Discover our stories. Experience our culture. Celebrate our heritage.
The Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area (MHNHA) was designated by Congress in April 2009 and covers 19 full counties and portions of 11 others. Its exact boundaries are spelled out in its enabling legislation, but roughly its borders are: the Tennessee and Alabama state lines to the north and east, and Interstate 55 and Highway 14 to the west and south. The Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance (MHHAA) is the coordinating entity for the MS Hills NHA, and during FY11 the Alliance engaged in a range of activities supporting the heritage area. MHHAA successfully matched its entire 2011 Federal allocation, and with an operating budget of over $300,000, the organization’s work this past year included:

**Completion of the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area Exhibit Center**
Work on the Center was completed in September 2011, and will serve as a centralized resource for regional communities and attractions, as well as a valuable source of information for visitors to the area. Plans are for the facility to host an ongoing series of demonstrations and hands-on activities, which should provide area schools with excellent field trip opportunities.

**Collaboration with the National Park Service**
MHHAA worked with the Southeast Regional office for National Heritage Areas in Atlanta to develop a cooperative agreement and secure appropriated funds for FY11. The Natchez Trace Parkway is the local supervisory contact for the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area.

**Promotion of mississippihills.org**
MHHAA continued to promote mississippihills.org through an integrated marketing plan, which included the distribution of 50,000 rack cards to members and Mississippi Welcome Centers and ads in print publications such as *Southern Living* and *Preservation*. The ad placement in these publications resulted in over 900 lead inquiries for more information on the Mississippi Hills area. In addition to print, MHHAA implemented online advertising with CivilWar.com resulting in significant traffic and click throughs to the Mississippi Hills website. The MHNHA website was updated quarterly to include: a seasonal color scheme; e-newsletter sign-up option; Facebook link; searchable calendar function by city, itinerary and date; membership page; photo galleries, and a dedicated Civil War 150 section.

**Production of E-Newsletter**
MHHAA continued production and distribution of its e-newsletter in FY11 to a database of almost 5,000. The e-newsletter is a component of the ongoing marketing for MHNHA.

**Use of Social Media**
MHHAA continued regular updating of the MHNHA Facebook page and Twitter account as components of the overall marketing strategy for MHNHA. The social media campaign promotes interest and drives traffic to the Mississippi Hills website.
**FY12 Goals and Objectives**

**Management Plan Development**
- Continue working with the Walker Collaborative on federally-mandated Management Plan: The consulting team is approximately six months into the planning process, with meetings having been held in Columbus, Oxford, Starkville and Tupelo. The development of these type plans usually require around 24 months to complete.

**Exhibit Center**
- Operate and promote the MHNHA Exhibit Center as a resource for member communities
- Partner with State Welcome Centers and appropriate attractions and businesses to promote the Center

**National Integrated Marketing Plan**
- Ad placement on multiple websites and in print publications with national distribution
- Maintain and enhance www.mississippihills.org
- Develop a Mississippi Hills mobile website

**Develop MHNHA Video**
- Develop video to use in Exhibit Center and to distribute to members

**CW150**
- Assist in promoting iphone app (developed by the University of Mississippi's Center for Traveler Information) featuring Civil War assets in the MHNHA

**Continue to Build Sustainability Through Partnerships**
- Develop additional partnerships with public and private organizations

**Continue to Promote Both the Hills’ Mission and Objectives**
- Promoting and marketing the 30-county region through key themes: Musical Legacy, Literary Legacy, Civil War & Civil Rights, Education, American Indian, American Legends, and Historic Icons
Our Mission

The mission of the Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance is to preserve, enhance, interpret and promote the cultural and heritage assets of the hills region. Its key objectives are to increase jobs and visitation to the area and to develop and support projects and programs that sustain the heritage tourism industry within the region.

Member Benefits

- You become a part of the 30-county Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area - one of only 49 in the nation.

- You have increased exposure at the new Mississippi Hills Exhibit Center in Tupelo.

- You have increased networking and partnership opportunities with the other members and ex-officio organizations.

- As a voting member you will have a part in the planning and allocation of funds for the Mississippi Hills NHA, a Federal program with appropriations from Congress.

- You become a part of the national promotion that includes website, print material, print advertising, social media and newsletters for Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area.

If you are interested in your county becoming a part of this organization, please contact Kent Bain, Project Coordinator for Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance for more information.

MISSISSIPPI HILLS HERITAGE AREA ALLIANCE AND EXHIBIT CENTER

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