

# Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Education Center

*Located in the heart of the Pennsylvania Wilds*

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## **I. Background**

In September 2007, the Northern Tier Cultural Alliance (Alliance) initiated a discussion with community leaders to explore the potential of a craft center in Mansfield, Pennsylvania. With its role as one of the Commonwealth's five regional folk art support centers and close association with Mansfield University, the Northern Tier Cultural Alliance is the region's premier non-profit organization dedicated to providing educational programs on its cultural traditions, history and art. The non-profit association also provides technical assistance and grant opportunities for traditional artists and entities in nine northern Pennsylvania counties, thereby fostering a grass-roots network of artists and institutions that continue the cultural legacy of the region.

The discussion was furthered with the establishment of the Alliance's Craft Marketing & Development Initiative Fund, made possible through a generous contribution by the Trask family. A feasibility study was commissioned to explore the viability and sustainability of a craft center in Mansfield.

The Alliance hired Meritage Consulting, a Charlotte-based cultural tourism planning and marketing consortium, to research and assess the potential for a craft school on the grounds of the Trask family farm. The initial research phase focused on conducting extensive local and expert interviews, and investigating established craft schools (including Penland and John C. Campbell Folk School in North Carolina, the Kentucky School of Craft in Hindman, Arrowmont School of Art and Craft in Tennessee, and Tamarack in West Virginia, plus others around the country) to determine the project viability for Mansfield. Further analysis determined how the current needs of the community meshed with the potential for constructing and sustaining a new craft center. The research findings led Meritage Consulting to recommend a phased approach for development and management of the craft center (July 2008), and to explore initial funding sources for the proposed endeavor (September 2008). Given recent downturns in the global economy, and lack of dedicated investments, Meritage Consulting recommends a streamlined alternative to the original concept, with staged development over the next 20 years through a public-private partnership.

This business plan outlines the proposed premise of the Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Education Center (Canoe Camp) housed on a portion of the Trask Family Farm in Mansfield, Pennsylvania. The information included here is a compilation of the research findings, local stakeholder discussions and priorities, and SWOT analysis of existing school programming and facilities. The recommended concept is based on the learnings adapted to meet the region's desires and needs, and on the economic viability and potential for development, plus long-term sustainability and management.

## **II. Business Overview**

### **Mission of the Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Education Center**

Through a diverse collection of quality classes, products and services that focus on the region's lumber heritage and natural assets, the Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Education Center (Canoe Camp) is purposed to celebrate folk traditions and encourage contemporary craft design and creation.

The mission of Canoe Camp is to stimulate the local economy and provide authentic learning experiences for all ages by serving as a quality tourism attraction for the region and year-round arts-based community center for the Mansfield area.

Its name draws on the historic community where the complex is housed. The legacy of Canoe Camp lives on in a craft center that serves as a testament to the residents and the rural heritage of the region by celebrating the natural beauty of Northern Pennsylvania.

### **Vision for Mansfield**

If successful, Canoe Camp will contribute to the overall economic sustainability and enhancement of Mansfield, Pennsylvania.

Vision for 2028: Mansfield is an attractive, vibrant and economically prosperous town because of the synergy between the university, downtown and Canoe Camp that collectively affords quality visitor experiences, stimulating craft-based learning, sustainable entrepreneurial opportunities and enhanced quality of life for residents through environmentally sensitive policies and programs. (Source: Public Meeting & Visioning Session, March 2008 – see Appendix )

### **A. Business Profile**

The Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Center is a multi-discipline center offering cross-generational learning for all skill levels. With a nature-based focus, Canoe Camp uses wood, wool (textiles) and welding as its three primary mediums for study and training. By focusing on the lumber heritage of the region and connection to nature, Canoe Camp becomes a unique educational center for the country – it's unique selling proposition.

*Focusing on “wood, wool and welding from start to finish”*

## *Business Plan: Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Educational Center*

The complex, housed in existing historic and newly constructed, environmentally and design sensitive structures on the Trask property<sup>1</sup>, contributes to the economic vitality of Mansfield and celebrates its rural lifestyles and landscape. The facility complements other nature-based activities and attractions in the region, providing further opportunity for visitors to expand their stay in Northern Pennsylvania and offering a reason to visit year-round. Most importantly, Canoe Camp provides a viable and desired collection of services to the residents and artists of the region through exhibitions, retail sales and supplies, training, and a community center for events and scheduled activities. Using the main exhibition center for special events and other community functions helps stimulate year-round use and produces earned income in addition to the fees from classes, retail sales, and other revenue generation outlets (see next section.)

Creating an attractive educational/ training facility that can also serve as a multi-purpose community center or special event venue adds revenue potential and increases sustainability for the complex long-term. An analysis of existing meeting facilities – Lambs Creek Food & Spirits (Mansfield), Mansfield Fire Hall, Gmeiner Art & Cultural Center (Wellsboro), and the Keystone Theatre (Towanda) – identified a need for local meeting space with adequate parking for groups associated with the university, local businesses, regional associations, or to host special events and community functions (from weddings to lectures.) See *Appendice A* for a competitive analysis of current facilities available.

### **B. Goals**

If successful, Canoe Camp can have a direct and compelling impact on the region. While the goals of the cultural center are admirable and should be at the forefront for all decisions, it is important that the complex also help realize certain aspirations that make it a viable and desired community asset. During the stakeholder discussions, five key community goals were identified for the project:

1. Connect to town and university
2. Stimulate beautification efforts
3. Provide reasons to live, work, play in Mansfield ...and visit
4. Strengthen the strong artistic tradition of the region
5. Be a catalyst for other quality initiatives and help raise the bar regionally

Benchmarks for Canoe Camp sustainability:

- Ten month “program” to generate revenue for year-round operation
- Integrate payback strategy for amortized facilities into fee-for-services

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<sup>1</sup> The location of the property is dependent upon an agreement between the Trask family and Canoe Camp management entity. Other sites were not reviewed as potential locations.

## *Business Plan: Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Educational Center*

- Strategic growth plan: don't build or enhance without financial assets
- Provide critical mass and diversity of quality programs and services to achieve financial solvency
- Use appropriate spaces for appropriate uses, at appropriate times
- Leverage partnerships for shared marketing, programming and sponsorships
- Combine private and non-profit operation to provide best possible economic return on investment and offer of quality products, services

*DIRECT OUTCOMES:*      *Job growth*  
*Increased tax revenue from sales*  
*Increased visitation*  
*Increased spending from visitors*  
*Enhanced image for Mansfield as an activity hub*

*INDIRECT OUTCOME:*      *Increased tax revenue from events, new housing*  
*Desirable meeting, event space for weddings, other community activities*  
*Increased beautification and gateway development*  
*Increased quality of life for residents (from programming)*  
*Mobility plan ramped up*  
*Additional retail on Main Street*

### **C. Ownership & Management**

Canoe Camp will be operated as a 501c3 entity. The programmatic and cultural product offerings at Canoe Camp will be developed and managed by the Northern Tier Cultural Alliance (Alliance), a functioning non-profit organization registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or its subsidiary. If a separate non-profit entity is formed, the Alliance will retain representation on the board of directors and benefit from the initial investment for creation, development and management of the facility and cultural programming. The Alliance will occupy office space at Canoe Camp, oversee all programming (including special events and craft school curriculum/training), and manage the retail artisan store.

Purchase of a tract of land, presently owned by the Trask family, is required to acquire the site and adapt or construct buildings for the physical complex. The proposed tract of land shall be purchased through a long-term sale, with terms to be determined by the two parties. (See the Appendix for a site rendering.) Land development rights and ownership documents will be held on file with the

county to protect original party agreements against future disputes. If the Alliance is unable to continue operating as an organization or elects to sever ties to Canoe Camp, the land and existing facilities (including gardens, buildings, equipment, and other assets original to the grounds) revert back to the Trask family. Should the Alliance be unable to raise adequate funds within the next five (5) years to develop and manage the complex according to this plan, or other agreed-upon terms between the original investors, the land and associated buildings will revert back to the Trask family for future use/development at will. All holdings and assets (supplies, materials, equipment) will be returned to the original owners.

The complex will be managed by the Alliance, with some operations – such as restaurant, lodging, and maintenance – leased through a special licensing agreement to one or more private for-profit businesses or third party. The Trask family has first right of refusal on any such licensed operation. All businesses and tenants must meet the terms and conditions set forth by the Alliance to maintain the integrity of the complex and ensure the continuity of programming, marketing, and delivery of products and services. The Alliance may require compensation from any for-profit partner as part of the licensing agreement.

## **D. Location & Facilities**

Site construction for the complex uses approximately 40 acres of the 160-acre Trask property in Mansfield, Pennsylvania. Located within the Pennsylvania Wilds region, the property designated for the complex is situated at the base of an undeveloped mountain. The desired site includes the area along the frontage road (Main Street) adjacent to and behind the barn and silo. The main entrance to the complex is to be sited, if possible, between the barn and the current mobile home park. (This allows for the Trask family to maintain a residence on the premises until Phase III.) Specifically, the site complex:

- Converts existing barn into the main exhibition, meeting space
- Converts other existing outbuildings to office space, reception area and retail store
- Builds new construction to provide craft education studios, food service, housing units, and storage/maintenance facility
- Uses wetlands for heritage or craft gardens and landscaping buffers

While the complex, even when completely built out, will not occupy the entire Trask property, covenants or standing agreements will help to protect the ridge line from development, maintain the desired density of development by clustering new construction in specified areas and keep scale of buildings to less than three stories, use buffers and other landscape strategies to shield large utility or maintenance structures, and minimize parking by limiting (or excluding) traditional or oversized vehicular traffic.

### **III. Products & Services**

Other recreational activities exist in Pennsylvania's North Country, as do craft galleries and artisan studios. Even a world class glass museum and workshop resides 30 miles away, just over the New York border in Corning. To realize its unique selling proposition and cultivate a customer base that will sustain the facility long-term, Canoe Camp must focus on offering a critical mass of quality products and services that all focus on nature, nature-based (lumber) heritage, and the environment.

#### **3.A. Existing Products & Services**

The Alliance currently operates the Pennsylvania North Country Artisan Center & Store in Towanda. The existing facility demonstrates the organization's ability to provide service to artists and operate a retail business. The site also is distanced (38 miles east of Mansfield on Route 6) as to not compete for sales or inventory.

Several projects and programs are also currently organized by the Alliance to foster appreciation and awareness of the region's cultural diversity and traditional art. Often, these cultural expressions demonstrate the connection of people to place by reflecting the natural beauty of Pennsylvania's North Country, interpreting the landscape or region's lumber heritage, or using nature to create objects. As a Pennsylvania Folk Arts Support Center, some of the regional activities are conducted in collaboration with the Route 6 Association and Pennsylvania Wilds, such as the Artisan Trails and Artisan Network programs. Regional programs and events focus on traditional culture, including recognition of the agriculture and farming heritage with production of a 2009 barn calendar and partnership with the Food Routes Network.

#### **3.B. Membership**

The Alliance currently serves more than 100 artists and cultural organizations in nine counties of Pennsylvania's North Country. An annual membership drive is conducted to cultivate financial support from individuals, families and non-profit organizations. Dues collected help support the various programs and events of the Alliance including the Forest Heritage Project, the annual Heart to Hand exhibit, Artist Gathering, and Buy Fresh/Buy Local program.

Current rates for an annual membership with the Alliance is:

- Individual           \$10
- Family               \$25
- Non-profit organizations/ For-profit businesses   \$50-\$250

It is anticipated that new products and services offered by Canoe Camp will help stimulate growth in local and regional membership for the Alliance. Existing membership will be a prime audience to target and communicate with for development and funding of Canoe Camp.

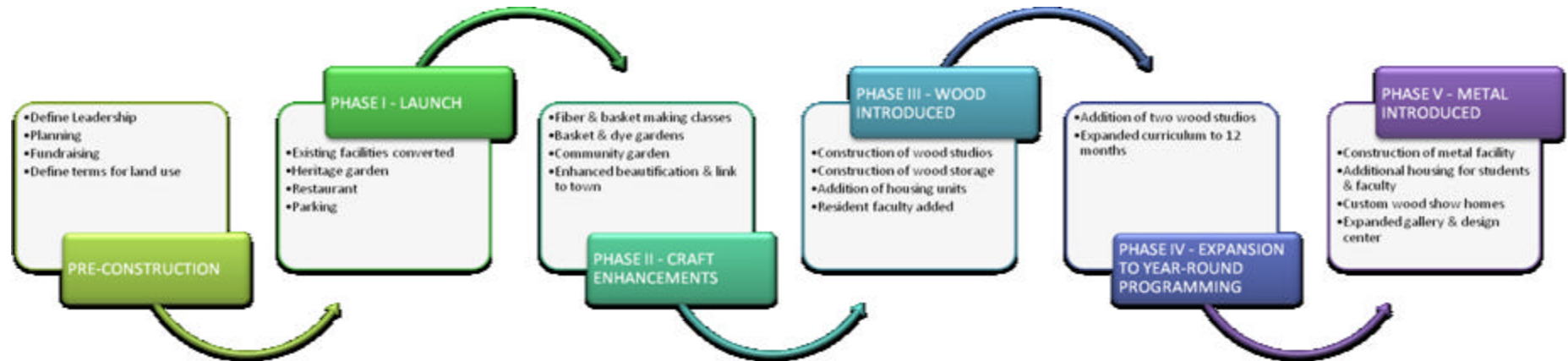
### **3.C. Development of New Products & Services**

Creating a compelling collection of educational experiences and training seminars is paramount to establish a quality reputation for Canoe Camp. While the facility to house and operate these training programs also must contribute to (and set the stage for) these dynamic nature-based experiences, the programming will allow the Alliance and its development partners to establish a customer base that will grow with the complex. Adding a retail component and scheduling special events can foster additional earned income opportunities. Providing a diverse and multi-tiered buying strategy will stimulate year-round sales from both residents and visitors.

#### Development and Pre-Construction Phase

Several activities must occur before actual development can begin on the center. Two key steps are of paramount importance to launch the project. The Alliance has accepted initial ownership of this project and accepted responsibility for moving the planning, fundraising and concept into implementation phase. Defined terms of purchase for the land (and existing structures, if desired) to site the center complex is the second key step in developing Canoe Camp in the phases outlined in this business plan.

From this foundation, the necessary due diligence can occur regarding a fundraising campaign (for capital investment and endowment), an environmental impact analysis, the necessary permits and engineering study to define usable land and architectural rendering of the facilities. Some of these activities can be scheduled concurrently; others can be conducted by private entities. The leadership and financial resources available will define how quickly this phase is completed.



### **Operational Phases**

The Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Education Center is sequenced in the following phases:

- Development/Pre-Construction
- Craft School Launch
- Craft Enhancements
- Medium Addition: Wood
- Year-Round Programming
- Medium Addition: Metal

The Craft & Cultural Education Center expansion is dependent upon available resources and documented customer demand.

## **Development/ Pre-Construction Phase:**

This inception phase requires leadership and pro-active planning. Designed to orchestrate the various elements of moving the concept to reality, the development/ pre-construction phase most importantly focuses on securing the financial investment and applying an organizational framework outlined in this business plan. Four key areas are addressed in this phase; and sufficient time and resources must be allocated to manage the process and advance implementation.

### **Leadership:**

- Establish a core team to lead and direct efforts
- Appoint/ hire a person to oversee day-to-day operations
- Identify other resources as appropriate (contractors, fundraisers, specialists) to advise on, achieve desired outcomes
- Implement marketing communications strategy to promote concept, encourage support

### **Planning:**

- Refine business plan to include specific schedules, timelines and benchmarks for success
- Define specific roles and responsibilities for leadership team, the Alliance, the Trask Family, the university and others
- Alliance establishes agreements with core partners: Trask family, township, university, tenants (PA Wilds, Food Routes Network, Route 6)

### **Fundraising:**

- Detailed development campaign is outlined and initiated (private and public investments)
- Grants applied for and secured
- Financial or in-kind match is identified, and scheduled, to coincide for usage with foundation and/or government grant rewards
- Investment by key potential stakeholders is secured
- Endowment needs identified
- Pricing strategy developed for retail, craft seminars, classes
- Database of potential donors, artists and other contributors

### **Site Development:**

- Land acquisition/ terms and conditions defined
- Permits and regulations secured

*Business Plan: Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Educational Center*

- Site Infrastructure planned in detail (based on conceptual drawing)

Phase I: LAUNCH OF CANOE CAMP COMPLEX

Existing facilities are converted into the complex as its foundation with grounds landscaped to provide additional attractions. New site construction is limited to private development; initial programming focuses on low-tech, low investment craft mediums. The site serves as new office hub for cultural, agricultural and nature-based organizations to foster collaborations and launch new regional initiatives. Specific structures and development includes:

- General purpose meeting space: 7,500 sq. ft. space for community meeting/events for 300 people (theatre style) including 2,000 sq. ft. exhibition or gallery space; staging area for lectures, instruction; wired for AV/ Internet: 400 people @ \$25 each  
*Day-long programming, evening classes for area residents or visitors*  
*Weekend programs with expert lecturers or local artists*  
*Special art and craft exhibitions (photography, Mansfield art students, local artists, traveling heritage exhibits)*  
*Artist and craft demonstrations for group tours, student/youth groups*
- Office space: 300 sq. ft. for NTCA; additional five offices for complex administration and outsourced to partners + conference room, galley, restrooms and workstation (total 2,500 sq. ft.)
- Retail store: 1,500 sq. ft. space to sell locally-made items, supplies + parking (20 spaces)
- Restaurant: private enterprise to cater meals for meetings/receptions of 300 people, groups of 45, special events, and weekly on-premise training (three meals daily, plus snacks, for 40 people)
- Heritage garden: planting of traditional crops in a patterned design
- Parking (adjacent to site and off premises) for retail store, visitors, residents, staff, offices, and motorcoaches/buses

Ideally, the existing buildings – the barn, the lean-to shed, boat building, and silo – can be rehabilitated or at least the exterior shells preserved to provide the appropriate aesthetics for the complex and retain the historic integrity of the site. New facilities will be a) sensitively designed to minimize impact, scale and density; and b) built using leed-certified green construction and regional materials to continue the natural appearance of the complex.

**What are heritage and craft gardens?**

Demonstration gardens showcasing plants used in local industry or craft making. For instance, the North Carolina Arboretum features a heritage garden with plants used in Western North Carolina's multi-million dollar craft industry: dye making from plants, basket making, hand paper making and broom making.

The heritage garden planned for Canoe Camp will serve as a beautification element for the site but also as an outdoor classroom. It will be a community outreach program to educate and inform local residents and visitors about the integrated economic and environmental impacts of nature and industry. The heritage garden, and other proposed gardens in Phase II. encourages propaagative conservation.

Phase II: CRAFT TRAINING PROGRAM ENHANCED

Dedicated craft component added to existing educational programs as a vehicle to attract and advance craft movement in region. Specific focus on fiber arts and weaving provided through dedicated weaving studio and themed garden allows Canoe Camp to expand marketing to broader external audiences.

- **Fiber & basket making classes:** 10 students at \$200 per class x 10 classes year one; 20 classes year two:

*Basic 4 Harness Weaving (3hr class/8 weeks)*

*Basic Knitting (3 hr class/5 weeks)*

*Weekend Course (8hrs; 2 days x 4 cycles)*

A dying and drying room is required for basket making (and broom craft, if that is offered/available).

Large worktables and appropriate lighting are also required for fiber/textile classes.

If demand exists, weaving looms are added in Phase IV.

- **Basket garden:** Showcasing plants from the region that continue to be used in both constructing the basket and dyeing the basket making materials. Some plants and trees commonly used in basket garden include red maple, honeysuckle, white oak and American ash. A research plan on native plants and also a design plan for planting annuals and perennials in an attractive setting is required as part of this phase.
- **Dye garden:** Features up to 50 dye plants, including native plants and historic dye plants like indigo, red maple trees, yarrow, hollyhocks, lady's mantle, European white birch, safflower, lily of the valley, and garland chrysanthemum. A research plan on native plants and also a design plan for planting annuals and perennials in an attractive setting is required as part of this phase.
- **Community garden:** a series of plots available for community rental to be tended by local residents, students.
- **Maintenance Storage Facility:** for golf carts, equipment, lawn care.
- **Enhanced beautification** and link to downtown:
  - Green commuter shuttle and bike path are added as part of the Mansfield Mobility Plan
  - The corridor will be landscaped with buffers to block industry, development, and attractive signage will mark gateway.

Phase III: WOOD SHOWCASES AT CANOE CAMP

Wood studios and storage facility constructed to expand production and training potential, add to the retail sales inventory and programming.

- **2 Wood Studios:** 2,500 sq ft each with appropriate ventilation, lighting, fixtures

The studios include:

- Metal forming room (with sand blaster, rolling mills, bench shears, bending brakes, wall hung tool storage, anvils and log forming blocks);
- Demonstration area;
- Air-conditioned soldering room with independent ventilation system, eight-10 work stations equipped with individual outlets for oxy-propane for soldering; pickling compounds; stainless steel divided sinks; centrifugal casting machine
- Storage lockers for students

**Wood classes** (model: Arrowmont): \$700 tuition for week (+ lodging); \$450 (for commuters, includes tuition + lunch):

*In spring, a four-week elder hostel program with four one-week classes offered for up to 15 people each*

*10 week-long programs held in the summer (15 students maximum)*

*Three-week elder hostel program in the fall with three one-week classes offered for up to 15 people each*

- **Wood equipment:** 4 wood lathes, 12 benches, 2 desks for each studio.
- **14 housing units** (10 for students; 4 for employees, artists in residence): 7,000 sq. ft.
- **Wood Storage Facility:** 25,000 sq. ft., concrete floor.

Phase IV: CANOE CAMP EXPANDS TO YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING

Staffed facility with expanded curriculum allows operation to attract visitors and residents with a consistent schedule of activities, events and programs. Lodging on premise also adds to the marketability of the facility, for either craft classes or other appropriate meetings.

- The **fiber arts/ textile facility** is enhanced to include a dark room. Additional equipment is added: large deep basin sinks, washer/dryer, ironing boards, irons, large pots, bowls and dyes plus adequate storage for these items.
- **Wood studios** are fully functioning.
- **Retail store** includes a comprehensive line of craft- and nature-based books, regional interest items and locally made craft.
- **Exhibition area** schedules at least two shows annually.
- **Facility space** is rented a minimum of 30 days by outside sources for appropriate functions (meetings, weddings, events) to expand facility usage and sustainability.
- **On-site restaurant and lodging** contribute to the successful marketing and immersion experience offered at Canoe Camp.
- **Programming** expands to offer a diverse menu of life-long learning experiences around a variety of nature-based topics. The fee-for-service programming is offered as:
  - single day or evening seminars;*
  - multi-segment classes (3 hour training over four-eight weeks) for commuter or local students;*
  - lecture and lunch series (reserved for group tours)*
  - kids programming, both for groups and individuals (age 6-16);*
  - week-long intensive training around a particular medium (housing provided for an additional fee)*
  - week-long training combined as part of a PA Wilds/Route 6 package (with other recreational, nature-based activities).*

Phase V: FULLY FUNCTIONING CRAFT & CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER

The construction of a metal facility and additional housing units provides entrepreneurial development and enhances the sustainability of the facility through additional revenue generation activities. Specifically, the addition of the metal facility – combined with the woodworking stations – provide the opportunity to work with a manufacturer, with support from the university or community college, to produce a new line of products or multiples of a particular/signature item for wholesale or resale.

Phase V includes the following components:

- **Metal facility:**

- Make hinges, handles, hooks and other decorative items from metal (with nature-based motif, design)
- Jewelry-making using native plants, products and metal
- Traditional metalsmithing techniques, such as tinmaking
- Outdoor specialist track expanded to include bicycles (maintenance school, accessories, baskets, mirrors)
- Offer cross-curriculum/multi-media packages
  - Canoe + fly-fishing + wood box for flies
  - Sinks + handles for home décor

**Metal classes** (model: John C. Campbell Folk School):

\$550 tuition for week (+ lodging); \$400 (for commuters, tuition + lunch)

*March – November: one-week classes offered for up to 15 people each; schedule heavier in spring, fall*

\$200 tuition for day-long seminar

*March – November: Saturdays only (27 days) for up to 15 people each*

- Additional 10 units of **housing** are constructed for students and resident faculty.
- Custom **wood show homes** are built on the existing trailer park site to demonstrate the craftsmanship and innovative design available from Canoe Camp.
- Expanded **gallery and design center** is available for homeowners, interior designers and architects to view custom décor and construction options (additional 5,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose facility).

### 3.D. Delivery of Products & Services

<u>Market</u>		<u>Products</u>	<u>Services</u>
LOCAL	Hobbyist	The Barn	Concerts, storytelling
	Students/Adult Education		Performances
	General resident		Entertainment
	Manchester University – student artists		Classes
		Continuing education	
		“Start to Finish” seminars	
	Core student – barter for labor/work		
REGIONAL	Tourists	Gallery	Fiber, wood initially Add metal in Phase V
	Elder Hostel		Exhibitions
	Bicyclists – Grand Canyon	Info center	
		The Shed	Supplies for wood, other artists
SPECIAL INT	Outdoor Recreation	1 week classes	Paddles, fly ties, bowls, utensils, boxes
	“Craft” makers		
	Advanced immersionists	2-3 week classes	Canoes, chairs, tables
	Artist in residence		Cross market with University of Pennsylvania at Indiana (IUP)

### 3.E. Future Products & Services

As Canoe Camp builds a sound customer base, attracting repeat visitors and generating year-round sales, additional products and services may be added. During a strategy meeting in Summer 2008, local stakeholders articulated that the policy set forth by John C. Campbell Folk School of “build when fiscally able and programmatically feasible” is a sound one that should be used for future growth of Canoe Camp (see Section 5.B). Resident artists in training, resident artist teachers, a full-scale motorcoach program, international exchanges and other types of artisan mentoring and growth can be considered for implementation when feasible and appropriate for the center’s sustainability.

## **IV. Tourism Overview**

Two key outcomes desired from visitation are a) increased economic impact generated from spending – new money introduced into Mansfield; and b) recognition of the quality products and experiences offered by Canoe Camp. These two deliverables make tourism a viable and necessary component of the Canoe Camp business plan. Other benefits arise from tourism to the region: additional activities and events that can be enjoyed by residents, reduced costs for public services because of increased tax revenues, increased community pride, additional beautification of the area, and enhanced appreciation for the natural and cultural environment.

To maximize the tourism potential and grow a sound customer base for Canoe Camp, it is important to profile current visitation to the Commonwealth and Pennsylvania Wilds. Understanding the potential target market for craft experiences and life-long learning is also vital to plan the appropriate and desired training, retail, and event facilities.

### **Overall Trends in U.S. Domestic Travel**

The *2006 Research Report*, a publication of the Travel Industry Association, identifies several trends that will impact tourism in the next decade. Perhaps the best indicators are found in trends of the past decade. The report states that “in 2005, U.S. domestic travel, defined as trips made by members of households in the contiguous 48 states, generated 1.019 billion household trips, an increase of 7.6 percent from 1996. In 2005, two out of three domestic household trips included at least one travel-oriented activity (66%, yielding 665.1 million trips), up from 1996 (61%).” Other statistics in the report include:

- Leisure travel generated 673.5 million household trips in 2005 (66% of all travel), up 22.2 percent from 1996. Leisure travelers tend to take longer trips, travel with more people, engage in more activities, spend more than business travelers.
- Dining, shopping, entertainment, and sightseeing are the most popular activities on domestic trips. The proportion of trips that includes shopping has held steady over the past 10 years (from 22 percent in 1996 to 23 percent in 2005), while the share of trips with entertainment activities grew slightly (from 17 percent to 19 percent).
- In 2005, the average domestic adult traveler was 46 years of age. Travelers who participated in recreational activities were about the same age, on average, as those who participated in cultural activities (average age of 45 vs. 46)
- 13% of all domestic trips in 2005 included a recreational activity; 15% included a cultural activity.
- Trips that included recreational activities in 2005 were most frequently overnight trips (60%) and tended to be longer (2.6 nights) than leisure trips (1.7 nights), all domestic trips (1.6 nights), and even cultural trips (2.0 nights).

## **4.A. Tourism in Pennsylvania**

The Travel Industry Association of America's 2007 Tourism Impact on State Economies reports that Pennsylvania ranks seventh in domestic travel expenditures and generated taxes. According to the 2006-07 Governor's Report on State Performance, the Department of Community & Economic Development reported an increase in visitors, both domestic and international over the past three years. The number of visitors from international target countries grew from 480,000 in 2004-05 to 600,000 in 2006-07. Travel expenditures also increased in the same period from \$25,260,000,000 to \$26,808,000,000. Also for the third year in a row, Pennsylvania hosted over 100 million leisure visitors (based on preliminary estimates for the first half of 2006-07.) Nearly 108 million leisure visitors traveled to and/or within Pennsylvania for an overnight or day-trip in 2005-06 with the number of leisure visitors whose travels included an overnight stay surpassing 50 million for the second consecutive year. Revenues from the state's hotel occupancy tax generated more than \$157 million for the Commonwealth and over \$116 million for local jurisdictions that have adopted a local room tax.

Marketing strategies implemented through established Regional Marketing Alliances by the Pennsylvania Tourism Office helped landmark initiatives such as the Artisan Trails develop and promote cultural tourism experiences along Route 6 and Route 15. The Commonwealth's consumer website, visitPA.com, also included innovative use of web videos and user generated content that significantly increased the time spent by the seven million unique visitors on the web site.

## **4.B. Tourism in Northern Pennsylvania**

### ***4.B.i Pennsylvania Wilds***

The Pennsylvania Wilds Tourism Marketing Corporation promotes the growth of tourism and related-businesses in the 12 counties located in north central Pennsylvania. The corporation is comprised of eight Tourist Promotion Agencies (TPAs) responsible for marketing the Pennsylvania Wilds and their respective regions. The Pennsylvania Wilds Tourism Marketing Corporation was established through a regional marketing grant from the Pennsylvania Tourism Office and matched with local contributions from the participating TPAs. The primary goal of the Pennsylvania Wilds Tourism Marketing Corporation is to establish a strong coalition of public and private partners with the goal of branding the Pennsylvania Wilds as the premier destination for outdoor experiences in the eastern United States. A web site, PAwilds.com, has been created to market the region as well as the establishment of a toll-free number (800-577-2029).

#### **4.B.ii Route 6**

The Pennsylvania Route 6 experience encompasses 11 counties, stretches over 400 miles across northern Pennsylvania and encounters many of the Keystone State's historic treasures and scenic places. National Geographic calls this span of road "One of America's most scenic drives." From its website: "... the route can be traced back to 1807 when state officials mandated a road be cut through the Moosic Mountains to enable easier travel to the western parts of the state. Carved out of hundreds of miles of wilderness, the road eventually united all of the county seats in Pennsylvania's northern tier. The highway quickly became a vital link between the industry of the west and the railroads in the east. Along its length sprung up charming villages, plentiful farming communities and thriving towns. In 1925, Route 6 in Pennsylvania was incorporated into a highway system that would connect the United States from coast to coast. Names US Route 6, the road stretched from Cape Cod, Massachusetts to Long Beach, California. It became one of America's first transcontinental highways. Today the road remains one of the longest highways in the nation."

#### **4.C. Tourism to Corning & Other Regional Attractions**

Only 30 miles north on Route 6 is the New York border and the **Corning Museum of Glass**. The attraction serves as a museum, a demonstration studio, retail store, educational center, and classroom. In 2006,

- Audio tours were introduced at the Studio, celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with special glass workshop. Studio offered 57 intensive summer and winter classes, 56 weekend and one-day workshops, and nine semester-length courses.
- Education Department sponsored weekly story hour for 5-10 year olds, and another program introduced 8-12 year olds to scientific applications of glass, and a hands-on experience to glassworking for 10 -18 year olds.
- Walk-in workshops generated an 18% increase in revenue; 22% of the 41,000 visitors made glass in the Workshop.
- The marketing department introduced a Kids Free! initiative. The new "Free to Rediscover" (free admission for repeat customers) program attracted 8,050 people.

In Northern Pennsylvania, **Wellsboro** is the first town incorporated as a borough in Tioga County. With more than 3,300 residents, Wellsboro is located approximately 30 miles west of Mansfield on Route 6. The historic town boasts stately homes with tree-lined streets; gas lampposts line the main boulevard and boutique retail. Wellsboro offers a self-guided walking tour through its 600-property historic district. Within a few minutes drive of downtown are an abundance of recreational activities and attractions including **Tioga State Forest, Leonard Harriston State Park, and Colton Point State Park**. The **Pine Creek Gorge**, coined as the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon, is a glacially carved canyon beginning just south of Ansonia, along US 6 and continuing south for about 47 miles. At its deepest point, Pine Creek Gorge is 1450 feet deep and nearly one mile wide.

## **V. Marketing**

The Tioga County Visitors Bureau currently coordinates marketing for Wellsboro, Mansfield and area attractions. Because of easy access (only a few hours by auto), key origin markets for visitors include Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York City, Washington D.C., Baltimore, Rochester, Buffalo and Toronto, Canada. The Bureau was the first in the state to work cooperatively with local state parks in order to offer visitor packages that feature a state park naturalist as the group's personal guide. The bureau and local chamber of commerce do their own promotion via traditional strategies (including website [www.visittiogapa.com](http://www.visittiogapa.com), print materials and telemarketing), but also market as part of the overall PA Wilds brand.

### **5.A Target Markets**

Two target audiences are necessary for Canoe Camp to realize its full potential. As stated earlier in this document, **local residents** (within a 50-mile radius of the complex) are vital to sustainability. Not only is this audience a potential repeat customer that affords greater return on investment through multiple usage of the complex throughout the year, the local resident also serves as a great ambassador and knowledge-broker for visitors, friends and relatives. Cultivating the local customer as a frequent user and champion is a major goal for the complex. Who is this local audience?

- *Hobbyists & Professional Artists: Basket makers, writers, musicians, quilters, wood workers, folk artists*
- *Residents interested in educational programming, evening and weekend events*
- *Residents that want to learn how to make something and take it home*
- *Residents interested in buying locally made items (for personal use or for gifts)*
- *Students wanting to expand skills, buy supplies*

Also important to Canoe Camp is its **external audience**, a person traveling to Mansfield from a 300-mile radius (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to Elmira, New York.) The core audience of any craft school is students for classes and training because of the income generation opportunity:

- *Visitors that need housing for one-week teaching studio*
- *Corning visitors interested in adding a discipline (wood, fiber, metal) to their glass experience*
- *Group tours interested in a scheduled class or program*
- *Regional meetings that need a desirable, attractive space*

These audiences encompass five major markets:

- **Educational travelers:** Interested in life-long learning, enrichment. The average age of students at Haywood Community College in Western North Carolina is 29 years old. Most are professionals with a previous degree.

- **Seniors and Group Tours:** Interested in added value activities that focus on a particular theme or interest (garden, nature, craft, local history) with opportunity for lecture, seminar, plus shopping and touring/exhibition or classroom learning. This market includes Elder Hostel and other social, military, religious, and fraternal groups (garden clubs, bank clubs, bicycle clubs, family reunions, etc.)
- **Cultural heritage travelers :** Older, more affluent travelers interested in experiential visits, meeting local experts and engaging in hands-on activities
- **Outdoor Recreation/Nature-based Travelers :** interested in educational programs, hands on learning, rainy day events, evening events
- **Lifelong Learners :**

These profiles provide the basis for developing a comprehensive marketing strategy to attract and sell to these target audiences, as programming is available. See the Appendix for a detailed profile of these markets.

In addition, Canoe Camp should also reach out to leisure visitors who may be traveling to the region for other motivations, including but not limited to:

- *Visitors that want to learn how to make something and take home the sample*
- *Visitors to Route 6 and Route 15 Artisan Trails*
- *Visitors engaging in a recreational or other leisure visit in the region-PA Wilds, PA Grand Canyon, Little League Hall of Fame*
- *Mansfield University students, alumni, and parents of students*
- *Visiting friends and family in the area*

## **5.B Competitive Analysis & Research**

As part of the research phase to understand the critical components of successful and sustainable craft schools, Meritage Consulting searched for comparable examples to review and reference. These learnings, generated through secondary research and personal interviews, offer an in-depth analysis of five craft schools located in the Appalachian region of the United States:

1. Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts – Gatlinburg, Tennessee
2. Berea College Crafts & The Log House Craft Gallery – Berea, Kentucky
3. Kentucky School of Craft – Hindman, Kentucky
4. Jacksonville Center for the Arts – Floyd, Virginia
5. John C. Campbell Folk School – Brasstown, North Carolina

## *Business Plan: Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Educational Center*

These schools represent concepts from the beginning of the Craft Movement in the late 1800's and early 1900's to current day approaches for training and teaching craft. These schools were also selected because of their connections to other institutions of education and for involvement in their respective community. The research illustrated “good and bad practices” based on concrete experience and ideas, elements and approaches that can be considered in the development of a new school of craft.

Meritage Consulting also compiled an overview of five non-degree craft schools/centers and two major retail centers of craft – Tamarack in Beckley, West Virginia, and The Folk Art Center in Asheville, North Carolina – to assess potential alternatives for Mansfield. The analysis report provided in the Appendix addresses best practices, lessons learned, current changes in the craft field, and practical advice for starting and managing a school of craft from the leaders of these institutions.

Reviewing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of existing craft schools, retail and learning centers around the country provided great insight into the key components for the Mansfield facility. Based on the initial research, the following conclusions were made:

- Start small and stay focused on core competencies, quality deliverables
- Provide enough of a critical mass and mix for viability: housing, programs, events, exhibits, retail
- Secure diverse funding sources for both development and management, programming and maintenance
- Community support, leadership, and investment is vital to launch and sustain the complex

Other primary research was conducted as part of the discovery phase including:

- a) personal telephone interviews with community leaders, artists and business owners;
- b) facilitated meetings and discussion groups to propose and prioritize issues, opportunities, and desired contributions for the craft center to Mansfield;
- c) meeting with Mansfield University students to get input and ideas on potential uses, needs for craft center
- d) electronic survey distributed to community residents, artists and other stakeholders; and
- e) article and survey in Northern Tier Cultural Alliance newsletter.

For a detailed recap of the primary research and analysis, see the Appendix.

## **5.C Competitive Position**

In order for Canoe Camp to have a unique and prominent place in the market, attracting both local residents and out-of-town visitors to its complex for training and related events, staying focused on its nature-based craft is essential.

***Canoe Camp's Unique Selling Proposition: Tie Outdoors to Craft through Wood-based Design & Products***

Programming and inventory must center on the development of products and services that complement and/or contribute to the wood theme. For instance,

- Name association: canoes, paddles; a PA “Wilds” Style design
- Nature-based activities, experiences: birdhouses, walking sticks, picnic baskets
- Youth sports equipment: skateboards, snowboards
- Fishing, hunting accessories: decoys, bird calls
- Outdoor furniture: patio, garden, picnic tables, fences, foot bridges
- Future phases: eco-friendly furniture and house construction

In addition, the physical buildings and facilities associated with the complex must be designed and constructed using green architecture, products and practices. LEED<sup>2</sup> certification and innovative environmental policies must be considered and included as part of the complex’s competitive advantage.

## **5.D Marketing Strategies**

Marketing is vital to keep residents informed, escalate community and regional interest, and demonstrate progress. Two marketing strategies are required to support the project creation, development, and launch:

- An internal marketing strategy provides consistent and constant messaging for key stakeholders to report performance on financial and programmatic goals, share media news, detail schedule of activities, and highlight successes. The internal audience includes all donors, investors, contractors, businesses, agencies, organizations and institutions guiding or engaged in the development and delivery of products and services associated with Canoe Camp, including the initial partners charged with creation and development of Canoe Camp (the Alliance, Trask family, Mansfield township).
- An external strategy is designed to cultivate support from media, residents, community and civic leaders, state agencies and other potential target audiences that will generate support of Canoe Camp. These entities are also potential customers or partners for Canoe Camp, and so early engagement is important.

The marketing approach for Canoe Camp must extend beyond the traditional mix of product, price, place (distribution), and promotion. For new businesses, especially ones focusing on tourism as an outcome, the marketing strategy must include a more complex and sequenced blend of public relations, advertising, promotions, collateral/ graphic materials (including website, printed brochures and other branded information for distribution), and research.

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<sup>2</sup> Leed: Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design. Source: US Green Building Council, [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

Detailed marketing plans must be developed and implemented for each Canoe Camp phase. An outline of the key strategies and deliverables is presented as a framework for consideration, enhancement, and preliminary budgeting.

### **5.D.i Pre-Development**

A targeted campaign to raise awareness and generate funding for Canoe Camp is vital to moving forward with the project. The campaign will require visual aids (for signs, presentations, press kit, renderings) and also communication tools (website, newsletter, talking points) that can delivery messages consistently and constantly to target audiences and partners as part of the pre-development phase. One of the primary responsibilities of the staff will be pro-actively informing publics, both internal and external, about Canoe Camp and its development.

### **5.D.ii Community Connector**

Liaising with local and regional community leaders will garner support and ensure Canoe Camp efforts complement other township and area developments, business goals, infrastructure improvements, and public projects. Establishing a speakers bureau, representing Canoe Camp on various committees and local task forces, meeting with university and business leaders, presenting to town council and working with area development officers are just a few responsibilities associated with the internal marketing strategy for Canoe Camp (during all phases.) As the project advances, media interviews and public meetings/hearings will be required to ensure accurate and pro-active community engagement.

### **5.D.iii Craft Attraction**

A key marketing strategy is to position Canoe Camp as a cultural attraction and leader in the arts community. Initially, this strategy will focus on gaining support from local and regional audiences – artists, gallery and retail shop owners, other museums and cultural attractions – to demonstrate Canoe Camp’s potential and positive impact. Marketing Canoe Camp as a craft attraction is necessary to lure residential customers and cultural travelers interested in handmade objects and craft-related programming.

### **5.D.iv Regional Destination**

Creating marketing alliances with local, regional, and state tourism agencies is required to help position Canoe Camp as a regional destination experience. Supporting and engaging in existing tourism promotion agency marketing efforts will leverage resources further and ensure a more consistent approach to reaching targeted audiences. A major responsibility for staff will include building

*Business Plan: Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Educational Center*

relationships with the Pennsylvania Tourism Office, the Route 6 Association, the Pennsylvania Wilds Marketing Corporation, local Tourism Promotion Agencies (Tioga County Visitors Bureau), the Appalachian Regional Commission, and other entities engaged in marketing the region, including heritage areas and cultural institutions. Providing the appropriate visitor services is part of Canoe Camp's responsibility as a tourist attraction.

## **VI. Management & Operations**

### **Management**

Canoe Camp will be operated as a 501c3 entity. The programmatic and cultural product offerings at Canoe Camp will be developed and managed by the Northern Tier Cultural Alliance (Alliance), a functioning non-profit organization registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or its subsidiary. The Alliance will occupy office space at Canoe Camp, oversee all programming (including special events and craft school curriculum/training), and manage the retail artisan store. If a separate non-profit entity is formed, the Alliance will retain representation on the Canoe Camp board of directors and benefit from the initial investment for creation, development and management of the facility and cultural programming.

#### ***The Northern Tier Cultural Alliance***

*The Northern Tier Cultural Alliance (NTCA) was formed in 1995 by volunteers who had been engaged in a cultural inventory of the area as part of a 1992 Pennsylvania Heritage Commission project. Even as representatives of local cultural and heritage organizations themselves, they had been overwhelmed with the wonderful, largely unsung artistry and heritage of the region. They shaped a mission of educating the public about cultural traditions, history and art of the Pennsylvania Northern Tier and to assist tradition bearers and traditional artists in the preservation of their work.*

*The Center for Rural Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts joined with Mansfield University and NTCA in the establishment of a Center for Arts and Folklife. NTCA became financially and legally independent of the University with 501(c)3 tax exempt status in February 2001. While the University still provides office space as well as human support to the organization, in 2004, NTCA moved its main office operations to the former Lehigh Valley Freight Station in Towanda. Now known as the Washington Street Station, the new location offers a spectacular view of the Susquehanna River and access to other regional arts and cultural organizations.*

*NTCA serves as one of 5 Regional Folk Arts Support Centers. The Institute for Cultural Partnerships and PA Council on the Arts partnered to "develop a statewide Folk Arts Infrastructure Initiative that seeks to strengthen awareness and understanding, as well as participation in, traditional arts across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania." In this role, NTCA engages in fieldwork, provides technical assistance, and develops programming and grant opportunities for traditional artists and organizations. In support of its mission, NTCA now offers support to artists and organizations from nine northern counties: Bradford, Cameron, Clinton, Lycoming, Potter, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming.*

## **Operations**

Purchase of a tract of land, presently owned by the Trask family, is required to adapt or construct buildings for the physical complex. The proposed tract of land shall be purchased as a long-term agreement, with terms to be determined by the two parties. (A site rendering is attached for reference in the Appendix.) Land development rights will be held on file with the county to protect ownership and long-term agreements against potential default or future sale. If the Alliance is unable to continue operating as an organization or elects to sever ties to Canoe Camp, the land and existing facilities (including gardens, buildings, equipment, and other assets original to the grounds) revert back to the Trask family.

The complex will be managed by the Alliance, with some operations – such as restaurant, lodging, and maintenance – leased through a special licensing agreement to one or more private for-profit business or third party. The Trask family has first right of refusal on any such licensed operation. All businesses and tenants must meet the terms and conditions set forth by the Alliance to maintain the integrity of the complex and ensure the continuity of programming, marketing, and delivery of products and services. The Alliance may request or require compensation from any for-profit partner as part of the licensing agreement.

### **6.A. Governance**

Governance for Canoe Camp will be provided initially through the Alliance. A separate development board will be appointed for oversight through the development/pre-construction phase, with representatives selected by the Alliance's current executive committee to include at least one representative from the following agencies or groups: artist community, Mansfield township, Mansfield business community, development agency, Mansfield University, tourism industry, Pennsylvania Wilds, Route 6 Association, and Lumber Heritage Area. The current Craft Development & Marketing Initiative committee should be considered as the charter members of the development board.

The executive director will assume a major portion of the responsibilities associated with the development/pre-construction phase (including fundraising, property acquisition, and other binding arrangements.) Additional support staff or contractors will be hired as funds become available and activities warrant. When appropriate (in Phase II), a separate non-profit organization will be established to separate the fiscal and administrative responsibilities from the Alliance and allow Canoe Camp to operate as a stand-alone entity. Staff will be employed to carry out the specific duties associated with programming and operations of the educational facility.

In recognition of its initial leadership, the Alliance will receive benefit from its founding of Canoe Camp. The Alliance executive director will permanently serve as an ex-officio member of the Canoe Camp board (of the new organization, if created) and the

Alliance Chairman will hold a voting position on the Canoe Camp board of directors. The Alliance will retain cultural oversight for the first 15 years of Canoe Camp’s development and operation (through Phase IV) to ensure program integrity.

## **6.B. Relation to Stakeholders**

Official meetings and reports, conducted on a predetermined schedule (quarterly), are necessary to ensure adequate and pro-active communication with key stakeholders. A letter of commitment and understanding shall be prepared and signed between each stakeholder group and the Canoe Camp Development Board (administered initially by the Alliance) to outline specific roles and responsibilities along with key deliverables or outcomes expected from each party as part of the relationship.

### **Who is a Canoe Camp stakeholder?**

A person, group, organization, business, agency or system that affects or can be affected by achievement (development and operation) of Canoe Camp, but is not directly involved with its day-to-day activities. Example: Customers, Mansfield residents, Alliance employees and board members, artists, partners, contractors, suppliers, related people or located near by.

### **6.B.i Northern Tier Cultural Alliance**

The Alliance will relocate its headquarters to Mansfield to demonstrate their commitment to this project and the opportunity for advancing the organization’s mission. As the lead agency responsible for creation and oversight of the Craft & Cultural Education Center, the Alliance will also seek a commitment of financial support for \$50,000 per year for the first three to five years to cover administration costs associated with the project’s fundraising and planning efforts. Currently the Executive Director position is a split position and is funded through contracts with two other organizations at a rate of: 40% NTCA; 40% PA Rt. 6 Heritage Corporation; and 20% Bradford County Regional Arts Council. (BCRAC). The Alliance Board of Directors has agreed to forgo the Rt. 6 and BCRAC contracts, but needs another funding source to replace lost revenue plus an additional amount for a part-time staff person. To help stimulate advancement of the project and garner fiscal support, the Alliance will establish partnerships and enter long-term agreements with other entities including the University of Mansfield, township, the Pennsylvania Wilds, Food Routes Network and the Endless Mountains Region.

### **6.B.ii Mansfield University**

As the primary educational institution in the township, and source of potential students and faculty, Mansfield University is a major stakeholder for Canoe Camp. Four key ways that Mansfield University can demonstrate support for Canoe Camp include:

- Commitment for facility rental as satellite training center and meeting site
- Commitment for entrepreneurial training
- Commitment as location for student exhibitions
- Other levels of commitment, collaboration (guest speakers, lecturers, etc.)

### **6.B.iii Food Routes Network**

A current Alliance partner, the Food Routes Network is a natural tenant for the Canoe Camp complex. Commitment for office space is one way that Food Routes can formalize its support of Canoe Camp. With relocation of its headquarters to Canoe Camp, the Food Routes Network helps build a regional hub for cultural heritage institutions to operate and organize area and national activities.

### **6.B.iv PA Wilds**

The Pennsylvania Wilds Marketing Initiative was formed in 2003, with Cabinet-level leadership by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), as a program envisioned to encourage growth of tourism in north-central Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Wilds Tourism Marketing Corporation was established in December 2004 as a non-profit organization comprised of local Tourism Promotion Agencies (TPAs). The Pennsylvania Wilds Artisan Development Network was formed in the summer of 2006 to capitalize on the production and sale of quality crafts and arts, particularly those made from world-famous Pennsylvania hardwoods. The network is attempting to identify all the local producers of arts and crafts in the region and develop recommendations to promote their products and business expansion. Already, over 300 artisans in all artistic disciplines across the Pennsylvania Wilds have been identified.

The Alliance will ask the Pennsylvania Wilds and its related affiliates to demonstrate their support for Canoe Camp in the following ways:

- Commitment for office space or facility rental
- Commitment to market Canoe Camp as part of its arts initiative

### **6.B.v Other Stakeholders**

*Business Plan: Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Educational Center*

Several other institutions and agencies represent potential Canoe Camp stakeholders. These entities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Lumber Heritage Region.** Designated in 2001, LHR is the largest of the state's 12 heritage areas with 15 counties and works collaboratively with stakeholders in the region to produce quality products and to enhance existing assets that will enrich the visitor's experience and impact the quality of life of its local citizenry. In addition to its interpretive work, LHR is working to enhance the economic development of the region. One opportunity for such impact is the completion of a strategic plan that outlines strategies to build on the wood industries' existing assets and to create partnerships that will grow demand for products produced from Pennsylvania hardwoods.
  
- **Route 6 Association and Route 6 Heritage Corporation.** The PA Route 6 Heritage Corporation is part of the Pennsylvania Heritage Areas Program. Each Heritage Park highlights sites, people, traditions and events special to the region to give visitors a taste of what Pennsylvania's heritage is all about. The PA Route 6 Heritage Corporation is unique because it connects four heritage regions including: The Oil Heritage Region, The Lumber Heritage Region, The Endless Mountains Heritage Region, and the Lackawanna Valley Heritage Region. Pennsylvania Route 6 encompasses eleven counties and stretches over 400 miles across Northern Pennsylvania, passing through each county seat and countless quaint towns and villages along the way. In 1925, Route 6 in Pennsylvania was incorporated into a highway system that connects the US from coast to coast. It runs from Cape Cod, Massachusetts to Long Beach, California and is still one of the nation's longest highways.
  
- State Agencies including the **Pennsylvania Tourism Office**, the **Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**, and the **Pennsylvania Council of the Arts**. All three of these agencies have craft-related programs or initiatives that can stimulate investment or marketing for Canoe Camp.
  
- The **Endless Mountain Heritage Region (EMHR)** encompasses four counties – Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, and Wyoming – in Northeastern Pennsylvania spanning 2,821 square miles. Since its formation in 1998, EMHR grants have funded over 70 projects with partner organizations and municipalities including renovated or restored historic buildings and improved museum exhibits. Grants are also awarded to improve organizational development and to identify, plan and prioritize future projects. Selected projects are oriented to increasing residents' quality of life and visitor experiences and are measured against more than 100 goals in EMHR's Management Action Plan.

These stakeholders will be tapped by the Alliance to make the following commitments:

- Market Canoe Camp, both in its development/pre-construction phase and during operation to members as a way to cultivate customers

- Use the facility for meeting rental, programming
- Provide technical and financial assistance, and other support, as necessary and appropriate

## **6.C. Private Sector Investment & Development**

Initial research led Meritage Consulting to recommend a comprehensive craft complex developed in three phases: 1) planning, 2) construction of initial facilities; 3) expansion of school to full operation for three disciplines of training. The first phase focused initially on fundraising and planning the complex over a two-year period. This phase was followed by construction and operation of the initial wood and fiber facilities, plus retail and exhibition space along with food and lodging. Time frame for completion of the second phase was projected at an additional 5-7 years. The third phase, where the complex is fully staffed and offering 10-month programming in three mediums, plus additional programming and events. This phase was considered a long-term strategy (8-15 years) depending on the success of Phase II and potential growth in the market.

Given recent economic downturns and uncertain financial investments for the Craft & Cultural Education Center, Meritage Consulting has revised the original development strategy and preliminary schedule to maximize use of facilities by local customers and jumpstart the concept through private ownership and partnership roles. This plan now focuses on launching the complex initially with mediums that require lower investment requirements for start-up – basket weaving, quilting, textiles, heritage gardens – and yet still contribute to the nature-based focus and stay true to the region’s craft heritage. The concept will also look at other partners that can be tapped to provide revenue as potential tenants or users of the facility. Satellite education centers or offices can be provided for PA Wilds, Mansfield University, Buy Fresh/Buy Local FoodRoutes Network, along with a permanent home for the Northern Tier Cultural Alliance.

### **Private Sector Investment & Development**

- The Trask family offers track of land for sale (parcel up to 60 acres<sup>3</sup>) on long-term basis (20 year sale) for complex facilities including conversion of existing outbuildings (barn, silo, etc.)
- The Trask family invests in engineering/ architectural services, environmental impact study as necessary to move concept and business plan forward. The financial investment will be scheduled to serve as part of the local match for Alliance fundraising efforts (grants, contributions)
- The Trask family entertains rights for developing and managing food service (restaurant/ and/or catering operation), lodging (for residents, faculty), and retail store

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<sup>3</sup> The exact size of the desired track is dependent on the final schematic and proposed scale of structures. This information will be confirmed in the business plan.

*Business Plan: Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Educational Center*

- Other small businesses, entrepreneurs, and investors interested in project may be offered opportunities for operating or conducting services associated with the complex such as grounds and building maintenance; horticultural, landscape and architectural design; construction; marketing and graphic design; and other related products
- Commitment by foundations, private individuals, government grants, or other funding sources will be tapped to assist with either planning, development, operations, or programming.

**Proposed Schedule for Development**

<u>Development/ Pre-Construction Phase:</u> PLANNING & FUNDRAISING	2009-2010
<u>Phase 1:</u> LAUNCH OF CANOE CAMP COMPLEX	2010 – 2011
<u>Phase 2:</u> CRAFT TRAINING PROGRAM ENHANCED	2012 – 2015
<u>Phase 3:</u> WOOD SHOWCASED AT CANOE CAMP	2016 – 2020
<u>Phase 4:</u> YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING	2021 – 2025
<u>Phase 5:</u> FULLY FUNCTIONING CENTER	2026 –

**6.D. Staff**

Development/Pre-Construction (3 Years)

*Staffing:*

- *Northern Tier Cultural Alliance Executive Director*  
*(50% of time devoted to Craft & Cultural Education Center planning and fundraising.)*
- *Executive Director for Craft & Cultural Center*
- *Administrative Assistant*
- *Construction Site Manager (Year 3)*
- *Fundraising (on contract as needed, suggested to be made FT in Year 3)*
- *Marketing/Communications (on contract as needed, suggested to be made ½ time in Year 3)*

*Business Plan: Canoe Camp Craft & Cultural Educational Center*

*During the Development/Pre-Construction phase it will be critical to identify leadership and form committees. The staffing needs for this phase are reflected in the budget other than the contract funds. It will be necessary to raise those as needed.*

Phase I: LAUNCH OF CANOE CAMP COMPLEX (2 Years)

*Staffing additions:*

- *Full Time Retail Manager (Year 5)*
- *FT Program Director/Event Coordinator (Year 5)*

*Staffing additions for Years 4 and 5 are also reflected in the budget, and exist on top of staff added in the Development/Pre-Construction Phase.*

Phase II: CRAFT TRAINING PROGRAM ENHANCED (5 Years)

*Staffing additions:*

- *1 Faculty Member (Fiber)*
- *FT Maintenance*
- *FT Housekeeping*

Phase III: WOOD SHOWCASES AT CANOE CAMP (5 Years)

*Staffing additions:*

- *1 Faculty Member (Wood)*

Phase IV: CANOE CAMP EXPANDS TO YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING (5 Years)

*Staffing additions:*

- *1 Faculty Member (Metal)*

Phase V: FULLY FUNCTIONING CRAFT & CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER

- *Staffing maintained at full level; additional contract and artisan/ expert teachers added as class demand warrants. Other personnel needs may be identified throughout the growth and management of the complex.*

## **6.E. Members, Volunteers & Other Personnel**

The artisan community, Alliance members, students and faculty at Mansfield University, plus other possible experts and residents, will be tapped to help with the operation and specific tasks of Canoe Camp. As required, staff will develop and coordinate member activities, docent programming with training, and other consulting relationships. Certain jobs may be more appropriate for contract personnel rather than full-time and/or permanent staff positions. The advisory board and leadership team will determine these resource needs.

## **6.F. Regulatory Issues & Risk**

The Alliance agrees to meet and adhere to all regulations associated with land ownership, administrative requirements set forth by funding agencies, and abide by all policies and procedures required for non-profit associations in good standing with federal government. In addition, the Alliance will secure necessary permits, hire appropriate consultants, or conduct studies necessary to satisfy the due diligence required for environmental assessments and analysis.

The Alliance will also agree to dedicate the financial and human resources required to create and launch the Canoe Camp project, entering into sale agreements and other binding contracts for purchase of assets and related services with full payment due upon a pre-determined schedule. The Alliance will seek lines of credit or provide other sources of income to cover the fees required to develop Canoe Camp in its Pre-Construction Phase (through 2010), or until such time that sufficient dedicated funds can be raised to offset the initial investment. If the Alliance is unable or unwilling to continue with the Canoe Camp project after the conclusion of either the Pre-Construction Phase or Phase I (through 2011), and defaults on any contract or purchase, the assets will revert to the original owner and the Alliance will assume all legal responsibilities and other potential liability associated with transfer or restitution.

## **6.G. Reporting**

The Alliance will conduct the appropriate financial and governmental reporting required for Canoe Camp. Annual audits conducted by independent authority or agent will be submitted as part of the non-profit organization's fiduciary responsibility. Additional jurisprudence and other systems will be put into place to maintain accurate reporting and records for the development and management of Canoe Camp.

## 6.H. Financials

The financial investment required to plan, create, launch, enhance, and sustain Canoe Camp – as outlined in this plan – will vary depending on the necessary land acquisition and development costs, construction or rehabilitation of facilities and purchase of equipment. It will also fluctuate depending on market rates for customer programming and personnel costs. The financial projections outlined below are based on actual costs of similar proposed facilities constructed or operated by other craft schools, cultural centers, retail stores, or performance/event venues.

A detailed budget with specific revenue and expense categories by year and phase is included in the Appendix. Below is a pro forma outlining the viability of the project over the next 20 years, and investment/demand required to fulfill the programming goals outlined in this business plan.

	<b>Pre-Construction</b>	<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Phase II</b>	<b>Phase III</b>	<b>Phase IV</b>	<b>Phase V annually</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Revenues</b>							
Earned Income	113,000	318,600	394,000	1,930,000	2,162,000	418,000	5,335,600
Contributions	565,000	1,000,000	1,260,000	2,250,000	3,350,000	800,000	9,225,000
	678,000	1,318,600	1,654,000	4,180,000	5,512,000	1,218,000	14,395,600
<b>Expenses</b>							
Planning/Dev	490,000	120,000	120,000	300,000	300,000	60,000	1,390,000
Construction	1,037,500	110,000	55,000	877,500	370,000	1,135,000	3,585,000
Equipment	20,000	15,000		335,000	550,000		920,000
Products/Services Marketing	90,500	117,500	115,000	235,000	260,000	75,000	893,000
Operations/Staff	235,000	512,000	714,500	2,090,000	2,250,000	515,000	6,316,500
	1,869,000	874,500	1,004,500	3,837,500	3,730,000	1,785,000	14,324,500
	(1,191,000)	444,100	649,500	342,500	1,782,000	(567,000)	71,100

### **6.H.i Planning**

A projected initial investment of \$1,869,000 is required to transform the existing site into a craft and cultural center complex with revenue-generating programming. This investment only covers the public buildings; additional funds are necessary for the private operations (lodging, restaurant.) Grants and contributions from foundations and government agencies are the primary sources for funding, but there may be additional opportunities and strategies to obtain revenues. Alternative financing may be available through loans or tax credits for infrastructure improvements, construction of new properties or rehabilitation of existing structures. As mentioned in Section 3, local leadership is necessary to help direct the development efforts. A strategic plan will be necessary to define the specific donor list and solicitation schedule.

Initial investigation determined that foundation gifts are limited for the region. However, some potential sources for funding were identified. The potential funding institution or agency and corresponding opportunity by phase are outlined in the table below. Additional funding information can be found in the Appendix.

<b><u>Potential Funding Sources</u></b>	<b><u>Purpose</u></b>	<b><u>Phase</u></b>	<b><u>Partner</u></b>
<b>State Government:</b>			
PA DCED - Elm Street	EIS/EIA Study	PCD: Year one	
Local Municipal & Resource Program (LMRDP)	Architect	PCD: Year one	
Growing Green II Urban Development Program (UDP)	Permits Legal Fees	PCD: Year one All Phases	University Planning Depts.
Land Use Planning TA - Ready, Set, Succeed	General Planning & Development	PCD	
Infrastructure Dev. Program (IDP)	Infrastructure	PCD:	
Dept. on NRCD- Heritage Park Grants	Heritage Gardens	Phase I	Master Gardeners of America
Community Grants	Basket Garden	Phase I	Garden clubs of America

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PA Recreational Trails (PRTD)	Bike Path	Phase 2	Bicycling Associations
PA Greenways - (DCNR)	Bike Path	Phase 2	Bike and outdoor shops
PA Hardwoods Dev. Council	Wood Studios	Phase 3	American Woodturners Association
PA Council on The Arts	Staff	All Phases	
<b>Federal Government:</b>			
Appalachian Regional Commission	Gen Planning & Development	PCD	
	Infrastructure	All Phases	
	Staffing/Tech Assistance	All Phases	
Rural Housing & ECO Dev. (HUD)	Gen Planning & Development	PCD	
NEA - Challenge America (after 3-years)	Gen Planning & Development	PCD	
Re-development Assistance Capital Program (Office of Budget)	Construction; Infrastructure; Guest Lodging	PCD; Phase 3	
USDA-Rural Business Enterprise Grant	Craft Gardens		

**Foundations/Private Sector**

AMETEK Foundation	Craft Gardens
The Pennsylvania Fund	Community Gardens
Beneficia Foundation	Community Gardens
Earnst & Mildred Sweet Foundation	Craft Studio Equipment
Consolidated Natural Gas Co.	Furniture/ Office Equipment

**6.H.ii Construction**

Restoration of existing structures on the Trask Family Farm will help retain the historic integrity and ambiance of the site. Compatible infill will help maintain the rural setting, with new buildings constructed to appropriate density and height. All structures should be designed with “green” architecture, and constructed with environmentally sensitive and/or local materials. Canoe Camp’s design and construction has potential implications on funding and certainly on marketability; if the site can demonstrate cutting-edge environmental practices or design that reflects the nature-based focus of the school, it will help attract funders and customers.

**6.H.iii Operational Phases**

The current recession, projected budget short-falls in government and foundation endowments, and decrease in consumer spending, the original plan for developing Canoe Camp was extended. Therefore, the revenue generation from earned income sources will need to be supplemented by private and public contributions.

Canoe Camp’s annual operating budget fluctuates with each phase, depending on the level of development and staffing required to construct, service or provide the new products and programming. When Canoe Camp is fully functioning in Phase V, the annual budget is projected at around \$650,000.

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Revenue Generation Opportunities for Canoe Camp include the following areas:

- Product Sales – retail shop (Phase I-V), specialty merchandise (Phase III-V), Canoe Camp product line (Phase V), craft supplies (Phase I-V), specialty foods and products of tenants
- Facility Rental – wood storage, general meeting space, exhibition area
- Tourism – overnight lodging and restaurant will generate additional revenues through a proposed licensing agreement and percentage of net sales; additional tourism revenue will be generated through admissions for tours of specialty gardens
- Programming – craft classes, demonstrations, special lectures and other tours

Programming Revenue					
Phase	Medium/Type	Frequency	Number of Students	Fee PP	Total Revenue
1	Special lectures	varied	400	\$ 25	\$10,000
2	Fiber/basket (no overnight)	10 x year 1 20 x year 2	10 for each class	\$200	\$20,000 \$40,000
3	Wood (+ overnight)	17 weeks	10 each week	\$700	\$119,000 each year
	Wood (commuter)	17 weeks	5 each week	\$450	\$38,250 each year
4	Fiber + wood + lectures	25 weeks	30 per week	\$240 av	\$180,000 each year
5	Metal (no overnight)	27 days	15 for each class	\$200	\$81,000 each year
	Metal (+ overnight)	27 weeks	10 each week	\$550	\$148,500 each year
	Metal (commuter)	27 weeks	5 each week	\$400	\$54,000 each year
5	Fiber + wood + metal + textiles	35 weeks	50 per week	\$ 247 av	\$432,400 each year

### **6.I. Expanded Funding & Earned Income Sources**

Alternative and expanded funding strategies include the following:

- Tax incentives and credits for rehabilitation
- Venture capital or private investment for new construction, business units
- Other sources of revenue, such as sponsorships or named facilities (for special gifts)

To demonstrate fiscal responsibility, Canoe Camp will operate under the premise of “pay as you go” so that each phase will only be developed when resources are available and the market warrants expansion. To underscore this fiscal management philosophy:

- Class income supports instructor costs, supplies
- Students pay for housing, shop, food (\$1500 per two weeks at Penland)

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- Canoe Camp will charge for tours (minimum \$2.50 - \$5) of its facility, with additional fees for special exhibits or other events.
- Well-planned facilities will use lessons learned from other schools to help plan for every use and economical operation. As demonstrated at Arrowmont, the creative design of a catwalk above studios (like Arrowmont wood shop, \$2 million facility) helps cut down on cost for guides.