



Section 8 Marketing and Promotion

The Highland Scenic Highway provides phenomenal views of the surrounding mountains and valleys, and access to a spectrum of nature-based recreation opportunities. The HSH and the surrounding Monongahela National Forest attract visitors from the local area, throughout the county, and other nations around the world. Gateway communities, such as Richwood, Marlinton, and Hillsboro, benefit from the tourism dollars that are generated from these visitors. Since there are no commercial services on the HSH, people stop at gateway communities for food, lodging, fuel, and supplies.

Present Marketing & Promotion Efforts

Informational Brochures and Visitor Guides

Information is available to visitors in advance of a visit to the HSH, or for those that want to know more about the area's resources. A variety of brochures are produced by the Forest Service and are available at the Cranberry Mountain Nature Center, ranger stations, nearby visitor centers, and the Forest websites. The following brochures detail HSH, nearby resources and interpretive opportunities:

- Highland Scenic Highway
- Honeycomb Rocks Trail
- Mill Point Prison
- Cranberry Glades Botanical Area
- Falls of Hills Creek Trail
- Cranberry Wilderness Area
- Williams River Area
- Tea Creek Area Hiking Trails
- Campgrounds (Tea Creek, Williams River Area, Day Run, Cranberry)

The Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) annual visitor guide features the HSH as one of the main attractions on the Monongahela National Forest. The Pocahontas County CVB also highlights the variety of recreation opportunities that are available from the HSH: fall foliage viewing, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling, hiking, motorcycling, and biking.

The Monongahela brochures are available at Forest Service district offices, Cranberry Mountain Nature Center, and local chamber of commerce visitor centers. The Pocahontas County CVB annual visitor guide is available locally, statewide, and may be downloaded on their website or mailed to the public upon request.



Internet Information

Information about the HSH is available on numerous websites. The Monongahela National Forest has a page dedicated to the HSH. It is difficult to find the HSH on the Forest's website and little information is available there. The Forest would like to improve the ease of finding the website, and the availability of information. Additional information is located at the America's Byways website and the West Virginia Byways websites.

Future Marketing & Promotion Efforts

The Forest Service is interested in maintaining and improving marketing and promotion for the HSH, but funding is limited. Expansion or improvements would likely require partnerships with local organizations or grants for additional funding. The Pocahontas County CVB is very supportive of the Highland Scenic Highway and area resources, and birding maps for the HSH area are already available on their website. Tourism is the primary industry in Pocahontas County, and the natural beauty of the area is the main attraction. Pocahontas County CVB includes the HSH and several area attractions in their annual visitor guide, and this will likely continue.



Figure 1 Highland Scenic Highway Portal Sign at WV150/US 219¹

¹ Photo Credit to Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau



Marketing & Promotion Management Strategies

The following strategies are recommended for marketing and promoting the HSH:

1. Improve web presence and increase ease of finding information on Forest Service website.
2. Update and incorporate additional information on the Monongahela National Forest website.
3. Market and promote the Highland Scenic Highway as a national scenic byway and national forest scenic byway, emphasizing its unique natural, scenic, recreational, cultural, historical qualities.
4. Build upon existing partnerships with the local Chambers of Commerce in Marlinton and Richwood, as well as the Pocahontas County Convention & Visitors Bureau.
5. Develop new partnerships with local and state governmental agencies that may offer financial support in the future.
6. Seek partnerships and opportunities for additional funding for marketing and promotion.

Public Participation Management Strategies

The Forest Service would like to increase community involvement and interaction in managing and maintaining the HSH, a valuable community resource. Increasing information sharing and involvement with the public will increase support and awareness of the resource, increase visibility, and may have positive effects on funding and marketing opportunities. The following recommendations will help increase public participation:

1. Create a Highland Scenic Highway Steering Committee, comprised of Forest Service employees, stakeholders, and community members within the scenic byway corridor.
2. Provide regular updates and information sharing with the public about the HSH and associated resources.





DRAFT