

☆ Copperhead ☆ County ☆

Crime and Corruption in the New South

By Jason Eley

“Green, green grass under my feet, but all I can think about’s the dirt underneath...”
-Drive-By Truckers

The Game

Copperhead County is a *Blades in the Dark* hack about organized crime and corruption in the modern American South. As in *Blades in the Dark*, players cooperate to build a criminal empire by pulling dangerous jobs and negotiating with the other factions of the land. Like *Blades in the Dark*, *Copperhead County* is crime fiction you create at the tabletop, but it isn’t a fantasy game. *Copperhead County* is set in the real world, in the present day, and pitched in the mode of modern social crime fiction.

You’ll play to find out whether your crew can rise from humble beginnings to best the bosses, the good ol’ boys, and the entrenched machines to become the king fish of their pond, if the bullets, betrayals, and breaks of the outlaw life don’t get them first.

The Setting

It’s the year **201x** in Cooley County, Tennessee, population approx. 200,000. Cooley County sits within the Great Smoky Mountains along the state’s North Carolina border, with the mighty Copperhead River forming a wide valley known as the Copperhead Gap (the source of the local nickname). Small towns and rural routes spindle through the hills, while more populated cities lay along the river and central highway.

In Copperhead County, a corrupt political machine has controlled affairs for decades, working hand in glove with powerful local criminals and their out-of-town connections. The county has a strategic location for criminal pursuits, nestled in the mountains with quiet routes to bigger markets across the Southland and beyond. Meanwhile, a cut of the proceeds flows back to the government and police, forming a great circle of graft and sin.

Today, Copperhead County is changing. The local establishment has pumped millions of dollars, much of it siphoned from illegal slush funds, to renovate its central city and attract new business and investment. Out-of-town corporations are starting to appear, attracted by the county’s low-tax, low-regulation environment, and prosperous locals are starting to see the fruits of modernization. But while the new economy has been good for some, many others are still left behind after decades of shuttered businesses, union-busting, and lack of investment in local communities. For every two steps forward the county takes into the ever-promised New South, it always seems to take three back into the same old shit.

As Copperhead County slouches forward into the 21st century, a new generation of criminals is rising to seize control, and your PCs are chief among them. If they’re good, they might infiltrate the halls of power, or bust them open and loot their treasures. If they’re

not, they might end up yet more bodies ground into the red clay soil as the Old South wins again.

The Characters

- ★ The **Brick**, an unstoppable enforcer
- ★ The **Cleaner**, a steady problem solver
- ★ The **Hazard**, a volatile artisan
- ★ The **Stringer**, a shrewd executive
- ★ The **Wheeler**, a wily politician

The Crew

In *Copperhead County*, the criminal pie is small enough that your crew isn't defined by a favored set of activities, but by their approach to the world. You might be:

- ★ A bunch of **Hellraisers**, rebels and renegades **exploding** the status quo
- ★ A tight **Outfit**, sharks and snakes **exploiting** the status quo
- ★ A crew bound by **Blood**, a family syndicate **expanding** their power

Touchstones

Copperhead County is inspired by modern crime fiction such as:

Television: *Justified* by Graham Yost & Elmore Leonard. *Breaking Bad* by Vince Gilligan, and *Better Call Saul* by Vince Gilligan and Peter Gould. *The Wire* by David Simon. *Fargo* by Noah Hawley. *Quarry* by Michael Fuller, Graham Gordy, & Max Allan Collins.

Music: The patron saints of *Copperhead County* are **Steve Earle** and the **Drive-By Truckers**. For a lot more, check out the official *Copperhead County* playlist at:

<http://spoti.fi/2pqsDvw>

Games: *Mafia III* by Hangar 13. *Grand Theft Auto V* by Rockstar Games. *Fiasco* by Bully Pulpit Games.

Comics: *Stray Bullets* by David Lapham. *Southern Bastards* by Jason Aaron and Jason Latour. *Criminal* by Ed Brubaker and Sean Phillips. *Scalped* by Jason Aaron and R.M. Guéra.

Theme Song

"Stomp and Holler" by **Hard Working Americans**.

Credits

Copperhead County is based on *Blades in the Dark* by John Harper. This is a preview and not intended to explain or replicate the base game. You will need a copy of *Blades in the Dark* to make sense of it. If something important is missing from this document, refer to *Blades in the Dark*, or wait.

All other work for this document by Jason Eley, 2015-2017, in Nashville, Tennessee.

Thanks to the **original Hellraisers: Bethany Gladson, Bob Coleman, Grayson Davis, Stefan Flickinger, & Adam Maunz**; and to Nathaniel Bayer and Adam Schwaninger.

Attributes and Actions

GRIT resists consequences with physical power or stamina.

Fight up close and personal, unarmed or with a weapon.

Growl to intimidate or showcase your hard attitude.

Handle vehicles and machines or perform manual labor.

Tread across earth or water with your own hands and feet, climb, leap.

GUMPTION resists consequences with willpower or perception.

Deal with other parties to reach common agreement.

Direct persons, projects, or activities with thought and care.

Reckon through situations, questions, and problems to find an answer.

Survey a location or situation to understand or anticipate events.

GRACE resists consequences with finesse or care.

Coax someone to do what you want.

Creep along unseen and unheard, attack with hidden violence.

Fix up machines or other contraptions.

Hunt a target and track its movements, snipe from a distance.

Character Creation

Choose A Playbook

- ★ The **Brick**, an unstoppable enforcer. Play a Brick if you want to be tough and boss people around.
- ★ The **Cleaner**, a steady problem solver. Play a Cleaner if you want to be cool, quiet, and competent.
- ★ The **Hazard**, a volatile artisan. Play a Hazard if you want to get creative with technical wizardry.
- ★ The **Stringer**, a shrewd executive. Play a Stringer if you want to lead and support your crewmates.
- ★ The **Wheeler**, a wily politician. Play a Wheeler if you want to be a dealmaker and manipulator.

Choose Your Origin

Your Origin says where your character grew up and what their family life or upbringing was like. When you choose an origin, circle it on the list on your playbook, then write a detail about your childhood on the line above.

- ★ **Local** means you're from Copperhead County, with extra baggage (see **Locals Only**).
- ★ **Southern** means you're from the South, but not from Copperhead County.
- ★ **Western** means you're from somewhere out west, like California or Colorado.
- ★ **Northern** means you're a Yankee from somewhere like New York or Chicago.
- ★ **Immigrant** means you're from outside the United States.

Choose A Background

Your Background says what you did before you joined the crew to pursue a life of crime. Each playbook has several suggestions, or you can choose Other and write in your own.

Assign Four Action Dots

Your playbook begins with three action dots already placed. You get to add four more dots (so you'll have seven total). At the start of the game, no action rating may have more than two dots (unless a special ability tells you otherwise). Assign your four dots like this:

- ★ Put one dot in any action that you feel reflects your character's **Origin**.
- ★ Put one dot in any action that you feel reflects your character's **Background**.
- ★ Assign two more dots wherever you want to (the max rating is still 2).

Choose A Special Ability

Look at your playbook's list of special abilities and choose one. If you can't decide which one to pick, go with the first one on the list. If you have something special in mind, you can pick Versatile and choose an ability from another playbook.

Special Armor

Some special abilities refer to your special armor. Each character sheet has two boxes to track usage of armor (standard and special). If you have any abilities that uses your special armor, tick its box when you activate one of them. If you don't have any special abilities that use special armor, then you can't use that armor box at all.

Choose One Friend and One Rival

Each playbook has a list of potential NPC friends. Choose one from the list who is a close relationship (a good friend, a lover, a family relation, etc.). Then choose another NPC on the list who's your rival or enemy. If you have your own idea for either, write in their name and job in of the blank spaces.

Choose Your Vice

Every criminal has some way to blow off steam from the outlaw life. Choose a vice from the list, and describe it on the line above with the specific details and the name and location of your vice purveyor. You can create a vice purveyor or ask the GM to tell you about a couple likely options for your vice.

- ★ **Blackout:** You lose yourself in the blackness of drug or alcohol abuse.
- ★ **Family:** You have a family and balance your outlaw life with taking care of them.
- ★ **Faith:** You take solace in the teachings and practice of a particular religion.
- ★ **Pleasure:** You enjoy hedonistic delights: good food, sex, gambling, whatever.
- ★ **Sloth:** You vegetate at home, doing as little as possible.
- ★ **Status:** You enjoy being seen and feeling important through a venue of your choice.

Record Your Name and Look

Choose a name for your character. If they use a street name or alias, include it. Then note your identifying details: build, hair, tattoos, clothing, etc.

Crew Creation

Choose a crew type, representing your approach to the county underworld. This isn't absolute: you can do whatever you want, but you'll earn more xp playing to your nature.

- ★ **Hellraisers** make noise, make enemies, and don't back down.
- ★ An **Outfit** keeps quiet, manages their affairs, and makes allies.
- ★ A family by **Blood** takes care of their own, by whatever way they can.

Your crew begins with **2 Cash**. You are **Tier 0**, with **weak hold** and **0 Rep**.

Choose An Initial Reputation and HQ

Your crew has just formed, banding together to build a new criminal empire. Given this group and their previous experiences, what initial **reputation** do you have with the rest of the county? Choose one, or create your own: **ambitious, brutal, deadly, fearless, for the people, reliable**. Since you'll earn xp for living up to your reputation, this is a signal of how the crew will act during gameplay. Are they only out for themselves, or can others trust them? Do they engage in casual violence, or are they circumspect on the job?

Next, talk about where the crew makes their **HQ**. You begin at Tier 0, so it's probably a modest, low-rent sort of place. You might work behind a **dive bar** or in an **abandoned church**, in a **nondescript office**, or anywhere you might think of.

Look at the county map (see **Cooley County, Tennessee**) and determine where your HQ is. Do you run your operation in a small town, in the city, or in a dark mountain hollow?

Starting a new operation means stepping on someone's toes. The entire county is divided between other factions, all currently stronger and meaner than your crew. GM will tell you which faction claims the area where your HQ is, then you decide how to deal with them:

- ★ Pay them a kickback. Give them **1 Cash** in exchange for breathing room.
- ★ Pay them **2 Cash** as tribute and gain **+1 status** with them.
- ★ Keep your money and take **-1 status** with that faction.

Choose a Special Ability

Take a look at the special abilities for your crew and choose one. If you can't decide which one to pick, go with the first one on the list—it's placed there as a good default choice. It's important to pick a special ability that everyone is excited about. You can get more special abilities in the future by earning xp.

Just like picking the crew type, reputation, and HQ, choosing a special ability is another chance to focus the game down to a more specific range of possibilities. Instead of playing a generic crew of outlaws, you end up with an *Outfit*, which is *ambitious*, with an HQ *above a downtown bar*, and the **Professionals** special ability. These choices signal how you'll act in play and how the world will react to your crew.

Assign Crew Upgrades

An upgrade is a valuable asset that helps the crew in some way, like a garage or a gang (see the complete descriptions on the following page).

Both crews have two pre-selected **upgrades** that suit that crew (like **Grit Training** and a **gang** of Soldiers for the Hellraisers).

You get to add **two additional upgrades** to your new crew, so you'll have a total of four to start. You can choose from the specific upgrades available to your crew type or the general upgrades on the crew sheet.

When you assign your two upgrades, the GM will tell you about two factions that are impacted by your choices:

- ★ One faction helped you get an upgrade. They like you, and you get **+1 status** with them. At your option, give **1 Cash** in thanks, and take **+2 status** with them instead.
- ★ One faction was screwed over when you got an upgrade. They don't like you, and you get **-2 status** with them. At your option, spend **1 Cash** to mollify them, and take **-1 status** with them instead.

You'll be able get more upgrades in the future by earning crew xp.

Choose A Favorite Contact

Take a look at your list of potential contacts on the crew sheet. Choose one contact who is a close friend, long-time ally, or partner in crime. The GM will tell you about two factions that are impacted by your choice:

- ★ One faction is also friendly with this contact, and you get **+1 status** with them.
- ★ One faction is unfriendly with this contact, and you get **-1 status** with them.

At your option, these factions are even more concerned with this contact and so you take **+2** and **-2 status** instead.

Locals Only

Any PC with the **Local** origin now has a special job. Growing up in Copperhead County means being enmeshed in years of local entanglements. Each Local PC should choose, with the GM's guidance, one faction that you have a **positive** past association with, maybe due to family ties or previous employment; you get **+1 status** with them. Then choose one faction you have a **negative** past association with, and take **-1 status** with them. At the PC's option, these ties can be strengthened to **+2** or **-2 status** instead.

Starting Situation

Review the **starting situations** and discuss your options, unless your GM has another idea.

Starting Situations

At the start of the game, Copperhead County is in flux. Maybe all it needs is a kick in the ass from a new crew. There are two situations that are especially pressing: one facing the rural county and one facing the central city. Depending on your crew's relationships, you might get drawn into one or both of them, or you might go your own way.

Fire on the Mountain

The **Pettimore Clan**, the crime family that has called the shots in the county hills for decades, is under attack. In recent days, a mountainside drug lab run by the Pettimores was—well, rumors differ on whether it was *burnt down* or *blown up*. Regardless, a lot of product and a lot of profit went up in flames, and, even worse, the family patriarch, **Buck Earl**, went up with it. Now his son, **Buck Junior**, is the heir apparent, left scrambling to find the perpetrators and assume control of the family business.

The death of Buck Earl creates opportunity across Copperhead County. Consider these issues as the crew is created and establishes and develops relationships with other factions.

- ★ Buck Earl was a respected and feared old hand, who kept peace with the county's other major gangs and kept the smaller ones in line. *Without his leadership, will old feuds reignite, and new feuds form?*
- ★ Blood is a powerful motivator, and Junior will mobilize his kin against whoever killed his father, or whoever the family thinks killed him. *Who do they blame? Who actually did it?*
- ★ If the PCs have a **positive status** with the Pettimore Clan, Junior or one of his lieutenants may call on them for help.
- ★ If the PCs have a **negative status** with the Pettimore Clan, Junior or his allies may move against them, if they seem involved even a little bit.
- ★ If the PCs have a **neutral** status with the Pettimore Clan, Junior may not care that much about them for now, but their allies or enemies might get caught up in this mess, creating problems or opportunities for the crew.
- ★ If the PCs were **actually the culprits**, flashback to the job and choose a **plan**. Depending on the outcome, the details of **Fire on the Mountain** might change!

Who Run It

Meanwhile, the county capital is on the verge of gang war. East Patterson, the city's most diverse and economically forgotten quarter, has long been ruled by the **Barnett Mob**, a no-drama organization that looks after the community and maintains peace with the **Mountain Mafia**, the biggest players in Patterson. But a new would-be king has emerged from the slums of Adamstown: **Baron Carter**, a fearless warlord who has either absorbed or destroyed the neighborhood's other gangs, and now sets his sights on taking the rest of the city.

- ★ Baron Carter seemingly can't be stopped, and people in Adamstown talk about his exploits in hushed awe. *If he faces setbacks, will the bubble burst? If he continues to win, will the people lose faith in the establishment?*
- ★ The Mountain Mafia has so far stayed out of the fray, seeing it as the Barnett Mob's responsibility. *If the skirmishes escalate, how will they react? Will they try to co-opt a smaller player, or remind the city of their authority with force?*
- ★ If the PCs have a **positive status** with the Barnett Mob, and/or a **negative status** with Baron Carter, the Barnetts can make a powerful, and wealthy, patron if the crew helps them stabilize control of East Patterson.
- ★ If the PCs have a **negative status** with the Barnett Mob, and/or a **positive status** with Baron Carter, Baron may view them as kindred spirits, inviting them to share the spoils of victory by fighting alongside him.
- ★ If the PCs have a **positive status** with both factions, that won't last for long. A confrontation is coming, and if you're not with one side, you're against it.
- ★ If the PCs have a **negative status** with both factions, either one might view them as a threat, or swallow their pride and offer the PCs inducements to friendship, if the situation gets dire enough.
- ★ If the PCs have a **neutral status** with both factions, they might stay out of the fray for now, until events push them one way or the other.
- ★ If the PCs have a **positive status** with the **Mountain Mafia**, the big dogs might view this crew of upstarts as a good investment toward swaying the outcome of the East Patterson situation in their favor.

Crew Upgrades

- ★ **Automatic Weapons:** Crew weapons can now check the *+Automatic* box to be an automatic version of that weapon.
- ★ **Cohort:** A cohort is a gang or single expert NPC who works for your crew. See cohort detail on following pages.
- ★ **Elite Gang:** Your gangs of the specified type get **+1d** when acting within that type.
- ★ **Gang Size:** You've invested in the space and equipment to maintain gangs larger than your Tier would indicate. The crew is considered one Tier higher for determining gang scale.
- ★ **Garage:** You have space to keep and maintain vehicles. Each Garage upgrade you take gives you access to one type of vehicle. Generally, your Garages maintain enough vehicles for the crew and their cohorts to share.
 - **Passenger:** Standard coupes and sedans, good for blending in.
 - **Utility:** Heavy trucks and vans, good for doing work.
 - **Motorcycles:** Bikes, good for speed. Since these are small, the Garage has enough for everyone to have their own bike.
 - **Boats:** Small motorboats for navigating the county's rivers and lakes.
 - **Helicopter:** A helicopter for aerial operations. You can only maintain one of these at a time.

- ★ **Heavy Vehicles:** Your vehicles have been upgraded for heavy duty, and can handle going off-road or other adverse conditions. They also gain **armor**. Only Hellraisers can take this upgrade.
- ★ **Mastery:** Your crew has mastered the skills of outlaw life. You may advance your PCs' action ratings to 4 (until you unlock this upgrade, PC action ratings are capped at 3). This costs four upgrade boxes to unlock.
- ★ **Offshore Accounts:** You have invested in foreign bank accounts and shell companies to help mask the flow of your money. When a PC increases their **Bank** level, the amount of **Heat** gained from **Tax Evasion** is decreased by 1. Only an Outfit can take this upgrade.
- ★ **Ordinance:** You have a supply of the really heavy shit. The crew can now take explosives, hand grenades, or RPG launchers on jobs.
- ★ **Prison Contacts:** You have contacts within the prison system who will steer convicted crew members to Bushy Bottom State Prison. Prisoners at Bushy Bottom are much easier to visit and can still participate in some game activities.
- ★ **Product Upgrade:** You've invested in making one of your Racket Products worth more, from superior service, better supplies, improved processes, or so on. Select one of your Products that provides a **Cash** value and increase that bonus by **+1**. Products can be selected more than once, but each time after the first also increases that Product's **Heat** value by **+1**.
- ★ **Quality:** Each upgrade improves the **quality rating** of all the PCs' items of that type, beyond the quality established by the crew's Tier. You can improve the quality of **Weapons** (includes firearms and body armor), **Vehicles** (any from your Garage upgrades), **Tools**, and **Gear** (including any items described as such).
- ★ **Second HQ:** You have established a second **HQ** in another part of the county, with all the same benefits of your original HQ. If this new HQ isn't on your **Turf**, follow the same faction status adjustments as when you established the first HQ during crew creation. This costs two upgrade boxes to unlock.
- ★ **Security:** Your HQ and other holdings have dedicated guards to watch over them, as well as cameras and other surveillance. A second upgrade raises the **quality** of your security. Use your **Tier** as your base security quality if it needs to be tested.
- ★ **Silenced Weapons:** Crew weapons can now check the *+Silenced* box to be a silenced version of that weapon.
- ★ **Stash:** As you accumulate **Cash**, you need safe places to store all that money and product. The first Stash upgrade increases your **Cash** storage to 8. The second Stash upgrade gives another 8 spaces, for a total of 16. You can also stash other valuables or prisoners at these stashes.
- ★ **Training:** You've invested in equipment or resources to train your abilities. During **downtime**, you can **train** an xp track if you have the relevant upgrade.

Items

Brick Items

Your heavy pistol: A sizable handgun like a big revolver or a Desert Eagle. Packs more of a punch and looks more intimidating than a regular pistol.

Your automatic rifle: Your own rifle, maybe a souvenir from your previous life. Can spray bullets at a decent range.

Your special melee weapon: A hand-to-hand weapon of some significance to you. Can be either a one-load or two-load item. *What is it? Why is it special?*

Zip ties: Disposable hand restraints, much more convenient than cuffs.

Cleaner Items

Your silenced pistol: Your own pistol, the key item in your arsenal. Doesn't do much damage, but doesn't make much noise.

Your sniper rifle: Your own rifle with a magnifying scope. Useful at long distances, but slow and loud.

Your surveillance gear: Whatever you need to mount a stakeout: cameras, microphones, GPS trackers, etc.

Hazard Items

Your sawed-off shotgun: A shotgun you sawed down to a more reasonable size. Packs all the punch of a shotgun, but only at close range. Illegal to possess.

Your custom toolkit: Your own tools, kitted out to your specifications. You always manage to pack exactly what you need, and no more.

A molotov cocktail: A glass bottle full of oil, stuffed with a rag. Light it on fire and throw it.

Craftables: Space for anything else you cook up.

Stringer Items

Your snub nosed revolver: A weak handgun, but easy to conceal.

Communication gear: Gear to let the crew communicate across distances: burner phones, bluetooth headsets, etc.

Your collapsible baton: A club that can collapse to be concealed.

Your notebook: Where you keep all your plans and notes.

Wheeler Items

One of your impressive outfits: Your clothes are a cut above what the situation calls for.

Your switchblade: A knife that's easy to hide.

Surplus \$ bills: Money is the universal gift. These are in various denominations.

Your trained guard dog: They say if you want a friend in politics, get a dog. If you want a really good friend, get a dog like this.

Crew Items

A melee weapon: Something you can hit someone with, like a knife or a hatchet. A large melee weapon is a two-hander like a baseball bat or an axe.

A handgun: A standard pistol, decent at short to mid-range.

A rifle: A hunting rifle, good at mid to long range.

A shotgun: A hunting shotgun, good at short range.

Body armor: Commercial armor that can help stop incoming fire.

Theft tools: Lockpicks, slim jims, bolt cutters, glass cutters, whatever you need to break in.

Mechanic tools: Wrenches, screwdrivers, whatever you need to fix something.

Wilderness gear: A GPS, water, hunting supplies, whatever is useful in the hills.

First aid gear: A small kit with bandages, ointments, and antibiotics for field healing.

A gas can: A can full of gasoline. You can fill a car with it or set it on fire.

A small dose: A personal hit of whatever you fancy.

Explosives: Blow-up-able material like TNT or C4. One unit can take a chunk out of a building. *Only available with the Ordnance upgrade.*

A hand grenade: Pull the pin, throw it, and take cover. *Only available with the Ordnance upgrade.*

An RPG launcher: A rocket-propelled grenade launcher. Fire in the hole! *Only available with the Ordnance upgrade.*

+Automatic: This gun now shoots a lot of bullets. *Only available with the Automatic Weapons upgrade.*

+Silenced: This gun is now quieter when it shoots. *Only available with the Silenced Weapons upgrade.*

Cohorts

A **cohort** is a **gang** or an **expert** who works for your crew. To recruit a new cohort, spend two upgrades and create them using the process below.

Creating A Gang

Choose a gang type from the list below:

- ★ **Agents:** Suited for sales and interactive pursuits.
- ★ **Drivers:** Suited for handling vehicles and transporting things.
- ★ **Plumbers:** Suited for sneaking and burglary.
- ★ **Soldiers:** Suited for group combat and grunt-work.

A gang has **scale** and **quality** equal to your current crew **Tier**. It increases in scale and quality when your crew moves up in Tier.

If your crew is Tier 0, your gang is quality 0 and scale 0 (1 or 2 people). When your crew is Tier II, your gang is quality 2 and scale 2 (10 people).

Some crew upgrades will add the "Elite" feature to a gang, which gives them **+1d** when they roll for a given Type. *So, if you're Tier I and have a gang of Elite Soldiers (+1d), they would roll 2d when they attack an enemy gang.*

Creating An Expert

Record the expert's **type** (their specific area of expertise). They might be an Accountant, an Assassin, a Doctor, an Investigator, a Lawyer, etc.

An expert has **quality** equal to your current crew Tier +1. Their scale is always zero (1 person). Your experts increase in quality when your crew moves up in Tier.

Edges & Flaws

When you create a cohort, give them one or two **edges** and an equal number of **flaws**.

Edges

- ★ **Fearsome:** The cohort is terrifying in aspect and reputation.
- ★ **Independent:** The cohort can be trusted to make good decisions and act on their own initiative in the absence of direct orders.
- ★ **Loyal:** The cohort can't be bribed or turned against you.
- ★ **Tenacious:** The cohort won't be deterred from a task.

Flaws

- ★ **Principled:** The cohort has an ethic or values that it won't betray.
- ★ **Savage:** The cohort is excessively violent and cruel.
- ★ **Unreliable:** The cohort isn't always available, due to other obligations, stupefaction from their vices, etc.
- ★ **Wild:** The cohort is drunken, debauched, and loud-mouthed.

Modifying A Cohort

You can add an **additional type** to a gang or expert by spending two crew upgrades. When a cohort performs actions for which its types apply, it uses its full quality rating. Otherwise, its quality is zero. A given cohort can have up to two types.

Using A Cohort

When you send a cohort to achieve a goal, roll their **quality** to see how it goes. Or, a PC can oversee the maneuver by leading a **group action**. If you direct the cohort with orders, roll **Direct**. If you participate in the action alongside the cohort, roll the appropriate action. The quality of any opposition relative to the cohort's quality affects the position and effect of the action.

Cohort Harm & Healing

Cohorts suffer harm similarly to PCs. A cohort can suffer four levels of harm:

- 1. Weakened.** The cohort has reduced effect.
- 2. Impaired.** The cohort operates with reduced quality (-1d).
- 3. Broken.** The cohort can't do anything until they recover.
- 4. Dead.** The cohort is destroyed.

All of your cohorts heal during downtime. If circumstances are amenable for recovery, each cohort removes one level of harm (or two levels of harm instead, if a PC spends a downtime activity helping them recuperate).

If a cohort is destroyed, it may be replaced. Spend **Cash** equal to your Tier +2 to restore it, plus two downtime activities to recruit new gang members, or hire a new expert.

Entanglements

After a payoff, the GM generates an entanglement for the crew using the lists below. Find the column that matches the crew's current **heat** level. Then roll a number of dice equal to their **wanted level**, and use the result of the roll to select which sort of entanglement manifests. If wanted level is zero, roll two dice and keep the lowest result.

Heat 0-3	Heat 4,5	Heat 6+
1. Gang Trouble or The Usual Suspects	1. Gang Trouble or Questioning	1: Flipped or Interrogation
4,5: Rivals or Bust	4,5: Reprisals or Bust	2: Show of Force or Bust
6: Cooperation	6. Show of Force	6: Arrest

Arrest. The authorities have enough evidence to move against the crew, and send a squad (a **gang** at least equal in **scale** to your **Wanted Level**) to arrest you. It's too late for bribes: try to evade them, or every PC with **Trauma** is taken in (see **Justice**).

Cooperation. A +3 status faction asks you for a favor. Agree to do it, or forfeit **Rep** equal to their Tier, or lose **1 status** with them.

Flipped. One of your contacts, patrons, clients, or a group of your customers switches allegiances due to the heat on you. They're loyal to another faction now.

Gang Trouble. One of your gang members causes trouble due to their flaw(s). Pay **Rep** (Tier +1) to lose face and move on, make an example of the offender, or face **Reprisals** from the wronged party.

Interrogation. The authorities round up one of the PCs to question them about the crew's crimes. Either pay them off with **3 Cash**, or they beat you up (**level 2 harm**) and you tell them what they want to know (**+3 Heat**). You can **resist** each of those consequences separately.

Product Bust: The authorities arrest an important NPC involved in one of your Rackets' Products (see **Justice**). The Product is shut down (provides no effect) until the person is freed, or you figure out another way to provide the Product.

Questioning. The authorities grab one of your Contacts or a Racket Captain to question them about your crimes. Make a fortune roll to see how much they talk (**1-3: +2 heat, 4/5: +1 heat, 6: no effect**), or pay the cops off with **Cash (Wanted Level +1)**.

Racket Bust: The authorities raid one of your Rackets and arrest your Captain (see **Justice**). The Racket is shut down for the next downtime phase. It resumes next downtime if your Captain is free, or if you appoint a new Captain.

Reprisals. An enemy faction makes a move against you (or a friend, contact, or vice purveyor). Pay them (**1 Rep** and **1 Cash** per Tier of the enemy) as an apology, allow them to mess with you or yours, or fight back and show them who's boss.

Rivals. A neutral faction throws their weight around. They threaten you, a friend or contact, or one of your vice purveyors. Pay **Rep** equal to their Tier to stand down and move on, or stand up to them and lose **1 status** with them.

Show of Force. A faction with whom you have a negative status makes a play against your business. Give up one of your Products or go to war (drop to -3 status).

The Usual Suspects. The authorities grab someone in the periphery of your crew. One player volunteers a friend or vice purveyor as the person most likely to be taken. Make a **fortune roll** to find out if they resist questioning (**1-3**: +2 heat, **4/5**: level 2 harm, **6**: no effect), or pay the cops off with **1 Cash**.

Justice

When someone involved in your crimes is arrested, it's time to face the music. The GM should determine what charges the person faces, given the crew's activities and Wanted Level.

Bagged Em

After someone in the crew is arrested, clear **Heat**. The authorities are satisfied with their catch, for now.

Legal Representation

If your crew has a **Lawyer** expert, use their **quality** as your **representation**. If not, you can hire **representation** by **acquiring an asset** as a downtime activity.

Bailed Out

For the arrested person to remain available for crew activities, you must pay their **bail** in **Cash**. Make a **fortune roll** using your **representation** quality. If they aren't bailed out, they remain in jail and can't do anything.

- ★ **1-3: Bail** is set at your **Wanted Level +2**.
- ★ **4,5: Bail** is set at your **Wanted Level +1**.
- ★ **6: Bail** is set at your **Wanted Level**.
- ★ **Critical: Bail** is set at your **Wanted Level -1**.

Copping a Plea

After their arrest, the authorities might try to make a **plea deal** with the person. Make a **fortune roll** using your **representation** quality.

- ★ **1-3:** No plea. The authorities aren't interested in them.
- ★ **4,5:** They can plead **Guilty** to a lesser charge in return for information. If accepted, go to **We Find the Defendant...**, but the crew's wanted level is treated as **1** lower for **sentencing**.
- ★ **6:** They can plead **Guilty** to a lesser charge and lighter sentence in return for information. If accepted, go to **We Find the Defendant...**, but the crew's **Wanted Level** is treated as **2** lower for **sentencing**.
- ★ **Critical:** They can **go free** in return for information.

If a PC is offered a plea, it's up to them whether or not to take it. If an NPC is offered a plea, make a **fortune roll** (**2d** for a regular person; **3d** for a gang member, Contact, or equivalent; **4d** for a Captain or Expert; **-2d** if they weren't bailed out). **1-3:** They take the deal. **4,5:** They take the deal unless the crew pays them **Cash** equal to twice their Wanted Level. **6:** They take the deal unless the crew pays them **Cash** equal to their Wanted Level. **Critical:** They're loyal. No deal!

If the deal is accepted, the person has to give up information either on your crew, or another faction of equal or higher Tier. If the information is about your crew, the crew gains a **Wanted Level**. If the information is about another faction, the crew faces **Reprisals**

from them. A PC can choose what sort of information to give up, while an NPC always gives up information about the crew.

See You in Court

If no plea was offered, or if the plea was rejected, the case proceeds to **trial**. Start a new **4**-segment clock for the trial. At the end of every downtime phase, mark one tick on the clock. When the clock completes, the trial begins.

To represent the trial, the GM will create two **6**-segment clocks: **Guilty** and **Not Guilty**. Alternate rolling your **representation** quality to advance Not Guilty, and rolling your **Wanted Level** to advance Guilty (if the defendant is a PC, add their **Trauma level** to the roll). **1-3**: 1 tick. **4,5**: 2 ticks. **6**: 3 ticks. **Critical**: 4 ticks. Whichever clock fills first is the **verdict**. If both clocks fill at the same time, it's a **mistrial**: the trial is over with no further effect.

Jury Tampering

Of course, the PCs may want to influence the court case to strengthen their hand. During the trial, PCs can take actions to influence the trial clocks. Attempting an action roll during the trial gives the crew **2 Heat**. If the crew gains a Wanted Level through jury tampering, and the verdict is guilty, use their original Wanted Level for the sentence.

We Find the Defendant...

If the verdict is **Guilty**, the defendant goes to prison. The term of their sentence depends on the crew's **Wanted Level**. The authorities may also seize their assets.

- ★ **Wanted Level 4**: A life sentence or the death penalty. A PC's entire **Bank** is seized.
- ★ **Wanted Level 3**: A decade or two. Two levels of a PC's **Bank** are seized.
- ★ **Wanted Level 2**: A few to several years. One level of a PC's **Bank** is seized.
- ★ **Wanted Level 1**: Several months to a year.
- ★ **Wanted Level 0**: Probation for xxx downtimes. If a character takes part in a job during probation, take **+1 Heat**.

After sentencing, the crew's **Wanted Level is reduced by one**., unless a plea deal was agreed otherwise.

If the verdict is **Not Guilty**, the defendant goes free, and the crew's **Wanted Level is reduced by one**, or **by two if the defendant was a PC**. The crew's exoneration makes the authorities hesitant to go after them again.

Multiple Defendants

If you wind up in a situation where multiple crew members are arrested at the same time, don't modify the crew's Wanted Level until all of them are resolved. However, at the end of this ordeal, you get to lose one Wanted Level for each person.

Riding the Rap

Most of the time, an arrested character goes to prison somewhere else in the state (or even to federal prison), and is out of sight, out of mind. If you want to still have access to an

arrested PC, take the **Prison Contacts** crew upgrade to ensure arrested characters stay at home in Copperhead County at Bushy Bottom State Prison.

If a PC goes to Bushy Bottom, they can still take **free play** and **downtime** actions (limited by their being in prison), but can't participate in jobs and their player should probably create a new character. However, that may not be the end of their story: long-term projects to manipulate the PC's sentence may get them out sooner. When a PC's prison term ends, they are on **probation** for an amount of time equal to their original sentence.

Bank and Retirement

Your playbook sheet shows your **Bank** tracker. Each full row of Bank indicates a PC's **Bank quality level**, from zero (street life) to four (luxury). A PC's Bank quality can be used during play to reflect their access to disposable income, creature comforts, etc. Most importantly, **a PC uses their Bank level for Vice rolls**. This is America: if you want to indulge, you've got to have capital.

When you mark your character's final Trauma, they are forced to retire from the outlaw life. At a player's option, their character can also retire at any other point during downtime. When a character retires, their Bank level determines the comfort of their remaining years.

Bank 1: Broke. You end up no better, and probably *worse*, than you began: broke and hopeless in America. All of this was for nothing. Jeez.

Bank 2: Decent. You might own your home, but it's not fancy. You still have to work a straight job to survive, but you have an emergency fund and can take vacations.

Stash 3: Pretty Good. A simple life with some comforts. You can last a while on your own if you watch your budget, or support a small family for a time (but good luck saving for college). You can afford to open a small business or make a decent investment.

Bank 4: Rich. Now this is living. You're taken care of for life, enjoying whatever leisure and luxuries you want (as long as you don't blow it all). You might own a classy business or make several investments. Or you might end up the target of the next generation of punks. Enjoy it for now: you won Copperhead County.

Increasing Bank and Tax Evasion

When a PC increases their Bank level, they can change the description of their **personal home** and **vehicle** to reflect their new lifestyle (maybe they move from a cramped apartment to a downtown condo, buy a new car, etc). They're also subject to **Tax Evasion**, the downfall of many outlaws: **when you increase your Bank level, take Heat equal to the new level**. The authorities notice unemployed criminals who don't pay taxes and suddenly start driving sports cars.

Removing Cash from your Bank

If you want to pull **Cash** out of your Bank, you may do so, at a cost. Your character sells off some of their assets and investments in order to get some quick cash. **For every 2 Bank removed, you get 1 Cash.**

Factions of Copperhead County

Criminal Underworld

Albright Solutions: A rich Californian trying to buy his way into the local underworld.

Barnett Mob: A no-drama drug crew ruled by a venerable matriarch.

Baron Carter: An ambitious gangster conquering outward from the city slums.

College Street Crew: PSU dropouts running a party-drug ring.

Gia Đình Núi: Vietnamese expats and their descendants facing an uncertain future.

Heathens MC: A hard-living biker gang aged into an established criminal enterprise.

Local '86ers: Old-timer ex-union miners with unrivaled knowledge of the mountains.

Lockeland Clan: Mountain recluses fighting anyone who'd tell them what to do.

McMorrow Clan: A faded crime family with new connections and new ambitions.

Mountain Mafia: Old-school mobsters insinuated within the county establishment.

Pettimore Clan: A brutal crime family dominant over the rural county for decades.

Rodríguez Brothers: Immigrant brothers running a burglary crew.

Spearpoint Institute: A far-right political group barely covering a violent militia.

County Institutions

Aquarius Farm: An old-school hippie commune attracting new back-to-the-land types.

Betsy Wood For County Clerk: An insurgent, far-right bid to take over county government.

Christian Action Network of TN (CANT): Fundamentalist gadflies and constant nuisances.

Copperhead Conservation Alliance: Environmentalist activists keeping the valley clean.

County Fire Department: Fire responders and paramedics serving county-wide.

County Democratic Party: The anemic local opposition, popular only in a few pockets.

County GOP: The party with an iron grip on county affairs.

County Public Schools: A huge employer and constant political battleground.

County Sheriff: County-wide troopers with a reputation for corruption and brutality.

Gap Banner: The local newspaper, faced with staff cuts and a dwindling subscriber base.

Patterson Police Department: The city cops, somewhat less corrupt than the Sheriff.

Patterson State University: A struggling, third-rate public college. Go Generals!

Prescott Foundation: Keepers of the history of the Copperhead Cherokee and operators of the Talala Lake Cherokee Resort.

Providence of Zion Ministry: An ostentatious prosperity megachurch attracting national attention and donations.

Southern Corrections Corporation: A private prison management company contracted by the state to run Bushy Bottom State Prison.

Tennessee Valley Authority: The operators of the Nuclear Plant and Talala Dam.

Commercial

Below the Line Productions: A TV company scouting for a pseudo-reality franchise.

DAT Systems: An outsourcing firm operating a cavernous call center and other services.

Early Dairy: A large family-owned farm and dairy facility, maker of milks and ice cream.

Fort Alice Regional Medical Center: A sprawling hospital and massive employer.

Freeman & Zeitlin: A real estate company at the forefront of city riverfront redevelopment.

Lester Hawkins Whiskey: A historic distillery now owned by a German conglomerate.

Kuruma Motors: A Japanese car manufacturer leading the alleged rebirth of local industry.

Mims Mutual: A long-time family-owned insurer, sponsor of many local events.

O&G Resource Exploration: A shady new corporation bringing mountaintop mining and shale fracking to the county.

Outlaw Country: A rickety theme park owned by an also-ran native country music starlet.

Zip Burger: A regional fast-food chain attempting to serve a little of everything.

United Auto Assemblers: A doomed effort to organize a union at Kuruma Motors.

Outside Factions

Eastern Tennessee Federal District: The federal district based in Knoxville, with a few agents each of the ATF, DEA, FBI, and USMS.

Tennessee Bureau of Investigation: State police against organized crime and corruption.

Tennessee Highway Patrol: Mobile troopers fighting road-based malfeasance.

Don Bratva: Terrifying Russian mobsters based in New York.

Gambinetti Family: An old-fashioned Italian mafia family in Philadelphia.

Hidalgo Cartel: A brutally efficient Mexican drug cartel with hooks in Florida.

Marauders MC: A large outlaw club based in Texas, moving contraband across the country.

Supreme Folk Nation: A chimera of Atlanta gangs controlling the southern drug game.

Albright Solutions (Tier I)

A rich Californian trying to buy his way into the local underworld.

NPCs: **Jensen Albright** (CEO, *relaxed, brainiac*); **Houston** (bodyguard, *deadly, loyal*).

Assets: An abundance of venture capital and a ruthless mindset.

HQ: Albright Solutions office, Downtown.

Turf: None yet.

Allies: xxx

Enemies: xxx

Situation: Jensen Albright is a young anarcho-capitalist who hit a big payout when his startup sold to a major firm. Unbeknownst to his partners, he had a side career dealing illegal goods and insider information on the dark web. Now independently wealthy, he has made connections in Tennessee and has decided to dedicate his retirement to expanding his illicit dealings. His millions can get him far in Copperhead County, but what does this rich outsider have up his sleeve?

Aquarius Farm (Tier I)

An old-school hippie commune, hanging on and attracting new back-to-the-landers.

NPCs: **"Father" Abraham Ackner** (Leader, *serene, maybe a little creepy*).

Assets: A private and tight-knit community. Extremely potent marijuana.

HQ: Aquarius Farm, a valley deep in the Hollows.

Turf: The farm and its environs.

Allies: xxx

Enemies: xxx

Situation: Aquarius Farm is an anachronism claiming new life in recent years. The commune was founded by Father Abraham in the 70s, when his group of western hippies arrived in Copperhead County seeking their own patch of land. Abraham preaches a blend of Unitarian theology and meditative mysticism, aided by the potent marijuana grown by his flock. The farm nearly fell apart in the 90s after Abraham was arrested on possession and tax evasion, and spent the next several years in federal prison. Now a free man, he has recalibrated the farm to appeal to today's green-minded youth, drawing in a steady trickle of idealists. Can he keep the farm going, or is it just a matter of time until it goes up in smoke again?

Barnett Mob (Tier III)

A no-drama drug crew ruled by a venerable matriarch.

NPCs: **Mabry "Ma" Barnett** (leader, steady, respected); **Gabrielle Barnett** (granddaughter and captain, icy, ambitious).

Assets: A long history and deep tendrils in the African-American community. An aversion to attention and needless conflict.

HQ: A hidden office in Coleman Park.

Turf: Coleman Park, Michelangelo

Allies: Country Democrats, Providence of Zion Ministry, Supreme Folk Nation.

Enemies: Pettimore Clan, Baron Carter.

Situation: The Barnett Mob is the modern incarnation of the county's black mob founded by local bootleggers during Prohibition. Mabry Barnett grew up in the business, and remains in firm control even in her advanced age. She long ago mastered the art of hiding in plain sight, and is commonly seen at community events in Coleman Park. Remaining hidden has allowed her to methodically expand her reach for years, perhaps far enough to grip the entire county. What does she have planned for her final act?

Baron Carter (Tier II)

An ambitious gangster conquering outward from the city slums.

NPCs: **Baron Carter** (leader, regal, conqueror); **Nikole Scruggs** (captain, methodical, composed).

Assets: Battle-hardened soldiers. Big dreams.

HQ: The Down Stroke, Adamstown.

Turf: Adamstown.

Allies: xxx

Enemies: Barnett Mob, College Street Crew, Gia Đình Núi.

Situation: Baron Carter has proved an unstoppable force so far, leading a small gang from his Adamstown block to take over their rivals, and fashioning them all into an army to protect his expanding domain. He dreams of tearing down Copperhead County's establishment and installing himself in its place. Will his rise to power continue unchecked? Or can another faction manage to come at the king?

Betsy Wood For County Clerk (Tier I)

An insurgent, far-right bid to take over county government.

NPCs: **Betsy Wood** (candidate, all smiles, intense); **Paula Shriner** (sister and campaign manager, focused, true believer).

Assets: Riotous supporters.

HQ: Campaign office, Bushy Bottom.

Turf: None.

Allies: CANT, Copperhead Patriots, Leonard Lombardo.

Enemies: County GOP, County Public Schools.

Situation: Betsy Wood is a Bushy Bottom PTA mother, County school board member, and busybody who has frequently clashed with the local establishment over her extreme ideas.

Fed up, she has thrown her hat into the ring to claim the County Clerk's office, with the support of like-minded voters across the county. Her campaign manager and sister, Paula, has some connections to the seedier side of the county, and is not above washing dirty money to keep their insurgency alive.

College Street Crew (Tier I)

College dropouts running a party drug ring.

NPCs: **Jessica Owen** (leader, *glamorous, partier*), **Roy Dunn** (chemist, *realistic, diligent*).

Assets: A thick network of connections with the youth community.

HQ: A former frat house, Glad Avenue.

Turf: Glad Avenue.

Allies: xxx

Enemies: Baron Carter.

Situation: The College Street Crew have been more successful than one might expect from a gang of college dropouts. Over the past year, they've managed to synthesize their own party drugs and sell them to campus-area buyers. But with real criminals breathing down their necks, will they graduate their business, or just get schooled?

Spearpoint Institute (Tier II)

A far-right political group barely masking a nationalist militia.

NPCs: **Dr. Wilbert Watson** (nominal leader, *recluse, cracked*), **"Big Al" Shriner** (fire leader, *hypocrite, violent*), **Howard Hutton** (captain, *furios, zealot*).

Assets: A lot of violent assholes with a lot of guns and a lot of bad opinions.

HQ: A fortified compound with armory and training grounds, hidden in the Hollows.

Turf: The homes and hearts of members across the county.

Allies: Betsy Wood, CANT, County Sheriff.

Enemies: Barnett Mob, Gia Đình Núi.

Situation: The Spearpoint Institute claims to be a Christian publisher, but only seems to print the poorly-typed, raving newsletter of its founder, Dr. Wilbert Watson, a man who hasn't appeared publicly in years. In reality, the Institute is run by "Big Al" Shriner, a veteran of extremist gangs who uses the organization to train an army of hate-drilled soldiers. While the Spearpointers espouse a cross-section of neo-Confederate and fundamentalist dogma, their only true gods are power and terror. With funding from fellow travelers and armed robberies allowing them to stockpile and train with heavy weaponry, it's only a matter of time before they announce their true intentions with a bang. What will they hit? Who will they hurt?

County Democratic Party (Tier II)

The opposition, popular in only a few pockets.

NPCs: **Brenda Garrett** (chairwoman, *shrewd, warrior*).

Assets: Long-suffering voters. Corrupt opponents.

HQ: Party office, Coleman Park.

Turf: Coleman Park, Michelangelo, Wodiga.

Allies: Barnett Mob, County Public Schools, Patterson State University.

Enemies: County GOP.

Situation: For decades, the local Democratic Party, once the powerbrokers of the county, have been doomed to fight a series of losing battles against total Republican control of the political machine. The party's support comes almost entirely from PSU students and faculty, county public employees, and local minority communities. Chairwoman Garrett, finding little support from the similarly anemic state party, is open to new ideas for change.

County GOP (Tier V)

The party with complete control over county affairs.

NPCs: **Lynn Cupp** (chairwoman and County Clerk, *queen, imposing*), **Hank Hangman** (Mayor of Patterson, *amiable, figurehead*).

Assets: Unchecked power. Unshakeable voters.

HQ: Party office, Fox Chase.

Turf: The entire county.

Allies: County Sheriff, Kuruma Motors, Mountain Mafia.

Enemies: Betsy Wood, County Democratic Party.

Situation: Over the last several years, the county seat of Patterson has transformed from a crime-ridden Appalachian backwater to a growing city. The mastermind of this development has been Lynn Cupp, who took over the local Republican Party after the death of her husband, the longtime chairman. Lynn isn't done, and foresees bringing even more money and construction to the county, with her lobbying funded by her mobster friends. Can she build an even greater legacy, or have her efforts only created a house of cards?

County Sheriff (Tier IV)

County-wide police, corrupt and mean.

NPCs: **Jane Cooper-Cupp** (Sheriff, *greedy, sly*), **Bobby Cooper** (Chief Deputy, *loyal, dim*).

Assets: An army of shitkickers-in-badges. The force of the law.

HQ: Sheriff's Department, Patterson.

Turf: The entire county.

Allies: Copperhead Patriots, County GOP, Pettimore Clan.

Enemies: xxx

Situation: Sheriff Jane Cooper-Cupp is the daughter of GOP powerbroker Lynn Cupp, and has been groomed from childhood for a life in government. Since being elected Sheriff, though, she's been more interested leading her deputies in extorting and assaulting criminals, with the help of her husband and second-in-command, Bobby.

Gia Đình Núi (Tier II)

Vietnamese expats and their descendants facing an uncertain future.

NPCs: **Kieu Châu** (patriarch, *hard-bitten, fearsome*), **Bianca Châu** (granddaughter/captain, *cool, intelligent*); **Danny Tran** (enforcer, *wild, quick*).

Assets: Inter-family loyalty. A hard-won siege mentality.

HQ: VN International Market, Adamstown.

Turf: Adamstown.

Allies: Barnett Mob, TVA.

Enemies: Baron Carter, Copperhead Patriots.

Situation: After the Vietnam War, the US government settled waves of South Vietnamese refugees in Patterson. Finding a poor welcome from the local criminal element, members of these families formed the Gia Đình Núi to protect their community from predators. Yet over time, the organization has steadily become more criminal itself, with a growing faction of serious operators in its ranks. The Gia Đình Núi may soon be on the verge of splitting apart, or becoming a different group entirely. Can they remain half-in, half-out of the underworld, or will they crack apart?

Kuruma Motors (Tier IV)

A second-tier Japanese car manufacturer leading the alleged rebirth of local industry.

NPCs: xxx (xxx, xxx, xxx).

Assets: A blank check of government incentives. A lack of labor regulations.

HQ: Factory campus, Adamstown.

Allies: County GOP, xxx.

Enemies: Mountain Mafia, United Auto Assemblers.

Situation: Kuruma Motors is a lesser-known auto manufacturer making a push into the American market. At the tip of their spear is a new factory in Patterson, which was nearly built in a bigger city until the local leadership approved hefty tax breaks, infrastructure spending, and other incentives to seal the deal. The deal has brought a lot of new jobs to the city, but most of them are long-term temporary positions with long hours, middling pay, few benefits, and no protections. The situation has attracted the attention of a few labor organizers who have come to town in a long-shot attempt to unionize the plant. Will Kuruma crush anyone in their path, or can the workers make a stand?

Heathens MC (Tier III)

A hard-living biker gang aged into an established criminal enterprise.

NPCs: **Mickey Mathis** (club president, *paternal, sharp*); **Nolan Carson** (vice president, *devoted, dull*); **Colton Dixon** (sergeant-at-arms, *alcoholic, volcanic*).

Assets: Loud, powerful motorcycles. Bad attitudes. Cool jackets.

HQ: A fortified clubhouse outside Cutter Station.

Turf: Cutter Station.

Allies: Outlaw Country, Marauders MC.

Enemies: Mountain Mafia, Tennessee Highway Patrol.

Situation: Biker gangs have a long history in the Copperhead hills, with their members livening up the secluded highways and byways with their sputtering bikes. In the early 1980s, the Heathens MC rose from the ashes of a forerunner gang, the Bullheads MC, under the direction of Mickey Mathis, a Texan who came to the county working security for "the Lady Outlaw" Jessie Jayne, a minor country starlet born in the county hills. Over the years, his rowdy crew has grown into a serious outlaw biker club, but the old guard is aging, and today's young criminals aren't so drawn to the life of gasoline and leather. Can Mickey lead the Heathens into the future, or will they fade into the sunset?

Local '86 (Tier I)

Former union miners turned to crime after the industry's collapse.

NPCs: **Carl Cleveland** (leader, *bitter, crafty*).

Assets: Knowledge of the secret ways. Deep-seated resentment.

HQ: The Black Diamond bar, Slayton.

Turf: None.

Allies: Pettimore Clan.

Enemies: OGRE.

Situation: Copperhead County was once home to a thriving, but brutal, coal mining industry. Labor unrest came to a head in 1986, when, faced with dwindling veins, the former mining company executed massive layoffs of union miners with little notice. After escalating protests, the company hired thugs to beat the miners into submission, and busted the union apart. The angrier members formed the Local '86 in memory of the bloody events, and sell their knowledge of explosives and the mountains' secret ways to other gangs.

McMorrow Clan (Tier I)

A faded crime family with new connections and new ambitions.

NPCs: **Tracy McMorrow** (leader, *vengeful, educated*); **Victor Perez** (husband, *competent, stealthy*).

Assets: An old name.

HQ: The McMorrow family home, outskirts of Michelangelo.

Turf: None.

Allies: xxx

Enemies: Pettimore Clan.

Situation: The McMorrow Clan was once one of the major crime families in the Copperhead hills, until a blood feud with the Pettimore Clan spiraled into a long war in the late 1970s. After the smoke cleared, the McMorrrows were nearly destroyed, and the Pettimores' rule was unquestioned (though their leader, Earl Lee, took a life sentence for all the dead). Today, only a few small branches of the McMorrrows are left, but prodigal daughter Tracy has returned from a legal career in Florida to rebuild the family, with help from her husband's crew from down south.

Mountain Mafia (Tier IV)

Old-school mobsters insinuated within the county establishment.

NPCs: **Dwight Davenport** (leader, *patient, epicurean*); **Gwen Watkins** (captain, *cutthroat, unsatisfied*); **Jake Scruggs** (enforcer, *veteran, cold-blooded*).

Assets: Political suction. Entrenched power.

HQ: A nondescript office in a downtown building.

Turf: Patterson, especially Downtown; Bushy Bottom; Wodiga.

Allies: County GOP, Patterson Police, Freeman & Zeitlin, Gambinetti Family.

Enemies: Heathens MC, Kuruma Motors, Prescott Foundation, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

Situation: The Mountain Mafia is the modern incarnation of the old-guard white mob operating in Copperhead County since Prohibition. Though they're no longer explicitly Dixie, they're still a conservative outfit enmeshed in the local political and commercial machines. While their dirty money was instrumental in helping the county government attracting new business, the Mafia has had limited success corrupting these newcomers,

particularly the management of the new Kuruma Motors plant. Will the mob find their place in the new economy, or will their influence wither?

O&G Resource Exploration (Tier IV)

A shady new corporation bringing mountaintop mining and shale fracking to the county.

NPCs: xxx (Operations Manager, xxx, xxx).

Assets: Mystery. Deep pockets.

HQ: Company offices, Downtown.

Turf: Slayton, The Hollows.

Allies: County GOP, xxx.

Enemies: Green Gap Project, Local '86.

Situation: Over the last year, O&G has come out of nowhere to buy up a lot of valuable industry in the county, including a timber mill, a limestone quarry, and the old coal mines. Few know who's really in charge of this outfit, but rumors of foreign owners persist. What is clear is that they're using a lot of money to push into ecologically ruinous pursuits like mountaintop mining and fracking, with the full blessing of the county government.

Outlaw Country (Tier II)

A rickety theme park owned by an also-ran native country music starlet.

NPCs: **Jessie Jayne** (Owner, *glamorous, has-been*).

HQ: Company offices, Cutter Station.

Assets: "The Tennessee Tornado", one of the country's fastest roller coasters.

Turf: The Outlaw Country park, outskirts of Cutter Station.

Allies: Heathens MC.

Enemies: xxx

Situation: "The Lady Outlaw" Jessie Jayne was once one of the few female stars of the outlaw country music movement, racking up a few hits in the mid-70s. During her stardom, she hired Texan biker Mickey Mathis to head her security detail, eventually settling down with him near her hometown of Cutter Station and using her money to build Outlaw Country, a theme park celebrating country music and Tennessee moonshine. The park has barely been updated since it was built twenty years ago, and seems to constantly bleed money, especially as fewer and fewer tourists make the trek. Can Outlaw Country survive, or will Copperhead County's biggest star fade away?

Patterson State University (Tier III)

A struggling, third-rate public college. Go Generals!

NPCs: xxx (University President, xxx, xxx), **Alvin Smallwood** (Athletic Director, xxx, xxx).

Assets: A large student body.

HQ: PSU administrative offices, Fort Alice.

Turf: Campus, Fort Alice.

Allies: County Democrats, xxx

Enemies: xxx

Situation: Never Tennessee's best college, Patterson State has especially struggled in recent years as academic funding is continually slashed by the state. The brightest spot of the school is their mid-ranked SEC football team, the Generals, who shocked the county by

managing a positive win rate last season. The University leadership is scheming to double down on this success by building a brand new football stadium near campus, but the price tag is far greater than they can manage on their own.

Pettimore Clan (Tier IV)

A brutal crime family dominant over the rural county for decades.

NPCs: **Buck Junior** (leader, *rash, insecure*); **Horace** (uncle, *crude, bad-tempered*); **Earl Lee** (imprisoned grandfather, *heartless, ancient*).

Assets: An old name and a history of bloodshed. Decades of power and connections.

HQ: An ancestral family compound deep within the Hollows.

Turf: Slayton, Michelangelo, The Hollows.

Allies: County Sheriff, Local '86, people of the Hollows, Hidalgo Cartel.

Enemies: Barnett Mob, McMorrow Clan.

Situation: The Pettimores have been in control of back-county crime for decades, dealing with any threat swiftly and mercilessly. But with their leader, Buck Earl, dead in a drug-lab sabotage (see **Fire on the Mountain**), the family is in a precarious position. Can Buck Junior take his father's place? Who will be the target of the family's revenge?

Prescott Foundation (Tier III)

Keepers of the legacy of the Copperhead Cherokee, and operators of the Talala Lake Cherokee Resort.

NPCs: xxx (Chairwoman, xxx, xxx).

Assets: Federal oversight. Lots of valuable property.

HQ: Foundation offices, Wodiga.

Turf: Wodiga.

Allies: xxx

Enemies: Mountain Mafia.

Situation: Like most of Tennessee, Copperhead County once belonged to the Cherokee Nation. The trading post of Wodiga was built in the early 1800s by Joseph Prescott, a Cherokee planter and merchant of partial Tennessean descent who was an influential figure in frontier Tennessee. During the Indian Removal of the 1830s, Prescott was able to secure Tennessean citizenship for his family and several others in his employ, and remain in Wodiga after its annexation. Today, his descendants operate the Prescott Foundation in Wodiga, owning much of the city through a federally-supervised land trust, as well as the Talala Lake Cherokee Resort, a popular tourist destination offering a variety of recreational activities. The Foundation has largely steered clear of the criminal element, but is now exploring the possibility of bringing casino gaming to the Resort, to the chagrin of the Mountain Mafia and others. Is the Foundation stepping into a minefield?

Rodríguez Brothers (Tier I)

Stick-up artists now running a burglary and auto-theft crew.

NPCs: **Javier Rodríguez** (older brother, *responsible, serious*); **Manuel Rodríguez** (younger brother, *joyful, relaxed*).

Assets: The element of surprise.

HQ: An office above a tobacco shop, Wodiga.

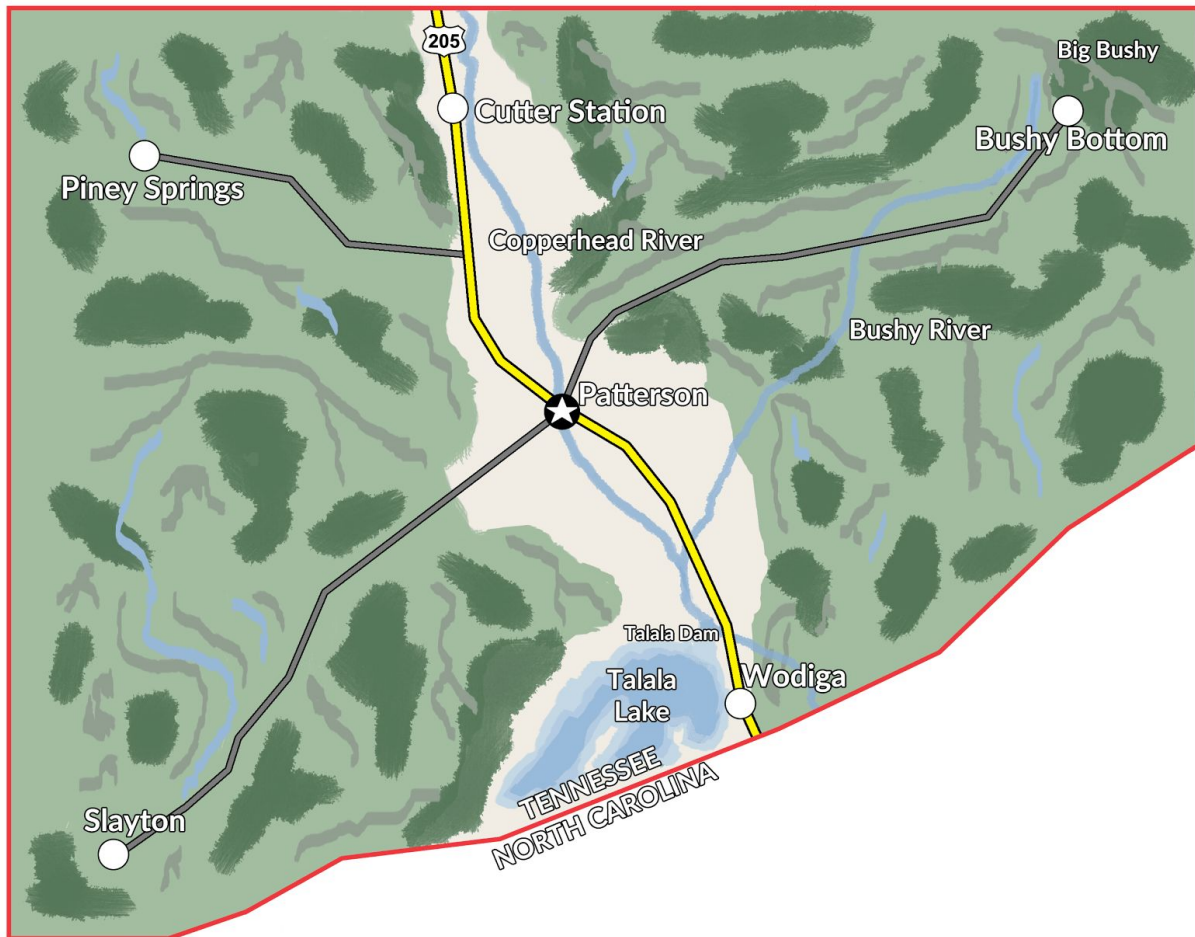
Turf: None.

Allies: xxx

Enemies: xxx

Situation: Javier and Manny Rodríguez went from Mexico to bouncing around the South, sticking up gas stations, stores, and drug dealers, until arriving in Copperhead County and deciding to set up shop. They have since moved on from simple armed robbery to more sophisticated larcenies, hiring an experienced gang of thieves to support them. Will they find a big enough pot of gold in their new home, or will they only piss off a more powerful faction?

Cooley County, Tennessee



Big Bushy: One of the tallest peaks in Appalachia, towering over the entire county.

Bushy Bottom: A quiet small town dominated by the nearby nuclear plant and Bushy Bottom State Prison.

Copperhead River: A tributary of the Tennessee River and the namesake of the county.

Cutter Station: A small agricultural town with a suburban center surrounded by farms and ranches. Home to the Outlaw Country theme park.

Highway 205: A US highway connecting the county to the outside world. Zip up to the rest of Tennessee, or zip south to the Carolinas and Georgia.

The Hollows: Narrow valleys interspersed through the mountains, some containing quiet homes.

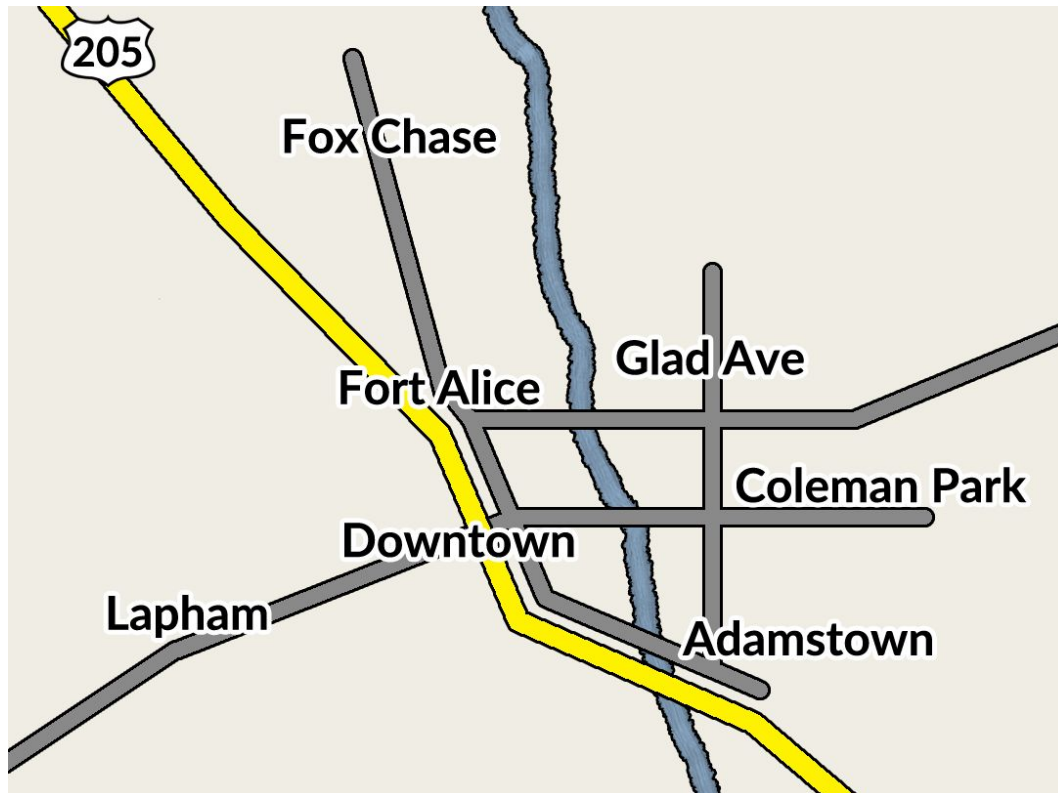
Patterson: The county seat, an industrial city experiencing redevelopment pains. Home to neighborhoods like Fox Chase, Fort Alice, Glad Avenue, Lapham, Coleman Park, and Adamstown.

Michelangelo (formerly *Piney Spring*): A small mountain town. Home to the Lester Hawkins Distillery and a large limestone marble quarry.

Slayton: A former mining town, now little more than a strip serving the surrounding mountain roads.

Talala Lake: A reservoir formed by damming the Copperhead River.

Wodiga: A tourist town with a long Cherokee heritage. Home to the Talala Lake Cherokee Resort.



Adamstown: The city's poorest neighborhood, home to struggling but proudly diverse communities. Home to the new Kuruma Motors plant.

Coleman Park: A historic middle-class neighborhood, the heart of Patterson's African-American community.

Downtown: The city's urban core, infused with cash by the county government.

Fort Alice: An affluent historic neighborhood mixing urban businesses with expensive homes. Includes Fort Alice Medical Center and the Patterson State University campus.

Fox Chase: A high-class suburb home to ancient money.

Glad Ave: A gentrifying area home to many students and cultural businesses.

Southwest (formerly *Lapham*): A large working-to-middle class residential area.

