

# Organization & Management

## 3.1 Understanding the Management Challenge

Implementing the National Coal Heritage Area's strategic management action plan is a long-term process that will demand extraordinary vision, resources and tenacity of purpose. Achieving success in plan implementation requires dynamic and flexible leadership designed to achieve the multiple objectives of preservation, development, partnering and capacity building. Leadership must commit itself to preserving and communicating the coal heritage story and to providing access to networks that can help build alliances and partnerships. Leadership, at the policy and staff levels, should also convey enthusiasm and a sense of entrepreneurship.



*A state-chartered commission is recommended as the central management structure.*



### **3.2 Management Concept**

A central organizing structure is required. It is recommended that a state-chartered commission be established to fulfill this purpose. A central structure is critical to the successful establishment of the NCHA during the start-up period when developing leadership and partnerships is key. If a state-chartered commission is not obtainable, then formally aligning the NCHA within an appropriate state division (such as History and Culture or Tourism) is recommended. A central tenant of the Strategic Management Action Plan is the support of groups and organizations at the grass-roots level. As a long-term goal, leadership and policy direction of the NCHA are best provided via the communities and organizations that support coal heritage events and interpretive sites. Several coal heritage destinations are already active and can grow into this role. A strong central organization will actively support partnering and capacity development at the community level. As the heritage area and its member organizations mature, the balance between the state commission and the communities with respect to roles and responsibilities may evolve into an organization that relies more on leadership from the community level.

A parallel non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, perhaps called either the Friends of the National Coal Heritage Area or the National Coal Heritage Area Foundation, will be created to supplement the activities of the Commission. The Friends will be governed by a Board of Directors that should mirror the various constituencies that will be involved in implementation. Geographic representation, to the extent possible is

also advisable but the key criteria entail commitment to the NCHA mission and raising funds to help it come to fruition. The Friends and the Commission will be intertwined, as three seats on the Commission's Board of Directors are reserved for members of the Friends. The Friends group will have its own governance system including by-laws and other tools.



### 3.3 Management Structure

A state-chartered National Coal Heritage Area Commission is charged with implementing the management plan to protect and enhance the region's resources. This approach requires enabling legislation that:

- establishes the number of commission members as no fewer than 21 and no more than 31;
- directs that Commission shall in no way infringe upon the authorities and policies of the State of West Virginia or any political subdivision;
- stipulates the involvement of cabinet-level appointees (or their designees) representing key state of West Virginia Departments and Divisions, including: Tourism, Recreation and Parks, the State Historic Preservation Officer, Economic Development, and Transportation. Membership on the Commission would be concomitant with term of office;
- specifies the appointment of a representative from each of the National Coal Heritage Area counties to be chosen initially by each county's elected officials and then replaced as terms expire by members of the Commission;
- compels the appointment of representatives of the private sector and coal interests including, but not limited to persons engaged in: tourism development, economic development, historic preservation, natural resources conservation, lodging, restaurant and attractions operations, tour operators, outdoor recreation, labor, coal operations, to be chosen initially by the Governor

and then replaced as terms expire by members of the Commission; and

- provides another two seats for appointees chosen by the Governor.

This Commission will meet a minimum of four times a year to establish policy. Commission members will elect officers: a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. These officers serve on an annual basis and are allowed to serve up to three consecutive one-year terms of office.

The Commission will also create committees that meet more frequently to fulfill its mission: "standing committees" to address Commission management and ad hoc "program committees," which address NCHA issues. All committees will be chaired by members, appointed by the Chair upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee. Except for the Executive Committee, committees may include non-commission members. The six standing committees (to be authorized by the by-laws) include:

- an Executive Committee consisting of the officers, the immediate past chair, and up to two non-officer trustees appointed by the Chair. This committee can act between Commission meetings to enable and implement its decisions;
- budget and administration;
- development;
- partner relations;
- long range or strategic planning; and
- nominating.



Program Committees correspond to the implementation plan and, therefore, the NCHA goals and objectives. They may be created (or disbanded) on an as-needed basis and will initially include:

- Resource Management
- Product Development
- Visitor Experience
- Image, Identity and Communications
- Interpretation and Education

All Commission members must serve on at least one committee, but no more than two.

NCHA staff will be state employees housed in the Division of Tourism or Division of Culture and History who report to the Commission. The enabling legislation will stipulate the creation of an appropriate number of positions, to include: Executive Director, Marketing Specialist, and Program/Technical Assistance, so that the Division of Tourism or Division of Culture and History will not suffer an effective reduction in force.

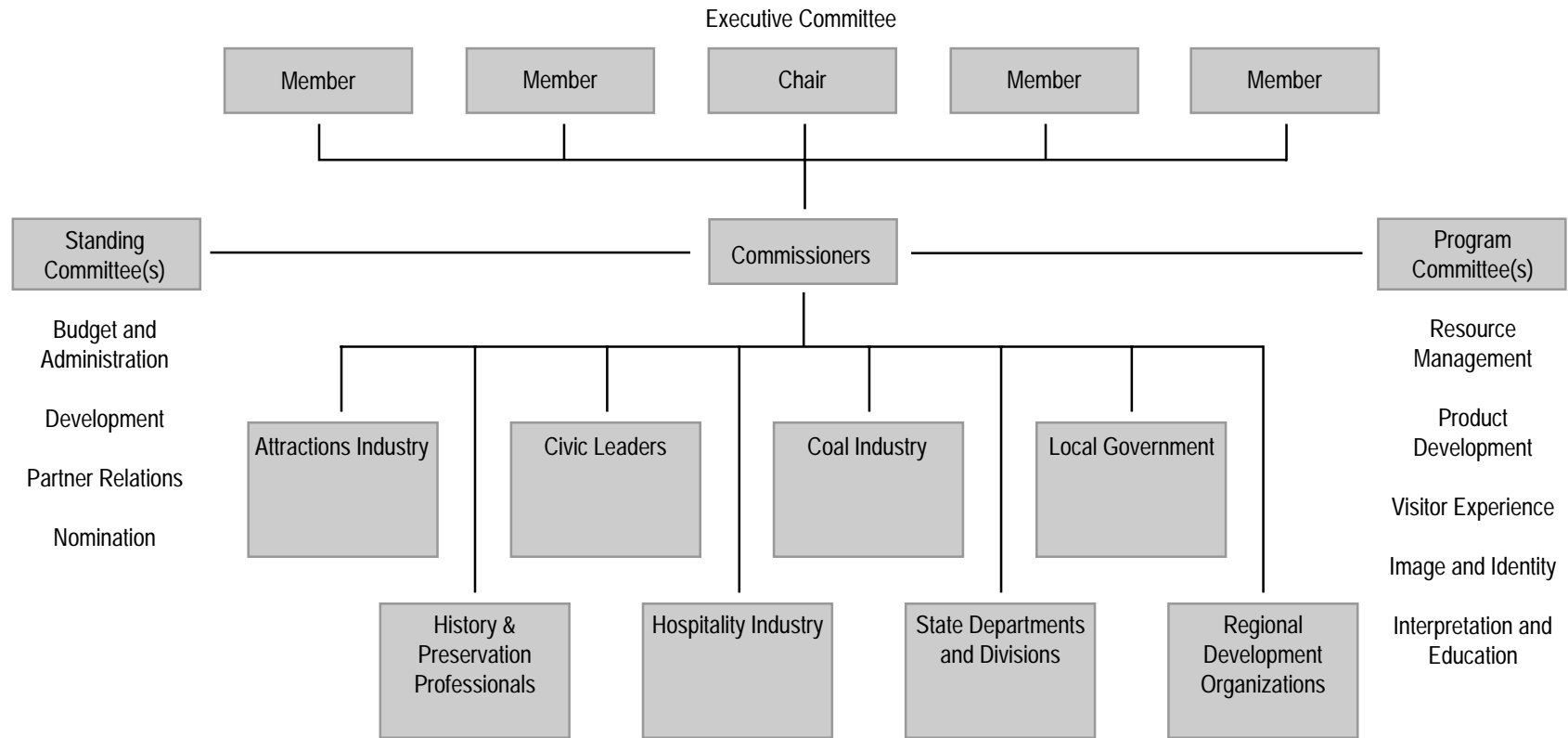


### **3.4 Enhance Staff Capabilities**

The size and duration of the coal heritage initiative call for additional professional staffing as funding, activities and responsibilities increase. The knowledge and skills of professional staff should overlap in such critical areas as marketing and strategic planning. The executive director, a position already in place, will exercise responsibility for staff leadership. This position's responsibilities are described in the current job description, which should be updated as the transition to a commission structure takes place. Developing a position to oversee professional marketing and promotions is recommended beginning in year two (Phase II) of plan implementation. This position would oversee communications, marketing and promotions. Once the heritage area moves beyond the start-up phase, adding capabilities in cultural conservation and historic preservation will be added. Administrative support will require a part-time position initially, but may increase to a full-time position as funding and activities permit.



### Coal Heritage Area Commission



## NCHA Staff and Technical Support

