

2023 Research Problem Statement: Cultural and Historic Resources

The South Mountain Landscape has a record of human land use that stretches to the Pleistocene. It is a record often but not exclusively focused on resource procurement and exploitation that begins with Native American tool stone quarrying, and continued through the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries with the timber and iron industries and their related practices. It also has a completely unique and idiosyncratic agricultural legacy as one of the most important fruit producing regions in North America. Ethnic and cultural diversity have been an earmark of this heritage as Native American, Scots-Irish, African American, German, and Latinx people have all left an enduring mark on the region's historic record. All of these cultures have living descendant communities in and near the South Mountain Landscape to whom this heritage belongs. Rapid growth in the partnership counties, and high visitation and use of public lands are challenges to the preservation, study and interpretation of the region's heritage. The South Mountain Research Corps will support research, inventory and modeling of issues in cultural and historic resource management including but not limited to the following topics. This list is based on priorities expressed by researchers and agencies, as well as community feedback. More detailed problem statements for each project can be made available upon request.

The following is a list of potential research and monitoring priorities provided by local partners that could be conducted on public or private lands within the South Mountain region.

Farm Labor Oral History

History and Evolution of Regional Agriculture

Native American Interactions with Forest Communities and Ecosystems

Legacy of charcoal production and the iron industries of the South Mountain

Early European settlement history and landscape evolution at Camp Michaux

Continuing Investigations Native American Metarhyolite Quarries

For more information on this problem statement and the associated topics, please contact Maria Bruno at brunom@dickinson.edu

Historic Context Development outlined in the Cultural Landscape Assessment

For more information on the above problem statement and associated topics, please contact Katie Hess at khess@appalachiantrail.org