

2004 STRATEGIC PLAN

Prepared for the Maine Mountain Heritage Network

By: Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc.

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STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

Background

In 2000, Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc. convened managers of a number of heritage-based development projects from across the mountain region of Maine (Oxford, Franklin, Somerset, and Piscataquis Counties). Project managers determined that the communities and businesses of the region:

- face similar challenges (global and local economic and social changes, collapse of traditional industries)
- share key resources (forested, four season, mountainous landscapes; strong, distinct valley communities; creative, nature-based economies)
- seek to take advantage of the same set of emerging market opportunities (arts and heritage tourism, interest in “green” products).

Acknowledging potential economies of scale, participants agreed to work together to find more effective ways to use our region’s existing resources to address emerging market opportunities. In September, 2002, the group organized as the Maine Mountain Heritage Network, operating under the governance of a steering committee of fifteen (list attached). Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc. serves as coordinating agency for the Network.

Vision/Goal

In October, 2003, the Network laid out its vision for the region as follows:

We envision a future for the mountain region of Maine in which healthy lands, waters and forests sustain vibrant human economies and communities, a region in which:

- ◆ Landscapes retain their traditional character with well defined relationships between village, farm, and forest;
- ◆ Local farmers, manufacturers, and artists make a range of high quality, value-added products for local consumption and for export;
- ◆ Strong community institutions celebrate and build local knowledge and identity as they strive to meet the evolving physical, social and educational needs of our people.

We envision a region in which all residents are invested in working toward these goals and broadly share in resulting benefits – both financial and spiritual - and where young people in particular recognize opportunities for rewarding work careers and raising their own future families.

Within this broad vision, the Network focused its attention specifically on strengthening the regional economy, and toward this end adopted as a central goal **bringing new revenues into the region** through creative and sustainable use of the region’s heritage assets.

Strategies

To realize its vision and achieve its goal, the Network has adopted an interrelated set of development strategies.

1. **Deepen knowledge of history, natural history, and culture** as a basis for understanding value of available assets.
2. **Identify development opportunities** by matching what we know about our assets with what we can learn about markets.
3. **Build working relationships** to allow coordinated action using assets to meet market opportunities.
4. **Encourage investment of public and private capital** in those places where need is critical or leverage is greatest.
5. Based on values and knowledge of place, **develop regional brand identity** to add value across sectors and extend market reach.

Programs

To operationalize its strategies, the Network is focused on four program areas: Knowledge Power (creating and disseminating information); Land and Waters (natural resource management), Village Works (community investment); and Mountain Made (signature products).

Note: Information about these programs, including activities currently underway, proposed future actions (with timeline and expected outcomes), potential partners, budget and potential funding sources will be found in “Program Profiles,” beginning on page 7.

Knowledge Power. *Develop deep knowledge of natural, cultural, and historical assets among stakeholders, including youth. Use this knowledge to add value to products, including tourism products.* The Network believes that deeper knowledge of the region’s history and natural history enriches individual experience and provides a basis for common understanding and purpose within communities. It also offers a basis for authentic regional identity (brand), an increasingly important advantage in the global marketplace.

The Knowledge Power Program includes coordination and support for a number of information gathering and analysis activities in the region, as well as for a range of communications initiatives, including development of new publications, programming for broadcast media and the Internet, and creation of a linked system of information centers. The Network has a particular interest in using information about the region to add value to the region’s products including tourism products. (For more information about the Knowledge Power Program, please see “Program Profiles.”)

Land and Waters. *Support sustainable, multiple use of our region’s natural resources.* Changes in the pattern of land ownership and use in the mountain region in response to

global economic forces and trends have put this program interest at top priority for the Network. Our region has long depended on its natural resources to sustain local economies. The Network seeks coordination of efforts to protect natural systems, balance multiple uses, and secure long term access to insure sustainable benefits.

The Land and Waters Program includes a range of activities intended to provide a basis natural resource management and development decisions in the region. The proposed program includes analysis of existing assets and their uses, evaluation of related market patterns and trends, and development of regional goals for resource management that can be widely supported across stakeholder groups. Based on the outcomes of these efforts, the Network will advocate for funding and other support for specific land conservation, recreation development, and sustainable forestry projects. Note: The Network estimates that investment in land conservation and recreation development in the region will total \$250 million over the next 10 years. The Network hopes to influence this investment in ways that meet the long term needs and aspirations of local communities in the region. (For more information about the Network's Land and Waters Program, please see "Program Profiles.")

Village Works. *Invest in "hub" communities building local capacity to make best use of heritage assets.* The Network has identified the effective functioning of "hub" or service center communities as critical to the overall health and well being of the region. These communities are characterized by concentrations of cultural and recreational resources and well developed service sectors giving them a special role in contributing to the vitality of local areas and the region as a whole. The Network believes that modest investment in these service center communities can have a significant positive impact on local and regional economies and quality of life.

The Network has completed a preliminary survey of hub communities which indicated interest and activity at the local level in a number of action areas including resource conservation, infrastructure development, and heritage-related business/non-profit cluster development. The Network is advocating for investment in these areas and has identified three focus points – trail and green space planning, downtown revitalization, support for local cultural institutions and events – for which regional assistance programs will be created. The Network anticipates that investment in resource conservation, infrastructure and program development in these hub communities will total \$25 million over the next ten years. (For more information about the Network's Village Works Program, please see "Program Profiles.")

Mountain Made. *Assist in development and marketing of "signature" products.* The marketing plan recently completed by Mountain Counties Heritage on behalf of the Network indicated an opportunity to market groups of products that are representative of the region under a Maine Mountain brand. Potential signature product groups include specialty foods, home furnishings, and recreational equipment and accessories, among others. Earlier sector studies suggested a need for linking small scale producers to achieve production efficiencies. The Network now proposes to support efforts to organize production clusters within signature product groups. Additionally, the Network proposes

support for the development of creative economy incubators now being initiated in locations across the region. (For more information about the Network's Mountain Made Program, please see "Program Profiles.")

Additional Marketing Activities

As a part of its planning process, the Network asked Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc. to undertake a market study for the Maine Mountain Heritage Initiative. The study considered current levels of activity and market trends in a number of sectors, including arts and heritage tourism, recreation tourism, wood products, agriculture, manufacturing, and handcraft. The study identified significant opportunity for linking marketing efforts across sectors and suggested a number of marketing initiatives that would strengthen the overall regional development initiative. (For more information about the Network's proposed marketing initiatives, please see "Program Profiles.")

Heritage Area Concept

The Network has adopted the heritage area model as a means of integrating and promoting its various strategies and programs. The heritage area model has been used successfully in many other parts of the country and the world as an organizing and marketing approach. Among the over 200 heritage area projects in the United States identified by the Network, approximately 25 are federally designated. Heritage areas vary in size and are organized around a variety of themes. Whatever their size and orientation, however, all combine resource conservation, education, and business development to generate a range of benefits for their constituent communities.

The Maine Mountain Heritage Network has learned from existing projects. The Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, a nationally designated heritage area, provided an early model, as did the state heritage area program in Wisconsin.

Desired Outcomes

The Network is creating a system whereby it can track progress toward desired outcomes by tracking a range of indicators. Among the **long term, regional outcomes** we desire are the following (these are beyond our capacity to affect directly – but they are desired nonetheless.)

- Natural systems retain or regain healthy state.
- Local and regional cultures and identities remain distinctive and vibrant.
- People are more prosperous, allowing young people to stay or move here.

Among **outcomes we can see as a direct result of our efforts** over the 5-7 year term are the following.

1. Deeper knowledge regarding heritage and resources (values and capacities) of region - broadly held in region.
2. Deeper knowledge of internal and external markets broadly shared among businesses and development people in region.
3. More effective communication of information about the region (resources and opportunities) to internal and external audiences
 - 3.a. Consistent, authentic images and messages across media and projects.
 - 3.b. Residents retain or develop strong sense local and regional identity.
 - 3.c. Regional and national media recognize Maine Mountain Heritage Area.
 - 3.d. Increased awareness and interest shown region from outside markets.
4. Better protection of natural, cultural, historical values of natural and built landscapes (resulting from deeper knowledge of resource values and capacities)
 - 4.a. Land conservation allows forestland to retain undeveloped character.
 - 4.b. Local actions (ordinances, easements, investments) protect and enhance local natural, cultural, and historical values.
 - 4.c. Resource and associated activity management capacities improved, local, regional and state levels.
5. More effective and sustainable use of heritage resources to produce financial and social benefits
 - 5.a. New heritage-based products and businesses developed (including specifically those engaging “creative” entrepreneurs).
 - 5.b. New heritage-based public programs developed.
 - 5.b. Appropriate (capacity and market sensitive) new investment in public infrastructure, businesses.
 - 5.c. Increased revenues to heritage industries (20% increase in tourism revenues in 5 years)
6. Businesses, non-profits linked through better working relationships
 - 5.a. Business clusters formed (geographic or thematic),
 - 5.b. Families of products marketed (tourism packages).
 - 5.c. Maine Mountain Heritage brand adds value across sectors.

Organizational Structure

The Network was formed out of a series of meetings through which participants identified common interests and purpose. Over 200 organizations and businesses have been represented in Network meetings over the past three years. The bulk of the planning effort has been undertaken by a “steering committee” of fifteen members representing multiple interests across all four counties. (Please see list of members and letters of endorsement in “Steering Committee” section.) Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc., which initiated the planning efforts, has served as coordinating agency for the Network.

Having completed this phase of planning, and with strong internal support for implementation of its strategic plan (this plan), the steering committee now recognizes a

need for two parallel efforts to move the initiative forward. The first effort will introduce the central goals and concepts of the plan to a much broader audience, both to determine the public support for recommended actions and to build a constituency for implementation. Although many people across the region have participated in development of this plan over quite a period of time, we still feel the need to verify and/or build community and stakeholder support as a prerequisite for implementation.

The second effort will focus on establishing a structure with the capacity to attract and manage the resources required for implementation. To determine what that structure should be, the steering committee will now expand its membership to include representatives of agencies and interest groups determined to be essential participants in implementation (beyond the already broadly representative steering committee itself) to examine and decide questions of commitment, capacity, decision making authority, and accountability.

The steering committee currently envisions a more fully evolved and formalized “network” which organizes around the program objectives outlined in this document, bound together by task specific agreements. It does not envision creating “another layer of bureaucracy” or a new corporate entity, seeking instead to accomplish its goals through the coordinated efforts of its respective members. Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc. will continue to serve as the coordinating agency for the Network as it seeks its new structure and until any newly formed entity determines that this function will be provided in a different manner.

Budget and Funding

Early Network planning efforts were funded by a consortium of state agencies, the Maine Arts and Heritage Partnership (see State Agency Partners). Additional funding for Network coordination, market analysis, and program development has come through the Western Maine Sustainable Development Collaborative (funders included the National Rural Funders Collaborative and the Sandy River Charitable Foundation) and from the Bingham Betterment Fund.

Moving forward, we estimate that on-going coordination of the Network, including program development, internal communications, marketing and fundraising, will require \$120,000 to \$150,000 per year for five years. Individual program cost estimates are included in Addendum A and vary from program to program. We assume that program funding will be sought by and will flow through agencies most directly responsible for carrying out program activities and not through a central organization.

Implementation funding is expected to come from a variety of local, regional, state and national sources, including government agencies, private foundations, commercial lending institutions (for related infrastructure and business development), and individuals.

PROGRAM PROFILES

Knowledge Power

Develop deep knowledge of natural, cultural, and historical assets among stakeholders, including youth. Use this knowledge to add value to products.

Current Actions

Many knowledge building efforts are underway within and beyond the region. These include programs in local schools engaging students in the study of local history and natural history, the on-going activities of local historical societies and natural resource groups, and the work of state agencies and independent scholars. Among other recommended actions, the Network proposes coordination of and increased support for these local, regional, and state-wide knowledge building and communications efforts. As recommended under “Longer Term Actions” below, the Network is already supporting development of information centers in the region through establishing better communications among existing centers and through providing technical assistance for those planning new (interpretive) centers. Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc., working on behalf of the Network the four Scenic Byways organizations in the region, has created a regional web site, www.discovermainemountains.com. MCH intends to continue development of this site in parallel with the initiatives proposed below.

Recommended Future Actions

Near Term (1-2 years)	Longer Term (3-5 years)	Expected Outcomes
Identify information sources, including knowledgeable people and plan for coordination of future information gathering and analysis to address current gaps.	Advocate for funding of local and regional research projects.	<i>Better information and accessibility to support a range of projects and initiatives, including business initiatives.</i>
Assess role and effectiveness of existing and proposed communications initiatives, including information centers.	As indicated by assessment, support development of information centers (planning, TA), including advocate for funding for new centers.	<i>More effective dissemination of information to residents and visitors, value added to tourism product of region.</i>
Publish a guidebook/atlas for the region, linked to web site.	Stimulate initiation of new publishing and broadcast ventures.	<i>Enhanced knowledge of region among residents and visitors.</i>

Potential Partners

Potential partners in the Knowledge Power program include local schools and community colleges, local libraries and other community organizations, the state university system, a

number of state agencies, independent scholars, writers, designers, and artists, publishers and broadcast organizations.

Budget and Funding

The knowledge building coordination efforts described above suggest the need for a full time professional over the three year term of the program (\$120,000). Specific local initiatives will vary widely in cost, from \$5,000 to publish a local history to \$1.5 million to build a new information center. Funding for Knowledge Power projects is expected to come from a variety of sources, including private foundations, state and federal agencies. We do see significant opportunities for generating earned income through publication sales and consulting fees.

Land and Waters

Support sustainable, multiple uses of our region's natural resources.

Current Actions

The Network has already taken steps toward creating a recreation development plan for the region. Following a stakeholder meeting in 2003 to outline an approach, and understanding that recreation planning must be done in the context of competing uses and conservation of natural systems, the Network engaged a team at the University of Maine to map values for timber harvest, recreation, and critical or vulnerable natural systems across the landscape. This mapping will be used as a foundation for further analysis (see below). The Network has also commissioned a market study, completed this year, that among other things identified market trends and opportunities for recreation activities that are presently supported in the region. That information is included in the Maine Mountain Heritage Initiative Marketing Plan which can be reviewed on the Network's internal web site www.mainemountains.org. With respect to product development, the Network is currently supporting and monitoring the work of a national consulting group, Fermata, Inc., in two pilot areas (Longfellow Range Area, Katahdin Moosehead Area) within the region. The Fermata project, sponsored by several state agencies under the leadership of Governor John Baldacci, is intended to recommend a range of investments, public and private, to develop effective product for the nature-based tourism market.

Recommended Future Actions

Near Term (1-2 years)	Longer Term (3-5 years)	Expected Outcomes
Using results from resource mapping, market research, and product development work above, create broad recreation development scenarios for the region. Test scenarios with stakeholder and community groups.	Based on accepted scenarios, work with service providers, resource managers to create more effective recreation tourism products. Direct investment to land conservation and recreation infrastructure that support this product development.	<i>Coordinated investment of as much as \$250 million in land conservation and recreation development over the next ten years.</i>
	Work with tourism regions and others to create and implement more effective promotion of mountain region recreation tourism.	<i>20% increase in recreation tourism revenues over the next five years.</i>
Identify and support other sustainable uses of the region's natural resources, including specifically sustainable forestry.	Advocate for multiple-use land and water management approaches, guide investment to appropriate use and development.	

Potential Partners

Potential partners for the Lands and Waters Program include land owners and managers, environmental organizations, recreation developers and tourism service providers, timber and wood product processors, state agencies, town governments, local recreation groups, tourism regions.

Budget and Funding

Mapping is being funded by the University of Maine, School of Forestry. The Maine Mountain Heritage Marketing Plan was funded by a consortium of state agencies (Arts and Heritage Tourism Partnership). The Fermata project has been funded by a second consortium of state agencies (approximately \$50,000 for two pilot areas in our region). The Network will seek additional funding from private foundations, state and federal agencies to complete recreation development plan and to support product development and marketing activities (estimated \$50,000 over two years).

Village Works

Invest in “hub” communities building local capacity to make best use of heritage assets.

Current Actions

The Network has already met with representative groups from eight “hub” communities in the region to introduce residents to the Maine Mountain Heritage Initiative and to begin to identify key heritage resources, opportunities, and projects at the local level. Among other things, these meetings did surface areas of prevalent interest and concern across the region, specifically interest in downtown revitalization, trail and green space planning, and assistance to community cultural institutions. In at least one case, these preliminary meetings sparked on-going development activity at the local level.

Recommended Future Actions

Near Term (1-2 years)	Longer Term (3-5 years)	Expected Outcomes
Develop and support regional programs to address needs/interests – downtown revitalization, trail and green space planning, cultural institution support.	Advocate for funding for specific local projects within these areas of interest.	<i>Within hub communities, substantial new investment in local infrastructure, institutions, improved quality of life.</i>
Assist communities in planning to use their natural, historical, and cultural resources to create successful heritage tourism experience/product.	Advocate for funding for resource conservation and infrastructure development at the local level, and especially investment in businesses that derive revenues from providing part of the locally supported heritage tourism experience/product.	
	Work with tourism regions to strengthen marketing of heritage tourism experiences in the region.	<i>(associated with all of these recommended actions) 20% increase in heritage tourism revenues.</i>

Potential Partners

Town governments, local cultural institutions, environmental and recreation groups, local businesses including specifically tourism-related businesses, but also all local producers of food and manufactured products traditional to the region, chambers of commerce and tourism councils.

Budget and Funding

Funding for initial survey of “hub” communities was provided by a consortium of Maine state agencies (Arts and Heritage Tourism Partnership). The Network seeks funding for a

program coordinator and consulting assistance (estimated \$70,000 per year for three years).

Mountain Made

Assist in development and marketing of “signature” products for the region.

Note: In this program, the Network is specifically focused on products that could be sold outside the region and for which a strong regional brand identity would represent a significant market advantage.

Current Actions

The Network’s Marketing Plan surveyed product development and marketing opportunities in several sectors and did identify a number of product clusters that were well established (if not well organized as clusters) in the region and could be marketed under a regional brand. Clusters identified included specialty foods, health and body care products, household accessories (including furniture), recreation products, and handcraft.

Recommended Future Actions

Near Term (1-2 years)	Longer Term (3-5 years)	Expected Outcomes
Identify producer groups who are interested in participating; work with them to develop program.	Direct investment to participating businesses to support product development, adoption of new production technologies, marketing.	<i>Improved capacity of individual business to respond to emerging market opportunities.</i>
	If required, advocate for investment in distribution and packaging systems and facilities to allow aggregation of output from smaller scale producers.	<i>Improved capacity of smaller scale producers to meet market demands.</i>
	Develop “Mountain Made” as a brand identity in selected product categories; launch Mountain Made promotion campaign.	<i>Increased sales/revenues. Stronger regional identity.</i>

Potential Partners

Potential partners in the Mountain Made Program include producers (manufacturers, artisans, farmers), trade groups, state agencies (Maine Departments of Agriculture, Conservation, Economic and Community Development), regional and county economic development agencies, University of Maine Extension Program, local banks and other investment entities, Maine International Trade Center.

Budget and Funding

Budget pending.

Marketing Initiatives

Identify and respond to opportunities for cross sector marketing.

Current Activities

Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc. has completed a marketing plan for the Maine Mountain Heritage Initiative. The plan includes extensive information on assets and products, market profiles and trends, customer base characteristics, identifying opportunities and challenges for each of six sectors including cultural heritage tourism, recreation tourism, agriculture, forest products, manufacturing, arts and handcraft. In addition, the plan identifies a number of cross sector marketing opportunities, addressing these opportunities in a number of recommendations. Note: The plan identifies cultural heritage tourism as a high potential sector with a customer base that represents cross over opportunities for producers in several other sectors.

Recommended Future Actions

Near Term (1-2 years)	Longer Term (3-5 years)	Expected Outcomes
Build regional brand identity. Identify/design elements of brand. Create <u>branding guidebook</u> for use across marketing campaigns.		
Design and implement " <u>Maine Mountain Village</u> " <u>campaign</u> using "hub" communities as platform for integrating heritage experiences and visitor support services.		
	Design and implement " <u>signature</u> " event raising awareness of key themes and resources of the region.	

Potential Partners

Potential partners for marketing initiatives include state agencies, trade groups, chambers of commerce and regional tourism councils, publishers and media businesses.

Budget and Funding

The budget for developing brand components is estimated at \$25,000. The Maine Mountain Village campaign will cost an estimated \$150,000 over four years. The Mountain Heritage signature event carries an estimated cost of \$250,000 per annual event (three years) with support coming from admissions, sponsorships, and foundation funding.

EXEMPLARY LOCAL PROJECTS

Within each program area, the Maine Mountain Heritage Network will advocate for and otherwise support locally generated and organized projects that are aligned with this strategic plan. Below please find a few selected examples of local projects for which such support will be sought.

Knowledge Power

Piscataquis County 20th Century History

The Cultural Heritage and Eco Tourism group, working in collaboration with 25 local historical societies, town and county officials, and many interested individuals, is creating a new history of Piscataquis County. The history will illustrate cultural, social, and natural resource trends through the use of historic images and remembered anecdotes. CHEt anticipates that “our ancestors’ resilient example will reinforce a sense of place in those who read the book and will offer examples of working together, overcoming nature’s challenges, recreating within natural surrounds, and engaging in commercial enterprises under challenging conditions.” Phase I: Complete manuscript and initial printing for local libraries, historical societies and schools. Phase II: printing of 1,200 library quality paperback copies to be offered for sale to the general public.

Lead organization: Cultural Heritage and Eco Tourism Committee, Piscataquis County Economic Development Corporation.

Funders committed to date: Maine Community Foundation, \$5,000.

Additional funding sought: for Phase I, \$1,763. Phase II will be self funded through sales.

Project contact: Helen Kelly, (207) 564-2942 or topo@kynd.net

Old Canada Road National Scenic Byway Interpretive Center

The Old Canada Road National Scenic Byway seeks to create experiences that will connect present residents and visitors to the past as well as locate them in tomorrow’s history. Planning efforts to date have suggested that a 5,000-sq. ft. interpretive facility would be an effective way to accomplish this task. The center would present information on the natural history of the area with a special focus on the waters of the Kennebec, Moose and Dead River watersheds. The center would also tell the stories of peoples who have traveled along these river highways, beginning with Native Americans and including immigrants from France and Ireland who found their way to pre-industrial and industrial age America over a newly commissioned (1820) Canada Road.

Lead organization: Old Canada Road Scenic Byway, Inc.

Funders committed to date: Federal Highway Administration

Additional funding sought: \$4 Million, (\$2 for construction, \$2 for a sustainable endowment)

Project contact: Bob Haynes (207) 672-3971 or canadard@midmaine.com

Land and Waters

Maine Huts and Trails

Founded by adventure enthusiasts with a vision for preserving Maine's naturally beautiful remote areas and providing access to the public, Western Mountains Foundation has proposed development of a network of huts, trails and waterway corridors stretching 180 miles from Rockwood to Newry. The system will provide people-powered recreation opportunities year round, including cross-country skiing, hiking, mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking, and fly-fishing. The plan envisions 12 huts that are within a day's hike of one another, each accommodating up to 40 guests.

Lead organization: Western Mountains Foundation

Funders committed to date: Individual pledges and contributions, \$250,000.

Additional funding sought: for Phase 1 (easement and land purchase, construction of three huts, 25 miles of trail), \$700,000

Project contact: Larry Warren (207) 237-2266

Androscoggin River Canoe Trail

The Mahoosuc Land Trust has worked for the last nine years with the Androscoggin River Watershed Council to produce the 175 mile Androscoggin Source to the Sea Canoe Trek. In addition it has been working on the Androscoggin River Canoe Trail – a 42 mile water trail from Shelburne, NH to Gilead, Maine. One of the goals of the Canoe Trail is to have a public access site every 5-7 miles. There are a few additional sites that need to be acquired for this important public access. One of them is the traditional 30 acre site in Gilead, Maine that was previously owned by MeadWestvaco. This site is critical for boat access and access for fisherpeople coming to the mouth of the Wild River for the extraordinary trout fishing.

Lead organization: Mahoosuc Land Trust

Funders committed to date: Land for Maine's Future

Additional funding sought: Unknown at this time.

Project contact: Marcel Polak, (207) 665-2577

Village Works

Emery Community Arts Center

The Emery Community Arts Center (ECAC) will be a performing arts facility to serve the University of Maine at Farmington and the western Maine community. It is intended to be a community resource to strengthen the arts, enhance the quality of life for all residents, and contribute to the economic wellbeing of the community as a downtown Farmington destination. In Phase 1, a 650 seat performing arts auditorium will be built with practice and rehearsal rooms, and storage space. The performing space will meet the needs of large music ensembles, drama, and dance.

Lead organization: University of Maine at Farmington

Funders committed to date: An anonymous benefactor has already contributed \$5 million.

Additional funding sought: \$3 million will be sought from community contributions in a campaign that will begin in 2005-06.

Project contact: Mary Sylvester, Director of Development, University of Maine at Farmington 778-7509

C.B. Cummings Mill Redevelopment

When the C.B. Cummings dowel mill closed in 2002, it left behind blighted buildings, loss of activity and a serious blow to otherwise positive efforts to revitalize downtown Norway. Western Maine Development Corp. purchased the site in January 2003. During the past year, through the financial support of the Town of Norway and WMDC's efforts, clean up efforts are underway. H.L. Turner Group of Harrison, Pine Tree Engineering of Bath, and Terrance Dewan and Associates of Yarmouth are developing a master plan for the site. Possible uses for the mill buildings would be office; light manufacturing; artisan studios; condominiums; and incubator space for start-up companies. The C.B. Cummings Mill project is a community effort that involves the Main Street Organization, the Town of Norway, Western Maine Development, and a support group made up of community members ranging from selectman to homeowners.

Lead organization: Western Maine Development Corp. (Enterprise Maine)

Funders committed to date: Town of Norway \$65,000. Western Maine Development Corp. has contributed \$69,000 in upkeep costs and expenses.

Additional funding sought: Final redevelopment budget not yet set.

Project contact: Marcy Boughter (207) 743-8830 or marcy@enterprisemaine.com.

Mountain Made

Forest Products Educational Video

Maine WoodNet (MWN) focuses on facilitating cooperative manufacturing, innovative marketing, and wood-use efficiency by forest-based businesses in western Maine, while also promoting networking and educational opportunities to improve forest stewardship. Maine WoodNet offers innovative solutions to Maine's rural woodworkers amidst an economic climate made harsh by the loss of jobs in the paper manufacturing and timber industries. Maine WoodNet proposes creating a series of educational videos to document how logs are transformed from their natural state to a range of finished products. The intent is to collaborate with the University of Maine at Farmington and with other local schools to write scripts, take the footage, and produce hour long programs that will be aired on local cable access TV.

Lead organization: The Wilderness Society

Funders committed to date: The Betterment Fund \$20,000

Additional funding sought: \$5,000

Project contact: Christine Krauss (207) 778-6765, or mewood@mainewoodnet.org

The Maine Highlands Guild

The Guild was established to educate artisans in business skills and provide them new opportunities to work together to grow their small businesses. The Guild helps its 110 members attend promotional and sales shows, provides an educational workshop series, jury sessions, newsletters, and mentoring services. It has been a model for the development of a farmer's cooperative and small woodlot owner's cooperative in the region. Though it is currently dependent on grants to support operations, the Guild has a business plan to become self-sufficient within 10 years.

Lead organization: Maine Highlands Guild

Funders committed to date: Pentagoet, Fisher Charitable Foundation, Maine Arts Commission, Maine Community Foundation, USDA- Rural Development, Maine Micro-Enterprise Initiative, Community and Technical Assistance Center-Mott Foundation, Goldman Sachs Foundation (for winning national Social Venture Competition 2003), and Jane's Trust.

Additional funding sought: \$375,000 is needed for the next 3 years of operations.

Project contact: Tracy Michaud Stutzman