

APPENDIX H: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
Series of Town Meetings - Tazewell County
Richlands Meeting



APPENDIX H: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – SERIES OF TOWN MEETINGS

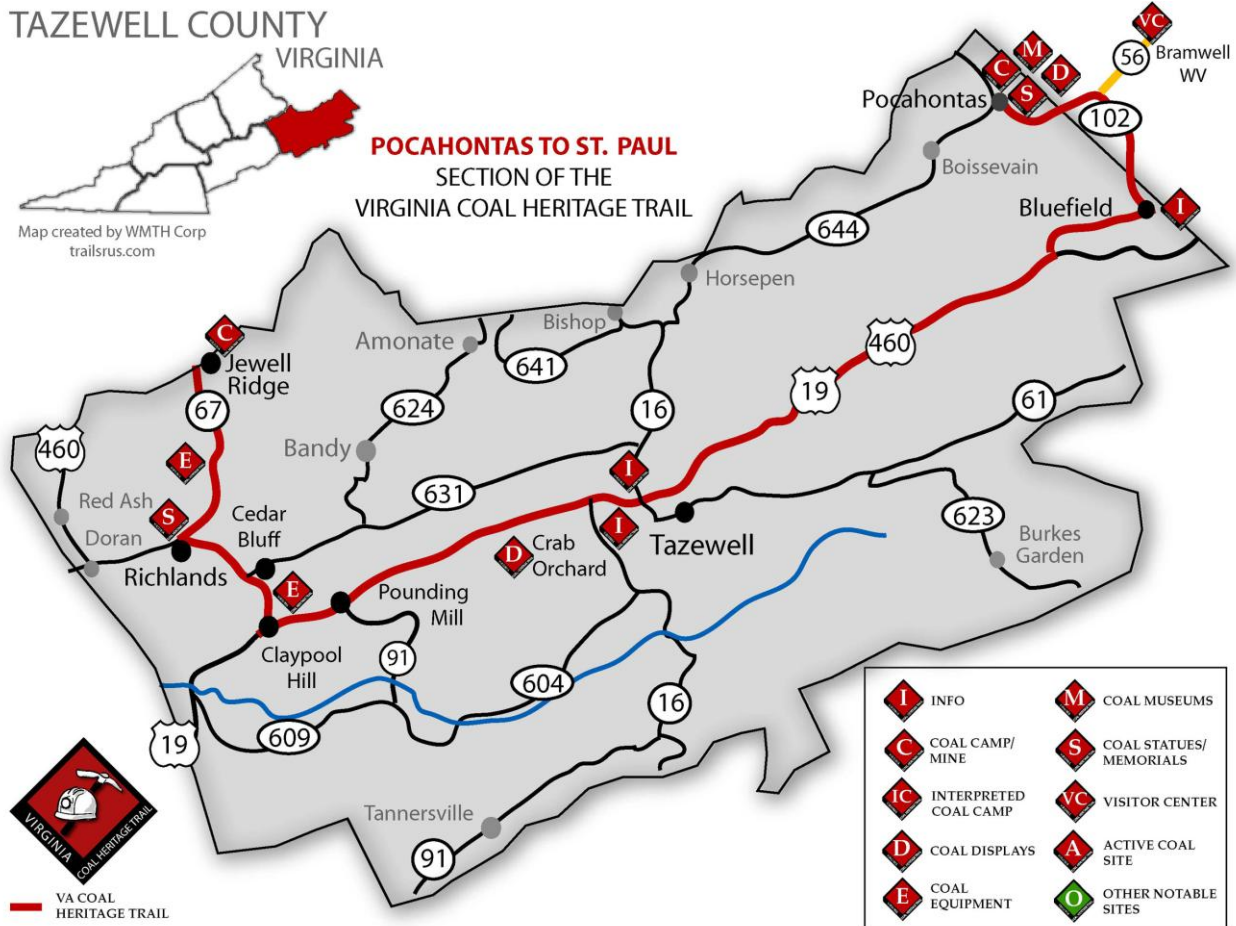
Virginia Coal Heritage Trail Corridor Management Plan Meeting
in Richlands on the Tazewell County portion of the Pocahontas Trail
September 21st 2010

Attendees:

- *Dr. Mark Estep, President of Southwest Virginia Community College*
- *Tim Taylor, Town Manager-Town of Richlands*
- *Rod Cury, Richlands Town Council*
- *Gaynell Thompson, Richlands Town Historian*
- *Ken Wysor, Former Mayor Town of Richlands*
- *Margie Douglass, Tazewell County Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator*
- *Jan White, Mayor Town of Richlands*
- *Ginger H. Branton, Executive Director Richlands Area Chamber of Commerce*



Below is the section of the Byway discussed in the Tazewell County meeting.
Primary coal sites are noted on the map.





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DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Pocahontas and Jewell Ridge

- Discussed the significance of both Pocahontas and Jewell Ridge as being the anchors at both ends of the county and the importance of preserving their buildings and getting their communities focused and ready for visitors.
- Meeting is being set up for the second or third week in October for both Jewell Ridge and Pocahontas.

Bluefield

- Fountain Restaurant and Pharmacy
- Tazewell Visitor Center – *Add map and information about the Coal Heritage Trail*
- *Check to see if there is historical information on coal in Tazewell County, coal camps etc. at the Graham Historical Society next to the Information Center that people might see.*
- *Notes on Coal Heritage Research at College – Follow up on this.*



The Last Fountain & Pharmacy



Tourist Info Center



Historical Society



Bluefield College

Addressed concerns for the number of billboards between Bluefield and Tazewell, encouraging no more be added along the byway.



Tazewell

- Exit 2 - *Add information and maps at Chamber about Coal Heritage Trail*
 - *Provide information at Coal Bucket Deli and possibly at McDonalds on the Coal Trail.*
 - *Possibly add photos of some of the coal sites one will find in Tazewell County*
- **Crab Orchard**
 - Excellent display on coal. *Add maps and brochures on the byway at this site.*
 -

Recommended Locations for Information on Virginia Coal Heritage Trail Byway



Tazewell Chamber



Themed Restaurant



Crab Orchard Museum



Tourism Kiosk across from museum



Pounding Mill

- Include The Cuz's as a Unique dining experience.



Cedar Bluff

- Suggest turning off and taking 1 mile Cedar Bluff loop (Business 460). Includes mill, Civil War site, coal loader, railroad and scenic park on this stretch of road.
- Definitely promote Stir'n Dip A Tea as a wonderful place to stop for lunch.



Old Mill – For Sale



VA Civil War Trail site



Coal Loader



Stir-n-dip-a-tea Restaurant

Richlands

- Rich in railroad history. Dinky track. Transfer station. Load Brick.
- Stone Masons, Brick Layers
- 1,500 men working in area
- Anomota Coal seam runs through Richlands
- Virginia's Miner Memorial at Town Hall
- Richlands just hired a litter control officer – Jerry Ward
- Richlands Hotel became the William Matty Hospital. Now site of Town Hall.
- The Chamber office is located in what was once a doctor's office.
- Dr. W.R. Williams House is now the Tazewell County Library.
- WWII and Coal – Story
- Immigrations
- King Coal
- Mining at Jewel at night needs to be encouraged. Might encourage overnight stays in the area.
- Critterville Park and Walking trail
- Include L'Venia and Coffee Station Restaurants when marketing the coal trail.

Recommendations:

- Need walking /driving tour developed for all historic sites, both coal and railroad in the Richlands historic downtown. See Chapter VII: Addressing the Issues for more on developing walking and driving tours.
 - Section House for the railroad, Chamber, Shraders, Library, bank, a number of buildings along Washington Square. Include Coffee Station and L'Venia restaurants, coal miner's memorial and other sites such as War Memorial, location and copies of murals including those in the Teen Venture Center as well as those featured at Southwest Community College in the Davis Hall Mining Educational, Occupational & Technical Building.



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- *Section House should be developed into an interpretive center for both coal and rail.*
 - Good location to share the interconnection of both. Also provide a display of the by-products of coal – plastic, medicine
 - Strategic location as one enters the historic district of downtown Richlands overlooking the railroad.
 - Ample parking and easy access to the Chamber
 - and Coffee Station Restaurant across the street.
 - Easy walking distance to the historic buildings on Washington Square and
 - View of Richlands School underneath the metal siding. A story to tell...



A few of the buildings to include on a downtown walking tour



Mural Downtown



Mural on RR Street



Murals in Teen Center



Murals at SWVCC

Recommendations:

- *Add an Artisan Trail as part of the tour to see the many murals in and around Richlands and include the teen center murals as well as those at the Art Center enroute to the college.*
- *Recommend interviews with Gaynell Thompson, historian and Ken Wysor, former Mayor Town of Richlands who have a lot of knowledge about the area. Oral histories are very important.*
- *Need better signage directing those on the Coal Heritage Tour through Richlands. Suggest the following which includes a side trip along Hwy 67 North to take in some of the historic markers along this route:*
 - Take Hwy 67 North into Richlands off Hwy 460 *(Need sign telling one to turn left on 67)*
 - *Need byway confirmation sign on right side of Hwy 67 N about ½ mile up road.*
 - Recommend route turn right at intersection following Hwy 67N. *(add “Turn right” byway sign directing one to turn right)*
Add pull off at Map of Richlands and Memorial on right.
Add a second pull off at War Memorial or have them pull in at Farmers Market.
 - Continue north on 67 to graveyard and historical marker on Richlands. *(Need sign directing them to do this)*
 - Have them then turn around and take 67 south back towards Richlands with pull off at “Coal” welcome sign. *(Need coal heritage confirmation sign and “Look Here” marker)*

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- Continue on 67 south with excellent view of the paralleling railroad tracks then continue straight on First Street.
- Stop at the Sexton House *(Need Coal Heritage Sign noting Info)* which will serve as the Visitor Center for the Coal Heritage Trail:
 - Providing maps and information on the Coal Heritage Trail as well as information on the history of Richlands and the history of the railroad and its impact on the region and Southwest Virginia.
 - Might also talk about some of the coal camps in the region.
 - Provide walking tours of the downtown area.
- Turn left onto Washington Square, *(Need "Turn left" Coal Heritage Sign)*
- Cross over second street *(Need Coal Heritage Sign on hill in front of town hall directing visitors to turn right onto Third Street and into Town Hall, site of the Coal Miner's Memorial)*
- Upon leaving the memorial, *have sign directing visitors to turn right onto Third Street.*
- At the intersection of Hwy 67 and Third, *have a coal heritage trail sign directing visitors to turn right onto Hwy 67 south towards Jewell Ridge.*

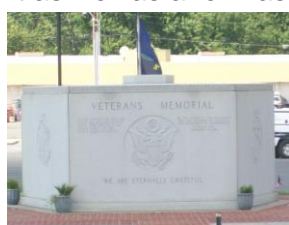
The Official Coal Miner's Memorial for the Commonwealth



Recommended Loop on Hwy 67 N parallels with the railroad track taking the visitor past a historic marker, a map of Richlands, a War memorial, a farmer's market, a cemetery, a unique "coal" welcome sign, a unique monument as well as a few fast food restaurants and shopping opportunities.



Highlights of Richlands



War Memorial



Historic Marker



Unique Sign of Coal.

Two other Coal Camps that once existed near Richlands were Red Ash and Brown Hollow:



Red Ash Mine



Brown Hollow Mine at Big Creek



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The tippel from the Seaboard Coal Mining Site is still visible as one climbs the mountain towards Jewell Ridge. It might be worth noting this site and including information about Seaboard in a brochure or other marketing materials.

Jewell Ridge

- Needs an interpretive site to describe what it once was and what still remains.
- Recommend a driving tour guide through the community.
- Mine access entrance? – Need to check on this.
- Once had hospital, school, YMCA and more
- Need better signage to encourage travelers to take the loop through community.

Tazewell County:

- As a county, Tazewell County as a whole needs to promote the Unique Dining Opportunities found along the Virginia Coal Heritage Trail which includes:



The Last Fountain (Bluefield), Coal Bucket Deli (Tazewell), The Cuz's (Pounding Mill), Stir-N-Dip-A-Tea (Cedar Bluff), Coffee Station (Richlands), L'Venia (Richlands)