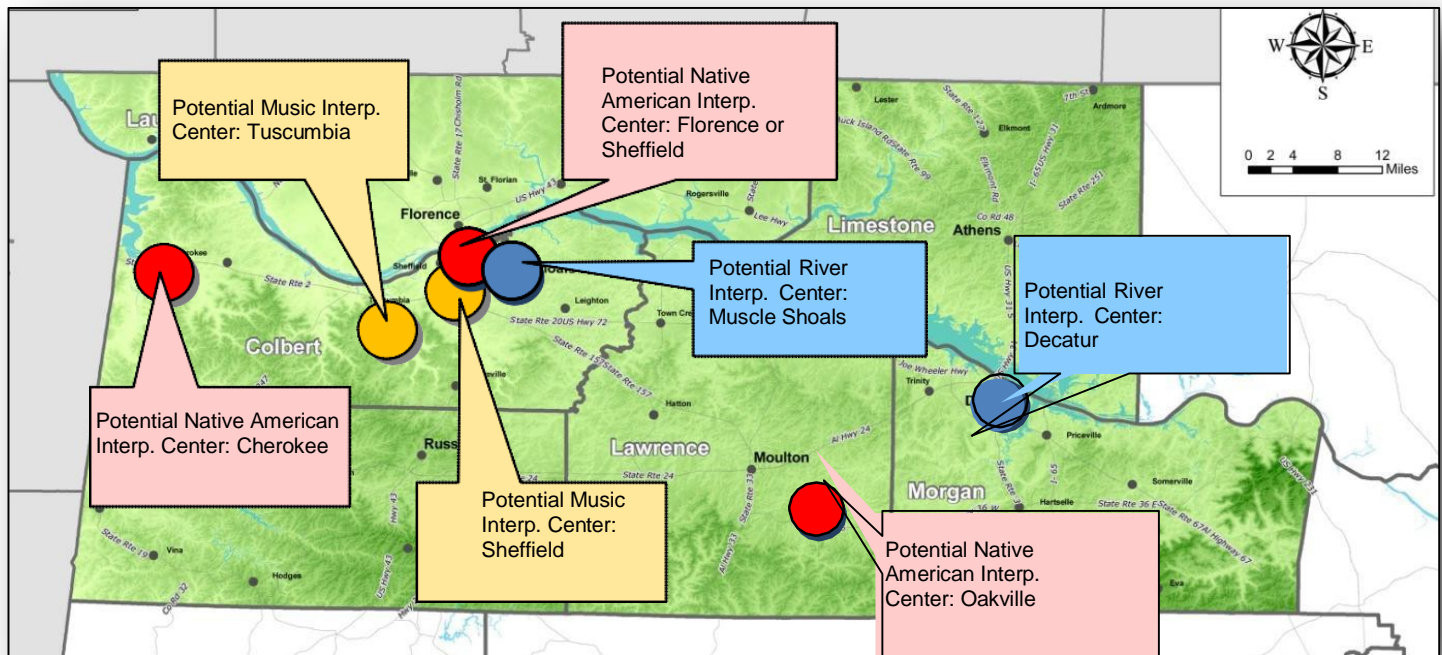
Objective 2-D: Develop one or more interpretive centers for the MSNHA. Also, existing or planned facilities that are separate initiatives by other entities might be leveraged to achieve this objective.

While this objective has existed since early in the management planning process for the MSNHA as part of this plan's Foundation Statement, it is recognized that the establishment of interpretive centers can be an ambitious and somewhat risky proposition. In very general terms, many interpretive centers across the country, including some associated with National Heritage Areas, have been difficult to fund and have even had to close their doors because of insufficient financial resources. While this broad trend cannot be ignored, it does not mean that opportunities for success cannot exist for some specific types of interpretive centers. Much of that success will depend upon a center's theme, its location, the existence of competing centers/attractions, its foundation of strategic planning, its organizational and funding structure, its marketing, and its substance. Thus, potential new interpretive centers must be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is beyond the scope of this management plan to include a feasibility study for any one particular interpretive center. **Rather than recommend that the MSNHA should initiate one or more specific interpretive centers, this objective is to recommend a process by which the MSNHA can thoughtfully explore the establishment of one or more centers, regardless of whether any centers ultimately come to fruition.**

This management plan's Interpretive Plan and Business Plan will go into more detail on interpretive centers, but the following is a summary of the key ideas. As the map on the following page illustrates, it is proposed that the development of an interpretive center be explored for each of the MSNHA's three primary interpretive themes. While each center could focus on one of the three primary themes, each could also interpret to a lesser extent all of the themes to provide context for the overall MSNHA and the three themes. In considering where interpretive centers might be located, the following principles are suggested:



A description of each potential interpretive center to be considered is provided below:



- Explore the establishment of an interpretive center for the River theme. While other sites may have potential, the two most likely locations would be Decatur or Muscle Shoals.

Merits of a Decatur location

- It is located near I-65 to capture a significant traveling population
- It is located on the Tennessee River to help interpret the theme
- It could be located on the riverfront near downtown to leverage economic spin-off benefits

A large percentage of MSNHA visitors will approach it from I-65. Because the river is a theme strongly associated with the other two primary themes, the sequencing of this center and theme as the first one encountered by visitors would facilitate the interpretation more effectively. Multiple plans have been prepared during the past decade to revitalize and redevelop Decatur's Downtown and Riverfront. Because the plans seem somewhat fluid and flexible, it is likely an interpretive center could be accommodated and could benefit the Downtown and Riverfront's redevelopment of Ingalls Harbor (right). In addition to Decatur being a good location for the overarching theme of the River, it is also a good location for several of the various sub-themes. For example, some of the most significant Civil War activity in MSNHA occurred in Decatur. Union forces occupied and fortified the City in 1863, and in 1864 Confederate General John Bell Hood's Army of Tennessee considered taking the town shortly before initiating its Middle Tennessee Campaign that ended in the battles of Franklin and Nashville. Rather than enduring the potential difficulties of capturing Decatur, Hood's Army elected to



The circled building is the proposed "Tennessee River Heritage Museum" on Decatur's riverfront.

move west and encamp at Muscle Shoals and Florence prior to launching their campaign. Another advantage of this suggested location for an interpretive center is that many of the key associated sites, such as Wilson Dam, are located to the west and would encourage visitors interested in the topic to circulate further into the MSNHA.

As a means of being financially conservative, it is also important to consider leveraging the existing river-related interpretive center in Decatur. The existing Givens Interpretive Center at the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge addresses the natural history of the Tennessee River and related Native American history, but it does not address many of the river theme's interpretive sub-themes as identified by this plan, including the TVA developments of the early-twentieth century. Should a new interpretive center be determined through a feasibility study to not be viable, adapting the Givens Interpretive Center may be a worthy alternative.

Merits of a Muscle Shoals location

- It is located near Hwy. 72 and at the confluence of four key communities that form a metro area
- It is located on the Tennessee River to help interpret the theme
- It could potentially be located on the TVA property and even utilize an existing facility

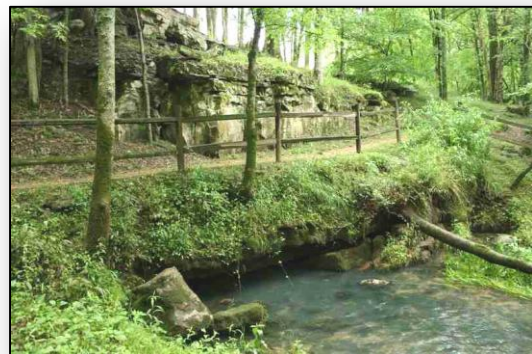
Not only might this location leverage existing interpretive facilities, as in the case of the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Decatur, but is also a good location for interpreting some of the River theme's sub-themes. As noted above, when General John Bell Hood's Confederate forces decided to bypass Decatur in the fall of 1864, it moved on to the Muscle Shoals area where it encamped for an extended period before launching its Middle Tennessee campaign. Civil War earthworks even exist on the TVA property and could be interpreted.

- Explore the establishment of an interpretive center for Native American Heritage theme. This plan's market assessment broadly identifies a potential market for nearly 20,000 square feet of Native American interpretive facilities, or about 17,000 square feet net of existing museums. As with any of the suggested interpretive centers to be explored, the specific market potentials for such a facility would need to be tested further in more detail.

Merits of a Cherokee location

- It is located near the Natchez Trace to capture a significant traveling population, particularly heritage tourists
- It is located near other Native American sites
- It can be located on one of the many available infill development sites in Downtown Cherokee where it can leverage economic spin-off
- It would leverage the natural branding that comes with the community's name

Other Native American sites in the vicinity of Cherokee include Buzzards Roost Spring, the Tom Hendrix rock wall honoring Te-lah-nay (his great, great grandmother), and the site near Waterloo (now under Pickwick Lake) where boats from Tuscumbia Landing docked during the Trail of Tears. It is also very close to the Bear Creek Mound, which is located on the Trace just over the Alabama/MSNHA boundary. This potential interpretive center location also provides some geographic balance to the MSNHA since so many sites and attractions are located to the east in the Shoals area or even further east toward Decatur and Athens.



Buzzards Roost Spring, near Cherokee, provided water to Chickasaw Chief Levi Colbert's home.

Merits of an Oakville Mounds location

- It is located at perhaps the NHA's most impressive mounds having the greatest physical integrity
- It could utilize the existing interpretive center for this site, representing a substantial cost savings

The existing Oakville Mounds interpretive center is very spacious and could likely be adapted *if acceptable to the owners / operators* of that important site. That potential location would also provide some geographic balance to the three interpretive centers, as would the Cherokee location.



The Oakville Mounds Park might be modestly adapted to serve as the MSNHA's Native American interpretive center.

Merits of a Florence or Sheffield location

- It is located near Hwy. 72 and at the confluence of four key communities that form a metro area
- It is in proximity to Florence's impressive Indian mound, small museum and Tuscumbia Landing
- Discussions have occurred regarding the potential of the City of Florence to develop a Native American museum
- An NPS planning charrette occurred in 2012 for an interpretive center at Tuscumbia Landing

The potential for the City of Florence to participate directly with the establishment of an interpretive center would be a highly significant consideration. However, it would need to be located somewhere other than near the existing mound and museum, as the industrial context of this site greatly diminishes its character and physical integrity. NPS participation would also be a huge factor.

- Explore the establishment of an interpretive center for the Music theme.

Merits of a Tuscumbia location

- It is located near Hwy. 72 and at the confluence of four key communities that form a metro area
- It could utilize the existing Alabama Music Hall of Fame facility, offering a substantial cost savings

The most critical and immediate consideration regarding a potential interpretive center for the MSNHA's Music themes is keeping the AMHOF's current collections in the Muscle Shoals area, regardless of which specific community it might reside in. The museum is experiencing serious financial struggles and its collection would be attractive to those in other parts of the state, so its preservation is paramount. However, with respect to the current facility, its location is not appealing and it fails to offer potential economic leveraging to the extent that other sites might offer, such as a downtown location.

Merits of a Sheffield location

- It is located near Hwy. 72 and at the confluence of four key communities that form a metro area
- It is located near current/former recording studios, as well as the W.C. Handy site
- It could be located on an available infill development sites in Downtown Sheffield where it could leverage economic spin-off

Of all of the MSNHA's major downtowns, Sheffield is the one that has experienced the greatest level of planning for revitalization, yet still needs the greatest amount of help in actually achieving revitalization success. Furthermore, one of the past plans for the downtown ("Montgomery Avenue... Soul of the Shoals") proposes an entertainment district, and there are at least a few restaurants/bars that offer live music. In addition to a potential Downtown Sheffield location, the former studio at 3613 Jackson Highway (Muscle Shoals Sound Studio) is currently on the market. Its current size is very limited and the need to interpret the space for its recording history would pose a challenge. However,

perhaps a sensitive expansion to the building or, more appropriately, a separate and adjacent interpretive center might have potential. Regardless of the specific location, if a music-themed interpretive center can be developed in Sheffield, it is recommended that it be adapted from the existing Alabama Music Hall of Fame.

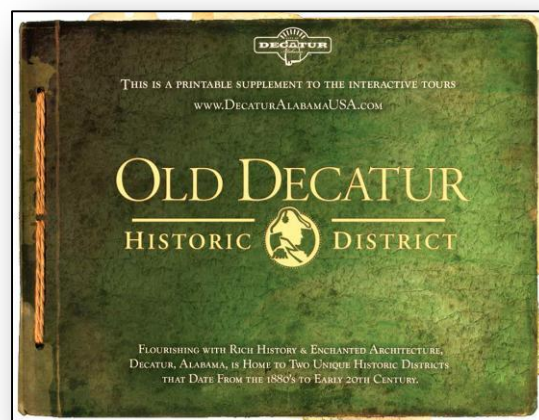


The “Sheffield Revitalization & Redevelopment Plan” features numerous valid strategies for improving Downtown.

It is important to keep a few key ideas in mind regarding interpretive centers. First, a feasibility study should be conducted for any potential centers prior to significant time and funding being spent on realizing this objective. See this plan’s Implementation Plan for approaches to commissioning feasibility studies. It should also be remembered that a heritage area trend is to focus less on interpretive “centers” and more on interpretive “experiences.” Experiences can occur within interpretive centers, but can include other venues as well. And finally, many interpretive centers proposed in NHA management plans have yet to materialize because of the funding challenges. Thus, the development of interpretive centers should not be viewed as linchpins to the balance of this Management Plan.

Objective 2-E: Develop a series of theme-based tours for walking, cycling and driving. Some tours might be at the community scale, while others are at the heritage area scale. Also, a variety of media might be utilized for interpretation, including printed maps/brochures and telecommunications.

- Encourage the development of theme-based tours at the community level where they currently do not exist, but could exist. At present, the places offering historically and/or architecturally-based tour routes include:
 - Limestone County: Athens and Mooresville (“Limestone County Antebellum Trail”)
 - Decatur: includes I-phone apps (Old Decatur & Albany tours)
 - Florence: four self-guided tours (“Take a Walk on the Southern Side,” “Wood Avenue District,” “Florence City Cemetery Tour,” “Forks of Cypress Plantation & Cemetery Tour”)
 - Tuscumbia: historic downtown area (“Historic Tuscumbia Walking & Driving Tour”)



Decatur’s two historic tours feature very attractive guide brochures, as well as apps for I-phones.

Communities lacking formal tours, but that have strong potential for tours include:

- Courtland (National Register District and Courtland Heritage Museum)
 - Sheffield (downtown and residential neighborhoods)
 - Hartselle (downtown)
- Encourage the creation of tour routes that link communities and/or sites at the regional level. The section below proposes a series of theme-based tours specifically for the MSNHA. Each tour is associated with one of the heritage area's three primary interpretive themes. However, there may be other opportunities for area-wide routes beyond those of the MSNHA.

One example is the potential retracement trail from Decatur to Tuscumbia Landing along the historic Tuscumbia, Courtland and Decatur Railroad. The historic railroad is approximately 45 miles and most of it is still in use as a rail line by the Norfolk Southern Railroad. It is the route of the congressionally designated Trail of Tears and numerous historic sites still exist along its route. In fact, within the last stretch of the historic route through Tuscumbia to the landing site, much of the abandoned historic railroad bed can still be seen through the asphalt of the streets. This 45-mile corridor could potentially be utilized for a greenway while still accommodating the current railroad use where it exists. In July of 2011, the NPS conducted a planning charrette for Tuscumbia Landing and the historic rail line, but the resulting report is not yet completed.

- Develop a series of driving tours tied to MSNHA's three interpretive themes. The following pages illustrate three examples of driving tours for the heritage area. With regard to the Music theme, an organized effort is recommended for creating a tour of the Shoals area recording studios. The tour should incorporate the two primary sites - FAME and Muscle Shoals Sound Studio – as well as others. Tours of the individual active studios would be designed to not interfere with the business conducted at the studios, such as through glass viewing areas and additions with interpretive and historical materials. The studios would be tied into the ticketing for the Alabama Music Hall of Fame (AMHOF) or a future music interpretive center, much in the same way that Nashville's Studio B on Music Row is tied to the Country Music Hall of Fame. A small shuttle could be run by the AMHOF to the studios or could circulate amongst the various facilities during regular hours.

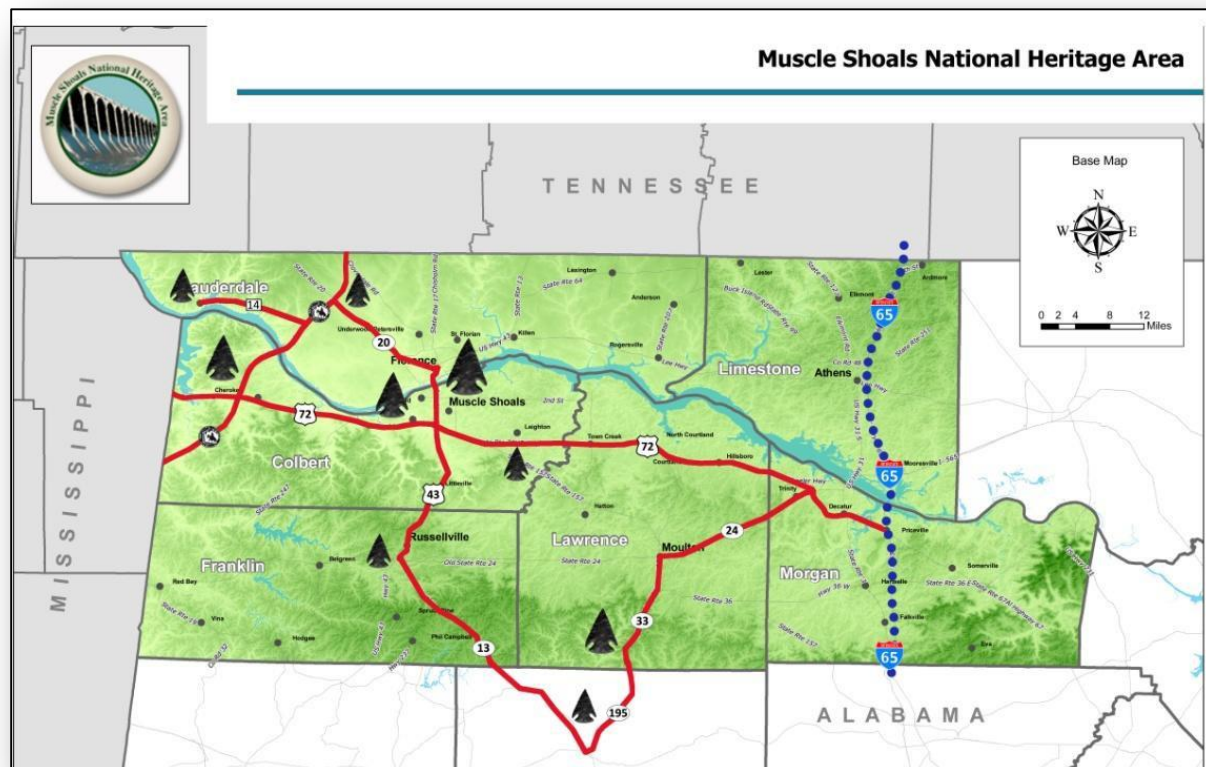
The Native American theme and the Music theme will each have a single tour and both are illustrated on maps below. The River Theme, however, features several sub-themes and, accordingly, multiple tours are recommended. The Civil War sub-theme of this broader theme is illustrated on a map below. More detail about individual sites on these tour routes, as well as the other maps for the River theme, are contained in this management plan's supplemental Interpretive Plan element.

- Continue development of the Roots of American Music Trail. There is the opportunity of greatly increasing the marketing exposure and tourism potential of the region by designating a tour route focused on the roots of American music that incorporated Muscle Shoals. This idea stems from an effort sponsored by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments. Their idea featured a tourism trail linking Nashville and The Shoals along the Natchez Trace Parkway, but did not extend west to Memphis. Formalization of a broader triangle routing, development of interpretive sites and packages, marketing strategies, and recruitment of tour companies would establish a new format. This would form a triangle linking Memphis, Nashville and Muscle Shoals; along with important sites in-between or nearby including Tupelo and Clarksdale in Mississippi. The tour would be marketed through bus tour companies, but also for self-driving, biking, and motorcyclists. The advantage of such an effort, despite the fact that much of the tour is located outside of the MSNHA, is that it leverages a much larger and broader audience with national and international exposure. Elements of this trail would include:
- Designated or partner tour bus companies, along with other stakeholders, engaged in the process of designing and packaging the tour

- Pro-active organization and coordination directly with area music heritage sites, but also with sites, music industry, and tourism organizations in the Shoals, Nashville, Memphis and intermediate locations.
- Packaging with flights into Nashville and Memphis, as well as Atlanta, New Orleans, and Huntsville
- Sites and live music venues in Nashville and Memphis, plus visits to Tupelo (Elvis) and Clarksdale (The Blues). There could also be an optional extension of tour to New Orleans (Jazz).
- MSNHA sites including Alabama Music Hall of Fame, W.C. Handy Birthplace and Museum, F.A.M.E., Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, Sam Phillips' Home (if purchased and opened to the public in the future), and live music at area clubs or new venue.
- Coordination with music festivals in all tour route locations (Shoals, Nashville, Memphis, Tupelo, and Clarksdale)
- More detailed local music tour route for destination travelers to The Shoals and the MSNHA. This tour could also incorporate the region's other musicians.

This concept is now moving forward and cell phone-based interpretation is in the process of being created.

For detailed descriptions and maps of this management plan's proposed tours, please see Appendix B of this plan's Interpretive Plan. Below is just one example.



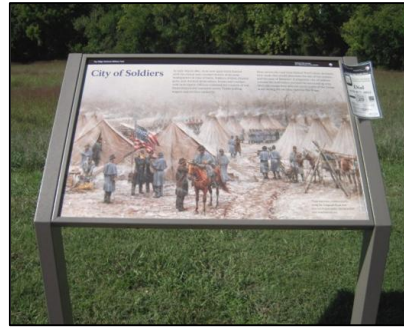
Native American Heritage Tour: Although this route connects with I-65, a key corridor, most of the related key sites are located in the western half of the MSNHA.

- Utilize a variety of media for interpretation of theme-based tours.

Maps & Brochures – Maps and brochures are a very traditional approach to interpreting theme-based tours, but they are still quite effective regardless of more recent technological advances in interpretation. Most brochures for tour routes include a map. Such maps typically use symbols to identify sites on a particular map, and those symbols are coordinated with associated text about the sites within the brochure. Brochures of this type for the tour routes proposed above should be available on the MSNHA's website in a digital format that can be accessed by computers and cell phones, as well as in a downloadable format (PDF) that can then be printed and used as a hard copy.

Telecommunications Tools – There are a variety of telecommunications technologies that can be used for interpretation as well. A younger audience, in particular, uses such technology. Examples of telecommunications tools that should be considered for the thematic tours include the following:

- **Cell Phone Audio Interpretation:** One approach is to provide a call-in phone number on either a tour brochure or a marker at the site that is being interpreted. This method is used at many historic sites across the country, including the Pea Ridge National Military Park in Northwest Arkansas. At the beginning of the battlefield tour a phone number is provided and then additional numbers are dialed into at specific sites so that an audio recording describes the historic events.



The tag applied to the upper right corner of this wayside exhibit features a call-in number, as well as a numeric code for an audio interpretation of the site.

- **Cell Phone Apps:** Application software, also known as an application or an “app,” is computer software designed to help the user to perform specific tasks. A good example of how apps can be used to interpret historic sites is provided by the Battlefield Apps program of the non-profit Civil War Trust (CWT). As described by the CWT, “Civil War Trust Battle Apps are free, GPS-enabled, multimedia tours of key battlefields for smartphones. They include historian videos, period and modern imagery, GPS-enabled battle maps, orders of battle and historical timelines – all designed to deepen your understanding of how the fighting unfolded” (Hallowed Ground magazine – Fall 2012, pg. 3).

- **QR Codes:** QR codes, which is an abbreviation for “Quick Response Codes” is the trademark for a type of matrix barcode (or two-dimensional code) first designed for the automotive industry. More recently, the system has become popular outside the industry due to its fast readability and large storage capacity compared to standard barcodes. The code consists of black modules (square dots) arranged in a square pattern on a white background. For historic interpretation, QR codes are linked to telecommunications resources that provide the same type of interpretive experiences (audio and video) described above for apps.



A Smartphone can be used to scan a QR code at a cultural site so that the phone can then receive audio and video interpretation.

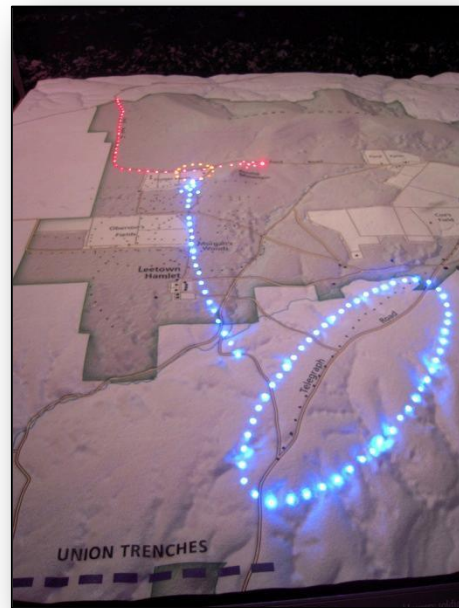
As one example of an NHA utilizing telecommunications, the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition is currently working with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation on the creation of a “Virtual Visitors Center” accessible on the internet and via Smartphones. Many of their partners, including Cuyahoga Valley National Park, are excited about this project since they believe it will save money and resources by allowing less reliance on paper brochures.


Interpretive Wayside Exhibits - This type of interpretive tool, as illustrated on the previous page, consists of a vertical, horizontal or angled two-dimensional panel that combined text and graphics to tell a story. Such exhibits are made durably to withstand the elements, and they are intended primarily to be read by a person standing in front of it, although they can sometimes be read by an individual in a vehicle parked extremely close to the exhibit. Most such exhibits made today are modeled after those utilized by the National Park Service (NPS). This model uses a magazine approach in which there is a hierarchy of information that might include a large-font heading, a smaller font sub-heading, and yet smaller font supporting text that provides detailed information. In addition to strong graphics, such exhibits sometimes also feature a sidebar story. This approach allows those only mildly interested to read a minimal amount of information, while offering much more information for those with a deeper interest. Interpretive wayside exhibits can be used for cultural resources associated with any of the interpretive themes for the MSNHA.

Interpretive Center Exhibits – As previously explained under Objective 2-D, it is recommended that the establishment of theme-based interpretive centers be explored for the MSNHA – perhaps even featuring one for each of the heritage area’s three primary themes. It is important that potential new centers utilize “best practices” for exhibit design. Good exhibits do not need to rely heavily on the existence of artifacts, as the most important factor is that information and stories are conveyed in a simple but engaging manner. When possible, technology should be employed to help tell the stories. Such technology should be both visual and audio-based. The possibilities of computer-generated techniques are virtually endless. When developing exhibits within an interpretive center, a basic set of questions should first be addressed. As an example, the general guidelines offered by “The Field Guide for Museums” by the State Historical Society of Iowa (2004 – pg. 23) include the following:



This interpretive center exhibit combines a topographically contoured map with lights that highlight specific locations being addressed with a film on the adjacent wall.





As noted previously, a feasibility study should be conducted prior to the pursuit of any of the interpretive centers suggested by this plan. A question that such a study should pose before assuming that people want to experience interpretation via interpretive centers is “How do visitors want to receive their interpretive information?” Although this plan’s market analysis suggests the potential viability and continued popularity of conventional interpretive centers, trends could conceivably change by the time serious efforts are made toward the pursuit of any new interpretive centers for the MSNHA.

Objective 2-F: Create a series of educational and interpretive materials telling the MSNHA’s story. In addition to more conventional materials, such as brochures, a coffee table book on the Heritage Area’s resources and stories might be developed, as well as web-based materials.

- Develop a series of brochures for the MSNHA. As described in greater detail in this document’s Interpretive Plan, the heritage area needs, at the very least, the following brochures:
 - MSNHA general brochure: This brochure would provide an overview of the heritage area, including a general summary of the three primary themes and a map. In fact, the MSNHA is in the process of creating a single overall map at present.
 - Theme-based brochures: These three theme-based brochures would feature information on the respective themes, as well as a map for a driving tour tied to the theme.

These brochures should include a website address for additional information, and they should be available in both hard copy format and a PDF digital format for downloading off of the MSNHA’s website. Also, the Interpretive Plan offers suggestions for enhancing the existing brochures of various historic attractions in a manner that makes them more effective for interpretation, more user-friendly, and more visually appealing.

- Develop an MSNHA “coffee-table” style of book. The local historic society of many communities will produce a hardbound book having strong graphics to highlight the history and remaining cultural resources of the particular community. Such an approach would be useful to the MSNHA not only to convey the themes and stories more widely, but also as a means of fund raising for the heritage area. To create such a book it is recommended that the MSNHA be the sponsoring organization and partner with the University of North Alabama’s new Public History program to draft the text and secure historic photographs and similar graphics. A local photographer would also be needed to photograph existing resources. One alternative to hiring a professional might be to utilize UNA’s Department of Art, which offers a Photography concentration as part of its bachelor’s degree program. Another option might be the Office of University Communications and Marketing’s “university photographer.” Finally, an editor and layout person would be needed. While UNA does not have a publishing arm, the Office of University Communications and Marketing might help with this task as well.

Objective 2-G: Program sites/attractions throughout the MSNHA with regular or periodic living history demonstrations and events.

- Program the MSNHA with living history demonstrations at various key sites. The following demonstration types might occur at the following sites tied to the MSNHA's three primary interpretive themes:

Native American demonstrations: Flint-knapping, food preparation, pottery making, music, and ceremonial dancing activities should occur at sites such as the Oakville Indian Mounds, Tuscumbia Landing (once made accessible to the public), and any potential new Native American Heritage interpretive center.

Tennessee River demonstrations: Fishing, mussel harvesting, and fish cleaning/cooking methods should occur at any MSNHA Tennessee River interpretive center. Also, Civil War demonstrations (camp life, firing long arms and artillery, etc.) could occur in Decatur and Athens where Union encampments existed (Old State Bank and Fort Henderson, respectively) and the Florence area where Confederate troops under Hood encamped in 1864 (Sweetwater Plantation). Similar military demonstrations could occur at Courtland to interpret the 1830s Texas war for independence based on the "Red Rovers" military unit raised in Courtland.

Music demonstrations: Activities related to song writing, playing music, and recording music should occur at a Music interpretive center if one should be established. Such programs could be modeled after the existing interactive exhibits at the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in Tuscumbia.

- Program the MSNHA with living history demonstrations at various events. The types of demonstrations described above could also be organized to occur at various special events throughout the NHA. Because of the need to sometimes bring history to the audience, rather than audiences being attracted to a particular site, MSNHA-sponsored demonstrations should be targeted to those events attracting the largest audiences, particularly those having a theme related to the NHA. The MSNHA may need to compensate participants for their expenses in at least some instances.

The MSNHA is already in the process of scheduling some living history demonstrations, including spearheading a program related to the 150th anniversary of Confederate General John Bell Hood's launching of his Middle Tennessee Campaign in the fall of 1864. Please see this plan's separate "Interpretive Plan" element for more detail on ideas related to living history programs.



Living history demonstrations can bring history to life in a manner that makes it more interesting to audiences otherwise lacking interest, particularly children.