

## F2. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources encompass archaeological, traditional, and built environment resources, including (but not limited to) buildings, structures, objects, districts, and sites. The following description of known cultural resources within the MHNHA is organized to mirror that of the previous section on “Interpretive Theme & Stories.” Thus, this section on cultural resources is sequenced as follows: 1) African-American Heritage Cultural Resources; 2) Civil War Cultural Resources; 3) Arts Cultural Resources; 4) Architectural Cultural Resources. Within each of these sections, the representative listed resources are organized by sub-themes within the broader given theme (see list below). These listed resources are not all inclusive, as a comprehensive inventory of resources organized by theme and county is contained in Appendix E of this report.

### Resource Categories

#### African-American Heritage

- Freedom Arrives
- Reconstruction & Post-Reconstruction
- Civil Rights: An Arduous Journey

#### Civil War

- The Opening Clash of Amateur Armies
- The Quest for Vicksburg Begins
- The Play’s Final Acts - 1864

#### Arts

- Pens & Brushes: Hills Literature & Painting
- Mississippi Melodies: Music of the Hills

#### Architecture

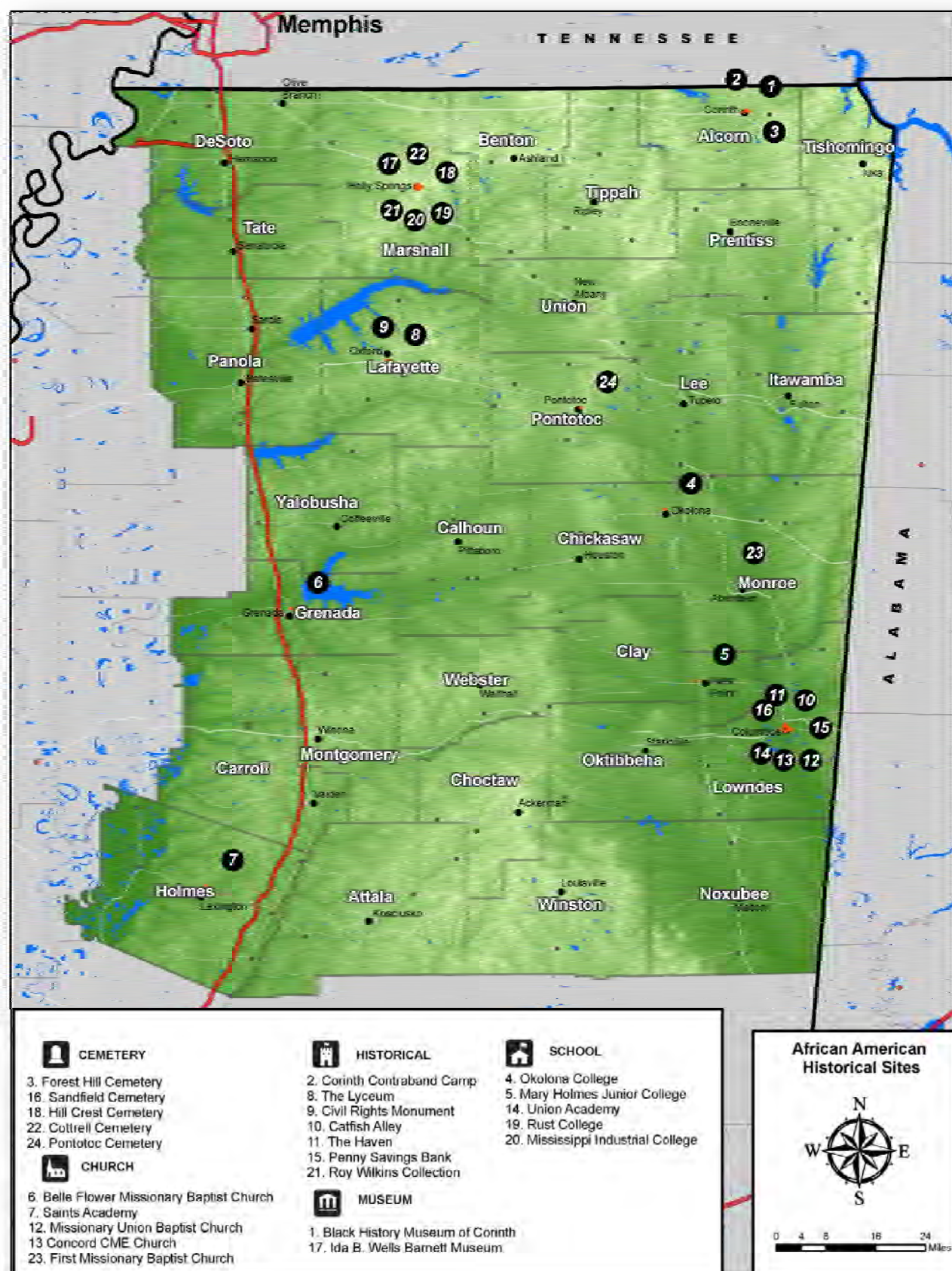
- Porches & Porticoes: Homes of the Hills
- Buildings for Profit: Commercial Architecture
- Worship, Learning & Governance: Institutional Buildings

### African-American Heritage

This theme for the MHNHA can encompass a broad range of African-American heritage, from slavery to today. However, the three sub-themes most defining for the MHNHA are “Freedom Arrives,” “Reconstruction & Post-Reconstruction,” and “Civil Rights: A Century-Long Journey.” Below is a summary of the inventory findings that are detailed in Appendix E of this report, as well as a map on the following page. It is organized by the three sub-themes:

#### Freedom Arrives

This sub-theme begins chronologically in 1862 when U.S. General Grant occupies Northeast Mississippi and escaped slaves begin entering his camps in Corinth. Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation shortly after the Union victory at Antietam in September of 1862, which went into effect in January of 1863, further solidified the freedom of slaves within areas of the Confederacy occupied by the Union forces. This sub-theme’s period continues through the end of the Civil War in 1865 when the Reconstruction era began. Examples of cultural resources related to this sub-theme include the following:



*Sample Freedom-Related Cultural Resources*

- Corinth Contraband Camp: Alcorn County, Corinth - 902 North Parkway

Reconstruction & Post-Reconstruction

“Reconstruction” is the term applied to the period after the Civil War in which a Republican coalition came to power in nearly all of the southern states and set out to radically transform the society, with support from the U.S. Army and the Freedman's Bureau. Reconstruction begins in 1865 with the close of the Civil War. However, by 1877 conservative white Democrats, alleging widespread corruption, regained power in each southern state, often with violence. Thus, 1877 is viewed as the end of Reconstruction. For the purposes of this study, “Post-Reconstruction” is viewed as the expansive period between 1877 and 1955 when the Civil Rights era began. Examples of cultural resources related to this sub-theme include the following:



*Established in Columbus in 1877, Union Academy was preceded by a Freedmen's Bureau school.*

*Sample Reconstruction Cultural Resources*

- Concord CME Church: Lowndes County, Columbus - 113 Concord Road
- Hill Crest Cemetery (Hiram Revels grave): Marshall County, Holly Springs - E. Elder Ave.
- Rust College: Marshall County, Holly Springs - 150 Rust Avenue

*Sample Post-Reconstruction Cultural Resources*

- Union Academy: Lowndes County, Columbus - 1425 N. Tenth Avenue
- Okolona College National Register Historic District: Chickasaw County, Okolona - West side of U.S. Hwy. 245
- Mary Holmes Junior College National Register Historic District: Clay County, West Point - West Main Street
- Saints Academy (“Saints Literary and Industrial School”): Holmes County, Lexington - 16979 Hwy.17
- Catfish Alley: Lowndes County, Columbus - Downtown between Main and College Streets
- Penny-Savings Bank: Lowndes County, Columbus - Corner of 2nd Avenue North and 5th Street North
- Ida B. Wells-Barnett Museum: Marshall County, Holly Springs - 220 N. Randolph Street
- Mississippi Industrial College: Marshall County, Holly Springs - Hwy. 7 (west side)
- Pontotoc Cemetery (grave of Ruby Elzy): Pontotoc County, Pontotoc - 116 N. Main Street

Civil Rights: An Arduous Journey

The African-American Civil Rights Movement refers to the social movements in the United States between 1955 and 1968 aimed at outlawing racial discrimination against African Americans and restoring voting rights to them. The movement was particularly focused on the South and was

characterized by major campaigns of civil resistance. Acts of nonviolent protest and civil disobedience produced crisis situations between activists and government authorities, and examples included the Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955–1956) in Alabama, "sit-ins" such as those in Greensboro (1960), and marches such as the Selma to Montgomery marches (1965) in Alabama. Noted legislative achievements during this era included: the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that banned discrimination based on "race, color, religion, or national origin" in employment practices and public accommodations; the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that restored and protected voting rights; and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 that banned discrimination in the sale or rental of housing.

#### *Sample Civil Rights Cultural Resources*

- Belle Flower Missionary Baptist Church: Grenada County, Grenada - Corner of Pearl Street and Water Street
- The Lyceum: Lafayette County, Oxford - University of Mississippi campus
- Civil Rights Monument: Lafayette County, Oxford - University of Mississippi campus



*Civil Rights monument at Ole Miss.*

#### **Civil War**

As explained on page 38 of this report, the Civil War in the Mississippi Hills started in the spring of 1862 when U.S. General Grant made his push into the area following the Battle of Shiloh. First with the rail center of Corinth as his objective and later with his eye on Vicksburg on the Mississippi River, the following military campaigns and their associated cultural resources served as the key components of the Civil War in the Hills (see Appendix E for an inventory of sites):



*The 47<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry in Oxford in December of 1862*

#### The Opening Clash of Amateur Armies:

##### Sample Cultural Resources

Comprised of the Siege of Corinth, the Battle of Iuka, and the Battle of Corinth in the spring of 1862, this series of engagements left the Union Army in control of the Mississippi Hills area. Below are some of the key associated sites:

- Corinth Civil War Interpretive Center: Alcorn County, Corinth - 501 W. Linden Street
- Verandah / Curlee House: Alcorn County, Corinth - 301 Childs Street
- Corinth National Civil War Cemetery: Alcorn County, Corinth - 1551 Horton Street
- The Crossroads Museum / Historic Depot: Alcorn County, Corinth - 221 N. Fillmore Street
- Corinth Earthworks: Alcorn County, Corinth
- Corinth Contraband Camp: Alcorn County, Corinth - 902 North Parkway
- Booneville Battlefield: Prentiss County - an extensive area S.W. of Booneville

- Iuka Battlefield: Tishomingo County, Iuka (SW corner) - NW of Hwy. 72 and Hwy. 25
- Shady Grove Cemetery - Iuka C.S. Mass Burial: Tishomingo County, Iuka - Spring Street
- Twin Magnolias – CS Gen. Little’s HQ: Tishomingo County, Iuka - E. Quitman Street
- Iuka Methodist Church – used as field hospital: Tishomingo County, Iuka - E. Eastport Street

#### The Quest for Vicksburg Begins: Sample Cultural Resources

While the majority of Grant’s Vicksburg Campaign occurred to the southwest of the Mississippi Hills region, the initial steps occurred in the Hills. The first step was Grant’s taking of Holly Springs in November of 1862, where he established a major supply center. However, in December of the same year Confederate cavalry leader and Mississippi native Earl Van Dorn conducted a major raid on Holly Springs that resulted in the destruction of most of Grant’s supplies, requiring him to abandon his campaign against Vicksburg until the spring of 1863. Below are some of the key associated sites:

- Davis’ Mill Battle Site: Benton County, Michigan City
- Confederate Forts at Grenada Lake: Granada-Graysport Road: Grenada County, Grenada - 2151 Scenic Loop
- Airliewood (Grant’s HQ – 1862): Marshall County, Holly Springs - near Courthouse Square (a few blocks away)
- Walter Place Estate & Gardens (Grant’s family residence): Marshall County, Holly Springs - 300 W. Chulahoma Ave.
- College Hill Presbyterian Church (Sherman’s HQ - 1862): Lafayette County, Oxford - 339 College Hill Road
- Cedar Oak (McPherson’s HQ - 1862): Lafayette County, Oxford - 601 Murray Drive
- Holly Springs Van Dorn Raid Railroad Area: Marshall County - East of Downtown Holly Springs - E. Van Dorn

#### The Play’s Final Acts – 1864:

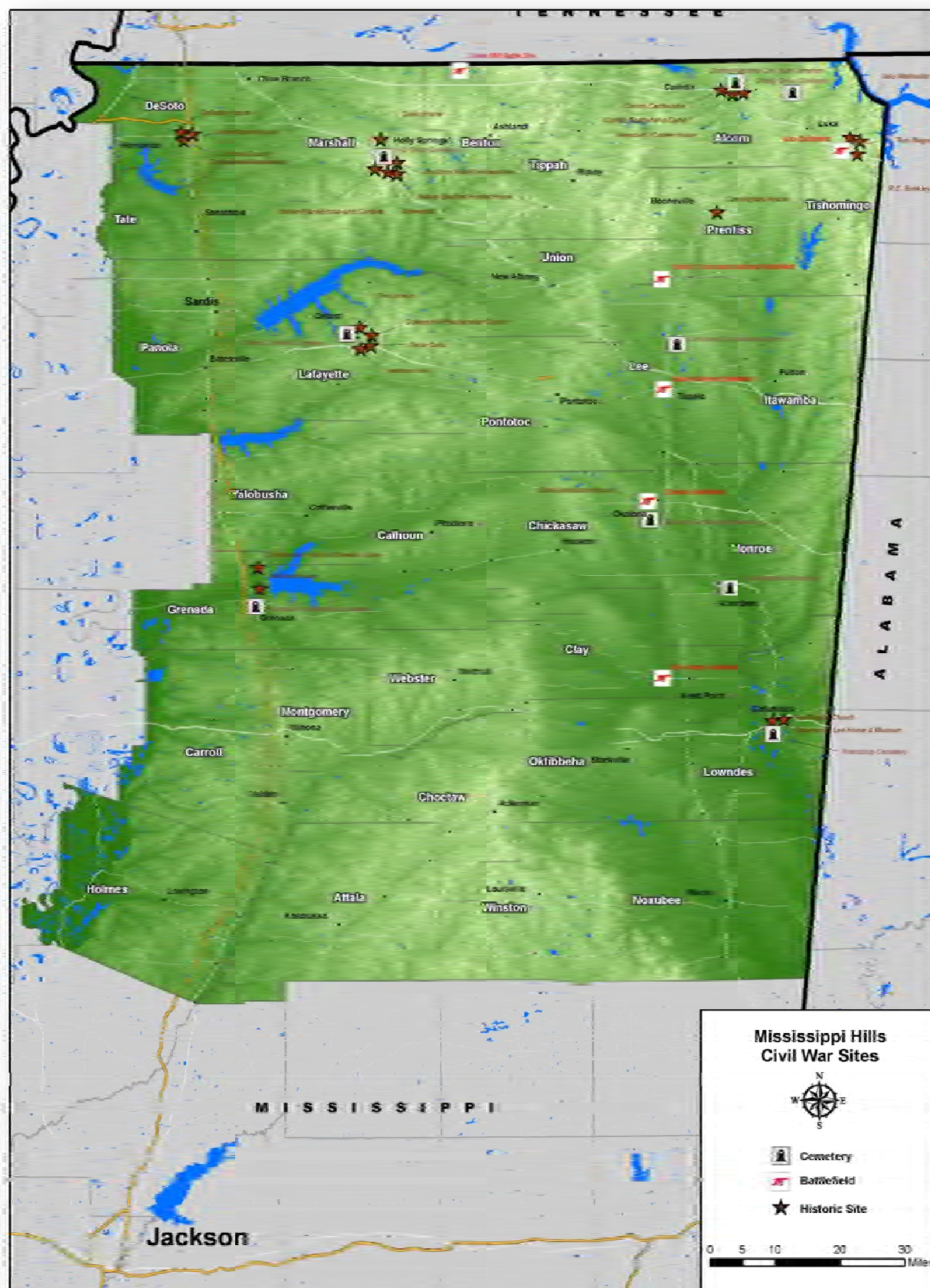
##### Sample Cultural Resources

In the Mississippi Hills during the waning days of the war, Union General Sherman would meet his own failures as the daring tactics of Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest cemented his reputation as one of the finest cavalry leaders in history. Key battles between February and July of 1864 included the battles of Okolona, Brice’s Crossroads and Tupelo. While the Confederates succeeded in the first two engagements, their loss of the Battle of Tupelo marked the end of any Confederate threats in Northeast Mississippi. Below are some of the key associated sites:



*Brice’s Crossroads National Battlefield is part of the National Park Service.*

- Okolona Battlefield: Chickasaw County, Okolona - Hwy 41 North
- Okolona Confederate Cemetery: Chickasaw County, Okolona - Church Street (SW Okolona)
- Elliot-Donaldson House: Chickasaw County, Okolona - 109 Church Street (Route 245)



- Old Aberdeen and Odd Fellows Rest Cemetery (Jeffrey Forrest's grave): Monroe County, Aberdeen - Off Hwy. 45 at South Poplar & Whitfield Streets
- Ellis Bridge Battlefield (aka "West Point Battlefield"): Clay County, Hwy. 50 West 3 miles west of West Point
- Cunningham House (where Forrest planned Brice's Crossroads): Prentiss County, Booneville - 100 W. Church Street
- Brice's Crossroads National Battlefield: Lee County, Baldwyn
- Mississippi's Final Stands Interpretive Center: Lee County, Baldwyn - Near junction of MS Highway 370 and US Highway 45
- Tupelo National Battlefield (aka - Harrisburg Battlefield): Lee County, Tupelo - Main Street (Hwy. 6/278)

### Arts

This otherwise broad cultural resources topic has been split into two categories for the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area – 1) writing and painting, and 2) music. Each of these two categories has, in turn, their own sub-categories, as reflected below.

#### Pens & Brushes: Hills Literature & Painting – Sample Cultural Resources

This study's earlier section on the MHNHA's themes addressed both writing and painting under the "arts" theme. However, the painting sub-theme was quite limited with respect to the depth of stories. Likewise, it is thin with respect to painting-related cultural resources. Consequently, the list below of representative cultural resources for "pens and brushes" is limited to the topic literature.

#### *William Faulkner*

- Rowan Oak (William Faulkner Home): Lafayette County, Oxford - Old Taylor Road
- Saint Peter's Cemetery (William Faulkner's grave): Lafayette County, Oxford - Jefferson at N. 16th Street
- Faulkner Collections: Lafayette County, Oxford - University of Mississippi campus

#### *Tennessee Williams*

- Tennessee Williams Home: Lowndes County, Columbus - 300 Main Street
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Tennessee Williams' church): Lowndes County, Columbus - 318 College Street

#### *Other Writers*

- Mississippi University for Women (Eudora Welty attended): Lowndes County, Columbus - 1100 College Street



*Although it was moved from its original location elsewhere in Columbus, Tennessee Williams' childhood home is now used as a visitors' center.*

- Ida B. Wells-Barnett Museum: Marshall County, Holly Springs - 220 N. Randolph Street
- John Grisham Room: Mississippi State University Mitchell Memorial Library - Oktibbeha County, Starkville - Mississippi State University

#### Mississippi Melodies: Music of the Hills – Sample Cultural Resources

As with the writing sub-category of cultural resources, this sub-category has a great deal of depth, as reflected in the following list of representative resources.

##### *Blues Music*

- Blues Archives: Lafayette County, Oxford - University of Mississippi campus
- Howlin' Wolf Blues Museum: Clay County, West Point - 307 West Westbrook Street

##### *Rock & Roll Music*

- Elvis Presley Birthplace: Lee County, Tupelo - 306 Elvis Presley Drive
- Tupelo Hardware (where Elvis bought first guitar): Lee County, Tupelo - 114 W. Main Street
- Elvis Presley's Honeymoon Cottage: DeSoto County, Horn Lake - 5921 Goodman Rd. West at Hwy. 301 S.
- Jerry Lee Lewis Home: DeSoto County, Nesbit - 1595 Malone Road



*The Howlin' Wolf Blues Museum is located on the edge of Downtown West Point. It interprets both blues music and the work of Howlin' Wolf.*

##### *Other Music Genres*

- Pontotoc Cemetery (opera singer Ruby Elzy's burial): Pontotoc County, Pontotoc - 116 N. Main Street

### **Architecture - Secondary Theme**

While Architecture is not considered a "primary theme" for the NHA, it is a secondary theme worthy of attention here. The cultural resources category of "Architecture" has been split into the sub-categories of residential, commercial and institutional architecture, as well as the preservation of key buildings. It is noteworthy that some buildings featured in the inventory (Appendix E) and Background Study description for architecture are also featured in other inventory categories and thematic and cultural resource descriptions. In particular, examples of repeated buildings include homes and churches that served as Civil War headquarters and field hospitals, yet that also stand on their own merits for their architectural significance.

#### Porches & Porticoes: Homes of the Hills – Sample Cultural Resources

The MHNHA has a broad spectrum of residential architectural styles, including Federal, Italianate, Second Empire, Classical Revival, vernacular and other styles. However, it is particularly known for its grand antebellum Greek Revival architecture that defines the cotton culture of the pre-Civil War era in the Hills.

*Vernacular*

- Lincoln Home (vernacular – 1833): Lowndes County, Columbus - 714 3rd Avenue South
- Drane House (vernacular – 1840s): Choctaw County, French Camp - Natchez Trace Parkway at Route 413, 1 Fine Place (mile marker 180.7)

*Federal*

- Cartney-Hunt House (Federal – 1828): Lowndes County, Columbus - 408 7th Street South
- Burton Place (Federal – 1848): Marshall County, Holly Springs - 248 South Memphis Street

*Greek Revival*

- Verandah / Curlee House (Greek Revival – 1857 / Civil War HQ): Alcorn County, Corinth - 301 Childs Street
- Rosewood Manor (Greek Revival – 1835): Lowndes County, Columbus - 719 7th Street North
- Whitehall (Greek Revival – 1843): Lowndes County, Columbus - 607 3rd Street South
- Bryn Bella (Greek Revival – 1848): Lowndes County, Columbus - 1822 Stinson Creek Road
- Shadowlawn (Greek Revival – 1848): Lowndes County, Columbus - 1024 College Street
- The Magnolias (Greek Revival – 1850): Monroe County, Aberdeen - 732 West Commerce St.
- Holliday Haven (Greek Revival – 1850): Monroe County, Aberdeen - 609 South Meridian Street
- Davis House (Greek Revival – 1851): Marshall County, North of Holly Springs - 285 Plains Road
- Waverley Mansion (Greek Revival -1852): Clay County, West Point - Waverley Mansion Rd. (off Hwy. 50)
- Adams-French (Greek Revival – 1856): Monroe County, Aberdeen - 301 North Meridian Street
- Elliot-Donaldson House (Civil War hospital – 1857): Chickasaw County, Okolona - 109 Church Street (Route 245)
- Heflin House Museum (Greek Revival – 1858): Panola County, Sardis - 304 South Main Street
- Montrose & the Montrose Arboretum (Greek Revival – 1858): Marshall County, Holly Springs - 335 E. Salem Avenue
- Walter Place Estate & Gardens (Greek Revival – 1859): Marshall County, Holly Springs - 300 W. Chulahoma Avenue



*The Elliot-Donaldson House in Okolona has both architectural significance and Civil War significance tied to the battle there.*

*Italianate*

- Amzi Love Home (Italianate – 1848): Lowndes County, Columbus - 305 7th Street S.
- Rosedale House (Italianate – 1856): Lowndes County, Columbus - 1523 9th Street South

*Other House Types*

- Temple Heights (Federal & Greek – 1837): Lowndes County, Columbus - 515 9th Street North
- Chandler House (Greek & Italianate – 1850s): Chickasaw County, Okolona
- Airliewood (Gothic Revival – 1858 / Grant's HQ): Marshall County, Holly Springs - near Courthouse Square

- Bella Vida (Second Empire – 1878): Monroe County, Aberdeen - 503 South Franklin Street

#### Buildings for Profit: Commercial Architecture – Sample Cultural Resources

This building type includes a broad range of sub-categories, including industrial, performance venues, and more conventional commercial structures, such as the 1845 Granada Bank. In fact, the majority of historic buildings found in any of the downtowns of the Mississippi Hills would fit under that sub-category. Furthermore, many of these buildings are contained within National Register Historic Districts, which are addressed in the following section of this study.



*The Ritz Theatre in Downtown West Point features a relatively rare Mission Revival style.*

#### *Industrial*

- Corinth Machinery Company Building (1869 – partially collapsed recently): Alcorn County, Corinth - South Tate Street

#### *Theatres*

- The Coliseum Theatre (Art Deco – 1924): Alcorn County, Corinth - 404 Taylor Street
- Ritz Theater (Mission Revival – 1931): Clay County, West Point - 125 Commerce Street

#### *Other Commercial*

- The College Inn (1830s tavern/hotel): Granada County, Granada - 131 College Street
- Granada Bank (1845): Granada County, Granada - 223 First Street

#### Worship, Learning & Governance: Institutional Buildings – Sample Cultural Resources

While many of the commercial buildings addressed above serve visually as “background buildings” within the context of a historic district, most institutional buildings function as “foreground buildings” that visually stand out as a means of underscoring their significance. Many of these types of buildings exhibit classical revival styles such as Gothic and Greek Revival, to name a few. Also, some institutional structures, when dating from the antebellum period, served as field hospitals at some point during the Civil War – especially in the case of churches.

#### *Worship*

- Yellow Fever Martyrs Museum (Christ Episcopal Church – 1841): Marshall County, Holly Springs - 305 East College Avenue
- St. Peter’s Episcopal Church (Gothic – 1860): Lafayette County, Oxford - Jackson Avenue at South Ninth Street
- Shongalo Presbyterian Church (1875): Carroll County, Vaiden - Court Street
- Mary Ricks Thornton Cultural Center (formerly the 1899 Romanesque Revival First Presbyterian Church): Attala County, Kosciusko - Washington Street and Huntington Street

*Leaning*

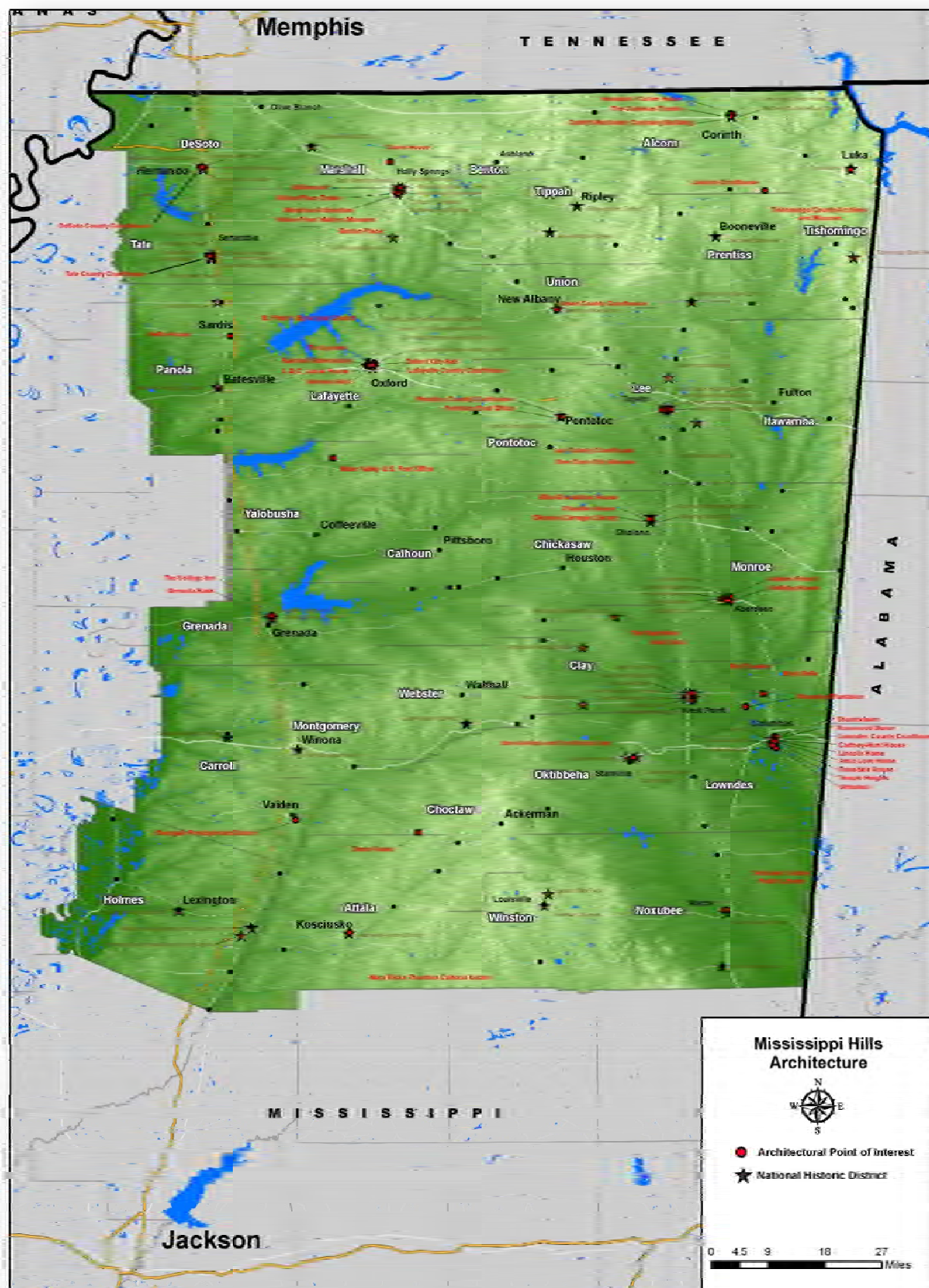
- The Lyceum (Greek Revival - 1848): Lafayette County, Oxford - University of Mississippi campus
- Barnard Observatory (1859): Lafayette County, Oxford - University of Mississippi campus
- Ventress Hall (Victorian Romanesque – 1889): Lafayette County, Oxford - University of Mississippi campus
- Okolona Carnegie Library (Classical Revival – 1915): Chickasaw County, Okolona - 321 West Main Street

*Governance*

- DeSoto County Courthouse (Greek Revival – 1836): DeSoto County, Hernando - Courthouse Square (2535 Hwy. 51 South)
- Lowndes County Courthouse (Greek Revival – 1847): Lowndes County, Columbus - 505 2nd Avenue North
- Jacinto Courthouse (Federal style - 1854): Alcorn County - off Hwy. 356 on County Road 367 (8 miles east of Rienzi)
- Lafayette County Courthouse (Greek & Italianate – 1872): Lafayette County, Oxford - Courthouse Square
- Tate County Courthouse (Gothic Revival - 1875): Tate County, Senatobia - 201 South Ward Street
- Oxford City Hall (Romanesque – 1885): Lafayette County, Oxford - 107 Courthouse Square
- Tishomingo County Archives & Museum (original courthouse – 1888): Tishomingo County, Iuka - 203 E. Quitman Street
- Lee County Courthouse (Classical Revival): Lee County, Tupelo - 200 Broadway North
- Noxubee County Public Library (Romanesque County Jail – 1907): Noxubee County, Macon - 103 East King Street
- Union County Courthouse (Classical Revival – 1909): Union County, New Albany - 116 East Bankhead Street
- Pontotoc County Courthouse (Classical Revival – 1916): Pontotoc County, Pontotoc - 11 Washington Street
- Pontotoc Post Office & Museum (Classical Revival): Pontotoc County, Pontotoc - Town Square / Main Street



*Although it had subsequent additions over the years, DeSoto County's 1836 Courthouse is the oldest one in the MHNHA.*



## Summary of Cultural Resources

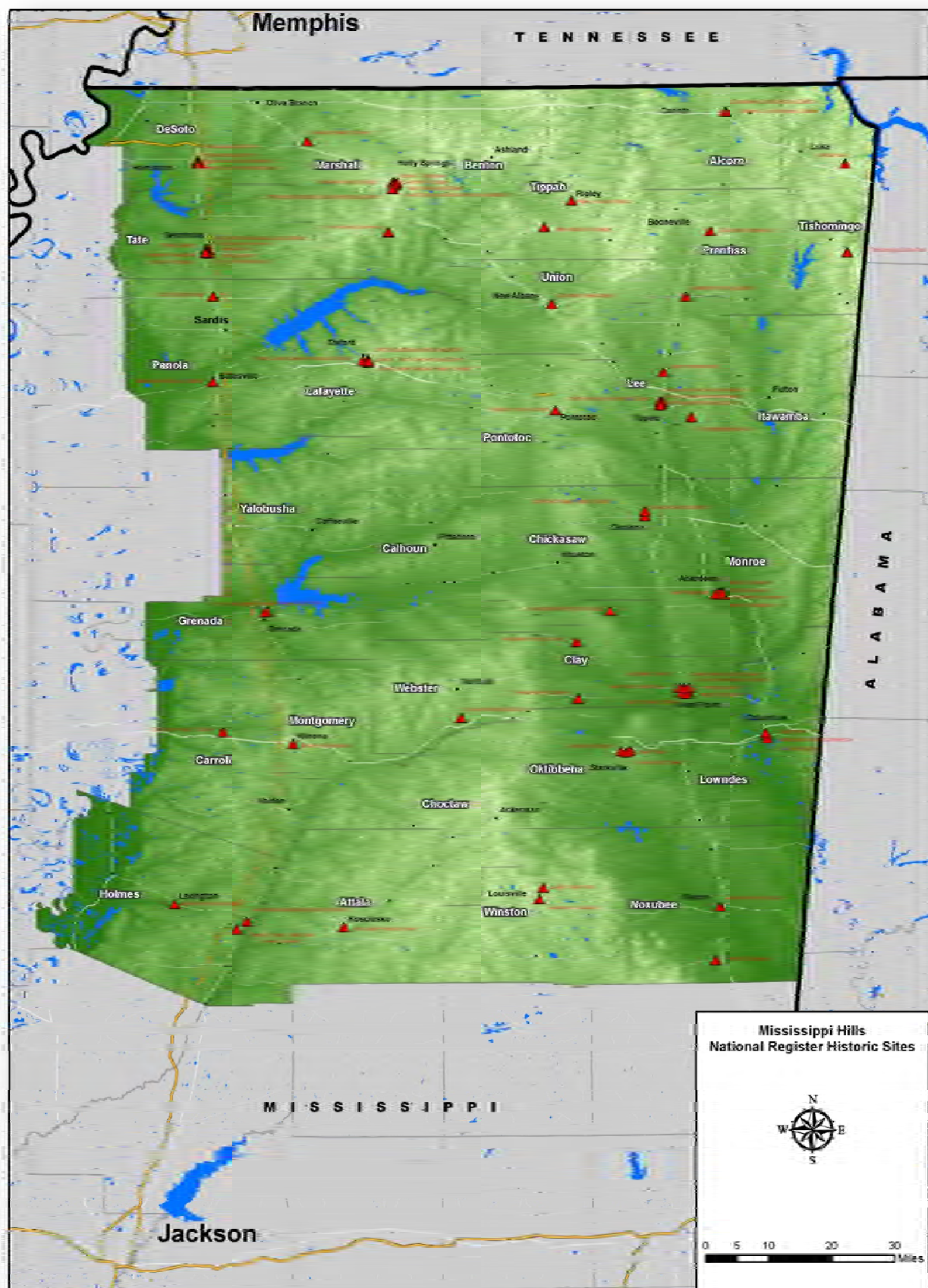
The MHNHA clearly has a vast stock of cultural resources that represent a variety of historic themes of the area. Based upon the inventory of this Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area Background Study (Appendix E), the following National Register Districts have been formally documented and/or designated:

<b>NR District Name</b>	<b>MHNHA County</b>	<b>MHNHA Community</b>	<b>Number of Resources</b>	<b>Year Desig.</b>
Downtown Corinth NR District	Alcorn	Corinth	125	1993
Midtown Corinth NR District	Alcorn	Corinth	223	1993
Kosciusko NR District	Attala	Kosciusko	564	2009
Carrollton NR District	Carroll	Carrollton	68	1978
Okolona NR District	Chickasaw	Okolona	294	2002
Okolona College NR District	Chickasaw	Okolona	6	2002
Court Street NR District	Clay	West Point	16	1982
Mary Holmes Junior College NR District	Clay	West Point	8	1991
Montpelier NR District	Clay	West Point	3	1991
South Division Street NR District	Clay	West Point	25	1990
West Point School NR District*	Clay	West Point	46	1990
Brandtown Gin NR District	Clay	West Point	14	1991
Commerce Street NR District	Clay	West Point	47	1990
East Main Street NR District*	Clay	West Point	62	1990
West Point Central City NR District*	Clay	West Point	120	1982
Pheba NR District	Clay	Pheba	2	1991
Hernando Commerce Street NR District	DeSoto	Hernando	17	2001
Hernando North Side NR District	DeSoto	Hernando	15	2001
Hernando Courthouse Square NR District	DeSoto	Hernando	23	1998
Hernando South Side (“Magnolia”) NR D.	DeSoto	Hernando	22	2001
South Main NR District	Granada	Granada	25	1988
Margin Street NR District	Granada	Granada	37	1988
Lexington NR District	Holmes	Lexington	321	2001
Holmes County State Park NR District	Holmes	Durrant area	10	1997
West NR District	Holmes	West	80	1993
North Lamar NR District	Lafayette	Oxford	215	2007
South Lamar NR District	Lafayette	Oxford	272	2009
Lyceum-The Circle NR District	Lafayette	Oxford	12	2008
Oxford Courthouse Square NR District	Lafayette	Oxford	72	1980
Baldwyn NR District	Lee	Baldwyn	165	2011
Highland Circle NR District	Lee	Tupelo	97	2006
Mill Village NR District	Lee	Tupelo	77	1992
North Broadway NR District	Lee	Tupelo	14	1985
South Church Street NR District	Lee	Tupelo	23	1992
Tombigbee State Park NR District	Lee	Tupelo area	10	1999
Tupelo Homesteads NR District	Lee	Tupelo area	20	1997

\* This district is now part of the “West Point Unified” National Register District

<b>NR District Name</b>	<b>MHNHA County</b>	<b>MHNHA Community</b>	<b>Number of Resources</b>	<b>Year Desig.</b>
Columbus Central Commercial NR District	Lowndes	Columbus	223	1980
South Columbus NR District	Lowndes	Columbus	526	1982
Factory Hill-Frog Bottom-Burns Bottom NR	Lowndes	Columbus	113	1980
Depot-Compress NR District	Marshall	Holly Springs	20	1983
East Holly Springs NR District	Marshall	Holly Springs	192	1983
Holly Springs Courthouse Square NR D.	Marshall	Holly Springs	60	1980
Mississippi Industrial College NR District	Marshall	Holly Springs	5	1980
North Memphis Street NR District	Marshall	Holly Springs	14	1983
Southwest Holly Springs NR District	Marshall	Holly Springs	80	1983
Wall Doxey State Park NR District	Marshall	Holly Springs	4	1997
Byhalia NR District	Marshall	Byhalia	91	1996
North Aberdeen NR District	Monroe	Aberdeen	42	1988
South Central Aberdeen NR District	Monroe	Aberdeen	173	1988
West Commerce Street NR District	Monroe	Aberdeen	20	1988
Aberdeen Downtown NR District	Monroe	Aberdeen	60	1997
Harmon Subdivision NR District	Monroe	Aberdeen	5	1988
Winona Commercial NR District	Montgomery	Winona	45	1994
Central Shuqualak NR District	Noxubee	Shuqualak	27	1980
Macon NR District	Noxubee	Macon	286	2002
Nash Street NR District	Oktibbeha	Starkville	18	1993
Greensboro Street NR District	Oktibbeha	Starkville	46	1982
Overstreet School NR District	Oktibbeha	Starkville	150	1992
Como Commercial NR District	Panola	Como	37	2008
Batesville NR District	Panola	Batesville	230	2003
Pontotoc NR District	Pontotoc	Pontotoc	82	1993
Downtown Booneville NR District	Prentiss	Booneville	48	1998
College Street NR District	Tate	Senatobia	19	1994
Panola Street South NR District	Tate	Senatobia	17	1994
Southeast Senatobia NR District	Tate	Senatobia	44	1994
Downtown Senatobia NR District	Tate	Senatobia	62	1994
North Park Street NR District	Tate	Senatobia	7	1994
Panola Street North NR District	Tate	Senatobia	4	1994
South Ward Street NR District	Tate	Senatobia	38	1994
Tate County Agricultural High School NR	Tate	Senatobia	4	1994
Blue Mountain College NR District	Tippah	Blue Mountain	23	1997
Ripley NR District	Tippah	Ripley	259	2005
Central Iuka NR District	Tishomingo	Iuka	29	1991
Tishomingo State Park NR District	Tishomingo	Tishomingo	28	1998
New Albany Downtown NR District	Union	New Albany	60	1996
Eupora NR District	Webster	Eupora	# unavailable	2011
Downtown Louisville NR District	Winston	Louisville	# unavailable	2011
Legion State Park NR District	Winston	Louisville	26	1998

The total number of National Register historic districts currently within the MHNHA is 78, while the total number of individual resources within those districts is 6,367. That number does not include districts designated in Eupora and Louisville in 2011, as those figures were unavailable.



## **G. Economic & Market Assessment**

The Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area has been designated for all or portions of 30 counties in northeast Mississippi. This diverse region harbors a distinct subculture formed in the rolling hills and plains where Appalachia meets the Delta. These two physical features, the Appalachian mountain range and the Mississippi Delta, represent not only distinct geographical regions but also unique American cultures. It can be argued that the place where they meet spawned some of America's greatest cultural icons in their distinct forms of music, literature, and arts. The region also formed a crossroads for travelers along the Natchez Trace, which traverses the entire length of the heritage area, and for armies clashing in the Civil War.

This economic and market assessment includes an overview of economic conditions in the area, along with an inventory and review of tourism sites and services in the region. Tourism flow and trends are analyzed. Heritage tourism market potentials were then forecasted for the area as a basis for identifying opportunities for tourism development. An outgrowth of this assessment contained later in this plan is additional background information on the individual sites and attractions and recommendations for implementation of projects and programs. The following few pages provide a summary of the assessment, but a full version of it can be found in Appendix F of this Background Report.

### **G1. ECONOMIC & TOURISM SECTOR OVERVIEW**

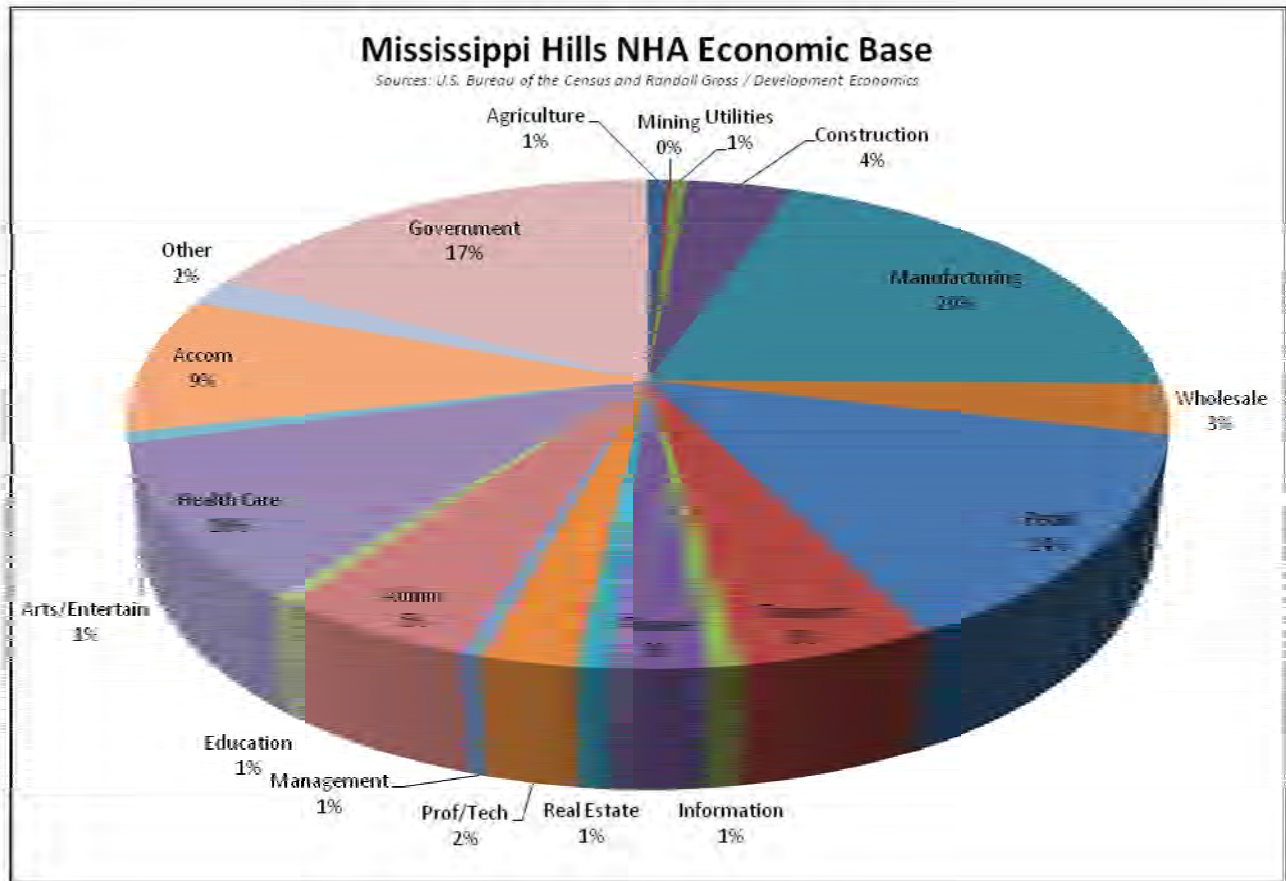
This section provides an overview of the regional economy and of tourism flow through the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area (MHNHA). The heritage area comprises all or parts of 30 counties in northeast Mississippi, generally bounded by I-55 on the west, State Route 14 on the south, Alabama on the east and Tennessee on the north. The area includes some suburban portions of Memphis, but there are no other major cities within the 30-county region. That being said, there are several smaller cities that serve as economic hubs for the region, including Columbus, Tupelo, Holly Springs, Oxford, West Point, and Corinth. Columbus and West Point both form part of a Census-designated "micropolitan" area.

The economic history of the region has been influenced by the establishment of transportation routes, starting with Native American trails that were later used to form the Natchez Trace, an important western road in early America. The Natchez Trace Parkway is now headquartered in the MHNHA. The building of railroads spurred development of many of the region's towns and cities, and was also key to control of the area during the Civil War. The Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway has helped provide water transportation access to the Gulf of Mexico, yielding opportunities for industrial development in the region. The region's geographic position where the foothills of the Appalachian Mountain range meet the Mississippi Delta has also played a role in its economic and cultural development.

#### **Tourism Expenditures**

Tourism expenditures were estimated at about \$1.04 billion in 2011, up by \$180.2 million or 21% from 2004. Tourism expenditures increased even though the number of tourists fell because

tourists spent more in 2011. In 2004, the average spend was about \$199 per visitor. By 2011, spending had increased to about \$287 per visitor.



Spending increased in most counties in the MHNHA between 2004 and 2011, but the fastest increases were in Panola and Yalobusha counties, where total spending more than doubled during the seven-year period. Tishomingo, Union and Lafayette counties also saw exceptionally rapid increases in total tourism spending during that period, followed by Prentiss, Webster, Oktibbeha, Marshall, and Desoto. Desoto saw the largest growth amount, nearly \$66 million in tourism spending, over the seven-year period. Chickasaw, Holmes, Lowndes, and Monroe experienced a decrease in tourism spending during the period. A detailed summary of trends in tourism spending by individual counties within the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area is provided in the following table, based again on data supplied by the Mississippi Development Authority's Tourism Division.

Table 3. TOURISM SPENDING TRENDS, MISSISSIPPI HILLS NATIONAL				
HERITAGE AREA COUNTIES, , 2004-2011				
County	2004	2011	2004-2011 Change	
			Amount	Percent
Alcorn	\$ 40,098,811	\$ 47,262,467	\$ 7,163,656	17.9%
Attala	\$ 16,562,757	\$ 16,908,543	\$ 345,786	2.1%
Benton	\$ 691,729	\$ 803,812	\$ 112,083	16.2%
Calhoun	\$ 2,430,048	\$ 3,061,985	\$ 631,937	26.0%
Carroll	\$ 1,106,965	\$ 1,117,642	\$ 10,677	1.0%
Chickasaw	\$ 6,965,838	\$ 5,096,171	\$ (1,869,667)	-26.8%
Choctaw	\$ 1,042,503	\$ 1,089,890	\$ 47,387	4.5%
Clay	\$ 13,342,567	\$ 15,311,757	\$ 1,969,190	14.8%
Desoto	\$ 172,762,905	\$ 238,326,617	\$ 65,563,712	38.0%
Granada	\$ 36,409,842	\$ 40,020,044	\$ 3,610,202	9.9%
Holmes	\$ 4,341,252	\$ 3,908,771	\$ (432,481)	-10.0%
Itawamba	\$ 8,608,328	\$ 10,313,733	\$ 1,705,405	19.8%
Lafayette	\$ 55,965,132	\$ 92,174,391	\$ 36,209,259	64.7%
Lee	\$ 229,705,613	\$ 232,124,655	\$ 2,419,042	1.1%
Lowndes	\$ 99,763,819	\$ 98,738,459	\$ (1,025,360)	-1.0%
Marshall	\$ 8,802,554	\$ 12,092,686	\$ 3,290,132	37.4%
Monroe	\$ 18,021,375	\$ 16,367,355	\$ (1,654,020)	-9.2%
Montgomery	\$ 7,293,719	\$ 8,590,611	\$ 1,296,892	17.8%
Noxubee	\$ 3,740,631	\$ 4,606,539	\$ 865,908	23.1%
Oktibbeha	\$ 54,734,153	\$ 74,911,249	\$ 20,177,096	36.9%
Panola	\$ 17,066,820	\$ 34,341,965	\$ 17,275,145	101.2%
Pontotoc	\$ 6,516,846	\$ 8,190,247	\$ 1,673,401	25.7%
Prentiss	\$ 5,063,599	\$ 7,907,909	\$ 2,844,310	56.2%
Tate	\$ 9,171,504	\$ 10,104,699	\$ 933,195	10.2%
Tippah	\$ 5,504,059	\$ 6,644,086	\$ 1,140,027	20.7%
Tishomingo	\$ 7,020,728	\$ 12,352,248	\$ 5,331,520	75.9%
Union	\$ 9,392,909	\$ 15,820,302	\$ 6,427,393	68.4%
Webster	\$ 1,768,403	\$ 2,448,705	\$ 680,302	38.5%
Winston	\$ 13,437,369	\$ 14,993,971	\$ 1,556,602	11.6%
Yalobusha	\$ 1,840,197	\$ 3,693,162	\$ 1,852,965	100.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 859,172,975</b>	<b>\$ 1,039,324,671</b>	<b>\$ 180,151,696</b>	<b>21.0%</b>
<b>Sources:</b>	Mississippi Development Authority, Tourism Division; and Randall Gross / Development Economics.			

**Conclusions**

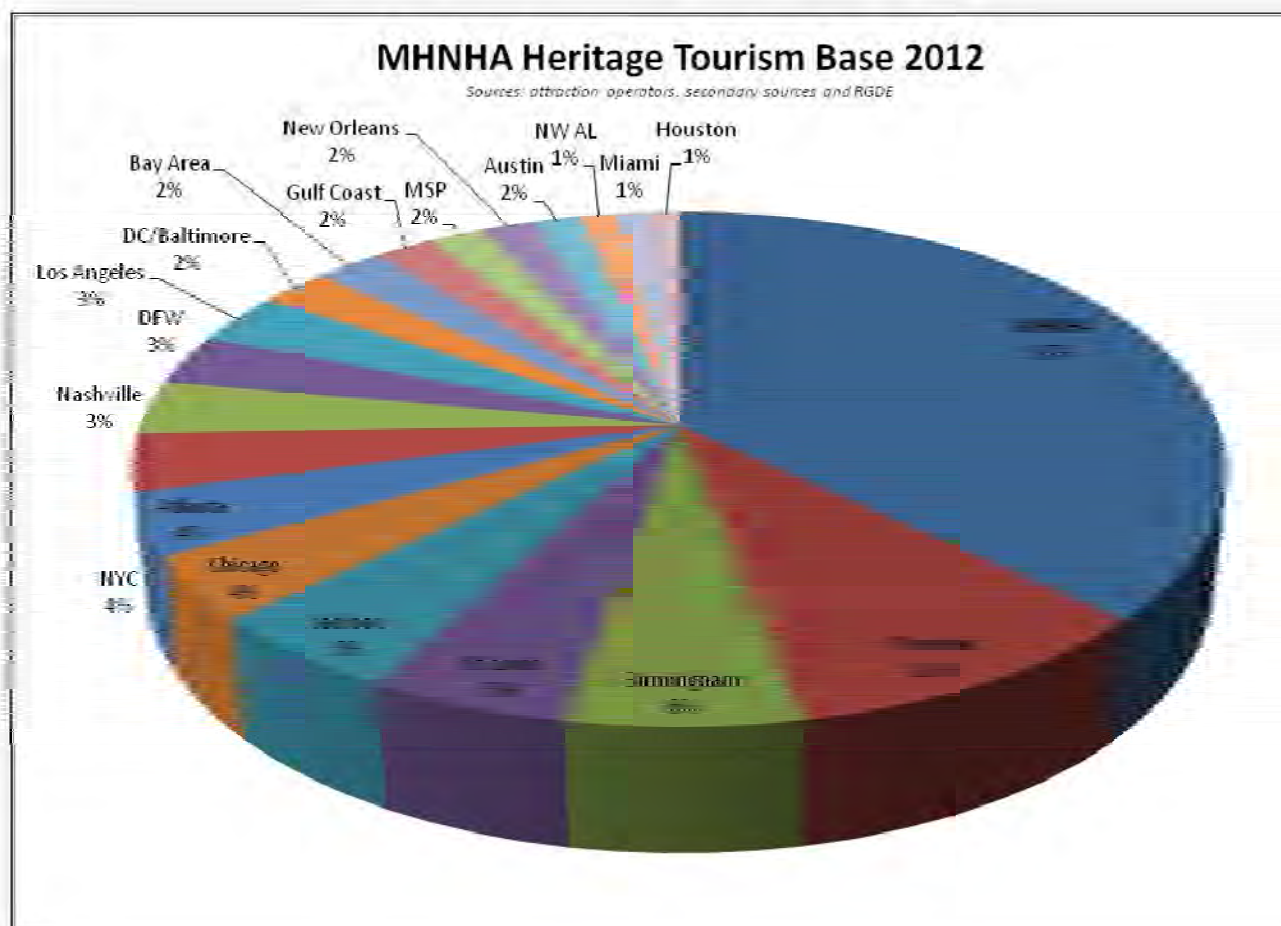
This region has built an economy based in manufacturing and, while industrial employment has fallen sharply in the last decade, manufacturing remains the main employer in the region. Access to the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway continues to play an important role in retaining this manufacturing base over the long-term. While many industries falter, the tourism industry has grown throughout the region. Accommodation, foodservice, and transportation growth has exceeded that of most other industries, and the tourism employment base is spread more evenly throughout the 30-county area. Key drivers inside and outside of the MHNHA help generate increasing tourism expenditures. Despite a temporary setback due to the nationwide recession, the tourism industry continues to attract more than 3.6 million people per year to the area, many of whom are experiencing the region's rich cultural, natural, and economic heritage.

**G2. HERITAGE TOURISM ASSET BASE**

This section summarizes findings from an inventory and assessment of the region's tourism asset base, with a particular focus on heritage tourism. The inventory and analysis were conducted based on extensive field reconnaissance (to as many sites as possible), interviews with operators and managers, and other research. This inventory includes over 1,000 tourist attractions, museums, parks and natural assets, towns and districts, festivals, sports and recreation facilities, trails and tours, lodging facilities, unique stores, tourism organizations, and related activities. These activities are summarized by type, then by theme. A more detailed analysis of the activities is then provided for heritage-related festivals, museums, natural areas, and historical sites and parks. This analysis includes a discussion of attendance and other factors, while a more detailed assessment of individual sites is provided in subsequent sections of this management plan.

**Conclusions**

The Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area has a rich heritage, especially as a cultural mélange born of the melding of Appalachian and Delta cultures. The Hills region has a substantive heritage asset base, some of which is already marketed and promoted through the MHNHA and local tourism agencies. Elvis's Birthplace is certainly important, but there are dozens of small museums and no single attraction dominates the tourism mix. The Natchez Trace Parkway provides linkages to various sites throughout the region and remains a key driver for heritage tourism. The area attracts several million visitors per year to heritage sites, museums and natural areas. The region's parks are well-attended, yet many of the region's Native American heritage sites are under-interpreted and there are opportunities for celebrating the unique Chickasaw and Choctaw heritage that calls the region home. There are a number of small local festivals, but only a few that attract a regional or national audience. Nearly 40% of visitors originate from within the region, many others from other parts of the South. However, there are also some visitors who travel internationally to experience the trend-setting music of Elvis and Howlin' Wolf, or to view the unique southern antebellum architecture of Waverly Plantation and other beautiful homes.



### G3. HERITAGE TOURISM MARKET POTENTIALS

This section provides findings from an assessment of market potentials for heritage tourism attractions in the MHNHA. A demographic analysis was conducted for core travel markets for the MHNHA in terms of age, education, income and other factors. Demand for heritage tourism is forecasted based in part on participation rates for various types of heritage attractions. The potential for increased heritage tourism within the MHNHA is then forecasted based on the area's capture of regional demand. Key opportunities for growth and expansion of heritage tourism in the area are identified based on the findings from this analysis.

#### Conclusions

Cultural and heritage tourism audiences are generally better educated, more affluent, and have "higher expectations" for travel experiences that are pleasurable and educational at the same time. Authenticity is a key for capturing these potential heritage tourism audiences. Heritage tourists spend more (\$623 versus \$457 by other travelers per average trip). They also travel longer, at 5.2 nights on average versus 3.4 nights for other types of travelers. Core audience markets for the MHNHA include the 30-county Hills region, plus nearby metros including Jackson, Memphis, and

Table 15. MUSEUM AUDIENCE POTENTIAL FORECASTS BY TYPE OF MUSEUM, MISSISSIPPI HILLS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA, 2012-2017				
Education	2012	2017	2012-2017 Change	
			Number	Percent
History	49,900	54,700	4,800	9.6%
Amer. Indian	8,400	10,500	2,100	25.0%
Science/Ind	60,500	62,000	1,500	2.5%
<i>Nat. History</i>	<i>47,800</i>	<i>49,000</i>	<i>1,200</i>	<i>2.5%</i>
Art/Design	49,800	53,600	3,800	7.6%
<b>TOTAL 1/</b>	<b>168,600</b>	<b>180,800</b>	<b>12,200</b>	<b>7.2%</b>
<b>Source:</b>	Randall Gross / Development Economics.			

Table 18. HISTORIC SITE AUDIENCE POTENTIAL, CORE MARKETS, MISSISSIPPI HILLS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA, 2012-2017				
Market	2012	2017	2012-2017 Forecast	
			Number	Percent
MHNHA	77,123	76,789	(335)	-0.4%
Memphis	41,371	40,871	(500)	-1.2%
Jackson	8,179	9,086	907	11.1%
DFW	11,991	14,872	2,881	24.0%
Atlanta	20,853	24,692	3,839	18.4%
Other/Foreign	582,115	604,830	22,715	3.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>741,633</b>	<b>771,140</b>	<b>29,507</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>Sources:</b>	Randall Gross /Development Economics.			

Table 19. FESTIVAL AUDIENCE POTENTIAL, CORE MARKETS, MISSISSIPPI HILLS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA, 2012-2017				
Market	2012	2017	2012-2017 Forecast	
			Number	Percent
MHNHA	77,168	79,651	2,483	3.2%
Memphis	39,621	44,165	4,544	11.5%
Jackson	4,995	5,219	224	4.5%
DFW	35,223	38,514	3,290	9.3%
Atlanta	20,263	33,110	12,847	63.4%
Other/Foreign	21,208	23,300	2,092	9.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>198,478</b>	<b>223,959</b>	<b>25,481</b>	<b>12.8%</b>
<b>Source:</b>	Randall Gross /Development Economics.			

Birmingham, as well as Nashville, Atlanta, Dallas and Chicago, among others. But a large share of attendance would also be generated by visitors from outside of these core markets, including a growing base of foreign tourists. The MHNHA museum audience, forecasted at 74,000, could support potential for another 35,000 to 40,000 square feet of museum space within the next five years. The fastest growth and least served museum market would have a Native American theme. The region has a plethora of history museums, but there is a dearth of art museums and an opportunity for further development within that arena. The area can also expect historic site audience growth potential of 30,000 people and festival audience growth potential of more than 25,000. Opportunities for capturing this growth through new, expanded, or enhanced museums, historic venues, and festivals are discussed in the following section.

#### **G4. PROGRAM & PROJECT CONCEPTS**

This section provides preliminary recommendations on potential project and program concepts based on the findings of field reconnaissance, inventories, existing heritage site assessments, and market potentials analysis. The Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area is not new to heritage tourism. Nor is the area lacking in heritage tourism sites. The area already has a substantial inventory of heritage attractions, especially museums that are being marketed to the public. Heritage tourism is marketed through the existing MHNHA organization. The broader region is marketed and promoted for tourism by the MHNHA, as well as by local and county convention and visitors bureaus.

As such, the primary objective of this section is not to “reinvent the wheel,” but rather to add value to existing and proposed attractions, services, and broader heritage tourism opportunities based on the various assessments completed herein; and, where appropriate, recommend other visitor attractions or services that can fill a niche or gap in the market. Ultimately, the key recommendations of this management plan will relate to project and program implementation, and on the role of the MHNHA in assisting with implementation.

**Conclusions**

The assessment of existing heritage attractions found that most have an excellent record of serving the public by interpreting the heritage of the region and providing an education resource. The region is particularly well-placed in designating historic homes as part of National Register Historic Districts. At the same time, there is a serious need for various levels of enhanced interpretation, design, education and outreach, curatorial services, protection and security, marketing, management, funding, strategic planning, and overall delivery for many of the region’s individual heritage sites and attractions. Several proposed concepts for development in the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area are provided in this section. Some of these concepts have already been identified or discussed in the region. The purpose of this effort is to identify concepts in relation to their market support and economic viability as a basis for implementation strategies contained later in the management plan.