

OCTOBER 2021  
**GROWTH RINGS**  
APPALACHIAN FOREST NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA NEWSLETTER



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Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area promotes and supports a network of partnerships based around our unique Forest Heritage. We work in 16 West Virginia counties and 2 counties in Western Maryland.

To learn more about us and the work we do, including our AmeriCorps program, visit [afnha.org](http://afnha.org) or contact Lukas Ray at [lukas@afnha.org](mailto:lukas@afnha.org) for more information



## Management Planning Update

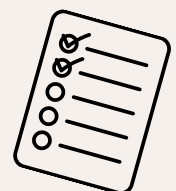
### Upcoming Dates:

- Public Meeting for recommendations from Exchange!
  - Monday, November 1st, 6pm, virtual. **ZOOM LINK!**
  - Tuesday, November 2nd, 3pm, virtual. **ZOOM LINK!**
- Organization Structure and Management Task Group
  - Friday, November 12th, 10am, virtual

AFNHA is planning on hosting two virtual, public meetings on Monday, November 1st at 6pm and Tuesday, November 2nd at 3pm. Please stay tuned for more details on these public meetings! These two meetings will focus on finalizing recommendations for the Management Plan and reviewing feedback from the Planning Exchange from July. The Planning Consultant Team will lead the two meetings. Each will focus on the same agenda, you do not need to attend both!

The Organization Structure and Management task group will meet on Friday, November 12th at 10am. A zoom invitation and agenda will go out to the working group email list.

You can always contact us at **[planning@afnha.org](mailto:planning@afnha.org)** with any questions on upcoming meetings and steps.



# AFNHA Awarded Benedum Grant!



## Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area

AFNHA has been awarded a \$150,000 grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation to expand regional activities promoting the creative economy in the Appalachian Forest region. Growing the Highlands Regional Creative Economy project will work in partnership with Eastern WV Community and Technical College (Eastern) on a 2-year project to expand the Potomac Highlands Creative Economy initiative to grow tourism and community development. AFNHA will work to grow the Potomac Highlands Creative Economy group to include all 18 counties within the National Heritage Area, aiming at expanding partnerships and growing networking opportunities for all communities. The regional project will develop and implement tourism enhancements for sites and attractions, resulting in enhanced tourism products, services, and experiences for customers or visitors. The program is designed to complement existing efforts while exploring new opportunities for supporting tourism and creative economy growth. In addition to regular meetings and periodic training opportunities, the project will sponsor a Tourism Summit in the summer of 2022.

Contact Lukas Ray at [lukas@afnha.org](mailto:lukas@afnha.org) for more information or to get involved!



# We still have OPEN slots for the 2021-2022 AmeriCorps Term!



**AmeriCorps**  
West Virginia



AFNHA AmeriCorps has been awarded a competitive AmeriCorps grant for 34 members for the 2021-2022 term, plus an additional 8 positions just awarded from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. In addition, the ARPA funding will raise member stipends to \$16,000 a year. This gives us a total program of 42 member positions, our largest ever. Because these additional funds were just awarded, we are still recruiting for a number of positions. While the new term starts September 8, we will continue recruiting through the fall until all positions are filled.

## Open Conservation Position

### 2 OPEN positions with the Monongahela National Forest!



- **Heritage Program (1 position):** The primary objectives for the position will be enhancement programs for heritage resources with emphasis on education and outreach.
- **Public Affairs (1 position):** Works to expand social media outreach efforts and conservation education programs Forest-wide. There will be opportunities to learn new skills or hone existing skills.

### 1 OPEN position with AFNHA



- **Recreation Tourism Associate:** This member will have lead on developing a Hiking Challenge or similar package to encourage hiking experiences, as well as developing content and implementing additional outdoor experience or eco-tourism tour products, story maps, or packages.



## 1 OPEN positions Appalachian Headwaters



APPALACHIAN  
HEADWATERS

- **Appalachian Conservation Office** : The position will be assisting our Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation and Partnership for Fish and Wildlife Programs that work with private landowners to conserve habitat for endangered species.

## 1 OPEN position with the Yew Mountain Center



- **Trail and Botanical Sanctuary Coordinator:** The position will to help develop our interpretive trail system, map the resources on the 500-acre nature preserve, and conduct educational outreach about forest ecology and culture.



## Open Heritage and Community Development Positions

### 1 OPEN position with Artspring and Alpine Festival



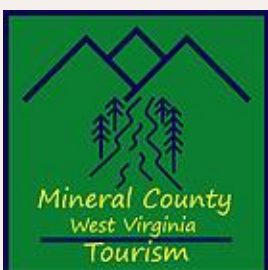
- **Alpine Festival:** The member will provide support in maintaining the growth and integrity of the events, and assisting with the Alpine Festival, WV Governor's Cup Ski Race, Celebrations of the Arts (a FREE outdoor concert by the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra), and the Leaf Peepers Festival.

### 1 OPEN position with Cass Scenic Railroad State Park



- **Archival work:** Member duties will include developing and implementing an interpretive plan for the period/museum house, organizing the period house and displays, improving collections management, exhibit displays, and labeling and logging interpretation for the exhibit.

### 1 OPEN position with Mineral County CVB



- This member will complete historical projects related to 2 sites, gather volunteers for historical organizations, and conduct research for specific sites. Sites include Ashby's Fort Museum, Traveler's Rest, and the Historical Society.



## 1 OPEN Position with the Richwood Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB

- The Richwood Chamber of Commerce and CVB support business and tourism in the Richwood community through festivals, meetings, activities, etc. Richwood is the kind of small town that once you visit you feel all the comforts of home and the town becomes a part of you forever

## 1 OPEN Position shared with the Upshur Historical Society and the Randolph County Museum.



- **RCM:** The member will help with capacity building, communications including newsletters and the website, and will assist summer visitors at the museum, including substantial weekend hours during the season.
- **UCHS:** The major projects will be to work with established digital/electronic systems for collections management cataloging and processing artifacts into PastPerfect. The member will work with UCHS research files and original sources to compile content for the Upshur County Digital Encyclopedia project, and will assist with gathering other data to be included on this digital system.



## 1 OPEN Position shared with 4-H Camp Pioneer and the Kump Education Center



- **4-H Camp Pioneer:** Member will work to preserve historical documents related to 4-H camping, 4-H club work and other programs related to the 4-H program. An emphasis will be put on collecting oral histories, as well as archiving 4-H memorabilia from community members.
- **Kump:** The coordinator will develop opportunities to improve teacher skills in using educational technology, student exploration of environmental conditions, and community awareness of priorities for building a brighter future.



Contact Chrissy Hall, Program Manager at [chrissyh@afnha.org](mailto:chrissyh@afnha.org) with any questions on our AmeriCorps program.

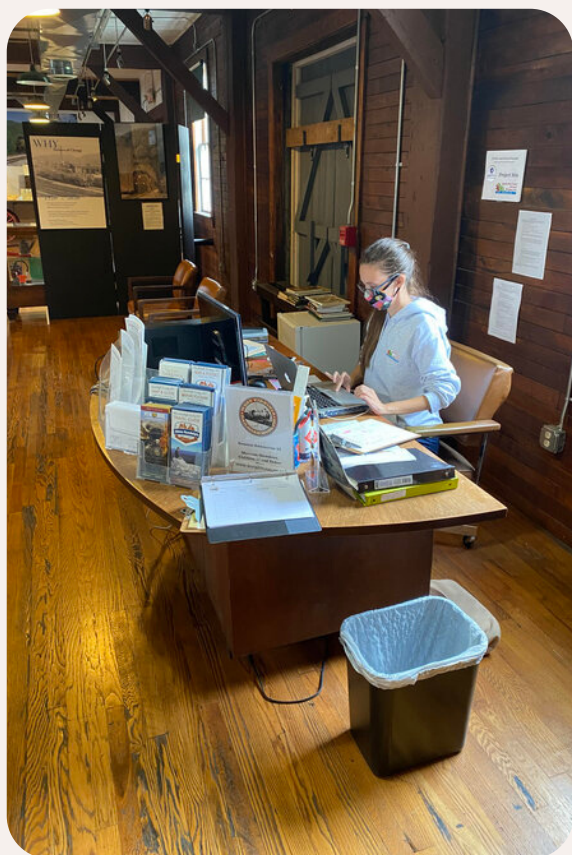


# The Potential of the WV Railroad Museum

By: Emma Pringle



When I began my first service term as an AmeriCorps with AFNHA at the West Virginia Railroad Museum, I didn't know a lot about railroads. And now, starting my second term at the same site, I'm still no expert. But what I have learned is that engaging with this history is creative work because there are so many ways a person can start, and so many places they can end up. For example, last year I tried to research music about the railroad, and now I own a signed copy of a historical railroad cookbook. I've recorded interviews about Elkins' local history. There is railroad art in our museum. I don't consider myself a railfan, but I ended the last term and began the new one asking: is railroad heritage kind of cool?



**[Click HERE](#)** to read the rest of Emma's story on the  
West Virginia Railroad Museum

Follow AFNHA on Facebook and Instagram!

