

Chapter 5

Engagement and Collaboration

This page intentionally left blank.

5.0 Engagement and Collaboration

5.1 Building Capacity for the Future

The 2005 ARC study entitled Meeting the Transportation Challenges of the 21st Century urged Appalachia to establish the institutional capacity to plan for and encourage transportation development across local, county, and state inter-jurisdictional boundaries. It also highlighted the importance of collaboration between transportation, economic development and international trade interests. Responding to these recommendations, ARC established a regional Study Group to provide guidance and oversight for the Network Appalachia project.

The Study Group was composed of members and their alternates designated by each of ARC's thirteen member-states and, by design, represented a balanced cross-section of transportation, economic development, and international trade expertise. It also included a designee from the ARC Federal Office and a representative of the Development District Association of Appalachia. The establishment of the Network Appalachia Study Group represents an important first step toward building inter-jurisdictional planning capacity and assuring the interdisciplinary mix necessary to prepare Appalachia for the 21st century. Members of the Study Group, as well as the dates and venues of the Network Appalachia Regional Workshops are shown in Figure 5.1.

Representing international trade expertise from across Appalachia, ARC's Export Trade Advisory Council (ETAC) would also provide constant input and support to the Study Group throughout the planning process. Financial support for the project was provided through ADHS administrative funds and the Study Group was assisted by ARC staff and by the consulting firm of Moffatt and Nichol.

5.2 Putting the Capacity to Work

Meeting for the first time on October 30 and 31, 2007, the Network Appalachia Study Group quickly formalized its planning process and outlined requirements for selecting consultant support to the project. The Study Group also committed to not only draw from a variety of research data and planning resources, but to evaluate first-hand emerging transportation and logistics challenges and opportunities from across Appalachia. During its first meeting the Study Group toured the Virginia Inland Port (VIP) in Front Royal, VA. Recognized as America's first successful inland port, this intermodal container transfer facility (ICTF) offers area businesses a seamless intermodal link directly to the Virginia Port Authority marine terminals, located over 200 miles away in Hampton Roads, VA. They learned of over \$600 million in private sector investment that has financed over 6.25 million sq. ft. of new warehousing, distribution, and manufacturing centers and generated over 7,000 new jobs, solely as a result of the high-speed and cost efficient global access provided by VIP.

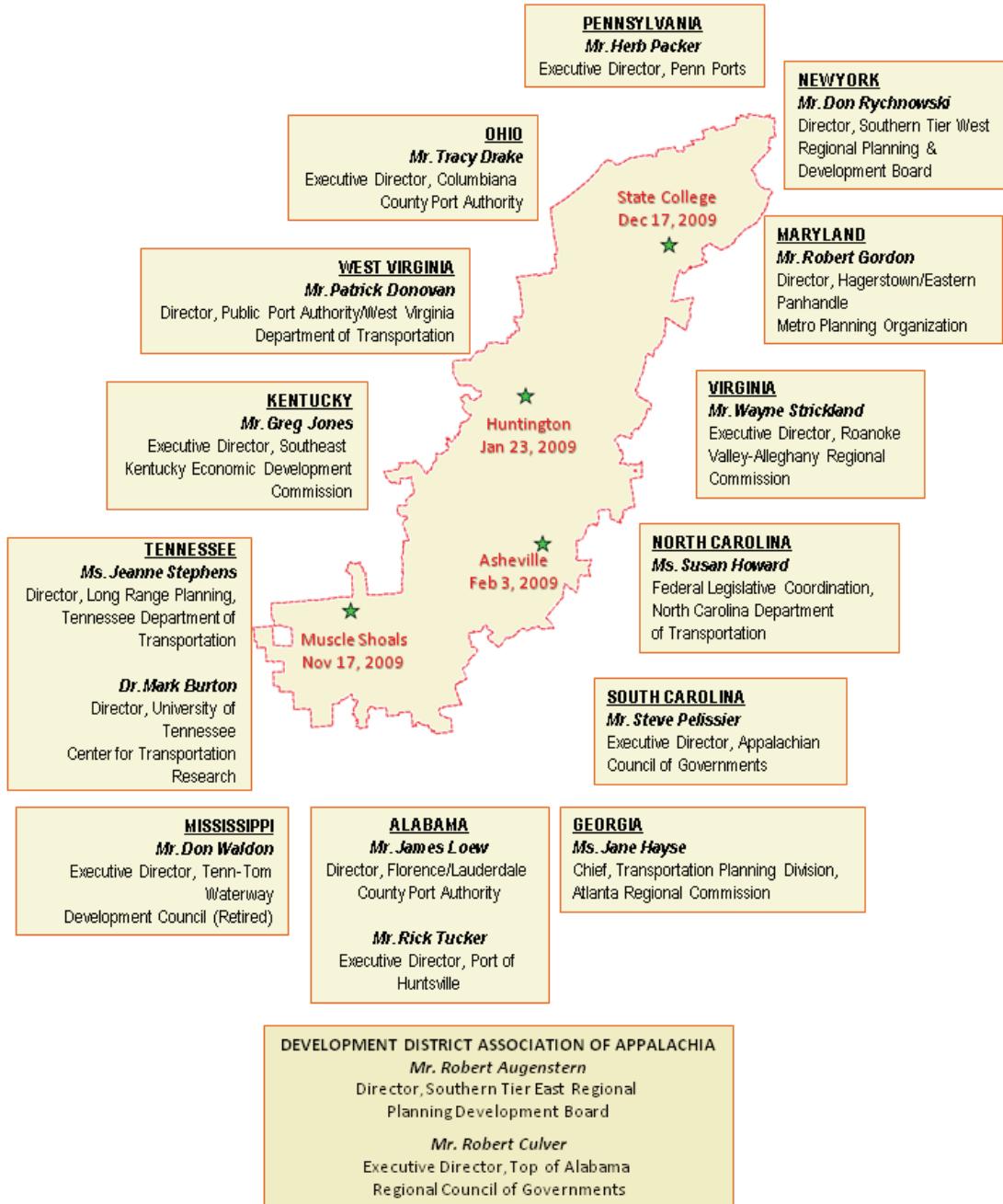


Figure 5.1: Venue/Dates of Regional Workshops and Members of the Study Group

For its second gathering, the Study Group traveled to Huntsville, Alabama on March 12 and 13, 2008 and met with representatives from Moffatt and Nichol, which had been selected to provide consulting support to the project. With the consulting team, the Study Group finalized the detailed structure of their planning process. The Study Group and its consulting team then toured the Huntsville International Airport's International Intermodal Center (IIC), an intermodal container transfer facility that, like VIP, has stimulated major private sector investment and employment growth.

At its third working session on July 9 and 10, 2008 in Savannah, Georgia, the Study Group reviewed preliminary macro-economic research that focused on changing economic trends and the affect that such changes were having on both commerce and the movement of goods to, from, and across Appalachia. Recognizing the importance of actively engaging the Region in the Network Appalachia planning process, the Study Group committed to host a series of Regional Workshops to both expand awareness of the project's transportation, economic development, and international trade issues and encourage attendees from across Appalachia to provide direct input into the planning process. Concluding its session, the Study Group was hosted by the Georgia Port Authority and provided with a hands-on presentation highlighting the dramatic growth of both Atlantic and Gulf coastal ports. The Port of Savannah program also clearly demonstrated the power of the intermodal global supply chain and the economic impact of global commerce.

Prior to its Regional Workshops, the Study Group convened in Washington, DC on September 17, 2008 to review additional economic trend analysis and to carefully assess Appalachia's existing transportation resources. The analysis confirmed that while some Appalachian areas enjoy well-developed access to both domestic and international markets, other areas suffer from underdeveloped capabilities, and others face serious access deficiencies.

5.3 Engaging the Region

At its September 17, 2008 working session, the Study Group committed itself to actively engage the Region in the Network Appalachia planning process and detailed the structure, locations, and sequencing of these Workshops. With an emphasis on active attendee collaboration and input, each Workshop event was designed to provide an overview of the macro-economic, demographic, and transportation/access issues affecting the Region. In addition, a variety of guest speakers would present information on both emerging challenges and opportunities. Following these informational briefings, attendees would be called upon to provide direct input into the process, providing strategic thoughts, ideas and concepts, as well as specific suggestions on near and mid-term opportunities to enhance their own local access. Finally, the Study Group emphasized the importance of engaging a broad and diverse Workshop audience to assure a representative cross-section of the Region. Invitations were targeted to both public and private sector officials, a multi-modal mix of transportation planners, providers, and users, academic institutions, energy and environmental interests, and, importantly, a broad cross-sample of business interests.

The Study Group decided to conduct a series of four Regional Workshops targeted to serve the southwest, southeast, central, and northern sub-regions of Appalachia. Each Workshop would be hosted by the Study Group designees representing the targeted sub-region. The Regional Workshop locations and schedules were:

Alabama/Mississippi
Muscle Shoals, AL - November 17, 2008

Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania
State College, PA – December 17, 2008

Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia
Huntington, WV - January 23, 2009

Georgia/North Carolina/South Carolina/Tennessee
Asheville, NC – February 3, 2009

In addition to the four Regional Workshops, the Study Group presented Network Appalachia to the 2009 Annual Conference of the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) entitled “Global Appalachia: Challenges and Opportunities”. As with the Workshops, the Study Group provided a project overview and sought direct input from the 250 conference attendees.

5.4 Many Voices. Many Ideas. One Future.

In all, these events attracted nearly 500 attendees from across the Region, who joined with the Study Group and with guest presenters for an engaged and collaborative look into the future of Appalachia.

Highway planners and users focused on the need to complete the ADHS and to better plan for both improved roadways and added highway capacity across the Region. Trucking interests spoke of their support to the Appalachian businesses community, yet shared their concerns over the growing fuel costs and increasing highway congestion. They referenced a recent study by the Government Accountability Office showing over \$8 billion of increased trucking industry costs caused by highway congestion and they pointed to some of Appalachia’s major interstate highways, including I-26, I-40, I-59, I-71, I-75, I-76, I-80, I-81, and I-90, as congested highway corridors with growing reliability, efficiency, and safety concerns.

Railroad officials from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Norfolk Southern and CSX presented new emerging intermodal corridor programs that, through innovative public/private partnerships, will help to relieve highway congestion, provide important energy and environmental benefits, and strengthen Appalachia’s competitive access to both domestic and international markets. Featured in these presentations were Norfolk Southern’s “Heartland Corridor” through Virginia, West Virginia, and Ohio and “Crescent Corridor” serving Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, as well as the CSX “National Gateway Corridor” serving North Carolina, Virginia,

Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio. Officials from the Genesee and Wyoming Railroad described the importance of Appalachia's short line railroads in maintaining safe, reliable, and cost efficient rail access for the Region's smaller communities and its many rural areas.

Navigation experts from both the Tenn-Tom Waterway and the Ohio River spoke of the safety, efficiency, and capacity offered by Appalachia's inland waterways. They committed to work together, on behalf of the Region, to establish a cooperative new Appalachian Marine Highway Corridor, stretching from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia through Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi, and on to Alabama's new Port of Mobile container terminal. Finally, the Virginia Port Authority spoke of the importance of strengthening and expanding intermodal links between coastal ports and Appalachian inland ports. They pointed to the landmark "Heartland Corridor" project between Virginia, West Virginia, and Ohio as an inter-jurisdictional, intermodal, and public/private model for transportation and economic success in the 21st century.

From an economic and employment development perspective, officials from a number of communities and from many of Appalachia's local development districts highlighted the need to better connect their communities and businesses to both domestic and international markets. Again and again they stressed the importance of assuring such access for not only larger metropolitan areas, but also for Appalachia's many smaller communities and rural areas. Many of these same officials urged ARC to increase its efforts to expand awareness of these issues and to assume a stronger advocacy role in developing a balanced and inter-connected transportation system that takes full advantage of ADHS and maximizes economic and employment benefits to the Region.

Pointing to the success of the Intermodal Container Transfer Facilities at the Virginia Inland Port and at Huntsville's International Intermodal Center, and to the new non-containerized cargo trans-load and consolidation centers in Somerset, KY, Dubois, PA, and Lenior, NC, officials urged the development of a region-wide system of inland ports to strengthen the connection between Appalachia's businesses and its transportation network. Representatives from the U.S. Commercial Service, ARC's Export Trade Advisory Council (ETAC), and from a number of Appalachia's colleges and universities spoke of the economic distress caused by the Region's historic isolation and emphasized the need to enhance the Region's connection to the global supply chain, if Appalachia is to successfully compete in the global economy. Some speakers called for taking full advantage of emerging new technologies, while others urged the Study Group to aggressively incorporate both energy and environmental issues into their planning to encourage a smarter and greener Appalachian transportation network in the future.

Perhaps the most compelling input was presented by Appalachia's businesses interests, who more than most, understand the critical importance of competitive access to both their suppliers and to their consumer markets. Speaking on behalf of a new manufacturing firm in Alabama, a company official stressed the importance of balanced highway, rail, and waterway

access. He explained that had their new location not offered such reliable, safe, and cost-efficient access, “We would have located elsewhere.” A representative from Appalachia’s wood and forest products sector pointed to a recent Virginia Tech study of the competitive advantage offered by improved transportation access. The study confirmed that over 85% of those Appalachian businesses interviewed claimed transportation as one of the most important factors in shaping their future success. This same message was powerfully reinforced when a major manufacturer in Mississippi reported that “In the years ahead, assuring safe, efficient, and reliable access to both suppliers and markets will be the single most important factor in determining the success of our firm and of our employees.

Through these Workshops, over 500 participants engaged in the Network Appalachia initiative, committing their time, vision, and energy in planning for the future of Appalachia. The Study Group then met to review and fully integrate Workshop input into the planning process. Through its evaluation, the Study Group assigned input into one of two categories. Entitled “Strategic Priorities”, the first category included ideas and suggestions that were overarching, medium-to-long term, and regional in scope. Combined, they help establish a comprehensive planning framework. Drawing from this framework and labeled “Tactical Opportunities”, the second category highlights very specific near and medium term examples of how to improve and expand local and sub-regional access to both domestic and international markets.

5.5 Strategic Priorities

Intermodal Corridors of Commerce: Appalachia’s transportation network of the 21st century will feature a fully interconnected network of highway, rail, and inland waterway corridors of both regional and national significance. These corridors will be closely linked to Appalachian businesses through a region-wide system of inland ports. Taking full advantage of the Appalachian Development Highway System as its foundation, these corridors will attract and accommodate a growing flow of both domestic and international commerce to, from, and across the Region, to the benefit of both Appalachia and its neighbors.

Economic Competitiveness: For Appalachian businesses to compete and succeed in the 21st century, they will require reliable, safe, and energy/cost efficient access to both domestic and international markets. Such access can only be achieved through a fully developed and integrated highway, rail, and inland navigation network. Such a network is essential to the competitiveness of Appalachia’s existing businesses and to the Region’s ability to attract new enterprise and employment in the future.

Planning and Coordination: The creation of the Network Appalachia Study Group represents an important first-step in building the Region’s capacity to plan for the future. This capacity is inter-jurisdictional in scope, intermodal in structure, and features a balanced blending of economic development, transportation, and international trade expertise. This comprehensive approach also recognizes the importance of both energy and environmental priorities and the

important benefits that can be achieved through improved public/private coordination and cooperation.

Partnerships: Planning for and developing Appalachia's access to opportunity in the 21st century will rely on new and innovative strategic partnerships, both internal to the Region and extending beyond its boundaries. Expanded collaboration and interaction will better coordinate economic development, transportation, and trade interests and maximize the transportation network's economic and employment contribution to the future of Appalachia.

Awareness and Advocacy: The Network Appalachia Regional Workshops confirmed a widespread recognition of the need to enhance access to future opportunity, both domestically and globally. Importantly, those who participated in the Workshops demonstrated a powerful sense of enthusiasm and confidence in the Region and in its future. The awareness that these Workshops expanded and the optimism and regional advocacy that they unleashed should be sustained to support continued planning and preparation for Appalachia's future.

Investment: In the 21st century, Appalachia's access to opportunity will require continued progress in developing the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) and in better coordinating the highway system with the Region's other transportation modes. A growing region network of inland ports, serving both containerized and non-containerized cargo, will assure a direct connection between the region's transportation network and its economy. To achieve such success, appropriate planning and development financing, from both public and private sources, must be identified and established.

5.6 Tactical Opportunities

During its planning session in Baltimore, Maryland the study group assembled a package of 30 tactical projects from across Appalachia that had been identified by participants at the regional workshops. These projects represent a broad spectrum of illustrative proposals, offering a variety of multi modal approaches to enhance the regions access to both domestic and international markets.

1. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Binghamton, NY.** Develop new intermodal inland port to enhance access to both domestic and global markets for southeastern New York and northeastern Pennsylvania.
2. **I-86 Development, NY.** Undertake improvements to ADHS Corridor T to complete a new cross-state I-86 highway corridor.
3. **Inland Port, Trans-load & Consolidation Center, Olean, NY.** Develop new trans-load and consolidation terminal in Olean, New York to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for western New York and northwest Pennsylvania.

4. **Inland Port, Trans-load & Consolidation Center, Dubois, PA.** Complete development of the Dubois Trans-load and Consolidation Terminal to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for north/central Pennsylvania.
5. **U.S. 219/Continental One Trade Corridor, NY, PA, & MD.** Undertake improvements to the Route 219 leading to the completion of the Continental One Trade Corridor, serving New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. .
6. **New Cross-Lake Erie Maritime Shuttle, Erie, PA.** More fully develop access to international commerce through the Port of Erie by launching new cross-Lake Erie freight and passenger services between northwest Pennsylvania and southern Ontario.
7. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Northwest PA.** In cooperation with the Port of Erie, develop a new intermodal inland port and logistics center to enhance access to both domestic and global markets for northwest Pennsylvania and southwest New York.
8. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Pittsburgh, PA.** In cooperation with the CSX National Gateway Corridor project, develop a new intermodal inland port to enhance access to both domestic and global markets for western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, and northwestern West Virginia.
9. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Southeast PA.** In cooperation with the CSX National Gateway Corridor project, complete development of a new intermodal inland port to enhance access to both domestic and global markets for southeast Pennsylvania, northern Maryland, and northeast West Virginia.
10. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Western Maryland.** In cooperation with the Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor project, develop a new intermodal container transfer facility to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for western Maryland, northeast West Virginia, and southeast Pennsylvania.
11. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Columbiana County, OH.** Complete development of Columbiana County Port Authority intermodal inland port to enhance access to both domestic and global markets for eastern Ohio, western Pennsylvania, and northwest West Virginia.
12. **Inland Port, Trans-load & Consolidation Center, Weirton, WV.** Develop new trans-load and consolidation center to enhance access both domestic and international markets for northwest West Virginia and eastern Ohio.
13. **Route 35 Highway Corridor, WV & OH.** Undertake improvements to the capacity, performance, and safety for the Route 35 Highway Corridor across WV and OH.
14. **Inland Port, Trans-load & Consolidation Center, Point Pleasant, WV.** Develop new trans-load and consolidation center to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for West Virginia and eastern Ohio.

15. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Tri-State.** Develop new intermodal container transfer facility to enhance access to both domestic and global markets for the West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky Tri-state area.
16. **ADHS Corridor H Completion, WV & VA.** Complete construction of ADHS Corridor H in West Virginia and Virginia.
17. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Roanoke Valley, VA.** In coordination with the Norfolk Southern Heartland Corridor and Crescent Corridor projects, develop a new inland port to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for southwest Virginia and southeastern West Virginia.
18. **Inland Port, Trans-load & Consolidation Center, Western North Carolina.** Develop new trans-load and consolidation center to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for western North Carolina.
19. **Murphy Gap Restoration, NC, GA, TN.** Restore abandoned rail link near Murphy, NC to reconnect western North Carolina, northern Georgia, and eastern Tennessee rail corridors, enhancing rail access for western North Carolina, northern Georgia, and eastern Tennessee.
20. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, East Tennessee.** In cooperation with the Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor project, develop new intermodal container transfer facility to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for east Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and western North Carolina.
21. **ADHS Corridor K Completion, TN.** Complete construction of the ADHS Corridor K highway corridor linking eastern Tennessee with western North Carolina.
22. **Saluda Rail Restoration, NC, SC.** Restore rail freight service along the Asheville, NC – Spartanburg, SC route to enhance western North Carolina access to both the Crescent Corridor and to the Port of Charleston, SC.
23. **Upcountry Intermodal Corridor, SC.** Develop new intermodal rail corridor between the Spartanburg/Greenville area and the Port of Charleston to enhance Upcountry access to both domestic and international markets.
24. **North Georgia Highway Corridor, GA.** Develop improved east-west highway corridor between I-75 and I-85, enhancing access to both domestic and international markets for northern Georgia.
25. **Huntsville-Mobile Intermodal Corridor, AL.** Develop improved intermodal corridor between the International Intermodal Center in Huntsville and the Port of Mobile, enhancing access to both domestic and international markets for north Alabama.

26. **Atlanta-Huntsville-Memphis Highway Corridor, GA, AL, MS, & TN.** Plan, design, and construct a new highway trade corridor between Atlanta, Huntsville, and Memphis to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee.
27. **Inland Port, Intermodal Container Transfer Facility, Birmingham, AL.** In cooperation with the Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor project, develop new intermodal container transfer facility in the Birmingham area to enhance access to both domestic and international markets for central Alabama.
28. **West Alabama Highway Corridor, AL.** Develop improved north-south Route 43 Highway Corridor between Mobile and northwest Alabama, enhancing access to both domestic and international markets for west Alabama.
29. **Tenn-Tom Intermodal Corridor, AL & MS.** Develop new intermodal container-on-barge services along the Tenn-Tom Waterway Corridor between northern Mississippi/Alabama and the Port of Mobile, enhancing access to both domestic and international markets for northeast Mississippi, northwest Alabama, and southern Tennessee.
30. **C&G Railway Corridor, MS.** Restore an abandoned rail segment to fully redevelop the cross-state Columbus and Greenville rail corridor, enhancing access to both domestic and intermodal markets for central Mississippi.