Components of a Successful National Heritage Area Management Plan

August 2007

How to Use this Notebook

The purpose of this document is to provide information to National Heritage Areas and National Park Service (NPS) staff on the management planning process and the components of a successful management plan.

This document offers a suggested methodology for completing the management planning process. It reviews basic planning steps, defines the components of a successful management plan, and includes various appendices, which contain helpful hints on finding additional sources of information, selecting public involvement techniques; and complying with environmental and other legal requirements.

While this document draws from NPS planning processes and materials, it recommends a modified approach for National Heritage Areas. This document is intended to serve as a guide and reference point for a wide range of audiences that are involved in heritage area planning. From local coordinating entities that are just beginning work to more well-established state heritage areas, from grassroots organizations to seasoned NPS Park planners, the Notebook aims to provide a common groundwork for all those involved in management planning within the heritage areas movement.

The information contained in this document is offered to assist National Heritage Areas with the understanding that each area possesses unique resources and faces unique challenges. There is no "one size fits all" approach, given the vast differences in prior experience, training and development. The planning process is flexible and local coordinating entities, or management entities, may find that altering the sequence or content of planning steps better serves their purposes. Ultimately, each coordinating entity must meet the requirements outlined in the authorizing legislation and develop a plan that works best for their particular heritage area.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Instead of a written executive summary, this notebook includes a presentation that explains the management planning process and the major components of a successful management plan.

The presentation is also included in electronic form for local coordinating entities to share with partners, the public and other interested parties.

Components of a Successful Management Plan: The Basics

Workshop Goals

- Discuss role of management planning
- Provide overview of the Planning Process
- Identify Plan components
- Provide insights from previous heritage area efforts

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The Role of Management Planning

ANHA

- The value of the PROCESS
  - Builds consensus
  - Establishes partner relationships
  - Allows for the identification of a regional vision, priorities and strategies
  - Manages expectations and prioritize projects
  - It commits partners

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Role of Management Planning

ANHA

- The value of the PLAN
  - It provides a roadmap for the future
  - It is a useful education and marketing tool
  - It gives credibility
  - It documents the process
  - It serves as a baseline for evaluation

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The Successful Management Plan

- It is a guide for decision making
- Formalizes partnerships
- Fulfills requirements in authorizing legislation

- *The plan specifies*
  - *actions*
  - *policies*
  - *strategies*
  - *performance goals*
  - *recommendations*

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Plan Components

- Resource inventory
- Foundation vision, mission, and themes
- Comprehensive policies, goals, strategies, and recommendations
- Actions and commitments
- Existing and potential sources of funding
- Implementation and interpretation plans
- Business plan

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The Planning Process

PHASE 1
Planning to Plan

PHASE 2
Vision and Foundation Development

PHASE 3
Making Choices and Drafting the Plan

Approval

Implementation

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Phase 1

3 years

PHASE 1
Planning to Plan

3-6 Months

PRODUCT
Scope of Work

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Phase 1

- Step 0 - Select team members and/or consultant(s)
- Step 0 - Develop Cooperative Agreement with National Park Service
- Step 1 - Review Authorizing Legislation and Feasibility Study
- Step 2 - Develop Scope of Work
- Step 3 - Engage Partners
- Step 4 - Develop Public Involvement Strategy

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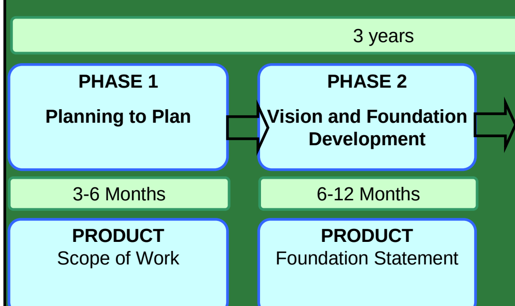
Phase 2



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Phase 2

- Step 5 - Develop/reaffirm Vision and Mission
- Step 6 - Develop/reaffirm Themes
- Step 7 - Develop/reaffirm Goals, Objectives and Strategies
- Step 8 - Gather information to develop alternatives
- Step 9 - Complete Foundation Statement

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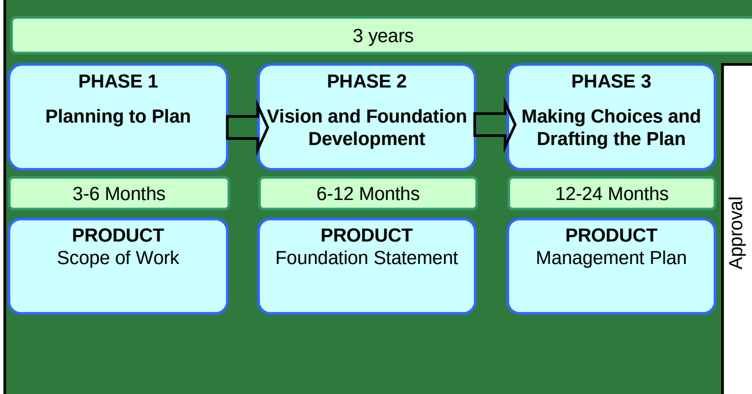
Phase 3



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Phase 3

- Step 10 - Develop and present preliminary options or alternatives
- Step 11 - Choose preferred alternative
- Step 12 - Draft Plan/EA or EIS
- Step 12 & 13 - Allow for Agency and Public review
- Step 13 - Final Plan/EA or EIS

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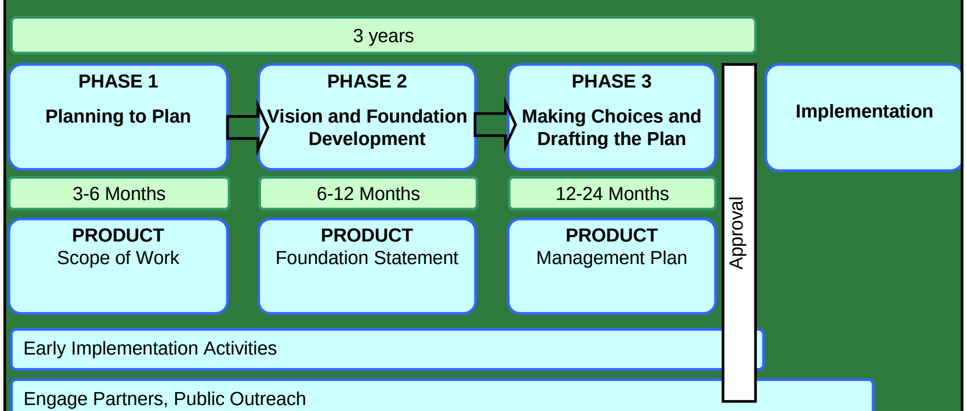
Overview of the Process



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Early Implementation Activities

ANHA

- Show real, action oriented, regional progress
- Engages partners and boosts morale
- Build public awareness and support
- Carry momentum from planning into implementation

Driving Tours	Community Building Activities	Classroom Kits
Signs	Brochures	Radio Segments

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Early Implementation Activities

ANHA

Community Building Activities

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Early Implementation Activities

Driving Tours

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Early Implementation Activities

Signs or Brochures

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Early Implementation Activities

Classroom Kits

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Process Summary

3 years

PHASE 1
Planning to Plan
3-6 Months

TASKS:
Step 0 - Select team members and/or consultant(s)
Step 1 - Begin Foundation Statement
- Review:
  - . Authorizing Legislation
  - . Existing information:
    - feasibility study
    - previous plans
    - other information
Step 2 - Develop Scope of Work:
- Establish ground rules and internal operating procedures
Step 3 and 4 - Develop Partner, Stakeholder and Public Involvement strategy

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:
Key Stakeholders/Partners

NEPA:
Identify Milestones
Select EA or EIS

PRODUCT:
Scope of Work

PHASE 2
Vision and Foundation Development
6-12 Months

TASKS:
Step 5 - Develop/reaffirm Vision and Mission
Step 6 - Develop/reaffirm Themes
Step 7 - Develop/reaffirm Goals, Objectives and Strategies
Step 8 - Gather information to develop alternatives
Step 9 - Complete Foundation Statement

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:
Implement Partner and Public Involvement Strategy

NEPA:
Public Scoping,
Agency consultation,
Notice of Intent (NOI) [EIS only]

PRODUCT:
Foundation Statement

PHASE 3
Making Choices and Drafting the Plan
12-24 Months

TASKS:
Step 10 - Develop and present preliminary options and alternatives
Step 11 - Choose preferred alternative
Step 12 - Draft Plan/EA/EIS
Step 12 and 13 - Allow for Agency and Public review
Step 13 - Final Plan/EA or EIS

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:
Public meetings,
Review of draft plan

NEPA:
EA/EIS,
Public and Agency Review,
FONSI/ROD

PRODUCT:
Management Plan

Plan Adoption and Approval

Implementation

IMPLEMENTATION:
MOVING FORWARD

Early Implementation Activities

Engage Partners, Stakeholder/Public Outreach

Developing Your Planning Team

- Planning team
- Planning committee
- Advisory committees
- Task forces

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Scope of Work

- All action items and deliverables
- Data needs
- Partner and Public Involvement strategies
- Compliance, consultation, and regulatory requirements
- Project management and communication procedures
- Roles and responsibilities
- Planning process schedule and budget
- Team members and consultants

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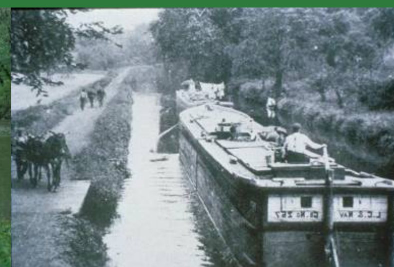

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Public Involvement Strategy

- Identify key partners and public groups
- Identify points throughout process where and how public should be involved
  - Scoping
  - Vision, mission, goal development
  - Alternative development
  - Draft Plan review
- Select specific techniques or outreach methods

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Management Plan Components

- Building Blocks to Success: Components of a Successful Management Plan

-Resource Inventory -Interpretive Themes -Goals, Strategies, and actions -Partner Roles	-Implementation Plan -Interpretive Plan -Business Plan -Performance goals and benchmarks -List of Preparers and Participants

Drafting the Plan

- Related Management Planning Issues
  - Agreements and Assistance
  - Alternatives
  - Other planning documents
  - Reporting and Review

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Questions?

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INTRODUCTION

The Value of Management Planning – What can planning do for you?

Most successful organizations and businesses do some type of planning. Well executed heritage area management planning can deliver several benefits, which are rooted in the fact that heritage areas are a locally driven effort designed to deliver real benefit to communities through celebrating shared cultural, economic and natural heritage:

- **The process serves as a mechanism to build understanding, involvement, and consensus among community members, stakeholders, existing and potential partners, and the general public.**

  In other words, the planning process gives the local coordinating entity, also know as the management entity, ongoing opportunities to communicate and reach out to various constituencies in the heritage area. Even for areas where the local coordinating entity has done previous work, completion of the planning process allows partners and other participants to better understand their role in the heritage area. It provides an opportunity to get people excited about their home and their heritage and turn that momentum into action.

- **Planning provides a structured forum for stakeholders to jointly determine the heritage area's purpose, vision, mission, goals and strategies.**

  It provides a forum for different constituencies to come together. With this collaborative effort, heritage area leadership can best ensure that heritage area actions and activities truly meet the needs of their communities.

> The process of creating a management plan can be as important as the actual document. By reaching out to such a wide variety of constituents, a management entity begins the process of building trust and relationships.

- **The planning process builds partnerships, solicits new ideas and garners additional community support in both the short and long-term.**

  By eliciting public participation and engaging partners early on, the planning process provides an opportunity for the local coordinating entity and other community members to develop relationships and trust. By establishing communication channels and ways of working together towards a common goal, the local coordinating entity can gather a range of ideas and develop a network of partners.

- **The process allows for the identification of regional priorities and the development of a regional vision and strategy**.

  Engaging partners and the public in different regions within the heritage area creates an opportunity for people to think on a larger scale. It allows people to share their concerns and explain how their stories and experiences may fit into a larger, regional context.

- **The planning process focuses partners on the most important feasible goals and actions**.

  After designation, various stakeholders may have specific ideas about how they see the heritage area and may have a range of projects in mind. The collaborative nature of the planning process allows parties to share their ideas, understand each other's point of view and decide together what steps are most important and most feasible for the short, medium and long term.

> "Planning is an imaginative way of conceiving the future vision for a heritage area. It is a process of channelizing citizens toward a consensus of desired conditions and actions to achieve those goals. It is an opportunity for the local coordinating entities and communities at large to choose the future of the heritage area, rather than allow incremental changes and short term pressures to erode nationally significant resources and values. A plan provides a picture of the heritage area we desire to have in the future, and a roadmap to get there." – *Suzy Lead Planner/Wilderness Coordinator National Park Service - Intermountain Region*

- **The process helps manage expectations, prioritize actions and give guidance for actions that the heritage area will ultimately not undertake**.

  While there are countless projects and initiatives that could occur in a heritage area, the local coordinating entity and partners have limited resources. By building consensus on goals, objectives and strategies, the local coordinating entity can keep focused on reaching those aims. The information outlined in the management plan can then help the local coordinating entity justifiably, turn down or modify specific project proposals or ideas that do not contribute to the stated goals of the heritage area. In this way, wide consensus or buy-in on the framework of the management plan makes it easier to make hard decisions in the future.

- **The development of a management plan commits partners**.

  Through the development of common objectives and the documentation of roles and responsibilities, the plan serves as an agreement among parties. It commits partners to the heritage area's goals and purpose, therein encouraging future cooperation on the implementation of actions and strategies.

- **It results in a tangible, useful vision or marketing tool for “selling” the heritage area concept, its goals and specific projects to the public, potential partners and funding sources**.

  The fact that a vision, mission, goals and strategy are clearly articulated shows others that the local coordinating entity and its partners are serious about the work they do and what they plan to accomplish. The information contained in the plan helps the local coordinating entity share its intent and purpose with others and elicit further support. In addition, the specific objectives included in the plan make it easier for organizations to commit funds or target grants.

- **The plan gives credibility to heritage area leadership, specific projects and the concept of the heritage area.**

  It gives credibility because it not only documents the decision making process, but it also demonstrates the existence of well thought out goals, objectives and action plans.

- **The plan documents a transparent process.**

  The plan documents adherence to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). It also illustrates that National Park Service (NPS) requirements, public involvement requirements and other statutory requirements have been met.

- **The management plan serves as a baseline for ongoing and future evaluation.**

  The local coordinating entity can compare planned actions with actual activities to evaluate the success of the heritage area.

Research shows that management planning has contributed to the success of heritage areas. While the process takes time, early planning helps the local coordinating entity and its partners implement their goals and projects.

See *Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future: A Technical Assistance Report to the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission* (http://www.nps.gov/archive/mabi/csi/pdf/BlackstoneReport.pdf) and *Connecting Stories, Landscapes and People: Exploring the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Partnership* (http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/REP/D&LStudyFullRep.pdf) for more information.

The Management Plan – What is it?

The management plan describes comprehensive policies, strategies, and recommendations for telling the story of the region's heritage and encouraging long-term resource protection, enhancement, interpretation, funding, management and development of the National Heritage Area. The plan specifies actions, policies, strategies, performance goals, and recommendations taken to meet the goals of the heritage area.

The plan identifies what the local coordinating entity and partners want to achieve over the initial period of the project (about 10-15 years) – it is an agreement between the parties – including the National Park Service, the public, elected officials, donors and other agencies – on what is going to be achieved over the life of the plan.

- **It is a guide for decision making –** both for the local coordinating entity and partners. It is a useful tool to explain the heritage area's goals and projects to potential partners, supporters, and the public. It conveys what the heritage area is all about and what the larger heritage area community intends to accomplish.

- The management plan also links the local coordinating entity to federal funding and broadly sets forth how federal and other monies are to be spent over time. The management planning process must be completed in three years, as stated in the authorizing legislation, and include National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) processes and documentation in order for the Secretary of the Interior to sign the plan. Without the Secretary's signature, a heritage area cannot receive further federal funding. **(**NEPA and NHPA outline planning and consultation processes which can be integrated into the management planning process and are explained below.)

- In legal terms, the management plan documents how the requirements of the authorizing legislation will be met.

Basic Components of a Management Plan

Throughout the planning process the goal is to build partnerships and understanding, but also to formalize ideas and produce outputs. In general, the management plan includes certain key components, including a vision and mission, comprehensive goals and actions to meet the requirements of the authorizing legislation, an implementation strategy, and a description of the roles and responsibilities of all the parties. The NPS lists eight interim requirements for the contents of a management plan:

1. A description of **comprehensive policies, goals, strategies, and recommendations** for telling the story of the region's heritage and encouraging long-term resource protection, enhancement, interpretation, funding, management, and development of the National Heritage Area;

2. A description of the **actions and commitments** that governments, private organizations, and citizens will take to protect, enhance and interpret the natural, historic, scenic, and cultural resources of the National Heritage Area;

3. Specification of existing and **potential sources of funding** or economic development strategies to protect, enhance, interpret, fund, manage, and develop the National Heritage Area;

4. An **inventory** of the natural, historic, cultural, educational, scenic, and recreational resources of the National Heritage Area related to the stories and themes of the region that should be protected, enhanced, managed or developed;

5. **Recommended policies and strategies** for resource management including, but not limited to, the development of intergovernmental and interagency agreements to protect the National Heritage Area's natural, historical, cultural, educational, scenic, and recreational resources;

6. A **program of implementation** for the management plan including:
   a. Performance goals
   b. Plans for resource protection, enhancement, and interpretation; and
   c. Specific commitments for implementation that have been made by the local coordinating entity or any government, organization, business, or individual;

7. An analysis and recommendation for ways in which local, State, Tribal, and Federal programs may best be coordinated, including the role of the National Park Service and other Federal agencies associated with the National Heritage Area, to further the purposes of this Act; and

8. A **business plan** that –
   a. describes the role, operation, financing and functions of the local coordinating entity and of each of the major activities contained in the management plan; and
   b. provides adequate assurances that the local coordinating entity has the partnerships, and financial and other resources necessary to implement the management plan for the National Heritage Area.

While the feasibility study, the study conducted to determine whether an area is feasible and meets the criteria to be designated as a National Heritage Area by Congress, authorizing legislation or other existing information may already contain a resource inventory or the identification of themes and nationally important stories, the management plan builds upon previous work and compiles all relevant information into one document, capable of capturing the full vision and plan for the heritage area.

> For further information on feasibility studies see: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines.* August 2003. http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FSGUIDE/nhafeasguidelines.pdf

The development of the plan also includes either an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS). These documents evaluate potential environmental impacts that could result from the implementation of management alternatives and also ensure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA compliance is necessary whenever the Federal government undertakes an action that could significantly impact the environment. Since the National Park Service will disperse federal funds and the management plan is adopted and approved by the Secretary of the Interior, the plan and the planning process need to comply with NEPA requirements. NEPA outlines good planning practices which involve public participation, consultation with other relevant agencies, and the consideration of potential affects on the environment. All of these items integrate into the planning process. More specific details are described below and in Appendix A.

> "Invest a lot of time upfront in *people*. Be sure to give stakeholders the time they need to understand the heritage area concept and to participate in the process." – *Deirdre Gibson, Valley Forge National Historic Park, Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor management action plan.*

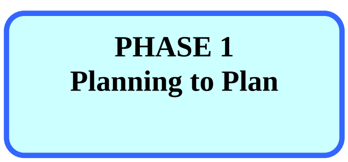
THE MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

The specific details of the planning process depend, in large part, on the breadth and depth of the feasibility study, the number and capacity of organizations within the heritage area, and the level of relationships already present at the time of national heritage area designation. Even if a substantial amount of work has already been done, the planning process is an opportunity to formalize, reaffirm and develop new ideas. This is especially relevant since there may have been a time lag of a few years between the completion of the feasibility study and heritage area designation.

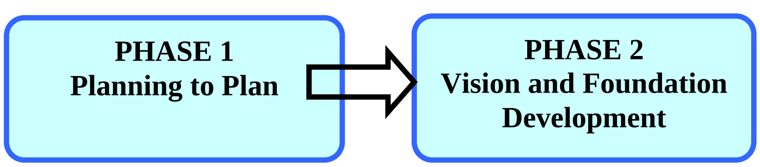
In all cases, it is essential for heritage area coordinating entities to work with their Park Partner or Regional Office to develop the plan while: 1) engaging regional partners, and 2) eliciting public involvement throughout the process.

The management planning process for heritage areas is composed of three main phases (see Figure 1. and see Figure 2 for more detail). However, since planning is an ongoing process, there should be opportunities to revisit earlier ideas whenever new insights are gained. In addition, the local coordinating entity should feel free to reorder the suggested steps or adjust timeframes described in the three phases to best fit the circumstances of each heritage area.

The first phase is where the local coordinating entity and key partners, if appropriate, develop the groundwork for the rest of the planning process. This is accomplished through an evaluation of existing information on the heritage area and a review of the planning and legislative requirements. These steps, in turn, allow for the development of an agenda and action plan for the management planning process – this is "planning to plan."



The second phase involves the development of a vision, mission and goals for the heritage area. This "Vision and Foundation Development" asks partners, stakeholders and the public to take part in the establishment of a firm foundation for future heritage area activities.



The third phase of planning involves: 1) the development and analysis of alternatives for how action will be taken to achieve the vision and goals for the heritage area, and 2) the selection of a preferred alternative – this is “making choices and drafting the plan.”

PHASE 1 : PLANNING TO PLAN

PHASE 1
Planning to Plan

3-6 Months

TASKS:

Step 0 - Select team members and/or consultant(s)

Step 0 – Develop Cooperative Agreement with NPS

Step 1 - Begin Foundation Statement
- Review:
  - . Authorizing Legislation
  - . Existing information:
    - feasibility study
    - previous plans
    - other information

Step 2 - Develop Scope of Work:
- Establish ground rules and internal operating procedures

Step 3 and 4 - Develop Partner, Stakeholder and Public Involvement strategy

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:
Key Stakeholders/Partners

NEPA:
Identify Milestones
Select EA or EIS

PRODUCT:
Scope of Work

There are two essential tasks that must be completed before planning begins or, if necessary, in the early stages of the planning process: 1) identify who will be responsible for leading the management planning effort and 2) develop a working relationship with the National Park Service, usually through a Cooperative Agreement.

Step 0 – Identify Planning Team or Planning Lead

There are different organizational structures or methods that can be used for leading the management planning process. For example, the local coordinating entity may consider the establishment of a small planning team or a planning committee to lead the planning effort. It is always helpful to have a team in place early on so that they are aware of all the processes involved and can drive the planning effort.

The structure of the planning team should reflect the themes and goals of the heritage area. In general, planning teams should include members with expertise in public involvement, natural resources, cultural resources, and business. Including members that focus on each of these areas is helpful in addressing the different needs of the heritage area and in completing environmental analysis of the management alternatives that will be developed in Phase 3.

The Use of Consultants

Most heritage areas find it helpful to hire a consultant(s) to assist with plan development. Consultants offer a range of experiences and can help at different phases of the process. Different consultants may be best suited to assist during different portions of the planning process depending on local coordinating entity needs and the desired output. However, it may be helpful to hire one consultant to manage the planning process and allow them to bring in other experts for various parts of the planning process such as, preparing the scope of work, facilitating public meetings or writing the environmental assessment. Other sources of assistance can be planning firms, non-profit organizations or universities.

If choosing a consultant, evaluate specific needs and work products to select the best fit.

Advisory Committees /Task Forces and Boards of Directors

The local coordinating entity can help shape the direction of the management plan and the heritage area through the people they engage in the planning process. For example, historic preservationists may bring a different perspective and expertise than groups focused on economic development – if the purpose of the heritage area is to promote economic development, it is important to consult with people who work in that field. The local coordinating entity may find it productive to form advisory committees and/or a board of directors with specific expertise that best match heritage area needs during plan development. The ability to consult an advisory committee can help the local coordinating entity develop an effective management plan that best matches heritage area goals.

Step 0 – Develop Cooperative Agreement with National Park Service

Establishing communication and partnership with the Park Service early in the process helps ensure that the local coordinating entity and the Park Partner or NPS Regional Office can work together to develop the plan. Typically, a Cooperative Agreement will be developed between the local coordinating entity and the heritage area's Park Partner or NPS Regional Office. The agreement outlines the working relationship between the parties and outlines responsibilities and expenditures for the upcoming year. If the agreement has not been completed, it can be included as a task for and product of Phase 1 in the planning process.

> For further information and guidance on the completion of cooperative agreements please see *Director's Order #20: Agreements* (http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/DOrder20.html).

Step 1 – Review existing information/Begin Draft Foundation Statement

A foundation statement is a formal declaration of the heritage area's core mission. It provides guidance for the rest of the planning process and later project implementation. It defines the basic foundations of the heritage area – its purpose, vision, mission and goals. In many cases, the foundation statement builds upon and consolidates any previous work done before designation and the contents of the authorizing legislation.

Completion of the foundation statement generally occurs in Phase 2 with partner and stakeholder involvement. However, the initial collection of information for the foundation can occur in Phase 1 as part of the 'planning to plan' process.

Review Legislation and Existing Information

To develop the foundation statement, a review of the authorizing legislation for the heritage area is necessary in order to better understand its purpose and components. Furthermore, it is essential to note any special planning requirements or specific time frames included in the legislation so that they can be incorporated into the scope of work (Step 2) and the planning process. It is also helpful to review the feasibility study, previous plans for the area, and any other existing information in order to identify information that the planning process can build upon.

Identify Information Needs

As a transition to the development of a scope of work for the management planning process, the initial review of information for the foundation statement should also evaluate any information gaps and identify the need for additional information to complete components of the management plan and to complete the appropriate environmental analysis for NEPA and NHPA compliance (either an environmental assessment [EA] or environmental impact statement [EIS]).

Preparation of the foundation statement makes a connection between information that is already articulated in earlier documents, such as the feasibility study and legislation, and information that needs to be included in a the management plan (see steps below).

Components

The breadth and depth of the feasibility study, detail of existing information and previous public and partner involvement will affect the extent to which the majority of the foundation statement can be completed in Phase 1 or in Phase 2. The local coordinating entity should draft as much of the foundation as possible in Phase 1, using information that is contained in the feasibility study, authorizing legislation, previous studies, and other existing information. The portions of the statement regarding the area's vision, mission, and goals should then be completed or modified to reflect feedback from partners and public involvement throughout Phase 2 of the planning process.

After working with partners and the public to define or reaffirm the foundation components (Steps 5-8), the local coordinating entity may produce the foundation statement as a stand alone document (Step 9). At a minimum, its components should ultimately be incorporated into the management plan.

The final foundation statement identifies what the heritage area is about. It includes:

- The vision for the heritage area
- The mission of the heritage area
- The purpose of the heritage area
- The nationally important significance of the heritage area/ resources and values
- Any special mandates or specific planning requirements from the authorizing legislation
- Broad regional goals, and
- Any additional information needs

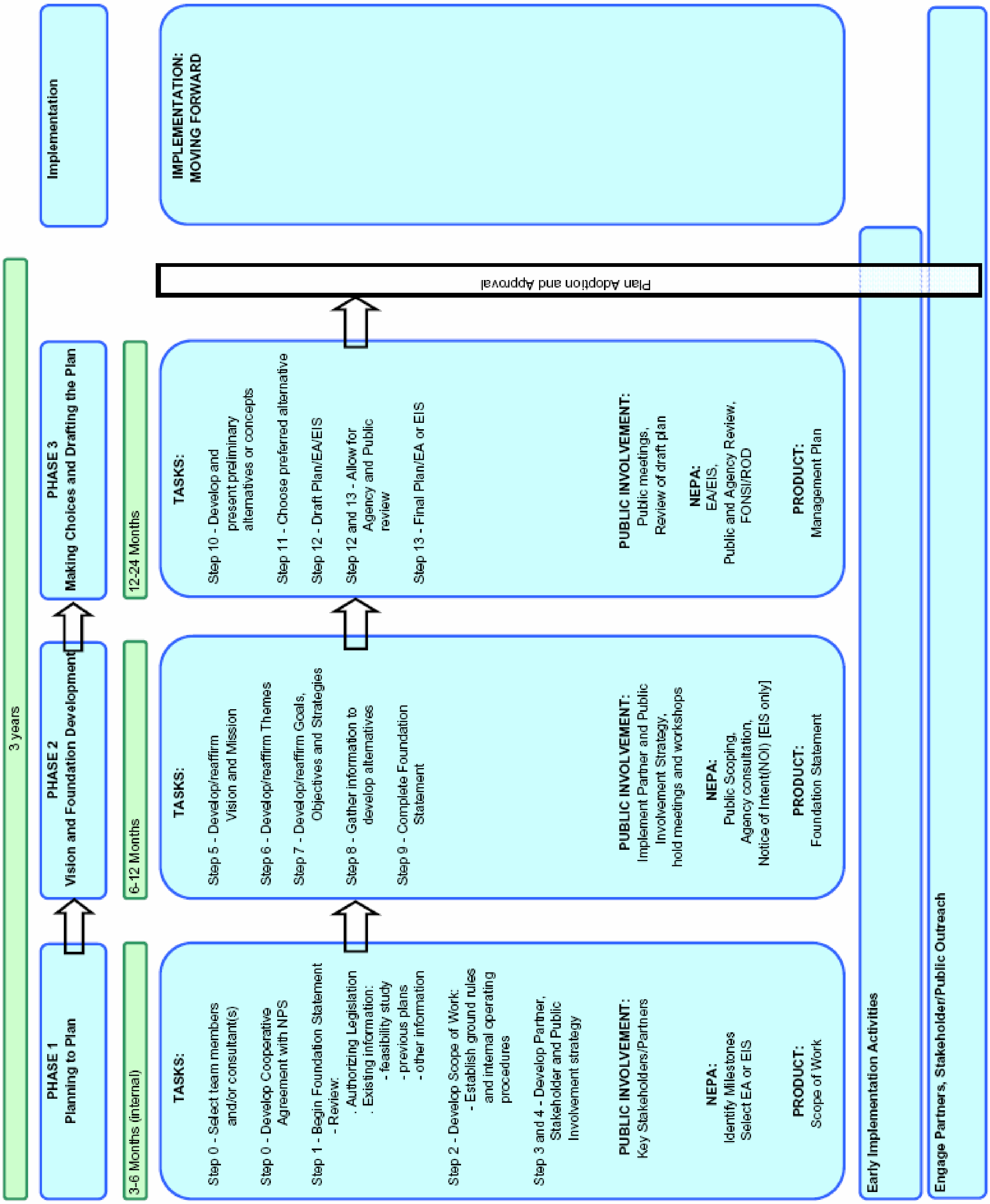
Step 2 – Prepare Scope of Work

Another key step is the generation of a more detailed 'to do' list for the planning process and the incorporation of each item into a realistic schedule. The scope of work is a comprehensive strategy for the planning process. It is developed by the local management entity, or planning team, with cooperation from its Park Partner or NPS Regional Office, input from the entity's Board of Directors, and, in some cases, with key partners.

When developing the schedule it is helpful to account for the fact that the planning process involves some initial steps, many ongoing and administrative tasks and other integrated elements that must be done on an ongoing basis.

Preparation of a scope of work for the management plan, the list and description of all the action items and deliverables, ensures that participants understand what is ahead and what must be done in the three years allotted for management planning. (Figure 1 illustrates the full planning process in more detail.)

Figure 1: Heritage Area Management Planning Process



Components

A scope of work should include the items necessary to complete the actions described throughout this document and to make sure all legislative requirements are met. The budget also should account for all the steps in the planning process, especially making sure the budget provides enough funds to allow for addressing review comments. In general, the scope of work includes:

- **Purpose, scope, and expected results for the planning process**

- **Primary issues to be addressed in the development of the heritage area**
  A description of issues or management planning questions that need to be addressed or answered. It can be helpful to present issues as questions that need to be answered, rather than as statements of fact or opinion (e.g. ‘social trails cause disturbance to historic sites’ versus ‘what type of resource condition and visitor experience is desired and what kinds of facilities would be needed to support that experience?’).

- **Primary products and services**
  A list and description of deliverables to be produced and major services to be rendered, including information on the responsible party; and the funding source. Examples include: briefings to interested parties and associated materials, newsletters, web services, public meeting facilitation services and comment summaries, draft and final management plan/environmental analysis, and final management plan.

- **Data needs**
  A description of the information needs that are critical to the success of the planning process and any special survey or study needs.

- **Public involvement, civic engagement, and partnership strategies**
  A description of appropriate times and methods for public, partner and stakeholder involvement. (A more specific partner and public involvement strategy is discussed below in Steps 3 and 4.)

- **Compliance, consultation and regulatory requirements**
  A list of pertinent outputs and various process and procedural requirements for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and other laws to be incorporated into the planning schedule, as appropriate.

- **Project Management and Communication Procedures**
  A description of the overall management approach, who will lead the planning effort (e.g. the planning team or committee), and how they will communicate with other decision makers, stakeholders and the public.

For example, the planning team or committee may lead internal discussions and then brief the Board of Directors before discussion with key stakeholders and the public.

- **Roles and responsibilities**
  A description of roles and responsibilities for the local coordinating entity, planning team and any consultants in order to complete the planning process along with the production and review of the management plan.

- **Planning process schedule**
  A detailed schedule for the three year process, including major milestones and outputs, ending with final plan approval.

- **Planning process budget and funding sources**
  A budget for the planning process and completion of management plan components, including public involvement meetings, materials, outputs, salaries, and consultant fees.

- **Project team members and consultants**
  A list of team members including area of expertise.

Preparing the Scope of Work

It is important to coordinate with the parties involved and agree upon clear milestones, which meet both specific legal requirements included in the legislation and other applicable laws (like NEPA and NHPA) and standards for NPS review. For example, process delays can occur when parties who must be consulted by the National Park Service are neither included in the scheduling process nor informed of the process deadlines. This can even include parties who are not necessarily involved with the heritage area.

Compliance Considerations

Historically, management plans for National Heritage Areas have included environmental assessments (EAs). Depending on local needs, an EA may be most appropriate for the nature of the management plan. However, during implementation, specific actions or projects may require further analysis and an EA or EIS can be prepared for those cases. The local coordinating entity should consult with their Park Partner or Regional Office to determine the need for an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS). Also see Appendix B for criteria to consider when deciding if an EA or EIS is appropriate.

Along similar lines, the local coordinating entity needs to evaluate the impact of management alternatives on historic and cultural resources to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Although the management plan may generally benefit historic and cultural resources, specific projects may be subject to further review and consultation requirements. The local coordinating entity should consult with its Park Partner or NPS Regional Office and the State Historic Preservation Officer and or Tribal Preservation Officer to determine appropriate process steps.

Questions to consider when deciding to prepare an EA or EIS:

Are these special resources affected?
– Public safety or health.
– Wetlands, floodplains, or ecologically sensitive areas.
– Important scientific, cultural, or historic resources.
– Threatened or endangered species or their habitat.
Is the proposal
– Likely to be highly controversial or its impact analysis highly debated?
– Likely to involve highly uncertain impacts or unique or unknown risks?
– Likely to pave the way for future actions?
– Part of a larger proposal?
– Likely to violate any law or requirement imposed to protect the environment?
If so, consider an EIS rather than an EA.

See *Handbook for Environmental Analysis: [Director's Order]DO-12 Handbook.* (http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/RM12.pdf) for more guidance on whether to prepare an EA or EIS, along with other details on NEPA compliance.

The environmental screening form included in the *Handbook for Environmental Analysis: DO-12 Handbook* could be adapted help determine the need for an EA or EIS.

Scope of Work Checklist

✓	
	Coordinate with Park Partner or NPS Regional Office throughout plan development to facilitate review and develop a better plan.
	Account for necessary review time for plan components, drafts and final versions by the Park Partner or NPS Regional Office, key stakeholders, partners, and the public.
	Integrate milestones for other processes. For example, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).
	Incorporate partner engagement and public involvement strategy milestones.
	Consider early implementation activities to build momentum and support during the planning process.

Step 3 – Engage Partners

Cooperation between partners is the backbone of any heritage area endeavor. Partners work actively with the local coordinating entity to implement activities and it is the partnership network that generates the capacity to undertake new projects and initiatives. While key partner relationships may exist before designation, the management planning process allows for the development of more dynamic and robust partner relationships.

At various points during the planning process, the local coordinating entity may wish to work with different partners, drawing upon the strengths and experiences of a range of organizations and individuals. This, in turn, allows for the development of strong relationships and solicits fresh and useful feedback. As new partners emerge, however, it is important for the local coordinating entity to remain flexible, always finding innovate ways to utilize a particular's partner particular expertise or mode of assistance.

It may be helpful to work with a smaller group of key stakeholders or partners to develop the scope of work, foundation, and elements of the public implementation strategy. Then ideas and concepts can roll out to wider partners and the public in general.

The Private Sector

The private sector can be a valuable resource for heritage areas. Often, private sector partners, from small businesses to the corporate level, bring different expertise, networks and resources. Kurt Zwikl, Executive Director of the Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area, recommends identifying who might support a river trail or other project as well as who might be able to leverage funds. Banks, in particular, look to sponsor activities and can also give advice on grant making or lending opportunities. This added diversity can contribute to the range of interests and resources available to implement heritage area activities.

Regardless of the level of the local coordinating entity's relationship with partners, it is still important to utilize the management planning process for several purposes.

- **Identify key partners and stakeholders** and establish or re-establish communication as appropriate.

- **Identify roles for each partner, stakeholder or group** in the heritage area implementation and development process through communication and evaluation of each partner's capacity.

- **Convey realistic views and expectations** during the planning process. The management planning process is an opportunity to manage expectations and foster a pragmatic approach.

- **Gather tangible evidence of partnership commitments** and stakeholder support.

- **Evaluate existing and needed relationships** to determine the current status of partnerships. Assess the need for other relationships and determine if and how developing relationships can benefit the community or region as a whole. It may be beneficial to formalize partnerships through cooperative agreements, letters of agreement, or other formal mechanisms.

- **Develop an involvement strategy** to maintain communication and consult with partners throughout the management planning process. Although the local coordinating entity guides the management planning process and implementation of the plan in the heritage area, successful work will only occur with diverse and robust partner support. It is important to build buy-in and trust through the planning process.

Step 4 – Develop Public Involvement Strategy

Because national heritage areas are a vehicle for locally initiated protection and interpretation of natural, cultural, scenic and historic resources much of the important work is the organizing that goes on at the beginning of the process to build consensus and momentum in the region.

While public involvement during the feasibility study may have focused on promotion of the heritage area concept and assessment of public support, successful management plans include community member participation as a way to build consensus and refine the vision, mission and goals. For management planning, public involvement can also help the local coordinating entity develop possible alternatives, consider the impacts of proposed actions, and develop the final management plan. Providing an opportunity for the articulation of local visions and for the expression of how heritage area activities may best be implemented gives the local community an opportunity to not only better understand the role of the heritage area, but also to contribute to management planning decisions. In some cases, public involvement efforts can provide channels for people to become active partners.

> We had originally formulated three alternatives with different options for 'points of visitor contact': 1) a single visitor center, 2) two gateway centers at the north and south end of the valley, and 3) a visitor center at each of the ten battle fields. The tourism community and the public suggested that we create groupings of battlefields and Civil War sites and provide an "orientation center" in each grouping. From this grew the "cluster concept" that formed the basic operating structure of the management plan and how we not only think about visitor centers, but also how we work at the community level to form partnerships with the Battlefields Foundation and have the partners work with each other.– *Howard Kittell, Executive Director, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Heritage Area*

Development of an effective public involvement strategy involves several key steps:

- **Identify the purpose of the public involvement strategy**

- **Identify and describe the issues or concerns surrounding the management plan, the management planning process and the heritage area in general**.
  For example, there may be advocates for a centralized visitor center focusing on interpretation while some community groups focus on recreation and dispersed visitor orientation nodes.

- **Identify the individuals, groups, and stakeholders that need to be included in the planning process**.

  Identify who should be at the table based on the steps above and previous organizing experience for the feasibility study or other work before national designation. Note who should be consulted specifically, and in general. Example parties are listed below.

Who Should be at the Table?	
• The congressional delegations that are contiguous to or interested in heritage area	• Private sector partners, including landowners, special interests, industry and agriculture groups, tourism councils, friends groups, Chambers of Commerce
• Local, state, and regional elected officials from this same geographic area, as well as some of the public policy organizations that provide consultation to these officials	• Traditionally associated groups
• Government partners, including city, township, parish, county, region, state, commonwealth, federal and tribal governments	• Tourism, business, and commerce-related groups
• Park resource user groups	• Civic groups interested in public policy and environment-related issues
• Environmental and conservation groups	• Colleges and universities in the regional area of interest
• Civic leaders	• Other state, regional, and federal governmental organizations, as well as tribal governments
• Business Leaders	• Local and state NGOs and community organizations
• General Public	• Economic Development Councils

- **Identify any special circumstances that may affect the public involvement strategy**

  Note any highly controversial issues, high levels of interest from specific groups, or interest from politicians, for example.

- **Identify points throughout planning process where and how the public should be involved**

  It may be appropriate to consult different groups or entities at different times and at different frequencies depending on their familiarity with the area and what information you hope to gain from them. For example, specific stakeholders may be consulted in the early stages to identify their roles and responsibilities or the public may be consulted several times for input on broad goals early on and again for alternative selection later in the process. See Appendix C for a sample public involvement strategy planning worksheet.

- **Select specific techniques or outreach methods for each applicable group or phase**

Techniques

There are a number of techniques that can be used at specific points in a public involvement strategy and throughout the planning process. Some options to consider are:

- **Open board meetings**
  Open board meetings increase the transparency of the planning process. They also create a venue for interested citizens and groups to learn more about decisions and contribute ideas.

- **Workshops**
  Workshops can be designed in multiple ways to meet a variety of purposes, such as visioning workshops and alternative development workshops.

- **Interviews**
  Stakeholder or partner interviews can help assess the potential of the heritage area, interest in the heritage area effort, existing success stories and possible pitfalls, and the depth and range of heritage area resources.

- **Option presentations**
  Specific meetings can be organized to present options or draft decisions and gather feedback.

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program at the National Park Service has a toolbox of different techniques for public involvement, which can be found at http://www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoolbox/ . Appendix D includes a list of popular tools and the templates included in Appendix C can be used as a conceptual guide to develop an effective public involvement strategy for the duration of the planning process and beyond. Also see Appendix E for additional sources of information.

Planning for the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor included over 100 interviews. A diverse collection of organizations and interest groups were asked about their plans, how they saw themselves as part of the heritage area initiative, what they might need in bringing the area's stories to life, and how they might become strong partners. These interviews helped to assess the potential of the heritage area, interest in the heritage area effort, existing success stories and possible pitfalls, and the depth and range of heritage area resources.

- **Educational and interpretive programs or activities**
  A wide variety of interactive activities focused on different heritage are themes can foster interest and elicit input in a more creative and proactive manner.

- **Newsletters**
  Newsletters can reach a wide audience and keep the public informed about key ideas and decisions throughout the process.

- **Press releases, newspaper supplements and other media coverage**
  Proactive efforts to issue press releases or get media coverage can keep public audiences up to date about heritage area efforts and can inform interested parties how to become involved.

The production of special newspaper supplements in six Sunday papers reached 360,000 homes during the planning for the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. Many people wrote and asked for information or how to become more involved.

- **Website**
  Websites are a useful method to make information available if they can be advertised and designed well.

- **Podcasts**
  Different technologies are available to spread information about the heritage area and the planning effort.

- **Presentations**
  A prepared presentation or 'road show' can be used to inform various groups and key individuals about the work being done in the heritage area and the decisions that need to be made. Depending on resources and the need to gather more support, the local coordinating entity or planning team can present to as many groups and organizations as possible.

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor

Notable components of the public involvement strategy include:

- A video and materials explaining the heritage area concept and inviting active participation
- A special newspaper supplement for six Sunday papers
- A series of over 100 interviews
- Advisory committees for land use and planning, interpretation and historic and cultural resources, and economic development and tourism
- Periodic workshops with advisory committees
- Three rounds of interactive public workshops during plan preparation
- Newsletters
- A special issue of the newsletter to present the alternatives
- A fourth and final round of public workshops to comment on the draft plan

Early Implementation Activities

Because planning takes time the local coordinating entity and planning team can consider the implementation of small projects or activities to help build interest and public support throughout the planning process.

Several heritage areas have found that this technique helps to build partners and show real, action oriented and regional progress. Small successes such as developing driving tours or signage through an area keeps partners engaged and boosts morale. When activities are regionally focused, they can build relationships and confidence that the heritage area will address the needs of the region as a whole. They can also build awareness and generate community support of the heritage area concept. For maximum benefit, remember to publicize actions and activities and use the opportunity to disseminate information to the larger public about the heritage area and the planning efforts. However, early implementation activities must be chosen so that they do not trigger the need for NEPA compliance.

Some ideas include:

- Community building activities
- Signs
- Brochures
- Driving tours
- Classroom kits
- Radio Segments

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District developed an Demonstration Projects Program to complete:

- Interpretative signage at a number of locations
- Tourism brochures
- Fencing at two sites
- Restoration projects at several historic structures on a battlefields
- A landowner's guide to preserving historic land in the Shenandoah Valley
- Landscape improvements at several historic sites on battlefields
- Repair of an "electric map" depicting the battles in the Shenandoah Valley

PHASE 2 : VISION AND FOUNDATION DEVELOPMENT

PHASE 2
Vision and Foundation Development

6-12 Months

TASKS:

Step 5 - Develop/reaffirm Vision and Mission

Step 6 - Develop/reaffirm Themes

Step 7 - Develop/reaffirm Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Step 8 - Gather information to develop alternatives

Step 9 - Complete Foundation Statement

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:
Implement Partner and Public Involvement Strategy, hold meetings and workshops

NEPA:
Public Scoping,
Agency consultation,
Notice of Intent (NOI) [EIS only]

PRODUCT:
Foundation Statement

Step 5 – Develop the Vision and Mission

Now that 'planning to plan' is complete, the local coordinating entity is ready to start the active process of planning. In order to ground the planning process and focus future discussions, it is important to develop a complete vision and mission statement with the full participation of partners, the public and other stakeholders. The vision and mission are key components of the foundation statement and guide further discussion and decisions. Even if the local coordinating entity or key stakeholders already have an idea of the vision – based on the feasibility study or other experiences – these same ideas may not be evident to or even match the ideas of others in the community. The involvement of additional parties leads to both the development of alternative ideas and to the building of consensus for the key foundations of the heritage area.

There are different approaches to vision and mission development. Depending on the level of involvement from various partners and the public, Phase 2 may serve as a venue to reaffirm or refine a vision developed in Phase 1 or earlier. On the other hand, for areas with a broad or less defined vision, it may be necessary to actively engage the public, partners and stakeholders to develop and refine a new vision and mission. In either case, public and partner support for the vision and mission is essential. The level and style of public and partner involvement also depends on the extent to which the vision or mission is outlined in the authorizing legislation.

Vision

The vision articulates the community's concept of what they want the heritage area to be in the future. It describes the kind of place the heritage area should be.

Mission

The mission articulates how the local coordinating entity and other partners in the heritage area intend to make the vision a reality. It describes the heritage area's purpose.

Techniques

Depending on the strength of existing relationships with partners and stakeholders, some techniques may be more helpful than others to elicit input and garner support for a vision and mission for the heritage area.

Some management entities may work with key stakeholders to develop a vision and mission statement, which can then be presented to the public and other partners for their feedback and approval. The local coordinating entity may ask, "Does this vision and mission work for you? Does it match your ideas?"

Other management entities may wish to present foundation information to partners and the public in workshops and directly elicit input about their own ideas for the heritage area. The local coordinating entity can ask questions to gather specific feedback and can then compile input into a written statement. For example, "How do you see the future of the heritage area? What is the purpose of the heritage area to you?"

Workshops can encourage participants to brainstorm methods to meet the requirements outlined in the authorizing legislation. Other styles include a technique where participants are broken into smaller groups to work together to develop ideas. After this breakout session, the larger workshop group reconvenes to compare each subgroup's work and decide which concepts to move forward.

Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area

Vision:
"We envision a Schuylkill River region fully revitalized and restored: A region whose citizens understand, value and are fully committed to preserving and sustaining their cultural heritage and natural environment for future generations."

Mission:
"To conserve, interpret and develop the historical, cultural, natural and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley."

Step 6 – Interpretive Themes

Themes are the organizing framework within which interpretation of related natural and cultural resources is conducted. They are the key ideas and concepts to be communicated to the public about the heritage area. The review of interpretive themes can help partners and the public better understand the heritage area's purpose. While the feasibility study may have included the identification of potential themes, these early concepts may need further development as the public input process progresses. A review of interpretive themes also gives the public an opportunity to share ideas and offer suggestions about the stories they wish to tell. For this reason they are included as part of the foundation statement.

Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area

Interpretive themes may address different resource areas and components of history. For example, Yuma Crossing identified the following interpretive themes:

- The River and the Land
- Transportation
- Supply and Defense
- Life in Yuma
- Cultural Crossroads

Which crosscut the following periods:

- Prehistoric and Early History : In the Beginning
- Prior to 1849 : Exploration
- 1849 to 1876 : Settlement and the Riverboats
- 1877 to 1909 : The Railroad and Commercial Enterprise
- 1910 to Present : Return to the River

Step 7 – Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Once a vision and mission have been developed, the local coordinating entity can work to identify broad goals, objectives, and strategies for the heritage area. Goals can often be developed for different resource or activity areas, such as resource conservation and enhancement, education and interpretation, recreation, community revitalization, tourism, or other categories. This breakdown can help management entities focus attention on the different components that make up the heritage area and identify desired conditions for each.

Although it may be tempting to focus on specific actions, especially for participants familiar with a particular project, the development of general overarching goals for the heritage area will form a strong framework for specific projects to develop later.

Once desired conditions are agreed upon, the local coordinating entity can identify strategies and actions to create those conditions.

Techniques

While formulating goals, objectives and strategies during the planning process it is helpful to ask questions. For example:

- How are we going to achieve our vision?
- What are the components or building blocks that would support that vision?
- Are there any specific themes or resource areas we want to emphasize?
- What broad actions or approaches benefit those components or building blocks?

For a specific resource area or theme, identify goals for that resource and then determine what approaches may be appropriate and desired. For example, would preservation efforts or adaptive reuse meet our goals for cultural resources?

Over all, the local coordinating entity can explore goals for a range of topics that cover different resources (natural resources, physical resources, and cultural resources), partnerships, public access, visitor experience, economic development, and tourism depending on area needs and priorities. In addition, goals can address how to build and maintain a sense of community, how resources relate to each other, and the desired level of interaction between resources.

Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area

The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area identified the following goals:

- Identify and conserve Yuma’s cultural, historical and geologic resources, recognizing that conservation is part of community revitalization.
- Assist partners to develop a diversity of interpretive opportunities, venues and heritage sites while distinguishing between different audiences and establishing different levels of heritage experience.
- Interpret Yuma’s heritage resources to emphasize their continuing role in a living, evolving community.
- Support and build upon existing interpretive efforts, creating dynamic partnerships with federal, state and local entities.
- Attract visitors, investment and economic opportunity to Yuma to improve quality of life for its residents.
- Create a gateway to Yuma to welcome and orient visitors and to provide an overview of the area’s significance.

Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area

Schuylkill River National Heritage Area identified goals and strategies for five key areas:

- Resources Conservation and Enhancement
- Education and Interpretation
- Recreation
- Community Revitalization
- Heritage Tourism

Goals	**Strategies**
Resource Conservation and Enhancement	
Conserve and enhance the Schuylkill River Valley’s significant historical, cultural, and natural resources.	- Preserve and enhance historical and cultural resources. - Preserve and restore the Schuylkill River Valley’s significant environmental resources, particularly those vital to he health of the River and its tributaries. - Support sustainable land use, open space, and greenway planning and preservation related to the Schuylkill River Valley’s cultural and natural landscapes.

Education and Interpretation	
Foster awareness and appreciation of the Schuylkill River Valley's heritage resources and the stories they have to tell.	- Establish a consistent, area-wide framework for the interpretation of the Schuylkill River Valley's heritage resources. - Connect heritage sites and resources through interpretive themes and products. - Support educational and research initiatives that teach the public about the Schuylkill River Valley's historical, cultural, and natural heritage.
Recreation	
Increase outdoor recreational opportunities related o the Schuylkill River Valley's natural and cultural heritage.	- Complete development of the Schuylkill River trail system, including connections to tributary trails. - Enhance existing and provide new outdoor recreational opportunities related to the Schuylkill River Valley's natural and cultural heritage.
Community Revitalization	
Strengthen the Schuylkill River Valley's historic communities through sustainable development related to heritage resources.	- Conserve and use heritage resources o foster sustainable economic activity in traditional centers. - Promote entrepreneurial activity and small business development related to the Schuylkill River Valley's natural and cultural heritage.
Heritage Tourism	
Increase heritage tourism and associated economic benefits for the Schuylkill River Valley region and its communities.	- Use a distinct visual image and identity in the design of heritage area products such as informational materials, signage, and interpretive exhibits. - Develop physical and programmatic linkages between heritage area designations to assist visitors in experiences the Schuylkill River Valley's diverse resources. - Promote awareness of and increase visitation in the Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area through public relations and marketing programs.

Step 8 – Gather Information to Develop Alternatives

Through Phase 2 the local coordinating entity can find different ways to work with partners and the public to elicit input and identify any issues or concerns with the development of the heritage area, its activities, and their impact on the environment. While the purpose of public and partner involvement is to create or reaffirm the vision, mission, goals and interpretive themes for the foundation statement (Steps 5 – 8), it is also needed to gather information that can be used to develop options or alternative choices for how to move forward and implement actions in the heritage area.

Gathering information from partners and the public is part of larger efforts to promote and encourage their involvement (Steps 3 and 4). However, the local coordinating entity may choose special techniques or otherwise focus on gathering information from partners and the public related to specific components of, or choices for, the management plan.

> NEPA uses the term 'scoping' to refer to public involvement required as part of the environmental analysis process. A good public involvement strategy will meet NEPA scoping requirements. The local coordinating entity should work with its Park Partner or NPS Regional Office to make sure all formal public involvement steps are completed.

Step 9 – Complete Foundation Statement

The foundation statement, as described in Step 1, is a work in progress through Phase 1 and Phase 2. The rate at which the statement is completed depends on several area specific conditions, including the state of relationships with partners and the form of the public involvement strategy. However, all heritage areas should aim to have a complete foundation statement by the end of Phase 2. Again, the statement formalizes and summarizes the work that occurs in Phase 2 and encapsulates the foundation of the heritage area and describes its purpose, vision, mission and goals.

Although there are many decisions and options for the implementation of specific projects, the foundation should remain constant and ground planning efforts. All decisions and options should be consistent with the foundation over time. It is a reference point from which all ideas, activities and programs are measured and evaluated; if these ideas and proposed activities to not relate to the foundation statement, they are not appropriate for further consideration as part of heritage area activities.

> The foundation statement includes:
> - The vision for the heritage area
> - The mission of the heritage area
> - The purpose of the heritage area
> - The nationally important significance of the heritage area
> - Any special mandates or specific requirements from the authorizing legislation
> - Broad regional goals

PHASE 3: MAKING CHOICES AND DRAFT PLAN

PHASE 3
Making Choices and Drafting the Plan

12-24 Months

TASKS:

Step 10 - Develop and present preliminary alternatives or concepts

Step 11 - Choose preferred alternative

Step 12 - Draft Plan/EA/EIS

Step 12 and 13 - Allow for Agency and Public review

Step 13 - Final Plan/EA or EIS

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:
Public meetings,
Review of draft plan

NEPA:
EA/EIS,
Public and Agency Review,
FONSI/ROD

PRODUCT:
Management Plan

Step 10 – Develop Alternatives

By using data collected through information gathering sessions, scoping and other, interaction with partners and the public, various options and alternative choices can be developed to reflect different ways the local coordinating entity and partners can implement actions. Alternatives are different ways to fulfill the mission and reach the goals, and other legislative requirements outlined in the foundation. The development of alternatives is the development of options for "the choices that need to be made" in order to meet the requirements of the authorizing legislation. They articulate different futures.

The alternatives should be consistent with the heritage area's purpose and significance, focus on its fundamental vision, mission, goals, themes and other important resources and values, reflect the range of interests in the area, and fully consider the potential for environmental impacts.

Even if the local coordinating entity has an idea of what they want and how to get there, heritage areas have found that it is still important to have workshops or other mechanisms to elicit partner and public comment. This allows for a full exploration of alternatives and considerations based on the foundation statement, more fully developed inventories and public input. In addition, NEPA requires the consideration and analysis of reasonable alternatives, including a no-action alternative, and the identification of an environmentally preferred alternative.

Techniques

Alternatives can reflect different resource focuses; different community focuses; different thematic plans; differences in implementation strategies, scale, partnering, resources, phasing, or their combinations; or other ways to represent different priorities or emphasize different interpretive themes.

Each alternative option or alternative strategy might include different options for the major elements of a management approach:

- Variations of an overall management concept
- Options for which potential resource conditions and visitor experience opportunities should be emphasized in particular areas of the heritage area, and
- Different implementation approaches that are needed to move from the existing to the desired conditions

> See Appendix E and *Park Planning Program Sourcebook: General Management Planning* (http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/GMPSourcebook.pdf) for more information on developing alternatives.

To develop alternatives with public and partner input, the local coordinating entity may begin the formation of alternative options based on previous feedback and scoping. Charettes, or other interactive sessions, can provide an opportunity for partners to contribute ideas and further refine the range of alternatives with the local coordinating entity. Utilizing additional ideas and responses to the draft alternatives, the local coordinating entity can finalize the options and may consider publicly releasing the final range of alternatives before beginning environmental analysis. For example, the local coordinating entity could develop a newsletter that describes the different alternatives and explains that after environmental analysis, a final decision will be made.

Example Alternatives Concepts
(Please see each respective plan/environmental assessment for detailed alternatives and implementation options)

Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area			
Alternative A: No Action	Alternative B: Places	Alternative C: Experiences	Alternative D: Layers
Alternative A would maintain operation of current programming. Because funding would remain at current levels, Alternative A would not increase the emphasis on any of the strategies identified to reach the goals of the heritage area.	Alternative B would use heritage area strategies, programs, and funding to enhance geographically based clusters of heritage attractions and resources, or **places**.	Alternative C focuses on market or interest-based topics that would be used to organize and guide visitor's **experiences** of the heritage area.	Alternative D, a combination of Alternatives B and C, would pursue development of intersecting **layers** in the form of 1) clusters of resources/attractions (places) and 2) area-wide topics that thematically connect the places.

Cane River National Heritage Area		
Alternative A: Status Quo	Alternative B: Preservation Emphasis	Alternative C: Enhances Visitor Opportunities
Alternative A assumes the continuation of current trends and preservation, interpretation, and promotion of heritage area resources would be left primarily to separate initiatives by federal, state, and local governments, businesses, nonprofit organizations and individuals.	Alternative B would: 1) develop and maintain a well-organized and funded partnership in research, conservation, and preservation that will ensure the long-term integrity of heritage resources, and 2) foster public support and appreciation for Cane River history and heritage area resources by providing quality educational and interpretative services for the local community and visiting public.	Alternative C would: 1) preserve heritage area resources, and 2) provide support for and effectively market a full range of heritage tourism opportunities, support services, and facilities to extend visitor stay in the Natchitoches area, maximize economic benefits, and ensure repeat visitation, while ensuring that the qualities that make the region a national resource would be protected for future generations.

Step 11 – Analyze Options and Select Preferred Alternative

In order to analyze the impacts of different alternatives, basic information about the existing environment is needed, specifically for the areas that could potentially be affected by the proposed management alternatives, known as the affected environment. The preparation of the foundation statement in Phase 1 and Phase 2 includes the assessment of existing information and the identification of any information gaps. Any additional studies or inventories can then be scheduled and completed for Phase 1 and/or 2. This helps ensure that information is available and ready for analysis in Phase 3.

In general, the analysis of alternatives should evaluate the impact of each alternative upon natural resources, recreational resources, cultural resources, socioeconomic resources, land use and administration. In general the analysis describes the action that causes something to happen, identifies what happens as a result of the action, and then describes the effect on the resource evaluated in terms of quality of impact, context, intensity and duration.

After analyzing the affects of all the alternatives a choice must be made and the local coordinating entity should identify a preferred alternative that is feasible, defendable, and best meets the heritage area mission, goals, and community needs while considering environmental impacts.

> For a more detailed explanation of impact analysis and different impact topics, see *Park Planning Program Sourcebook: General Management Planning* (http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/GMPSourcebook.pdf) and *Handbook for Environmental Analysis: [Director's Order]DO-12 Handbook* (http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/RM12.pdf).

Step 12 – Draft Management Plan

All of the efforts from previous management planning steps come together in the preparation of the management plan itself. The written plan contains information from the foundation statement and the analysis of alternatives to document the work done during the planning process and shows how decisions were made. Any additional information or documentation of compliance with other laws should also be included if necessary.

It is beneficial to work out a plan with your Park Partner or NPS Regional Office to develop a more precise schedule for document preparation and review and include it in the scope of work. Communication throughout the planning process can help ensure that the appropriate people are aware of expectations and timelines. As noted in Step 4 – *Develop Public Involvement Strategy*, it is also important for the local coordinating entity to communicate with its Park Partner or NPS Regional Office to arrange internal review and ensure that the plan meets all NPS, NEPA, and legislative requirements.

See *Management Plan Components* section below for a description of other plan components to consider, and Appendix F for a management plan component checklist.

After public comment on the draft plan is complete, the local coordinating entity should address any substantive comments and prepare the final management plan.

Step 13 – Plan Review

When the final plan is ready, the local coordinating entity should submit the management plan to the NPS Regional Office's Heritage Area Coordinator to begin the approval process. In general the review process flows accordingly:

- The local coordinating entity submits the management plan to the National Heritage Area Coordinator at the Regional Office.
- The coordinator is then responsible for coordination of the document's review within the Regional Office, including the Compliance Office, Cultural Resources Program, and Planning Office.
- The Coordinator will collect any comments and should keep the local coordinating entity informed of where the document is in the process. If comments from reviewers in the Regional Office are significant, the coordinator will work with the local coordinating entity to address them. Thus, it is advantageous to work with the Regional Office to address any concerns early in the process and avoid substantive changes during final review.
- The Regional Coordinator develops the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)/Record of Decision (ROD), required by NEPA for environmental assessments (EAs), in coordination with a compliance officer.
- The FONSI/ROD is then signed by the Regional Director.
- The management plan, FONSI/ROD, and letters of support from the governor and congressional delegation are then sent to the NPS Washington Office, to the Assistant Director of Cultural Resources.
- The plan is then sent from the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior, through the Associate Director of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, for signature and final approval.

NPS reviewers compare the contents of the management plan with the authorizing legislation. Submission of the final plan without addressing all of the legislative requirements is a reason that the plan may be returned during different levels of review. Regional and Washington Offices also look to ensure all NEPA process procedures have been met and that requirements for any other applicable law have also been included.

This review process should be included in the three year timeline allocated for management planning. The three year timeline for management planning begins at the time the heritage area receives an allocation in the NPS budget. Note that the time given to the Secretary for review and signature in the legislation, usually 90-180 days, begins once the Regional Office submits the plan to the Washington Office/Associate Director.

Step 14 – Final Plan Publication

Several heritage areas have noted that the physical format of the management plan is also significant and can actually impact its efficacy as a functional, living document.

Various format and presentation techniques can make the written management plan user-friendly and keep it off the shelf. Even before document preparation, it is beneficial to consider which modes of presentation and which organization techniques might be most useful for the local coordinating entity and partners.

Techniques

Some examples include:

- **Stand alone executive summaries**
  Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, and Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area, for example, have published stand alone executive summaries. These have proven useful as supplemental material for grant applications, educational information and general marketing material.

- **Priority matrices or tables**
  Some plans include tables and matrices to show project priorities in different categories, which helps managers plan annual activities and best take advantage of available opportunities. Heritage areas have also used them as an easy way to evaluate yearly progress and assess needs for the coming year.

- **Boxes and sidebars**
  Management plans have used side bars and text boxes to highlight vision, mission and goal statements to highlight the foundations of the heritage area

- **Photos and Graphics**
  Since the management plan summarizes what the heritage area is all about, photos, diagrams and other images help tell the story of the heritage area and express its vision.

Release of the plan is also an opportunity to promote the heritage area and show progress.

MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPONENTS

Throughout the planning process the task is to complete a 10-15 year management plan that meets the requirements included in the authorizing legislation and establishes a functional heritage area. The management plan can take many formats, but most include the components described below. These items are also often required by the authorizing legislation, but, if they are not, management entities can also consider the development of the components below to improve management plan quality and facilitate plan implementation. See Appendix H for a management plan component checklist.

The completion of the following items should be developed during planning Phases 1-3, the exact timing of which depends upon the characteristics of each heritage area. These are also general descriptions and local coordinating entities should refer to their authorizing legislation for their particular needs.

Resource inventory

The inventory documents significant resources within the heritage area related to stories or themes, which should be protected, enhanced, managed or developed. It can include natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources as well as information to classify level of integrity, threats to integrity, location and other characteristics.

Whereas the resource inventory undertaken in the feasibility study helps determine whether there are sufficient resources to tell a story, the resource inventory in the management plan is usually related to the purpose and need of the heritage area. It explains what resources are of most importance in the heritage area and which resources will be the focus of area actions. It also helps describe what resources will be impacted by the different alternatives.

The inventory in the management plan builds upon the resource inventory begun in the feasibility study. In Phase 1 of the planning process it is important to review the resource inventory in the feasibility study and identify gaps in resources that illustrate the interpretive themes for the heritage area or provide information to describe the "affected environment" for the purposes of the environmental assessment.

Interpretive themes

Themes are the organizing framework within which interpretation of related natural and cultural resources is conducted. The feasibility study includes the identification of potential themes, which should then be further developed and refined during the planning process.

Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area

Interpretive themes may address different resource areas and components of history. For example, Yuma Crossing identified the following interpretive themes:

- The River and the Land
- Transportation
- Supply and Defense
- Life in Yuma
- Cultural Crossroads

Which crosscut the following periods:

- Prehistoric and Early History : In the Beginning
- Prior to 1849 : Exploration
- 1849 to 1876 : Settlement and the Riverboats
- 1877 to 1909 : The Railroad and Commercial Enterprise
- 1910 to Present : Return to the River

Comprehensive goals, strategies and actions

Comprehensive goals, strategies and actions identify how the local coordinating entity will work to tell the heritage area's story. They encourage long term protection of resources, identify funding sources, and describe future management of the area. Goals can be broken down into categories according to interpretive theme or resource area and must meet the requirements and intent of the authorizing legislation.

Partner Roles and Commitments

To the extent possible, the management plan should identify partners and appropriate roles, actions and commitments of all parties. Construction activities or specific project responsibilities; financial commitments, such as donations, loans, grants; and potential opportunities for volunteers and the general public are all possible roles.

In addition, since detailed commitments may have been difficult to ascertain during the feasibility study, the management planning process is an appropriate time to specify partner commitments to the extent possible.

Implementation Plan

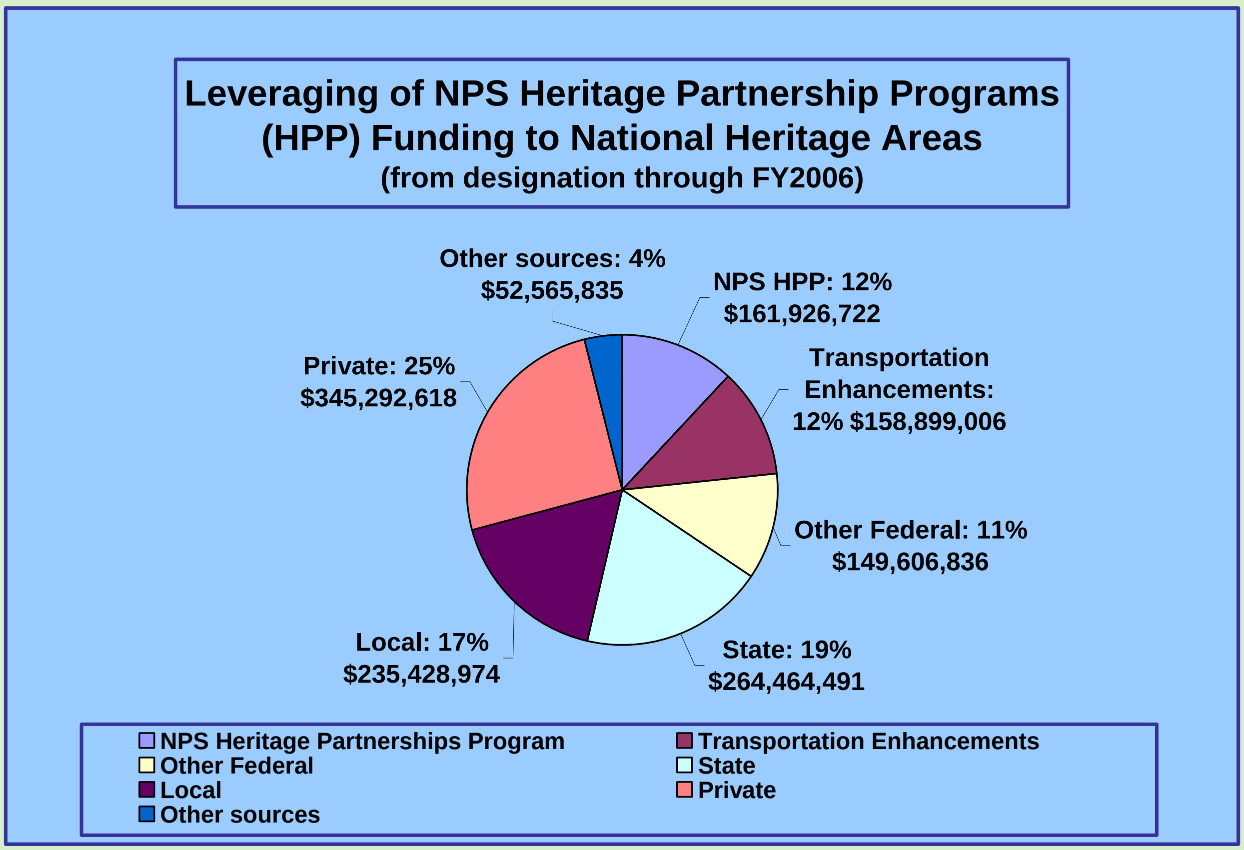
This plan explains broad actions to be taken over the life of the heritage area. Often, the plan is divided into medium- and long-term actions to cover activities in the 3-10 year period and the 10+ year period.

Sometimes legislation specifies a short term action plan. This plan outlines 'what next'. It explains the immediate, more detailed actions to be taken after the management plan is complete and is a useful tool to keep momentum from the planning process going into the implementation phase.

Interpretive plan
Depending on the authorizing legislation, an interpretive plan may be included in actions to be taken under the implementation plan, in a short term action plan, or in the management plan itself. It outlines how specific resources will be used to tell the story of the region – it identifies which stories to tell, how to tell them, and how to reach specific audiences. The interpretive plan guides educational services, including personal services, interpretive media, and partnerships that work to support the delivery of interpretive and educational programs.

Leveraging Diverse Funds

A diverse source of funds helps ensure funding stability and increases the ability of heritage areas to attract further funding. Keeping track of funding helps tell a story and shows support for heritage area activities. For example, corporations are happy to see funding sources as a sign government support. In many cases, potential donors are more likely to match funds from government or private sources. The fact that other entities support heritage area activities makes it easier for others to give or support area efforts.



Source: Annual Survey of the National Heritage Areas, last completed December 2006

Business plan
The authorizing legislation may have different requirements, but every heritage area should have a business plan for the local management entity and heritage area activities in general.

The business plan describes the role, operation, financing and functions for the local coordinating entity. For example, it states whether the local coordinating entity serves as a provider of technical assistance, a project implementer, a disseminator of funds, a project organizer, or a combination of functions. The plan lists needed personnel and accounts for fixed and variable operating costs.

It also outlines the budget needed to complete heritage area projects or initiatives and identifies sources of funding – donations, loans, grants (known and required), and fee-for-service, for example. While the feasibility study may have included some initial estimates, the management plan should include more specific figures to show how funds will be used.

Performance goals, benchmarks and evaluation
In general the management plan can include performance measures and methods to evaluate management activities and project success. Performance goals can be developed for the local coordinating entity and/or for the heritage area in general. Performance goals, benchmarks and evaluation can give helpful feedback on area efforts to illustrate levels of success and determine if any management changes are necessary.

Cooperative Agreements between the local coordinating entity and the Park Service may be a useful tool for evaluation because they define what work is to be done over a year period and lay out specific tasks each year. They can be used as benchmarks when compared to the actual work completed at the end of the year.

Having performance information may also help leverage future funds or other support by demonstrating the ability of the local coordinating entity and partners to implement successful projects.

List of preparers and participants
A list of preparers identifies who contributed to the plan's development and document preparation along with their qualifications.

CONCLUSION

Management planning for heritage areas presents a unique opportunity to build partnerships, foster communication and establish a collaborative work environment across the region. A well-thought out and executed plan can set the foundation for decades of growth and success. Because the management plan outlines the fundamental purpose and goals of the heritage area, along with a clear strategy to meet those goals, the investment of time and energy pays dividends well into the future. In addition, early implementation activities and the actions taken during management planning are critical to keep momentum going throughout the planning process and into later implementation phases

ACRONYMS

DO 12	Director's Order 12: Environmental Impact Analysis
FONSI	finding of no significant impact
EA	environmental assessment
EIS	environmental impact statement
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPS	National Park Service
ROD	record of decision

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http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/RM12.pdf

Provides information and guidance for how to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). It includes general outlines for environmental assessments and environmental impact statements. While written specifically for the National Park Service, the handbook can help heritage areas prepare their own environmental analysis and documentation.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *Management Policies 2006.* 2006.
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Provides information on the various levels of Park planning and plan components, which can be adapted to heritage area management planning where appropriate.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines.* August 2003.
http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FSGUIDE/nhafeasguidelines.pdf or
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Provides guidelines for the preparation of feasibility studies for heritage areas.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *National Heritage Areas.* website.
http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/

Contains information specific to National Heritage Areas, contact information for existing National Heritage Area coordinating entities, and links to relevant studies.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *Park Planning Program Sourcebook: General Management Planning.* Final Draft, October 2005.
http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/GMPSourcebook.pdf

Provides detailed information about Park planning processes and documentation. The sourcebook also includes various tools to facilitate public involvement, alternative development, and environmental analysis. Although written specifically for NPS purposes, the general ideas and concepts can relate to heritage area management planning where appropriate.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *Program Standards: Park Planning.* August 9, 2004. http://classicinside.nps.gov/documents/aug9final%20standards.pdf

Includes a general overview of the NPS approach to Park planning. The document explains the logic behind the different levels of planning, and describes the major components and process standards for each type of plan.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Conservation Study Institute. *Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future: A Technical Assistance Report to the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission.* 2005. http://www.nps.gov/archive/mabi/csi/pdf/BlackstoneReport.pdf

The sustainability study evaluates accomplishments, leveraging, partnership network, and current management structure in the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor since designation in 1986. It presents options fort the future and provides a case study for new heritage areas.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Conservation Study Institute. *Connecting Stories, Landscapes and People: Exploring the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Partnership.* 2006. http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/REP/D&LStudyFullRep.pdf

The sustainability study evaluates accomplishments, leveraging, partnership network, and current management structure in the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor since designation in 1988. It presents options fort the future and provides a case study for new heritage areas.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

How to Incorporate the NEPA Process

Federal funding and the adoption of the management plan by the Secretary of the Interior triggers the need for local coordinating entities to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) when they complete the management planning process.

NEPA legislates good decision making practices that can be integrated into the planning process. When thinking about NEPA, it is also important to consider other applicable laws or regulations that may also apply. For example, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and some states have other consultation or process requirements.

In general, NEPA requires:
- public involvement
- the evaluation of different alternatives, including a no-action alternative, and their impact upon the environment, and
- the selection of a preferred alternative

The *Handbook for Environmental Analysis: [Director's Order] DO-12 Handbook* explains National Park Service's policies and procedures for how to comply with NEPA.

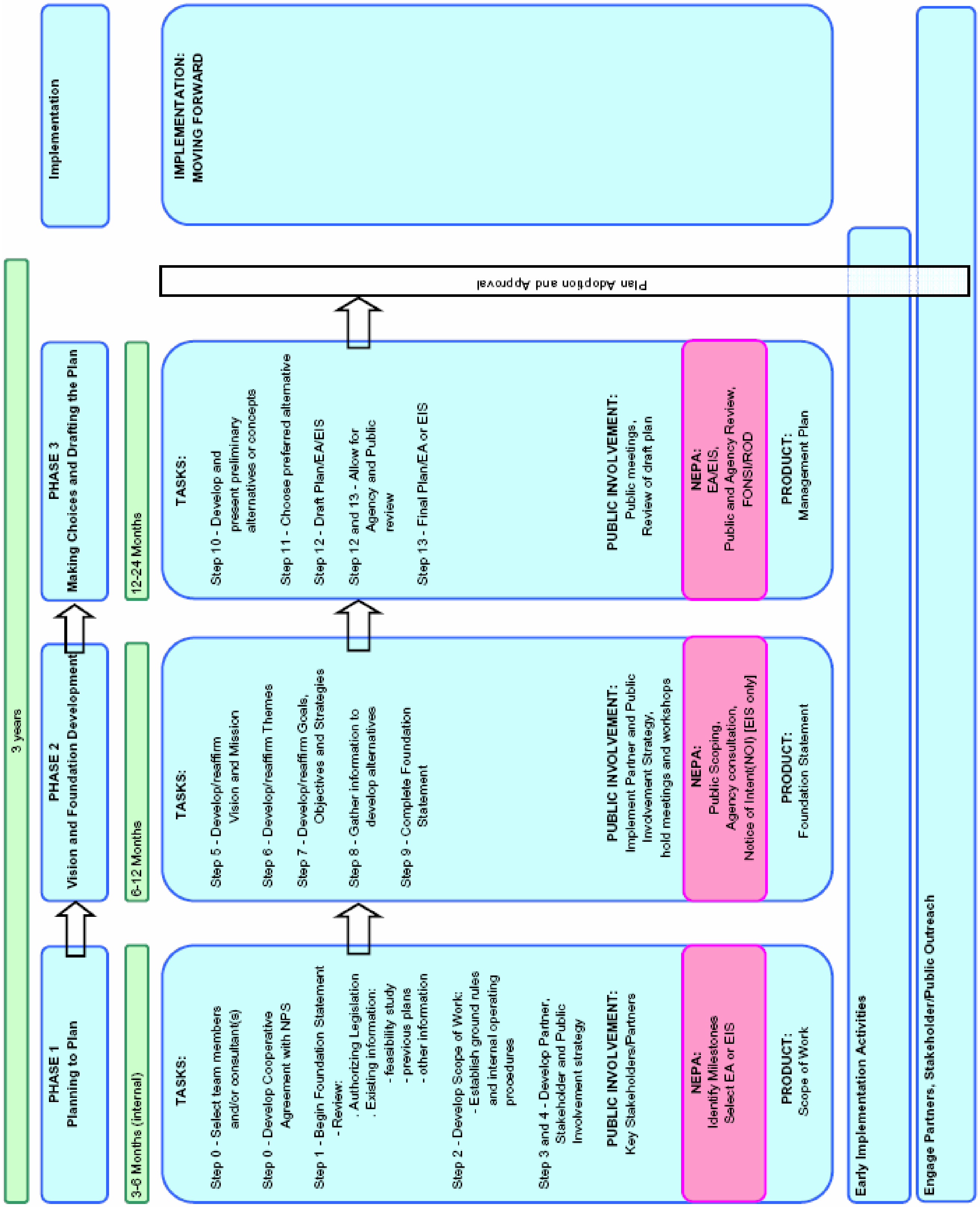
This appendix gives general recommendations for how NEPA fits into the planning process for heritage areas. However, **the details of NEPA compliance need to be finalized with the cooperation of the Park Partner and/or NPS Regional Office.** See Figure A for a diagram that highlights how NEPA integrates with the management planning process.

Scope of Work

The scope of work (Step 2) should also include NEPA compliance steps and note whether the local coordinating entity or the National Park Service is responsible. In general, the major steps include:
- Scoping and public involvement
- Environmental analysis of alternatives, including a no-action alternative, in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS)
- Providing opportunities to comment on the EA or EIS

Historically, most heritage areas have prepared an environmental assessment. However, the local coordinating entity must work with the National Park Service to determine weather and EA or EIS is most appropriate. The feasibility study should have included a preliminary assessment of impacts which helps determine if an EA or EIS is appropriate. Feedback from scoping (Step 8) can also help determine the need for an EA or EIS. Also

Figure A: The Management Planning Process and NEPA



see Appendix B, an excerpt from the *Handbook for Environmental Analysis: [Director's Order] DO-12 Handbook*, for criteria to consider when deciding if an EA or EIS is appropriate.

NEPA and Public Involvement

A through public involvement strategy can easily meet NEPA public involvement requirements, which are further discussed below under *Scoping*.

It is important to include the following actions in the public involvement strategy or scope of work for NEPA compliance:

- Send a notice of intent (NOI) to prepare the management plan and an EIS (for EISs only)
- Conduct formal NEPA scoping, which elicits public participation to help determine the scope of environmental issues and alternatives to be addressed
- Send a notice of availability (NOA) for the draft plan/EA/EIS
- Distribute the draft plan/EA/EIS to interested parties
- Allow for a period of public review on the draft plan/EA/EIS
- Hold a public meeting or hearing to give an update and elicit comments
- Issue a notice of availability (NOA) for the final plan/EA/EIS
- Distribute the final plan/EA/EIS
- Issue a notice of availability (NOA) to inform parties about the finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for an EA or record of decision (ROD) for an EIS

The local coordinating entity should work with its Park Partner and/or NPS Regional Office to determine who will send formal notices (an NOI or NOA) or otherwise inform the public about plan/EA/EIS availability and comment periods.

Scoping

Scoping is a specific period of partner, stakeholder and public involvement to formally inform interested parties and the public about the project and elicit input and identify any issues or concerns with the development of the heritage area, its proposed activities and their impact on the environment before the analysis of alternatives formally begins. The function of scoping is to: 1) gather information that can help determine important issues and eliminate issues that are not important or relevant; and 2) gather information to develop alternative choices, or alternatives, for how to move forward and implement actions in the heritage area. Comments may be received by mail, electronic mail, submissions to a planning website, or at any public meetings or workshops. It is important to note that the NPS must also consult with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies and any affected Indian tribe.

Larger efforts to involve partners and the public, as discussed in Steps 3 and 4 of the planning process should meet scoping requirements.

Environmental Assessment (or Environmental Impact Statement)

The environmental impact analysis, in either an EA or EIS, shows that decision makers considered potential impacts on the environment when making management choices. It also explains the rationale for why the preferred alternative has been selected.

Affected Environment

The affected environment section of the environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) succinctly describes the existing natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources that would be affected either directly or indirectly by implementation of any of the alternatives. The description of the no-action alternative and the affected environment together provide a baseline for later identifying the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives.

No-Action Alternative

The no-action alternative is the alternative that describes existing conditions and impacts continued into the future. It sets the baseline against which to compare impacts of other alternatives. Analysis of the no-action alternative describes what would happen to the resources if no action were taken and how that could impact area goals.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

After environmental analysis is completed, this is the alternative that is identified as the environmentally preferred alternative in that it causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment and best enhances or protects resources.

Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative is the alternative that the local coordinating entity chooses to implement. It is not necessarily the environmentally preferred alternative.

Comment Periods

Another element of public involvement entails giving the public and other parties a certain timeframe to comment on the EA, draft EA or draft EIS. Again, larger efforts to involve partners and the public, as discussed in Steps 3 and 4 should meet comment period requirements and give the public ample opportunity to review and comment on the local coordinating entity's proposed actions and environmental analysis.

Decision Documents

When an EA is prepared, a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is an explanation of why the selected action will have no significant effects on the human environment. It will be prepared by the National Heritage Area Coordinator in the NPS Regional Office and will be signed by the Regional Director before the plan/EA is forwarded to the Washington Office.

If the alternatives described in the EA have the potential for significant impact, an EIS must be completed.

After an EIS has been prepared, the ultimate choice of an alternative, mitigation measures, and the decision rationale are documented in a record of decision (ROD).

Again, each local coordinating entity should work with its Park Partner and/or Regional Office to finalize NEPA compliance procedures.

APPENDIX B

Criteria for the Selection of an
Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
(Excerpt from DO 12 Handbook)

The local coordinating entity and its Park Partner or NPS Regional Office should consider the following criteria when determining whether an impact may be significant in helping to determine if an EIS is appropriate:

1. Impacts that may have both beneficial and adverse aspects and which on balance may be beneficial, but that may still have significant adverse impacts which require analysis in an EIS.

2. The degree to which public health and safety are affected.

3. Any unique characteristics of the area (proximity to historic or cultural resources, wild and scenic rivers, ecologically critical areas, wetlands or floodplains, and so forth).

4. The degree to which impacts are likely to be highly controversial.

5. The degree to which the potential impacts are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

6. Whether the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects, or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions that may have individual insignificant impacts but cumulatively significant effects. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or breaking it down into small component parts.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect historic properties in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or other significant scientific, archeological, or cultural resources.

9. The degree to which an action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

APPENDIX C

Public Involvement Strategy Template
(Adapted from the Park Planning Program
Sourcebook: General Management Planning)

While there are many approaches to developing a public involvement strategy, the following template provides a simple framework for organizing ideas and can be customized for a particular heritage area and its local circumstances. The framework has been divided into parts that are described in the methods and tools section below. Appendix D includes a sample template based on an example scenario.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Part 1. Purpose of this Public Involvement Strategy and Situational Analysis
(Complete once for the entire planning project.)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">a. Purpose
b. Issues
c. Public and Stakeholders
d. Special Circumstances</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Parts 2-4
(Complete for each planning phase.)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Planning Phase:</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Part 2</td><td colspan="3">a. Public Involvement Goal for this Phase</td></tr>
<tr><td>b. Key Planning Steps</td><td colspan="2">c. Planning Product</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Part 3</td><td>Information Needed from the Public</td><td colspan="2">Information Needed by the Public</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Part 4</td><td>Public Involvement Activities for this Phase</td><td>Team Member Responsible</td><td>Due Date</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

SUGGESTED METHODS AND TOOLS FOR DEVELOPING A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

Methods and Tools for Part 1 of the Template

Part 1. Purpose of this Public Involvement Strategy (Complete once for the entire planning project.)
a. Purpose
b. Issues
c. Public and Stakeholders
d. Special Circumstances

Part 1 is only completed once for the project. There are four components of part 1.

Part 1a. Identify the Purpose of this public involvement strategy.	The first question the management entity needs to answer regarding public participation is: “What is the overall goal or intent of the public participation effort for this plan — what do you hope to accomplish by involving the public?” Generally, the goals of public involvement for a management plan are to inform the public of a decision to be made; to provide opportunities for the public to be heard before the decision in selecting a plan; and to provide opportunities for the public to influence the decision. More specifically, a public involvement strategy will usually have at least three primary goals: - Inform and educate the public about the need for the management plan / EA (or EIS) and about the key issues being addressed. - Provide the public with opportunities for meaningful involvement in the planning and NEPA processes. - Strengthen and enhance relationships and partnerships.

Part 1b. Identify the issues and level of controversy.	It is recommended that the list of issues and the list of stakeholders and partners (below) be developed simultaneously because it is easier to think about them that way: As the team thinks about issues it will find itself thinking of individuals and groups who are concerned about those issues. When the team thinks about the public, stakeholders and partners, it will think of issues those groups are bound to raise. Both internal and external stakeholders need to be considered in identifying issues. For each issue the planning team should assess the level of controversy. Even people who are highly experienced in public participation get taken by surprise. Something that seems like it should be highly controversial may not generate much interest, while something that seems quite bland may become a battleground. There is no magic way to predict controversy, but there are indicators of probable controversy. The most basic indicator of controversy, of course, is the significance of the impacts. For example, if certain visitor sites are going to be built or closed, if there will be major increases in pollution added to the environment, if there will be major adverse impacts on employment, or if limits are being proposed on visitor activities, you can count on considerable controversy. It is often worth asking major partners, stakeholders, and the Park Partner superintendent or regional director what issues he or she thinks will be most controversial. There are other indicators of controversy. Issues that might by themselves seem relatively noncontroversial can become highly controversial if any of the following situations occur: - There has been a prior controversy on the same issue, (e.g. controversy over prior actions). - The issue is closely related to another major issue over which there is continuing controversy or a power struggle. - The issue touches on local political topics such as land use or economic development that are the basis for political debate within the area. - The issue is the total reason for existence of a stakeholder group.

	Sometimes people within the planning team will know the stakeholders well enough to make an informed judgment as to how intense their interest will be. On occasion, though, the only way to assess the potential for controversy is to meet with stakeholders and discuss their interest in the issue and their suggestions for what kind of participation is appropriate. These interviews or small group meetings can play an important role in developing a successful public participation plan.
Part 1c. Identify the stakeholders and partners.	To identify stakeholders, partners and public groups ask the following questions: - Which public and stakeholder groups are most likely to exert influence in the heritage area, region, state and Washington? - Whose participation in the process is essential for credibility? - Are there other groups or individuals who have traditionally been associated with or involved in the area and that should be included in the planning effort? Pay attention to those who might be interested but have not traditionally been involved in the planning process.

Part 1d. Identify any special circumstances that need to be considered	In developing a public involvement strategy, sometimes special circumstances need to be considered. Examples of special circumstances to consider are: - cultural/ethnic sensitivities (e.g., most impacted people are from a single cultural/ethnic minority) - distance (e.g., interested groups are scattered over a large area geographically) - issue is connected politically to other issues (i.e., it may be difficult to keep this issue distinct from other controversial issues) - political sensitivities (e.g., key political figures have positions or reputations to defend related to this issue)

Methods and Tools for Part 2

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Planning Phase:</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Part 2</td><td colspan="2">a. Public Involvement Goal for this Phase</td></tr>
<tr><td>b. Key Planning Steps</td><td>c. Planning Product</td></tr>
</table>

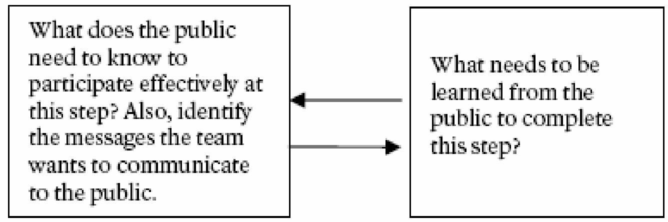
Identify the planning phase.	Parts 2-4 of the template are completed for each planning phase and step: the foundation, gathering information from the public, alternative formation, draft plan/EA (or EIS), and final plan/EA (or EIS).

Part 2a. Identify the goals of involvement for the public, stakeholders, and partners for this phase of the planning process.	To develop public participation objectives, simply ask: “What do we have to accomplish with the public by the end of this planning phase?” Then write an objective describing the completion of that task. Generic objectives of public participation include the following: - Inform the public about possible options. - Obtain public comment on a list of options. - Obtain public comment and consensus on vision, mission, themes, and goals. - Have a dialogue on the range of alternatives to be considered. - Get agreement on the range of alternatives to be considered. - Get input on the preferred alternative.
Part 2b and c. Identify the key planning steps and products for this planning phase.	Identifying the key steps and products will help planners identify where public involvement is needed by clarifying the planning activities and products for this planning phase.

Methods and Tools for Part 3

Part 3	Information Needed from the Public	Information Needed by the Public

<table>
<tr>
<td>Analyze the exchange of information that must take place to achieve the objectives for each phase in the planning process.</td>
<td>For each of the public participation objectives there is an exchange of information with the public that must take place.

For each phase in the planning process:

An example of what this analysis might look like for one objective, “Obtain a complete identification and understanding of how the problem is viewed by all significant interests,” is shown below:

Information exchange from the management entity to stakeholders/public:

- The nature of the planning and decision-making process
- What the local coordinating entity knows about the issues or concerns
- Opportunities for participation

Information Exchange from stakeholders/public to the management entity:

- How different groups see the issues and concerns
- How the issues and concerns affect different stakeholders and partners
- The intensity of the impacts
- Which parts of the public see themselves as affected

This same kind of analysis is completed for each public participation objective.</td>
</tr>
</table>

Methods and Tools for Part 4

	Public Involvement Activities for this Phase	Team Member Responsible	Due Date
Part 4			

Part 4. Select the specific public involvement and partner techniques for each phase in the planning process.	The next step is to select techniques that will achieve the public participation objectives. Many planners start with the step of selecting a public involvement technique without doing the strategic thinking of the preceding steps. This often results in a technique that may not be as effective in achieving objectives. Below is a list of frequently used public participation techniques. This list is divided into techniques for getting information to the public (one-way), getting it from the public (one-way) and exchanging information (interaction between the agency and the public). More information on these techniques can be found on websites referenced in Appendix E. Information providing techniques: - briefings - workshops - exhibits/displays - interpretive programs - feature stories - information repositories - mailings containing technical reports/environmental reports - news conferences - newsletters - newspaper inserts - news releases - press kits - public service announcements - presentations to groups - web sites Information gathering techniques:

	- focus groups - mail-in response forms (including advertisements, inserts or newsletters) - polls, surveys, questionnaires Interaction / information exchange techniques: - advisory groups/task forces - hotlines - interviews - open houses - participatory television/cable television - public meetings - retreats - workshops
Assign responsibilities and due dates.	Assigning responsibility for tasks and due dates and including them in the scope of work ensures that tasks are not forgotten and that they are completed on time.

APPENDIX D
RTCA Program Public Involvement Toolbox

Rivers, Trails and
Conservation Assistance Program

National Park Service
Northeast Region
Philadelphia Office

Decision Making Tools

Events Tools

Gatherings Tools

Visual Communication Tools

Facilitation Tools

Organization Tools

Outreach Tools

Written Communication Tools

Collecting Information Tools

For More Information

Home

Select Your Tools

Decision Making

- Action Agenda
- Consensus Building
- Defining Issues
- Goal Setting
- Setting Priorities
- Vision Creating

Events

- Art Projects
- Awards
- Conferences & Symposiums
- Festivals
- Field Trips

Gatherings

- Charrettes
- Meetings
- Open Space
- Workshops

Visual Communication

- Displays
- Presentations
- Videos

Written Communication

- Brochures/Flyers
- Newsletters
- Newspaper Questionnaires
- Press Releases

ParkNet
National Park Service

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Facilitation

- Active Listening
- Brain Storming
- Break-Out Groups
- Dialogue
- Flip Charts
- Ice Breakers

Organization

- Partnerships
- Project Steps
- Task Forces
- Volunteers
- Work Plans

Outreach

- Networking Database
- Postcard Mailings
- Press Conferences
- Speakers Bureau
- Telephone and Email
- Websites

Collecting Information

- Focus Groups
- Group/Public Mapping
- Inventory
- Photo Inventory
- Public Surveys
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Story Telling

APPENDIX E

Additional Sources of Information on Civic Engagement and Public Involvement

The management entity can consult Director's Order 75A which provides guidance on NPS policies relating to civic engagement and public involvement. This Director's Order is planned to contain a sourcebook. The order contains a number of helpful web sites containing information on public involvement strategies and techniques.

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) staff members are skilled in a variety of public involvement and community visioning techniques. The local coordinating entity can enlist RTCA staff assistance in designing their public involvement strategy. If possible, the local coordinating entity could consider involvement of RTCA staff in the various public meetings and forums conducted during the planning process. The Denver Service center has also developed a public involvement model that may be consulted.

Director's Order 75A contains a number of useful resources that may assist in devising strategies and techniques for public involvement in a NHA feasibility study including:

NPS Sources

Report on "The National Park Service and Civic Engagement"
http://www.nps.gov/phso/civic/civic.pdf

Visitor Experience and Resource Protection handbook (U.S. Department of the Interior 1997):
http://planning.den.nps.gov/document/handbook%2Epdf

Public Involvement: A Manual of Tools and Techniques, University of Idaho
http://www.cnr.uidaho.edu/nps_pi/

Public Involvement Toolbox, NPS Rivers and Trails, Philadelphia Support Office
http://www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoolbox

Superintendent's Guide to Public Affairs
http://www.nps.gov/pub_aff/refdesk/index.html

Other DOI Bureau Sources

A Handbook for Outreach, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2001
http://training.fws.gov/library/Pubs/outreach_handbook01pdf.pdf

Other Federal Sources

EPA's public involvement policy
http://www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/pdf/1228policy.pdf

Federal Highway Administration's guidelines and policy
http://ntl.bts.gov/DOCS/trans.html
http://ntl.bts.gov/DOCS/FHWA.html

US Army Corps of Engineers Everglades Outreach Plan
http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/progr_outreach.cfm

U.S. Forest Service
http://www.fs.fed.us/forum/pi/

CEQ scoping guidance
http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/guidance.html

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
http://www.achp.gov/usersguide.html

Non-Federal Sources

International Association for Public Participation
http://www.iap2.org

International Association of Facilitators
http://www.iaf-world.org

Parks Canada's public involvement policy
http://www.scarp.ubc.ca/thesis/octeau/chap4.html

Oregon Conservation and Land Development Agency's policy
http://www.lcd.state.or.us/goalpdfs/goal01.pdf

Oregon Conservation and Land Development Agency's policy
http://www.lcd.state.or.us/goalpdfs/goal01.pdf

APPENDIX F

Management Plan Component Checklist

The items below may be organized into one cohesive document or a simplified document with appendices.

	National Heritage Area Overview and Significance
	Related Plans and Activities
	Vision and Mission Statement
	General Interpretive Theme Structures and Stories
	Resource Inventory
	Area goals and objectives, for: - resource protection - interpretation/education - partnership development - public participation - tourism/ economic development
	Alternative Strategies - Roles of partners and state/local/private/NPS/other federal agencies - General Implementation Approach (for each alternative)
	Affected Environment
	Environmental impacts of each Alternative
	Implementation Plan (with short-term action plan) - priority initiatives
	Interpretive Plan
	Business Plan - Local coordinating entity description - Cost and funding sources; $ and in-kind anticipated/known, including partner commitments
	Partner Roles and Commitments
	Evaluation and Accountability Benchmarks/Success (Framework for Evaluation)
	Preferred Alternative and/or Environmentally Preferred Alternative
	List of preparers and participants - Management planning team - Advisory committees or Task forces