

Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan



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Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mifflin and Juniata Counties, Pennsylvania, constitute the Juniata River Valley region. They joined forces long ago to promote tourism and both have recently adopted a room tax to generate funding for this purpose. This Plan, financed by a combination of local and State funding, is intended to establish the foundation of a comprehensive tourism development and promotion program for the region. It builds on other efforts such as the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan and the previous activities of the Juniata-Mifflin Counties Tourist Promotion Agency.

Stakeholders in regional tourism development and promotion participated in analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to tourism development in the Juniata River Valley region. The following tourism vision for the region was developed using this process.

Tourism Development Vision for the Juniata River Valley Region

The Juniata River Valley is a region of attractive historical and natural resources. Its blend of history, working landscapes and spectacular features offers visitors relaxing, yet intriguing, experiences. These will be developed and promoted in ways that preserve the Valley's essential character. The Juniata River Valley will be marketed in a coordinated manner as a single region with links to adjoining regions. Tourism development and promotion will be focused on heritage and natural resources based tourism, preserving the quality of life for residents and continuously improving the quality of experience for visitors.

Tourism Development Inventory

The Juniata River Valley includes many scenic, natural, recreational, historic and cultural resources. These provide visitors with several ways to explore the river valley and learn about its rich heritage. They also provide the basis for a unique tourist destination. It is important that a tourism map and inventory be created to present them graphically.

The Mifflin County Information Technology Department has created the foundation for this inventory and map. It needs to continually improved and upgraded to illustrate the intrinsic qualities of the region while making it easy for visitors to navigate their way from one attraction to another. It is recommended that an attractive general Juniata River Valley Tourism Map be published in both print and Internet versions. More detailed special focus maps can easily be developed from this base.

Experience of Other Regional Tourism Promotion Agencies

Case studies of other multi-jurisdictional tourist agencies in the Northeast have been prepared to

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provide comparative examples of the potential benefit of a coordinated tourist promotion effort to the two-county Juniata River Valley area. The following elements were apparent in nearly all agencies interviewed:

- ◇ “Sharing resources” or “economies of scale” are consistently identified as the primary benefit of multi-county tourism promotion.
- ◇ The existence of a secondary niche that supports the primary tourist economy (e.g., unique architecture, a concentration of antique shops) is apparent in every case.
- ◇ Success and economic impact are hard to quantify but, nonetheless, attempted by all agencies. Common methods used to measure success include surveys, attendance at individual attractions, hotel reports and interviews with business and attraction owners.
- ◇ All agencies studied rely heavily on an agency website to promote their region.
- ◇ Many of the agencies have found it beneficial to work with neighboring tourism agencies on projects that involved large expenditures.

Several of the agencies surveyed also identified particular success with the following action items:

- ◇ Creation of kiosks at heavily trafficked locations to provide information on area attractions and businesses.
- ◇ Creation of pamphlets or directories identifying possible tours or itineraries within the region.

The ability to track the economic benefits of multi-county tourism promotion is important to each of the surveyed agencies’ ability to understand their market area and to attract new visitor profiles. The number of visitors to a website or roadside kiosk, membership surveys, lodging occupancy surveys and personal communication with individuals seeking information and members of the TPA, provide easy methods to track the success of the overall program. More consistent tracking of visitation at the local or individual attraction site level could enhance these methods.

Visitor and Economic Analysis

Juniata and Mifflin Counties already attract large numbers of visitors who play an important contributing role in economic development of the Juniata River Valley. The region offers a number of resources, mostly of an agricultural, cultural, historic or natural basis, that appeal to certain types of tourists. They find their way to the region as a result of individual business advertising, existing JRVVB local promotional efforts, those of larger promotion entities such as

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the Valleys of the Susquehanna program and the simple happenstance of random visitation. Even at the presently low level of regional branding and coordination in tourism promotion, the contributions are major.

Travel expenditures for the Juniata River Valley were an estimated \$60,501,000 in 1999. The trend has been up slightly upward since 1980 but, when examined in constant dollars, the travel industry appears to have suffered some in recent years as tourists have found it easier to travel further and further away from home. The events of September 11, 2001, have shifted the dynamics, however, as traveling by air has become somewhat less appealing. The continued aging of the general population has, at the same time, made the generally passive types of tourism that the Juniata River Valley offers more appealing. Importantly, both Mifflin and Juniata Counties have, since 1980, done better than the Commonwealth as a whole in maintaining their levels of travel expenditures.

The impacts of these travel expenditures are far-reaching as the following table reveals:

Economic Impacts of Domestic Travel Expenditures (1997)			
	Juniata County	Mifflin County	Total
Travel Expenditures			
Transportation	\$5,054,746	\$8,974,433	\$14,029,179
Lodging	\$3,487,155	\$6,191,258	\$9,678,413
Food & Beverage	\$5,744,998	\$10,199,938	\$15,944,936
Entertainment & Recreation	\$2,822,853	\$5,011,826	\$7,834,679
Retail	\$3,802,796	\$6,751,663	\$10,554,459
Other	\$1,100,436	\$1,953,766	\$3,054,202
Total Travel Expenditures	\$22,012,984	\$39,082,884	\$61,095,868
Earnings			
Accommodations, Amusement and Recreation Services	\$1,506,205	\$2,674,187	\$4,180,392
Eating and Drinking Places	\$1,281,758	\$2,275,693	\$3,557,451
Other Businesses	\$1,256,038	\$2,232,039	\$3,488,077
Total Earnings	\$4,044,001	\$7,181,919	\$11,225,920
Employment			
Accommodations, Amusement and Recreation Services	92	174	266
Eating and Drinking Places	109	207	316
Other Businesses	61	117	178
Total Employment	262	498	760
Taxes Generated			
Federal (Including Gas Tax)	\$1,138,563	\$2,021,947	\$3,160,510
State (Including Sales Tax)	\$817,663	\$1,461,354	\$2,279,017
Municipal/Other	\$366,831	\$651,372	\$1,018,203
Total Earnings	\$2,323,057	\$4,134,673	\$6,457,730

The data indicates that Juniata River Valley travel expenditures are mostly derived from passive types of tourism such as scenic drives, outdoor recreation (e.g. hiking, hunting, fishing) and agricultural tourism. These forms of tourism are also growing rapidly in popularity throughout Pennsylvania. The Juniata River Valley region possesses much of what the Hershey/Dutch Country has to offer - farm landscapes, Amish culture, camping, Bed and Breakfasts, historic

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architecture, unique shops and special attractions such as the Belleville Livestock Auction and Farmers Market. It also possesses some advantages not always shared by the remainder of the Valleys of the Susquehanna region. These include nearby Raystown Lake, the Juniata River itself (one of Pennsylvania's most scenic rivers), prominent ridge and valley features and industrial heritage.

First among the advantages, however, is that Juniata River Valley is closer to several urban markets than most of the Valleys of the Susquehanna and is, in some respects, a logical extension of the Hershey/Dutch Country region or alternative to it. There are 27 metropolitan areas within 200 miles of the Juniata River Valley. These urban areas are home to over 46,000,000 persons or 16% of the U.S. population. They include most of Pennsylvania and much of New York, New Jersey and Maryland.

There is, therefore, no lack of visitors with an interest in what the JRVVB has to offer. The challenge is to match those customers to a theme that will bring them to the JRVVB to spend money without destroying the very character that attracts them. It is more a supply side challenge than a demand side one.

Tourism Promotion Services Delivery

The Juniata Valley Area Chamber of Commerce (JVACC) has served in a dual capacity as Chamber of Commerce and as the Juniata-Mifflin Counties Tourist Promotion Agency. It has acted as the official agent of two counties in administering financial aid and other tourist promotion support provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is, nonetheless, an inadequate foundation for any major tourist promotion programs.

Chamber members with businesses unrelated to tourism cannot be expected to financially subsidize new ventures in that business sector. The more these activities directly benefit selected businesses (e.g. packaging of lodging with visits to specific attractions), the more difficult it is to justify using general Chamber revenue to support them.

The recent enactment of a 3% hotel room rental tax by both Counties will generate additional revenues that should be used for such programs. Moreover, the greater these revenues, the more difficult it is to use them effectively in the context of other Chamber activities. A separate tourism promotion organization with its own mission, membership, Board of Directors and staff is necessary to effectively promote tourism in the Juniata River Valley.

A separate nonprofit corporation, the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau (JRVVB), also organized to be tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code, is being formed to take over Tourist Promotion Agency functions and both Counties have passed resolutions designating it as their official agency for this purpose. The new group will solicit its own dues-paying membership, although continued support from the Counties and Chamber will be required

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during the transitional period. The organization will be associated with the Valleys of the Susquehanna tourism promotion program.

It is expected that the Chamber of Commerce and JRVVB will continue to share offices and associated support facilities and services. A move of both organizations into the Mifflin County Historic Courthouse has been anticipated. This will reinforce revitalization efforts and take visitors directly to some of the historic attractions the area has to offer. Downtown Lewistown is also relatively easy to access and the Courthouse location is being made available at a limited cost. Therefore, it is a good option in the short-term at least. Long-term, however, the JRVVB, to be most effective, needs to be convenient to visitors as they enter the region. Most are going to enter from the south, meaning that a permanent location in Mifflintown near the industrial park and the Route 35 and Route 322 intersection would be most advantageous, with a satellite location in Milroy. Shared satellite office space in Juniata County is being planned in the interim.

Some continued sharing of staff by the Chamber and JRVVB is expected, probably at the Executive Director level. However, more defined staff positions will be established with clear responsibilities for each to the respective organizations. This is an appropriate method of separating the two organizations without unnecessarily adding to overhead expenses. It also ensures there will be no competition between the agencies to provide duplicate services to the same customers.

The Juniata and Mifflin Counties' room tax contributions will become the major funding source for the JRVVB, at least at the outset until a broad based membership is established. Therefore, the organization must include the Boards of Commissioners from the two Counties as full partners. Indeed, the JRVVB needs to be a public-private partnership in every respect, with a combination of private and public members along the lines of many regional economic development organizations.

Marketing Plan

There is a 20,000,000 person visitor market available to Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau within 2-3 hours. The secondary market just an hour beyond this is even larger. The JRVVB needs to focus on targeting those portions of the market that want what the region wishes to offer in the context of the vision set forth above. An additional challenge is positioning the Juniata River Valley with respect to its competition.

Market data indicates that the best markets for the JRVVB to target include seven metro areas with a combined population of almost 16 million persons. These include:

- ◇ Washington-Baltimore (the most affluent MSA in the U.S. and also being targeted by the Commonwealth as a whole)

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- ◇ Harrisburg-Lebanon-Carlisle, PA
- ◇ State College (Centre County), PA
- ◇ Philadelphia (includes Wilmington, DE)
- ◇ Lancaster County, PA
- ◇ Reading (Berks County), PA
- ◇ York County, PA

The following advertising and marketing recommendations are offered for the JRVVB:

- 1) The JRVVB should combine the Juniata River Valley name with a theme that can be attached to and become part of the brand image through simple repetition over many years. A good theme encompassing the strengths of the region is "The Juniata River Valley...Discover Our Good Nature."
- 2) History, culture and the natural environment are the products that advertising must sell. This can be done, for instance, by developing simple but effective driving and walking guides that are left at hotels. The natural environment was also very effectively promoted in a publication to celebrate the Juniata River's designation as Pennsylvania's River of the Year 2001. This "Juniata Journey" brochure and the "Juniata River Guide Map" are both very professional pieces that invite visitors to appreciate the River and the surrounding area. The fact that they are prepared on a six-county basis is also good in that it establishes links with other regions for cross-promotion purposes. Examples, stories and professional photos such as used in the "Juniata Journey" brochure are needed to entice interest in other attractions and convey the prominent themes of each participating county.
- 3) Links to these other areas (e.g. the Allegheny Ridge State Heritage Park, the Southern Alleghenies Regional Tourism Federation) and projects such as the Millennium Legacy Trail are essential. The JRVVB cannot rely solely upon its relationship with the Valleys of the Susquehanna program.
- 4) Perry County could be a logical third partner in promoting the Juniata River Valley. It shares the same ridge and valley geography and markets. The JRVVB should explore these opportunities on a case by case basis.
- 5) It is important not to oversell the Amish community. It should be marketed as simply one feature of the Juniata River Valley culture - one reason to "Discover Our Good Nature." The JRVVB can help to ensure this by maintaining such a posture in all its own advertisements.

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- 6) Campgrounds and B&B's are both doing well in Pennsylvania and should be a target of the JRVVB's promotions. Both can do well with websites and a portion of the JRVVB's annual advertising budget (perhaps 10%) should be set aside specifically for the purpose of constantly upgrading the JRVVB website to make it completely interactive, with links to the recreation and tourism inventory and back to individual campgrounds, B&B's and other attractions. Links to ExperiencePA.com are also essential in both directions. The Internet is no longer an extra - it is basic for the travel industry. Additionally, it is cost-effective. The JRVVB needs to ensure 100% of its members have an Internet presence as soon as possible.
- 7) Signage of the new Route 322 Lewistown bypass will be critically important for hotel owners and others. The JRVVB should work with PennDOT to address this need by placing dining and lodging directory signs on the highway.
- 8) Routes 35, 75, 522 and 655 need to be promoted as specific journeys through the heartland of the Juniata River Valley region. Each conveys a particular charm and set of attractions. Scenic drives, "trails" and other tours focused on these Routes are needed.
- 9) Packaging of B&B's, campgrounds and hotels with attractions such as the Brookmere Winery, the Shoop Family Farm, Asher Candies, Raystown Lake and the Historic Greenwood Furnace are essential. The JRVVB needs to lead in putting parties together and arranging for joint advertising in metro market newspapers, websites and brochures.
- 10) The JRVVB needs to continue to work with the Mifflin County Information Technology Department to develop several variations of the Recreation and Tourism Inventory map that will illustrate various trails, trips, tours and groups of similar attractions.
- 11) Tourism promotion seminars are needed for both members and nonmembers of the JRVVB to share its vision, upgrade the professionalism and effectiveness of marketing efforts, achieve more coordination and develop more positive attitudes about tourism in general.
- 12) The JRVVB needs to assume as much control as it is able to achieve over the coordination of events in the Juniata River Valley, both to avoid conflicts where possible and to promote all these events collectively.
- 13) The JRVVB should engage the services of a firm such as the Valleys of the Susquehanna has previously used to gain placement of Juniata River Valley travel stories in the media for major market listed above.

Action Plan

The attached is a summary of major projects recommended in this Plan for the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau to implement:

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No.	Description	Estimated Costs	Economic Benefits	Special Needs	Other Impacts	Implementation
1	<p>Interactive Tourism Map.</p> <p>Finish developing tourism inventory map assembled by Mifflin County Information Technology Department to create an interactive website version</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">In-kind = \$25,000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Maintenance = \$10,000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Map reproduction = \$2,000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Software/support = \$3,000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = \$15,000/year</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">For Tourists:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">User friendly map. Easy to locate attractions. Convertible map in versions. Access to lodging/dining data.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For JRVVB:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Insert for brochures. Reduced drafting costs. Growth in business. More employment. Revenue for JRVVB.</p>	<p>Expertise of Mifflin County Information Technology Department.</p> <p>Up-to-date computer infrastructure.</p>	<p>Improved prestige.</p> <p>Improved self-image.</p> <p>Increased traffic to area.</p> <p>Some new development.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Add layers to map. October 31, 2002. 2) Add data to web. December 31, 2002. 3) Interactive website. December 31, 2002. 4) Print various versions. January 31, 2003.
2	<p>Themed Advertising Program</p> <p>Establish marketing theme (e.g. "The Juniata River Valley...Discover Our Good Nature") for Washington, Harrisburg, State College, Lancaster, York, Reading and Philadelphia. Base theme on agricultural, cultural, historic and natural assets of the region and relaxing atmosphere.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Harrisburg, Lancaster and York campaign - \$25,000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Other markets - \$10,000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ad development - \$15,000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = \$50,000/year</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">For Tourists:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communicates image of area. Preserves quality experience. Preserves the quality of life. Directs visitors to best assets.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For JRVVB:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">New customers. More employment. Revenue for JRVVB.</p>	<p>Professional expertise in advertising and graphic design,.</p> <p>Advertising agency to negotiate rates and place advertising.</p>	<p>Increased traffic to area.</p> <p>Some new development.</p> <p>Higher expectations.</p> <p>More demand for planning.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Secure professional advice and ad agency January 31, 2003. 2) Create and test marketing theme. March 31, 2003. 3) Place advertisements. April 30, 2003. 4) Evaluate effectiveness. December 31, 2003.

No.	Description	Estimated Costs	Economic Benefits	Special Needs	Other Impacts	Implementation
3	<p>Website Development Program for JRVVB Members</p> <p>Provide JRVVB members with a free web page linked to the Tourism Inventory and Map and technical assistance and training to develop that page or a separate website linked JRVVB and ExperiencePA.com.</p>	<p>\$1,000 - \$2,000/year for each website</p> <p>Total = \$15,000/year</p>	<p>For Tourists:</p> <p>Easy to locate attractions. Creates realistic expectations. Internet-based reservations.</p> <p>For JRVVB:</p> <p>Increased competitiveness. Strong Internet presence. Foundation for other marketing. Offers valued member service. Growth in tourism. Quality image of the area.</p>	<p>Up-to-date computer infrastructure.</p> <p>Technical assistance in website development.</p> <p>Capable supervision of any students employed.</p> <p>Funding commitment from the JRVVB.</p>	<p>Increased traffic to area. Some new development. Servicing of tourism providers and visitors. Higher visitor spending. High-quality image. More demand for planning.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Partner with website developers to offer technical assistance. February 28, 2003. 2) Develop guidelines and take applications for 50% cost-sharing. April 30, 2003. 3) Develop websites. September 30, 2003. 4) Publish initial websites. October 31, 2003.
4	<p>Travel Packaging Program</p> <p>Establish a formal travel packaging program for JRVVB members, combining two or more complementary offerings into single-price packages that include a variety of services such as lodging, meals, entrance fees to attractions, entertainment, transportation costs (e.g. Amtrak), guide services or other similar activities.</p>	<p>\$10,000 - \$12,000/year for 1 day/week position less partner chargebacks</p> <p>Total = \$6,000/year</p>	<p>For Tourists:</p> <p>Allows visitors to budget. Saves time in arranging travel. Good value for the customer. Easy to find attractions. Addresses specialized interests.</p> <p>For JRVVB:</p> <p>Adds value and profits. Longer stays. Increased off-season sales. Reducing marketing costs. Can target markets Reaches missed attractions. Business for small providers. Capacity to reach new markets. Develops multi-trip customers.</p>	<p>Staff with entrepreneurial, financial and marketing skills.</p> <p>Training and some professional technical assistance in market research, budgeting, projecting of sales, setting up a point of contact, cross-promotion agreements, booking procedures, promotion and quality control.</p>	<p>Increased traffic to area. Some new development. New tourism. Added jobs. Sustainable tourism business.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Train staff in packaging and establish fee structure. October 31, 2003. 2) Research market and solicit package partners. December 31, 2003. 3) Assemble, market, administer and evaluate package programs. December 31, 2004.

No.	Description	Estimated Costs	Economic Benefits	Special Needs	Other Impacts	Implementation
5	<p>Travel Media Information Program</p> <p>Establish a formal travel media information program within the JRVVB to encourage more writing of travel articles and generation of free publicity for the Juniata River Valley.</p>	<p>\$1,000 - \$2,000/year for travel media kits</p> <p>\$2,000 - \$4,000/year travel press tour costs</p> <p>\$5,000 - \$6,000/year JRVVB staff time</p> <p>Total = \$12,000/year</p>	<p>For Tourists:</p> <p>Education regarding the area. Increased appreciation of area. Higher quality experiences.</p> <p>For JRVVB:</p> <p>Inexpensive or free advertising. Tailored brand image. Increased sustainable tourism.</p>	<p>Staff trained to write news releases, assemble professional press kits and develop story lines for articles.</p> <p>The ability to relate well with travel media representatives.</p>	<p>Increased traffic to area. Some new development. Higher expectations. More demand for planning.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Establish travel media information page on JRVVB website and assemble travel press kit. December 31, 2003. 2) Begin regular e-mail communications with local and regional media. January 31, 2004. 3) Organize first scheduled travel media tour. June 30, 2004.
6	<p>Promote Agricultural Tourism Ventures</p> <p>Encourage the development of additional agricultural tourism businesses to complement other tourism offerings and build on the "Discover Our Good Nature" theme.</p>	<p>\$1,000 - \$2,000/year for promotion</p> <p>\$3,000 - \$5,000/year JRVVB staff time</p> <p>Total = \$7,000/year</p>	<p>For Tourists:</p> <p>Broader visitor opportunities. Increased appreciation of area.</p> <p>For JRVVB:</p> <p>Preserves rural character. Additional tourism income Improved farm income. Preserves working farms.</p>	<p>Coordination with Cooperative Extension Service.</p> <p>Technical assistance from other sources (e.g. legal advice, design assistance)</p>	<p>More sustainable tourism.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Survey need for specific enterprises and farmer interest. June 30, 2003. 2) Work with Cooperative Extension Service to identify resources and conduct seminars. December 31, 2003 3) Publish brochure, guide and map to farms with direct sales. June 30, 2004.

No.	Description	Estimated Costs	Economic Benefits	Special Needs	Other Impacts	Implementation
7	<p>Trail and Tour Development</p> <p>Support the development of additional trails and tours matching the objectives of this Regional Tourism Plan, including scenic byways, possible scenic river designation, canal trails, bus tours and associated mapping and signing with the "Juniata River Valley...Discover Our Good Nature" theme.</p>	<p>\$5,000 - \$6,000/year JRVVB staff time</p> <p>\$10,000/year for welcome sign program</p> <p>Total = \$16,000/year</p>	<p>For Tourists:</p> <p>Increase visitor access to sites. Higher quality experiences.</p> <p>For JRVVB:</p> <p>Tailored brand image. Increased sustainable tourism.</p>	<p>JRVVB staff coordination of public/private efforts.</p> <p>JRVVB leadership to achieve consistency in signage, initiate contacts with governmental entities and pull together various parties.</p>	<p>Increased traffic to area. Some new development.</p> <p>New tourism. Added jobs. Sustainable tourism business.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Identify best trail and scenic tour opportunities. December 31, 2003. 2) Establish task force to pursue designations. March 31, 2004. 3) Develop signage and promotion plans. September 30, 2004. 4) Erect signage and promote routes. June 30, 2005. 5) Repeat process for new trails and tours.
8	<p>Community and Economic Development for Tourism</p> <p>Implement community and economic development programs to increase the Region's attractiveness for tourism including; downtown revitalization, revitalization of gateways, planning for future high-quality growth, coordination with surrounding counties, financial incentives for tourism business development and tourism infrastructure investment.</p>	<p>\$5,000 - \$10,000/year JRVVB staff time</p> <p>Total = \$10,000/year</p>	<p>For Tourists:</p> <p>Preserves rural character. Higher quality experiences.</p> <p>For JRVVB:</p> <p>Increased sustainable tourism. Higher tourism income.</p>	<p>JRVVB staff participation in community development, planning and economic development activities.</p>	<p>Community and economic development.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Identify needed tourist attractions, businesses and development projects. December 31, 2003. 2) Participate in work of entities pursuing these community and economic development projects. Ongoing. 3) Prepare inventory of financial assistance programs for tourism businesses. June 30, 2004 and continue annually.

INTRODUCTION

Mifflin and Juniata Counties, Pennsylvania, constitute the Juniata River Valley region. The two Counties have joined forces to promote tourism and both recently adopted a room tax to generate funding for this purpose. This Plan, financed by a combination of local and State funding, is intended to establish the foundation of a comprehensive tourism development and promotion program for the region. It builds on other efforts such as the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan and the previous activities of the Juniata-Mifflin Counties Tourist Promotion Agency.

Stakeholders in regional tourism development and promotion were invited to a special meeting held in December, 2001 to analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to tourism development in the Juniata River Valley region. A summary of these follows:

Strengths of the Juniata River Valley Region for Tourism Development

- ◇ The Juniata River is a recognized natural resource of outstanding value, having been designated as Pennsylvania's featured River of the Year for 2001 by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
- ◇ The Port Royal Speedway offers a special attraction geared toward one of the nation's top spectator sports.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley is rich in Civil War, transportation and industrial heritage that could form the basis of more heritage tourism promotion.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley is part of a strongly defined ridge and valley geography that offers numerous scenic vistas.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley region is home to Amish communities that help preserve a pastoral quality of appeal to heritage and other tourists.
- ◇ State Game Lands and other public open spaces are abundant within the region and help to ensure the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley has a particularly strong Native American heritage.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley is recognized for its hunting and fishing opportunities because of events such as the National Rifle Competition and fishing derbies.
- ◇ Gliding competitions in the Juniata River Valley offer another unique feature that complements its image as a ridge and valley region.
- ◇ The distinctly rural atmosphere of the two counties provides a pleasing and sharp contrast with the urban areas to which it might market itself.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley offers many camping opportunities that complement its outdoor recreational image and build

- on a trail of such activities throughout the Valleys of the Susquehanna region.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley is central and convenient to a number of urban areas, including Harrisburg, York, Baltimore, Washington, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. It is, also, close to State College and the Pennsylvania State University, arguably serving as the "Keystone of the Keystone State."
 - ◇ The availability of both Amtrak and air service to the Juniata River Valley gives it a transportation edge over many other outdoor recreation areas.
 - ◇ The close proximity and relationship of Raystown Lake to the Juniata River Valley region provides a joint marketing advantage for both.
 - ◇ The Juniata River Valley region includes numerous examples of distinctive architecture that serve to create a special scenic character.
 - ◇ The two counties have only limited tax bases and financing capabilities for major tourism or economic development initiatives.
 - ◇ There is no college or university within the lower Juniata River Valley, making it difficult to offer nearby athletic and cultural attractions.
 - ◇ Other than the Juniata River and its trails there is no large single attraction within the two counties that provides a base of tourism on which to build.
 - ◇ There are relatively few large scale events in the Juniata River Valley and very few attempts to use these for business or tourism promotion purposes.
 - ◇ There is relatively little promotion of the Juniata River Valley as a region for tourism development purposes.
 - ◇ Coordination of tourism promotion within the Juniata River Valley and with adjoining regions has been lacking until recently and is still limited.

Weaknesses of the Juniata River Valley Region for Tourism Development

- ◇ The major highway infrastructure of the Juniata River Valley is undergoing continuing but unfinished upgrading that leaves it in a poor position, in the short term, to promote accessibility.
- ◇ There is the appearance of some water quality problems with the Juniata River that detracts from its appeal.
- ◇ The lack of control over Juniata River flows makes it difficult to promote it for recreational boating on a regular basis.
- ◇ Many communities within the Juniata River Valley have demonstrated provincial attitudes that make it difficult to promote or develop tourism on a regional basis.
- ◇ Highway access to the Juniata River Valley is limited to a few major

gateways, making it difficult to promote more remote areas of Juniata and Mifflin.

Opportunities within the Juniata River Valley Region for Tourism Development

- ◇ The Juniata River Valley is a logical extension of the Paths of Progress Heritage Corridor and could be easily linked to it for promotional purposes.
- ◇ The Millennium Trail from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg provides an opportunity to link the Juniata River Valley to other areas in promoting outdoor recreation attractions.
- ◇ Jacks Mountain and other private holdings may be excellent resources for growing the Juniata River Valley's hunting industry through recreational leasing by private landowners.
- ◇ Raystown Lake and Penn State University events offer cross-promotional opportunities for Juniata River Valley events and attractions.
- ◇ The Juniata River is an excellent bass fishery and Lost Creek is one of a few natural trout streams. These are some of the best fishing resources in Pennsylvania.
- ◇ The ridge and valley nature of the Juniata River Valley presents a number of air gliding, hiking and mountain biking trail opportunities (e.g. expanding upon the existing Mountain Bike Rally).
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley can be linked to other heritage corridors on the basis of the region's relatively good North-South connections.
- ◇ The Raystown to Williamsport Greenway, by linking outdoor recreation attractions, can be used to lead visitors to the Juniata River Valley, particularly from the south, if it is extended toward Bedford. as planned.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley's relatively strong farm images offer an excellent opportunity to develop and promote agricultural tourism pursuits.
- ◇ The Chamber of Commerce promotion of "Goose Day" offers a unique tourism angle that can be expanded upon as a niche marketing opportunity.
- ◇ When new interstate highway connections are completed the Juniata River will be far more accessible, creating new advertising possibilities.
- ◇ There are numerous opportunities to work with the Valleys of the Susquehanna program in promoting the Juniata River Valley region by packaging their attractions and events with local activities and tours.
- ◇ Historic sites and architectural assets throughout the Juniata River Valley present opportunities for developing themed attractions linked through driving tours and trails.
- ◇ Port Royal Speedway improvements and

events provide a method of reaching different tourists than conventional promotional efforts and introducing them to other attractions.

Threats to Tourism Development within the Juniata River Valley Region

- ◇ There have been several well publicized drug abuse problems within the region that have created an unfavorable image needing correction.
- ◇ Uncoordinated development can destroy the Juniata River Valley's appealing working landscape without careful planning and some land use regulation to protect the best features.
- ◇ Increasing tourism is not a universally shared goal within the Juniata River Valley region. Both local officials and the citizenry may need to be sold on the economic benefits of tourism development.
- ◇ The Juniata River Valley is split geographically by its ridges and valleys, making the promotion of activities across the region difficult without a strong regional image and consistent branding program.
- ◇ Political support for tourism development depends on the cooperation of officeholders who come and go, reinforcing the need for a comprehensive tourism plan that sets a course for the long-term.
- ◇ Many of the industries located in the Juniata River Valley are struggling. Economic development in general is a challenge demanding that tourism be part of a comprehensive strategy.
- ◇ Tourism development will lead to traffic increases with associated impacts on the highway system and secondary roads in
- ◇ The new interstate highway (I-99) will bypass Lewistown and isolate it and other parts of the Juniata River Valley from travelers passing through Pennsylvania unless new connections are created. These are essential.
- ◇ Negative attitudes can be an obstacle to tourism development without a shared vision that motivates stakeholders to pursue new ideas and approaches to marketing.
- ◇ Exploitation of Amish communities could be counterproductive and actually detract from the appeal of these areas unless tourism development efforts are constructed to avoid this.
- ◇ Lack of financial resources could prevent implementation of tourism development plans without dedicated funding from the room tax and additional outside grants and loans.
- ◇ Declining populations and outmigration of youth could deprive the Juniata River Valley of the human resources and energy to pursue new initiatives without a vision in which these individuals are willing to invest.

particular. This could strain the resources of communities without long-range planning and capital improvements budgeting.

This analysis was also used to assemble a vision and set of major goals for tourism development in the Juniata River Valley region. These follow:

Tourism Development Vision for the Juniata River Valley Region

The Juniata River Valley is a region of attractive historical and natural resources. Its blend of history, working landscapes and spectacular features offers visitors relaxing, yet intriguing, experiences. These will be developed and promoted in ways that preserve the Valley's essential character. The Juniata River Valley will be marketed in a coordinated manner as a single region with links to adjoining regions. Tourism development and promotion will be focused on heritage and natural resources based tourism, preserving the quality of life for residents and continuously improving the quality of experience for visitors.

Tourism Development Goals for the Juniata River Valley Region

GOAL NO. 1 - Develop a Juniata River Valley brand image to undergird all tourism development and promotion initiatives.

- ◇ Use the Juniata River Valley image to

jointly promote Juniata and Mifflin Counties outside the region as a destination.

- ◇ Promote the Juniata River Valley as the gateway to other attractions in the two counties, linking individual attractions under this theme to multiply the value of advertising.
- ◇ Use the Juniata River Valley to create a recognizable image of the two counties that will help intercept travelers passing through the region on improved highways.
- ◇ Promote the Juniata River Valley as the connecting link to other nearby attractions (e.g. Raystown Lake, the Millennium Trail and the Susquehanna River Valley) to trade off their appeal.
- ◇ Maximize the impact of room tax tourism expenditures by consistently promoting the Juniata River Valley in all advertisements.

GOAL NO. 2 - Improve the attitudes and self-esteem of Juniata River Valley communities, individuals and businesses as a foundation for new tourism initiatives.

- ◇ Increase the involvement of Juniata River Valley businesses in existing and nearby events that celebrate the region.
- ◇ Train tourist business owners in entrepreneurship.
- ◇ Sell Juniata River Valley businesses and communities on the benefits of tourism.

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- ◇ Increase communications among business owners, residents and visitors through events, publications and shared promotions.
- ◇ Provide tourism and other businesses with hospitality training.
- ◇ Use local schools to educate youth about the history and values of the Juniata River Valley, to instill greater pride in the region and to improve hospitality attitudes.
- ◇ Promote the unique talents of Juniata River Valley residents (e.g. furniture and quilt making).
- ◇ Identify, develop and recruit target businesses and attractions that will complement the Juniata River Valley's tourism offerings.
- ◇ Develop tourism in the Juniata River Valley through a measured, timed response action plan that is realistic and fits the Valley's vision.

GOAL NO. 3 - Identify the Juniata River Valley's long-term tourism and community development needs and adopt comprehensive plans for addressing them.

- ◇ Improve the quality of the Juniata River Valley (including the River itself), by enforcement of existing environmental regulations and organized volunteer efforts.
- ◇ Increase the availability of parking in downtown areas for the convenience of tourists and shoppers.
- ◇ Finish the Narrows project (scheduled for 2007) and develop the proposed trail system connecting the Counties.
- ◇ Continually update and expand upon the inventory of cultural and recreational attractions for purposes of interpretation and promotion.
- ◇ **GOAL NO. 4** - Coordinate all tourism promotion activities within the Juniata River Valley, and with other groups such as the Big Valley Association, to buttress the brand image and leverage investments in advertising and marketing.
- ◇ Improve communications and the level of coordination among business and tourism promotion entities through newsletters and frequent meetings.
- ◇ Expand the promotion of major events, focusing on those that serve to reinforce the Juniata River Valley brand image.
- ◇ Use the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau as a foundation for cooperative advertising among unrelated but complementary businesses.
- ◇ Increase cooperation among business groups in the two Counties, using the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau as the basis for cooperative marketing and development of funding sources.
- ◇ Jointly promote the Juniata River Valley with the Valleys of the Susquehanna and adjoining regions (e.g. publishing "Currents of the Juniata").

- ◇ Expand the use of regional forms of advertising such as cable television.
- ◇ Use the inventory of cultural and recreational attractions to produce a coordinated map and calendar of events for the Juniata River Valley as a handout and public service on behalf of all businesses.

GOAL NO. 5 - Continually solicit grass roots input in developing tourism initiatives.

- ◇ Ensure the maximum participation of all business owners and business groups in the two Counties in crafting promotions through joint meetings and frequent communications.
- ◇ Coordinate tourism promotion with school activities.
- ◇ Work with schools and business organizations to emphasize tourism development opportunities as means of retaining the region's youth.

INTRODUCTION

The Juniata River Valley contains a vast treasure trove of scenic, natural, recreational, historic and cultural resources. Together, these resources offer a visitor a multitude of ways to explore the river valley, learn about its rich heritage and provide the basis for a unique tourist destination. It is important that the tourism map created to promote the Juniata River Valley graphically illustrate the intrinsic qualities of the region while making it easy for visitors to navigate their way from one attraction to another.

CREATING A TOURISM MAP OF MIFFLIN AND JUNIATA COUNTIES

It is recommended that a general Tourism Map be developed for the Juniata River Valley, from which more detailed special focus maps can easily be developed. The following are ways in which the Geographic Information System (GIS) data layers developed by the Mifflin County Information Technology Department can be used to promote tourism within the Juniata River Valley.

Transportation

The Juniata River Valley is accessible through linkages to the surrounding Interstate Highway System [I-81 & I-80 via State Route 322], Amtrak passenger rail service, and air transportation. Accessibility will be further enhanced with ongoing highway improvements. These connections should be emphasized on

the Tourism Map as follows:

- ◇ The Tourism Map while placing an emphasis on Mifflin-Juniata Counties, should extend beyond the Counties' Boundaries to clearly show the linkage to Interstates 80, 81, 99 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike.
- ◇ The Amtrak Station in Lewistown and rail line through the region should be identified on the map.
- ◇ Emphasize Federal and State Roads and include only major local roads.
- ◇ Use a symbol to identify airports with gliding, charter and commercial service.
- ◇ Multi-modal linkages should be developed as part of the overall Regional Tourism Plan so that tourist can easily transfer from the Amtrak Station or airport to their destination.

Natural and Recreational Resources

The Juniata River was designated as Pennsylvania's featured River of the Year for 2001 by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The Tourism Map developed for the Juniata River Valley must capitalize of this natural & recreational resource. A few recommendations for doing so follow:

- ◇ The Juniata River should be emphasized on the tourism map with a thicker line weight to draw attention to the Juniata

River Valley. The river will provide a visual “common thread” that will tie the region together as a single tourist destination.

- ◇ All public access points to the Juniata River must be clearly identified on the Tourism Map. Symbols for public access points for boating, canoeing, and fishing are recommended.
- ◇ The Tuscarora State Forest is an attraction to outdoor enthusiasts and should be shown on the map along with public access points clearly identified. Other similar attractions associated with State lands should be similarly depicted.
- ◇ Various campgrounds, such as Buttonwood, Locust and Shoops, are popular accommodations for outdoor enthusiasts. These facilities should be clearly labeled on the map.
- ◇ There are a variety of public hiking trails throughout the Juniata River Valley. The trails along with public access/parking points should be identified.
- ◇ The Pennsylvania Departments of Conservation and Natural Resources, Fish & Boat Commission and the Game Commission may be able to assist in the funding of the Tourism Map.

Historic Resources

Heritage Tourism is one of the fastest growing segments in the tourism industry. Throughout

the Juniata River Valley there are over fifty historic sites that provide an opportunity to develop tourism packages with the assistance of tour operators and local historical societies. The Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau, working with the Mifflin County Information Technology Department, has prepared an inventory of these sites. Some suggestions for using it follow:

- ◇ It is recommended that an “Historic Site” symbol be used to denote all historic sites on the overall Tourism Map.
- ◇ Throughout the Juniata River Valley there are clusters of historic sites. These clusters provide opportunities to develop tourism packages with tour operators and local historical societies.
- ◇ Self-guided tours could also be developed. Using the general Tourism Map as a starting point, special “Historic Juniata River Valley” touring maps could be developed.

Big Valley and Amish Farmsteads

Within the Juniata River Valley there are areas that have a unique character such as the “Big Valley” and the clusters of Amish farmsteads that exist within that particular sub-region. These areas should be clearly shown on the Tourism Map. Some suggestions along this line follow:

- ◇ Use a transparent overlay or other highlighting mechanism to denote the Big Valley area.

- ◇ The Mifflin County Information Technology Department has a data layer that includes Amish farmsteads. This data layer should be included on the Tourism Map.
- ◇ Places where Amish crafts are offered for sale should be clearly labeled on the map.
- ◇ Wineries, farm stands, and specialty shops throughout the Big Valley should be shown on the map.
- ◇ Companion maps to the overall Tourism Map for the Juniata River Valley should be developed for particular geographic areas of interest to give the visitors greater levels of detail.

INTRODUCTION

The Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau (JRVVB) is being created by Juniata and Mifflin Counties to serve as the Tourism Promotion Agency (TPA) for the two-county area straddling the Juniata River. Case studies of other multi-jurisdictional tourist agencies in the northeast have been prepared to provide comparative examples of the potential benefit of a coordinated tourist promotion effort to the two-county Juniata River Valley area.

**Questions Case Studies Are
Designed to Answer**

The case studies have involved questions designed to reveal the following:

- ◇ Those initiatives or projects the JRVVB can reasonably expect to work based on the experiences of other comparable areas;
- ◇ Likely economic benefits of coordinated tourist promotion for local economies;
- ◇ Marketing and promotion strategies that work for rural multi-county tourist areas;
- ◇ Types of businesses that the JRVVB should endeavor to encourage to complement their strategies; and
- ◇ Projects suggested by these examples that could warrant further study for JRVVB.

A set of initial questions was used in telephone interviews of seven tourist promotion agencies to determine and illustrate the type of

experience the JRVVB can reasonably expect to have when promoting a Juniata-Mifflin two-county tourism concept:

- 1) Please identify the main jurisdictions (e.g., counties or towns) that your agency works to promote.
- 2) How does your organization measure its success? Does your organization attempt to measure its impact on the local economy, and if so, how does it measure its impact?
- 3) Which programs/practices have worked well in marketing your agency?
- 4) Which programs/practices has your agency tried that have not worked well?
- 5) Has your organization tracked visitors, spending, etc. since its inception? If yes, how do these indicators compare to the situation before your organization was in place? Does a quantitative means of comparison exist?
- 6) What types of secondary businesses or activities are key to your area in attracting and retaining visitors?
- 7) What projects has your organization undertaken, or plan to undertake in the near future, to further support tourism?
- 8) What do you feel are the benefits of “working together” at promoting tourism?
- 9) How does your organization interact with other organizations with similar missions and similar geography, such as county-level tourism departments?

10) What is your “mission” and how well do you feel it is being carried out?

**Case Study Locations
and Sources**

◇ **Columbia-Montour Visitors Bureau**
Columbia and Montour Counties (PA)
121 Papermill Road
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
(800) 847-4810
Contact: **Coralee Kindt**

◇ **Historic River Towns of Westchester**
Westchester County (NY)
143 Bedford Road, Katonah, NY 10536
(914) 232-6583
Contact: **Nancy Gold**
rivertowns@hudsonriver.com

◇ **Seaway Trail, Inc.**
St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Oswego, Cayuga,
Wayne, Monroe, Chautauqua, Erie,
Niagara and Orleans Counties (NY)
and Erie County (PA)
P.O. Box 660, Sackets Harbor, NY 13685
(315) 646-1000
Contact: **David Cutter**
david@seawaytrail.com

◇ **Allegheny Ridge State Heritage Park**
Blair, Cambria and Huntingdon
Counties (PA)
1421-27 Twelfth Avenue, P.O. Box 348
Altoona, PA 16603
(814) 940-1922
Contact: **Claudia Pequignot**
Cpequignot@alleghenyridge.org

◇ **Northwest Pennsylvania Great
Outdoors**
Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Elk, Forest,
and Jefferson Counties (PA)
175 Main Street
Brookville, PA 15825
(800) 348-9393 x 22
Contact: **David Morris**
dave@pagreatoutdoors.com

◇ **Adirondack Regional Tourism Council**
Clinton, Franklin, Essex, Hamilton, Lewis,
Warren, and St. Lawrence Counties (NY)
P.O. Box 2149
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 846-8016
Contact: **Douglas Yu**
info@adirondacks.org

◇ **Oil Heritage Region**
Venango and Crawford Counties (PA)
P.O. Box 128
Oil City, PA 16301
(800) 483-6264 x18
Contact: **Betty Squire**
info@oilregiontourist.com

◇ **Greater Hartford Tourism**
Greater Hartford Region (CT)
234 Murphy Road
Hartford, CT 06114
(800) 793-4480
Contact: Anne Lee
AnneL@ghtd.org

**Columbia-Montour
Visitors Bureau**

The Columbia-Montour Visitors Bureau's (CMVB) mission is to promote the "two-county region to travelers and those wishing to relocate to the area." According to CMVB staff, they have been successful in fulfilling this mission and promoting tourism because they are both small, rural counties and find it beneficial to share resources.

Columbia County, for example, does not have enough lodging to support the number of tourists generated by the events that take place in the County, but Montour County has plenty of lodging. The CMVB, therefore, has found it beneficial to promote events and attractions in both counties even though visitors are most likely staying in Montour County.

This enhances both the lodging and the entertainment experiences and allows the CMVB to assemble more complete promotions. The two counties indicate they also find it generally beneficial to be able to pool their resources to save money and make it go farther.

Major attractions/events in the Columbia-Montour Region include:

- ◇ Bloomsburg Fair – one of the largest agricultural fairs in the northeast.
 - ◇ Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine and Steam Train.
 - ◇ Catawissa Historical Railroad Caboose Museum – 13 restored cabooses.
 - ◇ Antiques – The two counties have a strong presence of antique retail.
 - ◇ Old Clover Leaf Village - restored Victorian village in Danville, near Interstate-80.
 - ◇ History – Several towns in the region were established in the late 1700s.
- Other activities in which the CMVB engage include the publication of a visitors guide, calendar of events, and maps with suggested tours. The CMVB also sponsors large regional events with neighboring tourist promotion agencies. These include "Valleys of Susquehanna" promotions together with the present Juniata-Mifflin Counties Tourist Promotion Agency.
- Other items of note include:
- ◇ The CMVB raises much of its own money by sponsoring regional events such as the covered bridge festival and biannual antique shows.
 - ◇ The CMVB provides relocation information to potential new residents.
 - ◇ Bloomsburg is also the site of Bloomsburg University.

Seaway Trail, Inc.

The ability to offer a “bigger” product while saving money is among the major benefits of operating an 11-county tourist agency, according to Seaway Trail, Inc.’s David Cutter. Tourists want their trip to contain a variety of activities, a mixture of urban and rural destinations, and highly specialized services, and the regional scope of ST facilitates the provision of this variety.

Among the promotional practices engaged in by the Seaway Trail, Inc. (ST) are the production of a series of guidebooks (for sale), an annual magazine that contains editorial stories and event information, elder hostel tours, theme tour packages (e.g., War of 1812), and kiosks/displays at heavily trafficked areas. The kiosks contain an overall map of the Trail, a detailed map of the kiosk area, tourists attractions related to the entire area in addition to Trail-related attractions, and a local community bulletin.

Seaway Trail, Inc. has attempted to measure the economic impact of their presence on the local economy but has not had any success, the task being better suited, in their view, to county-level tourist promotion agencies. They do attempt to indirectly quantify their success, however, using methods that include the tracking of agency membership over the last 14 years, the amount of grant funds received, and the number of visitors to the Sackets Harbor Discovery Center/visitors’ center. Although the primary purpose of the visitors’ center is to promote the Sackets Harbor area, it is also used to promote the entire Seaway Trail.

In the past, ST has spent money on television and radio advertising, but found that these forms of promotion are not effective for them. One possible reason they cite is that their advertising budget is too small to “do it right.” This forces the agency to come up with more creative ways to promote themselves for less money. They feel that these efforts are more worthwhile.

ST is supported by a variety of secondary tourist attractions. Attractions include:

- ◇ Lighthouses - there are approximately 20 lighthouses along the Seaway Trail and nine are open to the public.
- ◇ Architecture (e.g., cobblestone buildings in central NYS, and prominent historical buildings in Buffalo and Rochester).
- ◇ Fishing - salmon fishing is very popular in the fall.
- ◇ Boating.
- ◇ Bed and breakfasts.
- ◇ Historical reenactments.
- ◇ Heritage tours/attractions (e.g., War of 1912, French Indian War).
- ◇ Agri-tourism (e.g., apple season in late summer-early fall).

ST intends to expand and continue its program of package tours this season and into the future. They presently sell about seven package tours, all of which have themes pertaining to the Seaway Trail.

Examples of the existing package tours include fishing, toys, Niagara Falls, 1000 Islands, lighthouses, and “issues” (e.g., Underground Railroad, Suffragette Movement). ST plans to create more of these theme tours because they have proven to be extremely popular and ST works with hotels on creating these package tours.

ST was created in 1978 and is funded through membership dues, advertising sales, admission to the Discovery Center, state legislative line items and other grants.

Allegheny Ridge Corporation

The Allegheny Ridge Corporation (ARC) was created in 1992 when the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources designated the Allegheny Ridge Heritage Area as part of its Heritage Parks Program. ARC identifies, interprets, and restores the cultural, historic, and natural resources in its service area. The Heritage Parks Program is a multi-tiered approach to the conservation, development, management, and promotion of Pennsylvania’s heritage, especially industrial heritage.

The ARC service area covers central and western Pennsylvania, including Blair, Cambria, Huntingdon, and Somerset Counties. The ARC also promotes other state heritage parks and is active in the regional tourism confederation.

Six interrelated goals guide the ARC’s work; economic development, partnerships, cultural conservation, recreation and open space, and

education and interpretation.

Through regional partnerships and grassroots planning, the ARC identifies strategies to protect, enhance, and promote heritage resources to strengthen regional economies through increased tourism, creation of new jobs, and stimulation of public and private partnerships for new investment opportunities.

Practices that have added to the ARC’s success in recent years include community partnerships, collaborative partnerships with local CVBs, and cross-site promotion. The ARC has also created a curriculum for elementary and secondary schools in the service area based on local sites. Other programs that are under development include school group tours to be funded through a regional marketing initiative grant. The ARC does not track visitors or measure their success.

According to the ARC representatives, benefits of a regional approach to tourism promotion include greater reach, audience, networking base, and opportunity for collaborative partnerships.

**Northwest Pennsylvania
Great Outdoors Visitors Bureau**

According to Dave Morris, Northwest Pennsylvania Great Outdoors Visitors Bureau’s (NPGOV) director, the rationale for creating a multi-county tourism agency was to achieve a critical mass of attractions and gather enough resources to brand rural Pennsylvania

as a destination. The effort started as a one-county effort (Clarion County), but when County tourism officials realized the extent of the statewide competition (e.g., the Poconos, etc.), they sought to expand the agency during the 1980s. The fifth and sixth counties joined the agency in 2000. The NPGOV B does not seek to further expand. However, the NPGOV B does work with adjacent counties on specific projects and promotions.

The NPGOV B's mission is to promote outdoor tourism activities for the six-county area of Northwest Pennsylvania. The key activities the NPGOV B promotes are biking, hiking, canoeing, and wildlife activities. The NPGOV B Region is also home to Punxsutawney Phil and Groundhog Day.

Outdoor activities in the NPGOV B Region are further supported by a strong presence of antique conglomerates, local craft dealers, flea markets and Amish-made products. The NPGOV B works closely with hotels, campgrounds and restaurants to package the NPGOV B Region as a full-service tourist destination.

The NPGOV B considers the golf-marketing program, now entering its seventh year, a noteworthy success. This program, which has grown beyond the NPGOV B's six-county region, packages golf courses with hotels. The NPGOV B allows hotels and golf courses that are not part of the NPGOV B Region to join the program for financial support.

The NPGOV B is now attempting to similarly package other outdoor activities such as hiking and canoeing. The annual Elk Expo, now in its second year, is another program coordinated by

the NPGOV B. The NPGOV B Region is home to the only free roaming elk herd in Pennsylvania and the Elk Expo allows tourists to watch the elk roam.

Finally, the NPGOV B is installing interactive touch-screen kiosks at heavily trafficked areas during the summer of 2002. Due to the heavily forested areas along the state highways, signage is sometimes ineffective or unattractive. The kiosks are aimed at attracting transient visitors to the NPGOV B Region, and are designed to teach them about the Region and entice them to stay for dinner or to visit an attraction during their drive through Pennsylvania.

Products the NPGOV B produces include an event guide, visitors guide, a travel newspaper, and a website. The NPGOV B measures its success by the number of overnight stays. The NPGOV B's primary marketing strategy is cross-selling. For example, if a potential visitor requests information on Punxsutawney Phil, they will receive information on other area events and attractions.

The NPGOV B does track visitor trends by surveying visitors to the website and sending an annual mail survey to all of their contacts. They estimate that 85 percent of those who call the office for information actually visit the Region. The State estimates of visitors for each county (see the Chapter 4 discussion of Pennsylvania Economic Impact Analysis data) are the only means of comparing visitation before and after the existence of the NPGOV B.

Visitation numbers have increased since the agency was created, but the staff is hesitant to take full credit for that, as the numbers have increased statewide and the region has grown.

Staff members could not think of any strategies that have not worked reasonably well for them, but noted that the small staff (three people) and limited budget often prevent them from engaging in programs that could promote them further.

Other items of note include the following:

- ◇ The NPGOVB adheres to a structured planning process in which a work program is laid out annually.
- ◇ The NPGOVB has a Board of Directors comprising three tourism officials from each county. The Board meets quarterly and oversees the progress made on the agency's work program.

**Adirondack Regional
Tourism Council**

The Adirondack Regional Tourism Council (ARTC) is the official "I Love New York" agency for promoting the Adirondack Region. The advantages of operating a seven-county tourism promotion agency include the opportunity to pool resources and achieve economies of scale. ARTC feels that comprehensive regional tourism efforts make travel to the Region less confusing for tourists, while helping the individual counties promote strengths and downplay weaknesses.

The ARTC's mission is to promote tourism in the Adirondack Region. The key activities are skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, biking, canoeing, kayaking, and camping. Scenic driving tours, heritage tourism, and the small quaint villages

along the routes to the major tourist destinations further support these activities.

Current projects on which the ARTC is working include partnering with the State Department of Transportation to promote the statewide Scenic Byways program using print and television advertising, and relaunching the ARTC website with new and improved features that will include the ability to make online reservations at hotels and attractions.

Strategies the ARTC feel have proven successful include the website, magazine advertisements, e-mail, some television, press releases, direct mailings to specific interest groups and their status as the official New York State clearinghouse for the Adirondack Region. The ARTC also posts its name and telephone number "everywhere it can."

ARTC measures its success by surveying those who make inquiries every couple of years, as time and staffing permits (the agency employs two paid staff persons). ARTC typically judges the success of individual campaigns based on the number of inquiries received. A new partnership with SUNY Potsdam will result in the development of indicators to measure ARTC's success and quantify the impact that tourism has on the regional economy on an ongoing basis.

ARTC finds it difficult to accurately measure tourism in the region because attractions include a mixture of public and private resources and many do not have a defined boundary. Another hindrance is the general lack of tourism planning at the local level.

The ARTC does not track visitors to the

region, but many attractions do. Also, the ARTC shares space, resources, and staff with the “I Love New York” welcome center and, in that capacity, tracks visitors to the welcome center. Visitors to the welcome center are given information on the Adirondacks.

It can be assumed that the partnerships ARTC has formed with New York State and the “I Love New York” campaign have been a major component of the agency’s success. Though the ARTC cannot quantify their impact on tourism in the region, they do feel that they have been helpful and true to their mission of promoting tourism in the Adirondacks.

ARTC board members include representatives of the tourist promotion agencies for each county. The ARTC is county-funded, and receives state matching funds for publications.

Oil Heritage Region

The Oil Heritage Region (OHR) is a heritage tourism area that encompasses all of one county and part of another in rural Northwest Pennsylvania, but often works with tourism agencies from adjoining counties on promoting the entire region.

The OHR feels that there are financial advantages of working with neighboring tourism agencies. For example, the OHR recently joined with neighboring agencies to take out a full-page ad in an AAA publication that promoted “rural Pennsylvania.” OHR believes that if people can be enticed to visit rural Pennsylvania, the attractions in Venango and Crawford Counties will ultimately benefit.

The most noteworthy attractions under the OHR jurisdiction include the Oil Creek and Titus Railroad, which takes visitors to Pithole ghost town; the Drake Well Museum, the site where the world’s first oil was drilled in 1859; and DeBence Antique Music World, a collection of over 100 antique musical instruments. Secondary, or supporting, tourism attractions include Victorian architecture and antique shops.

Venango County is a relatively small county, and the tourism agency consequently has a small budget and staff. However, last year, the state of Pennsylvania passed a law to allow individual counties to enact a hotel excise tax to fund tourism promotion agencies. Venango County opted to enact this tax and this year, OHR received \$62,000. This was the first time OHR had a substantial budget with which to work.

OHR plans include an \$80,000 advertising campaign that will include cable television ads, radio ads, and billboards – all targeting the Erie and Youngstown areas. Other projects underway include a lodging guide, an antiquing guide, and an updated visitors guide. The OHR has historically published a visitors guide, as well as an annual newspaper, and hosts a website.

The OHR relies on feedback and word of mouth to measure its success. OHR solicits feedback from tourists that contact the agency for information and keeps in close contact with merchants and attractions to see how business is doing. A future measure of success in attracting visitors will be the amount of hotel tax collected. The OHR also uses hotel occupancy rates to compare the number of

visits each quarter.

The OHR Board of Directors comprises 24 members, including representatives from the counties, as well as from the hotel industry, attractions, businesses, economic development agencies, and the local chamber of commerce. The OHR office is located in the county economic development office, indicative of the fact that the county sees tourism as a valuable tool for economic development in the region.

Finally, OHR will be featured on an interactive kiosk on a nearby state highway. The agency is currently developing a compendium of regional resources including restaurants, shops, and attractions that will be featured in the kiosk to entice transient visitors to the area.

Greater Hartford Tourism

Greater Hartford Tourism of Connecticut (GHT) began, in 2001, to implement a strategic tourism plan that helped the organization to define a mission; identify critical initiatives; target and secondary markets, competition, audience, tourism promotion strategies and events; and integrate with the state tourism effort.

Among GHT's critical initiatives have been to:

- ◇ Position the region as an overnight destination through direct advertising, public relations, online services, and contacts with other tourism organizations;
- ◇ Provide marketing assistance to constituents;
- ◇ Distribute customized media kits to electronic and print media;
- ◇ Provide marketing materials, itineraries and assistance to group tour planners and travel agencies to increase overnight visitation and establish the region as a travel destination with culture, nature, history, shopping recreation, fairs, and festivals - something for every segment of the travel marketplace; and
- ◇ Capitalize on the trend of increasing interest in cultural heritage tourism and the growth of ethnic markets.

GHT plans to use a strategy of targeted relationship marketing. The goal is to increase the economic impact of tourism on the Connecticut economy. Strategies involve using advertising campaigns, direct mail, public relations, collateral materials and online services; becoming more customer-responsive and user-friendly; developing, enhancing, and updating a database; creating partnerships and packages with constituents to create compelling critical mass; developing sponsorship/partnership programs; and working with constituents to promote cooperative advertising opportunities.

GHT actively attempts to track visitor spending, visitor demographics (e.g., age, household size, education, income, race, etc.) length of stay, type of accommodation, attraction attendance, location of inquiry, as well as to measure the impact of their marketing efforts.

GHT published the "Fourth Annual Advertising Response Conversion Study" in

2001. This study attempted to provide a benchmark for measuring the outcome of service to those who requested information about GHT by performing a telephone survey of about two hundred people randomly selected from a list of telephone and mail inquiries collected between March and August 2001.

Top attractions in the GHT area include the City of Hartford, the Mark Twain House, the Harriet Beecher Stowe House, Bushnell Park and carousel and the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.

Other noteworthy attractions include the Nation's Oldest Statehouse, the Amistad Trail, and the Farmington Freedom Trail. Outdoor recreation plays a large part in promoting GHT.

Activities available in the Region include canoeing and tubing, horseback riding, hot air ballooning, and mountain biking.

Other items of note include the following:

- ◇ GHT's mission is to increase overnight visitation and tourism revenues to the 21 towns in the region by focusing marketing efforts on the out-of-state leisure traveler.
- ◇ GHT's website consists of a partnership between the GHT and the Greater Hartford Convention and Visitors Bureau (GHCVB).
- ◇ GHT and the GHCVB are partnering with other local economic development agencies to work on an image campaign for the Greater Hartford Region.

SUMMARY

The following elements were apparent in nearly all agencies interviewed:

- ◇ "Sharing resources" or "economies of scale" are consistently identified as the primary benefit of multi-county tourism promotion.
- ◇ The existence of a secondary niche that supports the primary tourist economy (e.g., unique architecture, a concentration of antique shops) is apparent in every case.
- ◇ Success and economic impact are hard to quantify but, nonetheless, attempted by all agencies. Common methods used to measure success include surveys, attendance at individual attractions, hotel reports and interviews with business and attraction owners.
- ◇ All agencies studied rely heavily on an agency website to promote their region.
- ◇ Many of the agencies have found it beneficial to work with neighboring tourism agencies on projects that involved large expenditures.

Several of the agencies surveyed also identified particular success with the following action items:

- ◇ Creation of kiosks at heavily trafficked locations to provide information on area attractions and businesses.

- ◇ Creation of pamphlets or directories identifying possible tours or itineraries within the region.

The ability to track the economic benefits of multi-county tourism promotion is important to each of the surveyed agencies' ability to understand their market area and to attract new visitor profiles. The number of visitors to a website or roadside kiosk, membership surveys, lodging occupancy surveys and personal communication with individuals seeking information and members of the TPA, provide easy methods to track the success of the overall program. More consistent tracking of visitation at the local or individual attraction site level could enhance these methods.

INTRODUCTION

Juniata and Mifflin Counties already attract large numbers of visitors who play an important contributing role in economic development of the Juniata River Valley. The region offers a number of resources, mostly of an agricultural, cultural, historic or natural basis, that appeal to certain types of tourists. They find their way to the region as a result of individual business advertising, existing JRVVB local promotional efforts, those of larger promotion entities such as the Valleys of the Susquehanna program and the simple happenstance of random visitation. Even at the presently low level of regional branding and coordination in tourism promotion, the contributions are major. The following analysis measures their relative importance to the regional economy.

The information has been organized to allow for easy comparison with data collected in previous years. It focuses on the travel expenditures of U.S. residents, both in-state and out-of-state, taking a trip of 50 miles or more each way to visit some part of Pennsylvania. It does not include expenditures by residents simply traveling to and from work. The methodology is based largely upon the U.S. Department of Commerce's Regional Impact Modeling System (RIMS II). It has been improved over the years.

Some adjustments have to be made to compare current data with earlier estimates based on visitors traveling 100 miles or more in each direction but the availability of information on both sets of visitors for some years makes this possible. It is also appropriate to compare data in constant dollars. This has been done by further adjusting earlier estimates for inflation. The results follow:

Travel Expenditures

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania does one of the best jobs among all the states in measuring visitation and the economic contributions of tourism. It has done so, more or less continuously, for over two decades. The data is based on a combination of information collected by the U.S. Bureau of Travel Development and the Commonwealth itself through the efforts of its Tourism, Film and Economic Development Marketing Office. The latter, in fact, contracted with the firm of D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd. to conduct a 1998 study entitled Economic Impact of Travel in Pennsylvania and to periodically update the data to measure the economic contributions of the travel industry by county and region.

Mifflin-Juniata Travel Expenditures by Travelers from 50+ Miles Away				
	1980	1990	1995	1999
Juniata	\$15,900,658	\$17,953,765	\$21,230,000	\$16,357,000
Mifflin	\$25,142,800	\$36,445,700	\$37,700,000	\$44,144,000
Total	\$41,043,458	\$54,399,465	\$58,930,000	\$60,501,000

Mifflin-Juniata Travel Expenditures by Travelers from 50+ Miles Away (1999 \$)				
	1980	1990	1995	1999
Juniata	\$35,458,468	\$23,339,895	\$23,140,700	\$16,357,000
Mifflin	\$56,068,443	\$47,379,410	\$41,093,000	\$44,144,000
Total	\$91,526,912	\$70,719,305	\$64,233,700	\$60,501,000

Source: "Economic Impact of Travel in Pennsylvania Counties"
(Annual studies conducted for DCED from 1980 to 1999)

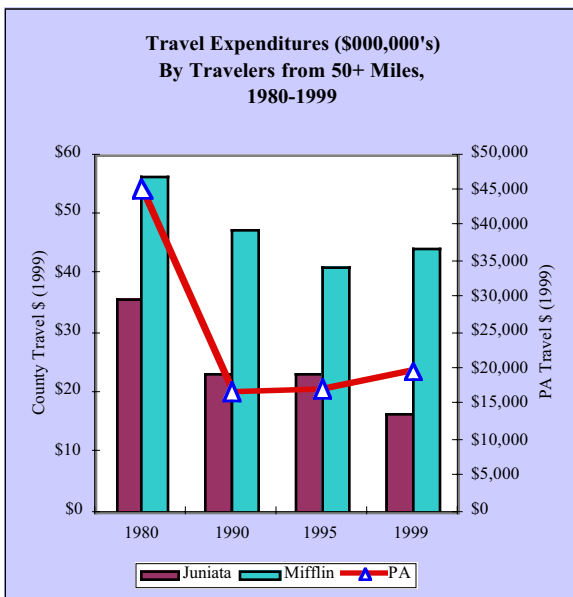
Travel expenditures for the Juniata River Valley were an estimated \$60,501,000 in 1999.

The trend has been up slightly upward since 1980 but, when examined in constant dollars, the travel industry appears to have suffered some in recent years as tourists have found it easier to travel further and further away from home. The events of September 11, 2001, have shifted the dynamics, however, as traveling by air has become somewhat less appealing. The continued aging of the general population has, at the same time, made the generally passive types of tourism that the Juniata River Valley offers more appealing.

Commonwealth but Mifflin County is well ahead of Pennsylvania as a whole. The comparisons with 1980 may reflect little more than changes in the way the data is collected and analyzed. It is the relative patterns and the more recent trends that are important to understanding how travel expenditures affect the regional economy.

Those impacts are far-reaching as the following table (excerpted from the Shifflet study) reveals:

Mifflin County travel expenditures, as an example and perhaps as a result of JRVVB promotions, have increased in constant dollars since 1999 (see table, page 4-1) as the following chart also illustrates:



Source: "Economic Impact of Travel in Pennsylvania Counties" (Annual studies conducted for DCED from 1980 to 1990)

Importantly, both Mifflin and Juniata Counties have, since 1980, done better than the Commonwealth as a whole in maintaining their levels of travel expenditures. Juniata County has lost some ground recently relative to the

Economic Impacts of Domestic Travel Expenditures (1997)			
	Juniata County	Mifflin County	Total
Travel Expenditures			
Transportation	\$5,054,746	\$8,974,433	\$14,029,179
Lodging	\$3,487,155	\$6,191,258	\$9,678,413
Food & Beverage	\$5,744,998	\$10,199,938	\$15,944,936
Entertainment & Recreation	\$2,822,853	\$5,011,826	\$7,834,679
Retail	\$3,802,796	\$6,751,663	\$10,554,459
Other	\$1,100,436	\$1,953,766	\$3,054,202
Total Travel Expenditures	\$22,012,984	\$39,082,884	\$61,095,868
Earnings			
Accommodations, Amusement and Recreation Services	\$1,506,205	\$2,674,187	\$4,180,392
Eating and Drinking Places	\$1,281,758	\$2,275,693	\$3,557,451
Other Businesses	\$1,256,038	\$2,232,039	\$3,488,077
Total Earnings	\$4,044,001	\$7,181,919	\$11,225,920
Employment			
Accommodations, Amusement and Recreation Services	92	174	266
Eating and Drinking Places	109	207	316
Other Businesses	61	117	178
Total Employment	262	498	760
Taxes Generated			
Federal (Including Gas Tax)	\$1,138,563	\$2,021,947	\$3,160,510
State (Including Sales Tax)	\$817,663	\$1,461,354	\$2,279,017
Municipal/Other	\$366,831	\$651,372	\$1,018,203
Total Earnings	\$2,323,057	\$4,134,673	\$6,457,730

A cursory review of the data suggests that it seriously underestimates the impact of tourism on both counties, even though the numbers are substantial. The lodging and dining facilities at the PA Route 35 and U.S. Route 322 interchange, for example, are major beneficiaries of travel expenditures. When recently visited

on a May, 2002, midweek evening there were four different tour buses (all from separate companies) parked at this interchange and using the various facilities available.

Initial hotel tax collections (a little over \$8,000/month for the two Counties combined) suggested lodging expenditures were about \$270,000/month, but these were late Spring numbers when occupancy was somewhat lower than normal. Moreover, the newness of the tax has probably resulted in incomplete tabulations.

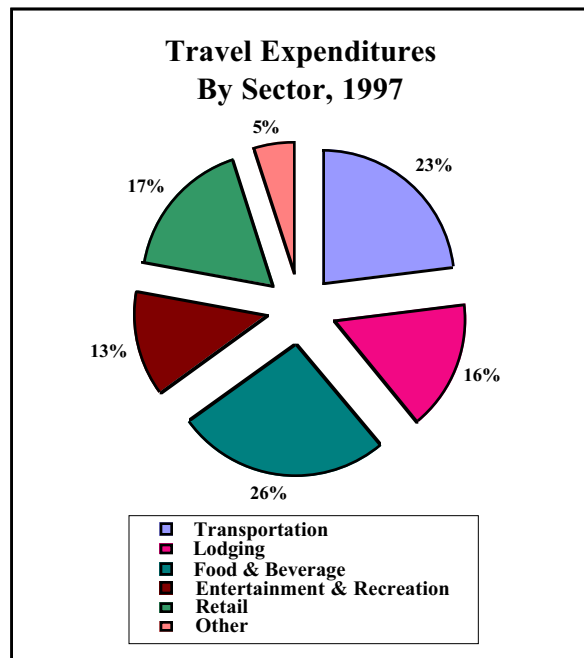
There are 325-350 motel, hotel and B&B rooms in the two counties. Assuming 75% occupancy and an average room rate of \$50, these rooms represent approximately \$4,500,000 in sales (and should produce \$135,000 annually in room taxes).

Additionally, there are a large number of campsites, other types of lodging and still other accommodations on the periphery of the Counties that are used by visitor. Combined with the hotels and motels, these probably take the total very close to the \$9,679,000 estimated in the Shifflet studies.

These estimates help in understanding how tourism dollars get spread around the region. There are three categories of travel expenditures that exceed lodging in importance. These are; a) food and beverage expenditures (almost \$16 million), b) transportation (over \$14 million) and c) retail (over \$10 million). Entertainment and recreation expenditures are a little less than \$8 million.

These numbers illustrate the impacts of tourism on non-tourism businesses such as

convenience stores and supermarkets. The following chart provides the perspective:



Source: Pennsylvania Economic Impact Analysis
D.K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd.

The data indicates that Juniata River Valley travel expenditures are mostly derived from passive forms of tourism such as scenic drives, outdoor recreation (e.g. hiking, hunting, fishing) and agricultural tourism. These activities can generate major travel expenditures. The 2001 National Fish and Wildlife Survey indicated U.S. hunters and anglers spent a combined \$55 billion on their hobbies, for example, an average of \$1,046 per hunter and \$1,581 per fisherman.

These forms of tourism are also growing rapidly in popularity throughout Pennsylvania. Additional D. K. Shifflet data gathered for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) indicates that 15.89 million or 19% of all leisure person-trips to Pennsylvania from 50 or more miles away **and \$403 billion or 33% of travel**

expenditures were outdoor recreation related.

The increases in recent years have been impressive, as the following chart (replicated from study data) indicates:



Interestingly, the area of Pennsylvania most affected by outdoor recreation travel was the nearby Hershey/Dutch Country region. Some 30% of its leisure trips were outdoor recreation related. The area least affected, however, was the Valleys of the Susquehanna Region, of which the JRVVB is part. Only 7% of its trips were of an outdoor recreation nature.

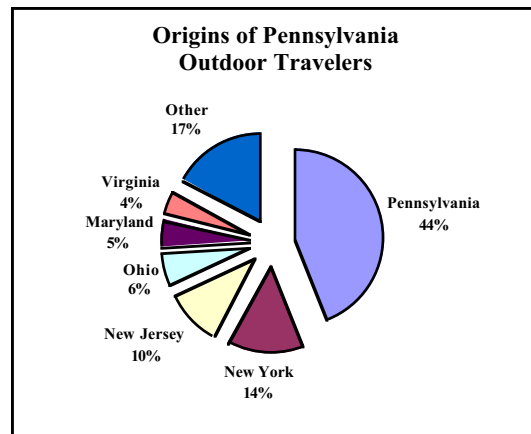
While the DCNR study states that 35% of outdoor travel expenditures and 37% of outdoor travel trips were made by visitors to State lands, this doesn't explain the differing experience of the two regions. Trips to State lands were 41% of Valleys of the Susquehanna outdoor travel visits, for example, but only 25% of such travel in the Hershey/Dutch Country. Only within the Poconos are both State land visits and outdoor travel in general high. Therefore, outdoor travel to other sites, private attractions and scenic areas drives outdoor travel to the Hershey/Dutch region.

This is important for the Juniata River Valley region because it possesses so much of what

the Hershey/Dutch Country has to offer - farm landscapes, Amish culture, camping, Bed and Breakfasts, historic architecture, unique shops and special attractions such as the Belleville Livestock Auction and Farmers Market. It also possesses some advantages not always shared by the remainder of the Valleys of the Susquehanna region. These include nearby Raystown Lake, the Juniata River itself (one of Pennsylvania's most scenic rivers), prominent ridge and valley features and industrial heritage.

First among the advantages, however, is that Juniata River Valley is closer to several urban markets than most of the Valleys of the Susquehanna and is, in some respects, a logical extension of the Hershey/Dutch Country region or alternative to it.

There are 27 metropolitan areas within 200 miles of the Juniata River Valley. These urban areas are home to over 46,000,000 persons or 16% of the U.S. population. They include most of Pennsylvania and much of New York, New Jersey and Maryland. They also include most of the areas from which the DCNR study indicates Pennsylvania's outdoor travelers come. The following chart is from that report:



Source: PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

The following metropolitan areas, rated for distance from the region and size of the market with double weighting for the former, constitute the Juniata River Valley's market. The markets are ranked by their net rating using this system.

over 20,000,000 persons available within 2-3 hours of the Juniata River Valley. An hour further picks another another 26,000,000 persons 3-4 hours. This is a tremendous market with more potential than the JRVVB would ever want to exploit and still maintain its rural quality of life.

JRVVB MARKET AREA			
No.	Market	Distance	Population Rating
1	State College (PA)	25	135,758 9
2	Harrisburg (PA)	50	629,401 8
3	Altoona (PA)	50	129,144 8
4	Williamsport (PA)	50	120,044 8
5	Lancaster (PA)	75	470,658 7
6	York (PA)	75	381,751 7
7	Johnstown (PA)	75	232,621 7
8	Reading (PA)	75	373,638 7
9	Allentown (PA)	100	637,958 6
10	Scranton (PA)	100	624,776 6
11	Cumberland (MD)	100	120,044 6
12	Elmira (NY)	100	91,070 6
13	Washington (DC)	125	7,608,070 6
Primary Market Total		11,554,933	
14	New York (NY)	200	21,199,865 5
15	Philadelphia (PA)	125	6,188,463 5
16	Pittsburgh (PA)	125	2,358,695 5
17	Jamestown (NY)	150	139,750 4
18	Dover (DE)	150	126,697 4
19	Erie (PA)	175	280,843 3
20	Youngstown (OH)	175	594,746 3
21	Buffalo (NY)	175	1,170,111 3
22	Rochester (NY)	175	1,098,201 3
23	Syracuse (NY)	175	732,117 3
24	Binghamton (NY)	175	252,320 3
25	Wheeling (WV)	175	153,172 3
26	Steubenville (OH)	175	132,008 3
27	Sharon (PA)	175	120,293 3
Secondary Market Total		34,547,281	
TOTAL		46,102,214	

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 (Metro Area Populations)

The metro areas identified above as the Primary Market include a population of 11,500,000 persons. If Pittsburgh and Philadelphia are included, there is a market of

There is no lack of visitors with an interest in what the JRVVB has to offer. The challenge is to match those customers to a theme that will bring them to the JRVVB to spend money without destroying the very character that attracts them. It is more a supply side challenge than a demand side one.

INTRODUCTION

The Juniata Valley Area Chamber of Commerce (JVACC) has served in a dual capacity as Chamber of Commerce and as the Juniata-Mifflin Counties Tourist Promotion Agency. It has acted as the official agent of two counties in administering financial aid and other tourist promotion support provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

One of the purposes of this study is to identify how this function can be effectively separated from the Chamber to implement tourism development recommendations. An overview of the issues involved and specific recommendations for creating the new tourist promotion agency follow:

Existing Organization

The Juniata Valley Area Chamber of Commerce is organized as a nonprofit corporation and is exempt from income tax under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code. It has a 25-member Board of Directors composed of business, nonprofit and local government leaders from the two counties. It has a paid staff of two persons; 1) a full-time Executive Director and 2) a full-time Administrative Assistant. It also has affiliations with local, regional, state and national organizations. Its broad array of services is typical of other Chambers (e.g., business promotion, event management, business education, health insurance, etc.).

Among the functions of the JVACC has been acting as the Juniata-Mifflin Counties Tourist

Promotion Agency. Tourism promotion in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been organized around such county-chartered tourist promotion agencies (TPA's) since 1961 when the Commonwealth became the first state to publicly fund tourism promotion.

Each of the 45 TPA/CVB's created to date is eligible for matching funds from the Commonwealth based on a formula that weights county ability to raise and spend local marketing dollars to attract visitors. The Pennsylvania Tourism, Film, and Economic Development Marketing Office acts as the conduit for these funds.

There are minimum standards for TPA's in Pennsylvania. These have been established by the Pennsylvania Office of Tourism, Film and Economic Development Marketing in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus (most TPA's are organized as convention and visitors bureaus or CVB's). A TPA or CVB must have:

- ◇ A full-time staff equipped to deal with public, industry and media requests.
- ◇ The capacity to respond to Tourism, Film and Economic Development Marketing Office, media and travel industry requests in three business days.
- ◇ The ability to answer requests for information from the general public in a reasonable period of time.
- ◇ A Board of Directors with significant numbers of individuals who are invested in the tourism industry and participate in the activities of the TPA/CVB.

- ◇ Annually elected officers and directors plus a rotation policy for appointed board members so as to allow new participants an opportunity to serve.
 - ◇ The capacity to produce and execute yearly marketing plans and budgets against which to measure the success of tourism programs. Such marketing plans must address advertising; proactive sales efforts for generating group business; media relations and customer service.
 - ◇ The capacity to obtain market research and data that measures the level of travel and tourism in the marketing region, include measures as hotel occupancy, visitation level at attractions, number of meetings and/or motor coach groups booked, number of inquiries received, etc..
 - ◇ Audited financial statement prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for submission, by October 31 of each year to the Tourism, Film and Economic Development Marketing Office.
 - ◇ Directors who, within 90 days of their hire, visited the Tourism, Film and Economic Development Marketing Office; the PACVB (Pennsylvania Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus); and the PA Tourism and Lodging Association for an orientation session.
- which is audited annually as required by the Commonwealth. The fiscal year is July to June. The audit for the year ending June 30, 2001, indicates the TPA program worked with a budget of approximately \$90,000. The Commonwealth's contribution was limited to slightly less than \$7,000, the counties provided \$2,000 and the program received \$50,000 of income from tourism member dues, the Festival of Ice (\$40,000) and the provision of various services. The Chamber of Commerce itself put in the remaining \$31,000.
- This Chamber of Commerce contribution is, in effect, a diversion of a portion of each member's dues to the tourism program. It is a system that has worked reasonably well to date, given the small size of the two Counties. It is, nonetheless, an inadequate foundation for any major tourist promotion programs.
- Chamber members with businesses unrelated to tourism cannot be expected to financially subsidize new ventures in that business sector. The more these activities directly benefit selected businesses (e.g. packaging of lodging with visits to specific attractions), the more difficult it is to justify using general Chamber revenue to support them.
- The recent enactment of a 3% hotel room rental tax by both Counties will generate additional revenues that should be used for such programs. Moreover, the greater these revenues, the more difficult it is to use them effectively in the context of other Chamber activities. A separate tourism promotion organization with its own mission, membership, Board of Directors and staff is necessary to effectively promote tourism in the Juniata River Valley.

The JVACC has served as TPA for Juniata and Mifflin Counties for a number of years, acting in its capacity as the Juniata-Mifflin Counties Tourist Promotion Agency. It has operated the TPA program under a separate budget

Proposed Visitors Bureau

The JVACC has been gradually shifting toward separate Chamber and TPA organizations. The accounting has been separated to meet requirements of Commonwealth law. Staff time is allocated between the two programs. The Visitors Bureau has its own website independent of the Chamber's and is establishing separate contact methods such as its own e-mail address. A separate Board of Directors for the tourism program has been assembled on a preliminary basis.

A separate nonprofit corporation, the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau (JRVVB), also organized to be tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code, is being formed to take over Tourist Promotion Agency functions and both Counties have passed resolutions designating it as their official agency for this purpose. The new group will solicit its own dues-paying membership, although continued support from the Counties and Chamber will be required during the transitional period. The organization will be associated with the Valleys of the Susquehanna tourism promotion program.

It is expected that the Chamber of Commerce and JRVVB will continue to share offices and associated support facilities and services. A move of both organizations into the Mifflin County Historic Courthouse has been anticipated. There have also been some suggestions that the offices should be in a more convenient location for U.S. Route 322 travelers. The Macedonia Run Lock House at

the Narrows was studied in this regard in a 1997 report prepared by Urban Research & Development Corporation for the Chamber. It was determined that this location was not suitable for a welcome center due to its future location at the end of a dead-end street. It would likewise be unsuitable for the JRVVB offices to be there because this would require maintaining multiple locations.

Other sites along U.S. Route 322 are, of course, possible. Mifflintown, Milroy or a highway site at Lewistown could all be appropriate locations for a welcome center and offices. The Mifflintown, Juniata County, location, in particular, would be convenient as a gateway from urban areas to the south, the source of most visitors. It is already a popular stop for bus tour operators and others. Land would probably be available for an attractive visitors center that could be used to catch visitors on their way to the area and encourage side trips east and west as they past through the two counties.

A Milroy location would serve visitors from State College very well. It would also be convenient to the many Big Valley attractions that form so much of the image that the area offers. Arguably, however, State College visitors are already fairly familiar with Big Valley. Business owners from that area could well benefit more by a center in Mifflintown that would encourage new visitors from the south to travel a little further to experience the Valley.

A Lewistown location, whether on the highway or in town would be central to most attractions. A downtown location such as the Mifflin County Historic Courthouse would

reinforce revitalization efforts and take visitors directly to some of the historic attractions the area has to offer. Downtown Lewistown is also relatively easy to access and the Courthouse location is being made available at a limited cost. Therefore, it is a good option in the short-term at least.

Long-term, however, the JRVVB, to be most effective, needs to be convenient to visitors as they enter the region. Most are going to enter from the south, meaning that a permanent location in Mifflintown near the industrial park and the PA Route 35 and U.S. Route 322 intersection would be most advantageous, with a satellite location in Milroy. Shared satellite office space in Juniata County is being planned in the interim.

Some continued sharing of staff by the Chamber and JRVVB is expected, probably at the Executive Director level. However, more defined staff positions will be established with clear responsibilities for each to the respective organizations. This is an appropriate method of separating the two organizations without unnecessarily adding to overhead expenses. It also ensures there will be no competition between the agencies to provide duplicate services to the same customers.

Meetings with the advisory committee for this project and different stakeholders, including providers of lodging services, suggest several specific functions for the JRVVB. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◇ Maintaining, improving and distributing the recreation and tourism map in cooperation with the Mifflin County Information Technology Department.

- ◇ Documenting and explaining the economic and other contributions of tourism to the area.
- ◇ Placing group advertising for the two Counties in targeted national and regional media outlets.
- ◇ Coordinating the area's many events to increase awareness and avoid conflicts.
- ◇ Working with local government to make downtown areas safer and more appealing for visitors.
- ◇ Providing visitors with constant access to brochures and other information on the area's attractions through a pamphlet distribution program.
- ◇ Packaging and booking of visits to lodging places and attractions in the two Counties.
- ◇ Coordinating tourism signage.
- ◇ Working with local government to ensure the working landscape character of the area is maintained and growth is controlled.
- ◇ Marketing the area outside the region under a "Juniata River Valley" brand image.
- ◇ Helping tourism providers develop websites linked to an interactive JRVVB version of the Mifflin County Information Technology Department's recreation and tourism inventory.
- ◇ Securing additional funding from the Commonwealth for regional tourism

promotion.

- ◇ Promoting unique attractions and areas that serve to support the desired image of the region, such as the Mennonite Heritage Center and Big Valley.
- ◇ Managing tours of the region.
- ◇ Effectively dealing with referrals from the 1-800-VISIT-PA and ExperiencePa.com programs.

Recommendations for Establishing the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau

The range of services Juniata and Mifflin County stakeholders have indicated they desire from the proposed Visitors Bureau, suggests it is, indeed, the proper form of organization to deliver them. There are at least four different types of tourism promotion structures that are available to employ. These include;

- 1) **A committee of the area Chamber of Commerce.** This combined services approach is the present method of organization. It is used quite often simply because tourism promotion is closely related to business promotion. Tourism businesses also need many of the same services as other businesses. It is also, nevertheless, typical for the tourism promotion function to later be separated out as an independent operation.
- 2) **A voluntary membership tourism agency or visitors bureau.** Tourism businesses join together under this model

as a nonprofit corporate entity to pursue specific projects. The group serves as the official tourist promotion agency and builds its own membership by focusing on visitor services and the other needs of tourism businesses.

- 3) **A tourism council that coordinates and supplements the services of other tourism organizations.** These might include groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Big Valley Area Business Association, the Juniata Tourism Association and Downtown Lewistown, Inc.. This model works well where there are already of a number of functioning tourism promotion entities.

- 4) **A governmental tourism council based on a room tax.** This model depends upon and is focused on spending a dedicated source of funding from a room tax or assessment. It is more public in nature and oriented toward marketing the region as a whole more than individual businesses or groups of businesses.

The proposed JRVVB incorporates elements of all three independent models but is largely based on the voluntary membership tourism agency concept. It will be important, however, not to neglect the coordination role, particularly as it relates to the Big Valley Area Business Association. This group is well-organized and highly effective in providing selected services. The JRVVB should complement and build on those services rather than attempt to replace them. Therefore, its role may be more akin to the tourism coordination council in the Big Valley than it is in other areas of the two Counties.

Likewise, the Juniata and Mifflin Counties' room tax contributions will become the major funding source for the JRVVB, at least at the outset until a broad based membership is established. Therefore, the organization must include the the Boards of Commissioners from the two Counties as full partners. Indeed, the JRVVB needs to be a public-private partnership in every respect, with a combination of private and public members along the lines of many regional economic development organizations.

Finally, the JRVVB must continue to have a strong relationship with the Chamber of Commerce. Initially, the Chamber's overhead support is necessary to transition into a new organization. Long-term, however, is important to avoid duplication of services or competition between the groups. This happens all too often in many communities, particularly where tourism promotion is largely the responsibility of government. Preventing it demands a well defined relationship between the groups.

Given this background and the services desired by potential members, several specific recommendations are offered below for the organization of the JRVVB:

- 1) **The JRVVB should be incorporated as a nonprofit corporation as soon as possible.** Exemption from taxation under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code should also be sought immediately.
- 2) **A Board of Directors of manageable size (9 to 15 members maximum) should be established.** It should include a combination of tourism industry and

public representatives from both counties, with the former forming the majority to ensure that program decisions are made on the basis of business rather than political priorities.

The Boards of Commissioners of each County, by virtue of their ability to ultimately control access to room tax revenue, will always exercise great influence over the organization, regardless of the numbers of Directors they actually appoint. One official representative appointed from each County, by or from its Board of Commissioners, should be sufficient, however, to monitor the work of the JRVVB and ensure that county government's objectives for the organization are met.

There should also be a Memorandum of Understanding among the two Boards of Commissioners and the JRVVB, that defines the relationship in this fashion so that future Boards of Commissioners and JRVVB Directors and staff will have a point of reference and be able to appreciate why the organization is structured as it is. A suggested draft of such a memorandum is attached as Appendix 3. It can be modified as necessary to meet the needs of both Juniata and Mifflin Counties.

- 3) **Officer positions on the Board of Directors should be rotating every 2-3 years.** Term limits of 12 years maximum should apply to all Directors. Both of these measures are essential to creating an organization with vitality that effectively represents all segments of the industry.

- 4) **A balance of membership between the two Counties is also essential.** That balance may not have to be strictly numerical if based on membership or financial contributions. Nevertheless, an equitable arrangement that effectively requires the assent of both Counties in major initiatives of impact on either one is a necessity. A minimum number of Directors from each County is appropriate and alternating chairpersons should also be considered.
- 5) **The Board of Directors should exercise overall authority and responsibility for all activities and operations of the Bureau.** Those responsibilities should include the following:
- ◇ Developing the corporate mission statement;
 - ◇ Approving goals and objectives;
 - ◇ Approving corporate finance, service and personnel policies;
 - ◇ Approving corporate strategic plans;
 - ◇ Monitoring corporate investments;
 - ◇ Balancing interests of tourism stakeholders, employees, clients and the public;
 - ◇ Electing corporate officers and monitoring their performance;
 - ◇ Hiring, advising and supervising the Executive Director and assisting that individual with related tasks;
- ◇ Ensuring that Directors, officers and employees meet established legal, ethical and professional standards; and
- ◇ Ensuring the financial stability of the organization through a combination of financial oversight and fund raising within both the private and public sectors.
- 6) **The JRVVB should share an Executive Director or President/CEO with the Juniata Valley Area Chamber of Commerce.** Such an arrangement is warranted at the outset due to financial constraints. It is, nonetheless, the proper arrangement for the long-term as well to avoid the competition between the two programs that plagues so many communities. The Chamber and JRVVB should be engaged in complementary rather than redundant activities. The best way to ensure this to put both organizations under the same professional leadership.
- 7) **The Executive Director should be responsible for the day to day management of the JRVVB with primary accountability for its accomplishments and fiscal integrity.** This includes working with the Board of Directors to determine the focus and direction of the Bureau; develop corporate goals, policies, strategic plans; create an organizational structure; and formulate long-range financial plans.
- The Executive Director should also serve as the spokesperson for the Bureau, work with political organizations in coordinating the activities of the Bureau and negotiate

financial support. Finally, the Executive Director should bear responsibility for informing and updating the Board of Directors on management and operations policies and procedures.

Additional guidance in formulating a job description (and corporate bylaws) can be obtained from the Pennsylvania Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus and the International Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus. The latter maintains a website where many such resources are readily available. It may be found at:

www.iacvb.org/iacvb/resource_center

A sample Executive Director job description is also attached as Appendix 4.

- 8) **The JRVVB Executive Director should have dedicated support staff related to this program.** As the activities of the Chamber and JRVVB grow, it will be important to add staff dedicated to each. This will help to ensure each organization gets the attention it deserves but under the leadership of a shared Executive Director.
- 9) **Among the first tasks of the Executive Director should be an extensive publicity program and membership drive to launch the JRVVB as an independent entity.** This will require new advertisements, an updated website and a series of presentations to local governments and other stakeholder groups. It is recommended the results of this study be used extensively for this purpose in laying the groundwork for a broader

understanding of the value of tourism to the local economy and the need to promote it. Marketing of JRVVB services must be accompanied by communication of the mission statement. This must be done in terms that invite membership on the basis of shared goals.

- 10) **The JRVVB needs to define its relationship with the Big Valley Area Business Association in terms of additional tourism support services that will benefit that organization.** The Big Valley Area Business Association is a well-run group providing a combination of business and tourism support services to its members, including a very effective brochure. It does not, however, offer its members access to managed tours, regional advertising buys, website development services or a packaging and reservation system. These are services that JRVVB can provide. Furthermore, JRVVB can help promote the Big Valley as an attractive locale within the greater Juniata River Valley region of which it is part.

The key is for the JRVVB to position itself in support of the Big Valley Area Business Association and not in competition with it. A dedicated position for that group on the Board of Directors, consistent with the tourism council model discussed earlier may also be appropriate.
- 11) **The JRVVB should, as soon as practical, apply for additional Commonwealth financial assistance to pursue a major tourism promotion initiative.** The Commonwealth, in addition to the routine matching funds

provided to all TPA's, makes available set-aside moneys for regional tourism promotion projects with other counties.

A number of TPA's and CVB's throughout Pennsylvania have used these funds to pursue special projects such as travel exchange programs, winter package promotions and heritage tourism projects. The JRVVB has several opportunities to pursue such projects. Two examples are a regional wine trail and a link to the Millennium Trail. Whatever project is ultimately pursued, this grant program offers a tool to build the credibility of the JRVVB, launch several new initiatives and secure a more substantial funding base for the organization.

INTRODUCTION

There is a 20,000,000 person visitor market available to Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau within 2-3 hours. The secondary market just an hour beyond this is even larger. This is plenty to work with from a marketing perspective. The JRVVB needs to focus on targeting those portions of the market that want what the region wishes to offer in the context of the vision set forth in Chapter 1 of this Plan (see page 1-5). An additional challenge is positioning the Juniata River Valley with respect to its competition.

An overview of the issues involved and specific recommendations for marketing the two-county region follow:

Tourism Marketing Trends Affecting the Juniata River Valley Region and General Marketing Recommendations

The Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) recently published data on a number of industry trends relevant to the Juniata River Valley region and its vision. Some of the most salient findings for the U.S. as a whole are excerpted or summarized below:

Adventure Travelers: One-half of adults took an "adventure trip" in the past five years. A third of these typically young, single and employed travelers engaged in hard activities (e.g. whitewater rafting) that fit well with the Juniata River and its tributaries.

Baby Boomers: Baby boomers (35 to 54 year-olds) generated the highest travel volume

among all age groups in 1999. They are likely to stay in a hotel or motel (60%) and spend more on their trips (an average of \$460 per trip). Promoting activities of interest to baby boomers (e.g. cultural and heritage attractions), therefore, will help Juniata River Valley hotels and enjoy a high rate of return on tourism marketing investments.

Bikers: Biking is the third most popular outdoor vacation activity in America, (following camping and hiking, which also appeal to most bikers). People who take biking trips tend to be young and affluent. About half are between the ages of 18 and 34 and one-fourth are from households with annual incomes of \$75,000 or more. **Biking is very well-suited to the Juniata River Valley given its ridges and valleys, proximity to State College and panoramic landscapes. More paths and trails are needed.**

Campers: Camping is the number one outdoor vacation activity in America. One-third of adults went on a camping vacation in the past five years. They tend to be married with children at home. Their average age is 37 and their median household income is \$43,000. People who go camping also tend to enjoy hiking, biking and canoeing. **Camping is already popular in the Juniata River Valley but has room to grow. A combination of River and mountain environments and low key lifestyle make the area very appealing for this activity.**

Children: One in five trips includes children under 18 and about 42 percent of trips with children include a hotel stay. Popular activities on trips with children include shopping (37%), outdoor activities (21%), theme/amusement

parks (15%), and historical places/museums (15%). **This may be an area where individual business owners and the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau need to do more by sponsoring events of interest to children as a way of attracting their parents.**

Cultural and Heritage Tourism: Some 46% of travelers in a 1998 TIA survey included a cultural, arts, heritage or historic activity while on a trip in the previous year and 29% lengthened their trips to participate in a cultural activity. Heritage tourists spend an average of \$615 per trip versus \$425 for all travelers; use lodging facilities 56% of the time versus 42% for all travelers; include shopping 45% of the time versus 33% of the time for all travelers; are twice as likely to take a group tour; and spend 4.7 nights away from home per trip versus 3.3 nights for all travelers.

Heritage tourists also have higher household incomes than other travelers (\$48,000 vs. \$37,000), are more likely to have completed college than other travelers (41% vs. 32%) and are more likely to be in managerial or professional occupations than other travelers. Among heritage tourists, some of the most popular cultural activities are:

- any cultural event: 46%
- historic sites or community: 31%
- museum: 24%
- art gallery 15%
- live theater 14%
- heritage/ethnic festival 13%

The Juniata River Valley is, of course, ideally suited to this type of tourism and, more specifically, associated forms of

agricultural tourism. It already offers a great deal of agricultural, cultural and heritage tourism, from canals to quilts. Moreover, these forms of tourism are compatible with the JRVVB vision. Stronger links and joint advertising among providers of this sort are needed, however.

Educational Travel: About one-fifth of adults took an educational trip to learn or improve a skill, sport or hobby in the past three years. Educational travelers are more likely to be male (56%), younger (39 years average), a college graduate (49%), have a professional or managerial occupation (38%), have children (51%) and have a higher annual household income (\$75,000 average). **Canoeing, fishing and golfing schools are all distinct possibilities for the Juniata River Valley.**

Festivals: One-fifth of adults attended a festival while on a trip away from home in the past year. One third of these attended an arts or music festival in the past year and 22% attended an ethnic, folk or heritage festival. Other festivals included county or state fairs (20%), parades (19%), food festivals (12%) and religious festivals (11%). The Juniata River Valley has some of this activity (the Ice Festival is a good example) but could use a lot more. **Events are essential to marketing. Antique shows, garden or botanical shows, an expanded set of "Goose Day" activities, a quilting festival and a Juniata RiverFest are all possibilities.**

Internet Travel: Two-thirds of travelers are online and 69% of those who are frequent travelers use the Internet for travel planning. Use of the Internet to actually book travel

continues to increase, with 27 percent of all travelers now online having made travel reservations on the Internet during the past year. A majority (66%) do more than half of all trip planning online. The most popular elements of online trip planning are searching for maps/driving directions (60%), searching for lodging (53%) and searching for things to do at the destination (45%). **This is an area where the JRVVB can make a big difference by assisting area businesses with the development of websites. The types of tourism businesses most appropriate to the Juniata River Valley are also the ones who can benefit most from websites (campgrounds, B&B's, etc.).**

Mature American Travel: Mature Americans, age 55 or older, average the longest stays away from home (4.9 nights, excluding day trips). Conversely, this group has a higher share of day trips (21%). Half stay in a hotel or motel on their trip. They are the most likely of all groups to travel alone or with someone from outside their household (49%). Their growing numbers, coupled with their financial power and availability of time, make them a very attractive market. **This includes the Juniata River Valley where passive forms of recreation such as scenic drives, farm markets and special shops are available. Event planning must address senior interests. There are also distinct possibilities for bus tours of the Amish area, Fall Foliage tours and special shopping trips (farm market, winery, quilt shops, candy factory, etc.).**

National Park and Outdoor Visitation: Some 20% of travelers took a trip of 100 miles or more, one-way, to visit a national park

during the past year. A large share of these travelers (70%) participated in outdoor activities while visiting the national parks. Among these outdoor activities, hiking (53%) was the most popular, followed by camping (33%) and fishing (19%). Outdoor trips are also likely to be taken by car (74%) and one in five (20%) outdoor trips includes camping in an RV or tent. Some 22% of travelers between 18 and 34 took their parents and/or grandparents on their most recent soft adventure vacation.

The Juniata River Valley is ideal for these types of vacations. It already possesses a number of State owned lands and has access to several more. The Juniata River is also a recognized resource even though it lacks the Scenic River designation that Urban Research & Development Corporation recommended in 1997 (see Chapter 5).

Package Travel: One quarter of past-year travelers bought a travel package within the past three years - that is, a trip including at least transportation and a place to stay all in one price. The average age of a package traveler is 43 years and the gender breakout is almost even (47% men, 53% women). A majority (68%) of these travelers are married; 24% are single, never married. Half have children in their household. Some 43% have a college degree or more education. The average annual household income of a package traveler is \$72,400.

This is an area to which the JRVVB needs to give major attention going forward. There are several opportunities to package transportation and lodging with tours of

specific attractions in the Juniata River Valley. While most visitors will arrive by car, assistance with trip planning while they are visiting and lodging arrangements will make traveling easier and more relaxing, which is what many are seeking. There are also opportunities for packaging Amtrak transportation with visits, a distinct advantage over most other rural areas.

Shopping: Shopping is the most popular trip activity for adult travelers. Some 63% of adult travelers in 2000, included shopping as an activity on a trip. Shoppers are just as likely to stay at a hotel, motel, or bed and breakfast establishment (49% of person-trips) as they are with friends or relatives (48%). Their trips average 4.2 nights and they spend, on average, \$531, excluding the cost of transportation to their destination. Most (87%) shopping travelers say that their most recent trip that included shopping was for leisure purposes.

A majority (59%) of shopping travelers obtained information about shopping areas from friends, family or co-workers. Hotels were another popular source with travelers (25% relied upon in-room maps, brochures, the TV or hotel concierge). The most popular place to shop on trips is traditional enclosed shopping centers or malls (62%). These are likely to have above-average incomes.

The Juniata River Valley offers several distinctive shopping opportunities, ranging from the Belleville Farmers Market to the Lost Creek Shoe Store in Juniata County. These need to be recognized and promoted as major attractions along with many other retail locations that may not typically be thought of as tourism sites.

Travel Information: Travel information comes from a variety of sources, but friends and relatives are the number one source for information about places to visit or about hotels (43%). Travel agents are the second most popular source of travel information (39%) and travel companies such as airlines, hotels or rental car companies were third (32%). One in five past year travelers contacted a tourism office to get information about a destination that they planned to visit or about hotels or other travel services in the past five years. Contacts with travel agents, tourism offices and travel companies include visits to the web sites of these organizations.

These numbers indicate the JRVVB must ensure that its members deliver a quality experience if it is to get the most out of the least expensive and most effective form of advertising - word of mouth. Quality generates referrals from family and friends. It must also establish strategic alliances with tour operators, travel agents and major travel industry players in the region such as its hotels. Finally, it must develop consumer-friendly methods of distributing information at least cost - the best opportunity being with the Internet.

Travel Media Usage: Half of all U.S. adults say they use the travel media to plan their vacations. Some 28% used newspaper travel sections to plan their travel in the past year, 21% used an Internet web site and 21% used television travel shows such as CNN Travel Guide. However, when travelers who use more than one travel medium were asked which travel medium is most useful to them, 24% said that they find Internet web sites most useful, followed by newspaper travel sections

and television travel shows. Half of travel media users (50%) say they read, watch or listen to travel media at least once a month or once a week. About one third of travelers decided to visit a travel destination because of information that they saw or read in the travel media.

This information indicates that the JRVVB needs to give priority to two types of advertising - both of which are very cost effective. The first must be the development of a strong Internet presence by all its members with links among all of them. The second should be a concerted and sustained effort to get the Juniata River Valley mentioned in travel stories in metropolitan newspapers and other media.

Weekend Travel: Half of all adults take at least one weekend trip per year. Almost 30% of Americans took five or more weekend trips in the past year and 35 percent of all weekend travelers say they took their children with them on at least one weekend trip. Compared to five years ago, day trips and weekend trips appear to be more popular than trips lasting about one week or longer. About 40% of weekend travelers reported they took more day trips and/or weekend trips than five years ago.

Most weekend travelers (42%) made relatively last-minute plans and selected their destination within two weeks of their trip. Slightly less than a third took advantage of discounts or special offers while planning or while on their most recent weekend trip. Visiting small towns (26%) was one of the favored destinations for these weekend travelers. Also popular were mountain areas (10%), lake areas (4%) and state or national parks (3%).

The Juniata River Valley clearly can offer what these weekend and day trip visitors seek. It needs to focus its packaging of tourist attractions to meet the demands of this market, by offering a number of single day, overnight and weekend trips that involve more than one activity.

Recommended Target Markets for the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau

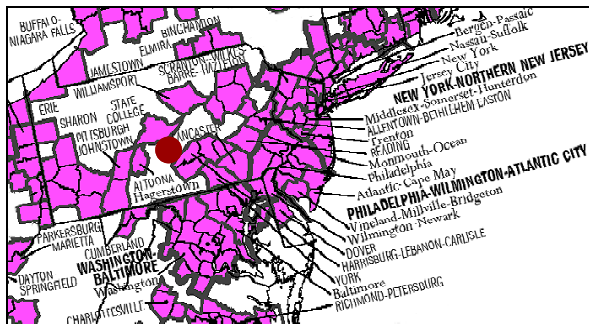
Market data included in Chapter 4 indicated the Primary Market, based on distance and population, consisted of 13 metro areas to which Philadelphia and Pittsburgh could be added, depending on the offerings and the availability of advertising and promotion funds. These areas bear further examination based on income, which is, as the data above indicates, a strong indicator of interest in what the JRVVB might offer. The following table adds income as a factor to rank major markets, giving it equal weighting with distance:

JRVVB MARKETS BY DISTANCE, SIZE & INCOME				
Market	Distance	Population	Income	Rating
Washington (DC)	125	7,608,070	\$40,046	14
Harrisburg (PA)	50	629,401	\$29,624	12
State College (PA)	25	135,758	\$25,237	11
Philadelphia (PA)	125	6,188,463	\$33,742	11
Lancaster (PA)	75	470,658	\$28,195	10
Reading (PA)	75	373,638	\$28,078	10
York (PA)	75	381,751	\$27,142	10
Altoona (PA)	50	129,144	\$24,553	10
Allentown (PA)	100	637,958	\$29,146	10
Williamsport (PA)	50	120,044	\$23,252	9
Pittsburgh (PA)	125	2,358,695	\$30,644	9
Scranton (PA)	100	624,776	\$25,191	8
Johnstown (PA)	75	232,621	\$22,663	8
Elmira (NY)	100	91,070	\$25,069	8
Cumberland (MD)	100	120,044	\$20,653	6

Source: U.S. Census (Population) and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (Per Capita Personal Income, 2000)

This data indicates that the best markets for the JRVVB to target include seven metro areas with a combined population of almost 16 million persons and are as follows:

- ◊ Washington-Baltimore (the most affluent MSA in the U.S. and also being targeted by the Commonwealth as a whole)
- ◊ Harrisburg-Lebanon-Carlisle, PA
- ◊ State College (Centre County), PA
- ◊ Philadelphia (includes Wilmington, DE)
- ◊ Lancaster County, PA
- ◊ Reading (Berks County), PA
- ◊ York County, PA



Map of Metropolitan Statistical Areas Proximate to Juniata River Valley
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Cost of media in these markets is also important, of course, and the Washington-Baltimore and Philadelphia metro markets will be expensive to enter if the JRVVB uses a typical advertising approach (newspapers, brochures, radio and television).

However, as noted above, that is not what typically works best in promoting what the

Juniata River Valley has to offer. Websites directed at these markets through clever links and referral arrangements can penetrate these markets cost-effectively. Smaller and less expensive advertisements can also be used to distribute the JRVVB Internet address and leverage media advertising investments.

The JRVVB also needs to take advantage of its special assets to advertise. Amtrak, for instance, is constantly transporting Harrisburg and Philadelphia travelers through the Juniata River Valley. The JRVVB should, therefore, be seeking to place advertisements in front of those travelers, whether that be done with signs at the Lewistown station, promotions or paid advertising.

The several different bus tour operators who are now regularly stopping at the Stop 35 interchange are another logical vehicle for advertising and promotion to reach these markets. Scheduling of special events throughout the year will make this easier.

Other Advertising Recommendations for the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau

Given the above, the following additional advertising recommendations are offered for the JRVVB:

- 1) The JRVVB should combine the Juniata River Valley name with a theme that can be attached to and become part of the brand image through simple repetition over many years in the model of the highly effective "I Love New York" message or the clever new "Pocono Mountains, More

to Love" advertising line that subtly plays off next door New York's success.

The theme should be the subject of some extensive focus group activity before being used so that the JRVVB can know in advance that it will be effective and commit to stay with it over the many years that are necessary to make it work as intended. The "Discover Our Good Nature" theme that appears on this report cover is now being tested and should be copyright protected if it works as well as expected. Another possibility is "The Juniata River Valley, Where Life Flows Easily."

Simplistic themes of this nature that capture the essence of the region while linking to the River are the best approach. Whatever theme is chosen, and this should be among the very highest of priorities for the JRVVB Board of Directors, it must be simple. After that equally simple repetition ad infinitum in all advertising is the key.

- 2) History, culture and the natural environment are the products that advertising must sell. The language used by the Clarion Inn to describe the area is instructive in this regard. It states that the Inn is;

"...situated in the middle of 80 acres of country farmland in a lush valley amidst the Appalachian Mountains. We are 12 miles from Belleville, which is the center of our bustling Amish community. On Wednesdays, visitors from all over the United States come to attend Belleville's

Farmer's Market, livestock auction, flea markets, antique shops and food stands."

These are some of the same products the area as a whole needs to sell. It can also sell history by developing simple but effective driving and walking guides that are left at hotels. Union County has done some good things of this nature with its "Rural Roads of Union County" brochures. Line drawings of historic buildings make effective advertising pieces in this regard. This could be one good use of special tourism promotion funding from DCED.

The natural environment was very effectively promoted in a publication to celebrate the Juniata River's designation as Pennsylvania's River of the Year 2001. This "Juniata Journey" brochure and the "Juniata River Guide Map" are both very professional pieces that invite visitors to appreciate the River and the surrounding area. The fact that they are prepared on a six-county basis is also good in that it establishes links with other regions for cross-promotion purposes.

However, the original version of the Guide and Map (which is intended to be a tourism publication while the other is focused on watershed protection) was not effectively linked to other cultural or historical attractions. Only markers on the map and simple listings were used. Examples, stories and professional photos such as used in the "Juniata Journey" brochure are needed to entice interest in other attractions and convey the prominent themes of each participating

county. Some of this has been accomplished with the accompanying Guide but more is needed to avoid it being viewed as simply an advertising piece.

- 3) Links to these other areas (e.g. the Allegheny Ridge State Heritage Park, the Southern Alleghenies Regional Tourism Federation) and projects such as the Millennium Legacy Trail are essential. The JRVVB cannot rely solely upon its relationship with the Valleys of the Susquehanna program. Certainly that is a logical group to work with much of the time, but the Juniata River Valley is, as noted above, distinctive and has its own unique set of opportunities it should work to exploit, sometimes in cooperation with other regions.
- 4) Perry County (and perhaps Huntingdon) could be a partner in promoting the Juniata River Valley. It shares the same ridge and valley geography and markets. These opportunities should be explored on a case by case basis for now.
- 5) It is important not to oversell the Amish community. It should be marketed as simply one feature of the Juniata River Valley culture - one reason to "Discover Our Good Nature." The JRVVB can help to ensure this by maintaining such a posture in all its own advertisements and encouraging members to do the same.
- 6) Campgrounds and B&B's are both doing well in Pennsylvania and should be a target of the JRVVB's promotions. Both can do well with websites and a portion of the JRVVB's annual advertising budget

(perhaps 10%) should be set aside specifically for the purpose of constantly upgrading the JRVVB website to make it completely interactive, with links to the recreation and tourism inventory and back to individual campgrounds, B&B's and other attractions. Links to ExperiencePA.com are also essential in both directions. The Internet is no longer an extra - it is basic for the travel industry. Additionally, it is highly cost-effective.

All of this requires constant maintenance and a commitment to excellence. Internet users who find inactive links or names of lodging places and other major attractions with no descriptive web pages to attach to these names will quickly become frustrated. There needs to be a commitment on the part of JRVVB to ensure that 100% of its members have an active Internet presence as soon as possible. The organization should, accordingly, offer all its members some simple assistance in developing sites as part of its routine advertising support, along with opportunities to develop more sophisticated sites for those who are interested. This, too, would make an excellent project for special State tourism funding.

- 7) Signage of the new Route 322 Lewistown bypass will be critically important for hotel owners and others. The JRVVB should work with PennDOT to address this need by placing dining and lodging directory signs on the highway.
- 8) Routes 35, 75, 522 and 655 need to be promoted as specific journeys through the

heartland of the Juniata River Valley region. Each conveys a particular charm and set of attractions. Scenic drives, "trails" and other tours focused on these Routes are needed.

- 9) Packaging of B&B's, campgrounds and hotels with attractions such as the Brookmere Winery, the Shoop Family Farm, Asher Candies, Raystown Lake and the Historic Greenwood Furnace are essential. Visitors want varied experiences that are planned out for them in advance. The JRVVB should take the lead in putting parties together and arranging for joint advertising in metro market newspapers, special websites and brochures. Private packagers (known as "receptives" with respect to foreign visitors) can also play an important role and should be encouraged and supported by the JRVVB. Receptives play a major role in packaging of visits to areas such Branson, Missouri.
- 10) The JRVVB needs to continue to work with the Mifflin County Information Technology Department to develop highly usable versions of the Recreation and Tourism Inventory map in several variations that will illustrate various trails, trips, tours and groups of similar attractions. See Chapter 2 for more information.
- 11) Tourism promotion seminars are needed for both members and nonmembers of the JRVVB to upgrade the professionalism and effectiveness of marketing efforts, achieve more coordination and develop more positive attitudes about tourism

promotion in general. Such seminars will also help to achieve widespread acceptance of the JRVVB vision and goals as set forth in Chapter 1 of this Regional Tourism Plan.

- 12) The JRVVB needs to assume as much control as it is able to achieve over the coordination of events in the Juniata River Valley, both to avoid conflicts where possible and to promote all these events collectively.
- 13) The JRVVB should engage the services of a firm such as the Valleys of the Susquehanna has previously used to gain placement of Juniata River Valley travel stories in the media for major market listed above. That firm was Geiger & Associates of Tallahassee, Florida and they successfully generated 23 articles on the Valleys of the Susquehanna through a press tour and other media liaison efforts.

Other similar firms are obviously available (see TravelWriters.com for more information) but the key is focusing on the Juniata River Valley and not the much larger Susquehanna Valley region. This may require working with other counties such as Bedford, Fulton, Huntingdon and Perry but would help to develop the brand image of the Juniata River Valley that is needed.

**Recommended Measures of
Marketing Effectiveness**

Measuring the effectiveness of the marketing

program on a continual basis is necessary to guide future investments. It is recommended the following criteria be applied:

- 1) **Tourism expenditures in each County as reported by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development in its annual "Economic Impact of Travel in Pennsylvania Counties" studies.** A reasonable goal is to increase gross travel expenditures, in current dollars, by 2% per year average over the next 5 years (2003 through 2007) in each County.
- 2) **Room tax collections.** The amount of room tax collected provides a hard measure of tourism promotion success in at least one sector of the industry that tends to also affect most other elements. A complementary measure that should be considered is the number of campsite rental days sold. This will demand annual surveys. Again, a 2% average annual growth rate is a reasonable goal. It may also be appropriate to set goals by quarter, assigning higher numbers to those seasons where marketing emphasis is given.
- 3) **Employment at lodging places, eating and drinking places and other tourism businesses.** This is also relatively easy to gather, using Pennsylvania Department of Labor data. Employment gains are likely to lag behind sales because existing businesses are usually able to grow volumes without adding employees at the outset. Therefore, a more modest goal of 1% to 1.5% per year average is warranted. This measure is also, for this same reason, better applied to the tourism program as a

whole than to individual marketing efforts.

- 4) **JRVVB inquiries.** The number of inquiries received by the JRVVB, especially during marketing campaigns and from those markets targeted are another measure of effectiveness. A minimum average growth rate of 3% per year is appropriate, reflecting the fact that promotion is likely, at the margin, to generate inquiries at a more rapid rate than visitors.

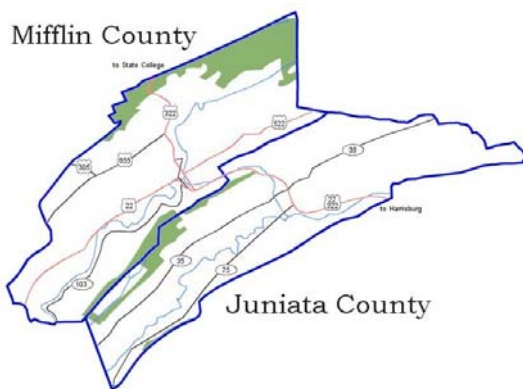
It is not recommended that visitation numbers for specific attractions, whether public or private, be used. They are subject to far too many other factors, ranging from weather to management, to be reliable indicators.

INTRODUCTION

The following is a summary of major projects recommended in this Plan for the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau to implement, along with further analysis of likely impacts:

Create A Tourism Map(s) for the Juniata River Valley

Description: Finish developing the tourism inventory map assembled by the Mifflin County Information Technology Department to create an interactive website version, with photographs and other information on each attraction, and several different published versions to illustrate the locations of various groups of attractions.



Estimated Costs: Work to date has been on an in-kind basis by Mifflin County. Continued development of the inventory map to be the basis of an interactive website will demand at least six more months of work plus associated out-of-pocket costs. It is expected this will require approximately \$25,000 in further in-kind contributions for labor plus an estimated \$10,000 per year to maintain the site and

\$2,000 per year for reproduction of maps. There will also be additional software development needed to establish the interactive aspects of the map and create the linkages needed with the JRVVB to put a reservation system in place. It is anticipated this will require another \$3,000 per year for a total of \$15,000/year in on-going costs.

Economic Benefits for Tourists: This project will create a much more user friendly version of the Tourism Map now available and make it much easier to locate Juniata River Valley attractions. The Map will also be convertible to other versions for specific purposes (e.g. a driving tour of the Amish farm country found in the Big Valley).

As the interactive website is developed to accompany the Map, potential visitors will be able to obtain photographs and other information on lodging, dining and other attractions that they would otherwise have to wait for by mail or drive to a location where brochures are distributed.

Economic Benefits for JRVVB and Region: This project will increase the effectiveness of all the JRVVB's efforts by making available a Map that can be inserted in different brochures and on other websites with ease and limited expenses. It should allow for much higher quality materials even as costs of drafting and printing are reduced. The savings from having such a map available should be in the range of \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year.

There should, in addition, be growth in revenues to local businesses such as hotels who now lack photographs on the Internet and lose customers as a result. This will produce more

employment and more revenue for the JRVVB, making the project very cost-effective.

Special Requirements: This project depends upon Mifflin County continuing to make available the special expertise of its Information Technology Department and up-to-date computer hardware and software infrastructure to maintain the system.

Other Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts: This system and the Tourism Map will add to the prestige of both Counties as well as the JRVVB, helping to embellish the self-images of both residents and business owners. The Map is expected to primarily service existing visitors and simply get them to spend more while they're in the area. Nonetheless, stimulating any amount new tourism will also increase traffic and result in some further development of the area, changing its character in some respects, although not necessarily negatively. Mifflin County has anticipated such needs with its Transportation Plan and recommended Interchange Study.

Implementation Steps and Timeline:

- 1) Finish adding new layers to existing map. Complete by October 31, 2002.
- 2) Add other data and photos to the website version. Complete by December 31, 2002.
- 3) Finish developing the interactive aspects of the Inventory and Map, including links to the JRVVB and member websites. Complete by December 31, 2002.
- 4) Print and distribute hard copies in various versions. Complete by January 31, 2003.

Develop a Themed Advertising Program Targeted at Major Markets

Description: Establish a marketing theme such as "The Juniata River Valley...Discover Our Good Nature" to accompany an advertising and marketing campaign targeted at Washington D.C., Harrisburg, State College, Lancaster, York, Reading and Philadelphia-Wilmington. Base the theme on the cultural, historic and natural of the region and its relaxing atmosphere.



**Courtesy of Common Ground Magazine,
McVeytown, Pennsylvania (Mifflin County)
R. Dunmire, P. Brumbaugh**

Estimated Costs: While much can be done at limited cost to market the Juniata River Valley, reaching the target markets with effective advertising that reinforces its theme will require

significant investments. The costs of advertising in major market media outlets can be large. They can be reduced by seeking out free publicity in travel sections of newspapers or using smaller advertisements that refer to the website for more information, but no media is going to make itself available for free to non-advertisers. Travel articles will, therefore, depend to some extent on how willing the JRVVB is willing to invest in that media.

Newspaper ad rates for the target markets identified in the Marketing Plan (Chapter 7) are as follows:

Newspaper Advertising Rate Analysis for Recommended Target Markets				
Newspaper	Standard Rate Per Column Inch	Bulk Contract Volume Rate	Total Readership	Standard Cost Per 1,000 Readers
Washington Post	\$325.00	\$238.60	1,712,300	\$0.19
Washington Sunday	\$454.60	\$335.80	2,359,500	\$0.19
Reading Times-Eagle	\$30.76	\$28.76	134,190	\$0.23
Reading Sunday	\$32.52	\$30.36	192,526	\$0.17
Baltimore Sun	\$142.30	\$71.15	619,096	\$0.23
Baltimore Sunday	\$200.10	\$160.08	940,770	\$0.21
York Sunday	\$54.23	\$45.90	214,710	\$0.25
York Daily/Dispatch	\$51.64	\$43.70	184,866	\$0.28
Harrisburg Patriot-News	\$68.70	\$53.45	238,000	\$0.29
Harrisburg Sunday	\$78.50	\$63.45	298,000	\$0.26
Lancaster Intelligencer	\$57.80	\$34.68	195,200	\$0.30
Lancaster Sunday	\$65.45	\$39.27	222,800	\$0.29
Philadelphia Inquirer	\$302.00	\$212.00	971,100	\$0.31
Philadelphia Sunday	\$428.00	\$407.00	1,464,824	\$0.29
Wilmington News Journal	\$101.80	\$66.17	265,100	\$0.38
Wilmington Sunday	\$128.25	\$83.36	272,600	\$0.47
Centre Daily Times	\$25.08	\$16.68	55,100	\$0.46
Centre Daily Sunday	\$32.73	\$21.61	60,400	\$0.54

NOTE: Readership numbers from Audit Bureau of Circulations where available, newspaper statements or estimated at 2.0 times circulation.

There are wide differences in the costs of reaching the target markets with newspapers. The least expensive, in costs per reader reached, is also the best market economically,

that being the Washington, D.C. metro area, although the Reading Times-Eagle Sunday edition is, taken alone, the single best buy. Nevertheless, repetition is key and placing repeated advertisements in a paper such as the "Washington Post" can be expensive (a single two column by four inch open rate ad in the Sunday edition would cost over \$3,600). Distance is also a factor and the higher probability of attracting a visitor from Harrisburg may well justify the slightly higher costs per reader.

Balancing of all these factors suggests markets such as Lancaster, where the cost per reader is still quite reasonable and same size ad would cost \$525, are the best bet. A campaign focused on Harrisburg, Lancaster and York, with 20 such advertisements in each paper annually at bulk rates, would cost approximately \$25,000.

Some additional funds should also be invested in other media and markets and, therefore, the total annual costs of an effective advertising campaign are probably closer to \$35,000. There will also be funding required at the outset to develop the appropriate theme, test it and put it in a graphically appealing format. This will require an estimated \$10,000 to \$15,000, based on experience in other areas.

Economic Benefits for Tourists: Creating an effective image of the Juniata River Valley that matches reality and reinforces themes built upon the cultural, historical and natural environment helps to steer new development in directions that preserve the quality of experience for visitors and the quality of life for residents. Advertising also helps to direct the visitors to the best assets of the area,

making each visit a more rewarding one.

Economic Benefits for JRVVB and Region:

Additional tourism of the type an advertising campaign would produce, would generate new customers for existing businesses, more employment and more revenue for the JRVVB, making the project a very cost-effective measure for increasing tourism.

Special Requirements: Developing an advertising campaign will demand professional expertise in both advertising and graphic design. This is not a task that can simply be given to a local printer or media representative. Alternatives will need to be created and focus groups used to test them. An advertising agency should also be used to negotiate the best contract rates and advise the JRVVB on placement and timing of the advertising.

Other Social, Economic and Environmental

Impacts: Increasing tourism will also increase traffic and result in some further development. However, growth is likely anyway. Effective advertising, by creating a high quality image of the Juniata River Valley, will help set expectations and standards for that growth.

Additionally, the two Counties both possess relatively good highway infrastructure east and west off of Route 322, where the major attractions are to found. These highways are able to accommodate additional visitation.

Many communities are also beginning to address land use issues related to quality. Much can be done with site plan review standards that accommodate growth but insist on better designs, limited signage and more landscaping. More planning is recommended.

Implementation Steps and Timeline:

- 1) Secure the services of a professional designer and an advertising agency to manage the development and testing of a marketing theme. Complete by January 31, 2003.
- 2) Create and test the marketing theme. Complete by March 31, 2003.
- 3) Schedule the placement of advertisements, subject to the availability of funding and negotiation of appropriate contract rates. Complete by April 30, 2003.
- 4) Evaluate effectiveness of advertising by tracking inquiries and surveying members. Complete by December 31, 2003.



**Courtesy of Common Ground Magazine,
R. Dunmire, P. Brumbaugh**

Establish A Website Development Program for JRVVB Members

Description: Provide JRVVB members with a free web page linked to the Tourism Inventory and Map along with the technical assistance required to develop that page and/or a separate website linked back to the JRVVB and ExperiencePA.com. This would include training in maintaining their pages or websites. This should be a strictly member benefit.

Estimated Costs: Some of this work will be included in developing the interactive Tourism Map and reservation program, but members need to be encouraged to go further in developing their own web pages or independent websites such as Buttonwood Campground's. This will require additional technical expertise for both the initial development stage and on-going training. Once the sites are created, the business owners should take responsibility for them.

A cost-effective method of providing such assistance would be to model it on a program being applied in nearby Bedford County. That project is featured on the State's "Pennsylvania Digital Grassroots" website. Students from the Bedford County Technical Center and Everett Area School District have teamed with a Future Business Learners of America local chapter to establish what is in effect a local media development company. Their project is to create an interactive virtual tour of Bedford County in partnership with the County Chamber of Commerce, Office of Economic Development and Visitors Bureau. A similar initiative could serve to provide the technical

resources needed to sponsor a website development program for JRVVB members.

Some supervision, software and overhead costs will still be involved if this approach is used but those costs would be relatively small, perhaps \$5,000 to \$10,000 per year. Should it be impossible to assemble such a program, than technical assistance would have to be purchased from other website developers. It would, typically, cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000 each to develop a professional website if that were the case, but those costs could be controlled and adapted to available funds by asking members to share in the expense with the JRVVB (50% each would be appropriate) and taking projects on an application basis.

Websites are the most cost-effective form of advertising for most of the businesses who now make up the Juniata River Valley's tourism sector. Additionally, the use of the Internet is soaring while print and other media are either in decline or diversifying to such an extent that it is difficult to achieve effective market penetration. Therefore, website development among members needs to be a priority for the JRVVB. It deserves a funding priority as well and not simply token attention. A \$10,000 to \$15,000/year commitment is warranted.

Economic Benefits for Tourists: This project will make it much easier for visitors to find Juniata River Valley attractions and know what to expect before they arrive. The Internet is fast becoming (if not already) the preferred tool for travel planning (see Chapter 6). Making the Juniata River Valley Internet friendly serves the needs of ever greater numbers of tourists.



Courtesy of Common Ground Magazine.

Economic Benefits for JRVVB and Region:

This project is necessary for the JRVVB to be competitive in the increasingly sophisticated world of tourism promotion. Getting noticed demands a strong Internet presence by not only the JRVVB, but also its individual members. Websites are the modern versions of brochures.

They cannot be the sole method of advertising but should serve as the structure for other methods of marketing. Newspaper and other media advertisements, tourism maps and signage all need to direct readers to the websites as the place to learn more and make travel arrangements.

Sponsoring website development by members will allow the JRVVB to grow in value as a service provider. It will also grow tourism itself and help to form an image of the area that encourages quality development.

Special Requirements: This project will require up-to-date computer hardware and software infrastructure, a source of competent technical assistance in website development, capable supervision of any students employed on the project and a funding commitment from the JRVVB.

Other Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts: This project, like others proposed, will be directed at better servicing existing tourism providers and visitors. The goal will be to increase their spending while in the Juniata River Valley. This will, nevertheless, tend to increase traffic and encourage some additional development of the area as additional tourism sites are established.

The key will be to create a self-fulfilling high-quality image of the area as a cultural, historic and natural environment worth preserving. Given such a self-image, businesses and communities will have every reason to plan and do it right and to fit into the image.

Implementation Steps and Timeline:

- 1) Develop a partnership with schools, one or more colleges or private website developers to offer the technical assistance required. Complete by February 28, 2003.
- 2) Develop assistance guidelines and take applications from members for the first round of websites, requiring some level of cost-sharing (50% sharing recommended). Complete by April 30, 2003.
- 3) Develop, critique and approve new websites, with links to JRVVB and ExperiencePA.com sites. Complete by September 30, 2003.
- 4) Publish initial websites on the Internet, including making arrangements for hosting. Also, take applications for second round of sites. Complete by October 31, 2003.

www.experiencePA.COM

**Establish a Travel Packaging Program
for the Juniata River Valley**

Description: Establish a formal travel packaging program for JRVVB members, combining two or more complementary offerings into single-price packages that include a variety of services such as lodging, meals, entrance fees to attractions, entertainment, transportation costs (e.g. Amtrak), guide services or other similar activities.

JRVVB staff would identify potential attractions that could be part of packages and meet with owner and managers to design programs offering distinctive customer benefits capable of being effectively marketed. Reservation, refund and cancellation policies would need to be addressed. Advertising would need to be arranged and funds collected and dispersed on behalf of package partners.

Packages would need to be priced so that customers could not purchase them in separate elements for less than the package prices. The JRVVB would also need to help owners determine if the packages are financially feasible by applying a break-even analysis to establish how many packages they must sell before earning a profit. Evaluation of how changes in package costs or prices would affect the number of packages a business must sell would be part of this.

Summarizing, travel packaging would involve three separate phases as follows:

- ◇ Package Preparation (market research, negotiations for services, pricing)

- ◇ Package Marketing (advertising, personal sales)
- ◇ Package Management (reservations, paying suppliers, administration)

Estimated Costs: The JRVVB will be able use its website and proposed reservation system to help with packaging. However, the largest expense will be for staff support that participating members should help cover by paying some additional fees. Packaging is a service that can be marketed to interested members at a discounted price that covers JRVVB out-of-pocket salary expense but still offers a good value for interested members. This would promote both the JRVVB and tourism generally.

If packaging partners include some of the bus tour companies already stopping regularly in the area, the potential is quite large and considerable staff resources could be required. A one day per week position (a reasonable assumption) would cost approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000 with overhead included. If packaging partners covered the basic salary in fees paid (say \$6,000) and all other out-of-pocket expenses, the net costs to the JRVVB would be about \$4,000 to \$6,000/year.

Economic Benefits for Tourists: Packaging would allow visitors to budget for trips. It would reduce the time consumed in making travel arrangements by allowing customers to arrange several components of a trip at once. Tickets, meals and other package components can often be purchased at wholesale prices, which together with the cost of packaging would still provide a good value for the customer. Visitors unfamiliar with many of the

activities and attractions of the Juniata River Valley would be helped to find them more easily as packaged services. Finally, packaging would provides an opportunity to address specialized interests by offering package components not readily available to individual customers (e.g. a quilting demonstration by some of the best quilt makers in the area).

Economic Benefits for JRVVB and Region: Packaging can be used to improve profitability by adding value to an existing product. Visitors can, for instance, be required to stay a certain length of time to qualify for package pricing. Packaging can also be used during low tourism demand periods to add features to a business's offering and produce increased sales.

Packaging can reduce marketing costs for individual package partners, especially if the businesses involved have similar customers. It can also be a very cost-effective way to target specific markets by offering special weekends or visits built around recurring Juniata River Valley events (e.g. the Ice Festival).

Packages can be designed to include less known or often overlooked attractions and, thereby, generate new tourism and increased business for small providers. They offer the capacity to reach new markets with more compelling and convenient products, bring back prior customers and develop multi-trip customers.

Special Requirements: This project would demand JRVVB staff with a combination of basic entrepreneurial, financial and marketing skills. While packaging partners can provide some of these skills, the JRVVB needs to be able to help all partners visualize the potential, design and price out packages, help sell them

and collect and disburse funds paid out and received.

Market research, budgeting, projecting of sales, setting up a point of contact, cross-promotion agreements, booking procedures, promotion and quality control would all have to be addressed. These would require a very competent JRVVB staff person who can be assigned to the task of travel package development and management. Training and some professional technical assistance would also be required.

Other Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts: Packaging would bring new tourism to the Juniata River Valley, adding jobs and increasing the profitability of existing tourism businesses. It would also increase traffic and result in some further development of the area as new tourism businesses were established to take advantage of the traffic. Once again, however, the goals should be to strengthen existing businesses and use packaging to help build a tourism industry focused on activities that will maintain the Juniata River Valley's rural farm and outdoor character.

Implementation Steps and Timeline:

- 1) Train staff in packaging and establish fee structure for partners. Complete by October 31, 2003.
- 2) Do market research with tour companies and others and solicit package partners. Complete by December 31, 2003.
- 3) Assemble, market, administer and evaluate package programs. Complete first round by December 31, 2004.

Establish a Travel Media Information Program for the Juniata River Valley

Description: Establish a formal travel media information program within the JRVVB to encourage more writing of travel articles and generation of free publicity for the Juniata River Valley. This would involve a combination of the following measures:

- ◇ Regular (weekly, if possible) news releases on Juniata River Valley tourism happenings and attractions, including reports on JRVVB activity.
- ◇ E-mailed versions of weekly or monthly calendars of events and story ideas.
- ◇ Organized travel media tours on request and by scheduling at least annually. The Pocono Mountains Vacation Bureau maintains a special web page for travel media representatives. The Bureau also encourages the press to request tours by completing a simple web-based form (www.poconos.org/travelmedia).
- ◇ An image library. This could be based on some of the excellent photography assembled by Mifflin County's "Common Ground" magazine, examples of which are included in this Chapter and much of which is already published on a Morehead State University website.
- ◇ A "travel press kit" including brochure collections, maps, statistics, background information on the two counties, contacts, pricing data, calendars of events, travel

package information, suggested story lines and other materials.

The Pocono Mountain Vacation Bureau web page for the travel media provides an overview of that agency's excellent program. It provides a model that could be largely replicated in the Juniata River Valley.

The Valleys of the Susquehanna agency was also successful in using a travel consultant to organize a 1998 press tour that generated the equivalent of over \$250,000 of advertising (See Chapter 6). This could be an appropriate technique for the JRVVB to apply on its own or in cooperation with the Valleys organization.

Estimated Costs: The JRVVB's largest expense in supporting a travel media information program would be staff time, although an estimated \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year would be required for printing and distribution of press kit materials with perhaps twice that amount to cover the cost of conducting tours (e.g. transportation, meals, lodging). The staff time involved would represent perhaps \$5,000 to \$6,000/year for a total cost in the range of \$8,000 to \$12,000/year.

Economic Benefits for Tourists: Tourists would learn more about the special character of the Juniata River Valley as a result of travel media information program. This would increase appreciation of the area's cultural, historic and natural attributes and improve the quality of visitor experiences.

Economic Benefits for JRVVB and Region: The benefits for the JRVVB and region from

this program are simple - inexpensive or free advertising. Travel articles would also serve to shape the brand image of the Juniata River Valley in detailed ways that paid advertisements could not. Travel articles would serve to promote the region and increase those types of tourism most suited to preserving its essential rural farm character.

Special Requirements: This project would demand JRVVB staff trained to generate news releases, assemble professional press kits and develop story lines for articles. The ability to relate well with travel media representatives would also be important.

Other Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts: Like other possible initiatives, added travel media attention would bring new tourism to the Juniata River Valley with the attendant economic benefits and traffic impacts discussed above. It would, yet once again, however, primarily help existing tourism businesses and encourage new businesses that fit the vision set forth in Chapter 1.

Implementation Steps and Timeline:

- 1) Establish travel media information page on JRVVB website and assemble travel press kit. Complete by December 31, 2003.
- 2) Begin regular e-mail communications with local and regional media, especially within the target markets of State College, Lancaster, Harrisburg, York, Reading, Baltimore, Washington and Philadelphia. Complete by January 31, 2004.
- 3) Organize first scheduled travel media tour. Complete by June 30, 2004.

Promote Agricultural Tourism Ventures for the Juniata River Valley

Description: Encourage the development of additional agricultural tourism businesses to complement other tourism offerings and build on the "Discover Our Good Nature" theme. Examples of agri-tourism ventures include :

- ◇ Outdoor farm recreation such as equine activities, wildlife viewing, clay bird shooting, hay rides, fee fishing/hunting, camping/picnicking, cross-country skiing, off-road vehicles and mountain biking.
- ◇ Educational experiences such as school tours, garden shows, brewery/winery tours, agricultural technical tours, historical agricultural exhibits, crop testing and exotic animal farms.
- ◇ Direct agricultural sales such as farmers' markets, on-farm processing and sales, roadside stands, farm-related crafts and gifts and u-pick operations.
- ◇ Entertainment such as food festivals, fairs, petting zoos, hunting/working dog trials, corn or sunflower mazes and musical events (e.g. bluegrass events).
- ◇ Accommodations such bed and breakfast inns, farm vacation resorts and hostels.

Promoting agricultural tourism is largely a matter of education and technical assistance. The Region's farmers first need to be made aware of the tourism assets they possess. One of the most important is the fact most farms

are family operations. Family history is a great marketing device to reach visitors eager to take home wine, cheese and other farm products they can tell others they purchased at a little family-owned farm in the Juniata River Valley.



Example of Agricultural Tourism

The Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau should encourage the development of additional agricultural tourism ventures such as new fruit and vegetable stands, fishing ponds, farm tours and u-pick operations through seminars on how to establish and conduct these enterprises. It should also solicit farmers interested in such endeavors. The Wayne County, Pennsylvania, Chamber of Commerce, for example, was successful in interesting one its farm members

in pursuing a corn maze operation to complement its train excursions. That business now attracts over 3,000 visitors annually and has been expanded to include a petting zoo.

However, rural landowners are often unsure, for example, how to manage liability concerns with these types of enterprises. They require additional technical education in regard to this matter and other facets of the tourism business if fee-based agricultural tourism is to develop. These educational programs should be accomplished in cooperation with the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service. The University of California Small Farm Center also provides some direction in this regard.

Finally, some advertising support from the JRVVB is important. Bucks County, Pennsylvania does a very effective job with a plain paper booklet advertising several dozen sites and combines this with a website where such attractions are packaged with bed and breakfast accommodations. A good example is also found in Agritour (UK) Ltd., which is dedicated to promoting farm stays and tours in England. (See www.agritour.com.)

Estimated Costs: The JRVVB's required investment in supporting an agricultural tourism program would be largely limited to staff time, although an estimated \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year would be demanded for printing and distribution of promotional materials. The staff time involved would represent perhaps \$3,000 to \$5,000/year for a total cost in the range of \$4,000 to \$7,000/year.

Economic Benefits for Tourists: Expanded agri-tourism opportunities would broaden visitor opportunities and increase appreciation

of the area's cultural and natural attributes.

Economic Benefits for JRVVB and Region:

Agricultural tourism is well suited to preserving the Juniata River Valley's rural character and working landscapes. It promises additional tourism income for the area while also enhancing farm income. It should help to preserve the working farms that form such an important part of the Juniata River Valley.

Special Requirements: This project would require JRVVB staff to coordinate efforts closely with the Cooperative Extension Service and secure technical assistance from other sources (e.g. legal advice, design assistance).

Other Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts: Added tourism to the Juniata River Valley will result in economic benefits to both farms and other businesses and only limited environmental and social impacts due to its compatibility with the Region's existing agricultural and rural character.

Implementation Steps and Timeline:

- 1) Survey need for specific agri-tourism enterprises and farmer interest. Complete by June 30, 2003.
- 2) Work with Cooperative Extension Service to identify resources and conduct seminars for interested parties. Complete by December 31, 2003
- 3) Work with Cooperative Extension Service to prepare and publish agri-tourism brochure including guide and map to all farms with direct sales. Complete by June 30, 2004.

Trail and Tour Development in the Juniata River Valley

Description: Support the development of additional trails and tours matching the objectives of this Regional Tourism Plan. Such trails and tours might include:

- ◇ Designation of Route 322 as a Scenic Byway using the private/public designation approach employed with respect to Pennsylvania Route 6. This collaborative approach can avoid many of the controversial growth control issues that have surrounded some other byway designations, while allowing the joint promotion of the route as a scenic tour.
- ◇ Designation of other scenic byways or scenic driving tours along Routes 35, 75, 522 and 655 (and possibly others). Union County's "Rural Routes of Union County" promotion provides an example.
- ◇ Supporting establishment of formal trails along the Pennsylvania Canal (and possibly some Canal restoration), Juniata River and the ridgetops through the two Counties. Groups such as the Juniata River Canal Trail Association are already pursuing trails or related projects in some cases that should be supported by the JRVVB in securing governmental cooperation, making grant requests and promotion.
- ◇ Supporting, through advertising and promotion, the already established wine trails and other tours through the region.

- ◇ Working with professional tour operators (several of whom already stop at the Routes 35 and 322 interchange) to create new "trails" and tours for bus trips through the region.
- ◇ Studying the advantages of obtaining official recognition of the Juniata River as a Pennsylvania Scenic River. The management obligations connected with the designation may not warrant taking that step, but this would not stop the JRVVB and adjoining counties from doing their own designation of the Juniata River as a regional scenic river with linkages to Raystown Lake, in much the same way as Route 6 has been identified as a scenic byway without extensive governmental intervention. The existing watershed organization could also play an important role in such a designation. Scenic river designation should, in fact, be driven by the outcome of watershed studies documenting its unique features.
- ◇ Creating the image of the Juniata River Valley as a trail through history by effectively signing various gateways into the Region as well as points of interest along the various trails and tours throughout it. These welcome signs should be of a distinctive high quality nature (preferably wood) and consistently employ the "Juniata River Valley...Discover Our Good Nature" theme. Similar signs should be encouraged at entranceways to Boroughs and villages. A design competition is one way to stimulate interest in such signage and also raise private contributions for its placement.

Estimated Costs: The JRVVB's largest expense in supporting trail and tour development would be staff time. Advertising and promotion would be part of the JRVVB's normal program. The staff time involved would represent perhaps \$5,000 to \$6,000/year. The JRVVB may also want to consider investing in a signage program by allocating approximately \$10,000/year for this purpose.

Economic Benefits for Tourists: Trail and tour development will increase visitor access to cultural, historic and natural features of the Juniata River Valley and, thereby, improve the quality of visitor experiences.

Economic Benefits for JRVVB and Region: Trails and tours can help shape the brand image of the Juniata River Valley by giving tourists exposure to particular facets of the Region and promoting those types of tourism most suited to preserving its rural farm character.

Special Requirements: This project would demand JRVVB staff coordination of multiple efforts by other parties both private and public. JRVVB leadership would be demanded to achieve consistency in signage, initiate contacts with governmental entities and pull together various parties.

Other Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts: New trails and tours would bring additional tourism to the Juniata River Valley with associated economic benefits and traffic impacts. They would, nevertheless, primarily encourage those activities fitting the JRVVB vision and, thereby, grow tourism without detracting significantly from the character or quality of life in the Region.

Implementation Steps and Timeline:

- 1) Identify the best trail and scenic tour opportunities for further development. Complete by December 31, 2003.
- 2) Establish an ad hoc task force of interested parties to pursue designations. Complete by March 31, 2004.
- 3) Develop signage and promotion plans for selected trails and routes. Complete by September 30, 2004.
- 4) Erect signage and begin promotion of selected trails and routes. Complete by June 30, 2005.
- 5) Repeat process for new trails and tours.



**Community and Economic
Development for Tourism**

Description: Community and economic development measures intended to increase the Region's attractiveness for tourism. These largely governmental measures might include:

- ◇ Downtown revitalization to enhance the appeal of these areas for new shops and visitors. The Downtown Lewistown Strategic Plan, for example, needs to be implemented with the support of the JRVVB to restore the Borough's "sense of place." This involves such efforts as redesigning Market Street for two-way traffic, upgrading facades and modifying parking arrangements. All these things are necessary to make the downtown a place of business friendly to shoppers and visitors. Monthly and weekly events (e.g. annual sidewalk sales, farmers market, Goose Day events) are also needed downtown to pull in visitors. Downtowns help define the character of an area and, therefore, need attention as a matter of regional priority. Mifflintown serves Juniata County very well in this way. Lewistown has much yet unrealized potential that can serve to encourage tourism throughout the Juniata River Valley.
- ◇ Cleanup and revitalization of gateway areas to the Region. Victory Park and the areas along the River in Lewistown, for example, need cleaning up. New boat launches may be worth considering in this regard. Older buildings need renovation.

Signage needs to be upgraded and landscaped welcome signs erected. The Victory Park area, in particular, could be part of a very attractive entranceway into Lewistown if it was upgraded and connected with some of the other features nearby such as the building below:



- ◇ Ensuring that future growth is of a high quality nature. This is equally important to cleanups in increasing the attractiveness of the Region. Comprehensive planning and effective land use regulations can be a major positive factor in ensuring that new commercial development incorporates good planning principles (e.g. parking in the rear, effective use of landscaping, ground vs. pole signs, etc.) and avoids the sprawl-like sameness of so many other communities. Billboard control is of particular importance and model sign regulations should be developed for consideration by municipalities. Highway interchange design and maintenance can also affect the image of an area. "Adopt a highway" and "adopt an interchange" beautification programs are very effective and should be promoted.

Mifflin County has developed a County Comprehensive Plan that addresses many of these issues and several municipalities have used it to build upon in crafting their

own plans. This process needs to be encouraged throughout the Juniata River Valley.

- ◇ Coordination of planning with surrounding counties and regions. Although formally part of the SEDA-COG and Valleys of the Susquehanna regions for purposes of most planning, economic development and promotion, Mifflin and Juniata Counties are also closely related to the Capitol Region and other Juniata River related areas of the Commonwealth. The relationships with Perry and Huntingdon Counties are particularly important, the latter because of the heavy influence and value of Raystown Lake as a regional attraction. Southern Alleghenies relationships are very important in general. This demands that Mifflin and Juniata actively participate in other alliances beyond the reaches of the Susquehanna. Juniata River promotions linked to Raystown Lake (and the other counties along the River) to get the spinoff benefits of its brand image are essential.
- ◇ Increasing access by tourism businesses to financial incentives already available for development. There are a number of existing loan programs and other financial incentives available through the Small Business Administration, SEDA-COG, the Small Communities Block Grant program, the Economic Development Administration, the Commonwealth and the Appalachian Regional Commission that are potential sources of financial capital for tourism businesses to develop and expand. These need to be inventoried, explained and publicized among JRVVB

members and potential members.

A simple matrix explanation of such programs, their uses, eligibility requirements and application procedures should be assembled by the JRVVB with the help of SEDA-COG and others for distribution. It needs to be annually updated. It should specifically include "potential uses of funds" information to encourage new tourism investment. Seminars along this along are also appropriate.

Tourist attractions and businesses now lacking and essential to an effective marketing program need to be targeted for the financial assistance. The region needs, in particular, to further develop its cultural attractions, historic sites, agricultural tourism assets, hunting and fishing related businesses, river related recreational uses and other trail and outdoor recreational facilities. Large scale event development of a compatible nature should also be supported (e.g. major festivals, new competitions). These are the areas with the greatest potential for growth and new activities in these categories will help to round out the region's offerings, building on existing assets.

- ◇ New tourism infrastructure investment by the Commonwealth. Investments in official traffic signage to direct visitors to key attractions are, for example, needed. It is essential to develop a less expensive and more streamlined alternative to the current PennDOT directional sign program. This will be especially important with the completion of the

Lewistown bypass now under construction.

Visitors also need to be directed to particularly attractive areas of the Juniata River Valley such as Mifflintown and the Big Valley. Long-term, the goal should be to secure a Route 322 Pennsylvania Welcome Center at the southern gateway to the Juniata River Valley, through which most visitors will come.

Estimated Costs: Because most of the above initiatives are governmental in nature, JRVVB expenses would be limited to the staff time involved in coordination and attendance at meetings. This would represent perhaps \$5,000 to \$10,000/year.

Economic Benefits for Tourists: Protecting and enhancing the special character of the Juniata River Valley would improve the quality of visitor experiences, offer more value to tourists.

Economic Benefits for JRVVB and Region: Higher quality visitor experiences produce higher tourism expenditures.

Special Requirements: This project would demand JRVVB staff participation in numerous activities outside the mainstream of tourism promotion, requiring an understanding of the long-term value to tourism of community development, planning and economic development.

Other Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts: Community and economic development are worthy goals independent of their importance to tourism promotion.

Implementation Steps and Timeline:

- 1) Identify those community and economic development projects, tourist attractions and businesses of most importance to tourism promotion. Complete by December 31, 2003.
- 2) Participate in the deliberations and work of other entities pursuing these community and economic development projects. Ongoing.
- 3) Complete and distribute inventory of financial assistance programs available to tourism businesses. Complete by June 30, 2004 and continue annually.

Juniata River Regional Tourism Plan

APPENDICES:

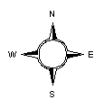
- 1 Juniata-Mifflin Counties Recreation and Tourism Map**
- 2 Travel Expenditures Data**
- 3 Draft Memorandum of Understanding Between Juniata and Mifflin County Boards of Commissioners and Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau**
- 4 Sample Executive Director Job Description**
- 5 Plan Adoption Resolutions**



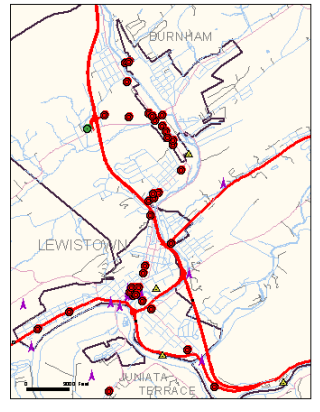
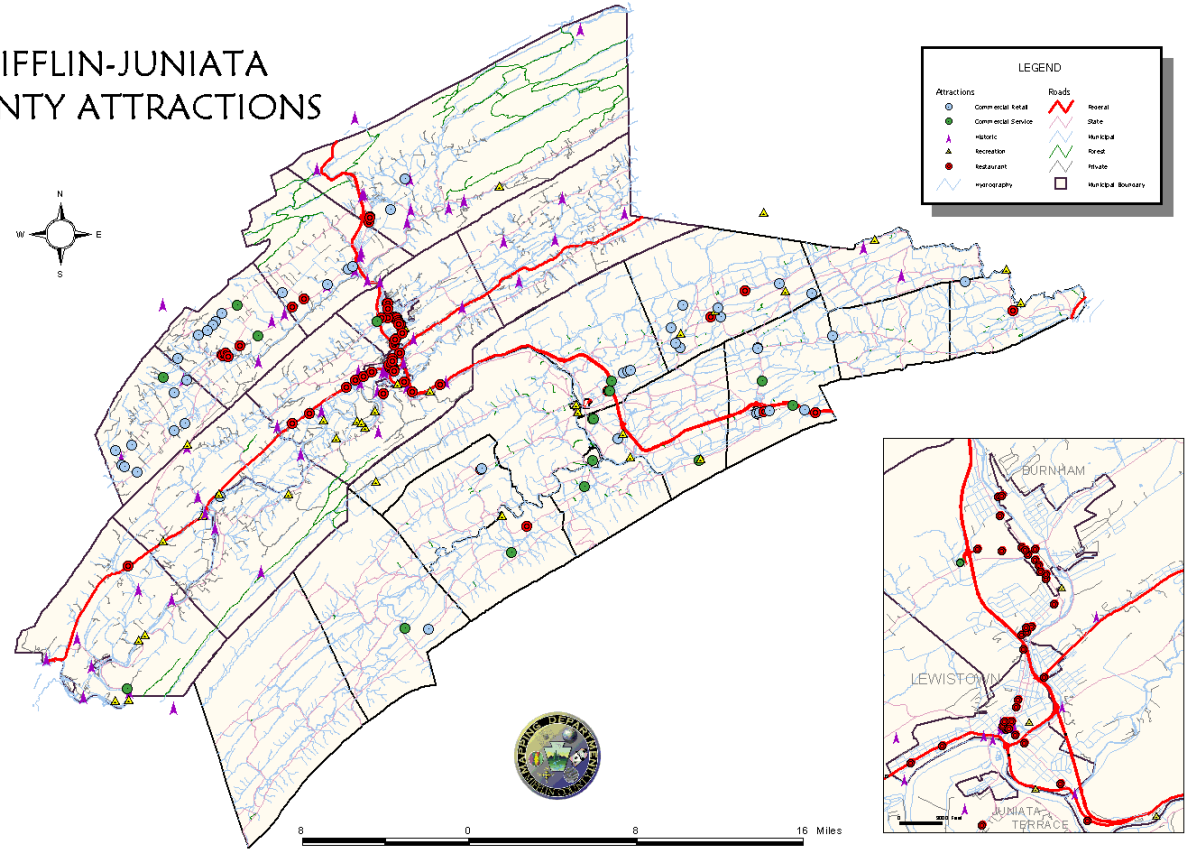
APPENDIX 1

Juniata-Mifflin Counties Recreation and Tourism Map

MIFFLIN-JUNIATA COUNTY ATTRACTIONS



LEGEND			
Attractions			
○	Commercial Retail	⚡	Power
●	Commercial Service	⚡	State
▲	Historic	⚡	Municipal
▲	Recreation	⚡	County
●	Restaurant	⚡	Private
⚡	Waterography	□	Municipal Boundary



APPENDIX 2

Travel Expenditures Data

JUNIATA
Economic Impact of Domestic Travelers
2000

Dollar Amounts in Thousands

DIRECT IMPACT

Industry	Sales	Employment	Compensation
Agriculture	\$0.0	0	\$0.0
Forestry	0.0	0	0.0
Fishing and Trapping	0.0	0	0.0
Mining	0.0	0	0.0
Construction	0.0	0	0.0
Manufacturing	40.2	1	7.3
Transportation	7,602.6	168	3,006.0
Communication	0.0	0	0.0
Utilities	0.0	0	0.0
Wholesale Trade	120.6	1	45.9
Retail Trade	1,185.0	26	572.7
Services-Restaurants	3,984.2	134	1,049.8
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	0.0	0	0.0
Services-Accommodations	100.1	2	36.6
Services-Other	1,004.1	24	145.3
Services-Entertainment	1,917.6	37	442.8
Total	\$15,954.4	391	\$5,306.2

INDIRECT IMPACT

Industry	Sales	Employment	Compensation
Agriculture	\$497.3	5	\$50.0
Forestry	8.0	0	1.4
Fishing and Trapping	6.1	0	4.0
Mining	4.0	0	0.5
Construction	221.1	3	91.8
Manufacturing	1,458.7	5	237.1
Transportation	593.0	9	193.2
Communication	130.6	0	27.6
Utilities	86.6	0	20.5
Wholesale Trade	239.5	3	90.8
Retail Trade	40.0	1	17.4
Services-Restaurants	36.8	1	10.0
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	463.5	4	78.2
Services-Accommodations	10.1	0	3.6
Services-Other	1,127.4	22	392.0
Services-Entertainment	532.8	11	114.1
Total	\$5,455.4	65	\$1,332.1

INDUCED IMPACT

Industry	Sales	Employment	Compensation
Agriculture	\$338.6	4	\$37.9
Forestry	14.6	0	2.7
Fishing and Trapping	0.3	0	0.2
Mining	3.2	0	0.4
Construction	154.2	2	57.8
Manufacturing	1,199.2	5	219.0
Transportation	415.0	6	144.0
Communication	103.0	0	21.3
Utilities	99.3	0	17.1
Wholesale Trade	195.0	2	74.2
Retail Trade	622.1	14	268.3
Services-Restaurants	186.4	6	52.7
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	903.3	5	137.9
Services-Accommodations	6.4	0	2.3
Services-Other	1,146.1	21	483.5
Services-Entertainment	118.7	2	27.1
Total	\$5,505.4	67	\$1,546.2

MAJOR TAXES GENERATED

Tax	Federal	State & Local	Total
Individual Income Taxes	\$1,668.3	\$381.4	\$2,049.7
Corporate Income Taxes	377.1	72.4	449.5
General Sales Taxes	0.0	292.7	292.7
Excise and Selective Sales Taxes	35.7	95.9	131.6
Total	\$2,081.1	\$842.4	\$2,923.5

MIFFLIN
Economic Impact of Domestic Travelers
2000

Dollar Amounts in Thousands

DIRECT IMPACT

Industry	Sales	Employment	Compensation
Agriculture	\$0.0	0	\$0.0
Forestry	0.0	0	0.0
Fishing and Trapping	0.0	0	0.0
Mining	0.0	0	0.0
Construction	0.0	0	0.0
Manufacturing	22.8	0	4.2
Transportation	12,789.4	252	5,037.6
Communication	0.0	0	0.0
Utilities	0.0	0	0.0
Wholesale Trade	370.5	4	141.0
Retail Trade	3,723.8	122	1,732.4
Services-Restaurants	12,524.4	393	3,557.6
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	0.0	0	0.0
Services-Accommodations	2,564.8	58	816.3
Services-Other	3,155.9	59	675.4
Services-Entertainment	6,017.9	94	879.3
Total	\$41,169.4	982	\$12,843.8

INDIRECT IMPACT

Industry	Sales	Employment	Compensation
Agriculture	\$618.7	7	\$69.0
Forestry	6.3	0	1.2
Fishing and Trapping	2.6	0	1.7
Mining	5.8	0	0.7
Construction	518.6	8	191.9
Manufacturing	3,976.9	15	646.7
Transportation	1,246.8	17	408.0
Communication	386.1	2	76.8
Utilities	579.4	2	125.9
Wholesale Trade	703.8	8	267.2
Retail Trade	107.0	3	45.8
Services-Restaurants	155.5	5	44.7
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,226.6	11	240.3
Services-Accommodations	131.5	3	43.7
Services-Other	3,227.2	54	1,255.6
Services-Entertainment	402.0	6	70.1
Total	\$13,294.9	141	\$3,489.2

INDUCED IMPACT

Industry	Sales	Employment	Compensation
Agriculture	\$390.5	5	\$46.1
Forestry	10.1	0	2.0
Fishing and Trapping	0.2	0	0.1
Mining	5.3	0	0.6
Construction	273.2	4	95.0
Manufacturing	3,203.8	13	577.8
Transportation	920.8	13	322.3
Communication	184.1	1	36.7
Utilities	496.8	1	90.2
Wholesale Trade	592.6	6	226.0
Retail Trade	1,581.3	48	671.3
Services-Restaurants	698.7	21	205.4
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	2,377.3	13	402.7
Services-Accommodations	87.6	2	29.6
Services-Other	4,619.7	75	2,146.5
Services-Entertainment	80.7	2	18.8
Total	\$15,522.8	202	\$4,871.3

MAJOR TAXES GENERATED

Tax	Federal	State & Local	Total
Individual Income Taxes	\$4,322.2	\$988.1	\$5,310.3
Corporate Income Taxes	980.5	188.4	1,168.9
General Sales Taxes	0.0	759.1	759.1
Excise and Selective Sales Taxes	92.6	248.6	341.2
Total	\$5,395.3	\$2,184.1	\$7,579.5

APPENDIX 3

Draft Memorandum of Understanding Between Juniata and Mifflin County Boards of Commissioners and Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE
JUNIATA AND MIFFLIN COUNTY BOARDS OF COMMISSIONERS
AND THE JUNIATA RIVER VALLEY VISITORS BUREAU**

THIS AGREEMENT entered into as of this _____ day of _____ of 2003 by and between the Juniata and Mifflin County Boards of Commissioners (hereinafter referred to as "Commissioners") and the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau (hereinafter called "JRVVB"):

WITNESSETH THAT:

WHEREAS, the Juniata Valley Area Chamber of Commerce (JVACC) has served as the Juniata-Mifflin Counties Tourist Promotion Agency, and

WHEREAS, the JVAAC has acted as the official agent of Juniata and Mifflin counties in administering financial aid and other tourist promotion support provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and

WHEREAS, the JVACC, acting in concert with the Commissioners of Juniata and Mifflin Counties, has determined to segregate tourism promotion from its other functions and establish a new organization, the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau, to assume such responsibilities,

WHEREAS, Juniata and Mifflin Counties, Pennsylvania, have by resolution designated the JRVVB as their joint tourist promotion agency, and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of both Counties have enacted a hotel room rental tax to help support the operations of the JRVVB, and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of both Counties, together with representatives of JRVVB and other community and economic development organizations, have prepared a Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan, setting out strategies for tourism development and marketing in the two Counties, and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of JRVVB to work cooperatively with the Commissioners of Juniata and Mifflin Counties to develop and promote tourism in the two Counties,

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties hereto mutually agree as follows:

- 1) The JRVVB shall be organized as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code. The JRVVB shall be obligated to maintain such status so long as it serves as the designated tourism promotion agency for Juniata and Mifflin Counties.
- 2) The JRVVB's responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE
JUNIATA AND MIFFLIN COUNTY BOARDS OF COMMISSIONERS
AND THE JUNIATA RIVER VALLEY VISITORS BUREAU**

- a) Maintaining, improving and distributing a recreation and tourism map in cooperation with the Mifflin County Information Technology Department.
- b) Documenting and explaining the economic and other contributions of tourism to the area.
- c) Placing group advertising for the two Counties in targeted national and regional media outlets.
- d) Coordinating the area's many events to increase awareness and avoid conflicts.
- e) Working with local government to make downtown areas safer and more appealing for visitors.
- f) Providing visitors with constant access to brochures and other information on the area's attractions through a pamphlet distribution program.
- g) Packaging and booking of visits to lodging places and attractions in the two Counties.
- h) Coordinating tourism signage.
- i) Working with local government to ensure the working landscape character of the area is maintained and growth is controlled.
- j) Marketing the area outside the region under a "Juniata River Valley" brand image.
- k) Helping tourism providers develop websites linked to an interactive JRVVB version of the Mifflin County Information Technology Department's recreation and tourism inventory.
- l) Securing additional funding from the Commonwealth for regional tourism promotion.
- m) Promoting unique attractions and areas that serve to support the desired image of the region.
- n) Managing tours of the region.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE
JUNIATA AND MIFFLIN COUNTY BOARDS OF COMMISSIONERS
AND THE JUNIATA RIVER VALLEY VISITORS BUREAU**

- o) Effectively dealing with referrals from the Pennsylvania tourism promotion programs.
- 3) A JRVVB Board of Directors of manageable size (9 to 15 members maximum) shall be established. It shall include a combination of tourism industry and public representatives from both Counties, with the former forming the majority to ensure that program decisions are made on the basis of tourism promotion priorities.
- 4) Officer positions on the JRVVB Board of Directors shall rotate regularly. Term limits of 12 years maximum shall apply to all Directors to ensure organizational vitality and effective representation of all segments of the industry.
- 5) Membership on the JRVVB Board of Directors shall be balanced between Juniata and Mifflin Counties on an equitable basis, with no less than 40% of the Directors coming from each County and at least one Commissioner from each County.
- 6) The JRVVB Board of Directors shall exercise overall authority and responsibility for all activities and operations of the Bureau. Those responsibilities should include the following:
 - a) Developing the corporate mission statement;
 - b) Approving goals and objectives;
 - c) Approving corporate finance, service and personnel policies;
 - d) Approving corporate strategic plans;
 - e) Monitoring corporate investments;
 - f) Balancing interests of tourism stakeholders, employees, clients and the public;
 - g) Electing corporate officers and monitoring their performance;
 - h) Hiring, advising and supervising the Executive Director and assisting that individual with related tasks;
 - i) Ensuring that Directors, officers and employees meet established legal, ethical and professional standards; and

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE
JUNIATA AND MIFFLIN COUNTY BOARDS OF COMMISSIONERS
AND THE JUNIATA RIVER VALLEY VISITORS BUREAU**

- f) Ensuring the financial stability of the organization through a combination of financial oversight and fund raising within both the private and public sectors.

- 7) The JRVVB Executive Director shall be responsible for the day to day management of the JRVVB with primary accountability for its accomplishments and fiscal integrity. The Executive Director shall work with the Board of Directors to determine the focus and direction of the Bureau; develop corporate goals, policies, strategic plans; create an organizational structure; and formulate long-range financial plans. The Executive Director shall also serve as the spokesperson for the Bureau, work with political organizations in coordinating the activities of the Bureau and negotiate financial support. Finally, the Executive Director shall bear responsibility for informing and updating the Board of Directors on management and operations policies and procedures.

- 8) The JRVVB shall assume primary responsibility for implementing the Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan in all its facets, including the specific tourism development and marketing recommendations set forth in such Plan. The JRVVB shall also be responsible for periodically updating and supplementing such Plan as may be required to be meet the changing needs of the tourism industry.

- 9) The parties may mutually agree from time to time in changes in this Agreement. Said changes shall be in writing and signed by all parties.

**Juniata County
Board of Commissioners**

ATTEST: _____

Chairperson

**Mifflin County
Board of Commissioners**

ATTEST: _____

Chairperson

**Juniata River Valley
Visitors Bureau**

ATTEST: _____

Chairperson

APPENDIX 4

Sample Executive Director Job Description

Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau

Sample Executive Director Job Description

Executive Director Job Description

This is the senior management position for the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau (JRVVB). The Executive Director has primary accountability for the accomplishments and fiscal integrity of the entire organization. The Executive Director is expected to work with the Board of Directors to determine the focus and direction of the Bureau. The Executive Director is responsible for developing the Bureau's capabilities, acting as its spokesperson and representing it before others. The Executive Director is expected to work with representatives of both County and State government in coordinating the activities of the Bureau and in negotiating financial support.

Responsibilities:

The Executive Director shall be specifically responsible for working with individual tourism businesses and other tourism providers in an advocacy role to develop and successfully implement tourism marketing strategies and promote tourism development within Juniata and Mifflin Counties. These responsibilities shall include the following tasks:

- Implementing the Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan in its particulars.
- Ensuring that the JRVVB fully complies with the requirements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania pertaining to the operation of tourist promotion agencies and visitor bureaus.
- Supervising and directing the work of other JRVVB staff, including developing an implementation program for who will be responsible, what tasks they are responsible for and when the tasks are to be completed with a schedule of activities and responsibilities assigned to individuals who must get the job done.
- Researching the tourism industry, including government policies and regulations and industry trends.
- Developing tourism promotion ideas based on the information from visitor and industry research and implementing a promotional campaign that includes a variety of advertising, public relations, and sales promotion activities.
- Assembling market data that will assist tourism providers in identifying potential patrons and profitable target market segments based on tourist behavior and markets.
- Identifying and soliciting available tourism promotion program funding from both private and public sources.

Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau

Sample Executive Director Job Description

- Monitoring, evaluating and modifying the tourism marketing plan.
- Working with tourism providers, travel agencies, receptives, other tourist promotion agencies to package and sell complete tourism products.
- Promoting a positive image of the tourism industry in the Juniata River Valley through a variety of media efforts.
- Networking with individuals and various organizations to improve and enhance the viability of local tourism businesses through diversification, niche marketing and regional branding.
- Working with various governmental and economic development agencies to develop and assemble a portfolio of financial resources including grants and loans to finance tourism development projects.
- Representing the county's tourism industry before government institutions.
- Representing the tourism industry on various economic development committees or task forces relevant to issues such as business retention and revitalization, attraction of new business, workforce preparation, competitiveness and quality of life.

Reporting Duties:

The Executive Director will report directly to the Chairperson of the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau Board of Directors. He or she shall, however, work closely with both the Juniata and Mifflin County Boards of Commissioners. The offices for the Executive Director will be located in one of these two Counties with the expectation that the Executive Director will also be regularly available at the other location and report periodically thereto for purposes of directing tourism promotion and serving local tourism businesses.

Required Skills:

The Executive Director must be skilled in communications and marketing and possess a working knowledge of the tourism industry. He or she must have relevant experience in advertising, sales and/or marketing, be able to write effectively and work well in both professional and nonprofessional environments. The Executive Director must also have demonstrated negotiating skills and be able to act as a forceful advocate in promoting both the County's tourism industry as a whole and the interests of individual entrepreneurs. Proven talent in developing and marketing both project ideas and products are essential. Education should include an Associate's or Bachelor's degree in a related field such as communications, business administration, finance or marketing. Comparable on-the-job training combined with extensive experience may substitute.

APPENDIX 5

Plan Adoption Resolutions

Juniata County, Pennsylvania, Board of Commissioners
Resolution No. _____, _____, 2003

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has enacted the Tourist Promotion Law for the purpose of rendering of financial assistance to Tourist Promotion Agencies engaged in promoting the development and expansion of business, industry and commerce in the respective counties of the Commonwealth; and,

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the Tourist Promotion Law only one such Tourist Promotion Agency shall be designated and qualified in each county to receive such financial assistance in accordance with the provisions of said law; and,

WHEREAS, the Juniata County Board of Commissioners has designated the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau as the Tourist Promotion agency to represent said County of the purposes of the Tourist Promotion Law; and

WHEREAS, the Mifflin County Board of Commissioners has also designated the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau as the Tourist Promotion agency to represent said County of the purposes of the Tourist Promotion Law; and

WHEREAS, Juniata and Mifflin Counties have jointly prepared the "**Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan**" to guide the work of the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau and set out a strategy for developing and marketing tourism to the Juniata River Valley;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the "**Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan**," prepared with the assistance of Shepstone Management Company and dated January, 2003, is hereby adopted as the Tourism Plan for the County of Juniata, said Plan representing the official joint strategy of Juniata and Mifflin Counties for developing and marketing tourism to the Juniata River Valley and promoting the creation and expansion of business, industry and commerce under the Pennsylvania Tourist Promotion Law.

Duly adopted at a meeting of the Juniata County Board of Commissioners this _____ day of _____, 2003.

JUNIATA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson

Commissioner

Commissioner

Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, Board of Commissioners
Resolution No. _____, _____, 2003

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has enacted the Tourist Promotion Law for the purpose of rendering of financial assistance to Tourist Promotion Agencies engaged in promoting the development and expansion of business, industry and commerce in the respective counties of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the Tourist Promotion Law only one such Tourist Promotion Agency shall be designated and qualified in each county to receive such financial assistance in accordance with the provisions of said law; and

WHEREAS, the Mifflin County Board of Commissioners has designated the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau as the Tourist Promotion agency to represent said County of the purposes of the Tourist Promotion Law; and

WHEREAS, the Juniata County Board of Commissioners has also designated the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau as the Tourist Promotion agency to represent said County of the purposes of the Tourist Promotion Law; and

WHEREAS, Juniata and Mifflin Counties have jointly prepared the "**Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan**" to guide the work of the Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau and set out a strategy for developing and marketing tourism to the Juniata River Valley;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the "**Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan**," prepared with the assistance of Shepstone Management Company and dated January, 2003, is hereby adopted as the Tourism Plan for the County of Mifflin; said Plan representing the official joint strategy of Juniata and Mifflin Counties for developing and marketing tourism to the Juniata River Valley and promoting the creation and expansion of business, industry and commerce under the Pennsylvania Tourist Promotion Law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the "**Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan**," prepared with the assistance of Shepstone Management Company, funded with the support of a Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Land Use Planning Assistance Grant and dated January, 2003, is hereby also adopted as an official Supplement to "Paths and Bridges," the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan, dated December, 2002; the "**Juniata River Valley Regional Tourism Plan**" representing an additional Comprehensive Plan element addressing the future development of Mifflin County and, specifically, the amount, character, intensity, location and timing of land uses proposed for business, industry and agriculture, as provided by Section 301 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, Board of Commissioners
Resolution No. _____, _____, 2003

Duly adopted at a meeting of the Mifflin County Board of Commissioners this
_____ day of _____, 2003.

MIFFLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson

Commissioner

Commissioner