

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

VISION

The Susquehanna National Heritage Area is regarded across the nation as a place with a unique identity where people and communities cultivate their connections with each other, the landscape, and their history.

MISSION

The Susquehanna National Heritage Area connects the people and communities of Lancaster and York Counties to one another and to the nation through stories about this nationally important place. The National Heritage Area welcomes visitors, cultivates partnerships, and nurtures a strong regional identity.



VISITOR **ENGAGEMENT**

VISITOR **CENTERS**

Susquehanna National Heritage Area (SNHA) welcomed over 34,000 visitors to our centers in 2023. Our visitor engagement team is committed to providing an excellent concierge experience for our tourists and community members. We guide visitors to the experiences that best suit their needs. Whether we talk to avid outdoors people or heritage enthusiasts, it is our responsibility to be the experts on our region's cultural and natural assets.

- » Updated and printed the region's only comprehensive Susquehanna River Guide that provides information on outdoor recreation and heritage tourism offerings.
- » Connected hundreds of visitors to Underground Railroad and Civil War history through Riverfest event in late June.
- » Finalized and installed a feature exhibit at Columbia Crossing entitled Black Gold: A Look Back at Anthracite Coal Effect on the Susquehanna River.
- » Created a Native Stories Video Series to showcase Native American culture in more experiential and inclusive ways.
- » Collaborated with multiple news organizations to share stories of our region's industrial past.



EDUCATION & PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Our program teams works to enhance storytelling and provide experiential learning at our centers. Our programs focus on connecting people to the river's natural and cultural history. River history and water quality are also showcased in SNHA's student field trips offered in May and October each year. Students earned their Junior Ranger badge at the Zimmerman Center as fourth graders and returned as fifth graders for an on-water experience at Columbia Crossing. SNHA partners with Wilderness Inquiry, who brings their floating classrooms called Canoemobile. Ten students in each canoe paddle around the historic bridge piers and learn about their place in American history.

- » Our program team engaged nearly 7,500 participants this year!
- » A total of 1,144 fourth and fifth grade students joined us at the waterfront to learn about the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.

Our premier visitor programs are our boat tours on the historic Chief Uncas. SNHA's signature 1-hour guided cruise showcases how the river has shaped this place and the people. Our sunset cruises take a longer route and last about one and a half hours. These trips connect people from across the country and the world to the National Heritage Area.

- » The Chief Uncas made over 200 trips on the scenic Susquehanna River in 2023.
- » Over 4,000 people learned about the river's place in history and our future in 2023.



EXECUTIVE **LEADERSHIP**

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JONATHAN PINKERTON
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF
PLANNING & PROJECTS

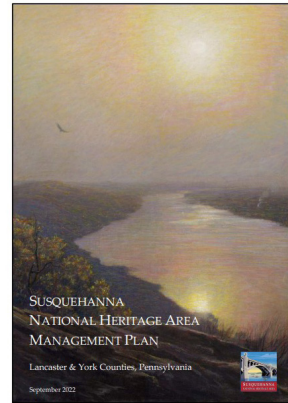
HOPE BYERS
VICE PRESIDENT OF
VISITOR ENGAGEMENT

ALENE WILMOTH
VICE PRESIDENT OF
FINANCE & OPERATIONS

PLANNING & PROJECTS

NHA MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVED

The National Park Service gave final approval for the SNHA Management Plan in fall of 2023. This approval solidified the plan that helps us to connect with sites, organizations, and individuals across both counties to develop a comprehensive approach for interpreting and promoting our area's nationally important stories and places. SNHA will now work with federal and state agencies, planning organizations, local communities, nonprofits, and other partners to carry out the plan's recommendations. SNHA staff have begun planning to implement a top priority of the Management Plan: The Heritage Partnerships Grant Program. The program will provide grant funding to heritage organizations, non-profit organizations, and municipalities in Lancaster and York Counties for projects that support our nationally significant stories. The SNHA Management Plan also recommends that SNHA engage and partner with tribal nations and American Indian residents in the planning and implementation of the National Heritage Area with emphasis on the Native Landscapes theme.



SNHA ACQUIRES MIFFLIN HOUSE & FARM



SNHA assumed ownership of the Historic Mifflin House and Farm from The Conservation Fund (TCF) in December 2023. SNHA, TCF, and Preservation PA have collaborated since 2019 to save the historic Mifflin site in Wrightsville as a new heritage and outdoor attraction for the Susquehanna NHA. TCF acquired the site in May 2022 with its national revolving fund and major grants from PA DCNR. The Mifflin project will preserve 87 acres of historic landscape featuring important Underground Railroad and Civil War heritage. The barn complex will be transformed into the Susquehanna Discovery Center, a SNHA-managed visitor destination showcasing our area's

nationally important stories. The Mifflin House will be restored as an Underground Railroad learning center with an interpretive trail to the river. The story of the Civil War battle that once engulfed this land and changed American history will also be showcased at the site. This important project will boost our region's heritage and outdoor economy and bring new vitality to our historic river towns.

SNHA DEFENDS CUFFS RUN

In 2023, York Energy Storage, LLC resubmitted their Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Application for preliminary approval of their application to build a new pumped-storage hydropower generation facility. The proposed site is a natural area along the Susquehanna River which is rich with ecological, cultural, and recreational resources. The project consists of an upper reservoir with a 580-acre surface area, created by a maximum 225-foot high and 9,800-foot-long dam, with an emergency spillway approximately 50-feet wide by 150-feet long. SNHA worked closely with other conservation partners to raise public awareness of the project and oppose its approval.



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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PLACEMAKING

Enhance the quality & appeal of the National Heritage Area's special places and landscapes.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

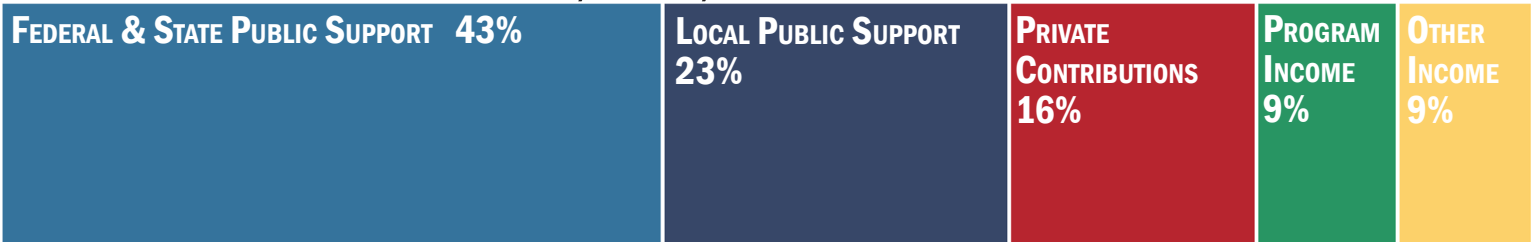
Increase the visibility & readiness of the National Heritage Area as a visitor destination.

VISIBILITY, VIABILITY, & CAPACITY:

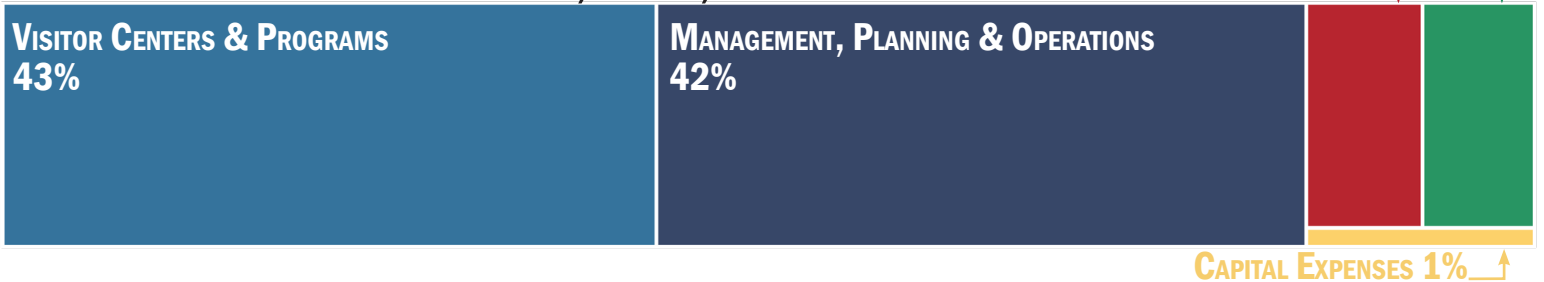
Secure the funding, staffing, & awareness to achieve our vision.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REVENUES **\$1,380,032**



EXPENSES **\$1,323,592**



THANK YOU FUNDERS & DONORS

SUSQUEHANNA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA APPRECIATES THE SUPPORT OF OUR MAJOR FUNDING PARTNERS AND TOP CORPORATE & FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS:



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