



Welcome to the Public Meeting for the

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR A NEW HEADQUARTERS AND VISITOR'S CENTER

INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service (NPS) proposes to construct a new Headquarters and Visitor's Center (HQ/VC) for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, a 330-mile long non-motorized route for public use that traverses portions of Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

This Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment (FS/EA) will analyze four different sites and assesses the impacts that could result from the construction and operation of a new facility at each location. The EA also analyzes the no action alternative, which is the continued use and operation of the current headquarters at King's Mountain National Park, located in Blacksburg, SC.

Public meetings are now being held in four different locations to solicit input on the proposed sites for the HQ/VC:

November 4, 2009

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park
1651 West Elk Avenue
Elizabethton, TN

November 17, 2009

McDowell Arts Center
50 South Main Street
Marion, NC

November 18, 2009

Old Burke County Courthouse
102 East Union Street
Morganton, NC

November 19, 2009

Stephenson Dining Hall
Limestone College
1115 College Drive
Gaffney, SC



Trail Map

Project Purpose and Need

The HQ/VC would support the expanding regional presence of Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail and increased staff required to maintain and manage the associated stewardship and public support.

The purpose of this action is to provide a HQ/VC facility to accommodate the functions associated with the expanding regional presence of Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail including centralized space for staff offices, meetings, storage, support, and educational and interpretive exhibits, and special events.

In recent years, Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail has dramatically increased its visibility and regional importance. The NPS has collaborated with more than 100 various partner groups and organizations to expand the Trail into nearly 74 miles of marked trail sections available for public use, an increase of 58 miles since 2002. Currently, more than one million people use marked trail sections annually. As a result of this increased regional presence and involvement, as well as growing public support for the trail and its history, additional NPS presence is needed to accomplish operational and administrative tasks and assist partners with various projects and initiatives. However, expanded and regional NPS presence is currently inhibited by the lack of a dedicated and centrally located Overmountain facility.

The existing NPS staff presence is limited to the Trail Superintendent, the only federal employee assigned to Overmountain, and inhabits loaned office space at King's Mountain National Park. The expansion of the Trail itself and the increase in partner relationships necessitates additional staff; however, space is not available at King's Mountain. The inability to accommodate park operations is inhibiting further expansion of the Trail. This facility is located at the southern end of the route, and depending on road and weather conditions, travel time to other sections of the Trail can take up to five hours. By reducing travel time, the NPS could provide a quicker response to on-site needs along the entire route, maximizing the actual time available to perform tasks and duties. A reduction in travel time would also result in lower costs associated with vehicle maintenance and fuel.

The lack of dedicated and adequate space has resulted in the scattered storage of required supplies (such as signs and equipment) and relevant materials (such as official publications, maps, and files) at various partner facilities in multiple locations along its 330-mile length. This lack of centralized storage makes it difficult to inventory and access these materials, creating inefficiencies for park management and operations.

Opportunities to Comment

Please submit your comments by December 18, 2009:
At NPS' Planning, Environment and Public Comment Site:
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/OWI>

OR

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