

Getting Outside



Fayette County's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan





Executive Summary

Why is the Plan important?

The goals and initiatives of *Getting Outside* are broad and far-reaching. The Plan explores initiatives from building awareness about natural resource conservation to optimizing the use of existing facilities to promoting improvement of physical and mental well-being. *Getting Outside* defines a series of recommended planning principles, roles and projects for the County's leaders and residents to pursue. Foremost, the Plan identifies how cooperation among stakeholders of local, regional, County and State initiatives can translate into success.

Overview

Getting Outside summarizes the Plan's parks and recreation recommendations, which are manifestations of the Plan's mission, goals and findings from technical analyses. The recommendations have been organized into various themes, or elements, which relate to the project's key issues and which have emerged from the project's analyses, assessments, evaluation and public input processes:

- Administration
- Facilities
- Maintenance
- Municipal Capacity Building and Support
- Programming, Promotion and Public Awareness
- Funding

Considerations

How can Fayette County achieve its desired goals? To develop a realistic answer to this question, several factors can be considered. The factors shaping the ways in which future success can be realized are:

- Ownership
- Staffing
- County and Municipal Coordination
- Securing Finances
- Accessibility of Recreation
- Assessing Needs
- Residence Health—Children and Adolescence
- Demographic Considerations
- Spreading the Word

Mission Statement

The core component of the County's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and trails Plan is its Mission Statement. The Plan's Mission Statement is based upon the input of key community stakeholders, the Plan's Steering Committee, County leaders and residents.

Enhance the quality of life for Fayette County residents and visitors by providing parks, recreational facilities, open space areas, greenways and trails that:

- Promote improvement of physical and mental well-being;
- Nurture family relationships;
- Build awareness about the benefits of conserving sensitive natural resources.

Goals

The purpose of defining the Plan's goals is to establish consistency with its identified mission.

- #1 Encourage public/private partnerships to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities and encourage related economic development;
- #2 Continue partnerships which enhance the relationship and quality of municipal and regional scale facilities and activities;
- #3 Examine various marketing initiatives in order to promote County recreation opportunities and natural resources;
- #4 Ensure consistent maintenance and updated regulation of parks, open spaces and recreation facilities;
- #5 Create additional administrative positions that support the County and its Municipalities to oversee parks, recreation, open space, greenways and trails decisions; and
- #6 Pursue potential sources of funding for parks and recreation needs and improvements.

Sources: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Game Commission

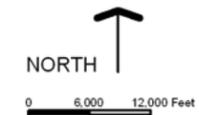
This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

PROJECT CORRIDORS

#	Name	#	Name
1	Mon River Trail	23	S.R. 40 Scenic Corridor
2	Yough/Mon Link	24	S.R. 381 Scenic Corridor
3	Redstone/ Yough Connector	25	S.R. 711 Scenic Corridor
4	North Brown's Run Trail		
5	Dunlap Creek Greenway		
6	Masontown/Brownsville Trail		
7	South Brown's Run Trail		
8	Forbes Wildlife Corridor		
9	Sheepskin Trail		
10	Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor		
11	Southern Coal and Coke Heritage Trail		
12	Yough River Greenway/ Great Allegheny Passage		
13	Jacob's Creek Greenway		
14	Laurel Highlands Greenway		
15	Normalville Connector		
16	Indian Creek Valley Trail		
17	Laurel Ridge Passage		
18	Chestnut Ridge Connector		
19	SoFay Trail		
20	Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor		
21	Laurel Hill Greenway		
22	Yough Dam Trail		

LEGEND

	Fayette County Boundary		BIKE/PEDESTRIAN TRAILS Existing
	Planning District		Proposed/Planned
	Major Roads		WATER TRAILS Existing
	Rivers, Streams and Lakes		Proposed/Planned
	County Parks (Fayette and Non-Fayette)		GREENWAYS Proposed/Planned
	State Forests, Parks, and Gamelands; Federal Lands		SCENIC TRAVEL/HERITAGE CORRIDORS Proposed/Planned
	No Park Need		Trail/Greenway ID Number
	Neighborhood Parks		Landmark Community
	Metropolitan Parks		
	Neighborhood, Metropolitan and Regional Parks		



*Comprehensive Parks, Recreation,
Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan*



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Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments

Getting Outside is dedicated to the children of Fayette County in hopes that they, the County's future residents and leaders, will showcase the memorable, fun and healthy outdoor recreation and conservation experiences in the County to those living within the region and beyond.

The development of Fayette County's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan represents a collaborative effort of the public and private sectors. Defining the many possibilities from which the County's residents, businesses and visitors can benefit has been possible through the insight of many including:

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee guiding the preparation of the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan was prepared with the guidance of representatives of various local, regional, County and State Organizations including:

Fallingwater
German Township
Fayette County Office of Planning, Zoning and
Community Development
Fayette County Manager's Office
Fayette County Redevelopment Authority
FayPenn Economic Development
Fort Necessity National Battlefield
Luzerne Township
Ohiopyle State Park
National Road Heritage Corridor
PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Redstone Township

Entities of Public Service

Fayette County Commissioners
Angela Zimmerlink, Chairperson
Joseph A. Hardy, III
Vince Vicites
Vince Zapatosky
Fayette County Office of Planning, Zoning and Community
Development
Sara Rosiek, Executive Director
Tammy Stenson, Executive Director (former)

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

This Plan was funded by the residents of Fayette County and through a grant provided by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Photo Credits

"Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program" of the Western
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PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Adrian Horvath, Recreation Planner

Environmental Planning and Design, LLC

Getting Outside was prepared by:
Environmental Planning and Design, LLC
100 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
epd@epd-pgh.com

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Recreation and Conservation.



Acknowledgments



Resolution

On file at the Fayette County Courthouse.



Revolution



Preface

Preface

With its rivers of whitewater, its unique woodland habitats and its historic battlefields, Fayette County's natural and cultural resources provide residents and visitors alike with one of Pennsylvania's finest "playgrounds."; yet to many, Fayette County's outdoor opportunities remain unknown. *Getting Outside: Fayette County's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan* strives to address the wide range of popular recreation experiences, along with those that many have to discover. *Getting Outside* is a guidebook for shaping and balancing the management, maintenance, promotion and use of the County's natural, cultural, and recreation resources.

Why is the Plan Important?

The goals and initiatives of *Getting Outside* are broad and farreaching. The Plan explores initiatives from building awareness about natural resource conservation to optimizing the use of existing facilities to promoting improvement of physical and mental well-being. *Getting Outside* defines a series of recommended planning principles, roles and projects for the County's leaders and residents to pursue. Foremost, the Plan identifies how cooperation among stakeholders of local, regional, County and State initiatives can translate into success.

Components of the Plan

Fayette County's Planning, Zoning and Community Development Office worked with a Steering Committee, professional recreation planning consultants and the Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to develop *Getting Outside*. From maintained park lands to untouched opens spaces, each of the Plan's following chapters explores the varying facets of outdoor resource planning and management: administration, facilities, programming, maintenance and financing. The Plan's chapters include:

- Section 1: Opportunities and Challenges
- Section 2: Mission Statement and Goals
- Section 3: Parks and Recreation Recommendations

- Section 4: Open Space, Greenways and Trails Recommendations
- Section 5: Action Plan
- Section 6: Background Data

In addition to parks, *Getting Outside* presents a long-term strategy to develop a County-wide network of greenways and trails. Greenways are linear corridors, comprised of both land and water resources, serving to connect key natural resources and open spaces. In recent years, one greenway/trail within Fayette County has risen to regional and national notoriety: the Great Allegheny Passage, which links Pittsburgh to western Maryland and, ultimately, to Washington, D.C. In addition to this major hiking/biking thoroughfare, other future designated recreation and conservation-oriented greenway corridors in Fayette County can provide opportunities to:

- Expand local and regional-scale recreation;
- Enhance an area's attractiveness;
- Provide alternative transportation routes/connections;
- Provide for and/or maintain continuity of critical natural habitats; and
- Improve or restore stream quality.

Public Involvement

Getting Outside is the result of many individuals' and organizations' involvement. Outreach conducted throughout the planning process include the project's Steering Committee, a Resident Survey, a Municipal Leaders' Survey and a School Survey. Other public involvement specifically included two Public Meetings and elected officials briefings.

Steering Committee

The Plan's Steering Committee members represent a broad range of recreation and conservation interests in the County. This committee of volunteers assisted the County's Office of Planning, Zoning and Community Development and the Plan's recreation consultant through a number of facets. In addition to contributing information regarding local community activities, members provided in-depth insights about opportunities of State and Federal facilities and other recreation and conservation efforts happening throughout the County.

Municipal Leaders' Survey

Each of the County's 42 municipalities received a survey soliciting opinions and information about current recreation opportunities and challenges. 38 out of the County's 42 communities provided feedback about the opportunities and concerns that exist for their residents. Overall, the survey revealed that municipalities generally have two park and open space-related concerns: the ability to finance recreation facilities and programming as well as minimizing vandalism.

School Survey

The County's Office of Planning, Zoning and Community Development worked with School District leaders to distribute a 2-page survey to students in the 5th, 8th, 10th and 12th grade classes of each of the nine school districts in the County. While some school districts chose not to participate, an analysis of responses received revealed there are numerous outdoor recreation opportunities that the majority of children in Fayette County have yet to discover. Promoting children's exploration and interaction with the outdoors can also be one tool to encouraging healthy lifestyles in the County.

Resident Survey

A Resident Survey was designed and distributed to County households to identify citizens' preferences and opinions about recreation. The survey was also available to through the County's web site. Many surveyed residents noted they are not familiar with some or all of the County's Parks including locations and types of recreation facilities provided. When residents participate in park and recreation activities, a majority of households travel to their destinations by car —often driving more than five miles from home.

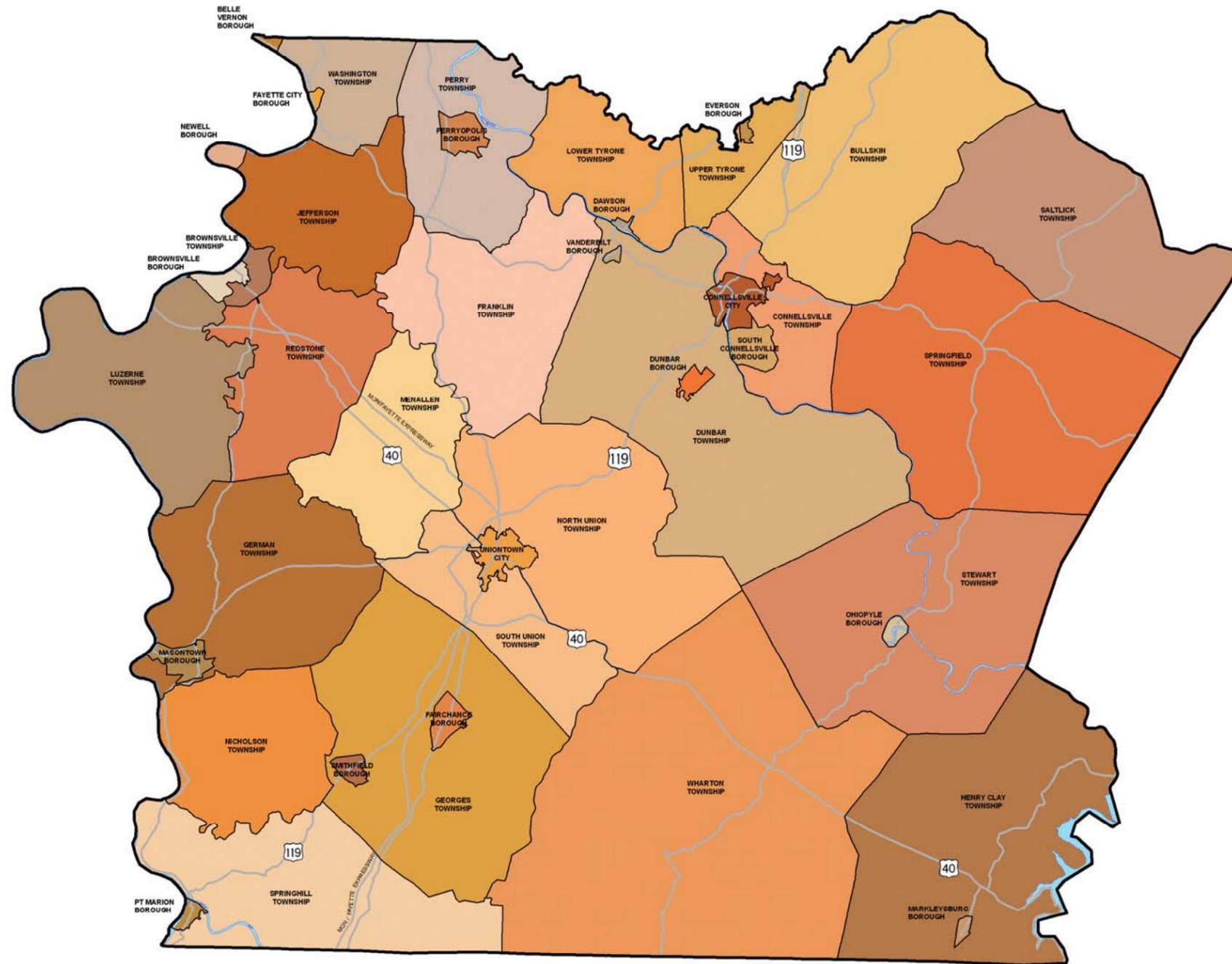
Public Meeting

A series of public meetings were also conducted as part of developing the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trail Plan. At each meeting, citizens contributed feedback to the Plan's analyses as well as ideas and recommendations for enhancing recreation opportunities in the County.

Municipalities Map

Within each of the 42 communities of Fayette County, opportunity exists for residents and visitors alike to explore a range of natural, recreational and/or cultural resources. The physical characteristics and socio-economic patterns of each

community are wide-ranging. In examining recreation trends throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania and the tri-state region (PA, WV and MD), Fayette County has a growing community of businesses and outreach organizations which offer unique opportunities which build on the County's natural resources.

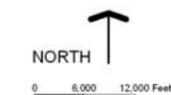
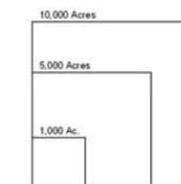


Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

LEGEND

- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Rivers
- Major Roads





Section 1

Opportunities and Challenges

Understanding Existing Influences

How can Fayette County achieve its desired parks, recreation, open space and greenway goals? To develop a realistic and achievable answer to this question, several factors can be considered. The following factors are shaping the ways in which the future successes can be realized.

Ownership

Fayette County is approximately half of a million acres in size, and about 10% of this land is formally designated as park and recreation land. A majority of this land is owned and managed by the State of Pennsylvania as either State Park or State Forest facilities, which are attractions to local, regional and national audiences.

The County owns three park sites totaling approximately 500 acres, or one-tenth of 1% of the overall amount of recreation land in the County. Based upon municipal data, an additional 1,200 acres of locally owned and managed parks can be found within the County's 42 municipalities.

Staffing

A number of County Offices are involved in the planning and maintenance of parks and recreation; however currently, recreation-related work tasks are minor components of each of the County staff's responsibilities

Planning, Zoning and Community Development

Planning for the County's three park and recreation sites is currently coordinated through the County's Office of Planning, Zoning and Community Development. In addition to parks coordination, the Planning, Zoning, and Community Development Office is responsible for zoning in 32 of the County's 42 municipalities. The Department provides grant writing assistance to the municipalities and non-profit agencies throughout Fayette County. The Department has non-union employees who were specifically hired to write grants.

County Manager

The County Manager administers the maintenance and operations at the three regional parks through the Buildings and Grounds Office and the Bridge Department. There are three full time employees in the Buildings and Grounds Office and seven employees in the Bridge Department. The crews are based at the Public Works Complex in Menallen Township near Dunlap Creek Park. The fulltime employees are Service Employees International Union (SEIU) union members under a contract that expires in December, 2009. All employees have job descriptions.

Other Support

The employees of the Buildings and Grounds Office, as well as the Bridge Department, work a paid work week. The crews have a one hour lunch (½ hour paid, ½ hour unpaid), and the crews work a Monday through Friday schedule.

One employee from the Buildings and Grounds Office, along with prisoners from the Fayette County Prison facility, mow, provide litter pick-up, and clean pavilions and restrooms weekdays at Dunlap Creek Park and German-Masontown Park. The employees of the Bridge Department provide assistance to maintain the roads and parking areas or work on larger maintenance or capital improvement projects as needed. The German-Masontown Parks and Recreation Board hires a part-time employee to clean up the pavilions and restrooms on weekends at the German-Masontown Park. Dumpsters for garbage removal are provided under contract at Dunlap Creek Park and German-Masontown Park.

The County contracts with Goodwill Industries, Inc. to mow, pick up litter/remove garbage, and clean pavilions and restrooms at Jacobs Creek Park. Bullsken Township maintains and operates the athletic facility at Jacobs Creek Park. The County contracts with Fayette Engineering to perform the required annual inspection of Dunlap Dam and Greenlick Dam. The County, through its insurance provider, inspects the park facilities at the three regional parks on an annual basis. The County Manager meets every weekday at 7:00 AM with the member of the Buildings and Grounds Office who maintains the Dunlap Creek Park and the German-Masontown Park and reviews work tasks. That crew member maintains a notebook to identify work needs and work completed.

County and Municipal Coordination

As related to parks and recreation, the coordination between County and community-scale recreation facilities and activities is currently limited. As part of creating *Getting Outside*, the County has begun compiling a database of local park inventory data for each of the 42 municipalities. In completing this first comprehensive collection of municipal-related recreation data, both the County and local officials are able to recognize there are many "untapped" opportunities for recreation in many communities. Initiating and continuing dialogue about how these existing resources can be utilized to expand opportunities for residents to get outside and enjoy the outdoors will be a key to optimizing the future use, amenities and safety of these facilities.

Securing Finances

The Parks and Recreation portion of the County's Buildings and Grounds Office Budget is solely funded by tax dollars. While the County and a majority of its municipalities do annually budget for parks and recreation, limited resources are typically allocated each year. Within the County's 42 municipalities, the majority of municipalities budget less than \$2,500 per year for recreation. Based upon an evaluation of State budgeting records, the amount of monies budgeted in the County and in municipalities has generally remained the same for the past several years.

The County collects no revenues as a result of its parks and recreation ownership or operations. All revenue resulting from the park and recreation program fees, charges, permits, concessions, etc. at the German-Masontown Park is collected by the German-Masontown Park and Recreation Board to offset its expenses.

Accessibility of Recreation

Topography, infrastructure availability and land ownership influence patterns of development in the County. With its rolling hills, established regional road network and extensive availability of public utilities, the western portion of the County supports a majority of its residents. Higher elevations, steeper slopes, as well as more limited road and infrastructure network characterize the County's sparsely populated eastern half.

Consequently, as part of these varying characteristics, two different geographic regions exist in the County. One of the greatest challenges with this pattern relates to recreation access. While recreation opportunities are abundant in County's east, they are sparse in the populated west. Moreover, pedestrian access between the west's more intensely populated areas and the east's larger public open spaces is currently limited. The County does not have any organized recreation programming for their facilities.

Assessing Needs

As part of the planning process, the County completed a series of technical analyses based upon planning criteria defined by the National Recreation and Parks Association. Park and open space acreage was evaluated in context of current and projected population trends to identify what needs, if any, for additional recreation space exist for County residents.

Three surveys—for residents, school children and municipal leaders (see Appendix)—were developed and issued as part of the County's Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan. Each of the surveys was developed to understand current park visitation patterns and identify what future recreation preferences are desired. From the nearly 3,500 households, 1,000 students and 38 municipalities which responded, a few primary planning challenges emerged:

1. Accessibility of recreation areas to existing population centers is perceived to be limited;
2. Available funds for the financing of parks and recreation is relatively limited;
3. Vandalism, and the desire to reduce it, of parks and recreation areas is a common concern among many municipalities;

4. Even with tens of thousands of local, County, State and Federal park and open space acres available to County residents, few visit or are aware of these sites;
5. For those who actively participate in recreation activities, a majority of residents (from the young to the old), do so for five (5) or fewer hours per week; and
6. The vast majority of the County population travel five (5) or more miles to meet their leisure needs.

See *Park Assessments and Surveys* in Appendix

Residence Health—Children and Adolescence

In January 2000, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services launched *Healthy People 2010* as a nationwide health promotion and disease prevention effort. Within the County, this program is promoted as "Steps to a Healthier PA." Based upon the project's findings, several notable trends exist in examining Fayette County residents' health. The County ranks as one of the top counties in the Commonwealth with residents experiencing several serious health problems including coronary heart disease, obesity and diabetes. These conditions are often correlated to "inactive lifestyles."

Another aspect of resident well-being is access to adequate infrastructure. The status of infrastructure planning efforts in the communities varies. It is recognized that the provision of adequate infrastructure service is an important component of both promoting resident health and well-being along with improved economic development.

Demographic Considerations

Although experiencing some specific periods of growth, Fayette County's overall population has declined over the past forty five (45) years—from 169,340 persons in 1960 to 148,644 in 2000. The US Census estimates an additional population decline (2.0%) to 145,760 in 2005. A variety of factors, including shifting economies, have contributed to these patterns.

The population of senior citizens (65 years of age and older) has increased 3.2% from 26,076 in 1990 to 26,930 in 2000, but the population of school aged children (0-18) has decreased 3.8% from 35,083 to 33,754 during this same timeframe. The size of family households has also decreased, and these trends are expected to continue.

These factors, coupled with the retirement of the "baby boomers" over the next 15 years, are likely to affect the ways in which the County prioritizes its outreach related to recreation and conservation.

The County's businesses and industry sectors have been impacted. (As part of losing population) Collectively, these factors have decreased the tax base that supports the services the County provides including the availability of personnel and maintenance.

In spite of these changes there has been positive growth in some portions of the County. The growth has occurred in Bullskin, Saltlick, and Springfield Townships. Job growth has occurred as a result of the expansion of the Seven Springs Resort and the expansion of the industrial complex around the Sony Plant in New Stanton, Westmoreland County. Population growth, housing and business development is also being seen around the Nemaquin Woodlands Resort and Spa.

Tourism

Tourism is the second largest industry in Pennsylvania. Tourism and the County's existing parks and recreation facilities/areas share a very close relationship. Fayette County has a large number of primary tourist attractions: Nemaquin Woodlands Resort and Spa, Seven Springs Resort (Somerset County), Ohiopyle State Park, Youghiogheny River Dam and Lake, Fort Necessity, the National Road Corridor, Youghiogheny River Trail, and the Laurel Highlands Trail, to name a few. The local Municipal and smaller private park and recreation related facilities and programs often provide a second tier of attractions to support the primary attractions. As one succeeds, so can the other. Ways in which Fayette County harnesses the positive impacts of the tourism industry can bring benefits to both local and regional economics. Tourism can provide opportunity to elevate residents' sense of pride through showcasing and maintaining what make the places in which they live special.

Cooperative Efforts

Survey responses from municipal officials and school students also indicate that limited "after-school" programs, with the exception of organized athletics in older grades, are available for students to attend. Reasons for this could vary widely, from finances to available volunteers. Consequently, many school facilities become inaccessible for recreation purposes after school hours. From analysis of existing



conditions, *Getting Outside* identifies an important question as part of future planning strategies could be, "What, if any, recreation opportunities could be developed or expanded through a County-Municipality-School partnership?"

Spreading the Word

As part of public meeting discussion, survey feedback and field reviews, two additional observations about the current marketing of recreation can be gleaned:

1. Recreation-oriented promotion in Fayette County focuses on State Parks and other regionally significant historical venues. The Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau is an entity promoting tourism throughout Fayette, Westmoreland and Somerset Counties. The audience focus typically extends to those living outside the region. A similar type of outreach geared toward the local County population is not known to currently exist for Fayette County.
2. Wayfinding, or an illustrative system, to navigate park goers to both County and local recreation destinations, is limited. Approximately half of those surveyed have never visited the County-owned Dunlap Creek Park, German-Masontown Park and Jacobs Creek Park. This could be for a variety of reasons including lack of familiarity with the Park's locations. Very little to no signage exists in navigating locals or visitors to County or municipal parks.

A Decade of Accomplishments

1997-1999

A Natural Diversity Inventory was completed for Fayette County in 1998 and 1999. On May 29, 1997, Fayette County received a Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant in the amount of \$40,000.00 to complete a Natural Heritage Inventory of Fayette County. This study was completed by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Bullskin Township received a \$50,000.00 Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Keystone Conservation Fund Grant on May 29, 1997 to

develop sport facilities at Jacobs Creek Park. The facilities constructed include one baseball field, a combination football/soccer field, a concession facility, an access road and parking area, chain link fencing, and landscaping.

2000-2002

The Fayette County Planning Commission completed an update of the County's Comprehensive Plan in 2000, which is in compliance with amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code.

The Dunlap Lake Task Force Committee obtained a \$5,000.00 DCED Grant and installed a handicap asphalt paved handicap walkway of the eastern side of the lake at Dunlap Creek Park.

The County, in cooperation with the Regional Trail Corporation, was obtained funding to develop the 32-mile Sheepskin Trail. The Sheepskin Trail will link the Youghiogheny Trail at Wheeler Bottom (Dunbar) with the West Virginia's Monongahela River Trail. Fayette County has received nearly \$800,000.00 in grants to construct this trail. In 2000, The County received a federal Transportation Equity Act (TEA 21) grant in the amount of \$366,000.00 to construct the 12 mile trail from Connellsville to Uniontown and a Pennsylvania DCNR grant in the amount of \$60,000.00 for the Brown's Run Trail (8.3 miles) to connect the Mon River to the Sheepskin Trail. The County received an additional \$375,000.00 (TEA 21) grant in 2002 for the trail.

2005-2007

The County replaced and upgraded, to National Playground Safety Standards, two play areas at German-Masontown Park, three play areas at Dunlap Creek Park, and four play areas at Jacobs Creek Park.

The County initiated and adopted its first Comprehensive, Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan to identify recommendations and strategies for improving conservation of natural resources and promoting resident well-being through recreation.



*Opportunities and
Challenges*



Section 2

Mission Statement and Goals

Planning Overview

Fayette County, encompassing 790 square miles, is a Fourth Class County located in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The County is enabled to function and operate under legislation created by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's County Code for Fourth through Eighth Class Counties. County classifications in Pennsylvania are based on population; a Fourth Class County contains a population between 145,000 and 209,999. County planning is based on the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, PL 805, No. 247 of public law.

With nearly 150,000 residents in the year 2000, Fayette County ranks as the 23rd most populated county in Pennsylvania. It has a population density of 188 residents per square mile. Fayette County's population grew 2.3% between 1990 and 2000, ranking it 37th among the counties in population growth in Pennsylvania.

Fayette County has two predominate cities, Uniontown, which is the County Seat and primary service center, and Connellsville; however, the County is predominately rural in character with nearly 90% of its total land area being potentially classified as undeveloped. The majority of this undeveloped land is devoted to forest and agriculture uses.

Building on the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Fayette County officials worked with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to help fulfill its State-wide goal to plan for the wise use and enhancement of recreation and conservation in the Commonwealth. Subsequently, Fayette's leaders and residents began to evaluate how they can harness and best coordinate the many recognized as well as "unrealized" possibilities that exist for parks, recreation, open space, greenways and trails in the County.

In order for this Plan to flourish, recommendations for parks, recreation, open space, greenways and trails should be evaluated annually in context of the County's economic development planning initiatives as well as other community and regional planning projects.

Mission Statement

The core component of the County's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and trails Plan is its Mission Statement. The purpose of establishing a Mission Statement is to clearly define the intention and focus of the effort at hand. The Plan's Mission Statement, outlined below, is based upon the input of key community stakeholders, the Plan's Steering Committee, County leaders and residents.

Enhance the quality of life for Fayette County residents and visitors by providing parks, recreational facilities, open space areas, greenways and trails that:

- *Promote improvement of physical and mental well-being;*
- *Nurture family relationships;*
- *Build awareness about the benefits of conserving sensitive natural resources.*

Goals

Goals represent what wants to be achieved. The purpose of defining the Plan's goals is to establish consistency with its identified mission. Listed below are the overarching goals of the County's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan.

- #1 Encourage public/private partnerships to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities and encourage related economic development;*
- #2 Continue partnerships which enhance the relationship and quality of municipal and regional scale facilities and activities;*
- #3 Examine various marketing initiatives in order to promote County recreation opportunities and natural resources;*
- #4 Ensure consistent maintenance and updated regulation of parks, open spaces and recreation facilities;*
- #5 Create additional administrative positions that support the County and its Municipalities to oversee parks, recreation, open space, greenways and trails decisions; and*
- #6 Pursue potential sources of funding for parks and recreation needs and improvements.*



*Mission Statement
and Goals*



Section 3

Parks and Recreation Recommendations

Overview

The following discussion summarizes the Plan's parks and recreation recommendations. The recommendations are manifestations of the Plan's mission, goals and findings from technical analyses. The recommendations represent a series of inter-related actions, policies and strategies that the County and its various recreation providers should implement incrementally over time. The recommendations have been organized into various themes which relate to the project's key issues. These themes, or elements, have emerged from the project's analyses, assessments, evaluation and public input processes. The Park and Recreation elements include the following:

- Administration
- Facilities
- Maintenance
- Municipal Capacity Building and Support
- Programming, Promotion and Public Awareness
- Funding

Outlined below are the specific recommendations associated with each element. The recommendations provide detailed direction regarding policies, projects, actions and assignments. In some instances, these recommendations will also be applicable to greenways and trail planning strategies outlined in the following section. When practical, additional information, examples and case studies regarding the Plan's specific recommendations or policies have been included in the document's appendix.

Administration

"Administration" represents the foundation of the Plan's success. This element defines the principal roles and responsibilities for Fayette County's park and recreation provider, whether public, quasi-public or private-sector. At the County level, decisions regarding parks and recreation are made in cooperation between the Planning Office and the County Commissioners.

Opportunities for inter-government cooperation and public-private partnerships are identified, and a set of policies to

coordinate future planning activities is established. In addition to the roles and responsibilities discussion, the Administration element integrates recommendations into short-term and long-term organizational strategies, which focus on the administrative, operational and staffing needs and are designed to provide a flexible framework with which this organizational structure can evolve as the Plan is implemented.

Parks and Natural Resources Division

#1 Form a formal Parks and Natural Resources Division
A Parks and Natural Resources Division should be created as part of the County's administrative system. In the short-term, to optimize available resources and knowledge of current administrative procedures, the Division should be housed by the County's Office of Planning, Zoning and Community Development. In the long-term, the Division will become its own "Office" in the County's administrative structure. The timing of this structure will likely depend upon the pace of development and the evolution of other municipal and regional recreation-related efforts.

No matter the organizational structure, the Division should strive to keep informed of trends of the park and recreation profession. One way to achieve this is to establish memberships in the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and the National Recreation and Park Association. These groups provide outstanding literature as well as valuable training opportunities.

The Division should develop a policy manual to outline rules for employees, participants, and volunteers. The manual should, at a minimum, include the following:

- Mission Statement;
- Safety policies for all facilities including first aid provisions;
- Policies for inclement weather;
- Policies for unsupervised youth, transportation rules, and other common program hazards;
- Promotion guidelines, such as a format for news releases, and public service announcements;
- Joint use agreements as necessary;

- Policies for fees and charges, including policies for non-residents;
- Rental policies and fees;
- Relationships with volunteer or private organizations;
- Fund raising policies;
- Policies for acceptance of gifts or donations;
- Requirements for record-keeping;
- Job descriptions for key positions;
- Risk Management policies, and
- Park rules

#2 Update Planning Efforts
The Division will also be responsible for providing periodic updates to the County's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan and to implement the recommendations and actions identified in this plan. The County's Division of Parks and Natural Resources should be charged with the responsibility to measure progress of *Getting Outside's* implementation by preparing annual status reports. Also, broader updates should evaluate changes in population, resource conservation initiatives, facility construction and open space inventories and County-wide acreage needs. At a minimum, these comprehensive updates should occur approximately every 10 years.

Division Chief

#3 Hire a Division Chief
The Division of Parks and Natural Resources should hire a full-time Director, or Division Chief through DCNR's Circuit Rider Program, to fulfill a variety of roles. This should be a short-term action. Specifically, the Division Chief should focus on:

- Coordinating park development, open space and greenways/trail recreation and conservation projects;
- Developing annual and long-term objectives;
- Creating parks development budgeting;
- Soliciting funding from local, State, Federal and other sources;

- Preparing grant applications/develop funding sources for County activities as well as assisting municipalities and local interest groups
- Supervising and directing activities of the facility supervisors, project coordinators, maintenance personnel, etc.

Based upon these roles, the Division Chief should have a minimum of five (5) years experience with all facets of recreation planning including master planning implementation, facility management /construction, programming and budgeting. A candidate should also have an educational degree in parks and recreation management and/or be certified to fulfill a professional recreation and parks position (CPRP).

Staffing

#4 Hire qualified support staff

As the Division Chief will be responsible for the overall system of parks and natural resources in the County, the assistance of other supporting staff will be necessary if warranted by the workload. Some of these supporting responsibilities are able to be filled through the County's existing administrative structure. Personnel employed in these roles would be responsible for the following types of tasks (for which the Division Chief will be responsible for coordinating these tasks in the short-term):

- Apply for construction permits as necessary
- Coordinate involvement and efforts of outside agencies, various community organizations and special interest groups
- Recruit, train and direct volunteers
- Develop and monitor program budgets
- Plan and coordinate park maintenance activities
- Supervise the use, storage and maintenance of equipment and supplies
- Coordinate equipment maintenance
- Develop parks brochures, maps, schedules, etc.
- Conduct public relations activities
- Prepare for special events
- Account for fees collected from various vendors

- Maintain time sheets and attendance records
- Maintain billing records
- Order supplies and other materials

Multi-Municipal Cooperation

#5 Create the Recreation Alliance of Fayette (RAFT)

The County should develop the Recreation Alliance of Fayette (RAFT) to encourage opening discussion among community recreation providers and improve the coordination and provisions of municipal and regional-scale programs and facilities throughout Fayette County. RAFT's objective is centered on exchanging ideas, information and referrals. Discussions can focus on any potential cooperative effort—from sharing equipment and buying bulk to creating a regional ATV facility.

RAFT meetings can be structured to offer a forum to discuss local and multi-municipal problems and solutions—whether it is related to working effectively with volunteers, optimizing finances or honing leadership skills.

Membership which represents each of the County's 42 municipalities, whether individual or multi-municipal, should be a goal of the Alliance. Development of the group should be the responsibility of the Division Chief. Meetings of all members should occur bi-monthly or, at a minimum, quarterly. Sub-committee groups, such as the executive leadership (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) should meet on months in between. Meeting locations should vary as members can host events their respective communities. The Alliance should organize periodic workshops on issues that members would like to address. The Alliance should also encourage the development of funding applications which address regional or multi-municipal projects.

A small membership fee could be charged to each participating municipality/organization to help with basic expenses such as postage, paper supplies, copies and speakers.

Public, Quasi-public and Private Stakeholders

#6 *Establish a Local Advisory Recreation Commission*
The County should Establish a 12-member Local Advisory Recreation Commission (LARC) to assist the County Commissioners and the County's Division of Parks and Recreation to conceptualize, review and refine long-term planning initiatives and funding strategies. Many park and recreation agencies find this type of citizen-based advisory group is invaluable to pursuing and protecting long-term recreation and conservation goals.

Such a volunteer advisory group should be comprised of representatives from the public (e.g. County Planning Office, school districts), quasi-public (e.g. conservancies, historic groups) and private (e.g. business) recreation sectors and typically meet on a regular basis (monthly or bi-monthly) year-round. In general, the role of the LARC is as follows:

- Serve as a "sounding board" to the Parks and Recreation Division Chief.
- Review and evaluate existing and future programs, facilities and recreational services the County and communities provides. The Commission should also encourage the local and regional scale stakeholders to develop new programs as needs/interests change.
- Monitor the entire recreation and park system and make continual recommendations for improvements. The Commission should assist the Division in conducting a resident survey every five years. Levels of quality and service of maintenance, signage and facility design could be evaluated.
- Become the proponent for recreation and park priorities, whether the priorities are park improvements or expansion of personnel. Moreover, the Commission should be prepared to attend community meetings to make presentations when necessary.
- Communicate Commission decisions to elected officials as recommendations. A routine reporting of actions should be shared with the Division and officials on a regular basis.

It is important that the LARC remain as apolitical as



possible. They should apply, be interviewed, and be appointed by the County Commissioners. Appointments should be made to those who exhibit a wide range of interests, not just a single interest area.

Recognizably, this layer of decision-making will require administrative duties of the County's Division Staff (e.g. prepare reports and attend meetings). The County should also be mindful of the assumption of some committee members regarding the LARC's responsibility of their input as advisory, not policy-making. County Staff will need to conduct an orientation for each new appointee to be certain to be precise about their advisory task. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources can provide materials about such citizen advisory groups; these materials are very helpful to train appointed citizens about their responsibilities and to help staff understand how to best use this type of outreach.

Organizational Summary and Supporting Tasks

As part of parks and recreation administrative duties, the following recommended strategies should also be explored.

- #7 *Map recreation projects as they develop into the County's GIS system.*
- #8 *Create a County-wide Adopt-a-Park program that encourages private organizations and municipal groups to aid in municipal and County park maintenance and to join in park safety efforts.*
- #9 *Create job descriptions which outline the roles and responsibilities of new and revised roles and responsibilities.*
- #10 *Create a conservation program (via voluntary land dedication, steep slope and flood plain ordinance, financial incentive, direct purchase) etc. to protect environmentally sensitive lands and critical open space areas.*
- #11 *Define salaries of the County Division's professional staff to remain competitive with comparable county agencies.*
- #12 *Promote regionalization of neighborhood and community parks, under the guidance of the County's*

Division of Parks and Natural Resources. The Division, through the Regional Alliance of Fayette (RAFT) and the Local Advisory Recreation Commission (LARC) should encourage local municipalities to combine facilities, programs and services/provisions, etc.

- #13 *Work with other State and County agencies to develop cooperative efforts and coordinate planning/development activities.*
- #14 *Work with the agricultural community to optimize the location and proximity of Agricultural Security Areas, park and recreation facilities and open space conservation/preservation areas.*
- #15 *Continue the working agreements with Pennsylvania's Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission to manage fish and game populations within the County Park and open space areas.*

Facilities

The Facilities element provides recommendations as to how the County should meet its current and future park acreage and distribution needs. This element prioritizes needs based on Study Region and time and offers criteria for selecting appropriate sites for future park and recreation facilities. The element outlines a strategy for developing an integrated park and recreation system through a coordinated network of trails and greenways (See also Section 4: Greenways, Open Space and trails Recommendations).

Facility Enhancements

- #16 *Create 5-Year comprehensive management plans*
Such a Plan for each County Park can ensure long-term protection of its natural, cultural and historic resources/character as well as to plan for short-term initiatives and capital improvement projects. Goals and objectives for resource management; each Management Plan should include recommended techniques in preserving park character; and Short-term capital improvements, cost estimates and phasing plans.

The County has a previously developed master plan for the German-Masontown Regional Park, as well as design plans and operations and maintenance plans for the Dunlap Creek Park. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service had last prepared such for Jacobs Creek Park in the 1970s. Comprehensive Plans and Master Plans

should generally be reviewed every five (5) years and revised as necessary to meet the changing needs of the community. The County should convene a meeting with the volunteer groups involved with the present regional parks, particularly the German-Masontown Recreation Board, the Dunlap Creek Task Force Committee, the Bullskin Township Supervisors, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, and the Pennsylvania Fish Commission to and evaluate the progress made on the plan and develop procedures to expedite the future recommendations for the next five (5) years through 2012. This meeting could generate a new enthusiasm for park and recreation use and assist the County in ways to make Parks and Recreation more financially feasible.

- #17 *Develop a publicly accessible trail and greenway resource database*
In addition to gathering and publishing data the County should establish a set of coordination guidelines that outline policies, procedures and timetables. The County Division of Parks and Natural Resources should monitor the availability of railroad rights-of-way and utility corridors as related to this Plan. Subsequently, the Division will serve as a technical clearinghouse for the planning and implementation of the trails and greenways.
- #18 *Emphasize ADA accessibility improvements at the County parks and continue to make ADA-related capital improvements.* In addition, the Division should advise municipal parks of improvement regulations with respect to local park and recreation facilities.
- #19 *Upgrade the restroom facilities at the Dunlap Creek Park and the Jacobs Creek Park*
- #20 *Survey all County Park boundaries and develop a marker system for property identification.*

Rails to Trails

- #21 *Monitor, through the County Division of Parks and Recreation, the availability of railroad rights-of-way and utility corridors as related to future opportunities for linear parks, greenways and trails*

Additional Park Lands

- #22 Convert underutilized active recreation and support facilities in all park and recreation facilities to passive open space areas
- #23 Work with municipalities to provide future parks and recreation needs by adopting land conservation techniques, especially in high growth areas identified like Bullskin, Saltlick, and Springfield Townships. Fee-in-lieu and negotiated dedication.

This approach seeks to control lands suitable for park and recreational use, as well as open space conservation/preservation areas in advance of physical development. Methods of control include mutual or joint-use agreements, right-to-entry easements, land grant programs, municipal zoning, land dedication, gifts, eminent domain or out-right purchase. The following tables summarize the County's acreage needs by time period, park classification and Study Region. Some Study Regions don't possess a short or long-term need in any particular park classification and are accordingly denoted with a zero. The detailed analysis process and definitions of each park classification utilized in obtaining these values is outlined in Section 6 of this Plan.

Table 1: Year 2000 Surpluses and Deficiencies

Park Classification	Region						Total acres
	1 acres	2 acres	3 acres	4 acres	5 acres	6 acres	
Neighborhood/Community	23	(20)	(119)	(15)	56	(5)	(80)
Metropolitan	527	183	167	(154)	(26)	4	701
Regional	221	503	1,927	(121)	564	1,963	5,057

Table 2: Year 2010 Surpluses and Deficiencies

Park Classification	Region						Total acres
	1 acre	2 acres	3 acres	4 acres	5 acres	6 acres	
Neighborhood/Community	15	(27)	(109)	(37)	53	(10)	(115)
Metropolitan	517	173	180	(181)	(30)	(3)	656
Regional	221	466	1,979	(231)	548	1,936	4,919

Table 3: Year 2030 Surpluses and Deficiencies

Park Classification	Region						Total acres
	1 acres	2 acres	3 acres	4 acres	5 acres	6 acres	
Neighborhood/Community	8	(32)	(113)	(47)	40	(10)	(154)
Metropolitan	507	168	175	(193)	(46)	(3)	608
Regional	143	445	1,960	(279)	486	1,936	4,691

Planning Districts



- #24 Institutionalize criteria and a process with which to evaluate the long-term feasibility of new park, trail and open space proposals. The County should work with local municipalities and regional recreation providers to secure or control only sites which are determined to have multi-municipal significance. This means that the site should attract users from several municipalities and be physically able to accommodate them.

Furthermore, a potential site should be either capable of meeting specialized needs that cannot be met at the municipal level or have resources which cannot be protected at the municipal level due to size, overlapping jurisdictions or administrative or operational capabilities. Every proposal should be evaluated based on the following factors:

Location:

Future park and recreation facilities should be located within Study Regions that exhibit a deficiency in parks and open space. Potential sites should primarily serve primarily the County residents living within the planned facility's service area. Potential sites located in Study Regions that exhibit a surplus of park and open space acreage should be secured/controlled only through "opportunity". Opportunity relates to voluntary land

dedications, gifts, government grants and private sector contributions.

Size:

A potential site should contain sufficient land as per the *Park Classifications Standards* in Part 6 and be of a suitable configuration to protect the park, especially environmentally sensitive areas, from encroachment by incompatible peripheral uses and development.

Natural Features:

A potential site's topography, vegetation, soil, water resources, climate and existing or potential water/sanitary facilities should be suitable for the park's intended use and should comply with any specific development capability criteria for the proposed park classification. The presence of unique features such as prehistoric, historic or scenic resources, water features and flora and fauna habitats is considered desirable. This plan recommends preserving areas with concentrations of natural resources.

Access:

Ideally there should be no public thoroughfares through the site for ease of operation and optimum public safety. The site should have reasonable public access for its intended use and should comply with the location criteria for its proposed park classification.

Existing Site Development:

The existence of structures suitable for use, renovation or expansion for park activities should be considered as a positive site feature. The existence of structures which, due to their condition or utility, would have to be removed should be considered as a liability.

Costs:

The cost of property acquisition and associated purchase procedures including appraisals, closing costs and where applicable condemnation proceedings and the estimated development, operating and maintenance costs as offset by current and potential revenues must be carefully evaluated.

- #25 Prepare a Forest Stewardship Plan for each County Parks' woodlands and/or open space. Each Forest Stewardship Plan should:

- Inventory a park's particular natural resources;
- Define goals and objectives for conservation;



- and
- Detail management practices and activities for specific woodland programs.

Identify natural resources (steep slopes, wetlands) that require protection or enhancement, classify their condition, and develop management guidelines for each resource use or protection. Work with the Fayette County Conservation District to develop detailed specifications for resource preservation and conservation. Site designs and recommendations evolving from each Forest Stewardship Plan will ensure forest resources are utilized or enhanced appropriately and in accordance with defined land uses. Typical elements found within a Forest Stewardship Plan are outlined in the Appendix. This palette of elements should be customized to fit each particular park site.

- #26 *Incorporate native xeriscape (drought resistant) landscape treatments in the passive open space areas of all parks*
Native landscape treatments reduce mowing and irrigation requirements, minimize surface water run-off and provide suitable habitat for wildlife.

Maintenance

The County has acquired and developed three regional parks (German-Masontown Park, Dunlap Creek Park, and Jacobs Creek Park) since the early 1970's. Many of the facilities in these parks are thirty years old or older. The County has provided a variety of minimal maintenance on these facilities over the years; many of the facilities are showing their age. The County should establish an upgraded written operations and maintenance plan for each of these three parks, particularly upgrading the operations and maintenance plans for Dunlap Creek Park and Jacobs Creek Park. It is cheaper to provide the necessary maintenance on these facilities than it is to replace them. Good maintenance will often extend the life of a park facility.

Staffing

The Buildings and Grounds Office (Parks & Recreation) is a labor intense operation. From the long term standpoint serious thought should be given to contain the existing labor force and its associated wages and fringe benefits. Work procedures should be developed to improve the efficiency of the Office of

Buildings and Grounds operations, and labor saving equipment should be purchased and implemented.

- #27 *Increase the annual maintenance budget*
Consideration should be given to enhance the County's current service approach to respect park maintenance and operations by increasing the current annual maintenance budget by \$40,000. The budget increase should be used for additional maintenance staff or for maintenance contracts with private vendors. Maintenance contracts should be reserved for major capital improvements, specialized construction projects, trash collection or septic improvements.

- #28 *Obtain applicable licensing*
The County expends a considerable amount of labor on trim mowing. The County should consider having the County Manager or his designate obtain a Public Chemical Applicators License with a "Parks Category" to apply and/or train other employees as technicians to apply herbicides and weed killers throughout the County Parks to lessen or eliminate trim mowing. The purchase of the chemical "Round Up" and associated herbicides, the purchase of 3-gallon hand tank sprayers and the purchase of a fifty (50) or two hundred fifty (250) gallon tank sprayer, and the labor required to apply the chemicals, will greatly reduce the amount of time needed for trim mowing and string trimmer operations. Herbicides could also be applied to the flower gardens, shrub planters, road guide rails, and signs to reduce and/or eliminate weeding.

- #29 *Optimize mowing*
The County's Office of Buildings and Grounds maintenance personnel and three prisoners expend five (5) days per week mowing County properties. Good park maintenance generally does not require more than three (3) to three and one half (3-1/2) days per week mowing its facilities, allowing a day and a half to two days to perform other needed maintenance tasks. Based on the age and condition of the present mowing equipment and a need for a future capital expenditure for mowing equipment, it is recommended the County consider the following options:

- Purchase a diesel tractor/mower (4x4) with a ten or twelve foot rotary mower with zero turning radius; retain the best existing tractor/mower as trim mower; reduce mowing time. Expend the time saved on other park maintenance needs.

Or

- Contract the mowing operations to a private contractor. Eliminate the existing mowing equipment and reduce associated operation costs. The one remaining staff person will complete the other park maintenance functions or associated buildings and grounds functions.

The County should consider establishing mow lines in the parks to reduce unnecessary mowing. There are many areas in the parks that are unnecessarily mowed, which could provide nesting areas for wildlife if left unmowed.

Policies

- #30 *Develop a Procedures and Policy Handbook*
The County should develop a procedures and policy handbook. This manual should have employee input. It should identify the County's maintenance standards and the maintenance tasks necessary to keep the park and recreation facilities and programs in good operating order. This manual would streamline operating procedures and instruct workers on the procedures and man hours needed to perform certain functions. Operations are better facilitated when employees know what equipment, materials, number of men and man-hours an operation requires.

- #31 *Develop written operational plans*
The County should develop a written annual, monthly, and weekly operational plan. This plan should also have employee input. This Department should post these plans in a variety of locations to give workers a sense of the work to be performed during that month or week. This would reduce preparation time at the beginning of shifts. The policy and procedures manual would detail the number of workers and man-hours needed for specific operations. These work plans could be developed in the form of check lists where an employee could check off the work as completed. This plan would establish a 12 month maintenance schedule and prioritize the park and recreation operations to insure the park and recreation facilities are clean, well-maintained, and safe. See the Appendix April Maintenance Check List.

Volunteers

- #32 *Promote volunteerism to assist in clean-ups*
In addition to hired staff, the County should encourage newly created programs such as the Adopt-a-Park Program (see #8) where volunteers are encouraged to help maintain the park and recreation facilities and operations and initiate an “Eager Beaver Day” in April. Individuals from the neighborhoods and volunteer organizations can come to the park to clean and prepare the park and recreation facilities for seasonal use. A similar activity could occur in the Fall as well.

Operations

- #33 *Conduct annual inspections with written follow-up*
The County Manager or designate should conduct an annual inspection of the three regional parks and develop a written check-list of the work to be performed to the Department of Buildings and Grounds (Parks and Recreation). It is recommended that this inspection be conducted prior to the fall budget process so monies needed for materials, equipment, etc. can be included as part of the budget request process. A list of projects completed in the parks should be provided to the County Commissioners and the County Controller on an annual basis to ensure that the County tax dollars have been properly expended.
- #34 *Promote and achieve playground safety*
Over 150,000 children across the nation annually are treated in hospital emergency rooms for playground-related injuries. To reduce the occurrence and severity of playground injuries, the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) have established general guidelines for new and existing playgrounds and technical guidelines for equipment and surfacing which, if followed, will dramatically reduce the number of playground injuries. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has not adopted these guidelines as law, but the Courts in Pennsylvania are following them to determine a municipality’s liability in law suits.

Fayette County should develop a “Risk Reduction Plan for Playgrounds” program and update all of the County’s playgrounds to the current (CPSC) and (ASTM) safety standards. The program should continue the County’s present program to update the play areas in its regional

parks. An associated risk management plan should be developed. The County’s insurance provider should be able to help the County develop this plan. This program could be based on *Points about Playgrounds: A Compilation of Significant Information*, National Parks and Recreation Association (Monty Christiansen, ed, 2nd edition, 1995) and/or *Playground Safety is No Accident, Developing a Public Playground Safety and Maintenance Program*, National Park and Recreation Association (Kenneth S. Kutska, Kevin J. Hoffman, Antonio Malkusak, 3rd edition, 2002).

The County Manager or designate should conduct an annual Spring Safety Walk, visiting and inspecting the County- owned facilities for safety. The safety problems should be identified and placed on a check list for work to be performed, and time frame for corrections should be made. The County should consider ordering the following manuals and information to develop this annual Spring Safety Walk: *Handbook for Public Playground Safety*, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C., (1994), *Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use, F1487-01* and *Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment, F1292*, ASTM, 100 Barr Harbor Drive, Conshohocken PA 19428, and *Safety First Checklist, Audit & Inspection Program for Children’s Play Areas*, MIG Communications, 800 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94710 (Sally McIntyre and Susan M. Goltsman, 2nd edition, 1997).

- #35 *Develop cooperative maintenance agreements*
The County should consider developing an intergovernmental program with its municipalities where services, training, and equipment are shared. It could be set up similar to Penn DOT Agility Program or a “fee for service” program.
- #36 *Create long-term paving programs for parks*
Road and parking area maintenance are considered “big ticket” items for parks and recreation operations. Park roads and parking areas are not considered high speed travel areas and often do not require asphalt paving. The County should develop a long-term maintenance program for roads and parking in the park and recreation areas, and it is recommended that the County develop a long-term Bituminous Surface Treatment and/or a Bituminous Seal Coating Program

to maintain the County’s park access roads and parking areas. It is cheaper to surface treat or seal coat these areas rather than asphalt them. An excellent plan would be to bituminous surface treat these areas for two consecutive years, then bituminous surface treat or seal coat these areas every four years, thereafter. The program should be designed and phased so all of the areas do not come due for treatment at the same time. The County could initiate this plan with Penn DOT as part of an agility program, contract the program with a private contractor, or develop the program with one of the neighboring townships where the regional park is located that surface treat roads on an annual basis. This program will pay long-term dividends.

Programming, Promotion and Public Awareness

Programming outlines the recommended strategies to market parks and recreational amenities County-wide and to simultaneously strengthen public awareness and support for parks, recreation and open space. Specific marketing and promotional venues or opportunities are detailed in this section. Subsequently, promotion opportunities, performance benchmarks and staffing needs are quantified as related to the County’s Division of Parks and Natural Resources.

Cooperative Outreach

- #37 *Encourage Municipal-School District cooperation*
The County should take the lead and encourage the School Districts to develop inter-cooperative agreements with the local municipalities throughout the County to share facility use and develop after school programs and summer recreation programs for the youth. See the Appendix for Program Opportunities.

National statistics show that cities that have reduced and ended their summer recreation and playground programs see their public safety costs regarding juvenile crime and delinquency escalate 300% to 800% for the similar time period. The municipality’s money would be better spent funding these summer programs. Many working parents in the local municipalities rely on these structured programs to keep their children out of harm’s way while they are away at work during the summer months or during after school hours when the



kids don't have school.

#38 *Promote activities and interaction among seniors*
County census figures show the senior citizen population is going to significantly grow in the next fifteen (15) years. The County should be encouraged to develop facilities and programming to meet the needs of the senior citizens throughout the County. The County should encourage the local municipalities to follow suit. The installation of walking trails and park benches in the parks would greatly encourage senior citizen attendance in the parks.

#39 *Continue to foster present programs with the Pennsylvania Fish Commission, the Pennsylvania Game Commission and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources*

The County, in joining with municipalities, should continue to support programming efforts sponsored by the state's Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commissions. These types of programs typically provide unique and cost-effective recreation options for residents and visitors.

Furthermore, as the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources pursues planning efforts in the Commonwealth's Laurel Highlands region, it is encouraged that the and local municipalities stay abreast and involved in related discussions to ensure there is clear understanding of proposed regional conservation landscape initiatives and investments. The County should be actively involved in these planning efforts.

Marketing

#40 *Develop a signage program*
Many County residents have expressed that they are unfamiliar with the locations of the County's parks, and so the design and installation of a signage system for parks and recreation facilities is a fundamental component of the County's future outreach. A unified signage program designating appropriate wayfinding between local and County facilities should be developed. Several communities, such as Connellsville, have already taken initiatives to orient residents and visitors toward places of recreational and cultural significance.

Sign designs, as identified by the principles of DCNR's Heritage Parks Program wayfinding system, should be considered. Cost sharing opportunities could also be explored through sponsorships from other public and/or private recreation providers who are in the general vicinity of proposed signs.

#41 *Initiate a marketing and promotion campaign to increase and expand public awareness and education about the benefits of recreation.*
Marketing and promotion can take on many forms, including compiling a program brochure for each season of the year. The four-season format will require new print services by bid, so the new position should prepare specifications annually. The program brochures will need to be budgeted also. Be sure to develop the most specific information for each season's program brochure. Study ways to distribute the brochure to the public. Some agencies simply print their seasonal program in a newspaper, while others bulk-mail them to households. Some distribute through schools (although it is not recommended since it eliminates older and younger households).

Create a regular news release format for each program and/or service. Many news editors rely on press releases almost as much as they count on material developed from their staff writers. Send releases to print media at least 2 weeks prior to each program/service weeks if advance registration is required). Be sure each news release contains who, what, where, when, and how much for the fee amount. Be sure to list a contact person should the reporter or editor need additional information.

Routinely, perhaps monthly, brainstorm positive feature story ideas for the print media and follow through. Educate all staff members to contribute to this year-round effort. Compile enough solid ideas to pitch a sound story at least every month all year; some months may naturally generate extra ideas. Highlight special accomplishments of staff or tell a human interest story about an active volunteer. Have a specialist on the staff give a helpful hint or suggestion. Always share results of surveys; those that affect large numbers of readers fascinate the public and media. The end result of the story will usually be a written feature story. However, it could also be an invitation for an interview by the press, or an invitation for a "behind-the-scenes" look at an operation by a photographer.

Create a public service announcement format for broadcast media (radio and television), also to be used for each program, facility's opening, or service. Be sure the format is short and to the point. A radio announcement, for example, will permit the most brief information (usually only where and when).

Contact the cable television company to discuss special feature production opportunities at the beginning of each year. Cable companies are required by federal law to produce and air numerous local public service programs. Typically, cable companies are seeking ideas, so it might as well be Fayette County Parks as the subject matter for at least one production each year. Try to pick a subject best told in video; that is, select beautiful or unusual sights. Try to avoid interview programs and the big crowd events, which are already covered by the television stations.

Develop a current mailing list for the print media and broadcast media to be targeted. Update the list every 2 months. Contact each media outlet to request how and when they prefer to receive releases or public service announcements. (Some may now prefer to receive faxes or even e-mails instead of hard copy) Invite a reporter to one of the parks for a tour occasionally, so they can observe firsthand some of the Division's concerns and accomplishments. Guarantee a timely response to the press and their questions. Understand that when the press needs information, they need it immediately.

Compile a display to take to local shopping centers and the Uniontown Mall on a weekend at least once each year to promote special projects. For example, one year feature new construction projects, and another year feature unique offerings such as the Friends of the Parks' Eager Beaver Days activities.

Follow-up each grant announcement and award announcement with a photo for media distribution. This not only provides an opportunity for the elected officials to recognize their part in supporting the parks and recreation, but also reminds the public the high esteem in which the Division is held statewide. Try to utilize key people at the highest echelons as well as those performing the very basic contribution, such as key volunteers.

Consider producing cards or postcards featuring an artist's rendering of a park setting (pen and ink sketches or photographs, for example) to market as a promotional tool. A painting or photography contest also could be sponsored. Stationary or note cards with matching envelopes can be printed typically for under \$200 per 1000 quantity. These can be sold in sets of 20 for \$10 (or 60% profit). Consider using a volunteer artist to perform the camera-ready artwork; many would do so for the exposure or to publicly display their artwork (at the County Courthouse or Public Service Building). Donate profits to a special park fund and acknowledge the proceeds on the cards (for example, the back of each card could read "proceeds benefit the Park Improvement Fund"). It is important to realize that the fundraising aspect of this idea is less significant than the promotional value. Many park visitors would delight in purchasing note cards to send to their friends which depicts their favorite park bench or their favorite fishing spot.

Develop a Division of Parks and Natural Resources web site. In addition, promote links about County park, recreation open space, greenways and trail opportunities on existing information on the Internet (web pages for Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau).

Distribute County Park system information through the local municipalities, schools, Chambers of Commerce and other County-oriented service organizations.

Funding

Obtain Funding

Similar to many planning efforts, a principal factor in the implementation of recommended actions is having adequate fiscal resources. To help fund *Getting Outside*, the County should consider the following:

#42 *Use grant monies to fund major maintenance and capital improvement projects throughout the park system.*

The County should work with community stakeholders to finance the control and development of County and other regionally-oriented park facilities by using corporate gifts, grants and cooperative agreements with

the private-sector. Alternative sources of funding can be used for land acquisition, planning and cooperative activities. These programs typically require a cost share. The County's labor costs will often fulfill the local cost share.

Alternative revenue sources should be used as a compliment to the Division's existing grant sources. These existing sources should be used primarily to finance County park facility improvements.

#43 *Introduce an amusement tax*

It should be noted that funding for some of the Plan's recommendations, particularly most of the new personnel, ought to be borne by county tax resources. The County should pursue a circuit rider program to assist the Director position. (See Section 5). This program will provide four years of assistance while the County evaluates the need to fund the Division Chief and Supporting Staff on a long-term basis. The same is true for adding restrooms in parks; the initial expense to design and build them may be shared with other funding sources, but the on-going maintenance expenditure to keep them usable for families visiting the parks ought to be funded through tax sources. These are the commitments necessary to continue to operate a professional park and recreation department in the future; they need to be anchored in a safe funding base.

The amusement tax or similar recreation-oriented tax, as enabled by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, could be implemented by either County or local entities on uses that are geared toward visitors, thus enabling users of recreation, which are largely from out of the County, to support this revenue stream.

#44 *Develop fees and charges*

To offset the costs of operations including maintenance, the County should establish a reservation fee program for pavilion use at Dunlap Creek Park and Jacobs Creek Park.

#45 *Develop programs in the parks*

To offset the costs of operations, program fees in most park and recreation operations can generally provide 50 percent or more of the revenues necessary to operate and maintain the park facilities.

#46 *Create an Endowment Fund*

The fund would be designed to provide monies to off-

set the costs of future development, programming, operations, and maintenance. It should be marketed through the County Bar Association where wills are being developed and the local mortuary associations.

#47 *Develop a five year major maintenance/capital improvement plan for the parks*

This plan would specifically identify how and when that particular project would be targeted for funding and completion.

#48 *Seek advertising support*

Tourism and local recreation and parks are closely related in Fayette County. The County contracts with the Laurel Highlands Visitor Center to promote tourism in Fayette County. The agency markets tourism outside of Fayette County. The County should develop a plan to market its large variety of recreation and leisure facilities and programs to both tourists and local residents. This can be accomplished by creating a quarterly or semi-annual attachment to the local newspapers with copies delivered to both the local newspaper subscribers and to the primary tourist attractions. These attachments would be fully funded by advertisements. The attachment would feature the different primary attractions and well as provide a calendar of events and directions to the local program facilities and events. Both will benefit from this type of advertisement. Westmoreland County has been able to reach nearly 90,000 of its 150,000 local households in the County with this type of marketing technique. For information on this program contact Westmoreland County Parks at 724-830-3950 or 724-830-3951.

Annual and Long-Term Budgeting

The County has acquired and developed three regional parks and trails in the County primarily relying on Federal and State grant funding with the local cost share being provided by foundations or local non-profit organizations. A detailed five-year comparison of funding for parks and recreation has not been included due to lack of data received from the County.

#49 *Review contracts*

The County collects no revenues to off-set its expenses resulting from the parks and recreation operations. The County contracts the grounds maintenance and clean up of Jacobs Creek Park with "Goodwill." The County should regularly check and scrutinize the maintenance operations under this contract to insure the work is



being properly performed. This contract does not release the County of its liability for the facilities at the park.

Fayette County has a collective bargaining agreement with the Service International Employees Union (SEIU) which expires in December, 2009. It will have a direct on increases in department wages, overtime, and fringe benefit expenditures. Depending on contractual obligations, direct costs (wages) will likely increase over the next five years. However, fringe benefit costs will dramatically grow with increases in medical insurance. Utility costs are going up. The use of energy saving devices should be incorporated into both the existing and future park facilities and programs.

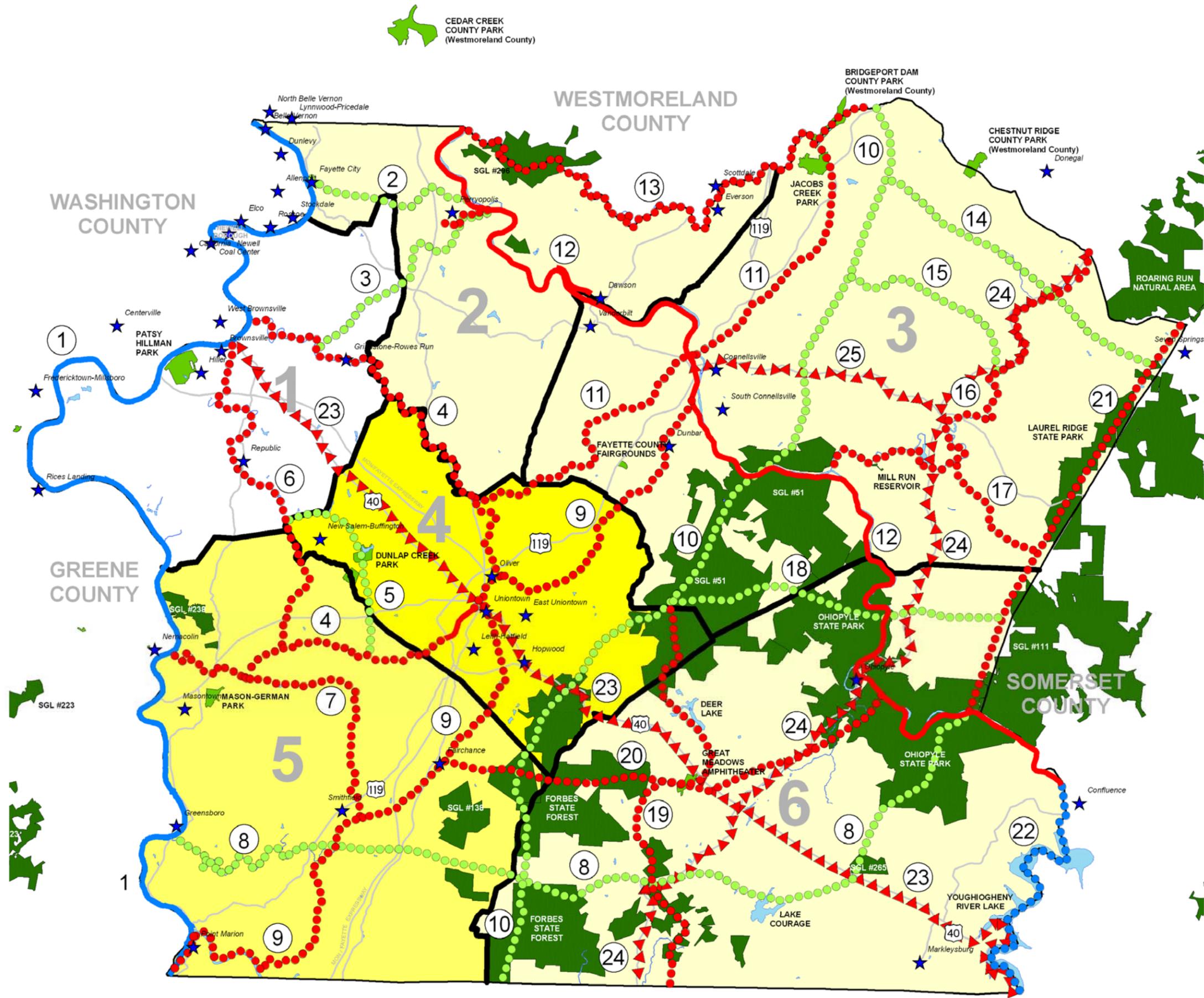
The County should closely monitor fuel costs related with the maintenance of the park facilities with fuel prices escalating nearly 125% over three years. The monies extended for the general care and the maintenance of the park and recreation facilities and equipment have remained flat or slightly increased over the past five years. Serious attention should be paid to more fully fund these operations as it is cheaper to maintain a facility than replace it.

- #50 *Developing a Capital Equipment Reserve Fund as part of the County budget process*
The fund would pay for the equipment needed to operate and maintain the park and recreation facilities. The fund would be based on a five year Capital Equipment Plan. The cost of the expenditures would be balanced over years as part of the budget process and expended solely based on need and availability of monies. Unspent monies would carry over from year to year. The fund would be identified as a separate item removed from the budget with expenditures scrutinized annually based on the capital equipment plan. The capital equipment plan would be updated biannually.



*Parks and
Recreation Recommendations*

*Comprehensive Parks, Recreation,
Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan*



Sources: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Game Commission

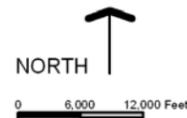
This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

PROJECT CORRIDORS

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5	Dunlap Creek Greenway		
6	Masontown/Brownsville Trail		
7	South Brown's Run Trail		
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9	Sheepskin Trail		
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13	Jacob's Creek Greenway		
14	Laurel Highlands Greenway		
15	Normalville Connector		
16	Indian Creek Valley Trail		
17	Laurel Ridge Passage		
18	Chestnut Ridge Connector		
19	SoFay Trail		
20	Chiopyle Scenic Corridor		
21	Laurel Hill Greenway		
22	Yough Dam Trail		

LEGEND

	Fayette County Boundary	BIKE/PEDESTRIAN TRAILS
	Planning District	Existing
	Major Roads	Proposed/Planned
	Rivers, Streams and Lakes	WATER TRAILS
	County Parks (Fayette and Non-Fayette)	Existing
	State Forests, Parks, and Gamelands; Federal Lands	Proposed/Planned
FUTURE FACILITIES		GREENWAYS
	No Park Need	Proposed/Planned
	Neighborhood Parks	SCENIC TRAVEL/HERITAGE CORRIDORS
	Metropolitan Parks	Proposed/Planned
	Neighborhood, Metropolitan and Regional Parks	Trail/Greenway ID Number
		Landmark Community



#51 Parks and Greenways Master Plan

Preparing an Annual Report

The Division Chief should prepare an “Annual Park and Recreation Report” for elected official review. The report should indicate the completion status of the Plan’s recommendations and should detail a schedule for those to be addressed over the next year. It is recommended that the report is presented to elected officials in the early fall before the next year’s proposed budget is reviewed and adopted.

The Parks and Greenways Master Plan illustrated to the left identified the location and relationship of existing and proposed resource improvements. Recommendations identified as part of this Comprehensive planning document are embodied to the greatest extent possible within the Master Plan graphic.

Additional information about proposed specific greenways, open space and trail efforts is outlined in the following Section.





Section 4

Open Space, Greenways and Trails Recommendations

Purpose and Goals

Purpose of the Greenway Plan

The Open Space, Greenways and Trails component of *Getting Outside* presents a series of analyses and recommendations for implementing both conservation and recreation projects and policies. This component of the County's Plan also has been created as a tool to unify the County, its municipalities and the development community.

How can Fayette County, through the enhancement of its existing natural resources, best leverage its assets and improve the quality of life within all of its communities? As part of this Section, a series of discussions are presented about how greenways can be identified and what types of actions will be needed in order for the this network of open spaces, greenways and trails to be realized.

What is a Greenway?

A greenway is a linear corridor of land connecting natural resources, open spaces and man-made characteristics. PA DCNR identifies greenways as "Linear corridors of public and private land that serve as the linkages between specifically identified natural resource-based or manmade features. They can be either land-based [greenways] or water-based [blueways] and serve a variety of functions and benefits including recreation, transportation, community revitalization and economic development, natural resource conservation, environmental protection, wildlife habitat and migration and education. These corridors often follow old railways, canals, ridge tops, rivers and stream valleys."

Fayette County's identified greenways are comprised of recreation and conservation-oriented corridors and open spaces. Furthermore, these greenways course through urban, suburban and rural landscapes to create an integrated network of resources.

As a system of these interconnected resources is established within the County, opportunity arises to develop greenway connections across county boundaries. Consequently, Fayette County's identified greenway projects contribute to forwarding local, regional and State-wide conservation and recreation

planning initiatives.

The Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission (Partnership) was created in 1998 to support the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) in the promotion of greenways throughout Pennsylvania. DCNR's *Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections* includes strategic approach to the development of greenways in the State. This Action Plan defines the following vision for Pennsylvania's greenways:

"Pennsylvania and its many partners will develop an outstanding network of greenways across the Commonwealth, creating an asset highly valued by Pennsylvanians and enhancing the quality of life for all. This network of greenways will connect Pennsylvania's open space, natural landscape features, scenic, cultural, historic and recreational sites, and urban and rural communities. Greenways will become one of the Commonwealth's most powerful tools to achieve sustainable growth and livable communities."

Greenway Plan Goals

In context of the State's identified greenway initiatives, other surrounding Counties' evolving greenway systems and Fayette County's pattern of natural resources, several greenway-related planning goals emerge:

- Establish an integral network to improve residents' accessibility between the County's eastern and western landscape.
- Link Fayette County's greenway opportunities with those in surrounding Counties.
- Market greenways to expand tourism opportunities as a means of strengthening local economies.

General Planning Approach

The Approach

To define the County's greenway network, a geographic information system (GIS) was the primary technical tool used for the project's inventory and analysis phase. This first phase's main steps include analyzing opportunities. The second phase, recommendations, presents the components of the County's comprehensive greenway network. A series of specific Corridor Projects, actions and tools for implementing these opportunities are outlined.

Analyzing Opportunities

Introduction

This section details the step-by-step approach used in completing the Plan's analyses. The three initial steps of this approach include:

- Creating Background Mapping;
- Establishing Criteria; and
- Identifying Greenway Elements.

Natural resource and infrastructure data, ranging from land coverage and utilities to stream quality and woodland areas, were mapped and evaluated. Other data sources were used including state and federal agencies, the County's GIS inventory, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's regional Natural Infrastructure GIS database and non-governmental organizations' available resource analyses, such as the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's biological diversity area information.

Topography influences the planning and accessibility of greenways. The location of stream valleys, ridgelines and other landform features can often define the extent of these corridors. Because digitally-formatted data was not available for all of the County's geographic characteristics, GIS mapping was created by digitizing paper maps and other sources. One example of this is "ridgelines." Ridgeline information was visually identified and digitized using United States Geological

Survey topographic information. All background mapping graphics and summary descriptions are included within Section 6 of the Plan.

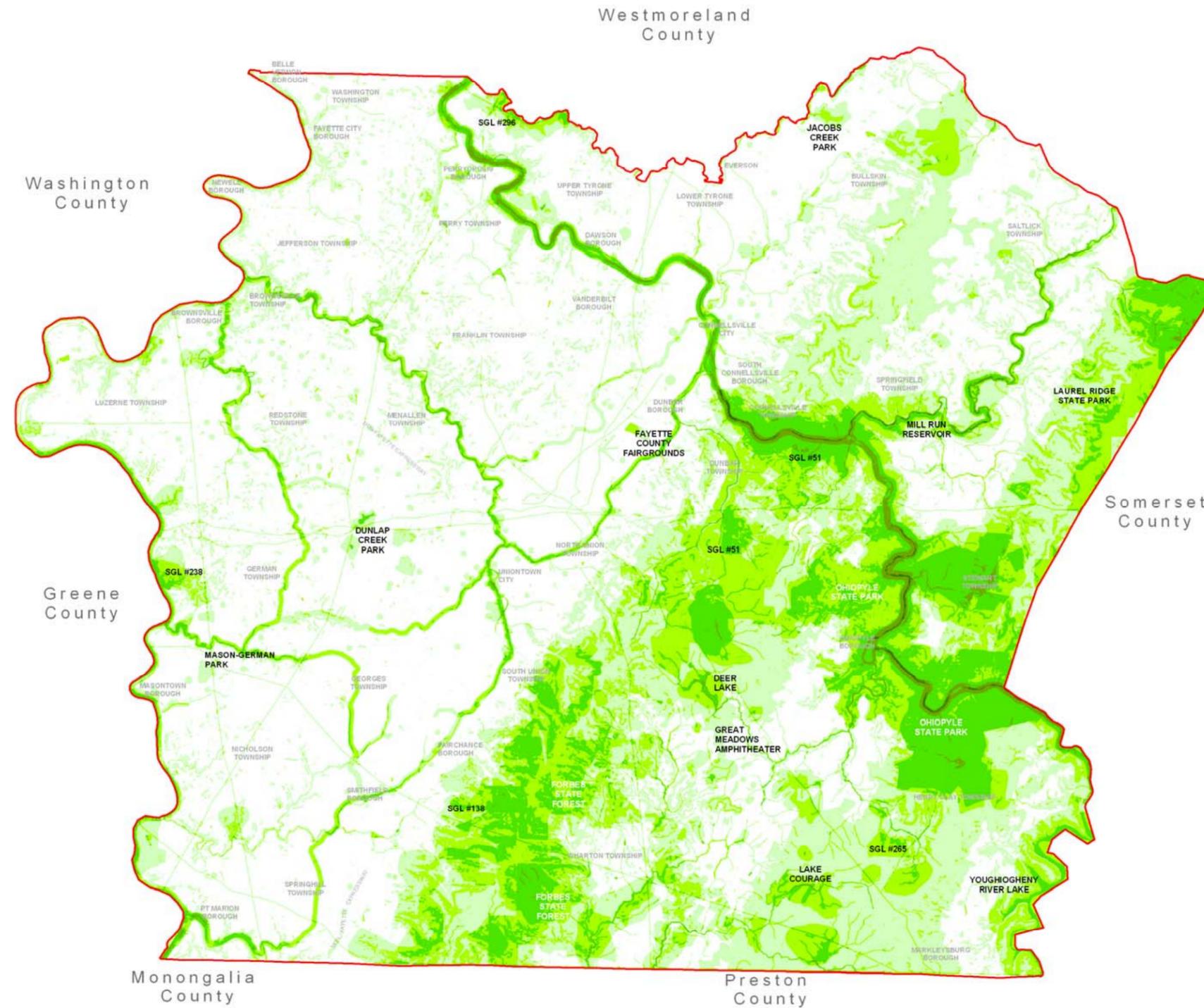
Once the individual patterns of the County's various resources were identified, each map was "layered" on top of one another to identify potential areas rich in resources. These resource rich areas were further evaluated to determine if there were any characteristics which may have a greater influence on enhancing the quality of open spaces whether it be for the benefit of future recreation, development and/or habitat conservation. Based upon feedback gained from the project's Steering Committee as well as the public, the characteristics of Fayette County which were determined to fit this criteria include the following:

- 1) Natural or "Green" Infrastructure
 - State Forests, State Gamelands, State Parks, County/Local Parks
 - Federal Parks/Lands
 - Biological Diversity Areas
 - Important Bird and Animal Areas
 - Wetlands
 - Flood Plains
 - Lakes and Ponds
 - Water Trails
 - High Value Streams
 - Exceptional Value Streams
 - Flatwater/Whitewater Streams
 - Slopes > or equal to 25%
 - Ridge-tops
- 2) Man Made or "Gray" Infrastructure
 - Historic Sites
 - Utility Corridors
 - Off Road Trails
 - Active Railroads
 - Abandoned Railroads

An illustration of the locations of these characteristics when layered together is found on the following map "Unweighted Natural Resource Composite Map." Darker areas represent the presence of a greater number of resources whereas lighter areas represent the presence of fewer resources. This map served as the first building block in establishing resource criteria to formulate *Getting Outside's* first greenway planning concepts.

The resources were then "weighted" based upon their sensitivity to human use and/or human impact. The "Weighted Natural Resource Composite Map" depicts the areas determined to be the least to most sensitive. In general, those areas of higher sensitivity were further evaluated for their potential relevance and inclusion in the County's overall greenways and open space network.





Sources: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Game Commission

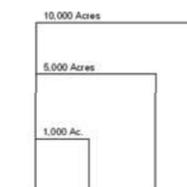
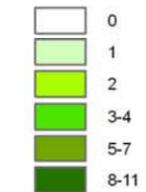
This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

- | Natural or "Green" Infrastructure | Man Made or "Gray" Infrastructure |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. State Forests, State Gamelands | 1. Historic Sites |
| 2. State Parks, County/Local Parks | 2. Utility Corridors |
| 3. Federal Parks/Lands | 3. Off Road Trails |
| 4. Biological Diversity Areas | 4. Active Railroads |
| 5. Important Bird and Animal Areas | 5. Abandoned Railroads |
| 6. Wetlands | |
| 7. Flood Plains | |
| 8. Lakes and Ponds | |
| 9. Water Trails | |
| 10. High Value Streams | |
| 11. Exceptional Value Streams | |
| 12. Flatwater/Whitewater Streams | |
| 13. Slopes > or equal to 25% | |
| | |
| | |

LEGEND

Fayette County Boundary

Number of Overlapping Criteria

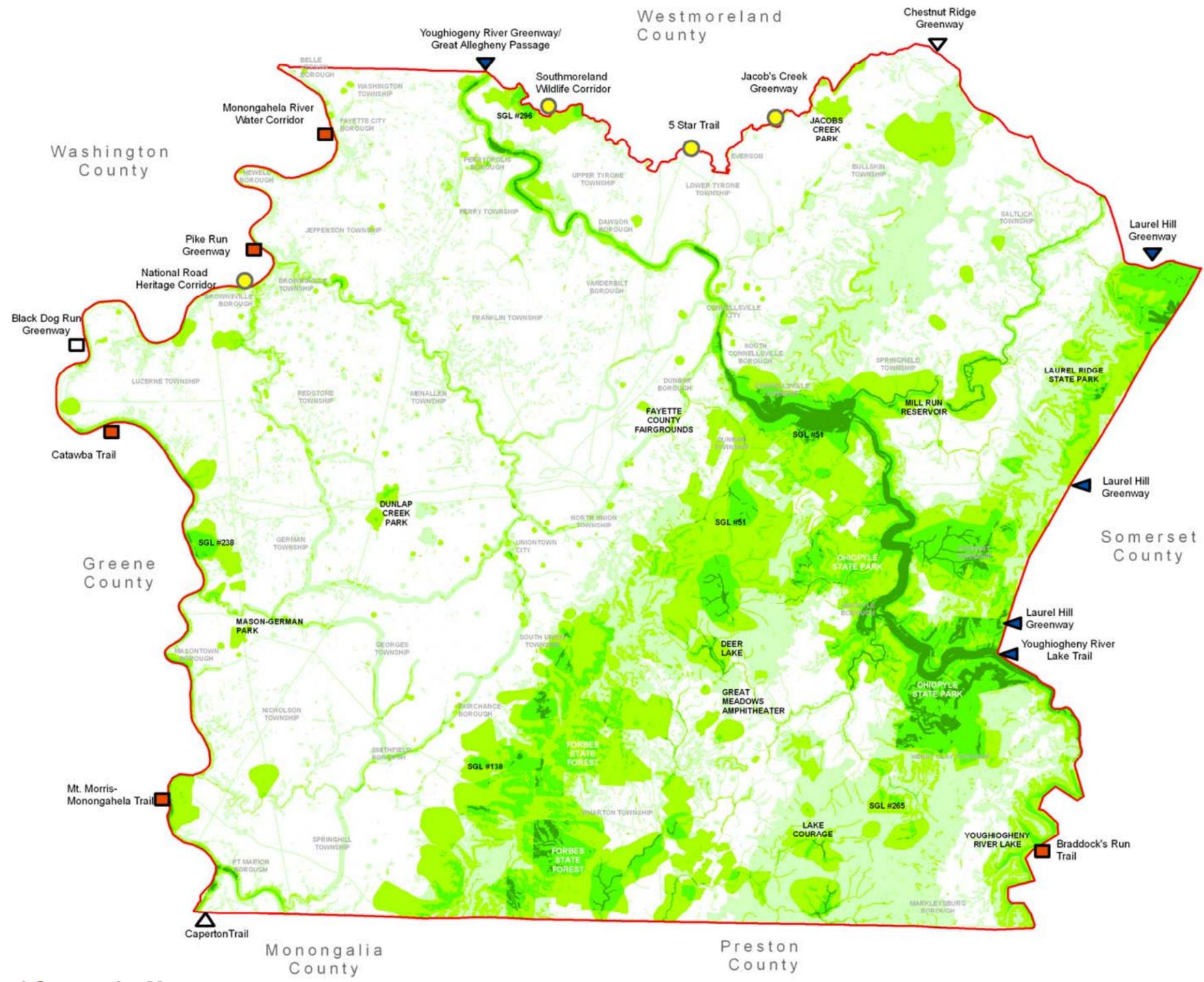


Unweighted Natural Resource Composite Map

This map served as the first building block in establishing resource criteria to formulate *Getting Outside's* first greenway planning concepts. Darker areas represent the presence of a greater number of resources whereas lighter areas represent the presence of fewer resources.



Open Space, Greenways and Trails Recommendations



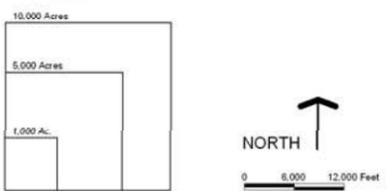
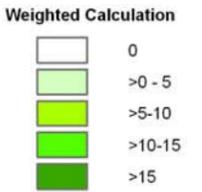
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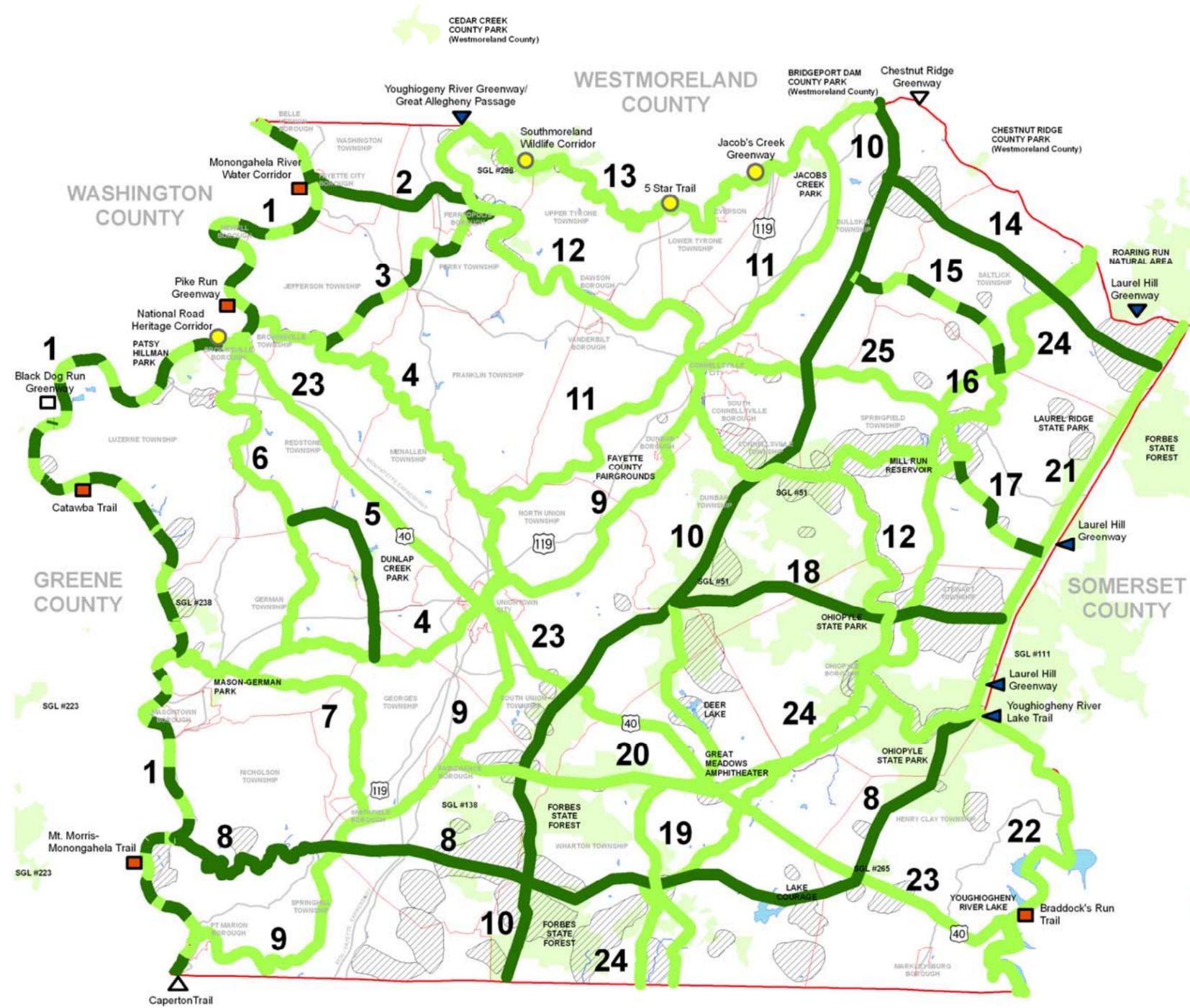
Number	Criteria	Weighted Value	Buffer
1	State Forest, Gamelands and Parks; County/ Local Parks	5 points	300 ft
2	Biological Diversity Areas	5 points	-
3	Exceptional Value Streams	5 points	100 ft
4	Important Bird and Animal Areas	4 points	300 ft
5	Wetlands	4 points	100 ft
6	Flood Plains	4 points	-
7	High Quality Streams	3 points	100 ft
8	Ridge Tops	3 points	-
9	Slopes > or Equal to 25%	3 points	-
10	Historic Sites	3 points	-
11	Off Road Trails	2 points	500 ft
12	Water Trails	2 points	500 ft
13	Flatwater/ Whitewater Streams	2 points	-
14	Special Recreation Areas	2 points	300 ft
15	Abandoned Railroad Areas	1 point	100 ft
16	Lakes and Ponds	1 point	-
17	Utility Corridors	1 point	100 ft
18	Active Railroads	1 point	100 ft

LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- ▶ Connection Currently in Place
- ▽ No Natural Impediment for Connection
- Natural Impediments-Stream Crossing Required
- Natural Impediment-River Crossing Required
- Natural Impediment-Local Ferry Service Available



Weighted Composite Map
 The criteria identified in creating the Fayette County's Open Space, Greenways and Trail Plan Component were then assigned weighted values based on their sensitivity to human use. The values ranged from 5 (most sensitive) to 1 (least sensitive). The Weighted Criteria are then used to construct a composite of highly sensitive areas. The darker the shading, the higher the sensitivity of resources in a given area.



Sources: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Game Commission

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PROJECT CORRIDORS

#	Name	#	Name
1	Mon River Trail	23	S.R. 40 Scenic Corridor
2	Yough/Mon Link	24	S.R. 381 Scenic Corridor
3	Redstone/ Yough Connector	25	S.R. 711 Scenic Corridor
4	North Brown's Run Trail		
5	Dunlap Creek Greenway		
6	Mason/Brownville Trail		
7	South Brown's Run Trail		
8	Forbes Wildlife Corridor		
9	Sheepskin Trail		
10	Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor		
11	Southern Coal and Coke Heritage Trail		
12	Yough River Greenway/ Great Allegheny Passage		
13	Jacob's Creek Greenway		
14	Laurel Highlands Greenway		
15	Norma/Valley Connector		
16	Indian Creek Valley Trail		
17	Laurel Ridge Passage		
18	Chestnut Ridge Connector		
19	SoFay Trail		
20	Ohio/Pylye Scenic Corridor		
21	Laurel Hill Greenway		
22	Yough Dam Trail		

LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- State Forests, Parks, and Gamelands; Federal Lands; County Parks
- Biological Diversity Areas
- ▶ Connection Currently in Place
- ◀ No Natural Impediment for Connection
- Natural Impediment-Stream Crossing Required
- Natural Impediment-River Crossing Required
- Natural Impediment-Local Ferry Service Available

PROJECT CORRIDOR CLASSIFICATIONS

- ↗ Conservation
- ↗ Recreation
- ↗ Recreation/Conservation

10,000 Acres

5,000 Acres

1,000 Ac

NORTH

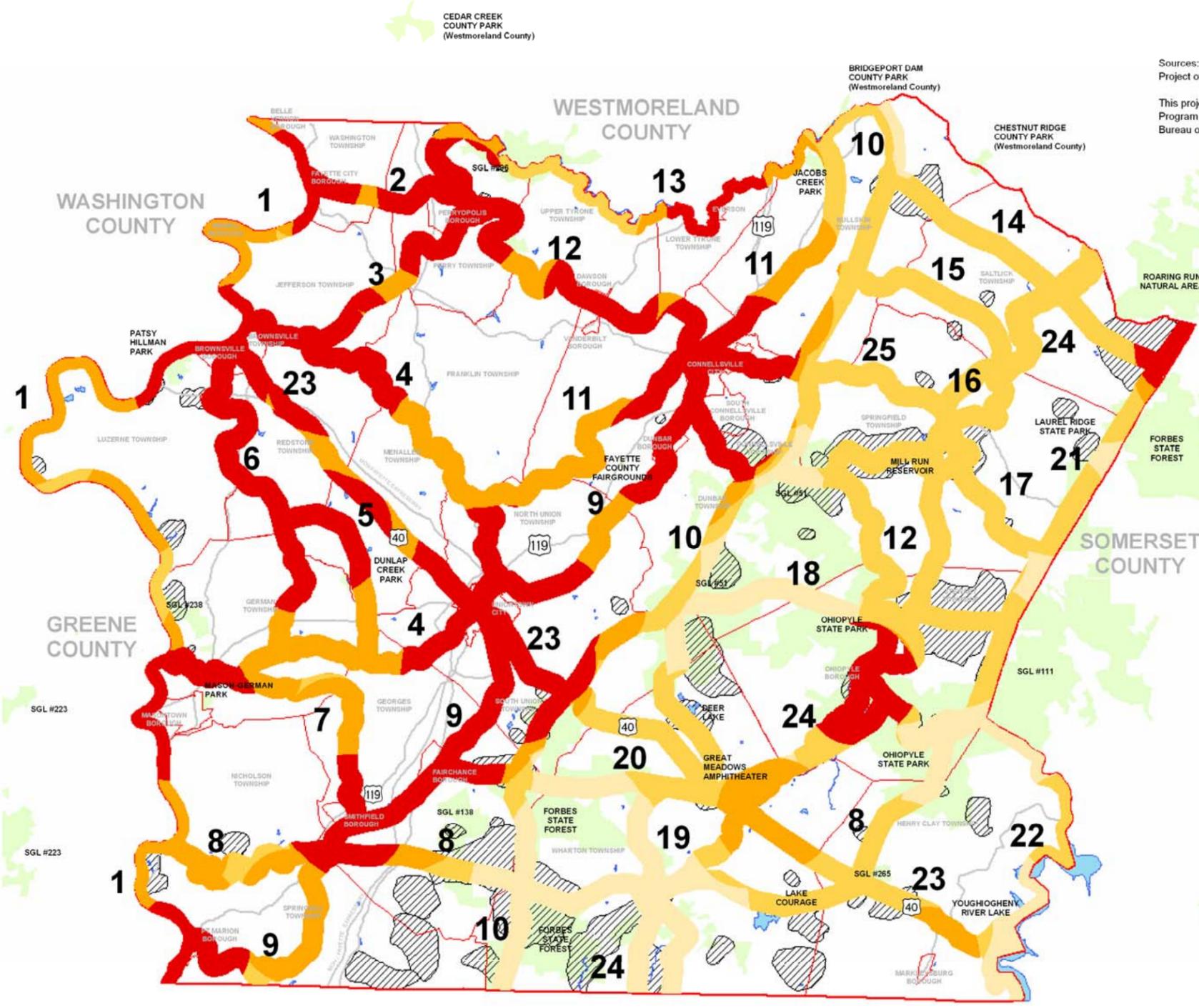
Project Corridors

In consideration of the weighted natural resources analysis and the County's existing trail network/system, a diagram of future greenways corridors, or Project Corridors was established. This diagram, shown above, illustrates more than two dozen greenway corridors identified in the County. Each corridor is identified and color-coded based upon its relevance to recreation, conservation or a combination thereof.

A significant factor in the proposed alignment and location of several potential greenway corridors within Fayette County is the

relationship of existing and planned greenways (both recreation and conservation) in surrounding counties of Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Maryland. Fayette County's greenways are a significant component of interconnectivity between planning efforts in the tri-state area.

The general characteristics of each Corridor is outlined on the following pages.



Sources: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Game Commission

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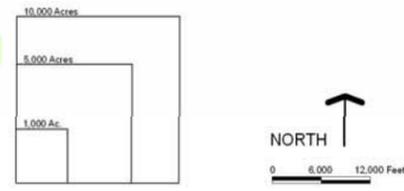
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16	Indian Creek Valley Trail		
17	Laurel Ridge Passage		
18	Chestnut Ridge Connector		
19	SoFay Trail		
20	Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor		
21	Laurel Hill Greenway		
22	Yough Dam Trail		

LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- State Forests, Parks, and Gamelands; Federal Lands; County Parks
- Biological Diversity Areas

LEVEL OF THREAT TO GREENWAY SUCCESS

- Lowest Threat Level (Does not meet any of the analysis criteria)
- Moderate Threat Level
- Highest Threat Level (Meets all three analysis criteria)



Threat Analysis

Recognizably, a corridor's success and feasibility of implementation is directly affected by development opportunities adjacent to the corridor. The existence of development opportunities may challenge the possibility of the corridor's greenway success. This Project Corridor Threat Analysis Map identifies the potential degree of "threat" along each of the greenway corridors. Reflecting upon the County's existing comprehensive land use, parks and recreation planning initiatives, criteria considered in this evaluation include:

- Proximity to public water service;
- Proximity to public sanitary service;
- Location within densely populated areas;

The severity of "threats" is determined by the number of criteria that overlay a Project Corridor. As the number of criteria existing along a Corridor increase, there is a higher potential challenge to achieving the Project Corridor's improvements. For the purposes of this analysis, those greenways which are scenic

routes, were not considered to be impacted by the presence or lack of presence of this assessment's criteria.

Open Space, Greenways and Trails Recommendations



Project Corridor Types

The other major component of defining the County's greenways network is evaluating and assigning the "type" of greenway corridor that is desired. To properly plan for and improve Project Corridor areas, each corridor is one of six different corridor types.

Within Fayette County, there are corridors that have no impact to the landscape to those that will or currently do include maintained, paved trails. Each project corridor's type was determined based on the nature of the underlying intent for a greenway to be used for recreation or conservation. The six Corridor Types include:

Type I: Open Space

No constructed trails; unblazed/unmarked; public access permitted



Type II: Maintained Dirt Trail

Light impact trails; blazed/marked; pedestrian trail approximately 2' wide



Type III: Improved/Maintained Dirt Trail
Medium impact trails; blazed/marked; multi-purpose trail approximately 6'



Type IV: Improved/Maintained Crushed Aggregate/Asphalt Trail

High impact trails; blazed/marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6'10' wide



Type V: Water Trail

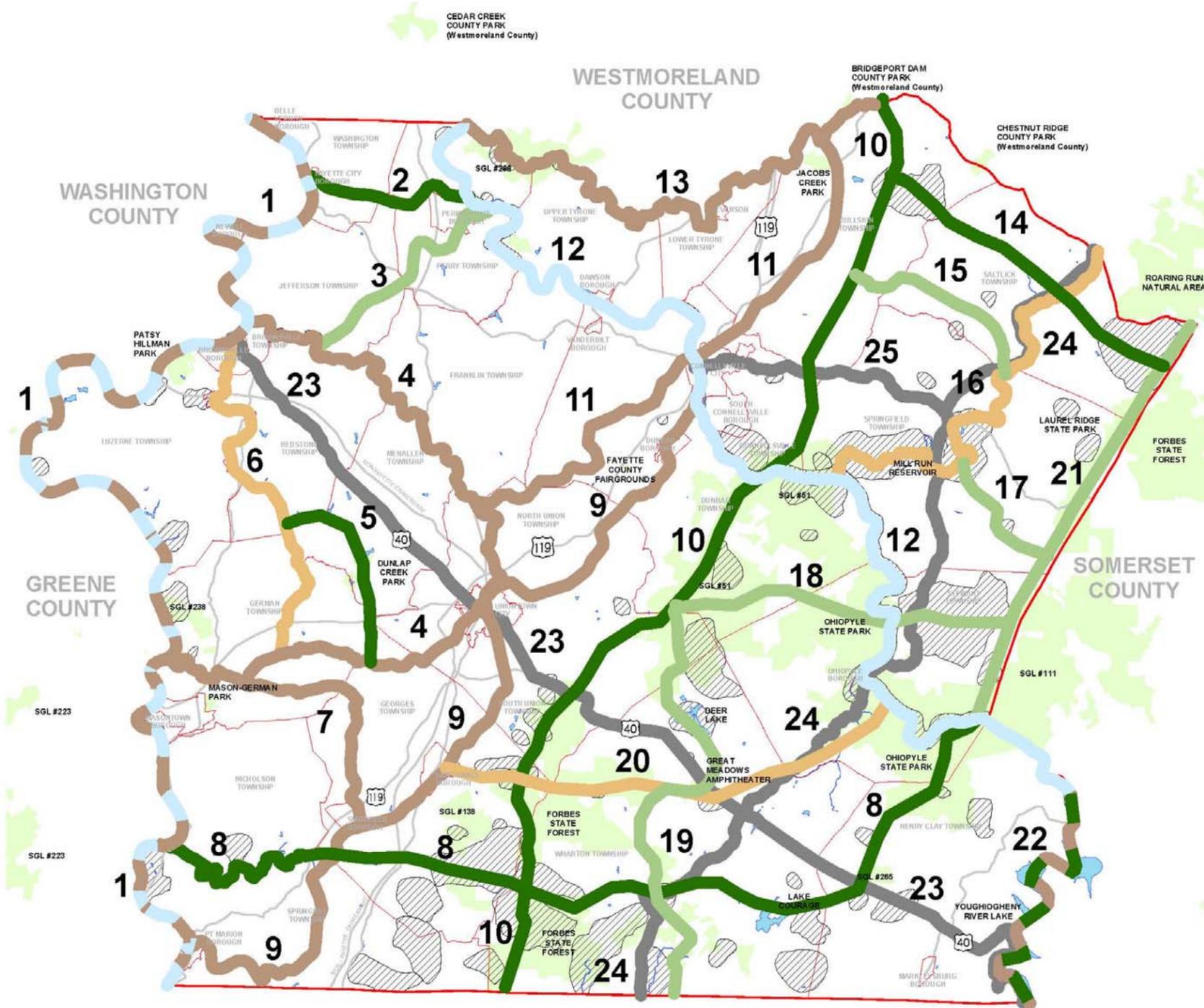
Mapped and identified water routes with public access at least every five miles



Type VI: Scenic Corridor

Vehicular-oriented corridors with historical and/or cultural significance





Sources: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Game Commission

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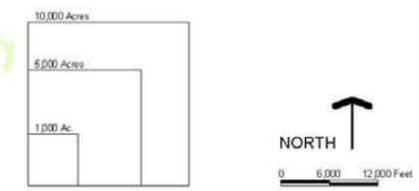
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20	Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor			
21	Laurel Hill Greenway			
22	Yough Dam Trail			

LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- State Forests, Parks, and Gmelands; Federal Lands; County Parks
- Biological Diversity Areas

PROJECT CORRIDOR TYPES

- Type I: Open Space
- Type II: Maintained Dirt Trail
- Type III: Improved/Maintained Dirt Trail
- Type IV: Improved/Maintained Dirt Trail
- Type V: Improved/Maintained Crushed Aggregate/Asphalt Trail
- Type VI: Scenic Corridor



Project Corridor Types

The map above illustrates the proposed Corridor Type for each of the recreation and conservation oriented greenways that create the County's network. Factors which have influenced each of these designations are existing trail construction, slated trail projects and potential connections with greenways in surrounding Counties.

In keeping with the spirit of the County's rural nature, a majority of corridors are proposed to be improved for pedestrian use but remain unpaved.

As opportunity arises in the long-term, however, the County could convert the improved/maintained dirt trail (Type IV) forming the Sheepskin Trail to become a hard surfaced trail as similar to that seen on the Yough River Greenway/Great Allegheny Passage. Potential amenities should also be evaluated for inclusion along the trails. Active recreation trails may benefit from exercise stations and drinking fountains, while passive recreation trails would be better served by wayfinding, seating, and educational opportunities.



Project Corridors

Table 4: Corridor Network

#	Name	Corridor Purpose	Type of Corridor	Total Project Length (miles)	Threat Level	Description	Connections to Other Greenways/Trails
1	Mon River Trail	Conservation/ Recreation	IV, V	49	Low to High	Travels the length of the County's western border along the Monongahela River. Includes numerous scenic and historic sites, including Patsy Hillman Park and the Belle Vernon Cokeworks. Connects the historic districts of Belle Vernon, Brownsville, and Brownsville Northside, and passes through a number of different State Gamelands.	Sheepskin Trail, Forbes Wildlife Corridor, North Brown's Run Trail, South Brown's Run Trail, Masontown/Brownsville Trail, Yough/Mon Link, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor
2	Yough/Mon Link	Conservation	I	6	Moderate to High	Serves as an important link between two major greenway projects. Connects Fayette City Borough and Perryopolis Borough.	Mon River Trail, Yough River Greenway/Allegheny Passage
3	Redstone/Yough Connector	Conservation/ Recreation	II	9	Highest	Serves as an important link between two major greenway projects. Connects Perryopolis Borough and Brownsville Borough.	Yough River Greenway/Allegheny Passage, North Brown's Run Trail
4	North Brown's Run Trail	Recreation	IV	30	High to Highest	Travels through some of Fayette County's most populated areas along North Brown's Run stream corridor. Connects Brownsville Borough, Uniontown City and Masontown Borough.	Mon River Trail, Redstone/Yough Connector, Southern Coal and Coke Heritage Trail, Sheepskin Trail, Dunlap Creek Trail, Masontown/Brownsville Trail, South Brown's Run Trail, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor
5	Dunlap Creek Greenway	Conservation	I	7	High to Highest	Serves Dunlap Creek Park in a suburban area of Fayette County.	Masontown/Brownsville Trail, North Brown's Run Trail
6	Masontown/Brownsville Trail	Recreation	III	13	Highest	Serves Brownsville Borough and a Biological Diversity Area south of town. Connects a number of important historic sites, including the Mon Railway Bridge, Saint Peter's Church, Bowman's Castle, and Dunlap's Creek Bridge.	Mon River Trail, Dunlap Creek Greenway, North Brown Run's Trail
7	South Brown's Run Trail	Recreation	IV	8	Moderate to Highest	Skirts Mason German park as it travels between the Mon River and Sheepskin Trails. Accesses Leckrone #2 Company Town, an interesting historical site.	Mon River Trail, North Brown's Run Trail, Sheepskin Trail
8	Forbes Wildlife Corridor	Conservation	I	33	Moderate to Highest	Travels the width of southern Fayette County. Visits the many Biological Diversity Areas. Passes through Forbes State Forest and several State Gamelands as well. Experiences significant elevation change as it connects the New Geneva Historic District in the east to Ohiopyle Borough at its western terminus.	Mon River Trail, Sheepskin Trail, Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, SoFay Trail, Yough River Greenway/Great Allegheny Passage, Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor, Laurel Hill Greenway, Yough Dam Trail, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor
9	Sheepskin Trail	Recreation	IV	32	High	Parallels US 119. Passes through the heart of Uniontown.	Mon River Trail, Forbes Wildlife Corridor, South Brown's Run Trail, North Brown's Run Trail, Great Allegheny Passage/Yough River Trail, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor

Corridor Improvement Types:

I: Open Space - unblazed / unmarked; public access permitted

II: Maintained Dirt Trail - blazed / marked; pedestrian trail approximately 2' wide

III: Improved / Maintained Dirt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6' wide

IV: Improved / Maintained Crushed Aggregate / Asphalt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6'-10' wide

V: Water Trail - public access points

VI: Scenic Corridor - Vehicular routes

#	Name	Corridor Purpose	Type of Corridor	Total Project Length (miles)	Threat Level	Description	Connections to Other Greenways/Trails
10	Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor	Conservation	I	34	Lowest to Low	Spans Fayette County from the North to the South on one of the County's most prominent ridgelines. Classified as conservation because of the unique habitat serving a wide variety of plants and animals.	Jacob's Creek Greenway, Laurel Highlands Greenway, Normalville Connector, Allegheny County Passage/Yough River Trail, Chestnut Ridge Connector, Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor, Forbes Wildlife Corridor, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor
11	Southern Coal and Coke Heritage Trail	Recreation	IV	20	Low to Highest	Celebrates Fayette County's industrial history as it follows abandoned rail lines through lands that were once home to thousands of beehive coal ovens. Passes through many historic company towns as well as the heart of Connellsville. Accesses Jacob's Creek Park and the Fayette County Fairgrounds.	Jacob's Creek Greenway, Yough River Greenway/Great Allegheny Passage, North Brown's Run Trail
12	Yough River Greenway/ Great Allegheny Passage	Recreation	V	43	Low to Highest	Functions as a section of the Great Allegheny Passage, which runs from Pittsburgh to Cumberland, Maryland. Provides access to Connellsville City, Ohiopyle State Park and the Bear Run Preserve. Follows a former railroad corridor, paralleling the Youghiogheny River for its entire length in Fayette County.	Jacob's Creek Greenway, Yough/Mon Link, Redstone/Yough Connector, Southern Coal and Coke Trail, Sheepskin Trail, Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, Indian Creek Valley Trail, Chestnut Ridge Connector, Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor, Laurel Hill Greenway, Forbes Wildlife Corridor, Yough Dam Trail
13	Jacob's Creek Greenway	Recreation	IV	22	Lowest to Highest	Runs along Jacob's Creek which forms the border with Westmoreland County to the north. Offers access to Jacob's Creek Park as well as a number of State Gamelands. Provides connections to Westmoreland County greenway projects as well as Bridgeport Dam County Park.	Yough River Greenway/Allegheny Passage, Southern Coal and Coke Trail, Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor
14	Laurel Highlands Greenway	Conservation	I	11	Low to Highest	Traverses a relatively unpopulated section of northeast Fayette County.	Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, Indian Creek Valley Trail, Laurel Hill Greenway, S.R. 381 Scenic Corridor
15	Normalville Connector	Conservation/ Recreation	II	7	Lowest	Provides an important link between two more substantial greenway projects.	Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, Indian Creek Valley Trail
16	Indian Creek Valley Trail	Recreation	III	17	Low	Parallels serene Indian Creek. Accesses State Gamelands, the Mill Run Reservoir, and a number important Biological Diversity Areas. Visits the Melcroft Historic District.	Laurel Highlands Greenway, Normalville Connector, Laurel Ridge Passage, Yough River Greenway/Great Allegheny Passage
17	Laurel Ridge Passage	Conservation/ Recreation	II	4	Low	Provides an important link between two more substantial greenway projects. Travels through a number of Biological Diversity Areas.	Indian Creek Valley Trail, Laurel Hill Greenway
18	Chestnut Ridge Connector	Conservation	II	12	Lowest to Low	Accesses some of the County's most important sites, including Ohiopyle State Park, Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, and the Bear Run Preserve.	Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, Yough River Greenway/Great Allegheny Passage, Laurel Hill Greenway

Corridor Improvement Types:

I: Open Space - unblazed / unmarked; public access permitted

II: Maintained Dirt Trail - blazed / marked; pedestrian trail approximately 2' wide

III: Improved / Maintained Dirt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6' wide

IV: Improved / Maintained Crushed Aggregate / Asphalt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6'-10' wide

V: Water Trail - public access points

VI: Scenic Corridor - Vehicular routes



Open Space, Greenways and Trails Recommendations

#	Name	Corridor Purpose	Type of Corridor	Total Project Length (miles)	Threat Level	Connections	Description
19	SoFay Trail	Recreation	II	15	Lowest to Low	Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, Chestnut Ridge Connector, Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor, Forbes Wildlife Corridor, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor	Connects Fayette County Greenway System with potential projects in Maryland. Includes access to Dear Lake, Fort Necessity National Battlefield, and Great Meadows Amphitheater.
20	Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor	Recreation	III	15	Lowest to Highest	Sheepskin Trail, Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, SoFay Trail, Yough River Greenway/Great Allegheny Passage	Travels the rugged and scenic Southern Laurel Highlands. Connects Fairchance Borough with Ohiopyle Borough, passing through Fort Necessity and the Great Meadows Amphitheater.
21	Laurel Hill Greenway	Recreation	II	15	Lowest to Highest	Laurel Highlands Greenway, Laurel Ridge Passage, Chestnut Ridge Connector, Yough River Greenway/Allegheny River Passage	Connects some of Fayette County's most popular recreation lands, including Laurel Ridge State Park, Forbes State Forest, Ohiopyle State Park, numerous State Gamelands and Roaring Run Natural Area. Continues to greenway systems in both Westmoreland and Somerset Counties.
22	Yough Dam Trail	Recreation	I, V	11	Low	Laurel Hill Greenway, Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor, Forbes Wildlife Corridor, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor	Connects Ohiopyle State Park and other greenway projects with the Yough Dam and the many recreational opportunities of the Youghiogheny River Lake.
23	State Route 40 Scenic Corridor	Recreation	VI	39	N/A	Mon River Trail, North Brown's Run Trail, Sheepskin Trail, Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, SoFay Trail, Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor, S.R. 381 Scenic Corridor, Forbes Wildlife Corridor, Yough Dam Trail	Follows a route almost identical to the Historic National Road. Designated a Pennsylvania Scenic Byway. Serves as one of Fayette County's major travel arteries and provides access to many other greenway projects.
24	State Route 381 Scenic Corridor	Recreation	VI	34	N/A	Laurel Highlands Greenway, Normalville Connector, Laurel Ridge Passage, Yough River Greenway/Great Allegheny Passage, S.R. 711 Scenic Corridor, Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor, Forbes Wildlife Corridor, SoFay Trail, U.S. 40 Scenic Corridor	Part of the Laurel Highlands Scenic Byway. Connects a number of important regional attractions Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, Ohiopyle State Park, and U.S. Highway 40.
25	State Route 711 Scenic Corridor	Recreation	VI	9	N/A	Sheepskin Trail, Yough River Greenway/Great Allegheny Passage, Southern Coal and Coke Trail, Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor, S.R. 381 Scenic Corridor	Travels over scenic Chestnut Ridge between Connellsville and Normalville.

Corridor Improvement Types:

I: Open Space - unblazed / unmarked; public access permitted

II: Maintained Dirt Trail - blazed / marked; pedestrian trail approximately 2' wide

III: Improved / Maintained Dirt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6' wide

IV: Improved / Maintained Crushed Aggregate / Asphalt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6'-10' wide

V: Water Trail - public access points

VI: Scenic Corridor - Vehicular routes

Table 5: Project Corridor Improvement Summary

#	Project / Corridor Name	Low and High Corridor Acquisition Cost Estimates ¹		Low and High Land Trail Improvement Cost Estimates		Water Trail Improvement Cost Estimate	Low and High Total Cost Estimates (Acquisition and Improvement)			
		\$	to \$	\$	to \$		\$	to \$	\$	to \$
1	Mon River Trail	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ 3,675,000	to \$ 5,880,000	\$ 98,000	\$ 3,773,000	to \$ 5,978,000		
2	Yough/Mon Link	\$ 1,020,000	to \$ 3,059,000	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,020,000	to \$ 3,059,000		
3	Redstone/ Yough Connector	\$ 1,444,000	to \$ 4,333,000	\$ 13,000	to \$ 13,000	\$ -	\$ 1,457,000	to \$ 4,346,000		
4	North Brown's Run Trail	\$ 5,116,000	to \$ 15,349,000	\$ 2,258,000	to \$ 3,613,000	\$ -	\$ 7,374,000	to \$ 18,962,000		
5	Dunlap Creek Greenway	\$ 1,118,000	to \$ 3,354,000	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,118,000	to \$ 3,354,000		
6	Masontown/Brownsville Trail	\$ 2,224,000	to \$ 6,673,000	\$ 196,000	to \$ 327,000	\$ -	\$ 2,420,000	to \$ 7,000,000		
7	South Brown's Run Trail	\$ 1,364,000	to \$ 4,093,000	\$ 602,000	to \$ 964,000	\$ -	\$ 1,966,000	to \$ 5,057,000		
8	Forbes Wildlife Corridor	\$ 5,268,000	to \$ 15,803,000	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,268,000	to \$ 15,803,000		
9	Sheepskin Trail	\$ 5,354,000	to \$ 16,063,000	\$ 2,363,000	to \$ 3,781,000	\$ -	\$ 7,717,000	to \$ 19,844,000		
10	Chestnut Ridge Wildlife Corridor	\$ 2,889,000	to \$ 8,666,000	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,889,000	to \$ 8,666,000		
11	Southern Coal and Coke Heritage Trail	\$ 3,342,000	to \$ 10,027,000	\$ 1,475,000	to \$ 2,360,000	\$ -	\$ 4,817,000	to \$ 12,387,000		
12	Yough River Greenway/ Great Allegheny Passage	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ -	\$ -	to \$ -		
13	Jacob's Creek Greenway	\$ 3,059,000	to \$ 9,176,000	\$ 1,650,000	to \$ 2,640,000	\$ -	\$ 4,709,000	to \$ 11,816,000		
14	Laurel Highlands Greenway	\$ 1,861,000	to \$ 5,582,000	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,861,000	to \$ 5,582,000		
15	Normalville Connector	\$ 1,189,000	to \$ 3,568,000	\$ 11,000	to \$ 11,000	\$ -	\$ 1,200,000	to \$ 3,579,000		
16	Indian Creek Valley Trail	\$ 2,895,000	to \$ 8,686,000	\$ 256,000	to \$ 426,000	\$ -	\$ 3,151,000	to \$ 9,112,000		
17	Laurel Ridge Passage	\$ 763,000	to \$ 2,289,000	\$ 7,000	to \$ 7,000	\$ -	\$ 770,000	to \$ 2,296,000		
18	Chestnut Ridge Connector	\$ 1,529,000	to \$ 4,588,000	\$ 18,000	to \$ 18,000	\$ -	\$ 1,547,000	to \$ 4,606,000		
19	SoFay Trail	\$ 1,198,000	to \$ 3,594,000	\$ 23,000	to \$ 23,000	\$ -	\$ 1,221,000	to \$ 3,617,000		
20	Ohiopyle Scenic Corridor	\$ 1,779,000	to \$ 5,337,000	\$ 232,000	to \$ 387,000	\$ -	\$ 2,011,000	to \$ 5,724,000		
21	Laurel Hill Greenway	\$ 2,474,000	to \$ 7,422,000	\$ 22,000	to \$ 22,000	\$ -	\$ 2,496,000	to \$ 7,444,000		
22	Yough Dam Trail	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ -	to \$ -	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000	to \$ 22,000		
23	State Route 40 Scenic Corridor									
24	State Route 381 Scenic Corridor									
25	State Route 711 Scenic Corridor									
		\$ 45,886,000	to \$ 137,662,000	\$ 12,801,000	to \$ 20,472,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 58,807,000	to \$ 158,254,000		

¹ Acquisition Costs of Unsecured Area/Easement: Low = \$450 acre; High = \$1,350 acre

² Corridor Improvement Types:

I: Open Space - unblazed / unmarked; public access permitted (price: not applicable)

II: Maintained Dirt Trail - blazed / marked; pedestrian trail approximately 2' wide (price: \$1,500/

IV: Improved / Maintained Crushed Aggregate / Asphalt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail

V: Water Trail - public access points (price: \$10,000 per access point approximately every 5 miles)

III: Improved / Maintained Dirt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6' wide (price: \$15,000-\$25,000/mile)

VI: Scenic Corridor - Vehicular routes (price: not applicable)



Open Space, Greenways and Trails Recommendations



Section 5 Action Plan

Introduction

The recommendations identified within this Plan represent a system of important connections between the County's natural, recreational, cultural, historical and scenic resources. Secondly, this network presents opportunities for such connections to be established and/or strengthened with surrounding counties. To ensure these recreation and conservation linkages can be promoted adequately and used appropriately, a formal Implementation Strategy should be established. This Strategy provides the framework for developing a County-wide system to manage, support and pursue funding for identified Parks and Greenways projects.

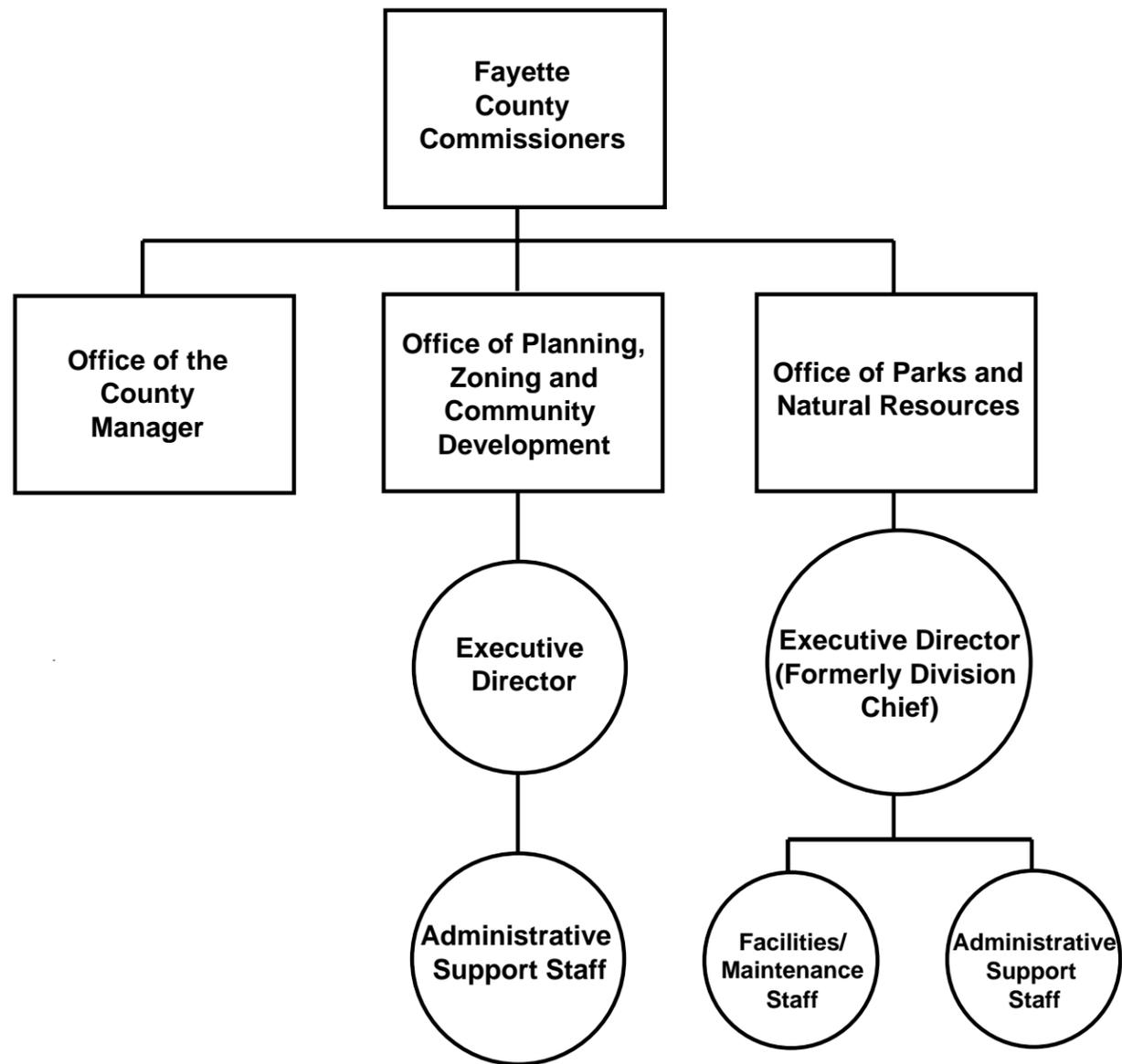
The Action Plan summarizes the key components of this Implementation Strategy:

- Outlining major actions and responsibilities;
- Identifying priority corridors; and
- Creating potential demonstration projects.

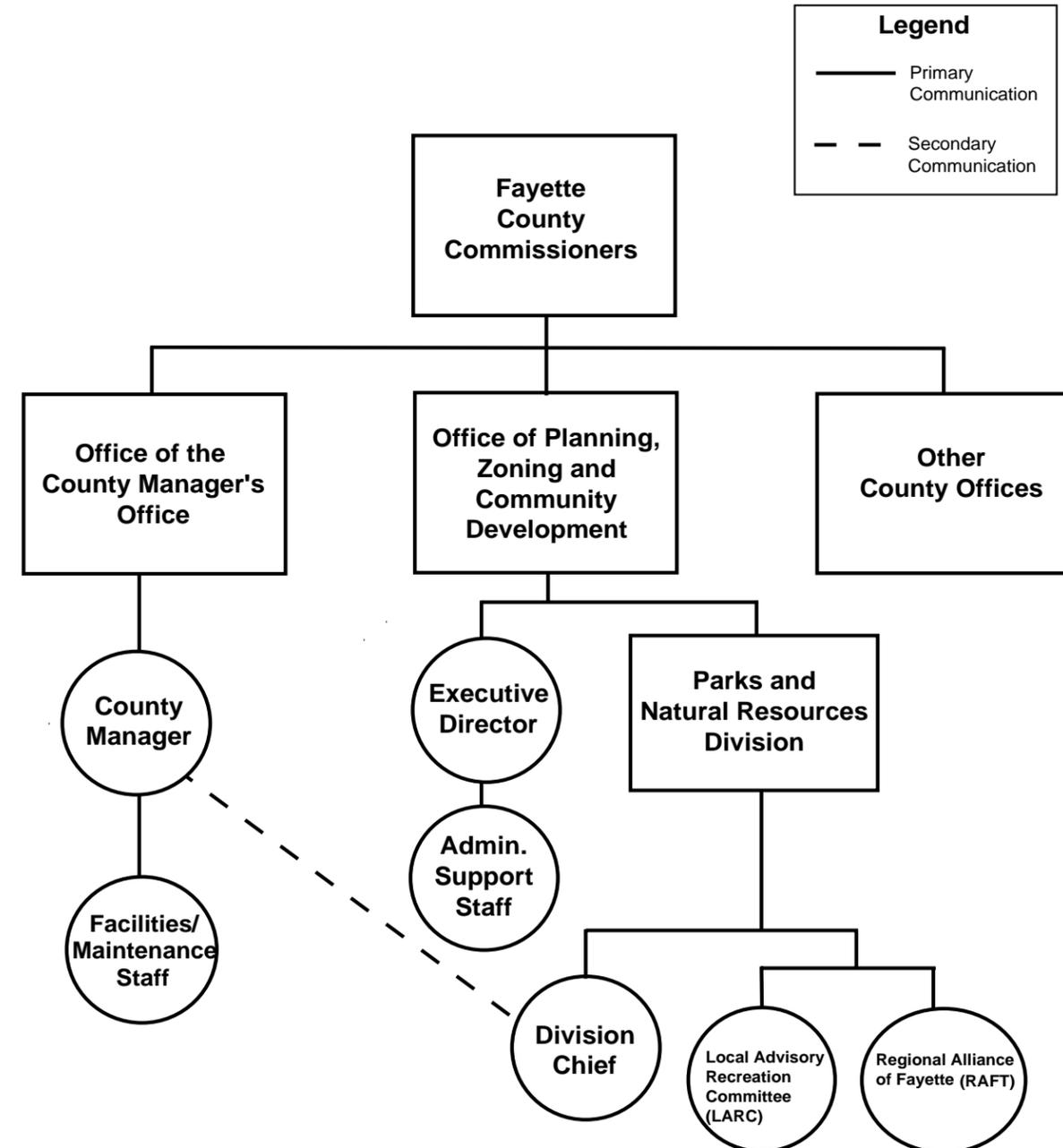
Organization

Outlined in the following charts are the specific staffing requirements, responsibilities and administrative roles that are recommended based upon the Plan's proposed projects and comments received from the public.

Short-Term Organization Structure



Long-Term Organization Structure



Parks and Recreation

Listed below are some short-term and long-range goals and objectives the County should consider to increase efficiency of park and recreation services:

Short Term Actions:

- The County should consider developing ongoing negotiations with SEIU to develop programs and practices to maintain its contract and keep the County financially viable
- The County should develop a written weekly, monthly, and annual operation plan for the park and recreation facilities
- The County should develop a program to chemically treat weeds in the parks to reduce maintenance
- The County should consider the purchase of a larger mower for park maintenance to reduce manpower or contract the mowing operations throughout the system
- Create a “Friends of the Parks” volunteer program; Initiate an “Eager Beaver Day”
- Upgrade the park master plans and the operations and maintenance plans for the three regional parks
- Develop fees and charges for the parks to offset the costs of operations
- Develop a plan to market both the tourist and local park and recreation facilities and programs in the County
- Conduct an annual inspection of the park facilities at the 3 regional parks
- Develop a “Risk Reduction Plan for Playgrounds” program and update all the play areas in the 3 regional parks
- Establish mow lines in the parks to reduce maintenance
- Continue to foster the existing park programs with the Pennsylvania Fish Commission and the Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Develop and install a directional system for the 3 regional parks
- Encourage the County School Districts and the local municipalities to develop cooperative agreements for joint use of existing facilities
- Develop a five year capital equipment plan the Department of Buildings and Grounds

Long Term Actions:

- Hire a full time professional to direct the park, recreation, and open space facilities and programs in the County
- Develop work procedures and purchase labor saving equipment to improve the efficiency of the Department of Buildings and Grounds to contain the existing labor force
- Develop a Procedures and Policy Handbook for the parks
- Create a volunteer County Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Board to support the park and recreation operations
- Use grant money to fund major maintenance and capital improvement projects in the parks
- Develop a Capital Equipment Reserve Fund as part of the County Budget
- Develop an intergovernmental program with the local municipalities where services, training, and equipment is shared
- Develop a long term surface treatment program for the park access roads and parking areas
- Upgrade the restrooms at Dunlap Creek Park and Jacobs Creek Park
- Develop facilities and programs for the senior citizens in the County Parks

Immediate Actions:

Work Plan

The County’s comprehensive land use planning serves as a success from which the network of recreation opportunities, open spaces and greenways can grow. To fully understand how *Getting Outside* recommendations fit within the spirit of the projects in which all identified Stakeholders have interest, the Recreation Alliance of Fayette (RAFT) should develop a Work Plan. Overall, the Work Plan should be aimed at identifying RAFT’s roles in:

1. Continuing to support the strengths of existing initiatives
2. Continuing detailed analyses of existing projects and their:
 - Status
 - Technical assistance needs
 - Funding needs
 - Timing
3. Identifying critical gaps
4. Developing a clearinghouse for technical assistance

5. Developing a marketing publications and supportive materials relevant to the County’s Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways, and Trails vision
6. Convening group presentations to County, state agencies and the regional legislative delegation to apprise them of the projects, progress and needs of the region.

Grant Applications for Feasibility Studies of Identified Demonstration Projects

The Local Advisory Recreation Commission (LARC) and RAFT should prepare a grant application to submit to DCNR in pursuing a feasibility study for identified demonstration projects.

One demonstration project that should be pursued is the Sheepskin Trail. Providing amenities and improving the trail and the connection to the Mon trail would increase use and encourage similar improvements on other trails. Coordination of private property owners, PennDOT, and local municipalities is essential for this development. The Forbes Wildlife Corridor could serve as another demonstration project that is conservation focused.

As demonstration projects are completed, it is recommended that LARC and RAFT continue to pursue grant funding for additional feasibility studies to understand the intricate opportunities and challenges that new Greenway and Trail Corridors possesses prior to significant acquisition and/or improvement investments are made.

Short-term Actions

Compile inventory of additional quasi-public protect lands

Land ownership information is currently established through Fayette County’s GIS database. As part of feasibility study work and on-going implementation efforts, LARC and RAFT should work with County planning staff to compile and update land ownership data specific relevant to all greenway project corridor areas. As quasi-public lands are acquired or become available for improvement, the database should be updated and RAFT, through its member representatives, can identify opportunities to expand greenway implementation and partnerships.

Conduct a Feasibility Study for Identified Demonstration Projects

Because it is necessary to manage and protect lands through regulation and planning, a feasibility study for the two initial demonstration projects should examine existing plans for conserving lands at the local level. The effectiveness of local

and County-wide regulatory measures for conserving natural resources should also be evaluated. The following criteria should be considered as part of this assessment:

- What do local comprehensive plans, zoning plans and natural resource protection ordinances promote in terms of open space planning within the vicinity of lands which are important for the greenway project corridors?
- Does it appear that such provisions could be updated to better address the effects of development on and protection of significant resources?
- Does the community utilize an Official Map, as described in the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*, to identify the location of future public areas and preserve right-of-way areas for recreation and open space?
- Are there any advisory bodies at the local level, such as an Environmental Advisory Councils, which review zoning and rezoning proposals, subdivision and site plans, or other development concepts to identify impacts on the community's landscape?

Develop a Regional "Ask"

A Regional "Ask" represents a multi-county effort which can fulfill a significant goal of agencies in the Commonwealth. In the case of realizing Fayette County's recreation and resource initiatives, the County is encouraged to develop collaborative efforts with surrounding counties such as Westmoreland and Somerset to pursue State funding and implementation of corridor projects including the Jacobs Creek Greenway/Coal and Coke Trail as well as connections to the Laurel Hill Greenway.

Implementation Stakeholders

PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources

A major landowner in the region, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) owns and operates State Parks and Forests and works closely with local governments and nonprofits to achieve conservation and recreation goals and projects.

PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

The Department of Environmental Protection protects Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and provides for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment. The DEP works as a partner with individuals,

organizations, governments and businesses to prevent pollution and restore our natural resources.

PA Department of Transportation

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) can provide funding and technical assistance for trail and other transportation related greenway initiatives.

PA Game Commission

Another public landowner within the County is the Pennsylvania Game Commission, which owns and operates State Gamelands.

Regional Trail Corporation

The Regional Trail Corporation is a non-profit partnership that acquires, develops, and manages appropriate trail corridors in southwestern Pennsylvania while creating and promoting opportunities for recreation, tourism, economic development, and historic and environment conservation.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy has conserved over 250,000 acres of land in Western Pennsylvania and focuses much of its work on the important biological and natural habitats in the region

Conservancies, Trusts, Local Foundations and Others

Communication with local and regional conservation and recreation oriented entities is a key component in ensuring coordination and understanding of community-driven day-to-day greenway activities.

Fayette County Board of Commissioners

The Fayette County Board of Commissioners (FCBC) and County Planning Office will have the primary responsibility for seeing that the Plan is implemented. The Commissioners are situated to guide the vision of the long-term. Parks, recreation and greenway activities are an important facet of enhancing County's assets of providing vibrant, cohesive transportation, economic development, recreation and tourism opportunities for County residents and visitors.

Greenway Owners/Managers

There are a variety of organizations which will actually be charged with owning and managing greenways in the County. To ensure continuity of implementation, a chief coordinating entity between this group of owners/managers, RAFT and Local Advisory Recreation Commission (LARC) is necessary.

National Road Heritage Corridor

The National Road Heritage Corridor is the State's only National Scenic Byway. The Corridor celebrates the history, culture and scenic beauty of the Nation's first federally funded highway.

Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area

The Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area was created in 1996 by Congress and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to "identify, conserve, promote and interpret the cultural, historic, recreational and other resources associated with steel and steel-related industries."

Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative

The Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative is increasing recreational opportunities and linking the area's beautiful landscapes with communities. The goal is to create a sustainable regional economy based on our natural resources and these links between communities and resources.

Implementation Techniques

Several techniques for implementing the Plan are described below. These tools range from creating land management policies and land use controls to purchasing rights to land.

Land Management

Land management tools provide specific policies for managing valuable resources.

Land management plans establish a specific set of policies for the use of publicly owned land. Management plans typically identify valuable natural, historic and heritage resources; determine compatible uses for the land; determine the administrative needs of the land, such as maintenance, security and funding requirements; and identify recommended short-term and long-term strategies/actions for the treatment and protection of identified resources. Because land management plans are prepared for publicly owned land, few or no other regulatory or acquisition-related tools are necessary to ensure implementation of the plan's policies.

Example. A County park could implement a land management plan that identifies areas of specific importance due to existing natural resources as well as areas suitable for development of trail/greenway facilities. The plan could include recommended actions that would result in the preservation of the natural resources and the development of the trail.

Conservation strategies on lands that are not publicly owned must be implemented using regulatory or acquisition related tools.



Regulation

Land may be protected through government regulation, which controls land use and development through legislative powers. Examples of various land use and development ordinances and components of these ordinances, which regulate community growth and protect natural resources, are as listed below:

Dedication/Density Transfers

The dedication/density transfer tool allows a developer/landowner to transfer allowable development density from one portion of his or her parcel/development to another portion. In exchange for the increase in allowable density, the landowner must dedicate the undeveloped open space portion to the municipality/County. This tool is applicable for a single parcel or contiguous parcels of land that are part of a common development plan.

Example. A portion of land included within a subdivision/development could potentially provide an integral link for the municipal trail system. The municipal planning commission could grant the developer increased allowable density on appropriate portions of his or her site in exchange for dedicating the remaining portions of the land for preservation purposes.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

TDR allows communities to provide additional density in areas where growth is desired and discourage growth/development in areas desirable as preserved open Space. The community identifies an area to be developed and an area to be preserved. The municipality's comprehensive plan is a useful guide for identifying these areas. Owners within the area to be preserved are given development credits that can be sold to land owners in the area to be developed. In order to sell these credits, landowners must place a permanent conservation easement on their property. The purchasing landowner within the area to be developed may then develop at a density that is higher than previously allowed by the municipality.

Example. A municipality contains a portion that is experiencing increased development pressures and another area with sensitive and important natural resources. The municipal comprehensive plan identifies the former as a future growth area and the latter as an ideal preservation area. The municipality could adopt a TDR policy allowing landowners in the preservation

area to sell development credits to the growth area. This action optimizes the development of the growth area and the preservation of the important natural area.

Negotiated Dedications

In instances where parcels are deemed beneficial to the protection and preservations of stream corridors, a municipality/county may request that a landowner enter into negotiations for those specific parcels. Additionally, during the subdivision review process, the municipality/county may ask for the dedication of land in order to provide public open Spaces. Such dedication should be proportionate to the impact the subdivision will have on the services provided by the municipality.

Example. A subdivision/development plan requires the extension of existing municipal infrastructure. The municipality can request that the developer dedicate a portion of the property to the municipality in exchange for the extension of municipal infrastructure and services. The size of the dedication should be relative to the impact on existing municipal services.

Fee-in-Lieu

Fee-in-lieu can be coordinated with negotiated dedications to bolster the effectiveness of a municipality's land conservation opportunities. Using this tool, landowners have the option to pay the municipality/county, in an amount relative to the density at which they are developing, instead of dedicating the appropriate portion of their land for preservation. The municipality/county may then utilize these funds to acquire land elsewhere in order to implement land conservation projects.

Example. Applying fee-in-lieu techniques along with a form of negotiated dedication increases the options presented to developers within the municipality. The developer then has a choice of dedicating the appropriate portion of land to the municipality or paying a lump sum fee to the municipality in lieu of the dedication of land.

Buffer/Transition Zones

Buffer/transition zones are formally identified within the municipality's zoning ordinance. The situation of these zones is determined by potential interaction of incompatible land uses. Open Space is preserved along these potential interaction points in order to provide a buffer or transition between the incompatible uses.

Example. Buffer/transition zones could be used in instances where land zoned for intense uses such as highway commercial or manufacturing abut less intense properties or open Spaces. The buffer/transition zone could be situated along the border of the two zones so as not to unduly make large portions of each unusable, but could be large enough to effectively screen one use from the other. The area within the buffer/transition zone could be used to situate a trail.

Zoning/Overlay Zones

Also identified within a municipality's zoning ordinance, zoning overlays allow a municipality to introduce specific controls related to land conservation, or enhance the underlying zone's existing land use regulations. Examples of these controls include increased setbacks, reduced maximum allowable land coverage, etc.

Example. Zoning overlays could be applied along potential key trail corridors. By increasing setbacks and reducing land coverage, more open Space can be provided along these key corridors than would be provided by the underlying zoning districts.

Conservation Subdivision

Municipal and county subdivision ordinances may contain requirements related to public park sites, trails, and greenways. Agency works with landowners to secure necessary right of way for trail etc.

Example. A conservation subdivision could allow an overall density bonus in exchange for clustering development and creating open Space and trail facilities.

Subdivision Exaction

This tool requires as a condition of development approval, that the developer provide public facilities or the financing for the provision of public facilities. The size of the facility or amount of financing should be relative to the impact that the development will have on existing public facilities and/or the demand for additional public facilities that the development will create. The facilities, which can include open Space, are then dedicated to the municipality/county.

Example. A developer could be required to build a park or reserve an area of his land for open Space because the number of new residents generated by the

development will cause an existing park to exceed its service capacity and/or create need for additional park facilities.

Acquisition

Property may be acquired outright as a way of protecting/creating land for open Space purposes. In general, all of the following techniques can be applied in order to acquire property or rights of way for the purposes of creating greenways.

Donation/Tax Incentives

Landowners can dedicate their property to the municipality and typically realize tax benefits such as federal and state deductions on personal income as well as the ability to avoid inheritance taxes, capital gains taxes and recurring property taxes. This tool results in the municipality/county receiving fee-simple title to a parcel of land at no cost.

Fee-Simple Purchase

This is the outright purchase of land by the county/municipality where it receives fee-simple title to a parcel of land.

Easements

Easements can be used by the county/municipality to acquire explicit rights to certain areas of a property. Easements result in local government receiving a specific interest in a parcel while the property owner retains responsibility for all taxes associated with the property, less the value of the easement granted. Easements are generally categorized by their interest in a property.

- *Conservation*
Typically, conservation easements are designed to protect natural resources and permanently limit the use and/or development intensity of land. These easements are generally applied to the entire property or relatively large portions of the property. Benefits to property owners who participate in a conservation easement include potential qualification for federal income tax deductions and/or state tax credits.
- *Preservation*
Preservation easements can be used to protect significant built and/or natural features of a

property. When applied for the purposes of protecting built assets, the easements general intent is the preservation of a structure's historical value and integrity. Additionally, when used in concert with best management practices, these easements can protect important elements of the property's landscape. These easements can be applied to the entire property or specific portions of the property. Tax incentives for preservation easements are similar to those associated with conservation easements.

- *Public Access*
The general intent of public access easements is to provide passage and access through a property in order to link to assets/amenities on adjacent properties. These easements are typically applied to portions of a property rather than the entire property. Public access clauses may be included within conservation and preservation easements or the public access easement may be utilized individually.
- *Easement Purchase*
Negotiations with property owners may fail to yield desired donations of land for the purposes of various easements. In these instances, a county/municipality may purchase an easement on the desired portions of the property. Because easements typically do not affect the entire property or the entire bundle of rights, the purchase price will be less than the title's value.

Deed Restriction/Purchase of Development Rights

A county/municipality can encourage protection of sensitive resources such as prime agricultural land by instituting a purchase of development rights program. Under such a program, the property owner would forfeit any further rights to develop his or her land in exchange for payment from the county/municipality. This type of program includes the fair market value purchase of property development rights from an owner and is typically reciprocated by the landowner including development restrictions beyond the current use within the deed to the land. The property owner continues to utilize the property and keeps all ownership rights associated with

the land in its current condition.

Purchase/Lease Back

A county/municipality can purchase land and lease it back to the original owner with additional use and development restrictions.

Option/First Right of Refusal

Owners who intend to sell their property can agree to give the county/municipality the right to decide whether they want to purchase the land before the owner sells to a private entity. When coupled with other tools, this technique can allow the Municipality time to acquire funds necessary to purchase a property for greenway use.

Condemnation

Condemnation could be used in instances where property or property rights are unusually difficult to acquire. This is usually the result of unclear ownership or the unavailability of the owner. Condemnation is not always warranted as other techniques may achieve the desired result.

Implementation Resources

The following funding sources provide financial assistance ranging from planning to land acquisition and generally take the form of grants and/or loans. Programs described below are grouped by the agency that provides the funds. In addition to these funding avenues, additional resources may be found through Pennsylvania's Greenway Clearinghouse -- pagreenways.org

Pennsylvania DCNR

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides grant moneys through the Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) to county and municipal governments to support greenway and park planning, acquisition, design and development. Heritage Park Grants are available to municipalities or nonprofit organizations for promoting public-private partnerships that preserve and enhance natural, cultural, historic and recreation resources to stimulate economic development through heritage tourism. Heritage Park Grants are only available within heritage park areas. *Land Trust Grants* are available to land trusts and conservancies to acquire land for areas that face



imminent loss. Land must be open to public use and priority is given to habitats where threatened species exist.

Rails-to-Trails Grants are available to municipalities and nonprofit organizations to fund the planning, acquisition or development to preserve and protect abandoned railroad corridors.

Community Grants are awarded to municipalities for recreation, park and conservation projects including the rehabilitation and development of parks and recreation facilities; acquisition of land for park and conservation purposes; and technical assistance for feasibility studies, trails studies, and site development planning.

River Conservation Grants are available to municipalities, counties, municipal and inter-municipal authorities and river support groups to conserve and enhance river resources. Planning and implementation grants are available to develop or carry out projects or activities defined in an approved river conservation plan.

Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Grants provide funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreation. Eligible applicants include federal and state agencies, local governments and private organizations. Eligible projects include: maintenance, restoration, development, construction of new recreational trails and acquisition of easements or property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.

Pennsylvania DCED

The *Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP)* provides grant funds for the preparation of community comprehensive plans and the ordinances to implement them. Multi-municipal ventures are given priority within this fund. LUPTAP funds could be used to implement greenway components of municipal comprehensive plans.

The *Community Revitalization Program* provides grant funds to support local initiatives that promote community stability and quality of life.

The *Floodplain Land Use Assistance Program* Provides grants and technical assistance to encourage the proper use of land and the management of floodplain lands within Pennsylvania.

PA Fish and Boat Commission

A Boating Facilities Grant Program is available to municipalities to develop access points on municipal-owned land. The Fish and Boat Commission also provides in-kind engineering services for the creation of these access points.

The Coldwater Heritage Partnership provides leadership, coordination, technical assistance and funding support for the evaluation, conservation and protection of Pennsylvania's coldwater streams.

The State Wildlife Grant Program provides federal funding for high-priority conservation projects impacting endangered, threatened and at-risk species across Pennsylvania.

The Fish and Boat Commission also supports a Water Trail Brochure Program. The program encourages and promotes water trails by creating brochures that delineate water trail locations and access points for any interested water trail group. These groups must provide a map of the water trail and content for the brochure. The Fish and Boat Commission provides in-kind design and layout services as well as reproduction services, which are available for a nominal fee.

Federal Funding

The *Land and Water Conservation Fund* provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

The *Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)* funds numerous transportation programs to improve the nation's transportation infrastructure, enhance economic growth, and protect the environment. A portion of Pennsylvania's SAFETEA-LU funds, administered through PENNDOT, go to greenway projects with ties to transportation, historic preservation, bicycle/pedestrian improvements and/or environmental quality.

The *Recreational Trails Program* is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that provides assistance by making funds available to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses.

The *Farmland Protection Program* provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA joins with State, tribal, or local governments to acquire conservation easements or other interests from landowners.

The *Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program* from the National Parks Service operates this program aimed at conserving land and water resources for communities. Eligible projects include conservation plans for protecting these resources, trail development, and greenway development.

The *Wetlands Reserve Program* is a voluntary program in which the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts and providing the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.

Bond referendums have been successfully placed on local ballots throughout the United States to support greenway development. Extensive informational campaigns greatly enhance the success rate of referendum votes because of increased public and voter support.

Land donations from private parties, whether fee simple or in the form of easements, supply municipalities with usable land for little to no expense and offer the landowner tax incentives.

The *Kodak American Greenways Awards Program* provides grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout the United States.

Charitable organizations such as land trusts or foundations can provide funds to municipalities or non-profit organizations to acquire land and/or develop trails.



Action Plan

Table 6: Actions and Stakeholders

Actions		Primary Stakeholders
A. Administration/ Cooperation		
1	Form a formal Parks and Natural Resources Division	County
2	Update planning efforts on a regularly defined basis	County
3	Hire a Division Chief	County
4	Hire qualified support staff	County
5	Create the Recreation Alliance of Fayette (RAFT)	County/ Municipalities
6	Establish a Local Advisory Recreation Commission	County/ Municipalities
7	Map recreation projects as they develop into the County's GIS system	County
8	Create a County-wide Adopt-a-Park program that encourages private organizations and municipal groups to aid in municipal and County park maintenance and to join in park safety efforts.	County/ Municipalities/ Private Sector
9	Create job descriptions which outline the roles and responsibilities of new and revised roles and responsibilities	County
10	Create a conservation program (via voluntary land dedication, steep slope and flood plain ordinance, financial incentive, direct purchase) to protect environmentally sensitive lands and critical open space areas.	County/ Private Sector
11	Define salaries of the County division's professional staff to remain competitive with comparable county agencies	County
12	Promote regionalization of neighborhood and community parks, under the guidance of the County's Division of Parks and Natural Resources. The Division, through the Regional Alliance of Fayette (RAFT) and the Local Advisory Recreation Commission (LARC) should encourage local municipalities to combine facilities, programs and services/ provisions, etc.	Regional/ County/ Municipalities
13	Work with other State and County agencies to develop cooperative efforts and coordinate planning/development activities	Region/ County/ Municipalities/ School District
14	Work with the agricultural community to optimize the location and proximity of Agricultural Security Areas, park and recreation facilities and open space conservation/preservation areas.	County/ Private Sector
15	Continue the working agreements with Pennsylvania's Game Commission (PGC) and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) to manage fish and game populations within the County park and open space areas.	County/ PGC/ PFBC
B. Facilities		
16	Create five-year comprehensive management plans	County
17	Develop a publicly accessible trail and greenway resource database	County
18	Emphasize ADA accessibility improvements at the County parks and continue to make ADA-related capital improvements. In addition, the Division should advise municipal parks of improvement regulations with respect to local park and recreation facilities.	County/ Municipalities
19	Upgrade the restroom facilities at the Dunlap Creek Park and Jacobs Creek Park	County
20	Survey all County Park boundaries and develop a marker system for property identification	County
21	Monitor, through the County Division of Parks and Recreation, the availability of railroad rights-of-way and utility corridors as related to future opportunities for linear parks, greenways and trails	County

	Actions	Primary Stakeholders
22	Convert underutilized active recreation and support facilities in all park and recreation facilities, County-wide, to passive open space areas	County/ Municipalities
23	Work with municipalities to provide future park needs by adopting a proactive approach to controlling land in areas where "needs" have been demonstrated	County/ Municipalities
24	Institutionalize criteria and a process with which to evaluate the long-term feasibility of new park, trail and open space proposals	County
25	Prepare a Forest Stewardship Plan for each County Parks' woodlands and/or open space	County
26	Incorporate native xeriscape (drought resistant) landscape treatments in the passive open spaces of all parks	County
C. Maintenance		
27	Increase the annual maintenance budget	County
28	Obtain applicable licensing	County
29	Optimize mowing	County
30	Develop a Procedures and Policies Handbook	County
31	Develop written operational plans	County
32	Promote volunteerism to assist in clean-ups	County
33	Conduct annual inspections with written follow-up	County
34	Promote and achieve playground safety	County
35	Develop cooperative maintenance agreements	County
36	Create long-term paving programs for parks	County
D. Programming, Promotion and Public Awareness		
37	Encourage Municipal-School District cooperation	County/ Municipalities/ School Districts
38	Promote activities and interaction among older adults	County
39	Continue to foster present programs with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)	County/ PFBC/ PGC/ DCNR
40	Develop a signage program	County
41	Initiate a marketing and promotion campaign to increase and expand public awareness and education about the benefits of recreation	County/ Private Sector
E. Programming, Promotion and Public Awareness		
42	Use grant monies to fund major maintenance and capital improvement projects throughout the park system	County/ DCNR/ Foundation Community/ Private Sector
43	Introduce an amusement tax	County
44	Develop fees and charges	County
45	Develop programs in the parks	County
46	Create an Endowment Fund	County/ Foundation Community/ Private Sector
47	Develop a five year major maintenance/capital improvement plan for the parks	County
48	Seek advertising support	County/ Private Sector
49	Review Contracts	County
50	Developing a Capital Equipment Reserve Fund as part of the County budget process	County





Section 6 Background Data

Natural Resources

Federal and State Parks and Forests

Bridgeport Dam Park

Bridgeport Dam Park is a 301-acre park facility located along Jacobs Creek near the unincorporated town of Bridgeport in Bullskin Township in Fayette County and Mt. Pleasant Township in Westmoreland County. The park was built as a result of the construction of the 60-acre permanent pool Bridgeport Dam (PA-655) on the site. As a result of an inter-county cooperative agreement between Fayette and Westmoreland Counties the Westmoreland County Planning Department administered the purchase of properties and the construction of the dam.

The project was funded with a Pennsylvania Project 70 grant and a U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service grant. The flood control project including engineering, design and construction supervision was funded by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. The access roads, six parking areas, public boat access, gates, security fencing and landscaping was funded by Westmoreland County. Westmoreland County Parks manages and maintains the park facilities. The Westmoreland County Engineer annually inspects the dam to meet federal dam regulations.

Westmoreland County and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service have jointly signed an operation and maintenance agreement for the facility entitled "Operation & Maintenance Agreement of Basic Facilities in a Public Recreation Development for Site PA -655". The Pennsylvania Fish Commission stocks and manages the lake and stream fishery, and the park is open to public fishing and hunting.

Westmoreland County has a lease agreement with the Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club to develop and maintain soccer facilities at the site. Two full sized soccer fields have been developed at the site. In 2006 and 2007, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation constructed a wetland wildlife mitigation area consisting of five ponds on the eastern portion of the site. This area can serve as an environmental education area for local schools.

Chestnut Ridge Park

Chestnut Ridge Park is a 189-acre park located along Jacobs Creek atop Chestnut Ridge in Bullskin Township in Fayette County and Mt. Pleasant Township in Westmoreland County. The park was built as a result of the construction of the 25-acre permanent pool flood control Acme Dam (PA-657) in 1974. As a result of an inter-county agreement between Fayette and Westmoreland Counties, the Westmoreland County Planning Department administered the purchase of the properties and the construction of the dam. The project was funded with a Pennsylvania Project 70 grant and a U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service grant. The flood control project including engineering, design and construction supervision of the dam was funded by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. The access road, parking area, security fencing, public boat ramp and landscaping were funded by Westmoreland County. Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation manages and maintains the park facilities. The Westmoreland County Engineer annually inspects the dam to meet federal dam regulations.

Westmoreland County and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service have jointly signed an operation and maintenance agreement for the facility entitled "Operation and Maintenance Agreement of Basic Facilities in a Public Recreation Development for Site PA-657". The Pennsylvania Fish Commission manages the lake fishery. The park is open for fishing and hunting, and a portion of the park acreage is leased as farmland. The County constructed a crushed limestone walkway and parking area along the western shore of the lake in 2007.

Fort Necessity National Battlefield

Fort Necessity is a National Battlefield Site under management by the National Park Service. The site was designated a National Battlefield Site by Congress in 1931 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. George Washington constructed the fort in 1754 as a base camp during his mission to build a road to Redstone Creek. The fort was subsequently attacked by French and Indian forces, marking the beginning of the French and Indian War.

The park site contains a replica of the original fort, the Mount Washington Tavern, the grave of General Braddock, and a new

visitor center constructed in 2005. The park offers talks, tours, a movie, and historic weapons demonstrations.

Friendship Hill National Historic Site

Friendship Hill National Historic Site was established on November 10, 1978, and is administered under Fort Necessity National Battlefield. The site highlights the accomplishments and contributions of Albert Gallatin, the Secretary of the Treasury during the Jefferson and Madison administrations. Gallatin is best known for purchasing the Louisiana Territory and funding the Lewis and Clark expedition. The 661 acre site is located on the restored country estate of Albert Gallatin. The park amenities include an audio tour of the house, exhibits, ten miles of nature trails, a picnic area, and a comfort station.

Laurel Ridge State Park

This 13,625-acre park stretches from Cambria, Fayette, Somerset, and Westmoreland counties. It moves along the Laurel Mountain from Youghiogheny River at Ohiopyle, PA to the Conemaugh Gorge near Johnstown, PA. The trail moves along state parks, state forests, state game lands, and public and private land. The park offers the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail, featuring eight trail shelters for overnight camping on hiking and backpacking trips. The Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail is a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. The shelters are located every 6 to 10 miles along the trail. Overnight reservations are mandatory for the shelters and an overnight camping fee is charged per night/per individual in the backpacking party.

Approximately 35 miles of trail are used for cross-country skiing, and a portion of the Park's overall trail system is also used for snowmobiling after the end of the antlerless deer season in late December. Snowmobiles are prohibited from operating on the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail and are restricted to trails designated for snowmobile activity. The trail is on state park and state forest lands. Almost all of the Laurel Ridge State Park is open to hunting, trapping, and the training of dogs from the fall archery season until March 31.

Ohiopyle State Park

Ohiopyle State Park's 19,052 acres is located primarily in Fayette County and serves as the gateway into the Laurel Mountains. Approximately 14 miles of the Youghiogheny River

Gorge passes through the center of the park. The river provides some of the best whitewater boating in the eastern United States.

The Ohiopyle State Park has 27 miles of trails for biking, while also offering 13.2 miles of biking trail. The park supports another 79 miles of hiking trails and 9.4 miles of horseback riding trails. The Youghiogheny River provides fishing activities and whitewater boating. Over 18,000 acres are open to hunting, trapping and the training of dogs during established seasons. Camping opportunities include modern sites with electricity, 226 campsites at Kentuck Campground, camping cottages, and platform tents. Surrounding Ohiopyle Falls is the Falls Day Use Area, the central point for visitors. This area provides parking, modern restrooms, gift shop/snack bar, and overlook platforms onto the beautiful landscape.

Winter activities include snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and sledding/tobogganing. The Sugarloaf Trail supports 3.8 miles of snowmobile activity. Over 33.9 miles of trails in the park are great for cross-country skiing. A hill near the Sugarloaf Snowmobile and Mountain Bike Area is maintained for sledding and tobogganing.

Through the use of environmental education and interpretive programs the park provides hands-on activities, guided walks and evening programs, in which participants gain appreciation, understanding and develop a sense of stewardship toward natural and cultural resources. Programs in the park focus on the Youghiogheny River, its gorge, and the natural, cultural and recreational resources of the Ohiopyle area.

Natural features are the main attraction at the park with the power and beauty of the 20-foot waterfall of Ohiopyle Falls. The Ferncliff Peninsula National Natural Landmark was created by a meander in the Youghiogheny River. The 100-acre peninsula contains many unique and rare plants due to its interesting habitat.

County Parks

German-Masontown Regional Park

The Fayette County Commissioners established the Fayette County Parks, Arts and Recreation Board in the late 1960's. That board was instrumental in the acquisition and development of the 125.5-acre German-Masontown Regional Park (Klondike Regional Park). The park is located on the border of Masontown Borough and German Township, and was purchased June 1, 1971 with Pennsylvania Project 70 funding. The initial master plan for site development was designed by

Carroll Hill & Associates in 1969. A revised master plan was developed by Aarthon Design Limited of State College, Pennsylvania in 1971. Park facility development began in 1972 with Pennsylvania Project 500 funding and park road development with Pennsylvania Liquid Fuel Tax funding. Site development has continued over the years. The County received a Pennsylvania Keystone Conservation Fund grant on May 29, 1997 in the amount of \$13,800 for development at the Park.

The County and the German-Masontown Park & Recreation Board jointly manage and maintain the Park. The German-Masontown Park and Recreation Board is made up of five (5) members. The Board manages the activities at the park and operates the park pavilion reservation system. The pavilions can be reserved for a fee at the Masontown Borough Building.

The German-Masontown Park contains one small pavilion that seats approximately 100 persons; three mini pavilions that seat approximately 20 persons, two play areas, horse shoe courts, bocce courts, a soccer field, two baseball fields, an amphitheatre, tennis courts, open space, grills, parking areas and a public restroom. Public water and electricity are available at the site. Two (2) play areas at the park were upgraded in 2005 and 2006.

Dunlap Creek Park

Dunlap Creek Park is an approximate 74-acre park facility located in Menallen Township. The park was built as a result of the construction of a 50-acre permanent pool flood control dam (PA-471) on the site in 1974. The project was funded by Fayette County, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. The flood control project, including engineering, design, and construction administration of the dam, was funded and supervised by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. The site amenities including the access roads and parking areas, picnic pavilions, pit type toilet facilities, boat launch and landscaping were designed and constructed by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and funded through its Resource Conservation and Development Project Fund program. The County and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service have jointly signed an operation and maintenance agreement for the facility entitled "Operation & Maintenance Agreement of Basic Facilities in a Public Recreational Development for Site PA-471".

By agreement, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission by agreement stocks and manages the lake fishery and the Fayette County Public Works Department maintains the park

facilities. The dam is annually inspected under contract by a local engineering firm, Fayette Engineering, to meet federal dam regulations. Garbage pick-up at the facility is privately contracted.

Dunlap Creek Park has a "Friends of the Park" group. It is a fishing club with between 400 and 500 members. An individual club membership fee is \$7.00 per year. This money is put towards programs, stocking the lake or specific park projects. The club meets 6 to 8 times a year. The club established a non-profit Dunlap Lake Task Force Committee to improve the park's amenities. It has been successful in obtaining a \$5,000.00 DCED Grant and installed an asphalt paved handicap walkway of the eastern side of the lake. The group hosts an annual "Fishing for Free" program at the park. The group continues to seek funding to improve the park facilities. Its future plans include:

1. Upgrade the existing park restrooms from pit type toilets to flush toilets;
2. The construction of some new picnic tables;
3. The refurbishment of the park restrooms; and
4. The installation of more playground equipment throughout the park.

Dunlap Creek Park contains a 50-acre lake, a public boat launch facility, four small pavilions that seat approximately 100 persons, access roads and four parking areas, public restrooms (pit type toilets), three play areas, a handicap access walkway and a ball field.

Jacobs Creek Park

Jacobs Creek Park is an approximate 151-acre facility located along Greenlick Stream in Bullskin Township. The park was built as the result of the construction of the 101-acre permanent pool multi-purpose flood control Greenlick Dam (PA-656) on Greenlick Stream, which feeds Jacobs Creek. The dam was constructed by the Latimer Brothers Construction Company of New Alexandria, PA. The project was completed on December 18, 1973. The dam breast of the Greenlick Dam is located east of the historic Braddock's Trail.

Property acquisition was funded by Fayette County, the Pennsylvania Fish Commission and the US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. The Pennsylvania Fish Commission holds land title to the 101-acre permanent pool of the lake and leases it back to the County. Fayette County holds land title to the approximately 50 acres of recreation areas that surround the lake. On October 29, 1970 the Pennsylvania Fish Commission signed an agreement with Fayette County to assist in the purchase of the land to



construct Greenlick Dam to provide public fishing and boating at the facility. The Pennsylvania Fish Commission stocks and manages the fishery.

The flood control project including engineering, design and construction administration was funded and supervised by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. Site amenities include access roads and parking areas, four picnic areas, pit type toilet facilities, boat launch, boat ramps and docks, handicap access, water system and landscaping. All were designed by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and funded through its Resource Conservation and Development Fund program.

Fayette County and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service jointly signed an operation and maintenance agreement for the facility entitled "Operation & Maintenance Agreement for Basic Facilities in a Public Recreation Development, Site PA-656, signed April 29, 1971. The agreement includes alterations to the initial development.

The Fayette County Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of the dam and park facilities. Fayette County contracts the mowing, litter cleanup, and garbage removal the park facility with Goodwill. The dam is annually inspected under contract by a local engineering firm, Fayette Engineering, to meet federal dam regulations.

Fayette County established a forty year lease with Bullskin Township to develop recreation/sports facilities at the park site. The lease expires on November 30, 2040. Bullskin Township received a \$50,000.00 Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Keystone Conservation Fund Grant on May 29, 1997 to develop these facilities. The facilities constructed include two baseball fields, a combination football/soccer field, a public restroom and concession facility, an access road and parking area, chain link fencing and landscaping. Bullskin Township contracts some of the mowing of the facility.

The park facilities include a 101-acre lake, four small picnic pavilions that seat approximately 100 persons, pit type public restrooms, well water, four play areas, a public boat launch, boat docks, fishing piers, asphalt access walkways, access roads, four parking areas, security fencing, open space and landscaping. The park is open to the public including public hunting.

Trails

Forbes State Forest

The Forbes State Forest is composed of over 50,000 acres and contains over 20 different tracts of State Forest Land in Fayette, Somerset, and Westmoreland counties. The forest was named in honor of General John Forbes who in 1757 ordered the construction of a road from Bedford to Fort Pitt for the movement of an expeditionary Army.

Six State Parks and three State Forest Picnic Areas have developed within the area to deal with the abundance of people that enjoy the area. The forest lies along the Laurel Ridge with adjacency to the surrounding areas of Pittsburgh, PA.

Forbes State Forest is broken up into five divisions: Blue Hole Division, Braddock Division, Linn Run Division, Kooser Division, and Negro Mountain Division. The Braddock Division lies within Fayette County and contains specific features such as Pine Knob, an observation point overlooking Uniontown; Cabin Hollow Rocks, an interesting rock formation located in Cabin Hollow; Wharton Furnace, one of the last active iron furnaces in Fayette County; Old Water-Powered Grist Mill; and Ponderfield Fire Tower.

Lick Hollow Picnic Area and Trail System

The picnic area is located off of Route 40 along Lick Run and features picnic tables, charcoal grills, water, and restrooms for public use. The picnic area is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day from 11 AM to dusk. However, it is closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays during this time. Access is available from the Picnic Area to the Lick Hollow Nature Trail and Pine Knob. The picnic area is utilized for picnics, weddings, reunions, and birthday parties.

Sheepskin Trail

There are presently funded plans to extend the Youghiogheny River Trail to include the Sheepskin Trail. The 32-mile Sheepskin Trail will link the Youghiogheny Trail at Wheeler Bottom (Dunbar), continue along the old B&O Railroad Branch, then through Uniontown to Point Marion and on to West Virginia's Monongahela River Trail. Fayette County has received nearly \$800,000.00 in grants to construct this trail. In 2000, the County received a federal Transportation Equity Act (TEA 21) grant in the amount of \$366,000.00 to construct 12 miles of trail from Connellsville to Uniontown and a

Pennsylvania DCNR grant in the amount of \$60,000.00 for the Brown's Run Trail (8.3 miles) to connect the Monongahela River to the Sheepskin Trail. The County received an additional \$375,000.00 TEA 21 grant in 2002 for the trail. TEA-21 grant monies require a 20% match from the local municipality. The County Commissioners, on October 27, 2005, requested Pennsylvania DCNR to use the net proceeds from the sale of the Project 70 Great Amphitheatre in Wharton Township as the local cost share for the DCNR and TEA-21 grants.

Youghiogheny River Trail

The 71-mile Youghiogheny River Trail is part of the 150-mile Great Allegheny Passage Trail that extends from Cumberland, Maryland to presently Boston, Pennsylvania. The Great Allegheny Passage Trail ties into the C&O Canal Towpath in Cumberland, Maryland which extends to Washington, D.C., creating a 316-mile trail. The Great Allegheny Passage Trail and the C&O Canal Towpath are sections of the 425-mile Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail intended to link the Chesapeake Bay with the Allegheny Highlands.

The RTC is presently working on a section of the trail to extend the Youghiogheny River Trail from Boston to downtown Pittsburgh. There are trail heads located at Whitsett, Connellsville and Ohiopyle in Fayette County.

The 43-mile northern section of the Youghiogheny River Trail from Connellsville in Fayette County to Boston in Allegheny is operated and maintained by the Regional Trail Corporation. The 28-mile section of the Youghiogheny River Trail extending from Connellsville, in Fayette County to Confluence in Somerset County is operated and maintained by the Pennsylvania State Parks.

Other Facilities and Initiatives

Quebec Run Wild Area

This heavily forested 7.441-acre wild area can be used for hiking, hunting, fishing, and solitude in nature. The Wild Area runs along the eastern slope of Chestnut Ridge in Fayette County. Nearly all of Quebec Run and Tebolt Run watersheds are encompassed by the Wild Area. The forest is mostly third growth, resulting from the extensive timber harvesting by the Summit Lumber Co. of Uniontown around 1938-40.

The forest is known as a mixed mesophytic with maples and yellow-poplar lining the moist north and east-facing slopes and mixed oaks occupying the warmer and drier south and west

sides of the hills.

The Wild Area contains many trails designed for the utilization of many purposes. Quebec Road is a 3.7 mile road bisecting the Wild Area and connects the north and south parking lots. West Road stretches two (2) miles from Hess Trail to Mill Run Trail. Tebolt Road connects the south parking lot to West Road. Tebolt Trail moves 3.9 miles from the Tebolt parking lot over to Mill Run where it joins up with the West Road. Hess Trail connects Tebolt and North parking lots moving along the west side of the Wild Area for 4.2 miles. Brocker Trail travels two (2) miles from Hess Trail to its junction with Tebolt Trail. Rankin Trail follows Quebec Run for 1.1 miles from Hess Trail to Mill Run Trail. Mill Run Trail moves from the Mill Run parking lot following Mill Run for 2.5 miles to West Road. Grist Mill Trail connects the Mill Run parking lot to a lot near the old Summey place. Miller Trail moves from the north lot along a one (1) mile foot path to the Mill Run Trail.

Regional Trail Corporation

In 1990, a task force of local citizens, trail groups and government officials from Allegheny County, Westmoreland County and Fayette County led by the National Park Service prepared a concept plan for the Youghiogheny River Trail following the P&LE Railroad right of way from Pittsburgh in Allegheny County to the existing bike trail on the abandoned P&LE railroad right of way extending from Confluence in Somerset County through Ohiopyle State Park to Connellsville in Fayette County.

The Commissioners of Fayette, Westmoreland and Allegheny Counties formed the non-profit Regional Trail Corporation (RTC) in 1991 with the mission to acquire, construct and manage the trail. The Trail right of way was purchased by the RTC in January, 1992. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission and ISTEPA provided the federal funding for the engineering and construction of the trail. The Robert Eberly Foundation provided the local cost share to these grants to acquire and develop the Fayette County section of the trail.

The RTC has since expanded its original role from the construction of the Youghiogheny Trail Northern Section to include the acquisition, construction, and development of trails throughout the three county region. Local trail chapters have been established to accomplish these tasks. The Fayette County Commissioners appoint three members to the Board of Directors of the RTC. Fayette County's local chapter is the Whitsett/Fayette Yough Trail Chapter.

The Regional Trail Corporation offices are located in West Newton, PA. The mission statement of the RTC is as follows:

Background Mapping

“The Regional Trail Corporation is a non-profit partnership whose mission is to acquire, develop, and manage appropriate trail corridors in southwestern Pennsylvania and to create and promote opportunities for recreation, tourism, economic development, and historic and environment conservation.”

Local/Municipal Park Facilities

In developing the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trail Plan, the County worked with municipalities to develop an understanding of existing local-scale park facilities. Through written surveys and feedback, thirty-eight (38) municipalities identified what types of recreation resources are provided to residents currently. All of the communities' responses and detailed findings from these inquiries are found in the Plan's appendix.

As part of assessing the presence, locations and relationships of the County's physical characteristics, a series of background mapping was completed.

Existing demographic information, infrastructure patterns, natural resources and recreation opportunities have been mapped and examined to determine their relevance and contribution to the County's future parks, recreation, open space, greenways and trail system.

These reference maps include:

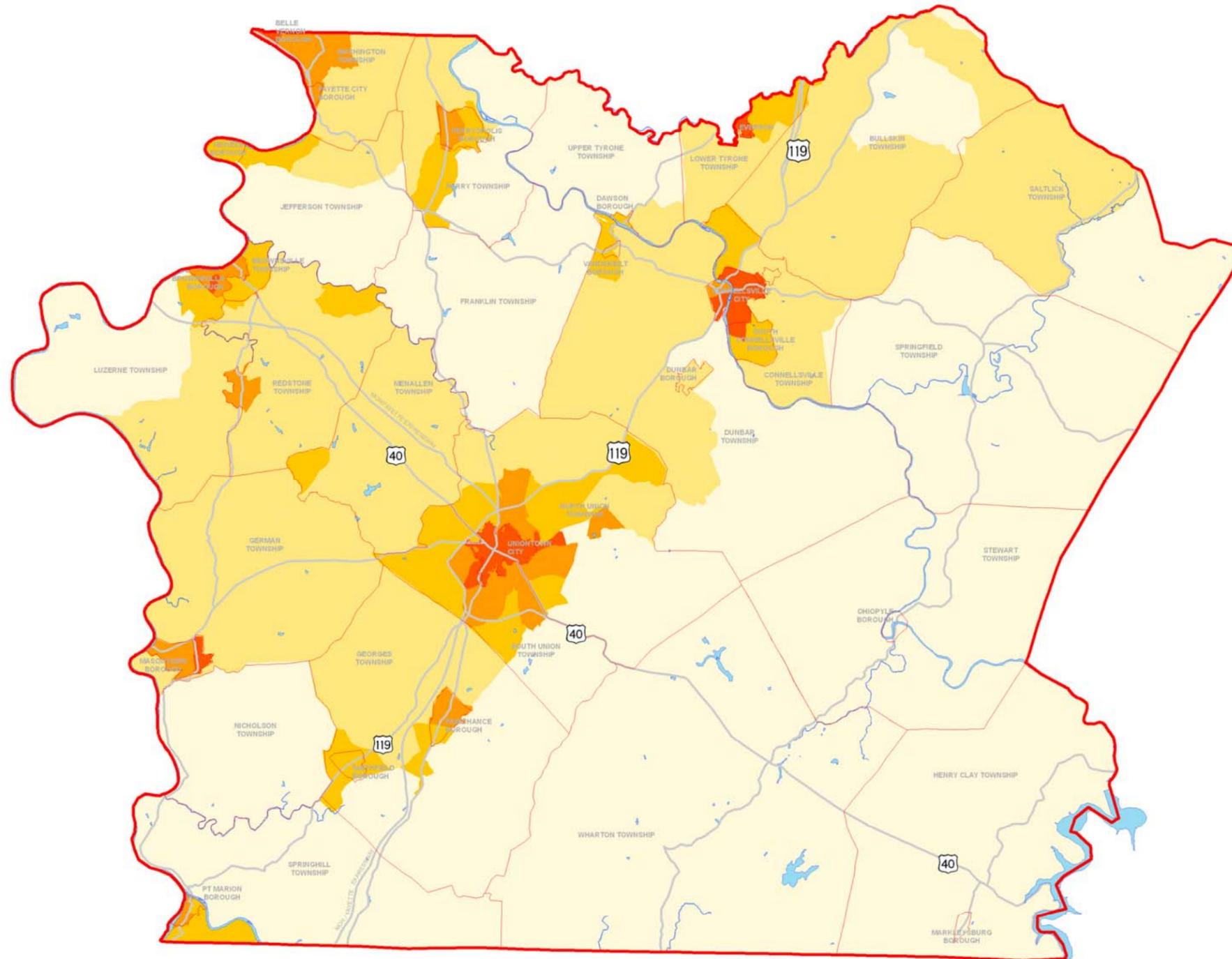
- Population Density Map
- School Facilities Map
- Potable Water Service Area Map
- Sewer Service Map
- Utility Corridors Map
- Transportation Infrastructure Map
- Landform Map
- Ridgetops Map
- Land Coverage Map
- Steep Slopes Map
- General Stream Quality Analysis Map
- Wetlands and Floodplains Map
- Reservoir Watersheds Map
- Agricultural Resources Map
- Biological Diversity Areas Map

- Important Bird Areas Map
- Parklands Map
- ATV Analysis Map
- Special Recreation Map
- Trails Map
- Historic Resources Map



Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the U.S. Census Bureau

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Keystone Recreation Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

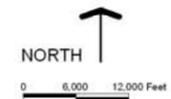
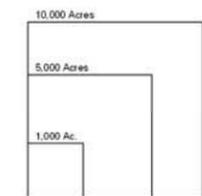


LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes

Persons per Square Mile (2000)

- 0 - 100
- 101 - 300
- 301 - 1000
- 1001 - 3000
- 3000+



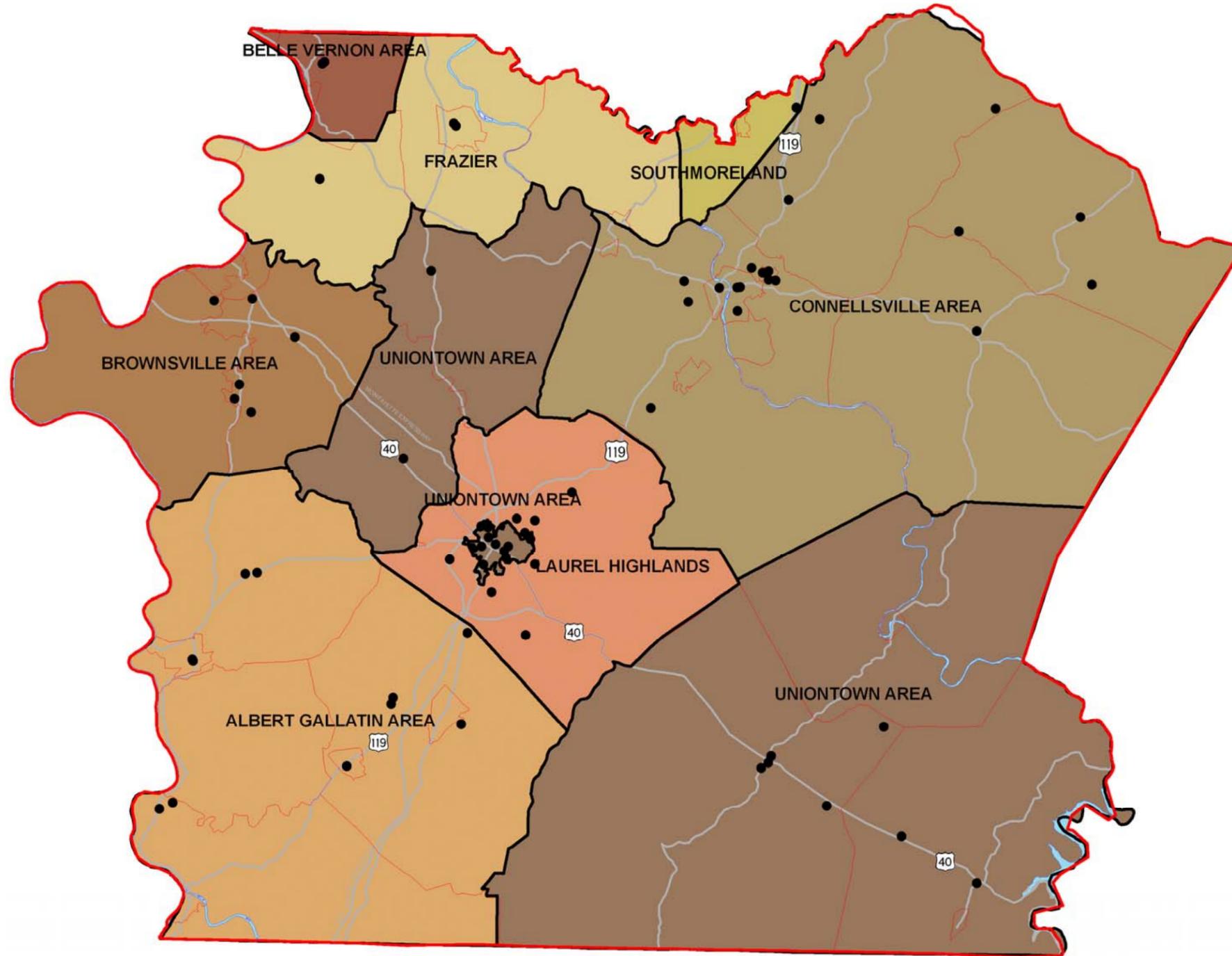
Population Density Map

The Population Density Map is based on U. S. Census data from 2000 and illustrates persons per square mile with the lowest density (100 persons or below) shown in pale yellow and the highest density (3000 persons or above) shown in orange. The gradations of the map from orange to pale yellow show concentrated populations in clusters of dark to medium colors around the city/town centers. The population densities show a clear relationship to the transportation network with the highest densities along State Route 119, and higher densities in general in the more developed western half of the County.

The analysis of population densities in the various parts of the County is important in determining the County's recreation needs. Areas of higher concentrations of people typically require more recreation facilities than areas of lower concentrations. However, the eastern half of the County, although lower in population density than the western half, attracts millions of users who must be included in the analysis of needs, and in the prioritization of recreation facilities which support a key economic resource of the County.

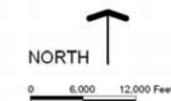
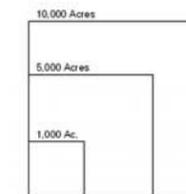
Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Rivers
- Major Roads
- Schools
- School Districts



School Facilities Map

The School Facilities Map identifies all school facility locations in Fayette County. School facilities offer various recreational opportunities including playgrounds, outdoor hard courts, football fields, soccer fields, and baseball and/or softball fields. The map shows that the majority of the facilities are located near a major roadway or clustered in Uniontown and Connellsville. Fayette County has eight school districts, including Uniontown, Connellsville, Albert Gallatin, Belle Vernon, Brownsville, Frazier, Laurel Highlands, and Southmoreland school districts. In addition

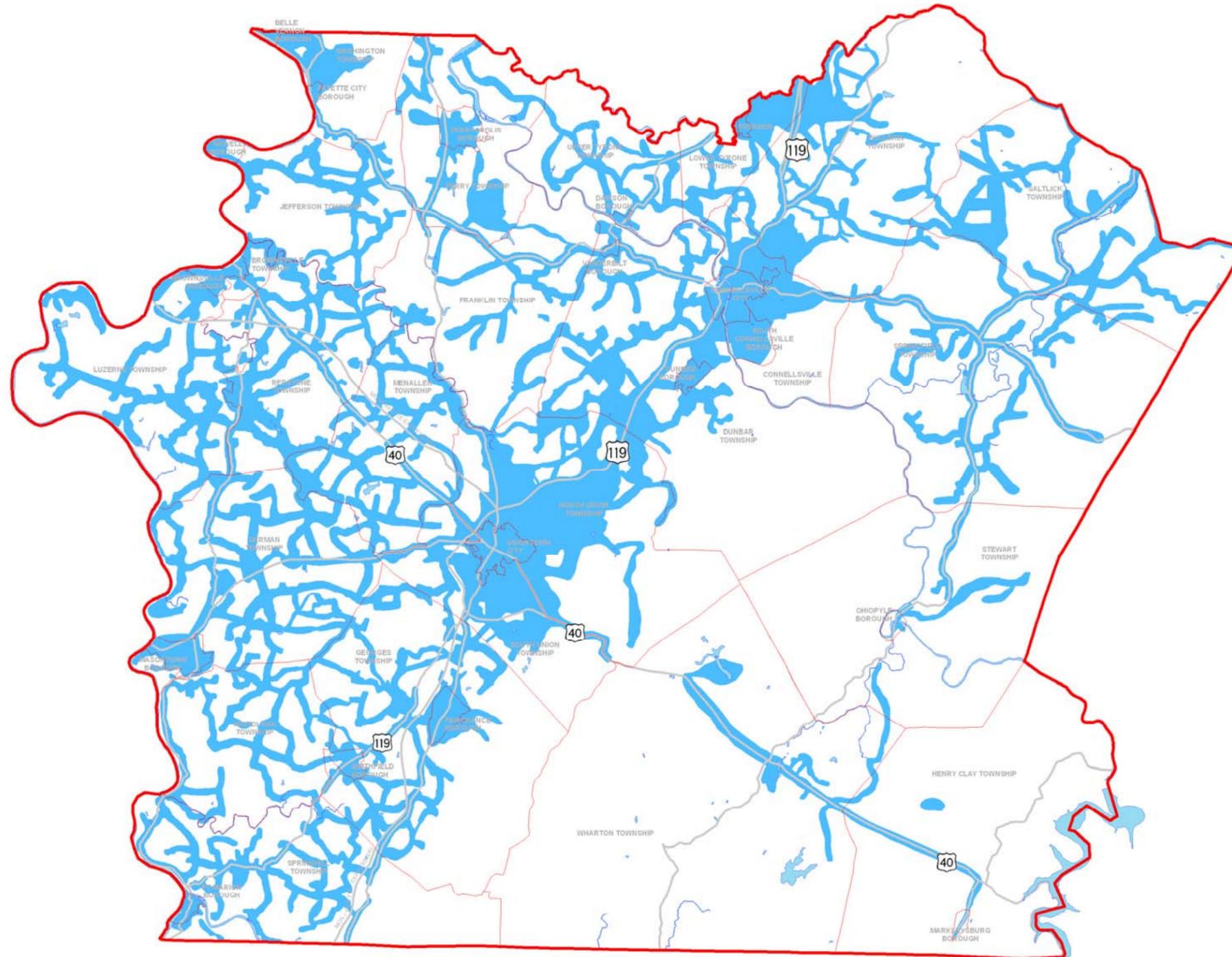
to these public school facilities, Geibel Catholic School District has students from all over the County.



Background Data

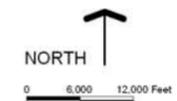
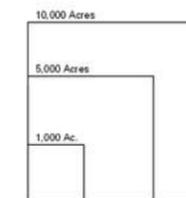
Sources: Public Potable Water Service is based on GIS data provided by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- Existing Public Potable Water Service Area

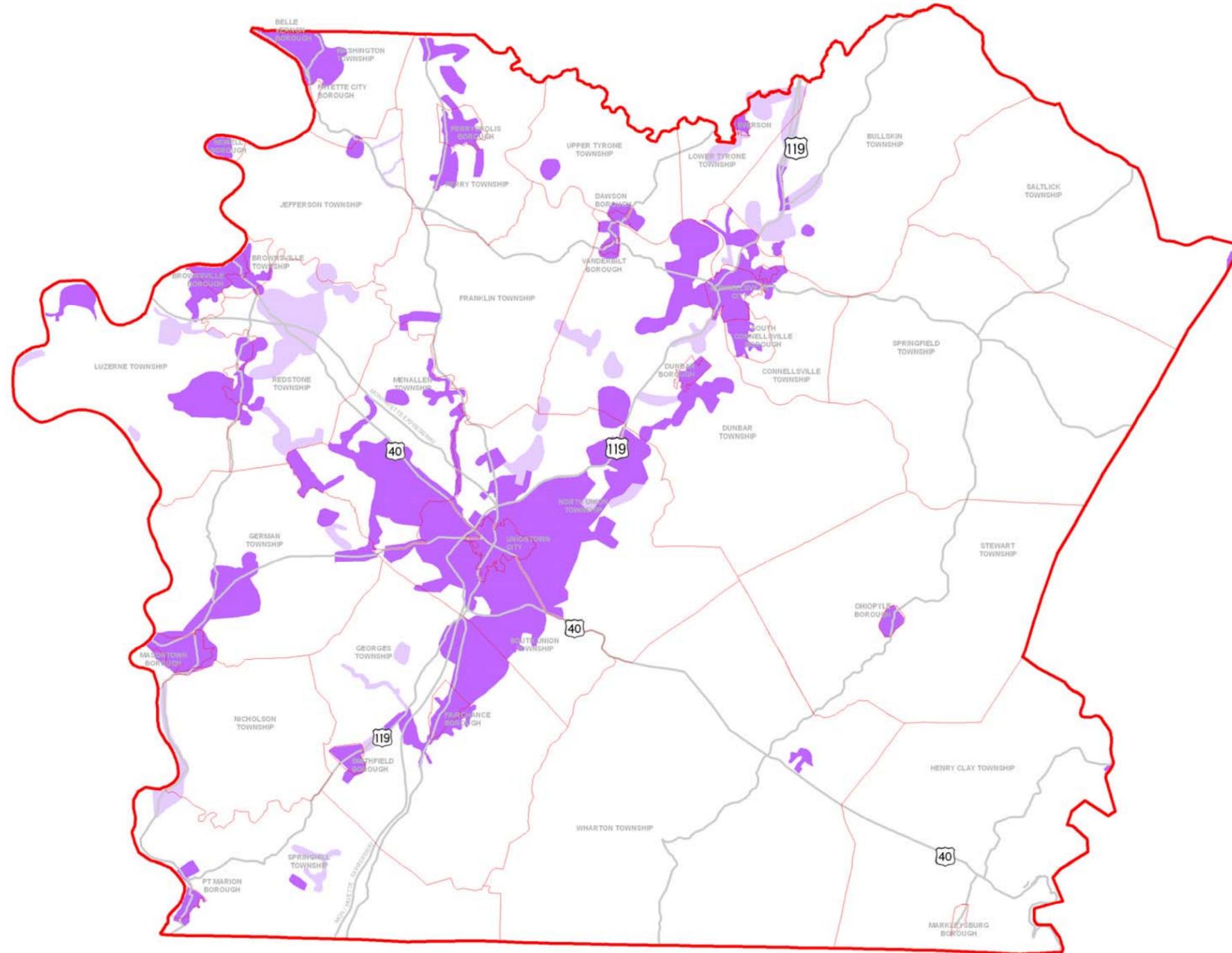


Potable Water Service Area Map

Potable water is water that is satisfactory for direct human consumption, human contact or in the preparation of foods for human consumption. The Potable Water Map defines the areas of the County where potable water is obtainable. The potable water areas are defined by the Natural Infrastructure of Southwestern Pennsylvania Atlas.

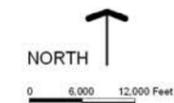
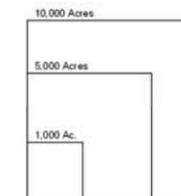
Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

-  Fayette County Boundary
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Major Roads
-  Existing Public Sewer Service and Short-term Improvements
-  Long Term Public Sewer Service Improvements

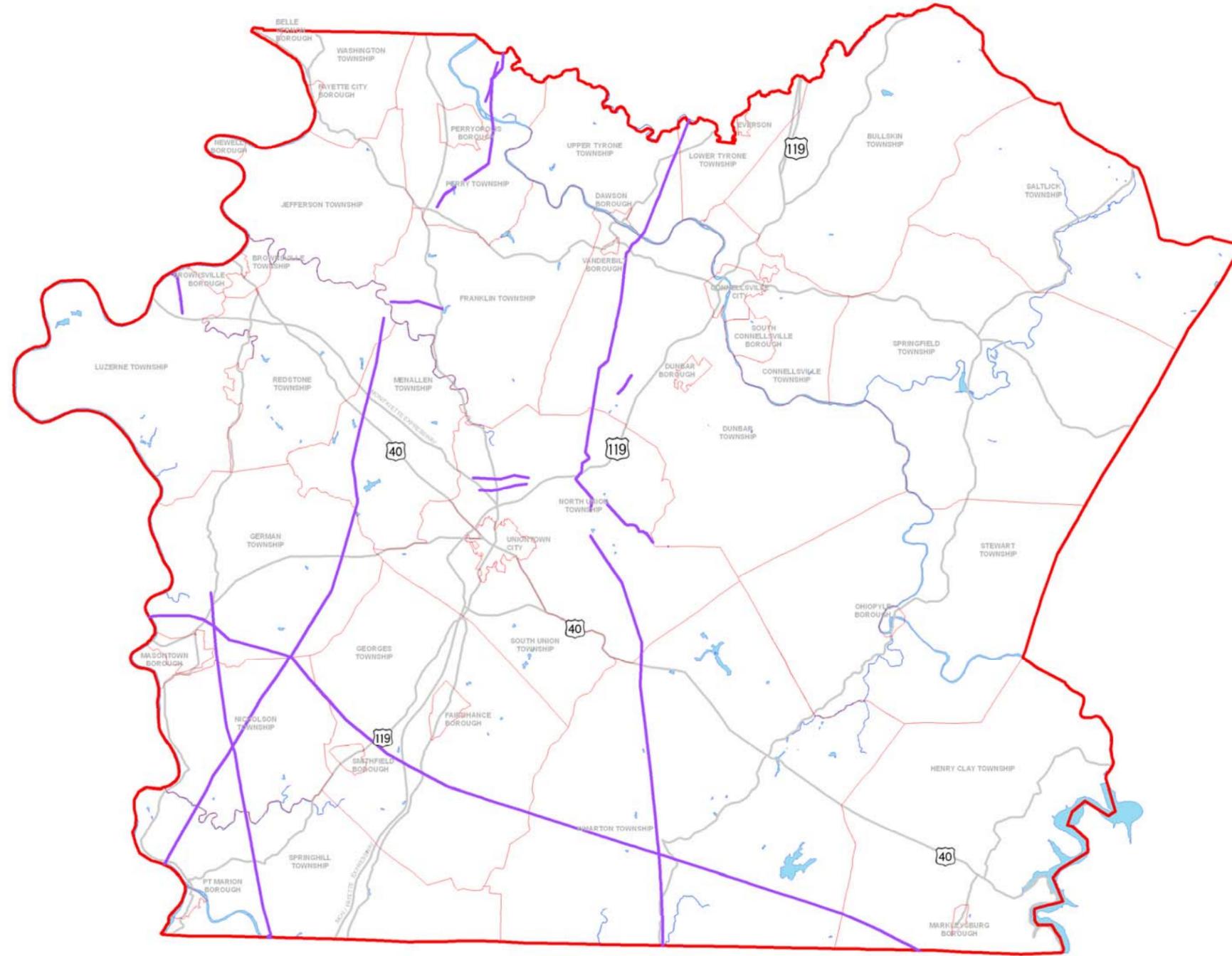


Sewer Service Map

The Sewer Service Map illustrates existing public sewer service and short-term improvement in purple and long-term public sewer service improvements in light purple. The availability of sewer service to an area often determines the amount and intensity of development that can occur in that location because development capacity is directly dependent on the availability of utilities. Existing sewer service areas in Fayette County occur in existing developed areas along major transportation routes in the western portion of the County. Long-term public sewer improvement projects are general located adjacent to current facility service

areas, increasing the possibility that development will remain focused in existing developed areas. The eastern portion of the County has very little existing or planned sewer service indicating that these scenic recreation lands will continue to develop more slowly than the County's western areas.



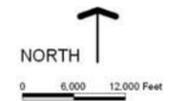
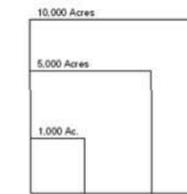


Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

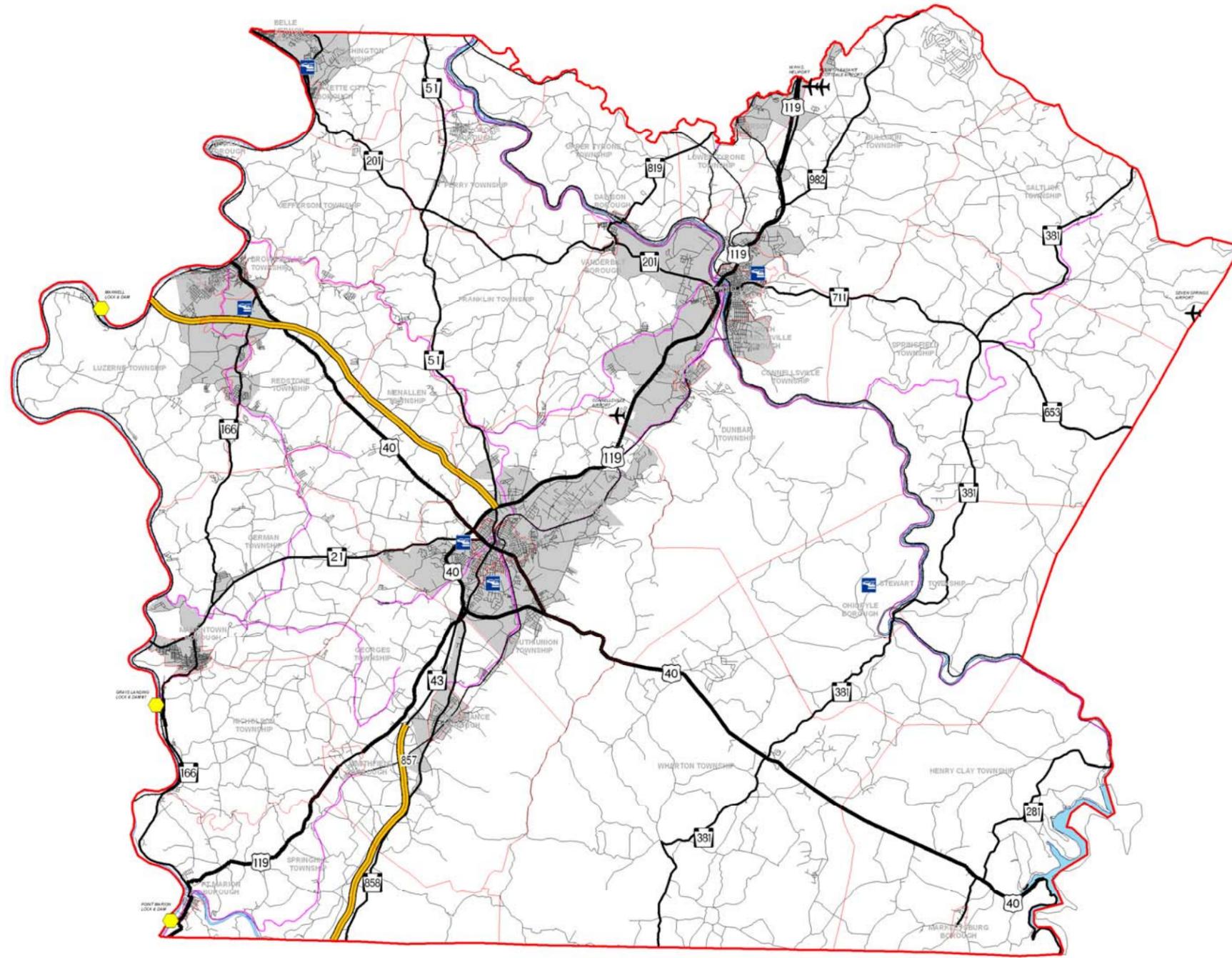
LEGEND

- ▭ Fayette County Boundary
- ▭ Municipal Boundary
- ▭ Major Roads
- ▭ Rivers and Lakes
- ▭ Major Utility Transmission Line Corridor



Utility Corridors Map

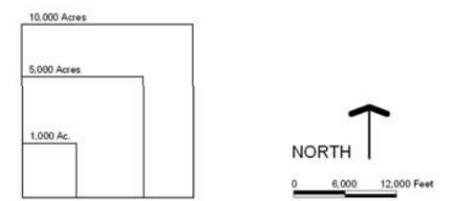
Utility corridors are rights-of-way easements for utility lines on either publicly or privately owned property. The Utility Corridors Map delineates the utility corridors in the County including electric transmission lines and various pipelines critical to infrastructure.



Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania, the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Health Statistics.

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- LEGEND**
- Fayette County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - MonFayette Expressway
 - U.S. Highways
 - Major State Roads
 - Other roads
 - Active Railroads
 - Inactive/Abandoned Railroads
 - Major Rivers
 - Locks
 - Airports
 - Heliports



Transportation Infrastructure Map

The Transportation Infrastructure Map highlights roads, railroads and major rivers. A comparison of the local road network reveals two distinct geographic regions. The area west of Chestnut Ridge has seen the majority of the County's transportation improvements, primarily because of its suitability for development in comparison with the rugged eastern half of the County. Fayette County's major thoroughfares include the Mon-Fayette Expressway, U.S. Route 40 (East-West) and U.S. Route 119 (North-South). Route 40 has also been named the National Road Heritage Park Scenic Byway by the Pennsylvania Department of

Transportation, and State Route 381 has been designated the Laurel Highlands Scenic Byway.

Railroads also play an important role in the County's transportation picture. Major active lines run along both the Youghiogheny and Monongahela Rivers, as well as through the center of the County connecting important population centers. A number of abandoned rail lines also exist in Fayette County and will likely play an important role in future greenway development.

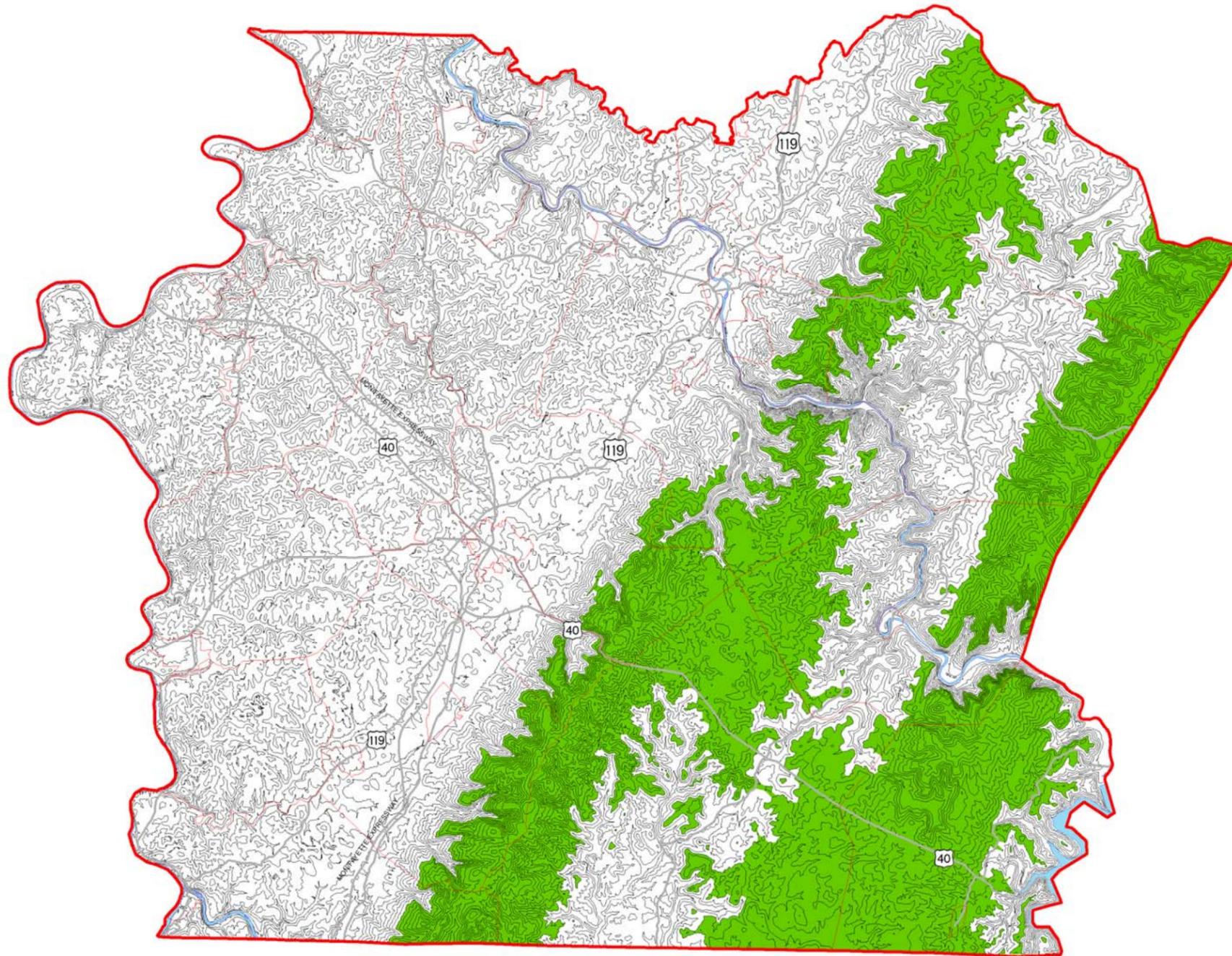


Background Data



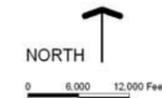
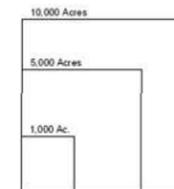
Sources: Land Info International, LLC, Southwest Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Keystone Recreation Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- ▭ Fayette County Boundary
- ▭ Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Existing 100' Contour
- ▭ Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- ▭ Ridge-Tops (Elevations above 1,900' ASL)

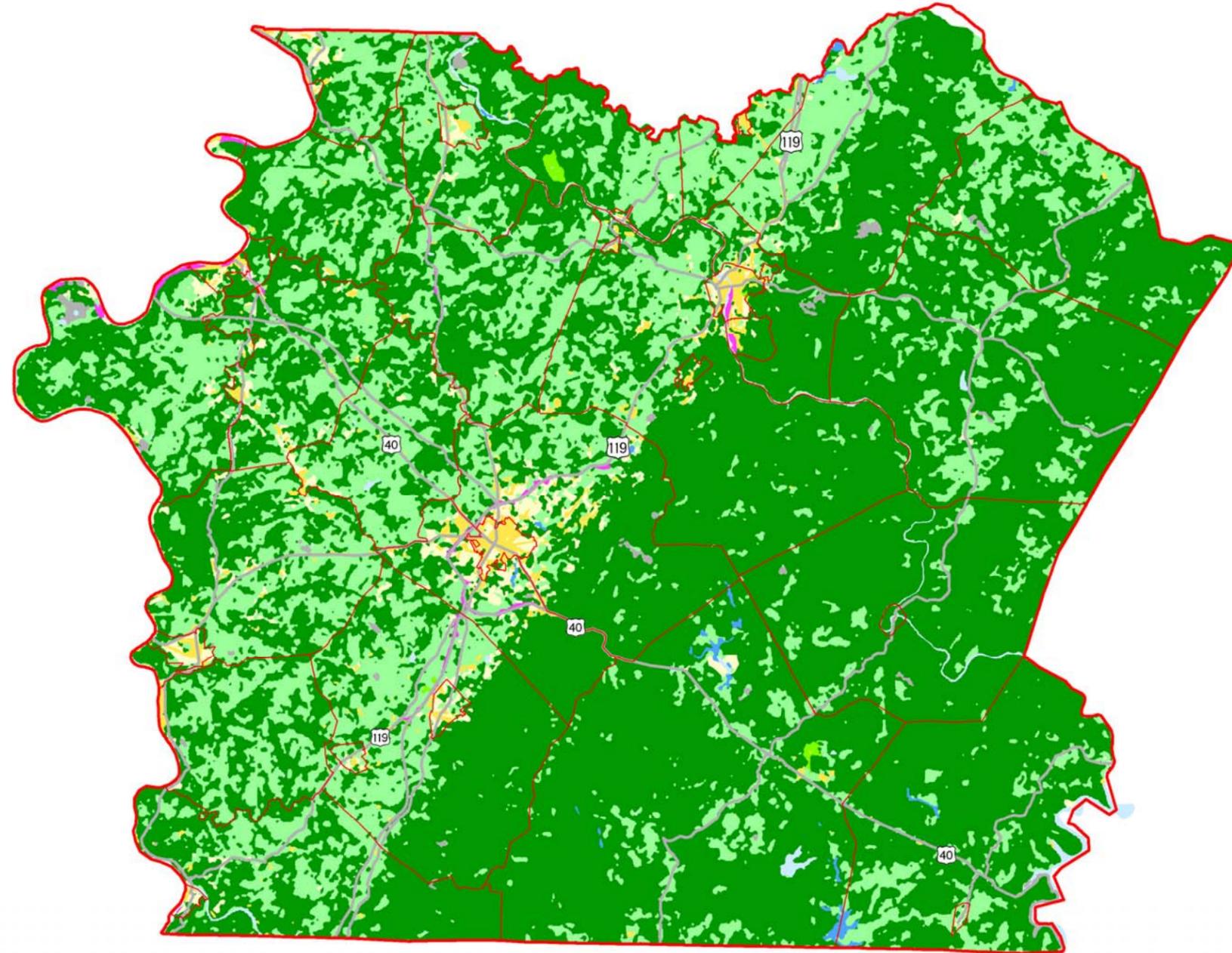


Ridgetops Map

For the purposes of this plan, a ridgetop is any land in Fayette County higher than 1900 feet above sea level. Appalachian ridgetops are significant because of the unique habitats they provide for many unique species of plants and animals. They are also easily traveled, as long as the traveler remains at the highest possible point at all times. Fayette County is dominated by two major ridges running southwest-northeast. Laurel Ridge forms the eastern border, and Chestnut Ridge runs parallel to the west.

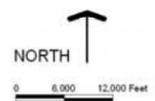
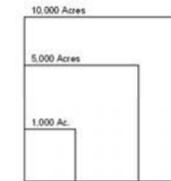
Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundaries
- Major Roads
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Maintained Grass
- Water
- Wetlands
- Industrial/Transportation
- High Density Urban
- Low Density Urban
- Strip Mines



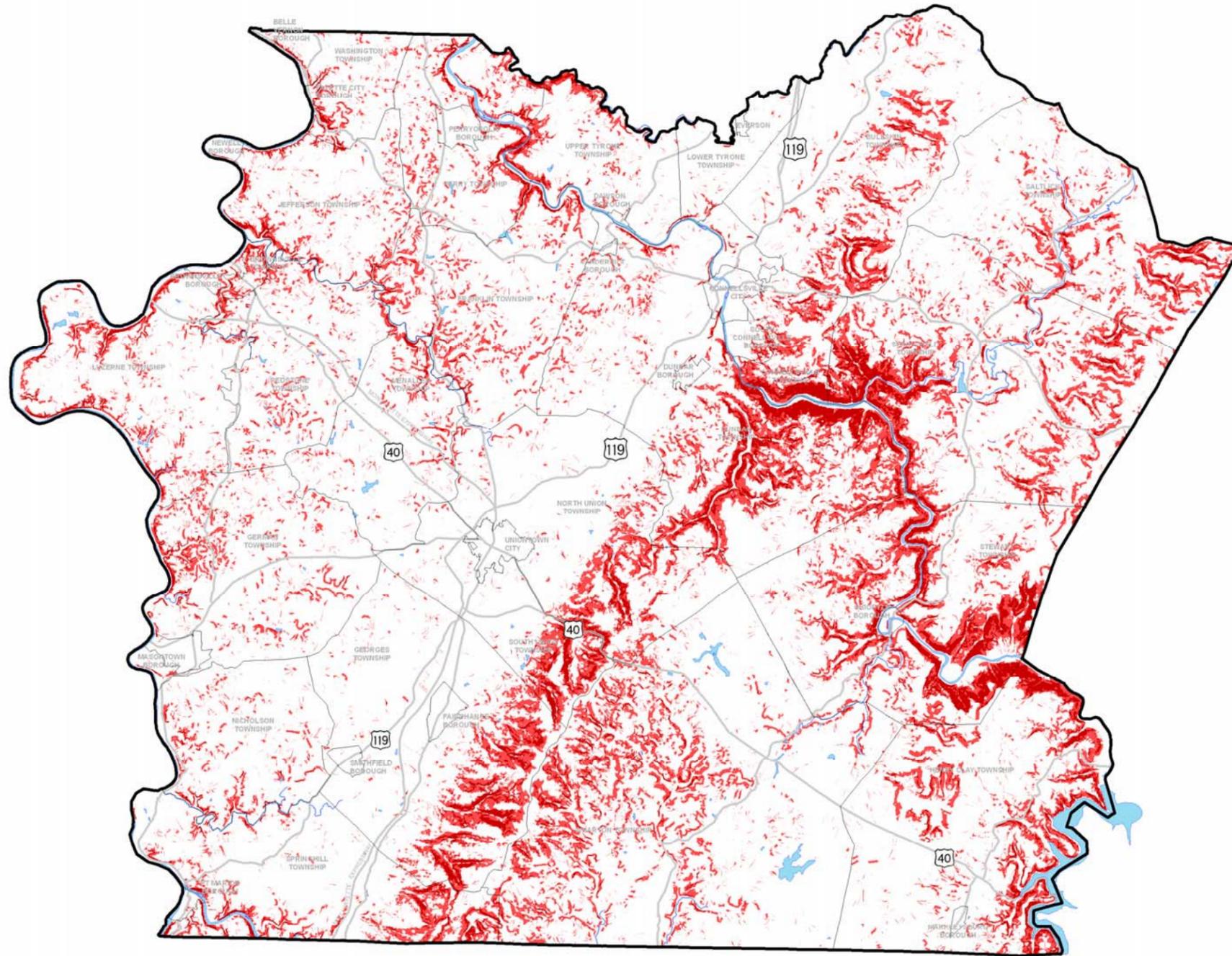
Land Coverage Map

The Land Cover map illustrates land use data that is derived from digital satellite imagery and remote sensing techniques. The distinction between eastern and western Fayette County is once again pronounced, with significantly more forest existing in the eastern portion of the County.



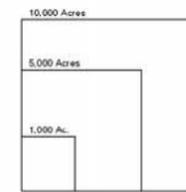
Sources: Public Potable Water Service is based on GIS data provided by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- STEEP SLOPES**
- ≥ 25%-40%
- ≥ 40%



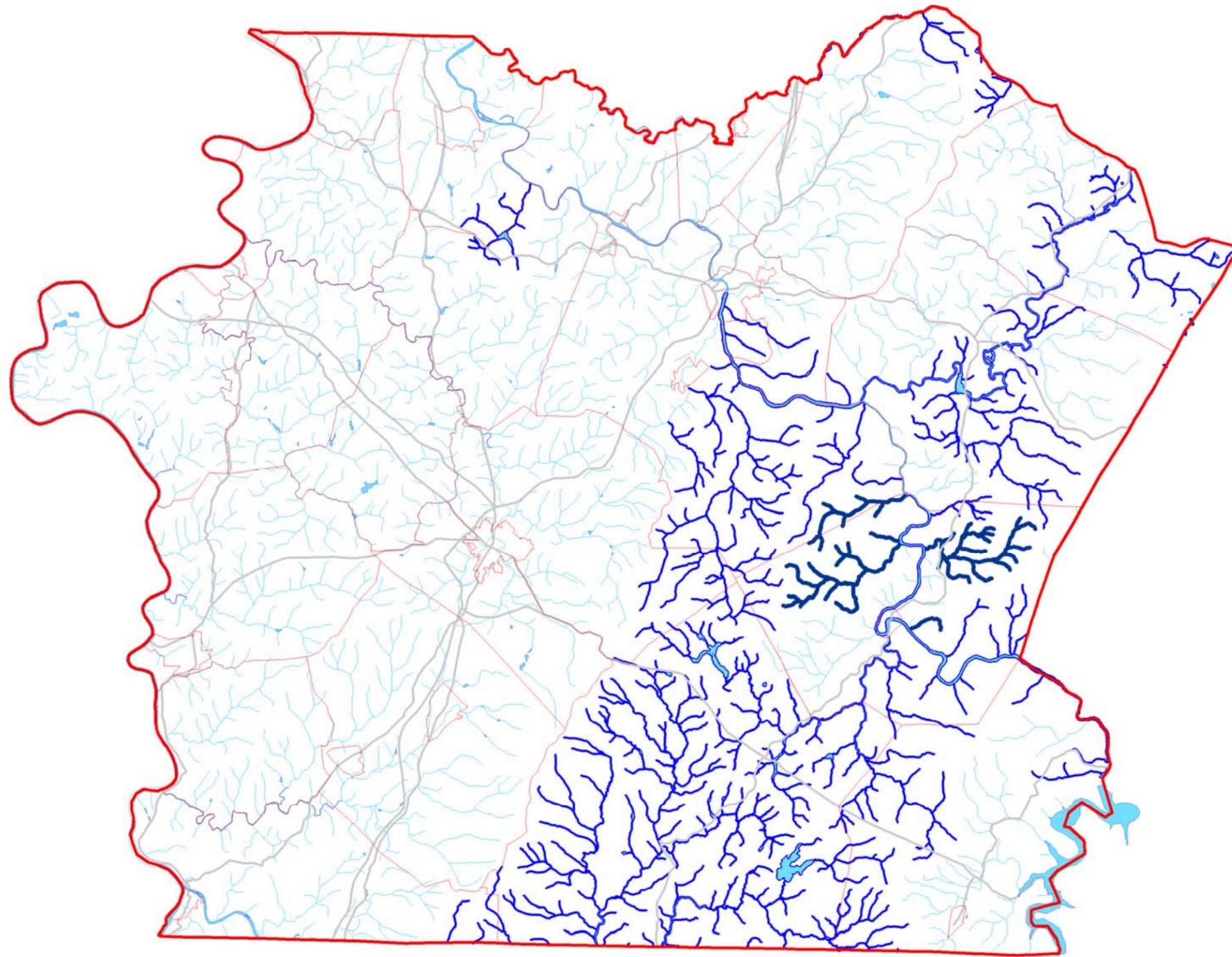
Steep Slopes Map

The Steep Slopes Maps shows the location of the County's steepest slopes. Slopes are calculated based on a 10-foot contour interval and have been categorized into 5 gradients of steepness. Slopes greater than or equal to twenty-five (25%) percent are naturally sensitive areas that provide open space and foster local biodiversity. The County's slope characteristics have been approximated using digital topographic data provided by the United States Geologic Survey, Land Info International, LLC and third party computational software.

Background Data

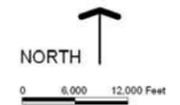
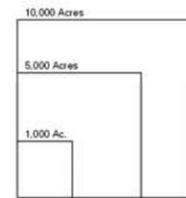
Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania

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LEGEND

- ▭ Fayette County Boundary
- ▭ Municipal Boundary
- ▭ Major Roads
- ▭ Major Rivers and Lakes
- ▭ Exceptional Quality Streams
- ▭ High Quality Streams
- ▭ Other Streams

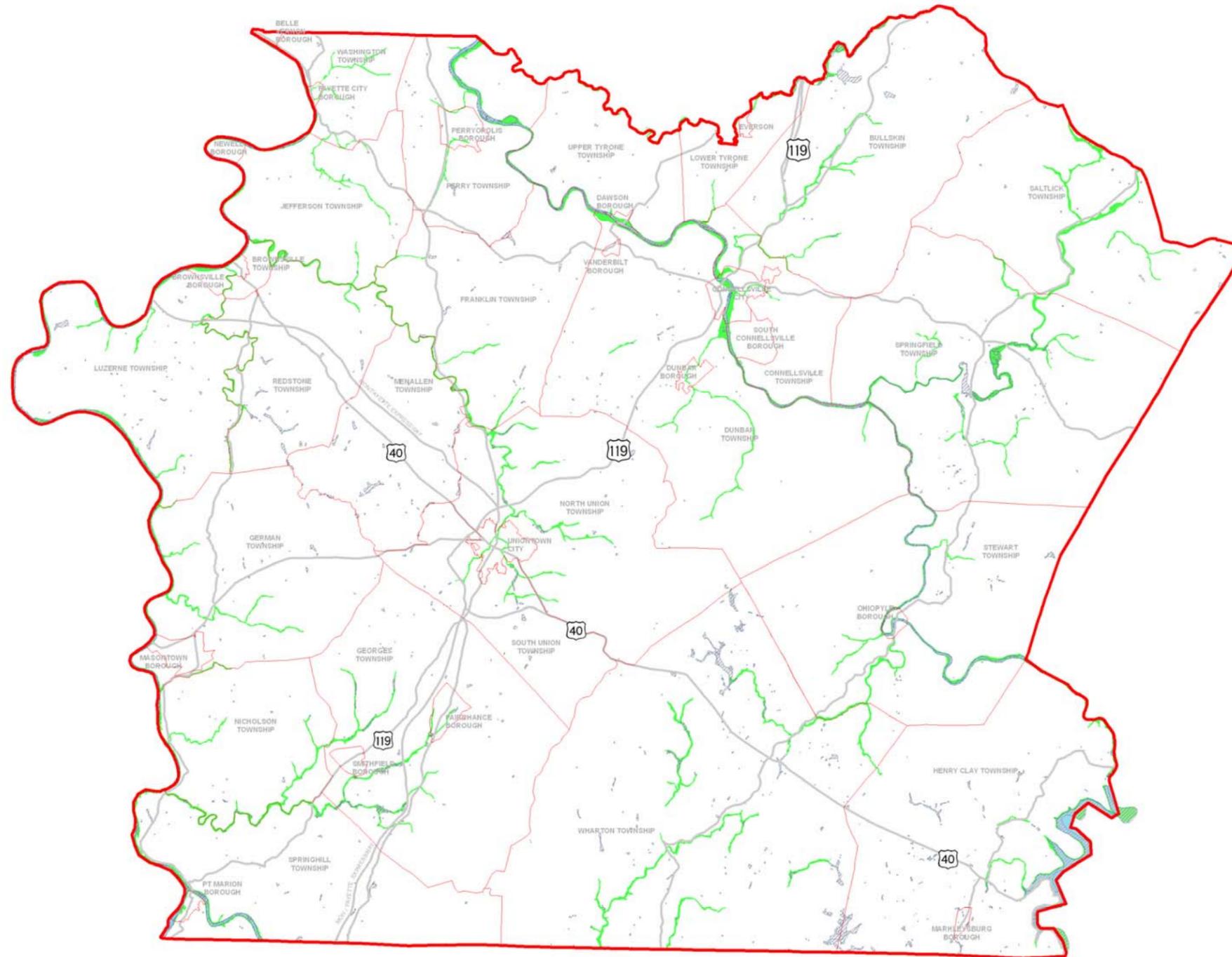


General Stream Quality Analysis Map

Stream quality is an indicator of aquatic habitat and has a direct relationship with fish and invertebrate species. Stream quality is related to a number of factors such as water clarity, movement, acidity, temperature and heavy metal content. Stream quality can be impacted by industrial discharges, sedimentation, acid mine drainage or other water-borne pollutants. The stream quality map illustrates the location and extent of exceptional value and high quality streams as defined by Chapter 93 of the Pennsylvania Code.

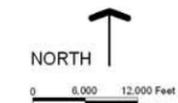
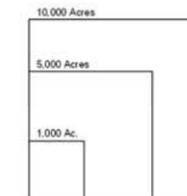
Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- Wetlands
- Floodplains

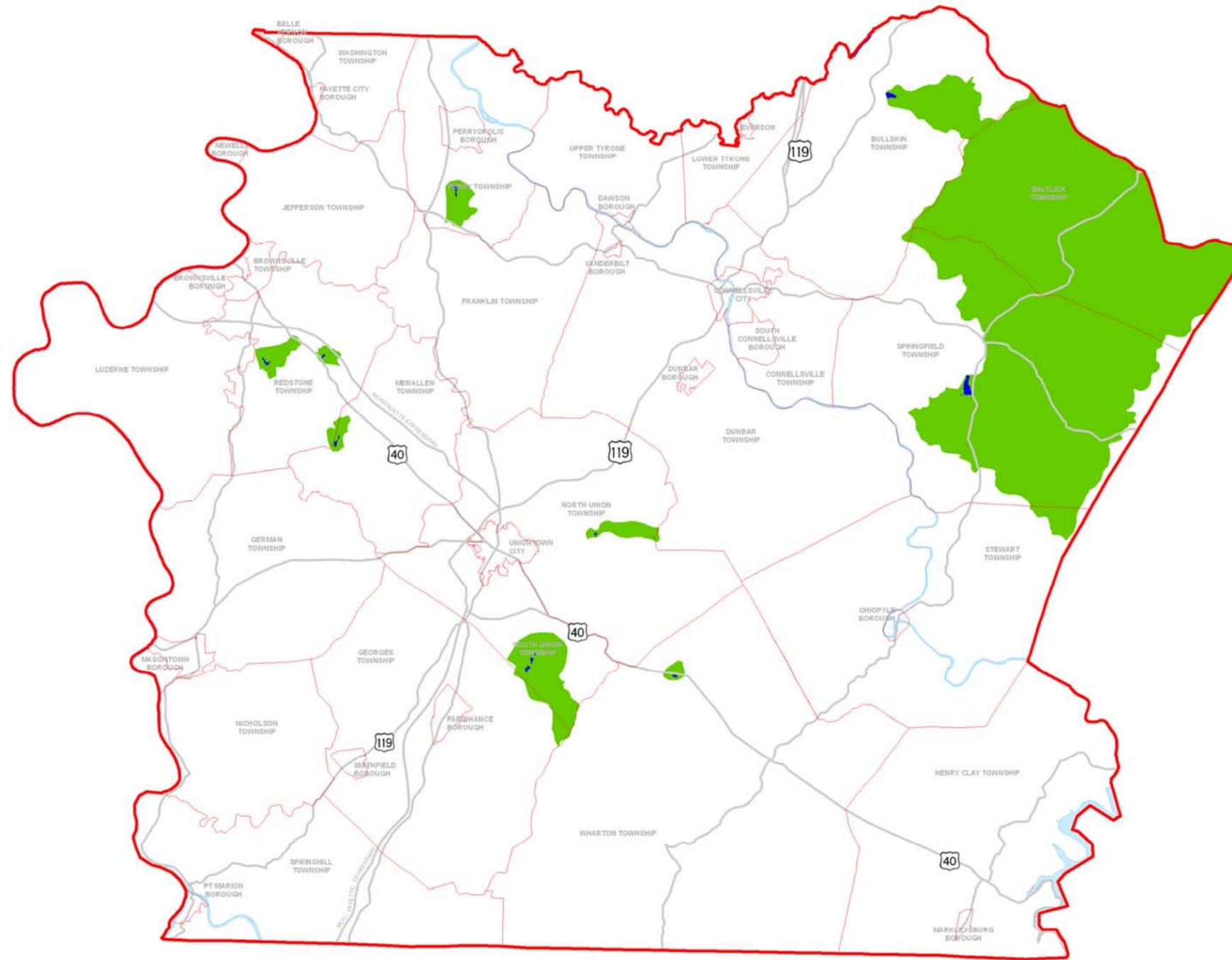


Wetlands and Floodplains Map

Wetlands are critical areas inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. There are three types of wetlands: lake edge (Lacustrine); marshes or bogs (Palustrine); and river edge (Riverine). Floodplains are land areas susceptible to inundation by water as a result of the floods and also serve an integral role in water quality through groundwater recharge and stormwater runoff. This map documents the location and extent of wetlands and floodplains within the County. These lands are found

throughout the County with concentrations in flat areas near bodies of water.



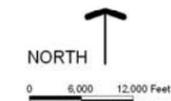
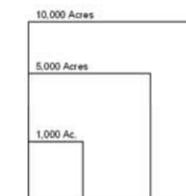


Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

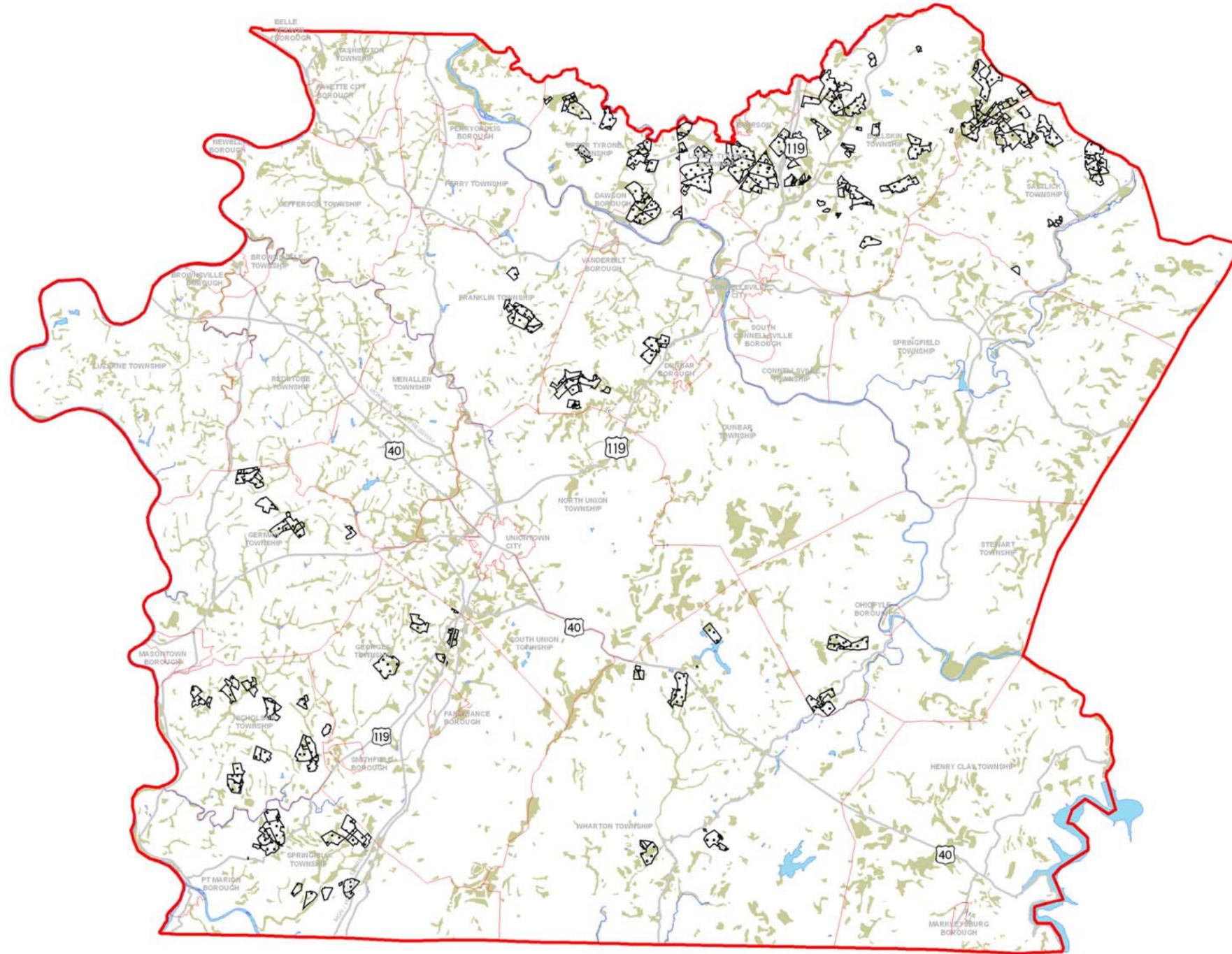
LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- Reservoirs
- Reservoir Watersheds



Reservoir Watersheds Map

Of all the watersheds that comprise Fayette County, arguably none are more important than those that provide water to County residents. A Reservoir Watershed includes the water body that actually stores the water, as well as the surrounding tributaries that are responsible for replenishing the water supply.

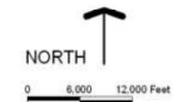
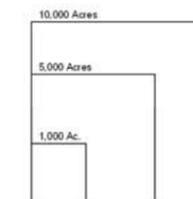


Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and Fayette County.

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**
- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Agriculture Security Areas



Agricultural Resources Map

The Agricultural Resources Map shows the areas that contain prime agricultural soils and agricultural security areas. Prime agricultural soils are designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as having an ideal combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing high yields of crops when treated and managed according to commonly accepted farming methods. Agricultural Security Areas are created by local municipalities in cooperation with individual landowners to promote more permanent and viable farming operations over the long term by strengthening the farming community's sense of

security in land use and the right to farm. All Agricultural Security Areas must be at least 250 acres in size, and participating farmers are entitled to special consideration from local and state government agencies, thus encouraging the continuing use of the land for productive agricultural purposes.

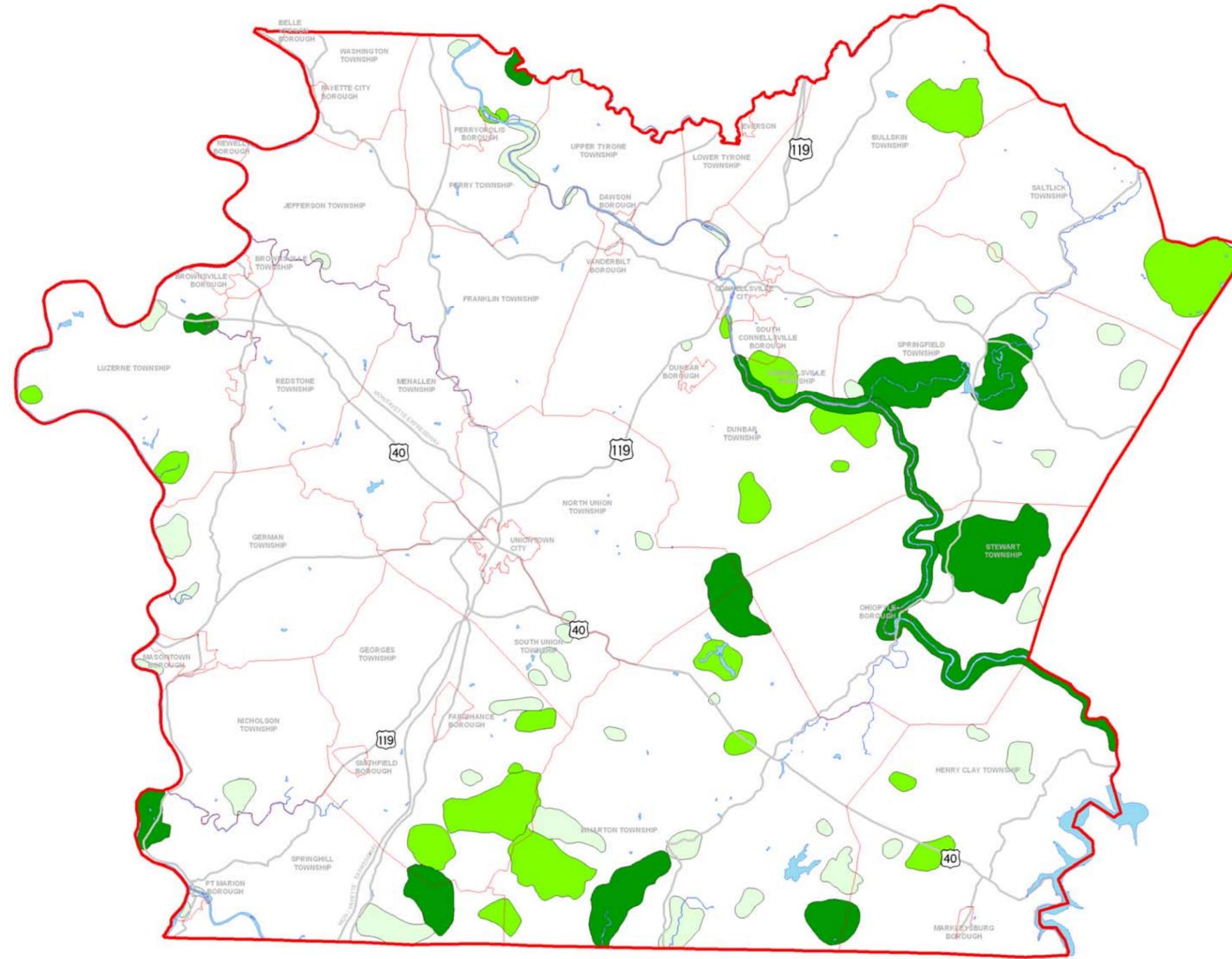
While these resources were not considered as part of criteria or inclusion in the County's proposed greenways network, their significance to understanding the character of the open space areas is important.



Background Data

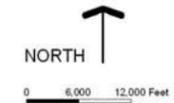
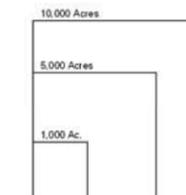
Sources: Southwest Pennsylvania Commission,
Natural Infrastructure Project

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Keystone
Recreation Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration
of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau
of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Waterbodies
- Biological Diversity Areas**
- Prime BDA (more significance and more sensitivity)
- Good BDA (significant and sensitive)
- Other BDA (less significance and less sensitivity)

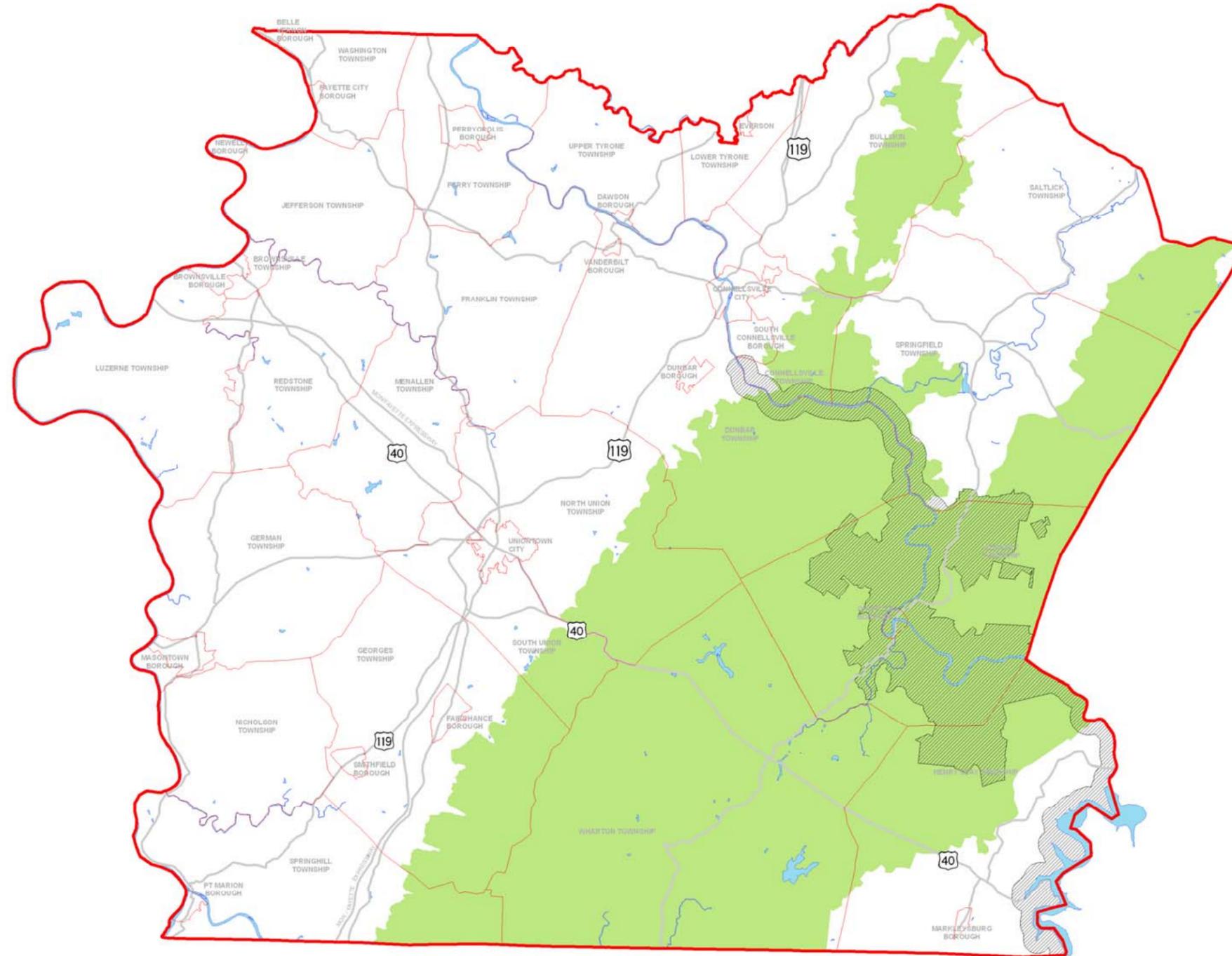


Biological Diversity Areas Map

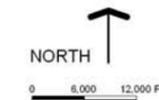
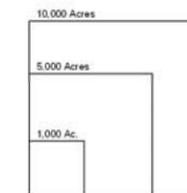
A Biological Diversity Area (BDA) includes genetic diversity within species, species diversity within a community, and diversity in a full range of biological communities of special concern by the State or Federal Government and/or high quality examples of natural communities supporting exceptional native diversity. The BDAs Map illustrates the location of these sensitive natural areas within the County based on the Natural Infrastructure of Southwestern Pennsylvania Atlas.

Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and Audubon Pennsylvania

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



- LEGEND**
- Fayette County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Major Roads
 - Rivers, Streams and Lakes
 - Important Mammal Areas
 - Important Bird Areas

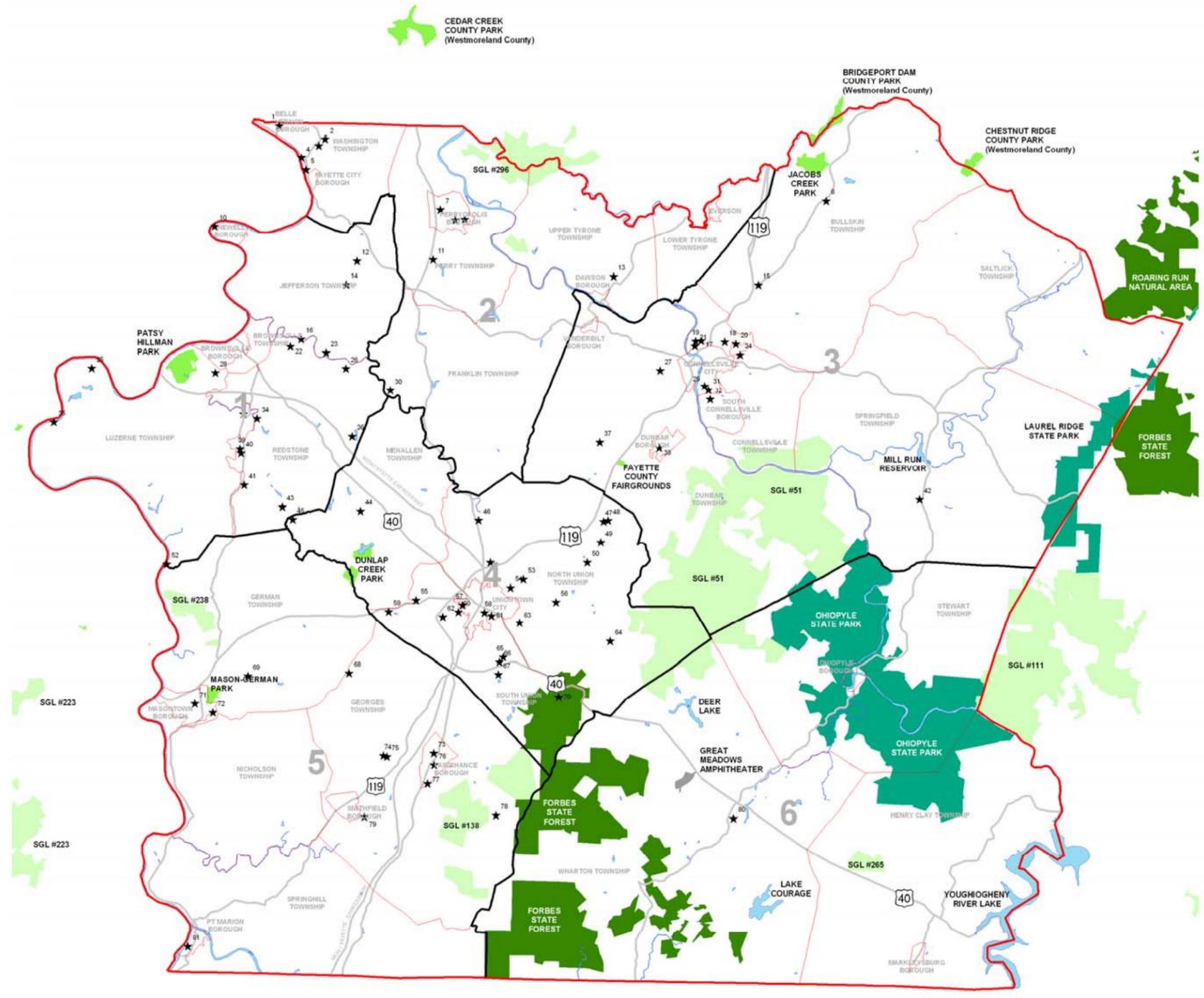


Important Bird Areas Map

An Important Bird Area is a place that provides essential habitat for one or more species of bird, whether in breeding season, winter, or during migration. These sites are considered to be exceptionally important for bird conservation. Protection of the most critical of these sites is one important approach to the protection of many bird species. Important Bird Areas (IBAs) as determined by the Audubon Society serve as the basis of the analysis. Criteria used to determine IBA status includes the number of bird species present, the presence of rare or endangered species and sites where long-term avian research or

monitoring is in process. The Important Bird Areas map reveals the IBAs located in the County.



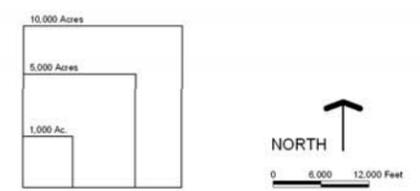


Sources: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Game Commission

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

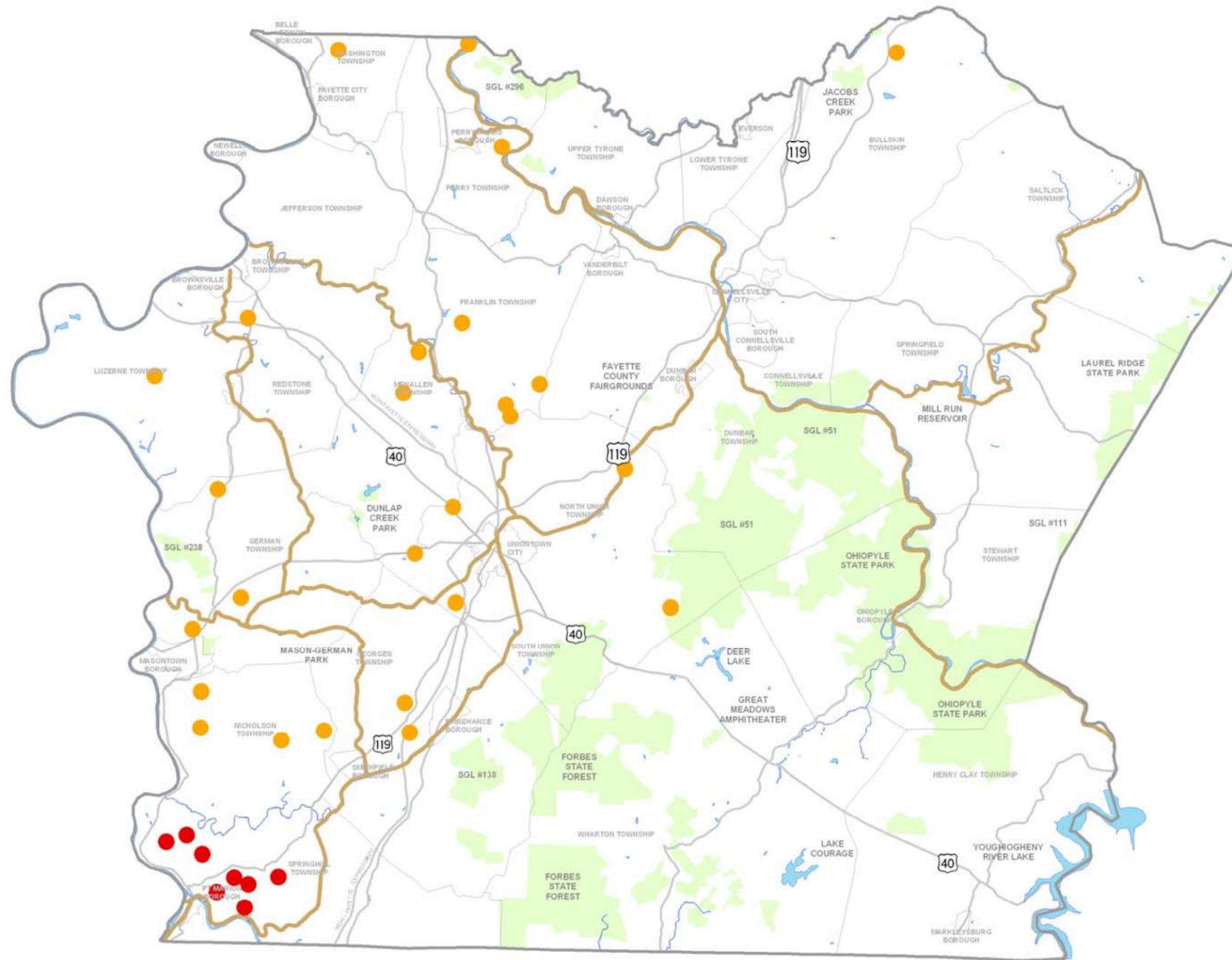
LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- State Gamelands
- County Parks
- State Parks
- State Forests
- ★ Municipal Parks
- Other
- Planning District
- 1 Planning District Id



Parklands Map

Managed and maintained by state, County or municipal governments, Fayette County's public parklands serve a wide range of active and passive recreational needs. Parklands vary significantly in size, location, scope, appearance and programming. In addition to recreation purposes, parklands protect a significant portion of the County's unique natural landscapes and unimproved open space.



Source: Land Most Suitable for ATV Areas is based on GIS data compiled by the United States Geologic Survey and is a subset of data contained in the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) Abandoned Mine Land Inventory; and GIS data provided by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission. The criteria for Land Most Suitable for ATV areas was developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

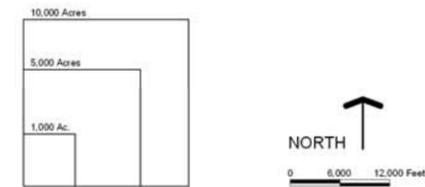
This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

LAND MOST SUITABLE FOR ATV AREAS CRITERIA:

- Good ATV Areas:**
1. Abandoned coal strip mines
 2. Size >500 acres
 3. Must be within 3 miles of a major road
 4. Cannot be located in a BDA with a sensitivity to active recreation
 5. Serves a population <150,000 people within a 20-mile radius
 6. Cannot be in a BDA
 7. Cannot be in an exceptional value or high quality watershed
- Other ATV Areas**
1. Abandoned coal strip mines
 2. Size >500 acres
 3. Must be within 3 miles of a major road
 4. Cannot be located in a BDA with a sensitivity to active recreation

LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- Parks, Forests and Gamelands
- Major Roads
- State/National Trails: Existing
- Good ATV Areas
- Other ATV Areas



ATV Analysis Map

Through discussions with recreation providers, enthusiast and a general review of land in the County, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) activity is popular among both residents and non-residents.

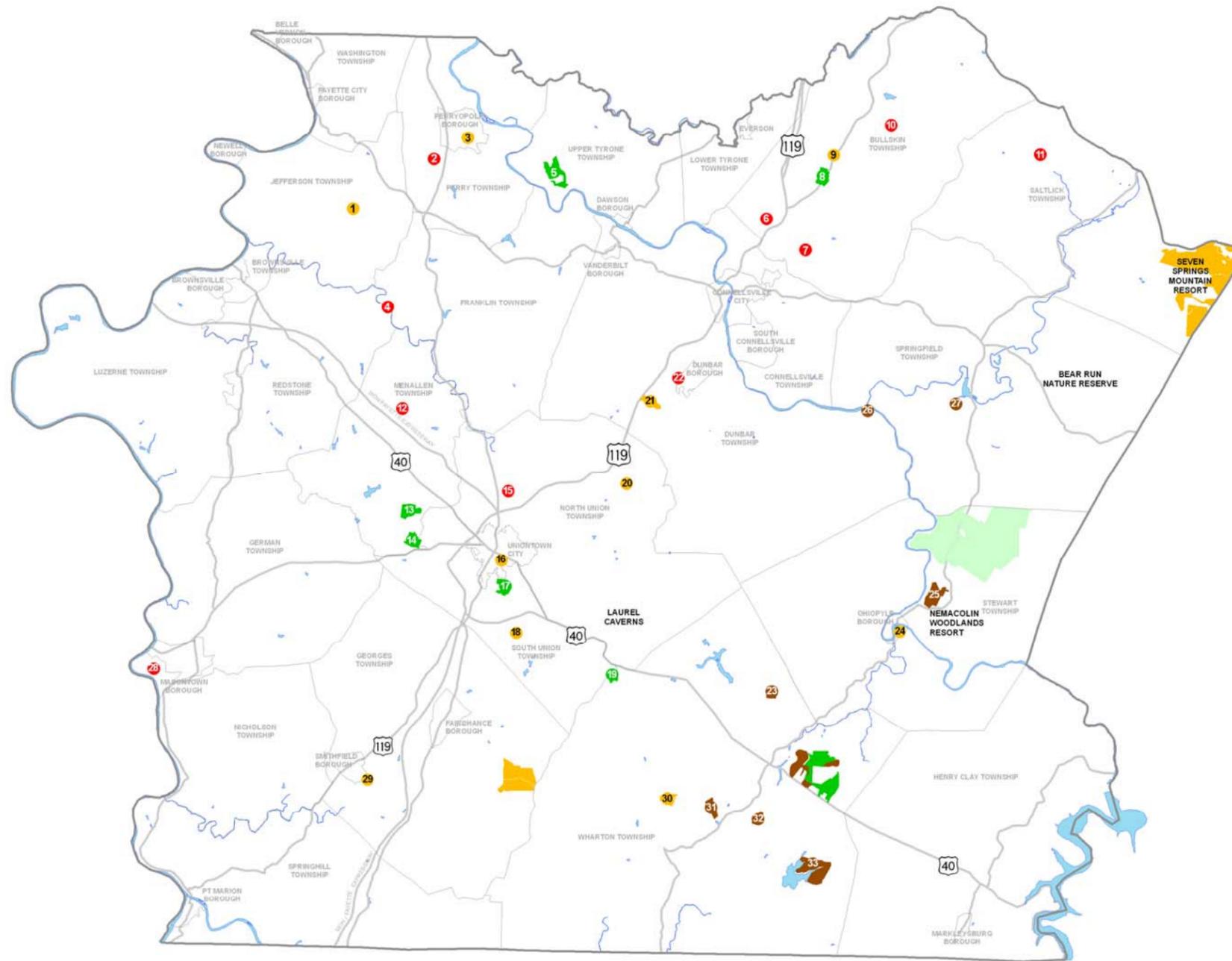
The ATV Analysis shows all areas suitable for ATV use and categorizes each area as prime, good and other. Each area's suitability level was developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and other Southwestern PA stakeholders as part of the region's Natural Infrastructure project. Emphasis is placed on re-using abandoned strip mines.

Positive considerations also included close proximity to a major road and the availability of adequate space. Areas close to parks and Biological Diversity Areas were deemed unsuitable because of the relatively high impact of ATVs.

As part of the planning process and comments received during development of the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan, some stakeholders from the private sector have identified potential interests in pursuing the development of an ATV-related facility. It is recommended that

the County work with local municipalities, other interested public-sector entities and the private sector to identify the most suitable location for such a recreation opportunity.





Sources: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, and Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania

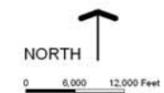
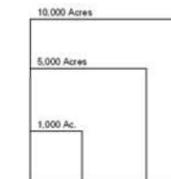
This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

SPECIAL RECREATION PLACE NAMES

1	Jefferson Township Ballfield 1 and 2
2	Star Junction Fish and Game Club
3	Perryopolis Park
4	Franklin Township Rod and Gun Club
5	Linden Hall Golf Course
6	Connellsville Sportsmen Association
7	Breakneck Rod and Gun Club/Fairbanks Rod and Gun Club
8	Pleasant Valley Country Club
9	Bullskin Township Fairground
10	Youghiogheny Fishermans Association
11	Indian Creek Valley Sportsmans Club
12	Keister Sportsmans Club
13	Duck Hollow Golf Course
14	Springdale Golf Club
15	Fayette Gun Club
16	Bailey Park
17	Uniontown Country Club
18	Hutchinson Recreation Area
19	Mount Summit Golf Course
20	Shady Grove Park
21	Fayette County Fairgrounds
22	Dunbar Sportsmans Club
23	Benners Meadow Run Campground
24	White Water Adventures, Inc.
25	Scarlett Knob Campground
26	Camp Camel
27	Camp Christian
28	Masontown Fish and Game Club
29	Smithfield Ballfield
30	Touchstone Center for Crafts
31	Five Pines Campground
32	Tall Oaks Campground
33	Heritage Reservation

LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- Campgrounds
- Golf Courses
- Local/Regional Recreation Areas
- Local Recreation Clubs
- Nature Reserves (Approx.)

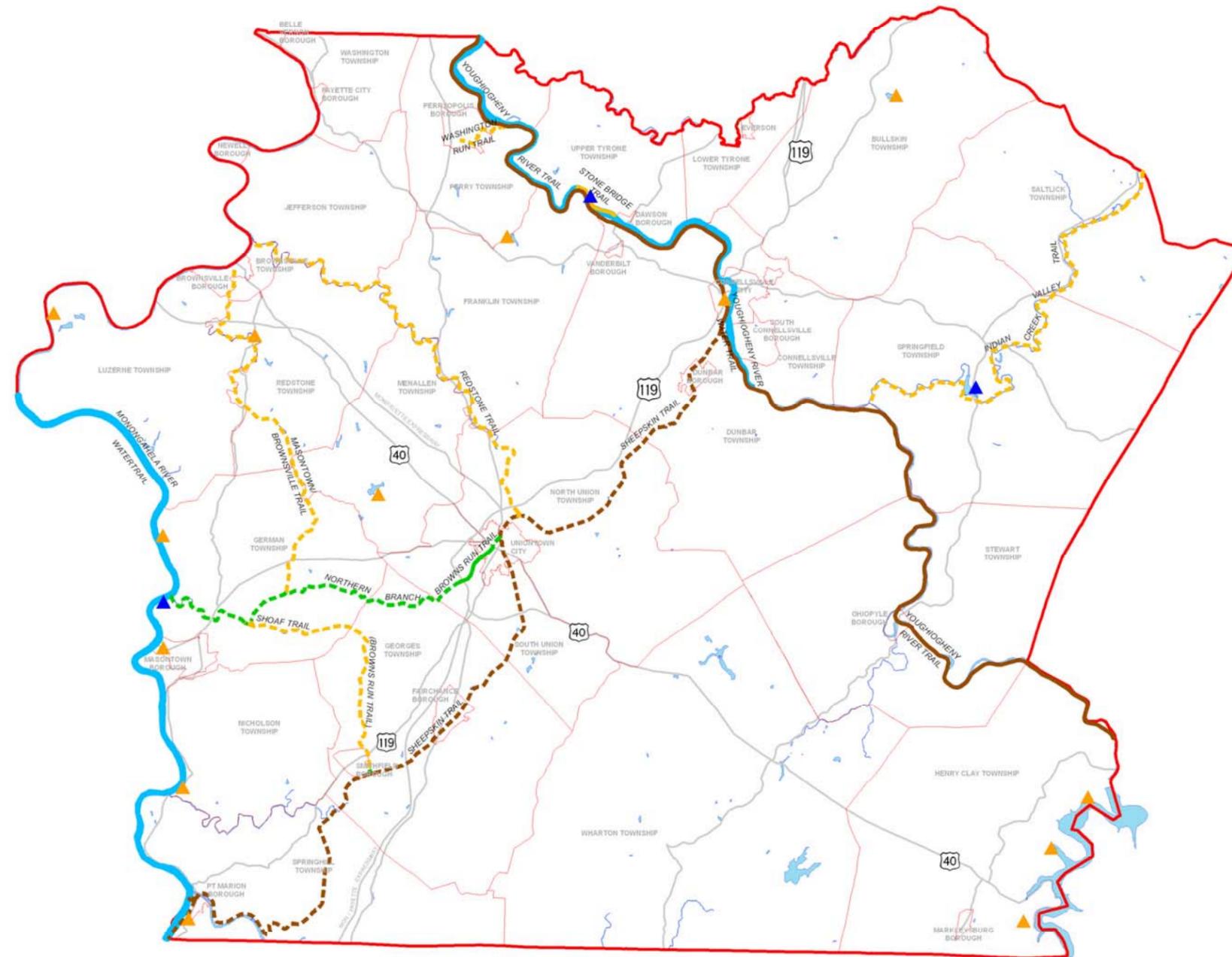


Special Recreation Map

Special recreation areas offer unique recreation opportunities, often centered around a specific activity or featuring a distinctive environment. They usually include campgrounds, golf courses, local and/or regional attractions, recreation clubs or nature reserves.

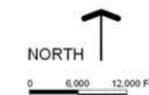
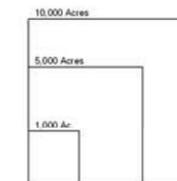
Source: Fayette County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- Major Roads
- Local Trails: Existing
- Local Trails: Proposed
- Regional Trails: Existing
- Regional Trails: Proposed
- State/National Trails: Existing
- State/National Trails: Proposed
- State-Designated Water Trails
- Private Boat Access Points
- Public Boat Access Points



Trails Map

The Trails Map illustrates a variety of existing and proposed trails as follows:

- Existing and Proposed Local Trails are shown respectively in orange solid and dashed lines
- Existing and Proposed Regional Trails are shown respectively in green solid and dashed lines
- Existing and Proposed State/National Trails are shown respectively in brown solid and dashed lines.

- State-designated Water Trails are shown in royal blue.

Major roads and water bodies are also shown on the Map. Both of these features are relevant to the existing and future trail system as potential sources of trail access points as and desirable destinations. Trails are key recreation elements furnishing opportunities for hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross country skiing, and in some cases snow mobiles and all terrain vehicles (ATV). They are also vital in the creation of links

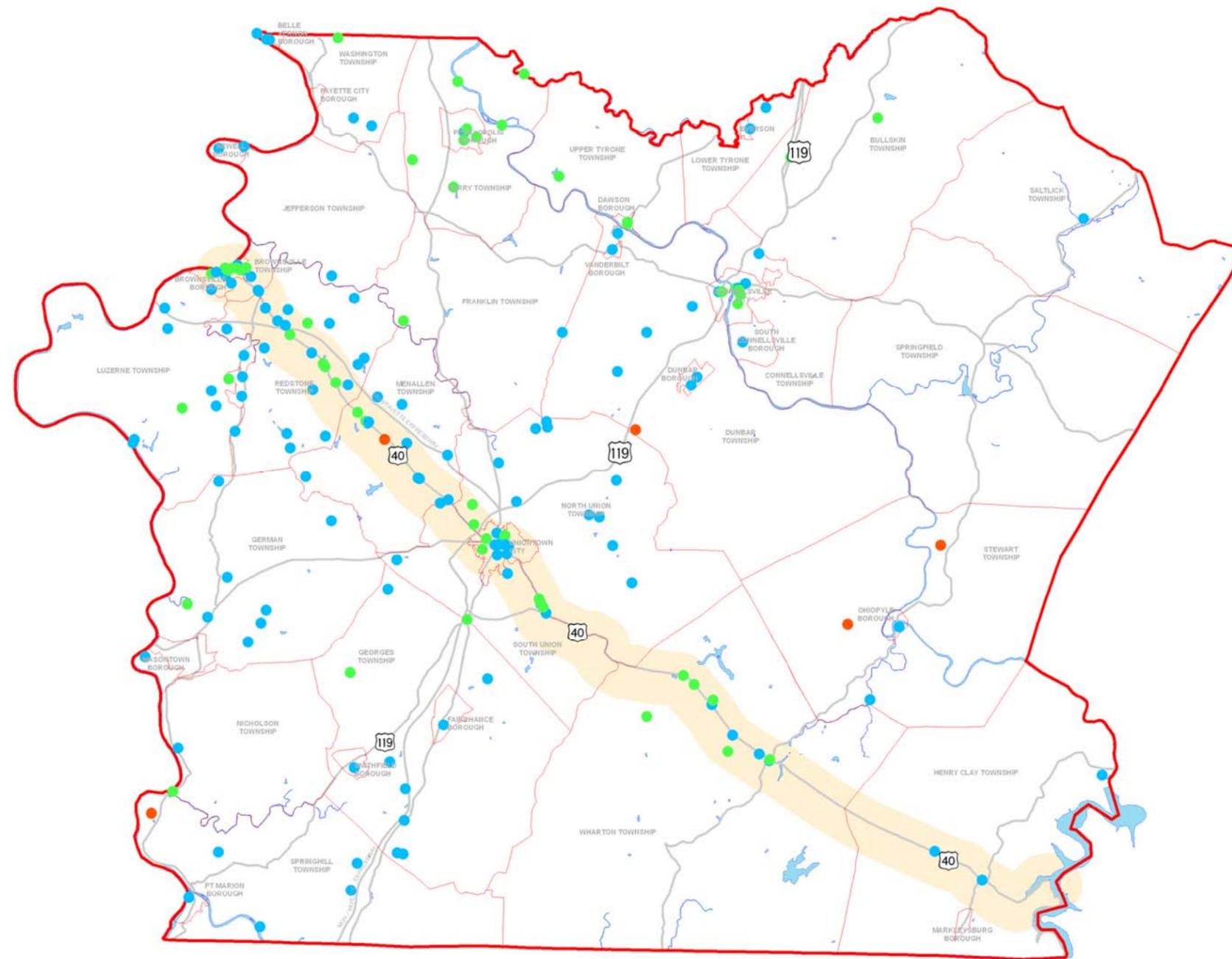
between other recreational features as well as natural features. The creation of County wide trail network, and its maintenance and future development, is an important goal of the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.



Background Data

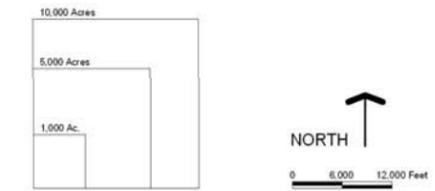
Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.



LEGEND

- Fayette County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Major Roads
- Rivers, Streams and Lakes
- Eligible
- Listed
- National Historic Landmark
- National Road Corridor



Historic Resources Map

The above map illustrates the Historic Resources of Fayette County.

The many historic buildings and sites that have been preserved in Fayette County attest to its rich history. The County's five (5) National Historic Landmarks are mapped in red and are as follows:

1. Albert Gallatin House (Friendship Hill) 3 miles north of Point Marion
2. Fallingwater at Mill Run by American architect Frank Lloyd Wright.
3. I.N. and Bernadine Hagan House (Kentuck Knob) located on Chalk Hill Road off of U.S. Route 40 near Uniontown
4. Isaac Meason House in Dunbar Township
5. Searight Tollhouse on the National Road (U.S Route 40) west of Uniontown

These, and other historic places, are important to encouraging tourism and recreational opportunities in Fayette County. Many of these sites are associated with existing open space and recreation features and serve as regional visitor destinations.

Parks and Acreage Assessment

State, County and Local Parks

Needs Assessment

The Needs Assessment is a major component of the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan. The assessment identifies and prioritizes the quantity and type of parks most needed within the County-wide park, recreation and open space system.

In order to determine County parks, recreation and open space needs, the amount of park and open space land available for County residents' use is calculated. This process is referred to as the quantitative analysis. The quantitative analysis calculates park acreage surpluses and deficiencies based on existing facilities and their distribution within the Fayette County region, as well as current and projected population statistics. The quantitative analysis is completed in two phases:

- Inventory and Distribution Evaluation
- Acreage Needs Assessment

The first phase mathematically identifies the region's current park acreage and the accessibility of such parks to residents within six identified geographic regions of the County.

The second phase calculates park acreage surpluses and deficiencies in relation to the overall County and each individual Study Region. The surpluses and deficiencies are based on current and projected population growth factors.

The following table illustrates the types of uses, facilities, minimum size, service radius and acreage recommendations per 1,000 persons that the County has assigned to each classification. These standards are based, in part, from criteria established by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA).

Table 7: Classification Table

Park Classification	Definition	Facilities	Min. Size acres	Service Area Radius miles	Acreage Requirement per 1,000 Persons acres
Neighborhood	Drive to park; intense recreational activities; max. 80% developed	Same as neighborhood plus swimming pool, lit playfields and single-use hardcourts, multipurpose building, community center	20	2	4.0
Metropolitan	County parks; drive to park; primarily passive usage with light intense active recreation; limited park programming	Water resource-oriented, unlit playfields, playgrounds, picnicking, hiking/biking/walking trails, nature center, amphitheater, group camping, swimming beaches, boating areas	100	15	5.0
Regional	Drive to park; natural areas with some resource based activities; max 20% developed	Water resource-oriented, conservation areas (flood control/management), beaches, nature study, group camping, rustic areas, bridal trails, picnicking	250	30	20.0



Inventory and Distribution Evaluation

The evaluation identifies the type of activity and development intensity for each municipal, County and state park and open space facility in the Fayette County region. In order to determine the park acreage available to the County and to each Study Region, the Inventory Distribution Evaluation is completed in a series of three steps.

Step 1: Park Classification

Using the National Recreation and Park Association’s (NRPA) general park classification standards as a base, the County has developed a set of standards that reflect the unique characteristics of Fayette County. Each park is classified as either:

- Neighborhood
- Metropolitan
- Regional

Step 2: Regional Proportion Calculation

The service radius assigned to each park represents the standard distance a park user is willing to travel to visit a facility. Typically, the larger or more specialized the park, the further a user will travel to visit. County Parks are assigned a 12 mile service area radius and State Parks are assigned a 30 mile service area radius. Based on their relatively small radius, neighborhood parks were not considered for regional proportion. A Regional Proportion is a Study Region’s portion of a particular park’s service area. The acreage of each Study Region with a park’s service area is then divided into the park’s total service area.

Table 8: Overall County Needs

Classification	Min. Size acres	Service Area Radius mile	Acreage Requirement per 1,000	Current County-wide Park, Recreation and Open Space Inventory ³ acres	Acreage Needed as per Pop. Statistics acres	Existing Surplus or Deficit () acres	Acreage Needed as per 2015 Pop. Proj. acres	Future Surplus or Deficit () acres	Acreage Needed as per 2050 Pop. Proj. acres	Future Surplus or Deficit () acres
Neighborhood/ Community	.25-15	2.0	4.0	514	595	(81)	628	(114)	668	(154)
Metropolitan	100	15	5.0	1,443	743	700	785	658	834	609
Regional	250	30	20.0	8,029	2,973	5,056	3,140	4,889	3,338	4,691
Subtotal			29.0	9,986.0	4,311.0	5,675.0	4,553.0	5,433.0	4,840.0	5,146

Several non-Fayette County Park and open space areas lie within easy driving distance of the County’s boundary. Because many Fayette County residents travel to neighboring counties for recreation activities and vice versa, it was determined that the Quantitative Analysis should account for all non-Fayette County parks within 12 miles of the County border and all non Fayette County State Parks within 30 miles of the County border. The same acreage distribution procedure is applied to non-Fayette County facilities.

Step 3: Available Acreage Calculation

To determine the actual park acres available for Fayette County overall, each park’s total acreage is multiplied by the percentage of its service area allocated to Fayette County.

To prepare for the second phase of the Quantitative Analysis and to gain a more detailed understanding of specific needs by the Study Areas, the available acreage for each Study Region is calculated. Each park’s acreage is multiplied by the percentage of a park’s service area with each Study Region. The remaining percentage is calculated as available acreage for non Fayette county residents’ use.

Acreage Needs Assessment

The Acreage Needs Assessment identifies the County’s park acreage surpluses and deficits. The total Recommended Acres by park classification are computed utilizing Fayette County’s population statistics and the required park acreage per 1,000 population as defined in the County’s Park Classifications Standards.

This study’s assessment not only determines current needs but projects future needs as well. To plan for generations to come, two future points in time were identified for analysis – 2010 and 2030. The projections are compiled for the overall County as well as each Study Region. Population projections were provided by several sources including the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP).

Table 9: Projected Populations

Periods	Population (Total Persons)
2000	148,644
2010	156,980
2030	166,888

Table 10: Regional Projected Populations

Periods	Region					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
2000	17,463	18,272	37,852	42,543	25,282	7,231
2010	19,375	20,114	35,273	48,057	26,080	8,081
2030	21,328	21,132	36,199	50,433	29,212	8,584

The recommended acreage per park classification is compared to the County's actual available acreage. The analysis results are described in the tables to the right. Numbers framed by parenthesis indicate deficits in terms of current available acreage.

Overall Acreage Needs Analysis only accounts for all park types and total park acreage throughout the entire County; consequently, surpluses and deficits for each Study Region may be masked. Therefore, surpluses and deficits for each Study Region distribution are evaluated separately. This level of detailed analysis uncovers specific regional surpluses and deficits. Three different timeframes were studied based upon population.

Table 11: Needs Analysis (Year 2000)

Park Classification	Region						Total acres
	1 acres	2 acres	3 acres	4 acres	5 acres	6 acres	
Neighborhood/Community	23	(20)	(119)	(15)	56	(5)	(80)
Metropolitan	527	183	167	(154)	(26)	4	701
Regional	221	503	1,927	(121)	564	1,963	5,057

Table 12: Needs Analysis (Year 2010)

Park Classification	Region						Total acres
	1 acre	2 acres	3 acres	4 acres	5 acres	6 acres	
Neighborhood/Community	15	(27)	(109)	(37)	53	(10)	(115)
Metropolitan	517	173	180	(181)	(30)	(3)	656
Regional	221	466	1,979	(231)	548	1,936	4,919

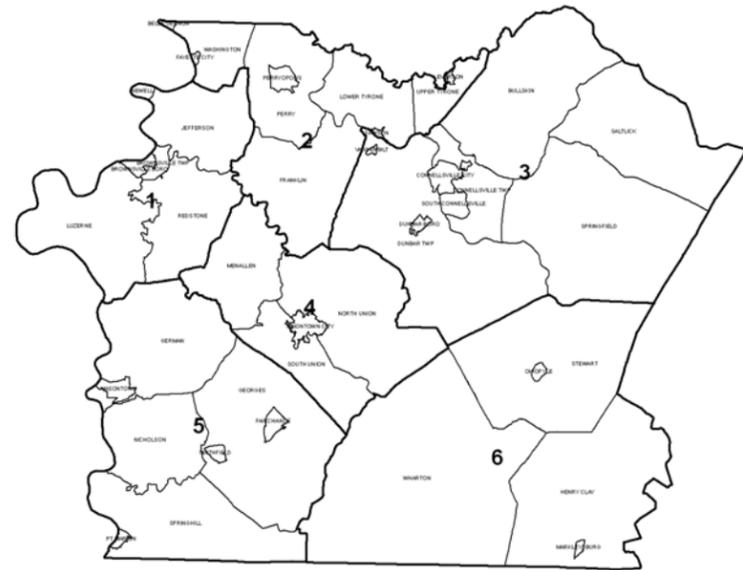
Table 13: Needs Analysis (Year 2030)

Park Classification	Region						Total acres
	1 acres	2 acres	3 acres	4 acres	5 acres	6 acres	
Neighborhood/Community	8	(32)	(113)	(47)	40	(10)	(154)
Metropolitan	507	168	175	(193)	(46)	(3)	608
Regional	143	445	1,960	(279)	486	1,936	4,691



Community Participation

Municipal Survey



This series of Municipal Survey Observation represents a portion of the public participation component being conducted as a part of the County's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan. The purpose of this particular survey is to document the state of parks and recreation at the municipal level according to municipal officials and representatives. Forty-two surveys were distributed (one to each municipality). In a few instances, a community duplicated the survey and distributed to multiple persons. Subsequently, multiple responses were received, and in some cases, differing responses to various questions may have been submitted by the same municipality. To rectify the situation, municipalities submitting multiple and differing surveys were contacted and the appropriate person's survey was included in the results.

Consequently, Fayette County distributed the surveys to the municipalities in November of 2006. Of the 42 municipalities, 90% responded as of March 2007. The County performed the initial tabulation on a County-wide basis. Environmental Planning & Design, LLC then tabulated and mapped the results on a municipal and regional basis.

The following map depicts the locations of each municipality within Fayette County. A series of six planning districts are

also outlined. The planning districts have been assigned based upon other planning efforts (current & historic) completed in the county. A listing of survey respondents is outlined on the following page.

The observations summarized within this document are based on Municipal Survey responses received from the following municipalities:

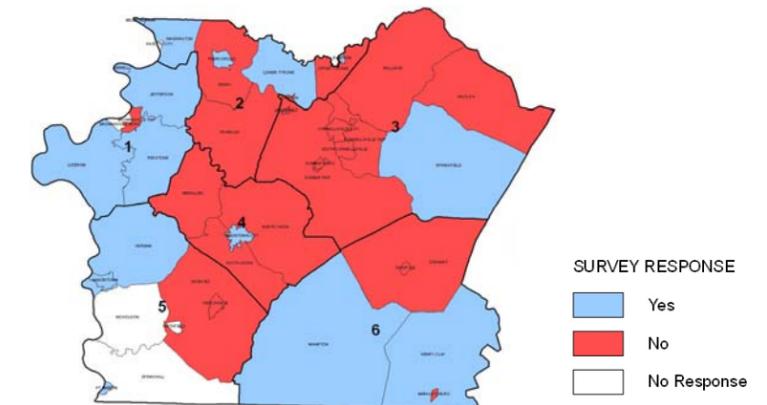
- Belle Vernon Borough
- Brownsville Township
- Bullskin Township
- City of Connellsville
- Connellsville Township
- Dawson Borough
- Dunbar Borough
- Dunbar Township
- Everson Borough
- Fairchance Borough
- Franklin Township
- Georges Township
- German Township
- Henry Clay Township
- Jefferson Township
- Lower Tyrone Township
- Luzerne Township
- Markleysburg Township
- Masontown Borough
- Menallen Township
- Newell Township
- Nicholson Township
- North Union Township
- Ohiopyle Borough
- Perry Township
- Perryopolis Borough
- Point Marion Borough
- Redstone Township
- Saltlick Township
- Springfield Township
- South Connellsville Borough
- South Union Township
- Stewart Township
- City of Uniontown
- Upper Tyrone Township

- Vanderbilt Borough
- Wharton Township
- Washington Township

The following municipalities did not submit a municipality survey:

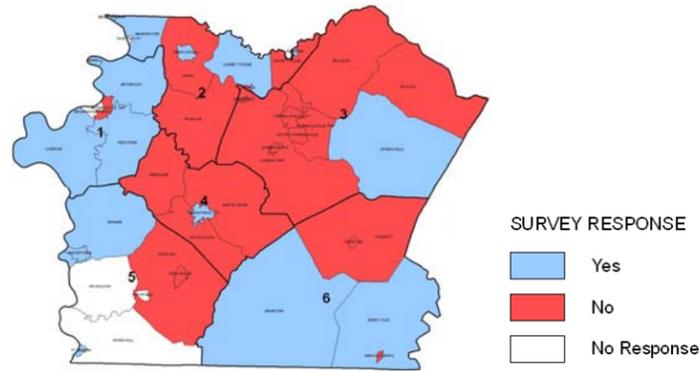
- Fayette City Borough
- Brownsville Borough
- Springhill Township
- Smithfield Borough

Responses to many of the survey's questions have been mapped according to the municipality's feedback. For each map created, survey responses with a "yes" answer are illustrated in blue/light gray. "No" responses are designated with a red/dark gray shading. If no response was given, the municipality shown in white. An example is illustrated below.



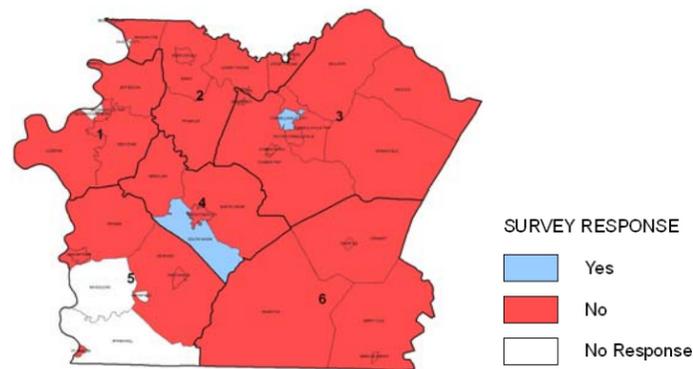
Demographic Overview

Question 1A - Does Your Municipality have a local volunteer Park and Recreation Board or Commission?



A volunteer Park and Recreation Board or Commission generally provides recreation oriented vision, organization, decision making and budgetary assistance for recreation programs and facilities. Forty-three (43%) percent of Municipalities have a local volunteer Park and Recreation Board or Commission. Each of the County's six Planning Districts has at least one municipality with such a board or commission from which techniques, procedures and policies could be further examined to build other successes in other surrounding communities.

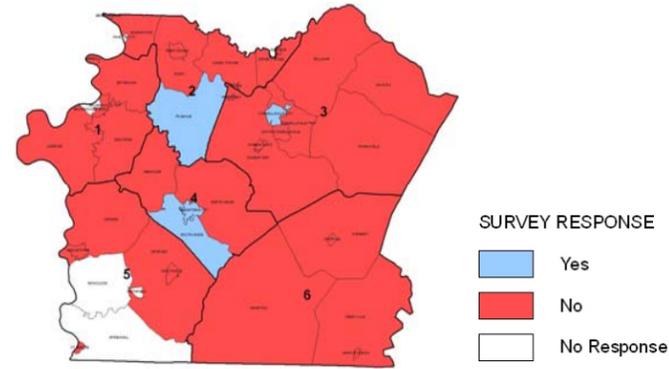
Question 1B – Does your Municipality employ a full-time person or persons who are specifically hired to plan, organize and operate recreation and park programs and maintain park facilities in your community?



Employment of staff for recreation is limited with 5% of County municipalities staffing a full time employee to plan, organize and operate recreation and park programs as well as maintain park facilities. Municipalities lacking such staff are generally "stretched" to address daily local parks and recreation planning

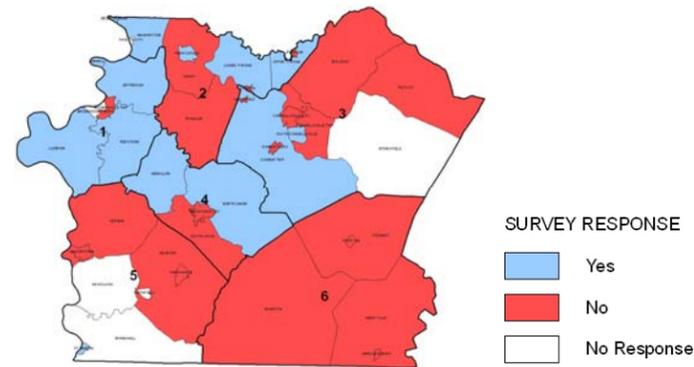
and/or maintenance needs.

Question 1C – Does your municipality employ a part-time person or persons who are specifically hired to plan, organize and operate recreation and park programs and maintain park facilities in your community?



Part-time staffing can be instrumental in planning, organizing and operating recreation programs for municipalities with smaller populations. Eleven (11%) percent of municipalities employ a part time person to plan, organize, and operate recreation and park programs and maintain park facilities. Part-time staffing could provide the opportunity to optimize budget resources, but at times, scheduling of programming, maintenance and/or facility use may become challenging within a community where recreation is in high demand and full-time staff is not available.

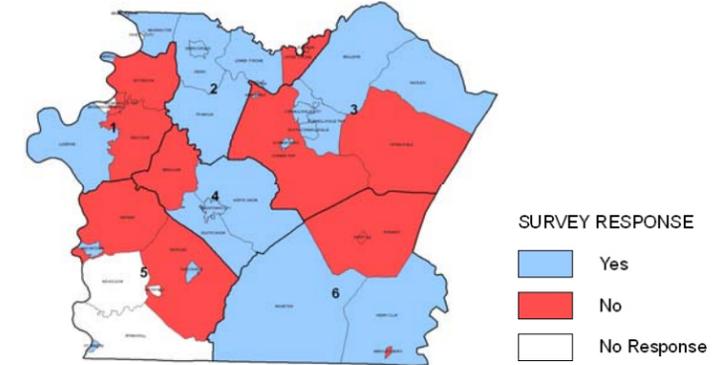
Question 1D- Does your municipality rely on volunteer organizations to provide park and recreation opportunities for the residents of your community?



Volunteer organizations provide a vital function in parks and recreation within the County's communities. Thirty-nine (39%) percent of the municipalities rely on volunteer organizations to provide park and recreation opportunities. Volunteers provide enthusiasm in helping communities complete their recreation

goals; however, the most effective benefits of volunteerism are often seen when a community provides a clear, coordinated statement of anticipated outcomes. Volunteers also may not always possess, nor should be expected to possess, all of the expertise needed in planning and maintaining parks/recreation facilities/programs.

Question 2 – Does your Municipality specifically budget and expend local tax dollars for parks and recreation in your community?



Budgeting for parks and recreation enables a municipality to allocate necessary funds for park maintenance and expansion as well as for recreation programs. Sixty-five (65%) percent of the municipalities budget and expend local tax dollars for parks and recreation, with each district exhibiting multiple municipalities that allocate funds for parks and recreation. Municipal budgets were cited from Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) 2005 data and then tabulated on a per person basis. The range of recreation budget expenditures per person ranged from \$0 (several municipalities) to \$22.06 per person (Uniontown City). It has not yet been examined as part of this survey if other funding avenues (private organizations, grants, etc.) help support these formally allocated budget figures.

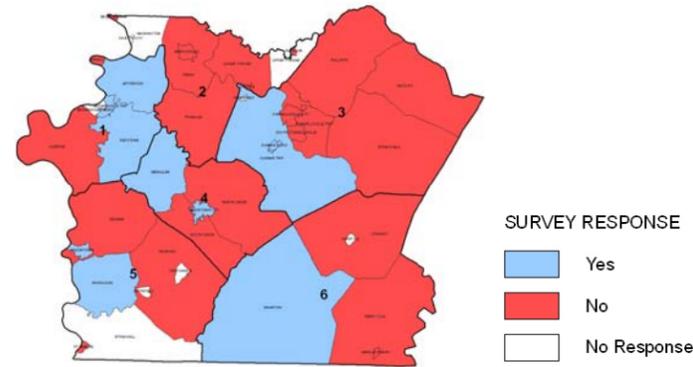
Question 3 – Are your Municipal parks and recreation programs open to any individual from the public regardless of their residency?

Open access encourages the use of parks and recreation facilities. Eighty-eight (88%) percent of the municipalities' parks and recreation programs are open to any individual regardless of their residency. This open access policy is a benefit to County residents because residents and organizations of some communities rely upon their neighbors for facility use and availability. [See School Survey responses for distance traveled.]

Question 4 – Please identify the major recreation programs and special events that occur within your Municipality.

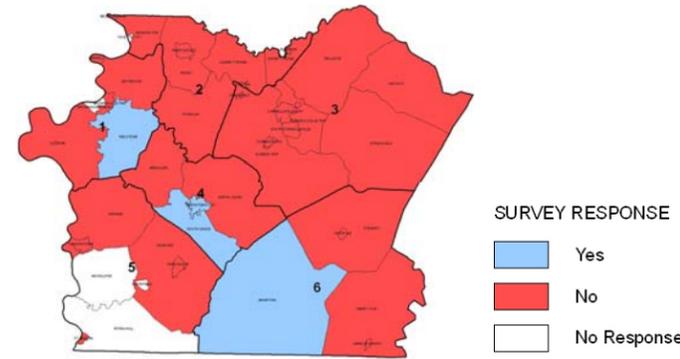
Public recreation programs and special events provide leisure and entertainment for municipal and County residents. The majority of municipalities offer public recreation programs and special events including youth sport leagues, holiday events and community picnic days. These events are hosted at a number of locations including public, semi-public, school and private facilities. [See also School Survey for organizations providing recreation.]

Question 5A – Does the school district provide recreation opportunities for the general public during non-school hours or school events?



Based on possible accessibility and costs, recreation provided by schools to students benefits County residents. 30% of the municipalities responded that the school district provides for recreational opportunities for the general public during non-school hours or school events. Additional access to facilities such as soccer and football fields, track and field, cross country, tennis courts, etc. could alleviate construction of similar facilities if needed elsewhere in the vicinity. However, liability, safety and security policies are often main elements discussed in establishing these types of joint efforts.

Question 5B – Does your municipality have any inter-cooperative agreements with the local school district to provide recreation opportunities for your residents?



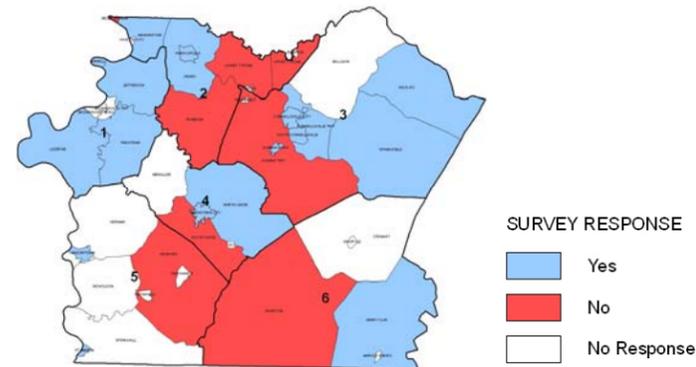
School sites generally contain various recreation facilities that may be used by County residents for recreation activity. Eleven (11%) percent of the municipalities have an inter-cooperative agreement with the local school district to provide recreation opportunities. While thirty (30%) percent of the communities report there is accessibility to such facilities, fewer reported there were formal agreements in place for such after-hour activity.

Question 7*– What type of recreation opportunities do you feel your Municipality is lacking?

The most requested recreational opportunities were the following based on priority:

1. Playgrounds;
2. Walking trails;
3. Ball fields;
4. Basketball courts; and
5. Skate parks.

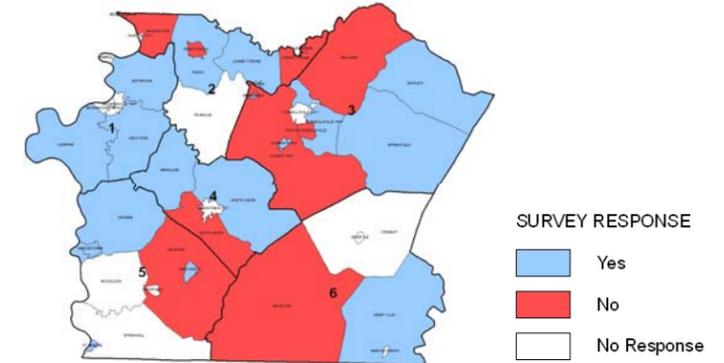
Question 8 – Does your Municipality have the property under ownership that is appropriate for the development of the needed recreation opportunities listed in question #7?



Sixty-nine (69%) percent of municipalities own property appropriate for the development of needed recreation opportunities. Those municipalities lacking property are

centrally located in the County. All Planning Districts contain a municipality having property under ownership for development of which joint efforts could be established to increase potential in developing additional parks and open space.

Question 9- Does your Municipality have any immediate plans or projects in the next five years to enhance or expand your Municipality's recreation programs or park facilities?

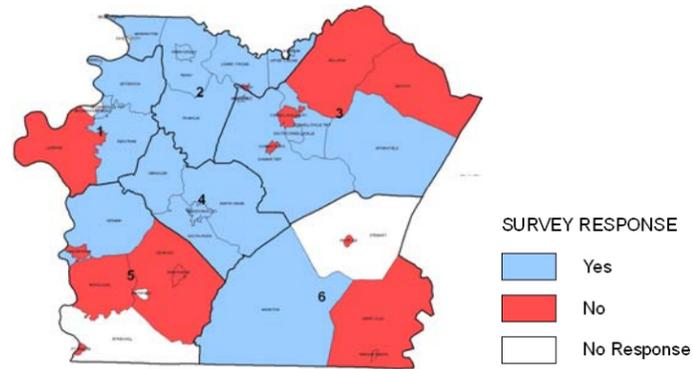


Expanding an area's parks and recreation opportunities is generally an indicator of a community's commitment to increasing the quality of life for its residents. Fifty-nine (59%) percent of municipalities have immediate plans or projects in the next five years to enhance or expand their recreation programs or park facilities. The nature of what types of expansion and to whom these facilities are geared (younger/older residents) should be further explored to identify complementary uses and/or gaps that may exist among neighboring communities. Of the municipalities that are experiencing significant growth, Henry Clay Township, Saltlick Township, Jefferson Township, North Union Township and Springfield Township are not planning enhancements or expansions.

Question 10 – Do you feel there is a problem of vandalism at your local park? If yes, what type?

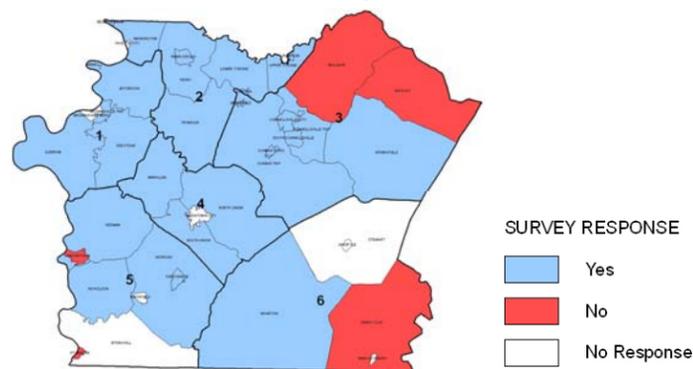
Vandalism generally involves the destruction of park and recreation facilities and/or a decrease of scenic amenities as well as an increase of the burden on municipality budgets for open spaces and facilities. 68% of municipalities stated that the most prevalent vandalism is related to property damage, theft, and damage from ATVs. Reasons for vandalism can vary including, but not limited to, personnel and/or budgetary resources allocated for security, user groups (residents and/or non-residents) and park attendance.

Question 11 – Do you feel your community should consider providing additional parks and recreation areas or open space for your residents?



Sixty-two (62%) percent of municipalities feel their communities should consider providing additional parks and open space. Municipalities that don't consider additional parks are those located near the larger county and state parks near the eastern County border, as well as the more densely populated municipalities, such as boroughs and cities. Of the municipalities experiencing significant growth, Henry Clay Township and Saltlick Township indicated that their communities should not provide additional parks and recreation areas or open space.

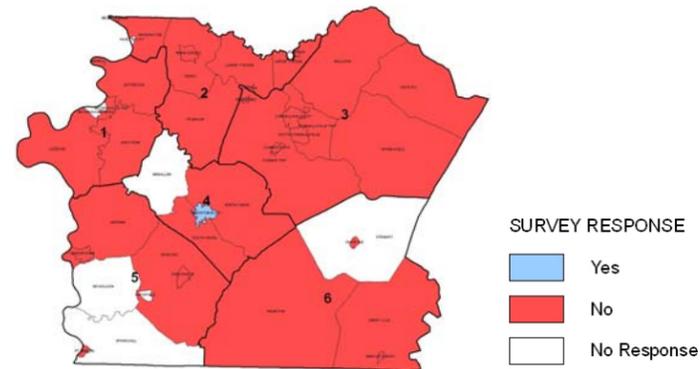
Question 12 - Do you feel the County should consider providing additional parks and recreation areas or open space for the residents of the County?



Eighty-five (85%) percent of municipalities feel that the County should consider providing additional parks and recreation areas or open space. Municipalities that feel the County should not provide additional parks are primarily located near the larger County and State Parks near the eastern border or in the western boroughs of Masontown and Point Marion. Of the municipalities experiencing significant growth, Henry Clay Township and Saltlick Township indicated that the County

should not provide additional parks and recreation areas or open space.

Question 13 – Do you feel your Municipality has more local parks that necessary?

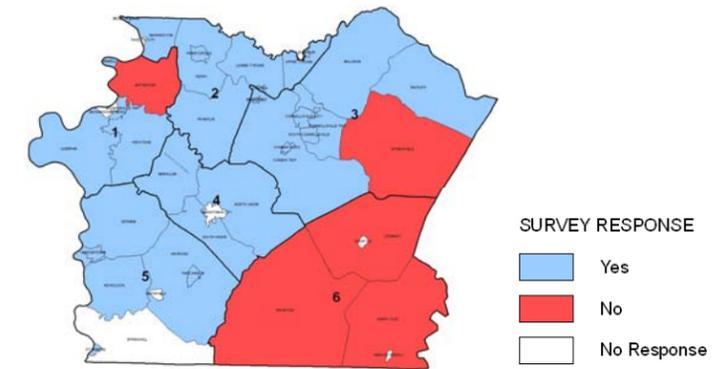


Local parks serve as a vital recreation area for local residents, usually providing facilities only a short walk or bike ride or drive from their homes. Only 3% of municipalities feel their municipality has more local parks than necessary. The remainder are either satisfied with the amount of parks they possess or desire more space. Financial restrictions and lack of administrative organization appear to be the two reoccurring themes of concern for the communities.

Question 14 – What challenges are you confronted with, as a municipal official, with maintaining, expanding or renovating the local parks in your Municipality?

Funding is the most common challenge for maintaining, expanding or renovating the local parks. Volunteers, local support, and lack of land are also common concerns. Municipalities experiencing challenges in maintaining, expanding and renovating local parks should consider efforts in conjunction with other municipalities to alleviate the burden of maintenance, expansion and renovation.

Question 15 – Fayette County has many unique historical areas, scenic vistas, bi-ways and geological areas within the County's boundaries. Do you feel these areas should be acquired and preserved for future generations?



Historical, scenic vistas, bi-ways and geological areas increase recreation amenities and opportunities. 86% of the municipalities feel historical, scenic vistas, bi-ways, and geological areas should be acquired and preserved.

*Additional analysis on Question 6 will be completed in context of overall School Survey results when available.



Resident and School Survey

As part of the comprehensive planning process, the County issued surveys to its residents and school students. The detailed findings of the resident survey are included in the Appendix. In general, the trends that emerged were similar to those that students expressed.

The Fayette County Parks and Recreation Student Survey was conducted to obtain the recreation actions and opinions of students in the eight (8) school districts of the County plus Geibel Catholic. The surveys were sent to schools for their distribution to students in grades 5, 8, 10 and 12, plus grades 8, 10, and 12 of Geibel Catholic in January/February 2007. Surveys responses were accepted by the County through April 2007.

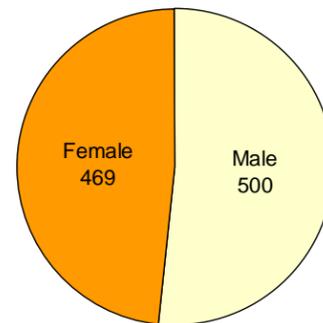
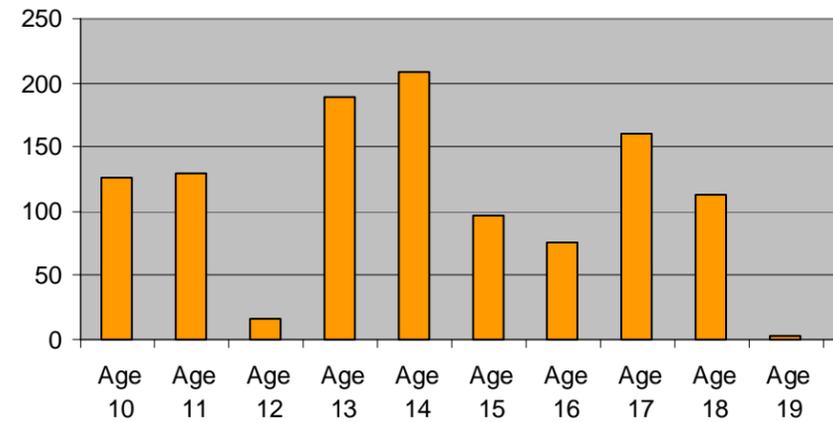
Fayette County currently has more than 16,000 children ages 10-18, generally equivalent to grades 5-12. Consequently, the baseline student population of the surveyed grades is approximately 8,000. To date, the County has received 1,000 survey responses, including responses from the following school districts and grades¹:

- Albert Gallatin (5th and 8th)
- Brownsville (8th)
- Frazier (5th and 8th)
- Laurel Highlands (12th)
- Uniontown (5th, 8th, 10th and 12th)

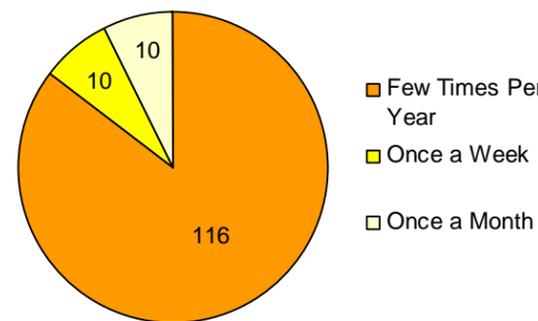
The surveys were standardized, meaning the same survey was given to 10-year-olds and 18-year-olds. Some variables based upon the understanding of different concepts within different grades may be reflected in the responses. For example, some 10-year-olds may not have the same frame of reference or understanding of concepts, such as distances traveled to recreation destinations, that an 18-year-old may have. Such variables will be factored into the Plan's overall summary and recommendations.

¹Geibel Catholic submitted responses after the initial tabulations. The responses have not yet been incorporated into the following analysis

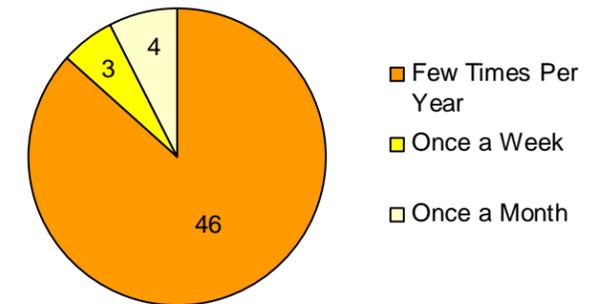
1. Please indicate your age and gender.



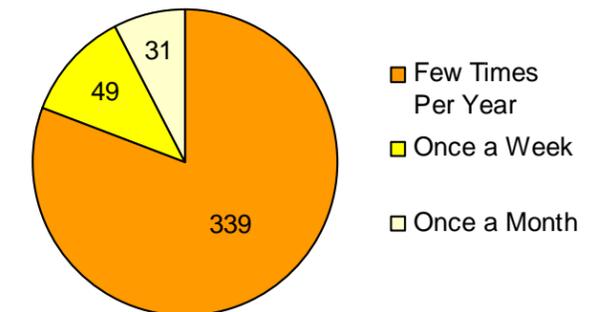
2. Have you ever visited German-Masontown Park? If so, how often?



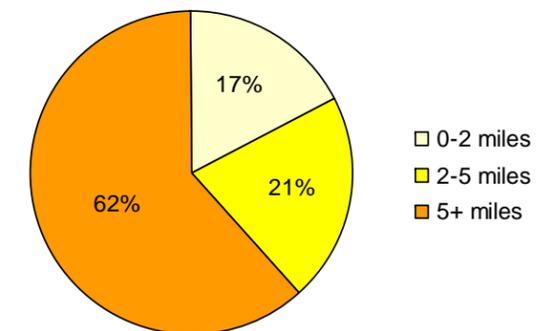
3. Have you ever visited Jacobs Creek Park? If so, how often?



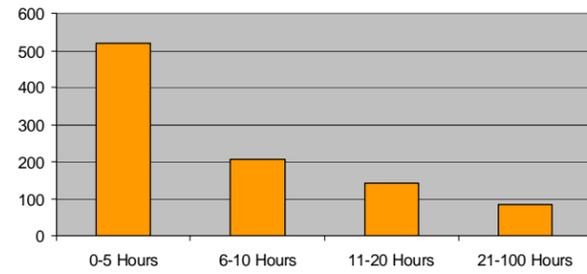
4. Have you ever visited Dunlap Creek Park? If so, how often?



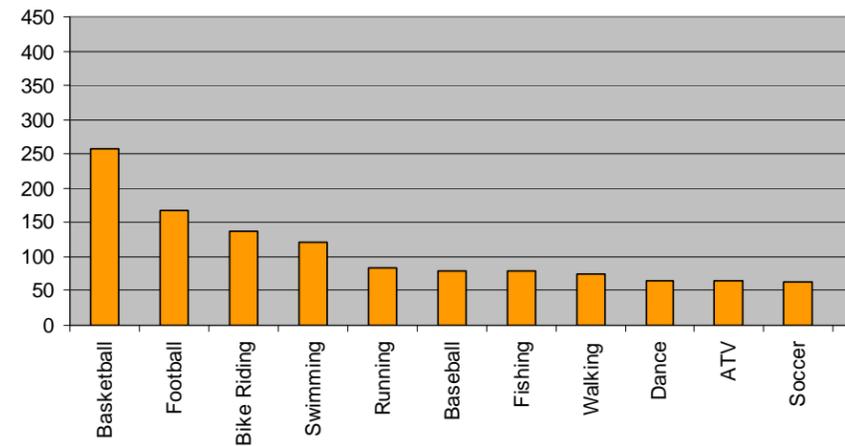
5. How far do you or your family members typically travel for recreational activities?



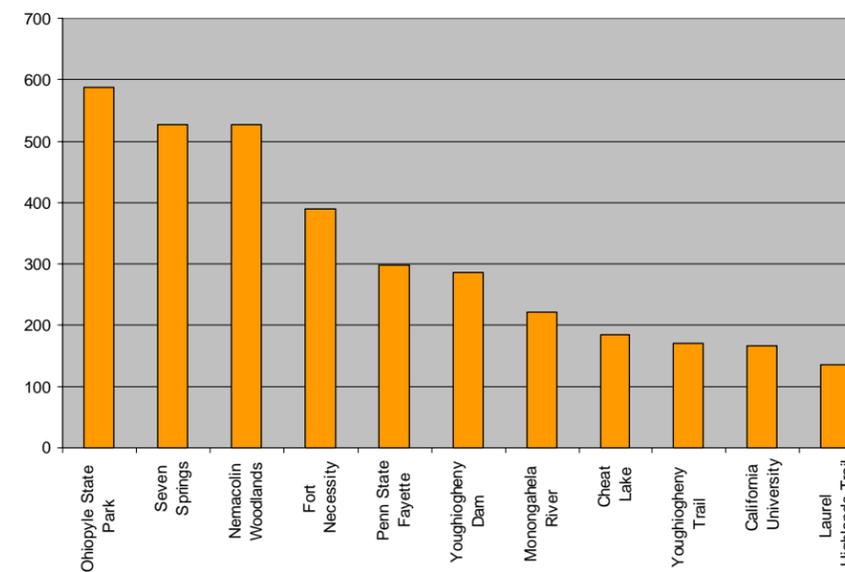
6. How many hours per week do you spend participating in recreational activities?



7. What activities do you participate in?²



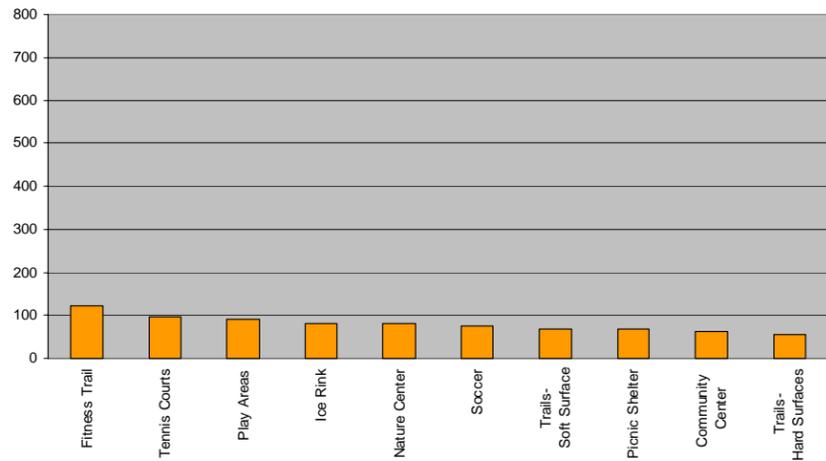
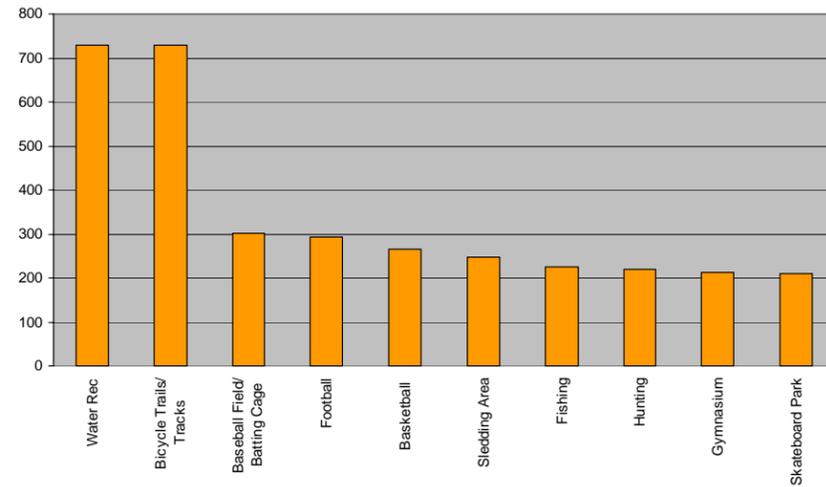
8. What major places do you visit for recreation?³



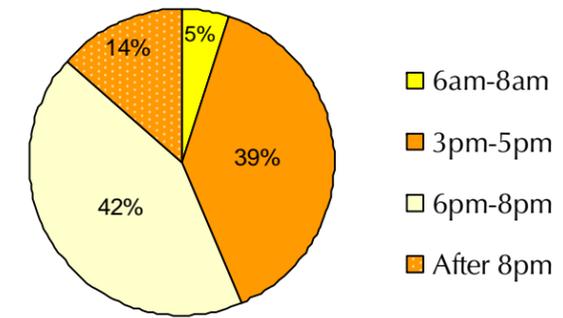
²Other activities with a significant number of responses include boating, skiing, cheerleading, snowboarding, hiking, horseback riding and mini-golf.

³The majority of these visits could be school field trips

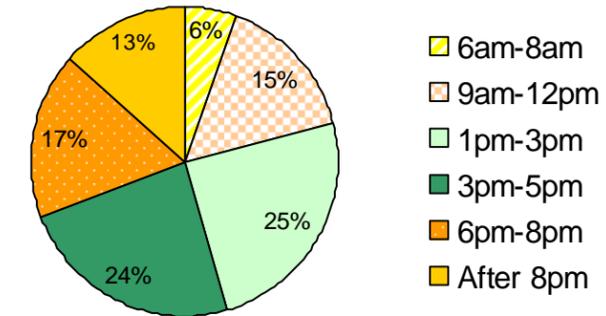
9. What activities would you want as future recreation programs in Fayette County?



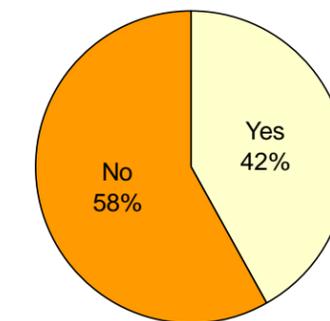
10. What time of day do you most often recreate during the week?



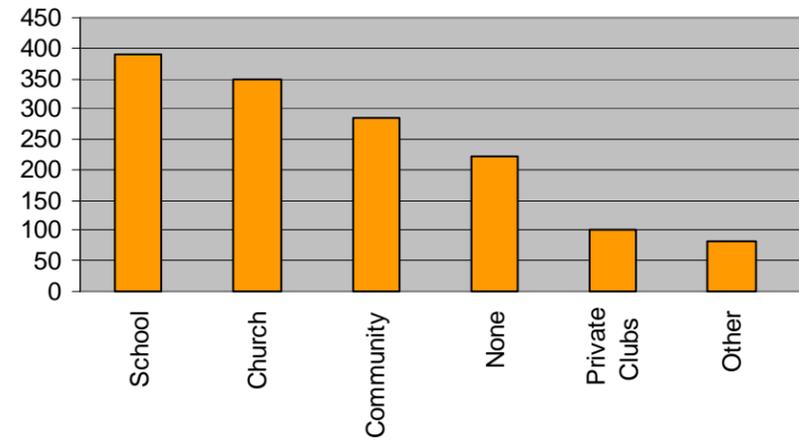
11. What time of day do you most often recreate on the weekend?



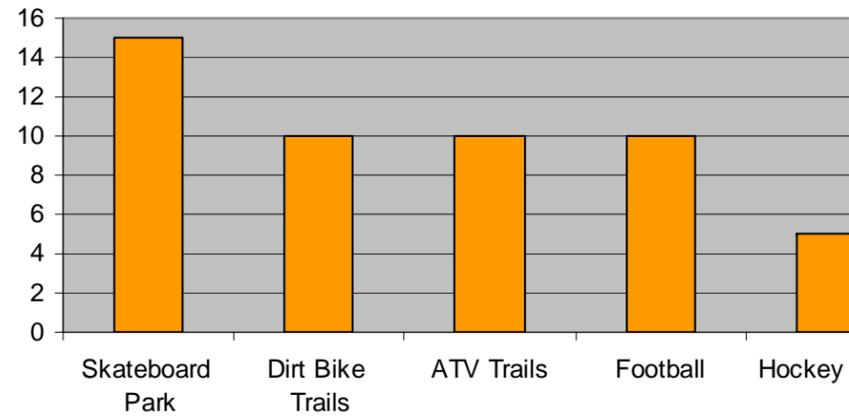
12. Are you familiar with recreation programs offered by organizations in your community?



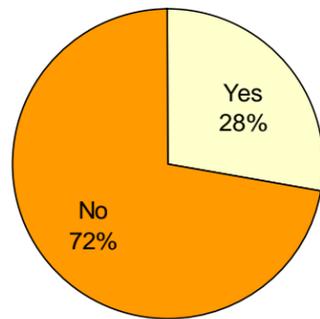
13. What organizations do you or your family members rely upon for recreation?



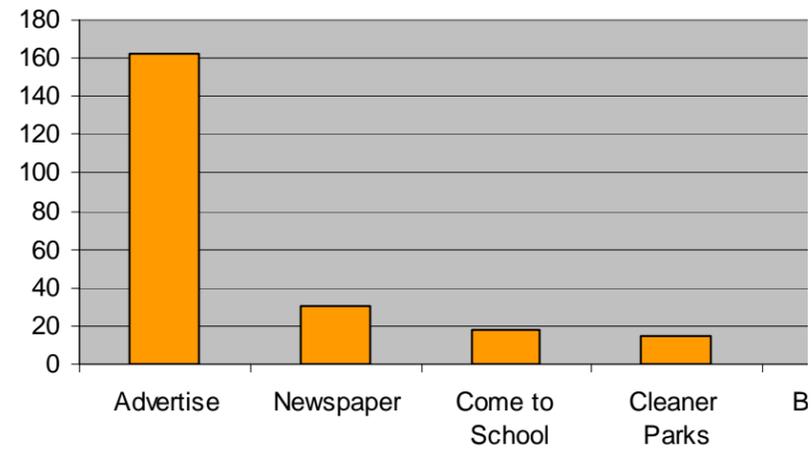
14. What new programs would you like to recommend?



15. Are existing County facilities adequately promoted?



16. What methods would you suggest to better promote the facilities and recreation activities?





Background Data