

Friends of Blackwater is exploring the creation of a National Historic Trail that would parallel Henry Gassaway Davis's West Virginia Central & Pittsburg Railroad, following the North Branch of the Potomac and Blackwater Rivers and stretching from Cumberland to Elkins. The proposed trail is 107 miles long and would highlight the unique histories of the towns and historic sites along the rail corridor.





1866	1880	1884	1886-1889	1900	1902-1905
<b>Origin of Railroad</b>	<b>New Name, Construction Begins</b>	<b>Mines Open</b>	<b>Davis Coal &amp; Coke Co. Formed</b>	<b>Towns Continue to Grow</b>	<b>Consolidation</b>
Davis is granted a charter to incorporate Potomac & Piedmont Coal and Railroad Company	The railroad was rechartered as West Virginia Central & Pittsburg Railroad. Construction of railroad from Cumberland to Elkins begins	The railroad reaches Thomas. Coal mines owned by the WVC&P open along the road.	In 1886, Davis purchases mines and equipment from railway. In 1889, the company reorganizes into the Davis Coal & Coke Co. The railroad reaches Elkins.	Rapid growth followed the railroad. Davis, a lumber town, grows from a population of 909 in 1889 to 2,391 in 1900.	In 1902, WVC&P RR is purchased by Fuller Syndicate. In 1905, it officially becomes part of the Western Maryland Railroad.
					



## West Virginia Central & Pittsburg RR Overview

The origins of the WVC&P began in 1866 when Henry Gassaway Davis, while serving in the WV House of Delegates, was granted a charter by the West Virginia legislature to incorporate the Potomac and Piedmont Coal and Railroad Company. The charter granted the company the right to construct a railroad from any point on the B&O line along the North Branch of the Potomac or any of its tributaries to any lands owned by the company in Mineral, Grant, Tucker, and Greenbrier Counties. In addition to the right to access this large geographical area, the legislature also established a process for the company to condemn private land for railroad use.

In 1880, the WVC&P RR was chartered under the former Potomac & Piedmont RR Company. This same year, construction began to extend from the B&O RR line at Cumberland, Maryland to Elkins, WV

In 1884, the road was completed to Thomas, WV and the coal mines opened by the WVC&P opened along the road.

In 1886, the H.G. Davis & Co. purchased the mine and equipment from the railway. In 1889, the company reorganized into the Davis Coal & Coke Co. Coketon was quickly developed as the company town and the nearby town of Thomas grew as a hub for shopping, commerce, and entertainment.

1889- The railroad reaches the town of Elkins, which became an important railroad hub with branch lines extending into Huttonsville, Belington, and Bemis.

1902- WVC&P was drawn into the tide of consolidation and was purchased by a group of investors called the Fuller Syndicate, led by George Gould, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and John D. Rockefeller among others.

1905- The WVC&P and several other railroads purchased by the Fuller Syndicate were officially united under the Western Maryland Railroad company name.

## Garrett/Allegany Counties



### Historic Overview:

- Cumberland was an important fort in the French/Indian War (1754-1763) and was the eastern terminus of the national road
- Garrett County is rural and the location of several railroad/coal towns along historic trail



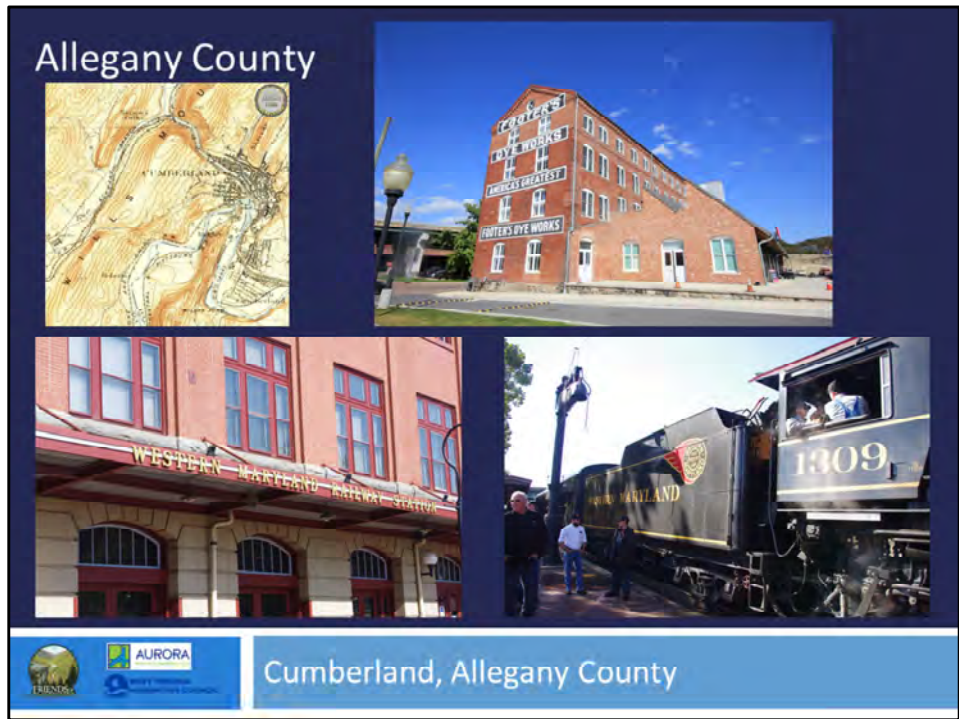
Kitzmiller Flood, 1924



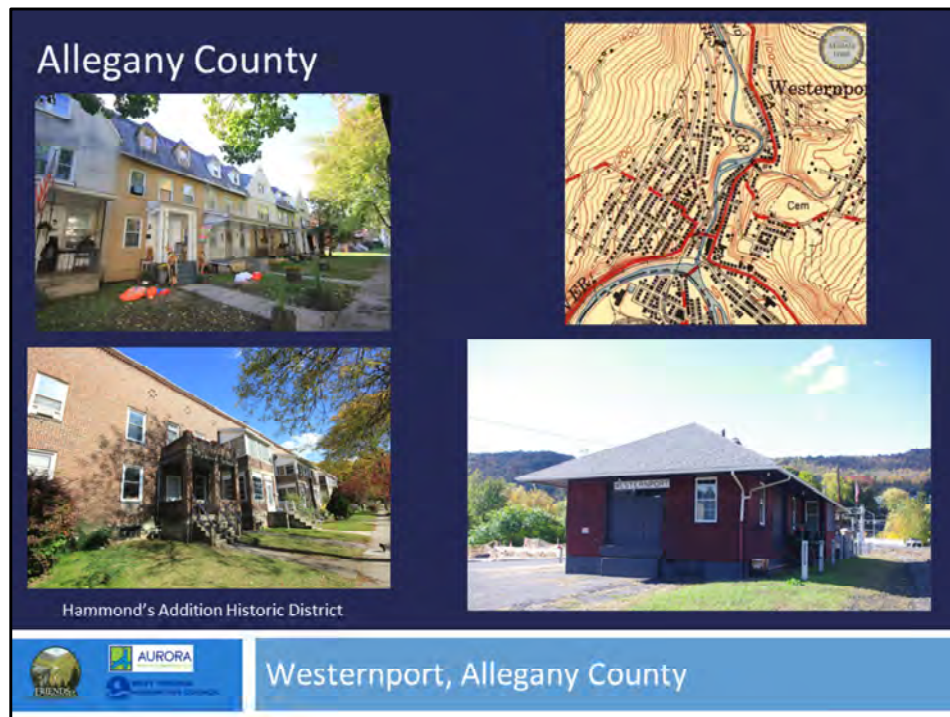
History of Garrett/Allegany Counties

Garrett County is Maryland's western most county and is fairly rural. Its county seat is Oakland, and the railroads. Allegany County is much more industrial with Cumberland as the county seat. Fort Cumberland was an important British post in the French and Indian War (1754-1763). In 1806 Cumberland was chosen as the eastern terminus of the National Road, transforming the city into an important point between resources in the West and cities on the East.





The B&O railroad, which broke ground in Baltimore in 1827 reached Cumberland in 1842 as the first railroad to cross the Appalachians. Cumberland quickly became a transportation hub, where natural resources from the west like, coal, iron, and limestone traveled by rail to cities in the East. B&O's presence in Cumberland facilitated the development of other railroads like the West Virginia Central & Pittsburg, as it became a starting point for new routes. By the 1890s, there were five railroads in Cumberland employing 2000 workers.



Westernport is located on the southern end of the George's Creek coal region and flatboats carried coal down the Potomac from Westernport as early as 1810. The railroad B&O reached Piedmont in 1851, and

Westernport is located on the southern end of the George's Creek Coal Region and sits adjacent to the West Virginia town of Piedmont. As early as 1810, flatboars carried coal from Westernport down the Potomac. The town began to grow significantly beginning in 1851, when the B&O railroad reached Piedmont. The Cumberland & Pennsylvania railroad established shops in Westernport in the 1860s and 1870s. Thomas Hammond, a land speculator from Frederick Maryland, realized the need for new building lots and in 1864 he laid out Hammond's Addition. Hammond's Addition is now a historic district and includes 320 buildings.



This building technically lies in Preston County, but is a stones throw away from Maryland and is part of the Kempton community. The Buxton & Landstreet Company was incorporated in 1889 as an independent business to supply the needs of Davis Coal & Coke Company towns and quickly established a store in Kempton after the opening of the mine. By 1921, Buxton & Landstreet Company operated in nine towns including Davis, Thomas, Bayard, and Elk Garden and was considered to be at the front rank of mercantile companies in West Virginia. Living in an isolated community that didn't have any road access until 1928, Kempton miners and their families relied heavily on the resources of Buxton & Landstreet Company to survive. The company store, no longer extant, was constructed near this warehouse building on the West Virginia side of Kempton as a workaround for Maryland laws prohibiting company stores. Though Buxton & Landstreet Co. was an independent company from Davis Coal & Coke. Co.,, the store's principals were officers of the coal company and the store traded in script known as "Kempton chinky-tink" for meat, vegetables, fruit, furniture, clothes, as well as dynamite and blasting equipment. Kempton thrived as long as the mine produced, but its resources were not limitless. To the suprise of miners and their families, on April 15, 1950, the Davis Coal & Coke Company closed Mine No. 42 and the Buxton & Landstreet Company store ceased operations.



## Garrett County



These five houses in Shallmar were built by the Wolf Den Coal Co., which ended operation in March 1918.

Photo from "Ghost Towns of the Upper Potomac," compiled by Garrett County Historical Society.

©2014 Garrett County Historical Society



The building, Company Store, was the center of Shallmar's coal mining town. It was built in 1917, and was the only building in the town.

Photo from "Ghost Towns of the Upper Potomac," compiled by Garrett County Historical Society.




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Shallmar, Garrett County


Shallmar was a small coal mining town in Garrett County, located along the Upper Potomac River. Coal mining was the town's only industry, and started in 1917 with the Shallmar Mining Co. before the Wolf Den Mining Co. took over in 1929. At its peak, 90 miners worked in Shallman. The mine closed in 1948. The company store extended credit to the 53 families living in the town, but they were maxed by Fall and starving. Organizations across the East Coast heard about Shallmar's plight and sent help as long as they could, but the town never recovered.

# Mineral County

**Historic Overview:**

- 1700s-early 1800s: agricultural land/huntingground
- B&O reaches Keyser in 1842 and Piedmont in 1852. Towns begin to grow
- Piedmont becomes rr hub for B&O, C&P, WVC&P RR



## History of Mineral County

In the 1700s and 1800s, what is now Mineral County was scarcely populated, and used as hunting grounds by native groups and as agricultural land. The population of the county only began to significantly grow with the arrival of the B&O railroad to Keyser in 1842, and Piedmont in 1852. Piedmont eventually became a large railroad intersection, with the B&O, C&P and WVC&P RR all building rail through the town. In 1852, the B&O built a large freight house and depot and set up an expansive system of machine shops and plants, eventually encompassing over half of a square mile, where Henry Gassaway Davis worked as station agent. In the 1880s, the West Virginia Central & Pittsburg Railroad branched off of the B&O in Piedmont, starting its long trek to Elkins, and bringing another profitable business to the area. Today, Keyser remains the county hub, but like other towns in the area: Piedmont, Elk Garden, and Ridgeley, it struggles with a dwindling population because of the railroad.

# Mineral County



Historic Map Showing RR Routes & Coal Basin

# Mineral County



WEST VIRGINIA PULP & PAPER MILLS, PIEDMONT, W. VA.



Elk Garden Depot



Piedmont



Historic Photos

## Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Depot



Piedmont, Mineral County

The B&O Railroad was chartered in Baltimore in 1827 and completed to Cumberland by 1842. Ten years later, the railroad extended its mainline through Piedmont and set up an expansive system of machine shops and plants with the idea that it would, in the future, attempt to cross the mountains into Wheeling and the West. B&O's investment in Piedmont stimulated growth of the town, and by 1855 Piedmont had more than 150 buildings and 1200 people. In 1856, the town chartered and continued to grow, reaching a population of 2000 in 1869. By 1871, the railroad employed over 500 people in Piedmont and its plant had grown to encompass over half of a square mile. The B&O Railroad prospered, with high yields of passenger traffic amounting to \$3,000-\$5,000 per month, incoming freight netting \$10,000 per month and outgoing freight returning \$50,000 per month. Notably, it is at this depot that Henry Gassaway Davis worked as station agent, gaining the experience that would later lead to the development of the West Virginia Central & Pittsburg Railroad.



## Cumberland & Pennsylvania Depot



Piedmont, Mineral County

The Cumberland & Pennsylvania Railroad was chartered in 1850 by the Consolidation Coal Company, and operated primarily in Allegany County, Maryland, with the exception of its PRR track to Pennsylvania and B&O track to West Virginia. The main line of C&P extended 31.8 miles from Cumberland to Piedmont and by 1872, the railroad operated two roundtrips a day. Sanborn maps indicate the existence of the C&P depot in Piedmont since 1892, but it was renamed the West Virginia Central Depot in 1902 and the the Western Maryland Depot in 1907 before returning to C&P in 1913. The C&P facilitated a transportation revolution for people living in remote communities, and its interchange with the B&O at Piedmont allowed passengers to go to market, attend school in cities, and attend churches, concerts, and sporting events. In 1953, the C&P was officially integrated into the Western Maryland Railway.

## First National Bank



Piedmont, Mineral County

In 1896 this building was functioning as a multi-use property, with a bank in its most prominent position facing the corner of 2nd street and Ashfield, and a variety of other business taking up the space on either side, including offices, a tailor, and a boot and shoe store. By June of 1907 , the entire building housed First National Bank, a prominent building in Piedmont featured on local postcards.

## Piedmont Grocery Company Wholesale Herald Printing House



Piedmont, Mineral County



### Piedmont Grocery Co. Wholesale

Prior to moving into this building, Piedmont Grocery operated out of a large wooden warehouse located between Kenny Street and the railroad tracks. Sanborn maps indicate that the building was not constructed in 1902 but extant sometime before 1907.

Piedmont Grocery Company had decades of success and expanded its operation in 1921, purchasing for \$15,500 the Kahl Planing Mill Property along the B & O Railroad in Oakland, Maryland. Though Piedmont remained the company's primary location and regular site of board meetings, the Oakland branch was reported to carry the same line of goods in large quantities. Newspaper accounts attest to Piedmont Grocery Company's prominence in the community, regularly printing advertisements on their behalf or announcements of levies due. In August of 1932, a prohibition crime played out at the warehouse when thieves stole a truckload of sugar amounting to 1800 pounds. Police determined that the truck had been moved to Uniontown and found John Gucik, of Uniontown, stirring barrels of mash on the Bud Hershman farm just west of Oakland. In total, five men were arrested for stealing from Piedmont Grocery and violating the Federal Prohibition Act.



The Herald Printing House, or Piedmont Herald Printing Company, was a staple of the Piedmont community for decades, serving as the printing house for the Piedmont Herald (1887-2006).

## Grant County

**Historic Overview:**

- Rich in agricultural resources, agrarian until WVC&P RR arrives in 1880s
- Bayard, Dobbin, Henry, Gormanian, and Wilson pop up on rail line
- Bayard becomes largest town/industrial center of Grant Co.

### History of Grant County

Grant county was officially created in 1866, after a split from Hardy County, West Virginia. Grant County attracted colonial settlers and European Pioneers because of the rich resources of the Dolly Sods Wilderness. The north branch of Grant County is more mountainous, and was typified with smaller farms, while the South Branch was better suited for larger farms, some of which used enslaved people for labor. The B&O Railroad passed north of Grant County through Garrett County, Maryland, and Grant County did not start to grow significantly until the arrival of the WVC&P RR in the 1880s. THE railroad ran along the northern border of Grant County and expanded connections not reached by the B&O. This led to the population growth across the county, but also creation and prosperity of northern towns: Bayard, Dobbin, Henry, Gormanian, and Wilson. Bayard became Grant County's largest town and industrial center in the 1800s due to water and railways. Important industries in the area were



## Grant County



Hall Building, Bayard



Mabis Ave., Gorman



Dobbin Depot



Historic Photos

Dr. Wilbert George Drinkwater served as a physician in Gorman for 58 years, moving to Gorman in 1889 after graduating from the Collegiate Institute, St. Thomas, Canada and Cincinnati Medical College. An active member in his community, Dr. Drinkwater was an elder in the Presbyterian church of Gorman and a life honorary member of the West Virginia Medical Association, Potomac Valley Medical Society, and the Allegany County Medical Society. After his death on December 27, 1947, Gorman lost its sole physician.

This building served as both the residence and office of Dr. Drinkwater. Historic photos indicate extreme alterations of window design on the facade of the building, leaving it without its architectural integrity.

## Dr. Drinkwater's House



Gorman, Grant County

Dr. Wilbert George Drinkwater served as a physician in Gorman for 58 years, moving to Gorman in 1889 after graduating from the Collegiate Institute, St. Thomas, Canada and Cincinnati Medical College. An active member in his community, Dr. Drinkwater was an elder in the Presbyterian church of Gorman and a life honorary member of the West Virginia Medical Association, Potomac Valley Medical Society, and the Allegany County Medical Society. After his death on December 27, 1947, Gorman lost its sole physician.

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## Knights of Pythias Lodge



Gorman, Grant County

Over the years this building has housed several businesses including a movie theater on the third floor and E.M Norman & Co. laundry on the first floor, but it is most prominently known as the Knights of Pythias Acme Lodge No. 69. In September of 1901, Col. Maner Jenkins of Piedmont instituted a Gorman chapter of the Company of the Uniform Rank, Knights of Pythias, just around the same time that the Davis chapter was established. These two lodges joined a regional coalition, with Knights of Pythias lodges in the nearby towns of Piedmont, Keyser, Bayard, Elk Garden, and Terra Alta. This fraternal organization was very active in Gorman and regularly hosted events, celebrations, and initiation ceremonies.

## Emmons Hall



Bayard, Grant County

Emmons Hall. Throughout 1925, *The Republican*, a newspaper based in Oakland, Maryland, reported on the various events hosted at Emmons Hall, highlighting it as an important community center. Some of the events that took place at Emmons Hall include events hosted by local organizations including churches, the Lady Maccabees and Knights of Pythias, holiday dances, concerts, and school contests, like the Inter-Society Contest in 1925 where Bayard High School students gathered to debate the proposed Child Labor Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Sometime before 1955, the building was purchased by H.R. Fulk Sr. and transformed into Fulk's General Store, Bayard's only grocery store.

## Tucker County



### Historic Overview:

- Coal discovered in 1835
- WVC&P RR arrives in 1884 and builds line across county for 5 years
- RR capitalized on existing industries and created new opportunities

"The Alleghenies were as rich in coal and timber as the Rockies in precious metals. The heart of the wealth of the Alleghenies is in West Virginia, and its throbbing has just begun with the awakening of its industrial life."

-Henry Gassaway Davis, Date Unknown



## History of Tucker County

Tucker County remained a remote part of Appalachia until mid 1800s, when, after the discovery of coal in 1835, settlers started to arrive in waves to the region. It officially separated from Randolph County in 1856. Noting that the B&O operated primarily in the northern end of the state and the C&O operated in the southern end, Henry Gassaway Davis had a vision for the wealth and opportunity that an Appalachian railroad would bring. In 1884, the railroad reached Thomas, and over the next 5 years road was built through Hambleton, Hendricks, and Parsons, before reaching Elkins in 1889. The railroad created population explosions in the towns it passed, and in turn, created multicultural towns like Thomas where laborers and immigrants representing 18 different nationalities worked together. Depletion of natural resources, environmental disasters, and an evolving economy eventually led to the decline of extraction industries in Tucker County.



# Tucker County



Parsons Depot



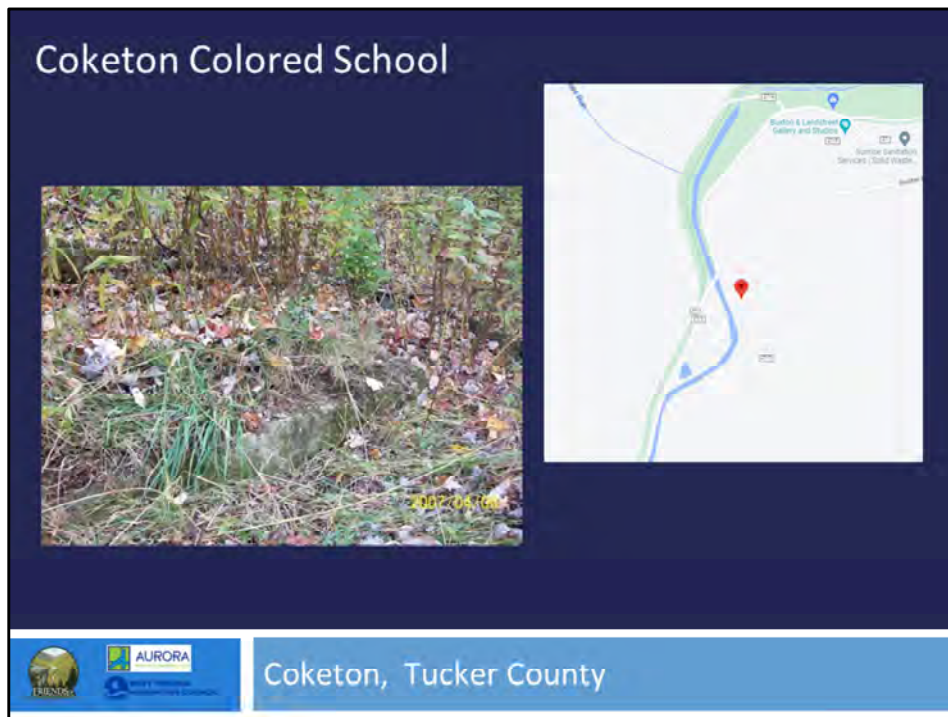
Thomas Depot



Hambleton Depot



Historic Photos



This is a photo of the archaeological remains of Coketon Colored School, a segregated two-room schoolhouse for African American students in Tucker County. In 1892, the Tucker Co. Board of education reduced the school term for black students from eight months to five months while the school term for white students remained at eight months. This case Williams v. The Board of Education of Fairfaa District reached the WV Supreme Court of Appeals and is an early case where discrimination was ruled illegal. Black students attended the school until 1854, when it closed as a result of Brown V. Board of Education, and the structure was torn down shortly after.

The wooden bridge was built just as Hendricks became a dry town, allowing residents to easily cross the bridge to Brooklyn Heights, where alcohol was legal and plentiful. The original bride was built in 1901 by Charles Darwin Gillespie and was replaced by this structure in 1986.

## Hendricks Swinging Bridge & Jailhouse



Hendricks, Tucker County

The wooden bridge was built just as Hendricks became a dry town, allowing residents to easily cross the bridge to Brooklyn Heights, where alcohol was legal and plentiful. The original bridge was built in 1901 by Charles Darwin Gillespie and was replaced by this structure in 1986. Not much is written about the Hendricks Jailhouse, but it is one of the few remaining historic structures in Hendricks.

# Mystery Buildings!



Mountaineer Inn, Bayard



Gormania



Gormania



What Do You Know About These Buildings?

# Mystery Buildings!



Childs Ave., Piedmont (Campbell Building?)



Gorman

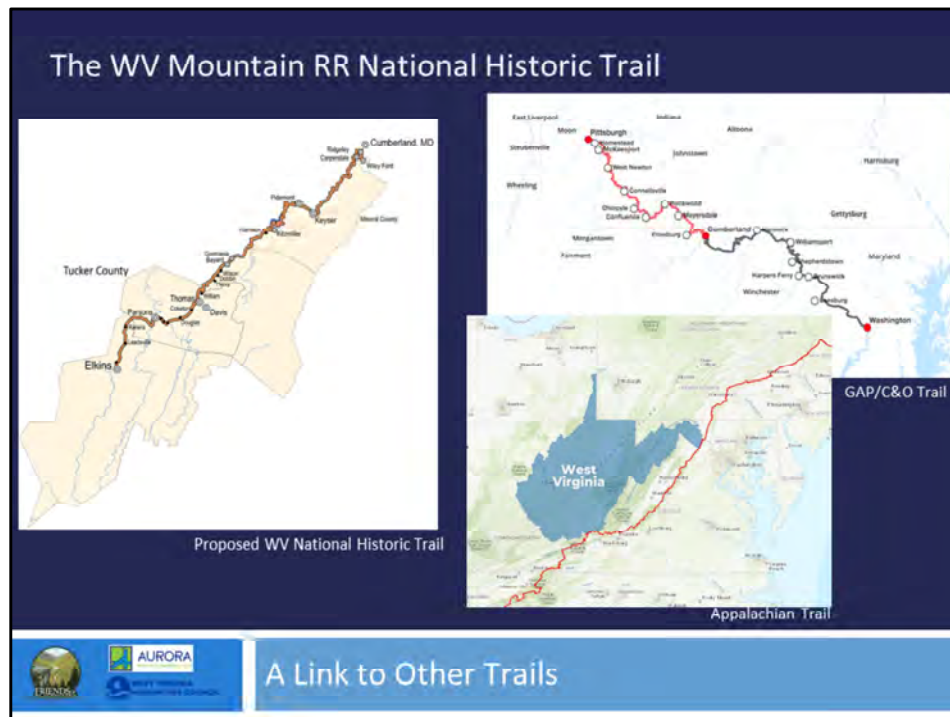


Wilson



What Do You Know About These Buildings?





This trail would provide a critical link from the Allegheny Highlands of West Virginia to:

- Chesapeake & Ohio Canal (C&O) Towpath Trail
- Great Allegheny Passage
- Appalachian Trail

## **WV Mountain Railroad National Historic Trail**

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**Is a conceptual project that envisions a trail that spans over 100-miles from Thomas, WV to Cumberland, MD. This route follows the North Branch of the Potomac River along the historic West Virginia Central and Pittsburgh Railroad that was created in the late 1800s by Henry Gassaway Davis.**

**This project began as an idea of Friends of Blackwater. Currently the project is in the beginning stages of a feasibility study being conducted by Civil and Environmental Consultants out of Bridgeport, WV. This project is being funded by an ARC grant.**

**CEC's involvement is through a partnership that is built with Friends of Blackwater during work on other trail initiatives in Tucker County. This trail is an extension of the Blackwater Loop Trail that is currently being designed that links Thomas to Blackwater Falls and Davis, WV.**

## **What is a National Historic Trail?**

National Historic Trails paint a colorful picture of our nation's diverse history. They can follow many different routes and outline many different pieces of history such as:

Past Routes of Exploration

Migration

Struggle

Trade

Military Action

National Historic Trails offer an opportunity to re-trace these past events through historic sites, points of interests, trail segments and waterways. There are currently 21 National Historic Trails in the United States totaling over 36,000 miles.



# The West Virginia Mountain Railroad National Historic Trail - Thomas, WV to Bayard, WV

Traveling through Tucker, Grant, and Mineral counties, the proposed trail aims to connect Elkins, WV to Cumberland, MD and the GAP trail system.



**Hamilton Company Store**  
Found at the historical location of Remington, MD, this building is believed to be the last one built for the Davis Coal & Coke Company in 1906.

## Thomas, WV

A town with close ties to the coal industry, Thomas is named after the Davis brothers. In 1883, they opened Davis Coal and Coke. By 1902, it was one of the largest and best known coal companies. Today, it provides a unique tourism destination, filled with unique art and local shops. Examples of this are shown below.



Oberlain Thomas



Jump Town Alley



The Purple Fiddle



**CEC**  
Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.

The West Virginia Mountain Railroad National Historic Trail - Bayard, WV to Piedmont, WV

Traveling through Tucker, Grant, and Mineral counties, the proposed trail aims to connect Elens, WV to Cumberland, MD and the GAP trail system.



**Piedmont, WV**  
 Located in Mineral County, WV, Piedmont, due to its proximity to surrounding industries, was a strategic location during the building of the B&O Railroad as it pushed west to Wheeling and the Ohio River. The high demand for railroads would result in the construction of a route from West Virginia to Ohio, the Ohio Development Company would bring further developments to the region. Today, CSX Transportation operates the rail line going through the area.



**Gorman, WV**  
 Founded as a result of the coal mining boom and related industrial activity in the area, Gorman is an unincorporated community located along the North Branch of the Delaware River, 8.5 mi on the Northwestern Turnpike (US 58).



**Blaine, WV and Kirmiller, MD**  
 Historically connected to the coal and lumber industries, Blaine and Kirmiller were the focus on the North Branch of the Upper Potomac River. Located along the Potomac River, MD, these two towns provided the Civil War. However, the greatest growth of the area was the result of the peak of the local coal mining industry.



**Cumberland, MD**

**Bayard, WV**

A coal-mining town in Tucker County, WV, Bayard was a coal-mining community located on the West Virginia Coal and Pitsburg Railroad. It served as an important industrial site that resulted from the local mining industry.



CEE  
 Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.



### The West Virginia Mountain Railroad National Historic Trail - Keyser WV to Cumberland MD

Traveling through Tucker, Grant, and Mineral counties, the proposed trail aims to connect Elkins, WV to Cumberland, MD and the GAP trail system.



Thank you for attending.

We welcome your comments and any additional information regarding the National Historic Trail

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Online Comment Form: <https://tinyurl.com/WVCPRR>



Conclusion