



# West Virginia's Coal Heritage Trail

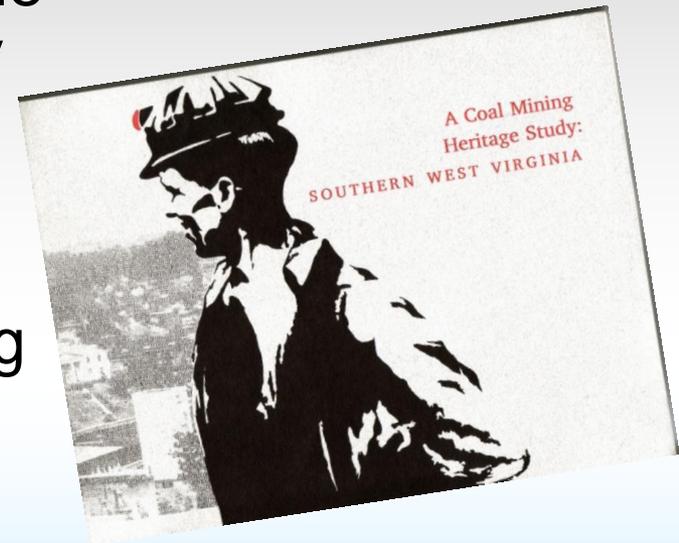
Developing a National Scenic  
Byway



# Coal Heritage Trail

## National Coal Heritage Area

- Efforts to preserve West Virginia's coal heritage began with coal heritage study authorized by PL 100-699 and conducted by the National Park Service in cooperation with the WV Division of Culture and History
- Study was completed in 1992 and recommended the Coal Heritage Area and Coal Heritage Road as strategies for preserving, protecting and promoting West Virginia's rich coal heritage.



# The National Scenic Byway Program

- In 1991 the National Scenic Byways Program was established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, which provided \$74.3 million in discretionary grant funds to eligible projects.
- In 1996 Transportation Secretary Federico Peña designated the first 14 National Scenic Byways and 6 All-American Roads from nominations submitted by local communities, states and federal land agencies.



# Coal Heritage Trail



- Designated in 1998 as a National Scenic Byways in the second round of designations joining roads such as Route 66, the Santa Fe Trail, and Skyline Drive. Original designation was for the portion of the Coal Heritage Trail from Bluefield to Beckley. Designation based on cultural and historic intrinsic qualities.



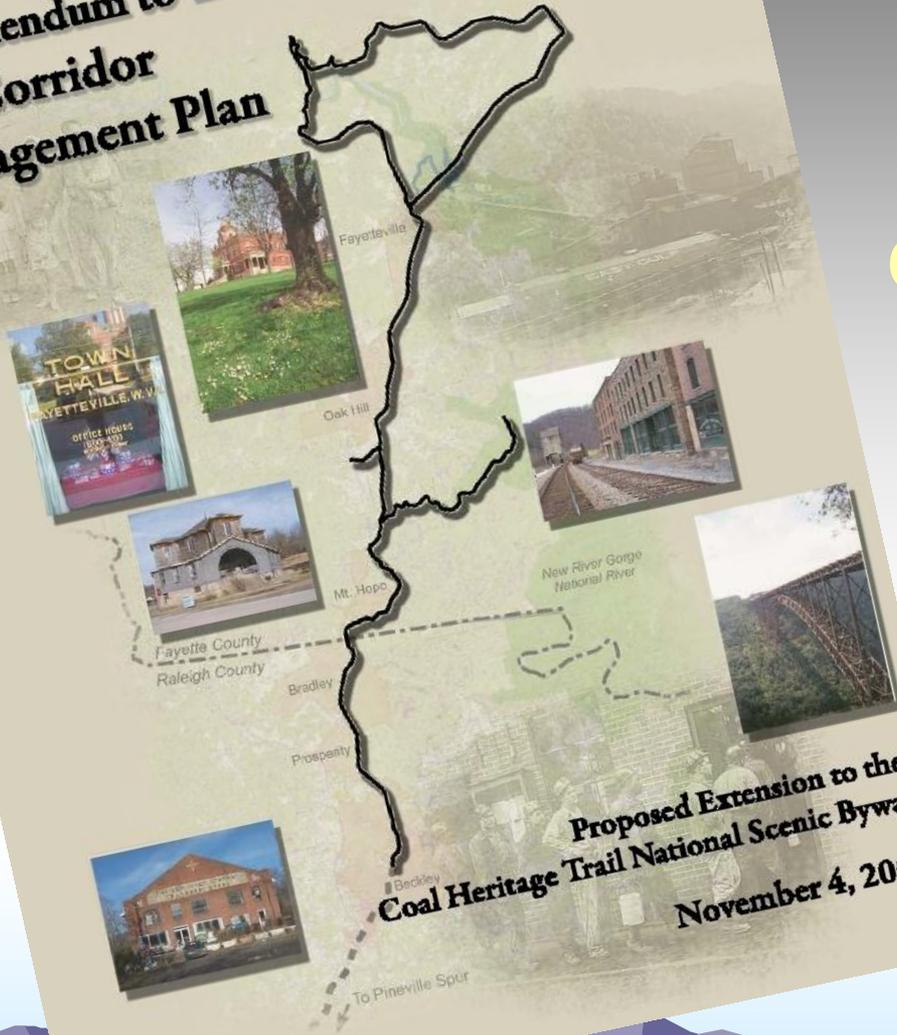
- Traverses the counties of Fayette, Raleigh, Wyoming, McDowell, and Mercer
- Managed by the Coal Heritage Highway Authority



Development  
guided by the  
Corridor  
Management Plan  
completed in 1998.



# Addendum to The Coal Heritage Trail Corridor Management Plan



Proposed Extension to the  
Coal Heritage Trail National Scenic Byway  
November 4, 2008

# Coal Heritage Trail Extension designated as a National Scenic Byway in 2009



**AMERICA'S  
BYWAYS™**



# National Coal Heritage Area

- One of 49 National Heritage Areas. Was created by the National Coal Heritage Area Act of 1996 ( PL 104-333) based on the national significance of the development of the coal industry in southern West Virginia.
- Consists of twelve southern West Virginia counties: Cabell, Wayne, Logan, Mingo, Boone, Wyoming, Summers, Raleigh, Fayette, McDowell, Lincoln, and Mercer and Paint Creek and Cabin Creek in Kanawha County.



# Projects and Programs

- Revitalization of the downtown Bluefield Historic District including Chicory Square.





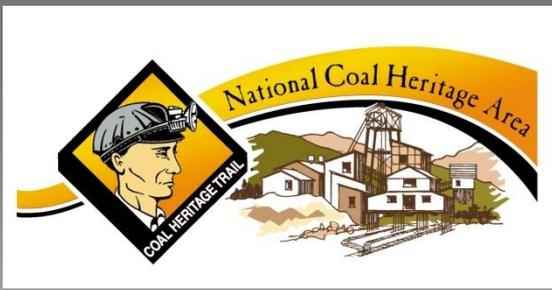
- Reconstruction of the Bramwell Depot in Mercer County. Now operated as the Coal Heritage Trail

Interpretive Center  
by CHHA/NCHA.  
Bramwell is Mercer  
County's largest  
tourist attraction.



- Exterior improvements to War Memorial to African-American Veterans in Kimball. Now home to interpretive exhibit entitled, Soldiers of the Coalfields developed by WVU students.





Restoration of  
Houston  
Company  
Store  
scheduled to  
begin this fall.



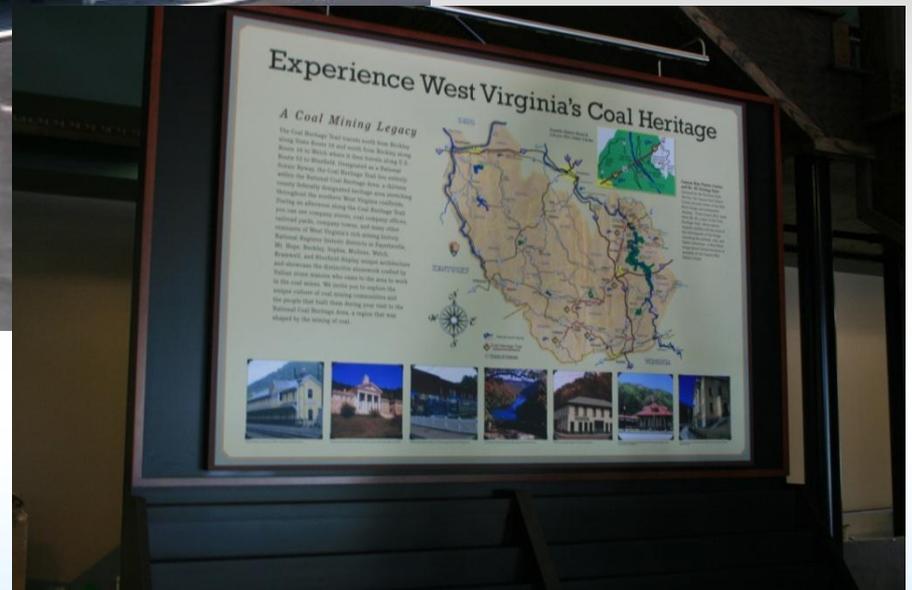


Improvements to  
McArts  
Amphitheatre near  
Welch-home to the  
annual  
presentation of *The  
Terror of the Tug:  
The Story of Sid  
Hatfield.*





# Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine



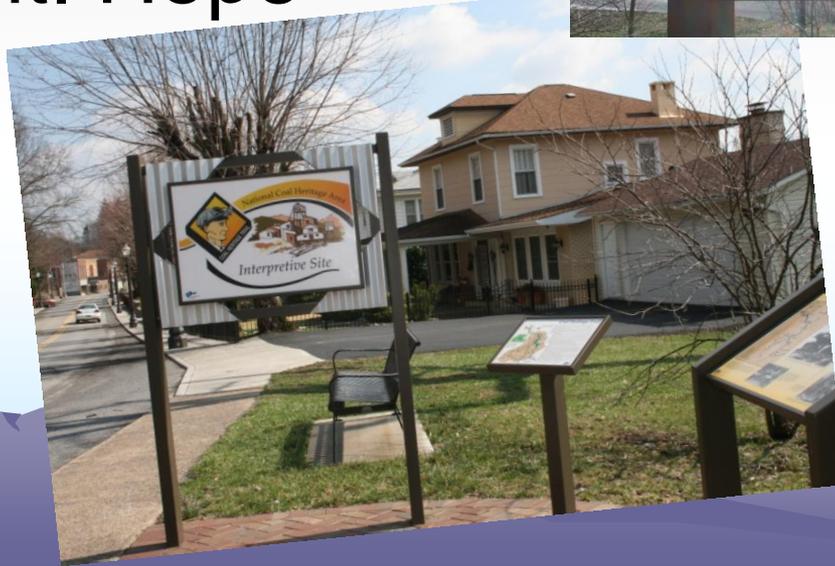
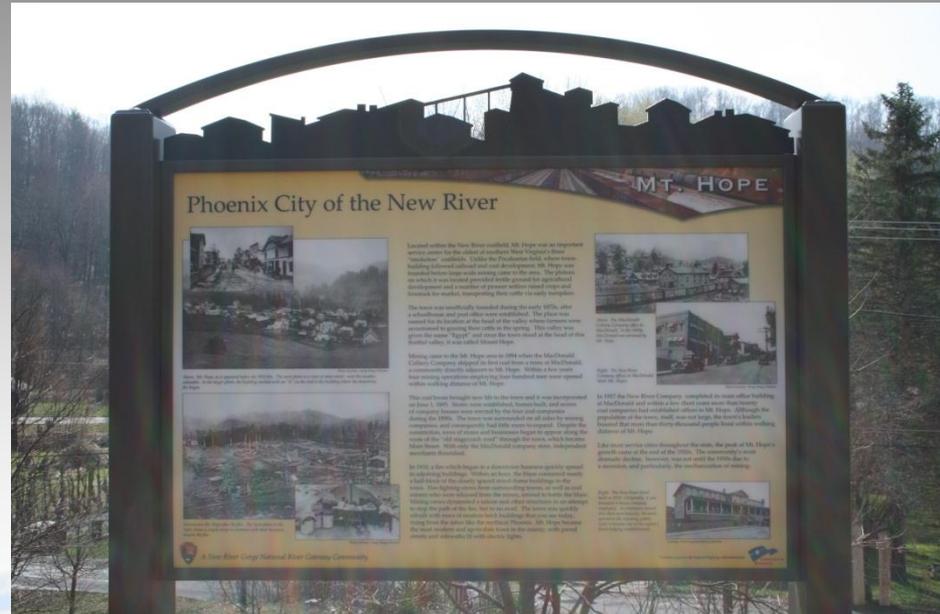


# Restoration of Graney Park in Mt. Hope and installation of interpretive signage.



# Five Interpretive Kiosks

- Bramwell
- Ashland
- Twin Falls
- Sophia
- Mt. Hope



# Additional Interpretive Signage to be Installed

- Coalwood
- Mullens
- War
- Kimball
- Ansted
- Sophia
- Whipple Company Store



# Coal Heritage Discovery Center



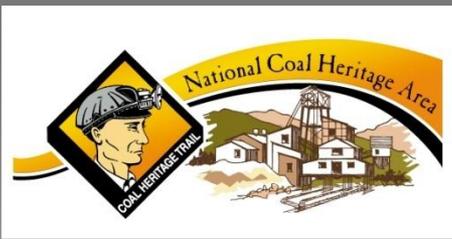
**National Coal Heritage Area**  
**Mt. Hope, West Virginia**  
Proposed New Office Rehabilitation

June 2008  
Michael Gioulis, Historic Preservation Consultant

# Coal Heritage Geocache Trail

- West Virginia's first geocache trail
- Consists of 16 different geocache sites located along three Scenic Byways: The Coal Heritage Trail, Midland Trail, and Paint Creek Scenic Trail.
- Introduces visitors to sites with unique historical significance or natural beauty.
- Patch is presented to all who complete the trail.





# Other Projects

- Restoration and interpretation of Henry Ford mine portal at Twin Branch Recreational Complex in McDowell County
- Interpretive hiking/biking trail from Pocahontas, VA to Bluestone Junction in Mercer County
- Thurmond Train Depot
- Ashland Company Store

- Whipple Company Store
- Ansted Rail Trail
- Interpretive signage at Burning Rock ATV Park
- Interpretive signage along Heartland Corridor
- Stabilization and interpretation of Nuttallburg Mining Complex



# Targeting the Cultural Heritage Tourist: Marketing the Coal Heritage Trail

- In addition to creating new jobs, new business and higher property values, well-managed tourism improves the quality of life and builds community pride.
- 78% of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling
- Cultural and heritage visitors spend, on average, \$994 per trip compared to \$611 for all U.S. travelers.
- Other benefits of cultural heritage tourism are diversification of local economies and preservation of a community's unique character.



# Current Marketing

- America's Byways website ([www.byways.org](http://www.byways.org))
- Development of new tourist focused website
- AAA Magazine feature on Coal Heritage Trail in August Edition
- WV State Travel Guide
- Southern WV Visitor's Guide
- Midland Trail Visitor's Guide
- Advertising in Long Weekends, Blue Ridge Country, American Road



- Projects in development include an audio walking tour of Bramwell and a series of murals based on historic photographs along the Coal Heritage Trail





# Cooperation with Virginia Coal Heritage Trail



- The Coal Heritage Trail and the Virginia Coal Heritage Trail are connected culturally and historically, both telling the story of the development of the coal industry in Appalachia
- Resolution supporting the designation of the Virginia Coal Heritage Trail in April 2008
- Presentation on Coal Heritage Trail to Virginia CHT steering committee
- Reviewed corridor management plan of Virginia Coal Heritage Trail



# Contact Information

- Christy Bailey, Executive Director  
Coal Heritage Highway Authority  
National Coal Heritage Area Authority  
PO Box 15  
Oak Hill, WV  
304-465-3718  
[cbailey@coalheritage.org](mailto:cbailey@coalheritage.org)  
[www.coalheritage.org](http://www.coalheritage.org)