

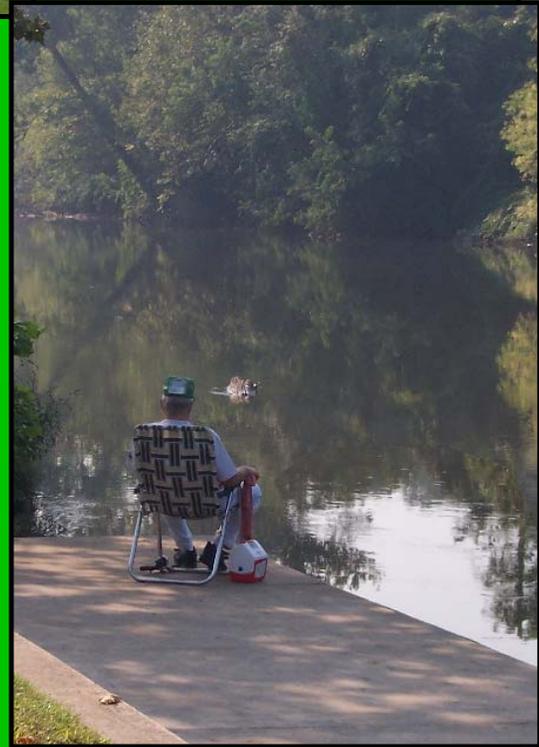
Produced by:

The Berks County
Planning Commission

and the

The Berks County
Parks Department

Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan



December 2007



RESOLUTION NO. 362-07

A Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Berks County adopting the *Berks County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan* as an element of the previously adopted *Berks Vision 2020: A Comprehensive Plan for the County of Berks*.

WHEREAS, the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code* (Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No.247 as reenacted and amended) enables the County of Berks to prepare a comprehensive plan, which requires a plan for the protection of natural and historic resources, and a plan for community facilities, including recreation; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth's greenways action plan, entitled *Pennsylvania Greenways, An Action Plan for Creating Connections* sets the direction for a new greenways program to build a comprehensive system of greenways across the state. This program promotes the development of county greenway plans that will become the local foundation upon which a statewide network of greenways is constructed; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Berks County on April 24, 2003, adopted *Berks Vision 2020: A Comprehensive Plan for the County of Berks*; and

WHEREAS, the Berks County Planning Commission recognized the need to supplement *Berks Vision 2020* to address greenways, ecological conservation, recreation, and historic preservation needs in greater detail; and

WHEREAS, the Berks County Planning Commission and Berks County Parks & Recreation Department partnered to develop the *Berks County Greenway, Parks & Recreation Plan*; and

WHEREAS, in 2004 the Berks County Planning Commission established a steering committee comprised of representatives from public, non-profit, and private interests with expertise in ecology, recreation and heritage to assist with the development of the plan; and

WHEREAS, the Berks County Planning Commission and Park & Recreation Department generated significant public outreach through public input meetings, surveys, stakeholder meetings, and website information; and

WHEREAS, the Plan develops a greenway network, intended to connect our parks and recreation areas, significant natural resources and wildlife conservation areas, and cultural destinations with each other and to the places where we live and work using natural corridors and recreation trails; and

WHEREAS, the Berks County Planning Commission authorized public distribution of said draft plan on October 10, 2007. Said plan was distributed in accordance with the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*, for the purpose of soliciting comment on the plan. The draft was also available for public review on the Berks County Planning Commission's website and in their office; and

WHEREAS, the Berks County Planning Commission transmitted said plan to the Board of Commissioners of Berks County, and the Board of County Commissioners held a duly advertised public hearing on December 20, 2007 in accordance with the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Berks County Board of Commissioners adopts the 2007 Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan as an element of Berks Vision 2020: A Comprehensive Plan for the County of Berks, in accordance with the provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Berks County Planning Commission is hereby directed to publish said Plan as adopted and distribute copies of it to all municipalities, school districts, public libraries, and appropriate stakeholders.

ADOPTED THIS 20th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2007

COUNTY OF BERKS


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ATTEST:


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with

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with

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Chapter 1

ABC's of the Greenway Plan

Chapter 1 - Approach: What is the Plan?

The 2008 Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan is an update to the 1994 Plan. This plan sets specific goals for the direction Berks County should take to provide future open space, greenways, and recreation for its citizens. The shortage of state and federal funds for recreation and preservation makes it imperative that municipalities and the County distribute their resources wisely. This plan is to be used as a guideline by municipal officials for how this can be achieved. The goals and recommendations set forth in the Plan are based on the year 2020. These goals and recommendations will change over time since recreational needs are dynamic. Changes in recreational trends will require development of new forms of preservation and recreational facilities and new strategies in the use of existing facilities.



The Distlefink at Berks County Heritage Center

Berks County, and the rest of the nation, has seen a trend toward more individual recreational activities such as hiking, biking, and jogging during the last decade. Passive recreational activities such as walking and sightseeing are also popular past-times. Consequently, the development of greenways, or linear parks, has become more and more popular in most major cities and local municipalities.

The recreational needs of Berks County's citizens reflect this national trend, and therefore the recommendations in this plan are oriented toward regional greenways connecting parks and historic sites, with less reliance on traditional parks. Traditional parks still serve a vital purpose, because they are the major source of local, close-to-home recreational facilities.

“A connected system of parks and pathways is manifestly far more complete and useful than a series of isolated parks.”

F. L. Olmstead

This plan is a guide for municipal officials, quasi-public organizations, developers and private interests on the development of future recreational facilities, connections to existing trails and greenways and in the preservation of open space and historic resources throughout the County. It should also be used as reference by municipalities when writing their own Open Space, Greenway and Recreation Plans. Policies and recommendations of this plan are advisory rather than regulatory but will be used by the Berks County Planning Commission and the Open Space and Recreation Advisory Council as criteria in making recommendations on project priority and funding.

1.1 - Course of Action: Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to identify important natural and historical resources and describe the necessary measures to ensure their permanent preservation. The conceptual greenway network map, ecological importance map and historic section of the plan contain goals related to the preservation of important resources and the provision of outdoor recreational opportunities throughout the year 2020. The plan also provides an extensive inventory of all public, private, and school district recreational facilities in the County.

The goal of the Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan is to ensure the protection of important natural and historical resources, and provide adequate open space and parkland to the public. This can be done through an easily accessible system of interconnecting greenways and linear parks. To reach this goal, specific recommendations are established in later chapters. They are summarized below.

Acquisition The plan recommends the acquisition and preservation of important natural areas and stream corridors throughout the County. These corridors were chosen using criteria such as: quality of water; accessibility; Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index (PNDI) sites; feasibility; and importance to the overall system.

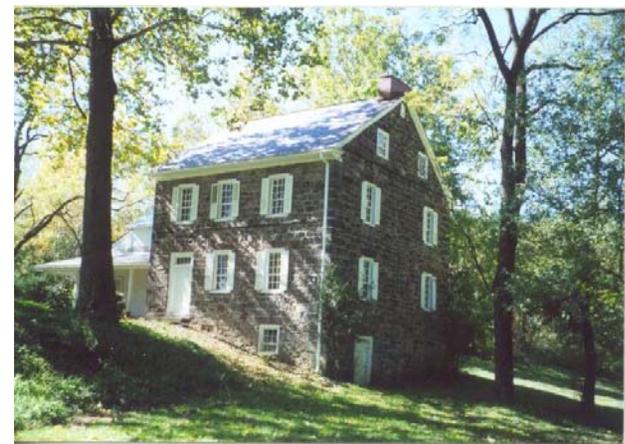
Protection The Plan recommends protection of critical and unique natural areas including:

- Schuylkill River Corridor
- Neversink Mountain
- Kittatiny Ridge

- High and exceptional quality waters
- PNDI sites
- Wetlands, floodplains, watersheds

The plan also recommends sensitive design techniques as a method to preserve open space and agricultural lands. Cluster development, when used in appropriate areas, can maintain the character of the landscape and provide recreational opportunities by developing the least sensitive portion of the site while leaving the rest as open space.

Historic Sites The plan recommends the protection and preservation of historic sites and districts on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Planning Commission staff with information provided by various state and local agencies has undertaken the task of updating the GIS database from the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission. Once complete, maps and forms will be provided to each municipality and information on zoning and historical districts will be provided. In the future, an accessible database should be created for use in research on historical features throughout the County. Another



Beidler House at the Allegheny Aqueduct

project of this plan would be to provide municipal histories on the internet for download and to create a panel within the County to discuss and formulate a Historic Strategic Plan for the County. A number of other recommendations are brought up in the Historical chapter of this plan.

Greenway System The plan recommends a system of interconnecting greenways along natural areas and stream corridors throughout the County. This system is shown on the *Greenways Network Map*. The greenways will connect major existing recreational facilities or “Hubs” with developed areas and can be used for hiking, biking, nature study, and other activities. These greenways are not only important for human use but also serve as ecological highway systems for the various animal species that travel throughout the County. The County must work with local municipalities, private and non-profit organizations and other counties to preserve these corridors. The Schuylkill River Corridor is a critical link to an inter-county trail system, and is of highest priority. The Schuylkill River corridor is basically the “spine” of the County. Further development of the Schuylkill River Trail system will provide connections to other recreational, historical and natural areas throughout the County. Ultimately this trail will stretch from Reading to Philadelphia.

Ecological Element The 2007 Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan proposes an ecological network throughout the County. This network will promote biodiversity in Berks County and connect additional areas in the Northern Piedmont of Pennsylvania. Through the use of a Smart Conservation model and input from environmental experts and numerous datasets an ecological network consisting of hubs and corridors was created.

Implementation Implementation of this Open Space, Greenways and Recreation Plan will require cooperation from the County, municipal officials, private interests, non-profit groups, and the public.

1.2 Planning Process

Berks County is divided into 73 distinct municipalities which include one city, 28 boroughs, and 44 townships. Each municipality carries out their daily operations and provides various community services according to their local needs and limitations. Some of these municipalities have formed cooperative agreements and work jointly with their neighboring municipalities to provide such services as police protection, fire and emergency response, solid waste disposal, recreational opportunities, wastewater treatment, infrastructure maintenance, and water supply management, while others choose to operate on their own. They vary in staff size, resource availability, fiscal status, service provision, constituent population and overall size.

In an effort to simplify the plan and make it more reader friendly the County was broken down into 5 distinct planning regions. Consequently, each region has its own characteristics and available opportunities for open space and recreation. A considerable amount of information regarding the type, size, and location of each open space, recreation, ecological and historic opportunity was compiled by staff into a database that could be studied to assess the needs of each region and the municipalities within. The following are the planning regions including their respective municipalities:

Hawk Mountain Region: U. Tulpehocken Township, U. Bern Township, Centre Township, Tilden Township, Windsor Township, Perry Township, Maiden creek Township,

Richmond Township, Maxatawny Township, Greenwich Township, Albany Township, Strausstown Borough, Centerport Borough, Hamburg Borough, Shoemakersville Borough, Fleetwood Borough, Lyons Borough, Kutztown Borough, Lenhartsville Borough

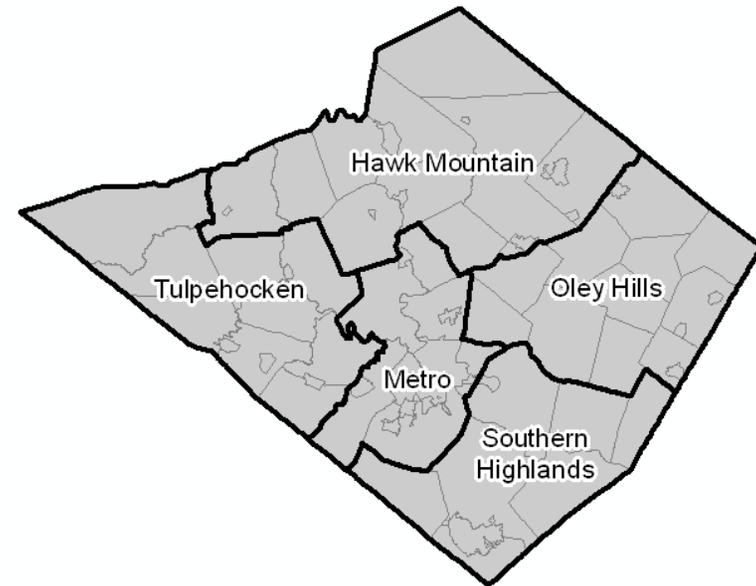
Tulpehocken Region: Bethel Township, Tulpehocken Township, Marion Township, Jefferson Township, North Heidelberg Township, Heidelberg Township, South Heidelberg Township, Lower Heidelberg Township, Penn Township, Womelsdorf Borough, Robesonia Borough, Wernersville Borough, Bernville Borough

Oley Hills Region: Alsace Township, Ruscombanor Township, Oley Township, Earl Township, Colebrookdale Township, Washington Township, Rockland Township, District Township, Pike Township, Longswamp Township, Hereford Township, Boyertown Borough, Bally Borough, Bechtelsville Borough, Tipton Borough

Southern Highlands Region: Brecknock Township, Caernarvon Township, Robeson Township, Exeter Township, Amity Township, Union Township, Douglass Township, New Morgan Borough, St. Lawrence Borough, Birdsboro Borough

Metro Region: City of Reading, Spring Township, Cumru Township, Lower Alsace Township, Muhlenberg Township, Bern Township, Ontelaunee Township, Sinking Spring Borough, Mohnton Borough, Shillington Borough, Kenhorst Borough, Wyomissing Borough, West Reading Borough, Mt. Penn Borough, Laureldale Borough, Leesport Borough

Map of Greenway Plan Regions



Population Berks County has been growing steadily since it was incorporated in 1752. In more recent decades, the County has seen increasing growth from the Philadelphia metropolitan area. It is notable that between 1990 and 2000, Berks' growth rate was similar to those of our neighboring counties to the east that make up the Philadelphia region. Of the counties directly adjacent to Berks, only Schuylkill to the north has been steadily losing population.

A concise analysis of population data is of paramount importance to any Comprehensive Plan since most of the plan's recommendations and future goals are derived from population assumptions.

From 1900 to 2000, the County's total population has more than doubled. During the early part of this century Reading's industrial complex attracted a considerable amount of immigrant labor. With the end of World War II and the beginning of economic resurgence, the number of new families and births rose tremendously. This was the beginning of a period popularly referred to as the Baby Boom. During the decade of the 1970's it became apparent that the children of the Baby Boom intended to postpone marriage, childbearing, or both in order to pursue educational and career goals. Demographically, the decade of the 1970's is referred to as the Baby Bust and generated its own set of consequences such as anticipated labor shortages and concern for the growing percentage of elderly within the total population.

Distribution and Density Although the County's population increased between 1990 and 2000 this growth was not evenly distributed among the County's municipalities. An urbanized area, as defined by the Census Bureau, consists of a contiguous territory closely settled surrounding a central city that together must have a minimum population of 50,000 persons. The designation does not necessarily follow municipal boundaries. For the purposes of this plan we broke the County into 5 distinct regions; Metro, Hawk Mountain, Tulpehocken, Oley Hills, and Southern Highlands. Each region's population was calculated and broken into specific age classes (*as seen in the available tables*).

The Metropolitan Region consists of both the urbanized area and places located in close proximity to the urban area. This would include most of the rural boroughs and certain pockets of dense

development located throughout what is commonly considered the suburban area. The suburban area of the County is considered to be the densely populated areas located around the City of Reading.

As assumed, the Metropolitan Region had the highest population because the urban core is situated in this region. The rest of the regions were fairly close to each other in their amount of population with the Tulpehocken region having the least population. Although there was a large difference between the most populated region and the least populated there were some interesting similarities. In each region the greatest percentage of the population is the 20-44 year old age group.

The information obtained through the use of population projections and age breakdowns is invaluable for greenway, parks and recreation planning. This information coupled with an inventory of available facilities in a region can help planners and local municipal officials decide where future facilities are needed and where to locate them.

1.3 Public Health Needs

Providing sufficient amounts of accessible recreational opportunities is one element in promoting healthy lifestyles within a community. Studies by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Health highlight the benefits of planning for recreation. Studies also indicate that the benefits of an active community extend beyond thinner waist lines and include less strain on the healthcare system, less dependence on medications for normal living, and lower insurance costs.

Community Health and Activity The CDC has found that poor diet and physical inactivity are associated with an increased risk of

chronic health conditions¹ including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers, high blood pressure, as well as obesity. The Berks County Health Needs Assessment, published by the Berks County Community Foundation in August of 2006 shows that sedentary life styles and poor eating habits are commonplace in Berks. The report points out that Berks County's statistics for obesity and its related health problems parallels national and state trends. According to a Center for Disease Control Study completed in 2004, 61% of Pennsylvanians are overweight or obese.



Joggers on Union Canal Towpath

Recent statistics show that our nation's obesity related health issues also impact children. According to the CDC, the number of overweight children within the age group of 6-19 has tripled since 1980 and now stands at 16 percent of that total group (over 9 million children). Even more discomfoting than the determination that more children are obese are the statistics that indicate an increase in diseases such as diabetes among children. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, in the 2002-03 school year more than 2 percent of Berks County students had already been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease, or roughly 1,400 Berks County pupils.

“These investments in parks, greenways, trails, will help keep families healthy and make our communities economically vibrant, great places to live, work and play.”

Pennsylvania Governor Rendell

The main factor contributing to childhood obesity is the fact that many children lead sedentary lives relying on television and computer games for entertainment.

According to the countywide citizen survey that was conducted as part of this plan, children's playgrounds came in as third highest on a survey polling facility needs. While changing behavior starts at home, providing easy and safe access to playgrounds may increase the likelihood that children will opt for physical activity. In addition, the American Obesity Society recommends that communities provide a range of developmentally appropriate sports and recreation programs that are attractive to all young people.

While park and recreation planning does not influence diet, it has positive health impacts on a community when amenities that promote physical activities are provided.

¹ Diseases include but are not limited to the following: hypertension, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea and respiratory problems, some cancers (endometrial, breast, and colon). Source: CDC

1.4 Cost benefits of an active community

Increasing the activities that promote healthy lifestyles benefits the business community in a variety of ways. Increasing the physical reliability of the labor force and lowering health insurance costs makes a business more profitable. Many businesses, in collaboration with health care insurers, have developed programs for disease prevention centered on daily exercise and healthy activities. A community that provides more opportunities for recreation is actually helping the businesses that are located within that community. Dovetailing with business sector efforts, many communities that strive to attract new businesses have made the “recreation connection” and are now using these services to market their region.

The Role of Planning in Healthy Communities Many communities now require that open space and recreation provisions be included within large residential developments. Similarly, many communities have also become more proactive in design requirements that promote an active, attractive and livable community. New trends proactively address issues of community health. Below are some of the factors that community leaders have looked at when addressing community health:

- Recreation facilities should be designed for use by a broad portion of the population rather than facilities appealing to a narrow range of individuals.
- Recreation should be centrally located for easier access for all residents.
- To fully utilize trails, sidewalks and bike lanes, connectivity should be sought to destinations so that these routes can be used for both transportation as well as recreation.
- Strive for mixed use development that integrates and promotes the use of trails, sidewalks and bike lanes by providing common destinations (i.e.- restaurants, stores, libraries, schools).
- Pedestrian friendly streets designed in a manner that includes park benches, narrower widths with low speed limits, sidewalks, street lamps, and pedestrian safe intersections.
- Trail route signage that includes mileage markers for those who exercise within a regimen.

In addition to setting aside areas for open space and providing recreational opportunities in new residential development, community leaders have begun retrofitting existing communities that lack recreation by identifying opportunities. Plans call for the marking of trail systems throughout existing communities by piecing together and using the existing sidewalk systems, open space easements and acquiring left over open space for connections and parks. All of these efforts on a regional scale combined with new trail systems provide recreational amenities and the potential for a more active and healthy community.

Economic Benefit The economic benefits of open space and recreation are often overlooked and not well understood by the public and municipal officials. The economic benefits are both direct and indirect. Recreation facilities can stimulate tourism and its associated economic benefits. Specialized activities can lead to the development of specialized business opportunities, such as the rental of bicycles or canoes. The development of restaurants and over-night accommodations are also examples of direct economic benefits.

Some communities have been able to use recreational opportunities as a key element in community revitalization. An excellent example is the town of Jim Thorpe, which has a well known rail trail. Even though it is located in a relatively remote

part of Pennsylvania it has a blossoming business community that includes restaurants, bed and breakfasts, and shops.

Although for most communities the direct economic benefits of open space and recreation are slight compared to the wider economy, an emerging economic development theory assigns new economic value to the overall quality of life in a given area. Adequate and well-located facilities contribute to a high quality of life and a growing body of research shows a direct correlation between quality of life issues and a community's ability to attract a skilled labor force. This economic interpretation proposes that the most talented employees desire to live in areas that are vibrant and original with an unspoiled environment and diverse cultural and recreational opportunities. Businesses will tend to locate in these areas to help attract and retain a skilled workforce. While this point of view may apply to different degrees based upon the size and complexity of the community, it is clear that these often difficult to define quality of life factors contribute to an area's ability to attract new businesses.

Here in Berks County, there are many communities that hold this potential. Whether located along the scenic Schuylkill River or tucked away among the scenic farmlands and rolling hills of Berks County, with vision and commitment by an energized local base many communities capitalize on their quality of life.

Finally, proximity to recreational facilities, including trails, and preserved open space increases the value of nearby property. While some residents adamantly oppose the development of nearby trails or parks the evidence is overwhelming that residential values benefit from these features and real estate advertisements frequently highlight distance to recreational facilities.

1.5 - Needs Assessment by Region

According to the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA), at a minimum, municipalities should provide 6.25 to 10.5 acres of open space/recreational opportunities per 1,000 population. For the purpose of this plan we used the 6.25 acre figure to calculate regional totals. Through our research we recognized the areas of the County that are deficient in providing recreational opportunities for its citizens. Because the whole County was broken down into the five distinct planning regions discussed earlier, three regions were deemed to have a deficiency in their recreational opportunities. However, when compared with one another and broken down by municipality it is more clear which municipalities do not provide adequate space for recreation. Within the region sections of Chapter 3, tables will show how some municipalities have very little, if any, recreational opportunities within them. Other municipalities are not deficient in providing recreational opportunities for its citizens. Each municipal government is encouraged to provide recreation opportunities for its citizens. The following parts of this chapter describe the findings in the regional analysis.

Metro Region Not surprisingly the Metro Region is the most populated and is comprised of the urban core of municipalities surrounding the City of Reading. Only six municipalities within this region were not deficient in providing recreational opportunities. Muhlenberg Township, Spring Township, West Lawn Borough (merged with Spring Township), Laureldale Borough, Shillington Borough, and Leesport Borough all exceeded the recommended minimum acreage suggested by NRPA. The rest of the municipalities within the region were deficient with Lower Alsace Township, Mt. Penn Borough, and Ontelaunee Township having zero existing minimum municipal recreation acreage. The City of Reading, although it has the largest population of any other

municipality within the County ranked low in providing adequate acreage for recreational facilities according to NRPA. Although some totals for acreage were below the NRPA recommendations the overall total for municipal recreation acreage was above the NRPA recommended number.

Hawk Mountain Region The Hawk Mountain Region is far less populated than the Metro Region and encompasses the northern municipalities in the County. The same is true for this region as it was for the Metro Region in that some municipalities have an abundant amount of recreation acreage where some do not have any. However, the overall total for recreational acreage in the region is below what is recommended by NRPA.

Oley Hills Region The Oley Hills Region is a rural area that is made up predominately of farmland. This region also encompasses the majority of the County's historical features such as old farmsteads and historic structures. The Oley Hills Region has the second lowest population of all the regions. The municipal recreation acreage spreadsheet indicates that this area is deficient in the amount of recreational acreage that is available for its citizens. Pike and Rockland Townships have zero recreational acreage for its citizens and the overall totals for the region show that it is 11 acres below the suggested number by NRPA. Although this region is rural in nature and its population density is not that of other regions there still is a need for recreational opportunities.

Southern Highlands Region The Southern Highlands Region is comprised of the fewest amount of municipalities of all the regions, yet it is the fastest growing region. The population of this region is expected to grow dramatically over the next 10 to 20 years as development, especially within New Morgan Borough, takes place. According to NRPA the existing recreational acreage

for this region is twice what is recommended for this region's population. Amity Township, Birdsboro Borough, Caernarvon Township, Douglass Township and Union Township all have more acreage set aside for recreation than what is recommended by NRPA. These Townships practically contain all the recreational opportunities for the entire region. As the population in this region increases over the years the municipalities with less than the minimum recommended by NRPA should consider providing their citizens with more recreational opportunities.

Tulpehocken Region The Tulpehocken Region is mainly a rural region much like the Oley Hills Region. This region has the lowest population out of all the regions discussed in this plan. Because of its rural character and low population, municipalities may not think much about providing recreational opportunities for their residents. According to the municipal recreation acreage spreadsheet (see section 3.6) the number of acres devoted to recreation is almost half of what is recommended by NRPA. Bernville Borough, Jefferson Township and Penn Township are the only municipalities with a surplus of municipal recreational acreage.

1.6 - Public Participation

Public participation and input were fundamental elements needed for the formation of the Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan. Staff concentrated efforts on public meetings, a citizen survey, municipal survey, school district survey and a short form survey. Additionally, individuals were amassed into three specialized stakeholder groups that dealt with recreation, green infrastructure/ecology, and heritage. These stakeholders were sought out and selected because they were recognized and in

many cases recommended due to their expertise within one or more of the previously mentioned subject matters.

Public Meetings Public meetings were held on the following dates: October 6, 2004 at the Berks Co. Ag. Center, October 7, 2004 at the Amity Intermediate Center, and October 14, 2004 at the Hamburg Borough Hall. These meetings were specially designed to be interactive and enjoyable for the audience while allowing them the ability to directly contribute to the process.

The meetings began with a brief explanation as to the goals of the Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan and were followed by an interactive activity that solicited audience opinions with regards to individual and County needs for recreation, green infrastructure/ecology, or heritage resources. The polls were conducted by giving each individual in the audience a group of dot stickers which they affixed onto poster sized lists effectively ranking the items according to need. The audience was asked to first rank recreation, green infrastructure/ecology, or heritage resource needs with their own needs in mind and then asked to rank them again with what they perceived as County wide needs. The votes were compiled, the results of which helped our staff identify trends and needs for the County. The results are also an element supporting the findings and recommendations of this plan.

Public meetings were held in May and June of 2006 to maintain awareness and to update plan progress. For the most part these meetings were informative in nature but a great deal of feedback was received with regards to the final plan's layout.

Stakeholder meetings were held to address progress and recommendations for the three main aspects of the plan those being recreation, ecology and historic. The input received

enabled us to refine the scope of the plan as well as establish plan goals and recommendations.

Finally, public meetings were held in late 2007 allowing public comment on the findings and recommendations of the plan. Comments ranged from a regional scale to specific local significance.

Surveys



Interactive survey at public meeting

Four different surveys were used to obtain data from citizens and entities within Berks County. All of the survey questions were heavily scrutinized with regards to type and tone to ensure that the results would be useful in later analysis. All of the survey questions, results and any staff interpretation of the results can be found within the appendices of this plan.

Between November 29 and December 31, 2005 over 5000 citizen surveys were sent to Berks County households, of which 16%

were completed and returned. Questions varied and dealt with preferred/needed recreational activities, satisfaction with current facilities and the need to preserve heritage and ecological resources.

Another survey was developed and given directly to municipal officials which consisted of 19 in-depth questions. Municipal input was especially important as supervisors and borough/city council members are often very knowledgeable of the recreational needs for their municipalities. Other information collected dealt with exploring collaborative municipal ventures, opportunities for funding, development of parks, ecologic/heritage preservation needs, and the possibility for joint municipal open space/recreation plans.

A survey of school districts was conducted to update our recreation facility records as well as gain a better understanding of the adequacy of school district facilities and the unique needs of each. The survey also sampled the availability of district facilities for non-school activities and about current or predicted developmental pressures.

Finally, the Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan staff members developed a one page short survey consisting of 9 questions dealing with many of the same issues as the citizen survey. This survey was created to allow individuals that were unable to participate in the public meetings or did not receive a citizen survey to present what they felt were needs for recreation, green infrastructure/ecology, or heritage resources. These surveys often went to public meetings or were given to local organizations. Because this particular survey was not a random sample of the County, the results were used by our staff on an advisory level.

Steering Committees

Three groups of steering committee numbering approximately 15 individuals* each were assembled to provide a consultative element throughout the planning process. The individuals who were asked to participate in this capacity were selected due to their extensive knowledge of recreation, green infrastructure/ecology, and/or heritage resources. In many cases they included professors, scientists, engineers, and historians. It should be noted that all of the individuals were from Berks County which allowed a link of their local and professional knowledge to the overall planning process.

Early in the process, meetings occurred to brainstorm the planning approach to address recreation, green infrastructure/ecology, and heritage resources. Within these meetings general themes were discovered and clusters of resources designated. Midway through the planning process, the groups were periodically consulted with more specific issues relating uniquely to their subject matter. Finally, the draft plan was mailed to each of the stakeholders and special meetings were held to receive comments and discuss the findings and recommendations of the plan.

1.7 - REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Since the 1994 County Open Space and Recreation Plan was adopted there have been several park and open space planning related studies along with an abundance of other studies directly related to this Plan. The following are brief reviews of these studies so that their findings can be incorporated into the efforts to implement this Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan.

The reviews are categorized by the region of the County that they are located within and by the type of study.

Countywide Planning Initiatives

Berks County Comprehensive Plan: Vision 2020 – 2003

Part of the “Vision” of the County Comprehensive Plan is to “protect its rich agricultural land and open spaces from suburbanization, expand its parks and trail systems and promote the settlement to fit burgeoning 21st Century population in a redesigned Reading and in boroughs and townships planned to emphasize higher density, more intimate walking-biking friendly living...recognize and celebrate the diversity of its population, a continuity of multi-ethnic and multi-cultural history...”

Goals (See Appendix for the entire Policy Plan of Vision 2020)

- Adhere to a logical, coordinated land use pattern that provides for a variety of appropriate types of development, while recognizing land and infrastructure capabilities in relation to natural features and environmental and physical factors.
- Preserve and protect important open space and provide adequate recreation opportunities for County residents.
- Use development techniques that will conserve natural resources while not conflicting with rural environments.
- Protect steep slopes greater than 25 percent, watercourses and their riparian buffers, wetlands, floodplains and aquifers, and to restore those already degraded.
- Improve existing stormwater management facilities, to develop Stormwater Management Plans for all watersheds located in Berks County and to protect water quality.
- Provide a balance of highway, public transportation, aviation, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian systems into a coordinated transportation system.

- Preserve and promote all community, cultural, and aesthetic elements that identify Berks County as a special place to live and work.
- Maintain and enhance the character of established villages, towns and boroughs, and to create new neighborhoods that have their own sense of community, while blending with surrounding development and open spaces.
- Promote and protect the people, places and things that make Berks County unique to its residents and visitors.
- Recognize historic preservation as a means of retaining community character, providing affordable housing, and assisting economic development.
- Maintain and enhance the visual character that defines places in Berks County as distinct and livable.
- Develop and expand partnerships, communications, and coordination among municipal officials, the private sector, and citizens during the planning process.
- Take an intergovernmental approach to planning, zoning, and municipal projects.

Accomplishments

- Open Space and Recreation Advisory Council (OSRAC) and Grant Program
 - Neversink Mountain Preservation
 - Schuylkill River Trail system connections from Reading to the Berks/Montgomery/Chester County Lines and trail connections around Hamburg Borough to Schuylkill County.
 - Improvement of access to the Schuylkill River at various locations
 - Various small locally important projects
- Berks County Bicycle Pedestrian Plan

- Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan Update – currently underway
- Act 167 Stormwater Management Planning – coordinating new plans with MS4 permitting and intergovernmental cooperation among MS4 municipalities to implement certain aspects of the permits jointly.
 - Sacony Creek Stormwater Management Plan & Update
 - Tulpehocken Creek Stormwater Management Plan
 - Maiden Creek Stormwater Management Plan Draft
 - Schuylkill River Stormwater Management Plan Draft
 - Cocalico Creek Stormwater Management Plan
 - Conestoga River Stormwater Management Plan
 - Little Lehigh Creek Stormwater Management Plan & Updates
 - Swamp Creek Stormwater Management Plan Draft
- Natural Land, Farmland and Open Space Conservation Grant Program
- Part One – Conservation Zoning Incentive Program for Berks County Municipalities Adopted
- Part Two – Municipal Land Protection Plans (grant easement purchase program)
- Part Three – Private Conservation Organization Grants (easement or acquisition purchase program)
- RiverPlace
- Goggleworks

Berks County Bicycle Pedestrian Plan 2002

Vision Statement

“The region values the importance of walking, bicycling and other non-motorized methods for transportation, tourism, recreation, air quality, health and wellness. It will actively plan, encourage and provide for the integration and development of walking and bicycling into our transportation system that connects communities and regional assets.”

Goals

- Municipalities should actively plan for and encourage non-motorized modes of transportation
- Establish an education/enforcement safety campaign
- Develop funding mechanism and accountability in implementing the bicycle/pedestrian plan
- Provide and maintain bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Identify unique urban and suburban pedestrian issues

Accomplishments

- Work on Schuylkill River Trail along with other partners, including; Complete bridge over Lancaster Avenue, complete sections of Bartram Trail (Hamburg Area), parking facilities at Brentwood and signage, complete segments east of Birdsboro, Wyomissing Creek Trail in West Reading
- Include Bicycle/Pedestrian comments in the subdivision and land development review process
- Continue progress on the Blue Marsh connector Trail
- Continue progress on the Hay Creek Trail

Natural Areas Inventory – Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index (PNDI) 1991

In order for communities to better identify areas in need of protection while balancing development this document identifies the critical natural areas of the County. This information is based upon the input from many sources including; field surveys, The Pennsylvania Science Office of the Nature Conservancy, Academy of Natural Sciences, the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, Albright College, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and other important contributors.

The Inventory contains reports and maps of the best know natural areas and natural communities located within the County “along with the locations of all known animal and plant species of special concern (endangered, threatened, or rare).”

Specific Recommendations

- Incorporate information from the study into all municipal comprehensive plans
- Incorporate regulations into municipal ordinances that will protect the natural areas and threatened communities
- Include targeted areas for acquisition as parkland and/or environmental education areas within municipal Open Space and Recreation Plans
- Educate landowners on the sensitivity of the threatened communities and encourage conservation easements

Accomplishments

- Study updates occurred in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003

Berks County Open Space and Recreation Plan 1994

This Plan is an update to the 1980 Open Space and Recreation Plan. It is intended for use as a guideline to the County and municipal officials in the strategic planning of recreational, historic and natural resources.

The overall goal of the Plan is to “ensure the protection of important natural and historical resources, and provide adequate open space and parkland to the public.” This is accomplished “through an easily accessible system of interconnecting greenways and linear parks.” Additional recommendations are found within the Plan.

Specific Recommendations

- Create a system of open space networks that interconnect greenways and parks. Highest priority areas include:
 - Hay Creek Corridor
 - Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park
 - Neversink Mountain
 - Allegheny Aqueduct Park
- High Priority areas include:
 - Schuylkill River Corridor
 - Maiden Creek/Pine Creek Corridor
 - Sacony Creek/Sacony Marsh
 - Northkill Creek Corridor
 - Six Penny Creek Corridor
 - Tulpehocken Creek Corridor
 - Wyomissing Creek Corridor
- Medium priority areas include:
 - Angelica Creek Corridor
 - Manatawny Creek Corridor
 - Pink Creek Corridor (Pike/Rockland Twps.)
 - Perkiomen/West Swamp Creek Corridor

- Protection of critical and unique natural areas:
 - Neversink Mountain
 - High and exceptional quality waters
 - Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index sites (PNDI)
 - Wetlands, floodplains, watersheds
 - The County should acquire land for future expansion of its park system
 - Sensitive design techniques to preserve open space and agricultural lands
 - Municipalities should adopt Open Space and Recreation Plans
 - Municipalities should form cooperative agreements with school districts for the joint use of facilities
 - The County should continue to maintain its existing facilities and programs
 - The municipalities should provide local recreation facilities
 - Regional recreation should involve joint responsibility with those affected
 - Use the Open Space and Recreation Advisory Council for long range planning of facilities
 - Protection and preservation of historic sites and districts on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, including;
 - Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park
 - Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
 - Daniel Boone Homestead
 - Completion of the Allegheny Aqueduct Park
 - Interconnecting greenway systems along natural areas and stream corridors throughout the County. These systems will provide a critical link between recreational, natural and historic sites.
- Allegheny Aqueduct Park
 - The Open Space and Recreation Advisory Council – grant programs
 - Support and funding provided for continuation of the following projects;
 - Neversink Mountain
 - Thun Trail (Schuylkill River Trail)
 - Leesport Locks and water access to the Schuylkill River
 - Various municipal recreational projects
 - Additional trails in Wyomissing and West Reading Boro.
 - Inclusion of detailed Open Space and Recreation components within Joint Comprehensive Plans
 - Handicap trail and playground at the Youth Recreation Facility
 - Purchase of Hunsinger’s Grove Park in Longswamp Twp.
 - Handicap fishing facility along the Schuylkill River, West Reading Boro.

Schuylkill River Source Water Assessment

Schuylkill River Watershed Conservation Plan 2001

The Plan is designed as a guidebook for municipalities, conservation groups, and citizens. The Plan focuses on an analysis of watershed lands needed for ecosystem viability, broad scale water quality and an assessment of public agencies and nonprofit organizations. Recommendations are divided into three sections; water quality, landscape sustainability and institutional assessment.

Specific Recommendations

Accomplishments

The Plan lists 25 recommendations in the category of water quality related to the following concerns:

- Need for water quality monitoring data
- Urban/suburban development and stormwater runoff
- Non-point source pollution
- Habitat quality
- Acid mine drainage

The Plan lists 22 recommendations in the category of landscape sustainability related to the following concerns:

- Identification and mapping of existing greenspace components
- Analysis and mapping of proposed greenspace components base on natural resource values
- Mapping population projections to establish potential “threat” to watershed resources
- Providing recommendations and implementation tools, focusing on the need for strategic planning and institutional capacity building to ensure implementation of these recommendations

The Plan lists 21 recommendations in the category of institutional assessment related to the following concerns:

- Improve coordination among organizations for watershed management
- Build capacity between public agencies and nonprofit organizations; especially in funding, citizen involvement, training and board development
- Increase education/outreach and public awareness of watershed issues

Accomplishments

- Schuylkill River Act 167 Plan

- Schuylkill Action Network, (SANS)
- Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems Permits (MS4)
- Conservation Zoning Incentive Program
- Riparian Buffers – agency coordination

Tulpehocken Region

Joint Comprehensive Plans

Bernville-Jefferson Joint Comprehensive Plan 1995

This Joint Comprehensive Plan identifies both existing and proposed facilities along with recommendations for programs, administration, maintenance, communication based upon specified standards.

Specific Recommendations

- Establish mandatory dedication provisions in the subdivision and land development ordinance generally based upon NRPA guidelines and establish a fee in lieu of mandatory dedication based upon the same guidelines.
- Update existing facilities at the Borough’s Umbenhaer Park.
- Use fees in-lieu-of to establish a small neighborhood park and greenway in the northern portion of the Borough.
- Require setbacks and/or begin acquiring conservation easements to protect open space areas along the Borough’s major drainage ways.
- Provide recreation facilities, including baseball, soccer and tennis at the newly purchased 29-acre Jefferson Township Community Park. Use fees in-lieu-of to accomplish this.
- Use mandatory land dedication to preserve greenways along creeks.
- Support the Bernville Area Recreation Association and the Tulpehocken Soccer Club recreation programs and

periodically evaluate the range and diversity of the recreation programs available.

- Establish written agreements with the Tulpehocken Area School District for the use of school recreation facilities by the residents.
- Conduct regular safety inspections for compliance with safety standards and ADA accessibility requirements.
- Prepare and distribute a brochure describing parks, recreation facilities and programs available to local residents. Encourage other local recreation providers to also communicate recreation information to residents.

Accomplishments

- Jefferson Township Community Park: soccer field, baseball
- Construction of a maintenance shed and township building
- Agreements with local recreation associations for maintenance of community park facilities
- Update the Joint Comprehensive Plan to include Penn Township

Southwestern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan 2000

This Joint Comprehensive Plan involves Lower Heidelberg Township, South Heidelberg Township and Wernersville Borough. In the Future Land Use Plan, an expanded Spring Meadows Park is indicated along with new recreation areas shown in the Rosewood Development off of Hill Road and off Lincoln Drive in Wernersville. In general Wernersville Borough and South Heidelberg Township will collect fees in-lieu-of to improve their existing facilities, while Lower Heidelberg Township, which does not own any facilities, will look at each new development on a case-by-case basis to determine the need for additional facilities within those developments. More emphasis has been placed in

this Plan upon developing a conceptual trail and greenway system throughout the Southwestern Berks County region.

Specific Recommendations

- Provide recreation resources for bicycling and walking.
- Provide connections to the existing Blue Marsh and Union Canal Towpath trails and trails that interconnect with them.
- Provide an alternative circulation system throughout the area for access between business, jobs, community facilities and recreation facilities.

Accomplishments

- Joint Zoning Ordinance with Conservation Design Ordinance requirements

Western Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan 2000

This Joint Plan involves five municipalities; the Boroughs of Robesonia and Womelsdorf and the Townships of Heidelberg, Marion and North Heidelberg. The Plan identified a small deficiency in the amount of active recreation land within the area and encouraged the municipalities to look for additional land for facilities. This region of Berks County has a large amount of acreage in farmland. The Plan lists specific guidelines for protecting important natural features of the region. These features include; steep slopes, groundwater, floodplains, wooded areas, soils, waterways, natural drainage channels and hydric soils.

Specific Recommendations

- Maintain existing municipal parks.
- Add additional 2 acres of active parkland.
- Continue community use of school district properties.

- Establish a greenway segment along Tulpehocken Creek to connect Blue Marsh Lake with Womelsdorf and Lebanon County.
- Establish a greenway along Spring Creek to connect to the Tulpehocken Greenway.
- Promote the techniques specified to establish rights-of-ways for greenways.
- Initiate a greenways feasibility study in Western Berks area similar to Montgomery County's Schuylkill River Greenway Stewardship Study.

Accomplishments

- Joint Zoning Ordinance – adopted by Robesonia, Womelsdorf, Heidelberg and North Heidelberg
- Tulpehocken Greenway Feasibility Study 2005
- Addition of Mill Springs Meadow Borough Park, 2.73 acres, Womelsdorf Borough
- Addition of walking trail and soccer field at Heidelberg Township Park.
- Addition of a Memorial Pocket Park in Robesonia Borough.

Open Space and Recreation Plans

Township of Spring Greenway Study, 2007

The Township, with the help of a DCNR grant, completed a comprehensive analysis of the need for a greenway system. The study identifies the cultural and physical benefits along with the existing system and gaps within that system. The system proposed is guided by six principles; including regional interconnection, connection of hubs, variety of recreational uses, use of existing and proposed linear infrastructure, strive for off-road connections, and respect for private property.

Specific Recommendations

- Three primary trail routes (22.78 miles)
- Ten secondary trail routes (33.97 miles)
- Four local trail routes for internal access
- Sidewalk improvements along specific roads
- Design guidelines

Accomplishments

- Plan adoption January, 2007

Related Studies

Western Berks Water Authority: Source Water Assessment Report 2002

Tulpehocken Creek Watershed Conservation Management Plan 2001

Tulpehocken Greenway Feasibility Study 2005

The Lebanon Valley and Berks County Conservancies coordinated the preparation of this study. The focus of the Study was the Tulpehocken Creek watershed upstream from its confluence with the Northkill Creek. The Study “proposes a network of greenways – linear corridors of open space – to conserve and protect the area’s streams, woodlands, and farmland.”

Also, both land and water recreational opportunities were investigated.

Specific Recommendations:

- Greenway Concept Plan that includes the following:
 - Natural resource conservation greenways

- Water Trail between Womelsdorf and Blue Marsh Lake with parking, access points, signage and guide map.
- Land Preservation greenbelts
- Six Land based trails in various locations
- Three auto and bike touring routes with signage and guide maps.
- Extension of the Tulpehocken Creek Historic District into Lebanon County.
- Restore a portion of the Union Canal within the study area, including the towpath, for historic purposes.
- Multi-County, municipal collaboration for regional interconnections to other important trail-greenway systems.

Hawk Mountain Region

Joint Comprehensive Plans

Northern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan 2005

The Joint Plan for the Northern Berks Region encompasses six municipalities: Hamburg and Strausstown Boroughs and the Townships of Tilden, Windsor, Upper Bern and Upper Tulpehocken.

This area contains large amounts of farmland, natural resources, major transportation connections to outside the County and pockets of higher density development. The Plan's overall goal is to balance these resources to maintain the beauty of the Northern Berks area for future generations.

Specific Recommendations

- Update ordinances to include natural resource protection standards and net out provisions where appropriate

- Update ordinances to include Historic Resource Overlay along with additional protections and incentives
- Protect scenic road and view sheds
- Promote the use of development techniques that will conserve natural resources while not conflicting with rural environments.
- Protect and expand the character of the villages and boroughs
- Improve transportation coordination along major corridors
- Update SALDOs to reflect the above concerns and also:
 - Stormwater Management
 - Open Space preservation and dedication of land or fees in lieu thereof
 - Road design standards that will include bike and pedestrian considerations
 - Protection of existing trails and future trails and access
- Appoint a regional historic commission to help protect, coordinate and interconnect historic resources
- Encourage conservation easements
- Create municipal Environmental Advisory Committees
- Coordinate with the County and others to preserve riparian buffers
- Implement/Update/Adopt Open Space and Recreation Plans
- Create a trail planning commission and implement the conceptual trail system. Coordinate where needed with PennDot for shoulder improvements.
- Adopt municipal official maps to implement public projects proposed
- Coordinate with the school district on the availability of their recreational facilities to residents.

Accomplishments

- Beginning process of trail coordination

- Upper Bern and Windsor Townships are participating in the County CZIP
- Tilden Twp is coordinating with Blue Mountain Wildlife for the continued use and expansion of the Kernville Dam area as a recreational facility and environmental resource
- Hamburg Borough is improving its riverfront area
- Municipalities are in the process of updating their zoning ordinances to reflect the Joint Comp Plan

Richmond Township-Fleetwood Borough Joint Comprehensive Plan 1997

The Joint Plan discusses the ranges in landscape across the Borough and Township. This area encompasses excellent farmland, villages, higher density residential areas in and around the Borough, industrial re-use areas, Route 222 (a major highway bisecting the region), small business and commercial centers, environmentally sensitive and natural resource areas and a number of historic resources.

The background inventoried and analyzed the specific needs of the area for recreation. The Joint Plan identifies a deficiency of 24.8 acres of active recreation lands within the area and projects that with population growth this deficiency will rise to 37.2 acres by the year 2010.

Specific Recommendations

- Improve Township ordinances to protect natural resources
- Encourage preservation of open space through zoning techniques
- Compile a complete inventory of locally important historic resources
- Investigate funding for a historic facade improvement program

- Acquire conservation easements and historic facade easements
- Participate in Pennsylvania's Blue Marker Program
- Establish special sign requirements for historic properties
- Install historic style welcome signs at Key entrances
- Create a pamphlet to encourage historic preservation and provide design guidelines to area residents
- Avoid demolition of historic buildings
- Retain historic character of existing areas by reflecting in new additions and improvements to buildings and areas
- Acquire land for a Township owned Community Park and apply to DCNR for funding purchase
- Require local athletic associations to financially contribute to the construction and maintenance of new fields at the Community Park
- Evaluate the need and cost to expand the Borough swimming pool
- Continue regular safety inspections of existing Borough parks
- Identify ADA needs in the Borough park areas
- Amend the Township SALDO to include land or fee-in-lieu of dedications and revise the Borough's SALDO to strengthen these regulations
- Support and expand existing recreation programs
- Establish permanent duties and responsibilities for the Richmond Township Recreation Committee
- Work with Berks County Conservancy and other parties to establish greenways along specific corridors
- Establish a sidewalk replacement program in the Borough
- Establish pedestrian and bike trails along greenway corridors

Centre Township and Centerport Borough Joint Comprehensive Plan 1997

The Plan highlights that the distinctive scenic character of the Joint Area is derived from its rolling rural countryside, vistas of agricultural fields, farmsteads and small settlements. The area contains some significant historic resources especially within the Borough and two villages.

Specific Recommendations

- Develop portions of the Township owned land at Bucks Hill Road as a park
- Expand the existing open space area next to the Central Berks Fire Company in the Borough
- Create new parks along the Schuylkill River to the north and south of Mohrsville Bridge and westward to connect the Mohrsville Athletic and Playground Association open space area
- Preserve creeks and floodplains with buffers
- Preserve the agriculture and rural areas by limiting development outside of the growth areas

Accomplishments

- Expansion and development of the open space area next to the fire company in the Borough
- Establishment of a Township-County easement purchase program for both agricultural and conservation easements of development rights

Greenwich Township – Lenhartsville Borough Joint Comprehensive Plan 1996

The Plan states that there are no municipal owned parks in either Greenwich or Lenhartsville. A private resident owns and

maintains the Lenhartsville 1.2 acre community park. There are a number of privately held campgrounds, a rod and gun club, and one neighborhood common open space. Recreational programs are offered through adjacent municipalities.

Specific Recommendations

- Lenhartsville should purchase the private playground to ensure future access to the facility
- Establish an open space network along the Maiden Creek and work in conjunction with adjacent municipalities
- Establish mandatory fee in-lieu of land dedication provisions
- Apply for grants for acquisition and development of parks, trails and open space
- Support the existing area recreation programs

Accomplishments

- Begin proceedings to complete a ten year update to Joint Comprehensive Plan

Open Space and Recreation Plans

Maidencreek Township Open Space and Recreation Plan 1999

Related Studies

Lake Ontelaunee – Watershed Assessment 1998

The Reading Water Authority contracted with the Cadmus Group, Inc. to complete an assessment of the City of Reading's water supply, Lake Ontelaunee. This assessment included delineation of the watershed, review of potential and actual pollutant sources, analysis of the susceptibility of the watershed to the sources and a management plan consisting of a series of recommendations.

The study identified three key concerns: 1) bacterial contamination, 2) sediment delivery to the reservoir, and 3) algae

growth fueled by phosphorus. These concerns were based upon the identification of point source pollution from sewage treatment plants and malfunctioning septic systems and non-point source pollution from stormwater runoff particularly agricultural lands.

Specific Recommendations

- Management recommendations include development of a Watershed Coalition, short and long-term goals, focus on Key Issues, long-term sources of funding and in-kind services, long-term monitoring program and consideration of hiring a part-time watershed inspector.
- Work jointly with State and Local Officials to solve the problem of fecal contamination from septic systems and conduct sampling in support of this.
- Conduct a current reservoir volume study to determine the change in volume over the last 7 years.
- Conduct a sediment study to focus sediment reduction efforts.
- Investigate both long-term and short-term solutions to sedimentation problem.
- Actively promote protection of streamside buffer zones. Consideration should be given to lease or purchase of buffer zones.
- Work with various agencies to develop BMP demonstration projects.
- Educational outreach to users of toxic materials within the watershed.

Accomplishments:

- Formation of the Maiden Creek Watershed Association.
- Continued monitoring of Lake and Tributaries
- Completion of a Volume Study of Lake Ontelaunee

- Construction of the Lenhartsville Borough Sewage Treatment Plant
- Berks County Conservation District's riparian buffer projects.

North Berks Land Utilization & Reconnections Planning Study 2000

This study, initiated by the Schuylkill River Greenway Associations, encompasses the Townships of Tilden, Upper Bern, Upper Tulpehocken, Winsor, Perry and the Boroughs of Hamburg, Shoemakersville and Strausstown along with the Village of Shartlesville. The Plan assesses the feasibility of extending the Schuylkill River Trail from Hamburg to Shoemakersville; linking the towns of Hamburg, Shartlesville, and Strausstown by establishing a pedestrian/bicycle and automobile touring route; and utilizing the state owned properties in and around the Kernsville impounding basin for recreational activities.

The Northern Berks Recreation Corporation formed to help coordinate the visioning process and implementation of the recommendations.

Recommendations

Hamburg to Shoemakersville Trail Connection

- An off-road route is recommended with coordination of several private property owners, most of the trail follows former roads or paths. The construction of the trail will be the greatest expense

Hamburg to Strausstown Touring Route

- The existing Old Route 22 corridor with upgrades to shoulders, two bridges, sidewalk and safety improvements on State Street Bridge, safety and interpretive signage, and parking facilities will provide a great opportunity for an

interpretive trail for both pedestrian and bicyclists along with vehicles.

Kernsville Dam and Impounding Basin Area

- Hamburg to Through Truss Route – connects Hamburg to the Kernville Dam area using the existing Hamburg/Tilden pedestrian bridge along an existing trail with two options for final connection to the Dam area.
- Kernsville Impounding Basin improvements range from passive nature/wildlife preserve, play/picnic/fishing area, and new motor boat launch; to active sports and multi-purpose fields with parking, restrooms, concession area and storage facilities. Also, a native plant riparian buffer between the river and recreational fields.

Reconnect Main Street with the River

- Hamburg – improve the pedestrian connections within the town, signage, gateways and create a historic walking trail.
- Hamburg to Shoemakersville – improve visibility of the Miller Street Bridge, create a local interpretive trail, improve sidewalks and crossings and improve the public access to the Schuylkill River through acquiring additional waterfront property.
- Shartlesville – improve sidewalks and crosswalks, signage, and create a local interpretive trail and connect the adjacent businesses in the village with Roadside America.
- Strausstown – improve signage and create a local interpretive trail.

Accomplishments

- Formation of Blue Mountain Wildlife, non-profit group

- Hamburg Borough-riverfront projects and interconnections
- NBRC moves the active recreation sites to Kaercher Creek for the protection of the Kernsville Dam natural resources

Blue Mountain - Kittatinny Ridge Project

This is a collaborative effort amongst local, regional and state organizations and agencies to focus public attention on the importance of Blue Mountain and the Kittatinny Ridge; and to help foster good stewardship of the Ridge for future generations.

This region is not only one of Pennsylvania's most prominent natural features, it is also valued highly for its; important bird migration, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, large blocks of unfragmented forest and natural areas for species habitat.

The goals of the project include a long-term vision for the Ridge and the development of tools and programs to implement this vision through local governments and agencies.

Oley Hills Region

Joint Comprehensive Plans

Hereford – Washington Township Joint Comprehensive Plan 2006

The Plan identifies the need to protect the rural character and environmental quality of the two Townships. Developmental pressures are increasing in this region and protection of the areas historic sites and village is a concern. Also, while the two Townships have about 600 acres of public/quasi public and private parkland, there are no bicycle-pedestrian trails in the region.

Specific Recommendations

- Expansion of existing recreation resources

- Protection and enhancement of open space, natural and cultural resources through regulations and coordination

Eastern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan 2004

District, Longswamp and Rockland Townships and Tipton Borough participated in this Joint Comprehensive Plan. Generally accommodation of growth in and around the existing villages and Borough along with limiting impact of new development in the rural areas is the community vision.

The Joint Plan completed a fairly extensive review of existing park and recreation facilities. Of the four municipalities only Rockland Township is identified as being deficient by 11.2 acres in active recreation land. Improvements or additions are recommended for specific types of recreation activities due to limited availability within the region.

Specific Recommendations

- Protection of various water resources
- Provide riparian corridor buffers and education residents of their importance
- Protection of steep slopes
- Preservation of historic sites through adaptive re-use
- Promote Conservation by Design in new development
- Provide public facilities and services on a regional basis where practical
- Maintain current parks and recreation services within Borough
- Coordinate parks and access with the School District, formalize agreements, expand Rockland Elementary School Park

- Develop one centralized community park per Township and coordinate those facilities and services
- Create a Regional Recreation Board
- Apply to DCNR for funding of a Regional Park and Recreation Plan
- Adjust local ordinances to accept dedication of open space and/or fee-in-lieu thereof, use funds on a regional basis
- Explore a linear trail (possibly from Tipton to Kutztown)
- Promote pedestrian travel and linkages, install sidewalks in all new planned neighborhoods
- Lobby BCPC and PennDot to widen designated bicycle routes and add proper striping

Accomplishments

- Meeting to discuss regional park and recreation aspects
- Longswamp Twp. updated their zoning ordinance to include Conservation by Design SALDO options

Oley-Alsace Township Joint Comprehensive Plan 2002

The Plan did a brief analysis of the existing open space and recreation opportunities within the two Townships. Based upon existing conditions the Townships are relying on the school district to make up their deficit of active recreational areas. The Plan states that the two Townships should have an additional 17.9 acres of active recreational land.

Accomplishments

- Updating the Joint Comprehensive Plan to include Ruscombmanor Township

Bovertown-Colebrookdale-Pike Joint Comprehensive Plan 2005

The Boyertown-Colebrookdale-Pike region as a whole has less than half of the recommended public active recreation acreage for an area of this size and population. Boyertown Borough owns and operates the only active recreation site in the three communities. This in turn creates a situation where the youth sports leagues rely heavily upon the availability of their respective school districts for facilities.

Specific Recommendations

- Continue to implement the feasibility study completed in 1996 for the creation of the Old Dutchman Trail; a 3.8 mile rail-to-trail.
- Continue community use of recreation facilities owned by the Boyertown and Oley School Districts.
- Establish a multi-use community park in Colebrookdale Township.

Accomplishments

- The three municipalities are continuing to meet and discuss implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan.
- Colebrookdale is investigating the feasibility of establishing a community park.

Related Studies

Upper Perkiomen Creek Watershed Conservation Plan 2001 *

Pine Creek Watershed Protection Plan 2002 *

Lehigh River Watershed Conservation Management Plan 2003

In 2000, through funding from DCNR and the William Penn Foundation, the Wildlands Conservancy and its partners began the three year process that would develop the Conservation Plan

for the Lehigh River and give the Conservancy its guidance for the next ten years.

The study identified the cultural, natural, biological, historical and recreation resources of the Lehigh River and Watershed. It also listed the problems, solutions and prioritized recommendations for preservation, protection and enhancement of the identified natural resources.

Key Goals of the Plan are:

- Gain Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry Status – to increase funding opportunities.
- Protect and Preserve Cultural and Historical Resources.
- Improve Water Quality in the Lehigh River Watershed.
- Protect significant and valuable land components.
- Protect biological resources.
- Increase and enhance watershed recreational opportunities.
- Promote municipal watershed stewardship.
- Promote environmental awareness, knowledge, skills support, and stewardship commitment.
- Monitor and update watershed resource information on a continuing basis.

Accomplishments

- 2004 Lehigh River placed on the Pennsylvania River's Registry.

Oley Hills Partnership – Berks County Conservancy

The Oley Valley contains beautiful scenic vistas, five state-designated exceptional value streams, significant woodlands, varying geology, and a rich assortment of cultural and historical resources. Oley Township holds the distinction of being the only Township in the United States listed on the National Register of

Historic Places, due to its Pennsylvania Dutch agriculture and architectural styles.

The Pennsylvania Highlands lists, in their conservation atlas, the Oley Hills as a threatened area due to the development pressures surrounding the region. The majority of the land within the Oley Hills is unprotected.

The Berks County Conservancy is working with other local, regional and state agencies to protect this important natural resource.

Pennsylvania Highlands Region

In 1990 Congress directed the USDA Forest Service to conduct a study of the Highlands in New York and New Jersey. An Update of this study occurred in 2002. A study is now currently underway for the Pennsylvania and Connecticut portions of the Highlands.

The Pennsylvania Highlands is a range of hills and low mountains stretching from Conewago Falls, on the Susquehanna River, to Easton, on the Delaware River. This area encompasses portions of ten counties. In Berks County, the Highlands encompass all of those municipalities within the Southern Highlands District, the Oley Hills District and portions of municipalities within the Tulpehocken District, the Metro District and the Hawk Mountain District. In general, the rugged and less fertile lands of the Highlands discouraged agriculture and despite repeated exploitation for timber and fuel, the area retains large tracts of forest.

The purpose of the Pennsylvania Highlands study is to identify areas of high conservation value and to study the implications of continued land use changes for the Highlands resources. The study is divided into two parts: part one is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2006 and part two completed in 2007.

Key issues of the study are to include;

- Conserving landscape character and existing land use activities
- Protection of surface and ground water quality
- Conserving the landscape for wildlife, rare plants, and environmental quality
- Retaining working forests and farms to ensure economic viability and livability
- Providing appropriate recreational opportunities near the urban corridor

Metro Region

Joint Comprehensive Plans

Governor Mifflin Area Joint Comprehensive Plan 2005

A study of the existing parks in the Plan shows that they have a good park system with a wide variety of facilities. Efforts are needed to rehabilitate older recreation areas to make sure that they meet modern safety standards. The area benefits from some larger municipal parks in Kenhorst, Shillington and Mohnton along with the Nolde Environmental Education Center and State Game Lands. With the population growth of the region cooperation amongst the municipalities is crucial to providing any future recreation facilities to make sure that they are located in the appropriate areas.

The Plan included recommendations from the 1999 Cumru Township Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Specific Recommendations

- Create a Recreation Coordinating Council that includes representatives from each of the municipalities, school district and major non-profit groups

- The Council should analyze current programs, identify future needs and jointly provide recreation facilities and programs to meet these needs
- Complete a system of bicycle, pedestrian trails and greenway system along the Angelica and Wyomissing Creeks that would connect the Schuylkill River with Mohnton area and Nolde Environmental Education Center
- Improve access of the Thun Trail including a pedestrian bridge over Lancaster Avenue and extend the connections of the trail north
- Require new developments to have pedestrian and bicycle interconnections with other developments and park systems
- Work to maintain a passable Horse-Shoe Trail system through Brecknock Township
- Neversink Mountain should be permanently preserved as a public recreation area
- Preserve areas along the creeks in as natural condition as possible
- Seek to maintain interconnected corridors for wildlife

Leesport Borough-Ontelaunee Township-Perry Township Joint Comprehensive Plan 1996

This Plan includes a fairly detailed Recreation, Parks and Open Space element. The level of detail is such that it forms the legal basis for the three municipalities to require mandatory dedication of land as part of the local subdivision and land development process. The three municipalities, based upon size and population are deficient in the amount of parkland available. Also recommended in the Plan is the protection of critical and unique areas, the use of sensitive design techniques, protection and preservation of historic sites and districts, interconnection of greenways along natural areas and stream corridors that would connect major existing recreation facilities with developed areas

and the continuation of the Schuylkill River Heritage Park Project along with the Ferdinand K. Thun Trail.

Specific Recommendations

- Protect the areas natural resources from sprawling development.
- Work with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association to develop greenways and trails along the river.
- Acquire parcels in both townships for community parks. Especially Ontelaunee Township, where there is no municipal parkland.
- Upgrade existing parks to meet standards.
- Create partnerships with adjoining municipalities, school districts, the Schuylkill River Greenway Association and the private sector to help expand/improve recreation facilities.
- Encourage the continuation of volunteers who are the backbone of the existing park facilities.

Accomplishments

- Ontelaunee Township Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan 2005

Suburban Berks West Joint Comprehensive Plan 2003

The Plan states that most of the Region is well served by existing parks that are well distributed. The Region's park system contains a variety of facilities. Efforts are needed to upgrade some of the parks so that they meet modern safety standards.

Specific Recommendations

- Encourage Open Space Development methods to preserve the important natural, scenic and historic features of the area.
- Improve parks and playgrounds

- Complete a system of bicycle and pedestrian trails with regional connections
- Develop a linear park along the Cacoosing Creek
- Develop the new Spring Township park next to Shiloh Hills Elementary School
- Develop a park on land being purchased by Spring Township near State Hill Road

Accomplishments

- Spring Township is in the final stages of completing a greenway study
- Wyomissing Borough has completed various upgrades to its park system
- West Reading has installed a walking trail along the Wyomissing Creek to connect the Wyomissing Borough Trail to the West Reading sidewalk system that leads to their fishing dock on the Schuylkill River.

Open Space and Recreation Plans

Muhlenberg Township Recreation and Open Space Plan “Pathways to Prosperity” 2006

The Township’s overall objectives for this Plan are to establish, maintain, and manage a park system that meets the needs of its citizens as well as protects the municipality’s natural resources. The Township currently has 325 acres of parkland in varying ranges of size and use. The Muhlenberg School District provides facilities for indoor activities while the Township offers organized programs and events throughout the year that serve all ages and interests. There are also a number of sport league associations that provide additional activities for varying age groups.

Specific Recommendations

- Play a significant role in the revitalization of the Township
- Continue to “Tune Up” existing facilities
- Focus on the Riverfront and Trails
- Provide a balance of facilities for community organizations and individuals
- Plan for an Indoor Recreation Center
- Institute strategic changes in refocusing recreation services
- Prepare for the increasing demand on park and recreation facility maintenance with the addition of the new parks and the rail trail
- Establish an operations function in the Parks and Recreation Department
- Continue to invest in Parks and Recreation at a level commensurate with responsibilities and resources

The above recommendations will require significant amounts of funding and the Township intends to approach this hurdle by establishing budgets, partnerships impact statements, seeking grants and sponsorships, and potentially a bond issue. The Township has also set up an implementation schedule for the Plan.

Accomplishments

- The Township submitted a grant application to DCNR for the Jim Dietrich Park
- Progression in the Rail Trail

City of Reading 10-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan 2002

The City completed an extensive and very detailed Plan. The Plan's overall strategies are organized into five areas;

- Staffing and financing
- Park Areas and Recreation Facilities
- Recreation Programs
- Maintenance, Safety, and Security
- Communications and Public Involvement

Within each of these areas the Plan discusses the City's deficiencies, goals and recommendations for implementation. The Plan recognizes the City's financial constraints and offers a number of ways to maximize funding opportunities. See the Metro Region in Chapter 3 for many of the proposed projects, which are too vast to repeat here.

Accomplishments

- RiverPlace
- Interconnections with Neversink Mountain and the Schuylkill River (currently underway)
- ICGR
- Goggleworks
- Redevelopment along the Schuylkill River

Ontelaunee Township Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan 2005

The Township prepared this Plan due to the increase in both population and development pressures. This Plan was developed to implement the recommendations of the Leesport Borough-

Ontelaunee Township-Perry Township Joint Comprehensive Plan, plan for the development of park and recreation opportunities and protect the natural resources of the Township.

Specific Recommendations

- Create a Recreation and Parks Committee
- Develop a community park to serve all of the Township Residents
- Establish written policies on the use of public park facilities
- Develop neighborhood park to serve areas of the Township
- Develop a trail plan
- Develop the Schuylkill River Greenway
- Develop the Maiden Creek Corridor

Accomplishments

Cumru Township Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan 1999

This plan recommends that Cumru Township develop a number of new open space, park and recreation opportunities based upon the present and future population densities. Currently, based upon national standards, there is a deficit of park and recreational facilities.

Specific Recommendations

- The Township should develop a community-wide park at a previously dedicated 26-acre parcel along Abercarn Road. This park would be a multi-use park.
- Develop two new neighborhood parks
- Acquire control of the Gouglerstown Fire Company playground
- Develop the Angelica Ice Dam Park for historic and recreation purposes
- Make improvements to existing parks throughout the Township

- Support the efforts of the Berks County Conservancy and the Neversink Mountain project
- Trail corridors are recommended for Angelica Creek, Wyomissing Creek, Schuylkill River Greenway/Heritage Park and Rails to Trails (abandoned Conrail line)
- Various regulatory updates that would help preserve open space and scenic road corridors
- Create a Township Parks and Recreation Department by year 2010 to administer the Township's recreational system

Related Studies

Museum Development Study: Reading Railroad Heritage Museum 2004

The Reading Company Technical and Historical Society (RCT&HS) was incorporated in 1976 and has assembled one of the largest collections of memorabilia relating to a single railroad. The RCT&HS owns property in Hamburg and Schuylkill Haven, and lease facilities in Temple and Leesport, Pennsylvania. The goal of the RCT&HS is to create museum interpretive centers in Hamburg, Temple, Reading and Schuylkill Haven and operate a scenic rail excursion that would also create economic development opportunities. This study forms the preliminary schematic outline for the development of the proposed Museum System.

The primary interpretive center is slated for Hamburg at the former Pennsylvania Steel Foundry. This center will house exhibits, a turntable, and many of its rail cars, engines and other stock from the Reading Railroad. The center also hopes to resume train excursions from this site. Also, the site will contain a technical crafts center and guild for the promotion of education training and

provision of an enterprise generating revenue to sustain it and provide support for the museum interpretive centers.

Accomplishments

- The RCT&HS is currently renovating their property in Hamburg to accommodate the primary interpretive center.

RIVERPLACE Master Plan 2005

RiverPlace Development Corporation formed to address the disconnection and deterioration of the Schuylkill River Waterfront through the urban areas of Greater Reading. The Vision of RiverPlace is to connect the Schuylkill River with the surrounding population. This Vision involves many partners in both the public and private sector. Projects that implement the following recommendations are listed according to timeframes along with policy initiatives.

Specific Recommendations

- New trails that will connect new and existing park systems
- Performances, festivals and other events that bring people down to the riverfront
- Economic Development (new housing and innovative business districts)
- Reading Area Community College (RACC) remains and expands as a central riverfront anchor
- Expand the City of Reading and West Reading Borough downtown uses closer to the river along the Penn Corridor
- Interconnection of the riverfront to Greater Reading and Berks County through the Schuylkill River Nation and State Heritage Area
- Expansion of the link between the three tributaries that link RiverPlace to major institutions: Penn State Berks on the Tulpehocken Creek; Reading Museum, Reading Hospital &

Medical Center and the Nursing School along the Wyomissing Creek; Alvernia College and Angelica Park on Angelica Creek

- Expand the existing trail system on Neversink Mountain to the Schuylkill River

Accomplishments

- Opening of the Goggleworks
- Completion of the Lancaster Avenue Trail Bridge (SRGA)
- Schmidt Training and Technology Center (RACC) under construction
- Redevelopment activities underway along areas on both sides of the riverfront

Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area Management Plan

The Schuylkill River Heritage Area stretches from Schuylkill County; the headwaters of the Schuylkill River, to the mouth of the Schuylkill River South of Philadelphia in Chester County encompassing over 3.2 million people in a five county region. In 1995, Pennsylvania designated the Schuylkill River Valley as a Heritage Corridor under the Heritage Parks Program. In 2000 the United States Congress followed through with the designation of the Schuylkill River Valley as the Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area.

The major goal of the National Heritage Area is to “conserve, interpret and develop the historical, cultural, natural and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley. The Schuylkill River Greenways Association (SRGA) is the designated management organization for the Heritage Area.

Specific Recommendations

- Resource Conservation and Enhancement

- Education and Interpretation
- Recreation
- Community Revitalization
- Heritage Tourism

Accomplishments

- Grants to various entities

Neversink Mountain Feasibility Study 1997

The study contains five major parts; background, regional considerations, conditions and resources, the long-range plan and financial considerations. It also contains two supplements: a butterfly study and a confidential plan for the acquisition of land rights tailored specifically to the Berks County Conservancy's ongoing acquisition and easement program.

The partners involved in the preparation of the study were the City of Reading, Berks County Conservancy, DCNR through a Recreational Improvement and Rehabilitation Act grant and other stakeholders.

The overall goal and concept of the study is that Neversink Mountain remains as a green area. The hope is that one entity will oversee the stewardship of the mountain on behalf of the six municipalities that it lies within.

Specific Recommendations

- Preserve the green character of the mountain along with its natural, cultural, visual and historic resources
- Acquire and/or ease key parcels estimated acreage needed is 750 acres
- Develop and enhance the recreational opportunities
- Optimize the open space

Accomplishments

- Acquisition of about 500 acres of the mountain through fee-simple, easement and right-of-way agreements
- Installation and improvement of trails through certain areas and established maintenance programs
- Land swaps with various entities to improve access and protection
- Acquisition of properties to improve access to trail heads
- Educational programs

Greater Reading as a Recreation Hub

The plan and vision for the Greater Reading as a Greenway and Recreation Hub initiative is that through strategic partnerships the Berks County Conservancy will assist the County in implementing the County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan for the metro region of Berks County, including the “Greater Reading Area”. Through enhancement of greenways and recreational opportunities and influence and support from the economic development community coordinated by the Berks Economic Partnership (BEP) this will improve greater use and appreciation of our natural resources, recreational assets by our citizens and improved stewardship of the community and environment.

Partners include: Berks County Conservancy, RiverPlace, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, Berks Economic Development Partnership, City of Reading, County of Berks, West Reading Main Street, and DCNR

Project focus includes: Angelica Park, Antietam Lake/Mt. Penn (Rose Cree), City Park, Confluence Point Park-RiverPlace North, Baer Park/Dana Memorial Park-RiverPlace North, RiverPlace-Central riverfront, Heritage Park-RiverPlace South, Neversink Mountain, West Reading/Wyomissing Creek-RiverPlace Central, Recreation Stewardship & Communication-Trail heads & signage

Accomplishments

- Coordination of grant applications and acquisition of key parcels has begun
- Acquisition of grant funds for various portions of projects

Berks Urban Greening (BUG) Community Gardening Program

This program through the work of the Berks County Conservancy and other interested stakeholders transforms vacant lots into healthy green community spaces and community gardens. The program provides the opportunity for local residents to grow their own vegetables, herbs and flowers which will engender economic self-sufficiency, health and nutritional benefits, resident cooperation, community spirit and is an attractive green space addition to the urban areas.

Accomplishments

- To date there are six BUG community garden sites established in the City of Reading
 - Amanda’s Garden 600 South 10th Street
 - Opportunity House Community Garden corner of Beech and Pear Streets
 - Eisenbrown Street Community Garden blocks 628-644
 - North 6th Street Community Garden blocks 718-720
 - 6th Ward Community Garden blocks 137-139 Buttonwood Street
 - Garden of Good Thoughts Schuylkill and Walnut Streets

Southern Highlands Region

Joint Comprehensive Plans

The Joint Comprehensive Plan: Amity Township, Exeter Township and St. Lawrence Borough 2005

The plan includes an inventory of existing park, open space and historic facilities. Many of the actions recommended in the plan are regional in nature and encourage cooperation amongst the municipalities and other entities.

Specific Recommendations

- Update local zoning ordinances to promote conservation of natural and historic resources, scenic roads and view sheds
- Update local SALDO ordinances to require trail, bikeway and greenway planning; resource identification and protection; open space and recreation; conservation of natural resources
- Plan for greenways and riparian buffers along the Monocacy, Antietam and other creeks and the Schuylkill River
- Active involvement of historic commissions
- Active involvement of Environmental Advisory Committees
- Implement the trail plan through a joint trail committee
- Work with the school districts to assure retention of existing facilities and availability
- Encourage development of trail systems that interconnect regional resources; Neversink Mountain, Antietam Lake; the City of Reading and Antietam Creek

Southern Berks Regional Comprehensive Plan 2004

The plan discusses recommendations for the preservation of natural features, public facilities and services, and parks and recreation. This plan also stresses the need for cooperation to accomplish many of these recommendations.

Specific Recommendations

- Adopt regulations that promote groundwater recharge, riparian buffers, and best management practices

- Consider preparation of a Watershed Management Plan in areas most vulnerable to development impacts
- Consider initiating plans under the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Program
- Adopt regulations for woodland preservation and replacement
- Monitor surface water quality
- Create a Regional Recreation Board
- Apply to PA DCNR to prepare a Regional Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
- Locate a new community park in the Green Hills Area
- Add additional neighborhood parks in areas not currently served
- Apply to PA DCNR for a peer-to-peer review
- Improve the Robeson and Union Township community parks by adding additional programs and activities
- Protect the Horseshoe and Thun Trails
- Adopt/update mandatory dedication regulations in SALDO's
- Revenue share mandatory dedication funds throughout the region

Open Space and Recreation Plans

Amity Township Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan 2001

The updated Township Plan identifies how Amity should address parks, recreation and open space needs – both currently and over the next ten years.

Specific Recommendations

- Finish developing Hill Road Recreation Area
- Upgrade selected facilities at Lake Drive Park and Recreation Area

- Make immediate improvements at Monocacy Hill Recreation Area
- Secure Clear Title to Monocacy Hill Recreation Area
- Plan for long range development of an environmental education center at Monocacy Hill Recreation Area
- Sell a portion of the Haas Farm site to Daniel Boone School District for a new Middle School
- Construct outdoor athletic facilities on the Haas Farm in cooperation with the Daniel Boone School District
- Construct additional outdoor recreation facilities at the Haas Farm for community use
- Continue policy of accepting fees in lieu of land for neighborhood parks
- Include multi-purpose community space in the new Birdsboro Library
- Connect the old Airport Road open space to the Township building property
- Establish a greenway along the Leaf Creek Interceptor
- Plan an additional greenway segment along the Schuylkill River
- Create more non-sports activities, especially for adults
- Offer more special events programming
- Consider professional programming assistance in future
- Strengthen and enact zoning regulations for
 - Steep slopes
 - Stream Corridors

- Wooded areas
 - Consider adopting historic preservation regulations
- Encourage more agricultural preservation
- Track usage of Monocacy Hill Park
- Enhance regular safety inspections at Township Parks
- Enhance risk management policies
- Establish a gifts catalog of recreation items needed
- Establish a park endowment fund
- Distribute a brochure describing leisure opportunities in and around the Township

Accomplishments

- Amity Community Park – a joint effort of the Township and School District
- Monocacy Hill Recreation Area environmental education signage

Caernarvon Township Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan 2002

The Plan identifies that the Township lacks municipal level recreation programs and recreation facilities. Over the past few years the Township obtained several grants to support parkland acquisition and development. Various organizations provide recreation programming in the area. New developments within the Township will provide future recreation facilities for the residents.

Specific Recommendations

General Park Facilities

- Prepare park master plans for all Township-owned parks
- Develop an annual maintenance schedule/budget
- ADA accessibility to all Township parks
- Redevelopment and Acquisitions identification
- Signage

Recreation Programs and Administration

- Design a recreation program
- Improve public awareness of Township parks program through a newsletter & website
- Equipment inventory matrix
- Risk management policy and procedures
- Recreation department and operations manual

Accomplishments

- Development of playground
- Grants for acquisition of additional parkland

Master Plan for Ironstone Park and Douglass Township Municipal Park, 2004

The Plan details the primary improvements that are recommended for the Township's two existing parks; Ironstone Park and Douglass Township Municipal Park.

Specific Recommendations

Ironstone Park

- Create a one plus mile multiple use trail for walking, jogging and bicycling during the summer and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter.
- Install benches along the trail
- Add four picnic pavilions with parking
- Add a multipurpose field
- Install a large play area and three smaller ones
- Install a tricycle track
- Remove existing play areas
- Replace basketball court with a new court
- Install a portable ice rink for ice skating

Douglass Township Municipal Park

- Install a large play area and tricycle track
- Create a ½ mile multiple use trail for walking, jogging and bicycling
- Improve parking areas
- Install a new basketball court and new tennis courts

Overall

- Acquire land between Ironstone Creek and Ironstone Park
- Formalize agreements between Township and the Pine Forge Athletic Association

Related Studies

Hopewell Big Woods Landscape Conservation Plan 2003

The Hopewell Big Woods area is the last large unbroken forested area in South Eastern Pennsylvania, encompassing nearly 73,000

acres. With the threat of losing this environmental resource a number of State, Local and Non-profit groups came together to participate in the report prepared by the Natural Lands Trust. This report includes a threat analysis for conservations purposes and identifies key natural features, landscape ecology, land use, and ownership patterns. Based upon this information, the report identified landscape conservation short-term and long-term priorities for critical areas along with conservation and restoration activities.

Specific Recommendations

- Project goal of 15,000 acres of continuous forested areas
- Develop a community-based conservation presence to address the conservation issues identified
- Write a detailed land protection plan and protect land
- Write a stewardship plan for the management of Hopewell Big Woods conservation targets
- Assist municipalities and non-profits in helping to carry out these plans
- Develop quantitative baseline condition documentation for all conservation targets
- Implement the Hopewell Big Woods stewardship plan
- Monitor the Hopewell Big Woods conservation targets to evaluate the success of stewardship efforts
- Use adaptive management principle to modify management to better achieve conservation goals
- Use a variety of communication tools to promote the project
- Raise funds to support the above activities.

Morlatton Village Development Program 2004

The Morlatton Village contains the first European Settlement in Berks County. The Morlatton Village Development Plan proposes the concept of combining recreation activities with educational and

cultural pursuits of this very historic area. The Plan designates the lands along the Schuylkill River as a passive recreation of the Amity Township Park and Recreation system. Within this park would be the historic Morlatton Village, which would be owned and operated as a museum by the Preservation Trust of Berks County.

Specific Recommendations

- Facilities for a riverfront recreation park, including the Thun Trail and other potential nature trails, fishing, picnicking, boat launch site for car-top watercraft and such.
- Continued improvements, preservation and enhancement of the Historic Morlatton Village that would further facilitate the Village as museum
- Creation of a Visitor's Center Area for the Village that could include exhibit space and storage of historic artifacts
- Archaeological investigations to uncover more of the Village's past
- Preservation of the nearby Village of Douglassville and integration of its functions with the Historic Morlatton Village. This would include significant traffic changes due to the Route 422 Corridor. Also, connection of the Thun Trail through Douglassville to the Amity Township Park system.
- Economic Development related to these recommendation

Birdsboro Municipal Water Authority: Source Water Assessment Report 2002 *

Bridsboro Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan 2006

The Borough completed a comprehensive review of their recreation facilities and programs. Through this process they identified ecological, recreational, heritage and management goals

in order to guide the future growth and development of the Borough's park system.

The Plan identified and ranked many projects. Following are the Very High Priority Projects:

- Adopt an Official Map
- Develop Tucci House
- Require mandatory parkland dedication
- Acquire right-of-way within Armorcast Property
- Acquire right-of-way for Mountz Trail from F.M. Brown
- Improve recreation program coordination
- Coordinate with regional stakeholders

Hay Creek Watershed Conservation Mgmt Plan 2004 *

Allegheny Creek Watershed Assessment 2005 *

* All of these plans address water related resource issues as they pertain to these specific areas. The Plans are all fairly similar in their recommendations and goals. Each Plan identifies the main sources of potential contamination and pollution sources in that specific watershed and recommendations for correcting or preventing them. Please see the individual plans located in the planning office for further information.

Neighboring Counties

Lehigh County

Montgomery County

Chester County

Lancaster County

Lebanon County

Schuylkill County

Each of the counties that adjoin Berks County has Comprehensive Plans and either adopted Open Space and Recreation Plans or are in the process of adopting one. Berks County is committed to regional ideas and therefore during the process of creating the new Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan has reviewed and correlated our Plan recommendations and projects with ideas from adjoining Counties and beyond. All adjoining Counties have received copies of information in draft format for review and comment in order to correlate those areas that extend beyond Berks County borders.



Chapter 2

Plan

Background

Chapter 2 - Plan Background

This section presents an overview of the ecological, heritage and recreation themes which make up this plan. Additionally, the process leading to this plan's Greenway Network conclusions is described.

2.1 Ecologic Resources

The 1991 Berks County Comprehensive Plan and the Natural Areas Inventory (NAI) initiated detailed ecological planning for Berks County. These two documents promoted the idea that there are areas of the County that need special protection from development. The 1991 Comprehensive Plan designated Environmentally Sensitive Areas that needed special considerations due to factors such as steep slopes and large contiguous wooded areas while the NAI identified areas associated with plant and animal habitats that needed protection from development. The 1994 Open Space and Recreation Plan promoted the idea of protecting critical and unique natural areas along with the creation of a "Greenway System" or "linear parks" that would interconnect greenways and historic sites along natural areas and stream corridors throughout the County. The need to protect sensitive environmental areas was more broadly developed in the 2003 Berks County Comprehensive Plan Vision 2020 and is more thoroughly refined in this Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan.

Through the use of the Geographic Information System (GIS) the County identified more clearly where the special physical environmentally sensitive areas are located in the Vision 2020 Plan. Using this information along with other sources, such as the NAI and its updates, development patterns, hydrology, and steep slopes the County identified the Rural Conservation and

Environmental Hazard Areas of the Vision 2020 Plan. In order to protect these areas from inappropriate development the County established the Conservation Zoning Incentive Program (CZIP). This program provides municipalities with the funding and tools to enact land use regulations that promote sensitive and flexible design principles and techniques allowing land to be developed efficiently with the least degree of environmental impact. Following in the footsteps of the Vision 2020 Plan is the Greenway, Park and



Butterfly Garden at Kernsville Dam

Recreation Plan Update to the 1994 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

While the Vision 2020 Plan is a sound basis for environmental protection, the amount of area shown in both the Environmental Hazard and Rural Conservation is far beyond what the County or any other entity is able to permanently protect. Therefore a clear and precise identification of the

most important natural and habitat areas needed to occur in order to maximize limited funding and resources available for protection. Also, other strategic ways of protecting the remaining environmentally important areas while still allowing for growth and development are needed. The County used the NLT Smart Conservation Modeling process for the identification of the most important ecological resources. The model processed data including; PNDI, protected lands, and conservation recourses, to develop an ecological cluster map to determine where the County should focus its habitat protection efforts. The cluster maps included the top 20% of the highest valued habitat areas found in the County. These cluster areas were revised dependant upon existing development and connections with already preserved areas and shown prioritized on the “Greenway Network”. One of the main goals for habitat protection is interconnecting hubs and corridors. The hubs are the main “every day living” areas for the various species. A hub must be at least 250 acres. The corridors are the linear connections between the hubs that promote species diversity, additional food supplies, and migration. While it is extremely important to protect the hubs as the main habitat areas for plants and animals, without the simultaneous protection of the corridors to interconnect the hubs many species will not flourish. Corridors vary in size and width dependant upon existing development and ability to interconnect with a hub. Wide corridors provide the best connection. However even narrow connections are better than none. Generally, the corridors should be between 1000 to 3000 feet wide for optimal connections.

The objective of this Plan for habitat protection is to identify and prioritize projects based upon ecological value. Each project lists the partners that should work together to accomplish the goals identified for the project and identify potential funding sources to complete the project. This

process starts with the identification of already protected lands and the connections between these lands and the hubs that are prioritized as needing the most protection. Also, the projects will list the opportunities (benefits) for each project. Certain areas will list protection of the ecological resource as the opportunity; however there are a number of projects throughout the County that will have opportunities other than ecological.

Some of the most important ecologically valuable lands in the County of Berks are those hubs and greenways found along the Northern and Southern borders, the Kittatinny Ridge and the Highlands Corridor. (See chapter 3 for individual regions) The reason for this is the availability of water, forests, meadows and large masses of undeveloped land equate to high habitat values. Most species, no matter which type, need all of these factors to survive.

2.2 Heritage Resources

Berks County has a diverse history that reflects an ever changing cultural and economic dynamic spanning its 255-year history. Cultural groups have each left and continue to leave their own distinct impression on the county in such ways as language, dress, architecture and food. Additionally, national and international events as well as an evolving economy have impacted Berks County. The following historical overview highlights some of the County’s major milestones and the more prominent heritage themes.

Historic Overview At the start of the Eighteenth Century, the mild climate, fertile soil, and the Schuylkill River combined to attract European immigrants to Berks County. The area was originally settled by Swedes in 1701, followed by Germans, English, Welsh, and French Huguenots. Most of the County's eastern section was settled by people migrating inland from the Philadelphia area. In 1752, Berks County was incorporated from parts of Lancaster, Chester, and Philadelphia Counties. In 1772, Berks gave up territory for the formation of Northumberland County, and again in 1811, for the formation of Schuylkill County. Berks County was named for Berkshire, England, home of William Penn's family. Likewise, Reading was named after the main town in Berkshire, England. In 1790, the first federal census of the



The Happy Dutchman German Band at Hunsickers Grove

county reported 30,189 residents, 22,345 of whom were of German descent. Reading Town, the only sizeable settlement, had 2,225 residents.

Reading's early growth was largely influenced by the Schuylkill River. Flat-bottom boats made it possible to carry products, mainly agricultural goods, to the markets of Philadelphia. Later the County emerged as a hub of the steam railroad industry. Reading's early economy attracted considerable numbers of immigrant laborers during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, an era of great industrial growth for Berks County.

In 1995, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania designated the Schuylkill River Corridor as a State Heritage Area, which promotes its industrial legacy. In 2000, the U.S. Congress acknowledged the river's national historic significance by designating it as a National Heritage Area. The Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA) is the designated management organization for the area. Additionally, the SRGA has made strides to conserve, interpret and develop the Schuylkill corridor's historical, cultural, natural and recreational resources.

Benefits of Historic Preservation

Historic preservation is a key element of planning and Smart Growth strategies. A major part of creating an attractive, vibrant and welcoming community is preserving its historic character and charm. Berks County is fortunate, with a wealth of historic structures and a historic fabric with little fragmentation, to have an excellent basis from which preservation efforts can be expanded.

Educational benefits are derived from safeguarding a historic asset in its current state allowing future generations the ability to learn from the past. While different styles of building structures and architecture can be recorded in books and even replicated in modern construction, the ability to visit a fully

preserved and original 'Pennsylvania Bank Barn', one room school house, covered bridge, general store or grist mill is an priceless resource.

A **cluster of similar historic resources** presents the potential for preserving a region's historic fabric and establishing a historic theme. Many regions in Pennsylvania have identified consistent and clustered items like a specific bridge structure, architectural style, barn type or factories from a manufacturing practice of a bygone area. These clusters give a community a unique identity and a special role in historic preservation.

Neighborhood revitalization is often intertwined with historic preservation. Often aged and overlooked historic communities are "re-discovered" by individuals that see value and potential in the historic homes, businesses and community. The municipality can help by making infrastructure repairs, updating land use ordinances and participating in main street and façade improvement programs.

Adaptive reuse of historic structures has become a widely accepted practice as renovation processes have attuned to preserve a historic structure's integrity, meet modern code standards as well as remain economically viable. Adaptive reuse has been successful throughout Berks County. Important examples include the Silk Mill Apartments (former mill/Reading City), The Works restaurant (former factory/Wyomissing), The American House Hotel (hotel/Hamburg), and numerous Kutztown mansions that now house Kutztown University offices. As existing communities continue to revitalize, adaptive reuse will play a more prominent role in downtown commercial districts.

Economic Benefits of Preservation: Berks County communities can simultaneously preserve their heritage as

well as benefit the local economy. Tourism is often based primarily on an active community promoting its heritage through the preservation of historic resources. The community's effort is supported by locally owned shops, restaurants and bed & breakfasts and can be enhanced by additional recreational activities. A historic themed festival, like the Kutztown Festival, or a historic walking tour are good community activities that raise historic awareness and promote the local economy.

Municipal support is important for a successful historic preservation program. Private initiatives and investment will be more readily available with an assurance that historic preservation is an integrated goal of the entire community.

Clusters of Historic Resources in Berks County

Clusters of historic resources have potential as tourist attractions and the resource surveys that were conducted as background for this plan have identified a number of clusters. Listed below are some significant clusters.

Boroughs and Villages – Berks County has many historic villages and boroughs. These clusters of population and commerce reflect the region's early establishment. Villages began in the pre-revolutionary era as a trading post for fur traders. As the landscape and economy changed coinciding with the influx of Germanic settlers, Berks developed yet more towns as hubs for the burgeoning agricultural community. These towns often included a general store, school, mill and post office but in some cases also provided lodging and restaurants as well.

Barns –An array of barn styles including but not limited to the "Pennsylvania", "Three Gable" and "Tobacco" are found

throughout Berks County. One of the most important styles for both the County as well as the Commonwealth is the forebay bank barn or also commonly referred to as the “Pennsylvania Barn”¹ or the “Pennsylvania German Barn”. The feature that most distinguishes the Pennsylvania Barn from others is its hallmark 7-8 foot forebay, overshoot or overhang. The barn is typically “banked” or built into a slope utilizing the upside for access to the main floor of the barn and the louver overhanged entry into the base floor of the barn (source: PMHC).

Efforts to protect barns have escalated as the number of unique and historically significant barns, such as the Pennsylvania Barn, has dwindled. The main thrust of early efforts was to make barn owners aware of the treasure they possessed. This effort paid off as many owners took it upon themselves to restore their barns and keep them in use. Also, historians documented the different styles and raised awareness by publishing books and reports on the buildings. A local example this is a book titled “The Pennsylvania Barn” by Kutztown University Professor Robert Ensminger.

Bridges: The number and variety of bridges in Berks is another example of a cluster of historical resources. In recent years covered bridges have developed a loyal interest group that enjoys visiting the bridges as well as aiding in their preservation. Steel bridges are another type that is attracting national efforts for preservation. Having many steel and covered bridges within Berks County, many of which are included within existing historic surveys and are registered with the Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Council, it is important that they be inventoried and regularly inspected.

¹ For more information of this local historic resource please consider the book *The Pennsylvania Barn*, by local historian Robert Ensminger, a Professor at Kutztown University



Stone Bridge

Canal System: The canal system grew during the 1700’s, in the midst of Berks County’s burgeoning agricultural and lumber economies. The canal met the integral need for transport of commodities to points of sale in Philadelphia and beyond.

Churches: Many churches that exist today have roots that predate the official formation of Berks County. Early church buildings were not only used for religious services but also as a community gathering places since they were often the first public buildings built in the community. Congregations for these churches still thrive today and maintain birth, death and cemetery records that date back to the 1700’s. These records are invaluable for genealogical researchers as well as local historians who may be trying to re-establish key elements of the County’s heritage.

Farmsteads: Similar to barns, farmsteads are the fully intact nucleus of a historic agricultural operation. These building clusters at least include a farmhouse and a barn but often also include several outbuildings, silos, chicken coupes, privies, spring houses, corn silos as well as additional barns. In some cases there may still exist another older dwelling that, in many cases was constructed from logs, but due to an increase in size of the residing family's was outgrown and replaced by a larger farmhouse.

Furnaces: Furnaces in Berks County played a pivotal role in the American Revolution. The Hopewell Furnace, a National Historic Site, is Berks County's best example. It was a major arms contributor during the Revolutionary War. These furnaces were so important that George Washington encamped at Valley Forge in order to protect the furnaces from capture by British forces. In addition to being a major factor in America's Revolution, furnaces were the beginning of the steel industry and often manufactured stoves and grates that can still be found in historic homes throughout the region.

Education: The public schools and colleges in Berks County are also a source of historic resources. Kutztown University, formerly the Kutztown Teachers College, was established 130 years ago, and Albright College is more than 150 years old. For more than 114 years the Reading Hospital School of Nursing has prepared individuals for careers in the medical field while strengthening Berks County's health care system.

These and other early education structures still exist in Berks, varying in size and use from one room school houses to the large stately buildings located within Kutztown University's campus. A more recent trend in some communities has been to preserve and continue to use the neighborhood school. In

many cases, these school buildings are roughly 50 years old and built of traditional materials, including brick, stone and marble. While the structure's material/architecture is important, citizens are more concerned with the school's traditional location within walking distance for students, with the building serving as a cornerstone of the community. While



One room school house

economically and logistically these buildings cannot always be saved, the site can be reused for a replacement school thus preserving the role that the school serves for the community.

Hex Signs: The hex sign is a unique decoration on many farmsteads throughout Berks County. These typically round symbols were an example of artisanship from original German immigrant farmers who brought the hex sign tradition from their homeland. The symbols have various. Efforts to preserve and restore these symbols are underway but currently are under funded. In at least one case, a driving tour

is centered upon local hex sign examples. If existing signs are restored and other signs are brought back (based on historical



Barn with Hex Signs

records) these elements could become part of a broader tourist economy.

Highway System: Within Berks county the highway system was initially established along Native American Paths and early trading routes. As America's early economy grew and trade with Philadelphia increased, the highway system connected natural resource areas to population centers. Most of today's most heavily traveled roadways have a historical connection with our early development.

Mills: Within Berks there are primarily three variations of the typical mill: grist, wood/saw and knitting. Grist is the most widely understood and recognized for its processing of corn, wheat and flour. The wood mill produced lumber. Knitting

mills supported the recognized textile industry that existed within the Berks County. Tens of thousands of people were employed by the mills and its related industries. The large textile mills still stand with many having been converted to retail or loft apartments.

Native Americans: The earliest of this area were Native Americans, mainly sub sects of the Lenape or Delaware tribe. Many feature names that are common today were derived from the native American language including but not limited to the following:

- Maxatawny, from the Lenape Tribal word Macksithanne meaning "Bear's path creek"
- Monocacy: from the Shawnee Tribal word *Monnockesey* meaning "River with many bends"
- Tulpehocken: from the Lenape Tribal word *Tulpewikaki* meaning "Place of the Turtle",
- Wyomissing: surmised to be from the Lenape Tribe meaning "A place of Flats"

Many of our current roads began as Native American trails, evolved into trading routes and then to significant roadways.

Rail System: Due to the greater efficiency and increased service area options (by not being limited to waterways), the railroad flourished and replaced the canal systems. The rail system primarily carried agricultural goods, coal and steel. It also allowed for extensive passenger service. The Reading Railroad was a nationally significant railroad company based in Reading. Many of its repair facilities still exist, along with the typical community railroad stations. Today, restored railroad facilities and museums are major tourist attractions. The Reading Company Technical and Historical Society has

an extensive collection of important railroad locomotives and cars.

During the early 1900s, rail ran Philadelphia tourists to the well known resorts located in western Berks County. Additionally, local rail service was provided by trolley. Tracks ran east through Mt. Penn as well as west through West Reading. A novelty to the trolley system was a gravity line that was installed from the Pagoda down to the city of Reading.

Vehicle/Auto Industry: The automobile was a perfect match for the established steel industry that existed in Berks. The Duryea brand of car was manufactured as well as tested in Reading. Some of the early auto and truck manufacturing companies still exist, but many have recently left the area or gone out of business. The Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles has a well-respected collection of important vehicles.

Historic Preservation Tools

There are several options for municipalities that want to take a more proactive role in preserving their historic resources. Many programs exist to legally protect historic sites. Additionally, there are options to persuade landowners to value and protect their historic properties much like an investment. Beyond the historic resource inventory, which is the first step and basis for nearly all additional preservation options, are the following potential heritage/historic resource preserving tactics:

Each community must recognize the importance and role that the historic resources play in creating the unique character of their community and establish a preservation strategy to protect them. A preservation strategy can include the following components:

- With any program there must be appreciation and respect for a community's heritage. Knowledge of these resources and acceptance of their value is the initial step to incorporating them back into the community. Use of municipal newsletters to relay information is a way to increase awareness of the resources and cultural heritage, and offering classes is a way to educate residents how to maintain them.
- Establish historical commission/committee to advise local officials about the effects of activities on historic resources, etc.
- Identify and evaluate historic resources and character (the building setbacks, height of structures, architectural style, area and location of parking, signage, street furniture, landscaping, etc.)
- Evaluate land use ordinances. How do they affect areas with historic assets? Regulations should encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, delay demolition, and require that new development, particularly infill development and additions to structures, be compatible with the existing historic resources. Zoning should focus on the area and bulk provisions encouraging new structures to compliment the building mass, scale, height and character of the existing historic buildings. Such provisions can help prevent tear downs from being replaced with monster homes that are out of character with the neighborhood. The use of form-based regulations emphasizes the form of structures rather than managing uses. Further refinements should include revised sign regulations with the goal of deterring excessive visual competition. Zoning regulations that provide incentives to restore a structure, or encourage the use of cluster development can provide a degree of flexibility in mitigating the impact of development on historic resources. The

zoning provisions can either be built into the base zoning or through the use of a historic conservation overlay district. Design guidelines on the appropriateness of modifications to historic resources can be developed to encourage consistency and help property owners to understand expectations. The historic resource surveys developed during the inventory process should be referred to during the subdivision/land development review to ensure that significant historic resources are not being overlooked.

- Where there is a concentration of historic resources with architectural integrity consider establishing a certified historic district in accordance with the Pennsylvania Historic Districts Act (Act 167). This act requires the appointment of a Historical Architectural Review Board (Harb) and provides maximum protection of architectural details and facades. Certified historic districts may not be the right fit in most situations, unless the concentration and integrity is there.
 - Undertake public improvements in a manner that preserves the historic and architectural integrity of structures and neighborhoods. A variety of public investments to neighborhoods such as street and sidewalk improvements, street trees, appropriate street lights, signage and street furnishings, upgrading neighborhood playgrounds/parks, debris removal, reduce sign clutter, and creating neighborhood gardens can be supportive of the historic environment and preservation effort.
 - Consider instituting Elm Street and Main Street Programs that blends economic development and historic preservation.
- Develop a financial strategy. Seek funding sources to establish revolving loan pools for façade improvements, adaptive reuse of buildings, or housing rehabilitation.
 - Support heritage tourism efforts.
 - Hold festivals that replicate and recreate historic experiences and celebrate cultural traditions.
 - Along trails, in parks and at cultural destinations install interpretive signage that tells “the story”.
 - Establish a Historical Marker Program that identifies properties that are historic and have been restored to an acceptable level. Another similar option is to nominate a property for a Pennsylvania Historical Marker Program.
 - Nominate historically significant public structures to the National Register of Historic Places.

Mapping

Historic resources data was used as part of the modeling that created the Greenway plan and network. The existing historic site survey was used and ranking was differentiated according to historic status (National Register, National Register Eligible, PMHC Survey etc.). Similarly, historic districts were separated according to their status as National Register listed or eligible. Additional items that were also incorporated include historic trails and rail lines.

2.3 Recreation Resources

Benefits

Imagine our communities without parks, playgrounds, trails, nature centers, basketball and tennis courts, soccer and

baseball fields, historic sites, and museums. These facilities help make-up our cultural fabric, add to the quality of life and are an essential part of our life. They provide public gathering spaces. It is relationships with people that make parks more than just fields, courts and playground equipment. These intangibles are as important to a community as tangible benefits. Investment in park and recreation facilities and programs provide opportunities for personal enrichment, community welfare, and can be a catalyst for economic growth. The contributions that can be made to the individual, community and the local economy by park, recreation, heritage and cultural amenities are well documented:

- personal enrichment benefits includes, physical fitness, emotional wellness, release of stress, learns to compete and cooperate, build relationships, develop character and leadership skills;
- foster community pride and spirit;
- alleviate youth crimes by providing organized recreational programs;
- enhancing real estate value (people are willing to pay more to live close to parks and protected natural areas);
- attracting new businesses and retaining old ones (community spirit, entertainment and cultural opportunities are great lures for businesses- businesses depend on their work force and a deciding factor on where they locate is often quality of life considerations for their employees-park and recreation amenities are a major quality of life component); and
- attracting tourists (tourists/participants in events stay in our motels, eat in our restaurants, and shop in our stores).

Enhancement of a community's quality of life, which embraces its livability, is an important benefit communities derive from

great park systems and abundant recreational and cultural programs.

Trends and Desires

Social, environmental, participation and management trends influence the provision of parks and recreation, and the delivery of those services. The implication of these trends is that leisure needs and desires are constantly changing, and need to be monitored.

Trends:

- Explosive population growth placing a strain on municipalities to keep up with the provision of park and recreation facilities and programs;
- The changing characteristics of our population and households, and their diverse leisure needs, including multi-cultural diversity and the increasing Hispanic population, the aging baby boomers, the disappearing traditional family and the increasing numbers of children at risk;
- Changing housing patterns including conservation residential development design that includes natural area preservation and provides recreation areas, traditional neighborhood development, over-55 developments, downtown revitalization with an emphasis on greenspace, and the emphasis on walkable pedestrian-oriented development;
- Disappearing natural resources resulting in greater public interest in waterway protection, water quality enhancement, plant and wildlife habitat protection, and greater access to nature;
- Disappearing historic resources resulting in greater emphasis on heritage and cultural resource planning;
- Emphasis on greenway network planning;
- Importance of tourism in local economy;

- Physical inactivity, obesity and the associated health problems of diabetes, stroke and heart disease, resulting in the growing fitness and wellness movement;
- Changes in participation including the increasing numbers of girls in sports, older adults staying active longer, persons with disabilities, and the year round play of many youth sports;
- Continued growth of organized youth sports and the need for additional indoor recreation facilities and outdoor fields for league play and practice;
- Trails are the most preferred recreation facility according to state and Berks County surveys. According to the Berks County citizen survey, the top five recreational facility preferences were: walking/hiking/biking trails, natural areas, playgrounds, museum/heritage park, and outdoor entertainment (amphitheatre, fairgrounds, etc). The most important recreational programs were: cultural arts (concerts, theatre, etc), fairs/festivals, holiday events, athletic/sports leagues/clinics, and environmental education;
- Interest in family-oriented indoor recreation centers;
- Growth of “extreme” action sports and the interest for in-line skating and hockey facilities, skateboard/bike action parks, and facilities for mountain biking;
- Growing interest in orienteering and geocaching (outdoor treasure hunting game in which participants use global positioning receivers to hide and seek containers, the location of which is posted on geocaching websites-a typical geocache is a small waterproof container with a logbook and small trinket-geocachers are free to take objects from the cache in exchange for leaving a trinket for the next geocacher to find);
- Growing interest in dog parks;
- Interest in multi-municipal recreation planning for regional park acquisition, development, maintenance, programs, management and financing;

- Greater collaboration between municipalities and schools through joint acquisition, development and use of recreation land and facilities;
- Exploring partnerships among public, private and non-profit recreation providers;



Soccer at Muhlenberg High School

- Declining economies and decreasing fiscal resources forcing government to supplement recreation budgets with a mix of new revenue sources and tapping community resources including user fees, impact fees, sponsorship, fund raising, donations, grants and volunteerism; and
- Greater emphasis on zoning and subdivision as recreation planning tools.

Park and Recreation Facility Classifications

Successful park systems are ones in which the recreational facilities are comprehensive, cohesive, equitably distributed

and accessible. The degree of service which park and recreation areas provide, or the influence they have on a community(s), depends on the types of facilities available, the activities provided, the size of the site, the condition of the facilities, connectivity and the proximity of the site to potential users. A well-rounded municipal system of parks and recreation areas should be composed of a number of different park types.

Mini-Park: Generally is a single-purpose public property offering a very limited range of passive or active recreation use, often servicing a unique or specific recreation need. Examples include tot lots/play structures, community gardens, sitting area, picnic area, or a landscaped public use plaza in a downtown. Typically, they are not intended to be used for programmed activities. The service area is usually less than a ¼ mile in radius in a residential setting. Ease of pedestrian access to and from the surrounding area is of key concern since parking is usually not required. Typically, the size of mini-parks range from 2,500 square feet to one acre, however, could include park areas up to 3 acres.

Neighborhood Park: Serves as the recreational and social focus of a residential neighborhood, providing close-to-home public areas for playgrounds, passive pursuits, and limited programmed athletic activities. Active recreational facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner, except for limited use by youth teams. The menu of potential facilities include a general use playfield, play structures, sport courts, picnic/sitting areas, trails, and passive open space. A small activity room and restroom facilities are appropriate. If space allows larger scale active recreation facilities such as baseball/softball and soccer fields can be included. Development of a neighborhood park should seek to achieve a balance between informal active and passive park

uses geared specifically for those living within the service area, accommodating a wide variety of age and user groups. Service area ranges from ¼ to ½ mile radius uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers. Ease of pedestrian access and walking distance are key as most people arrive by foot/bike, although the site should accommodate a limited number of off-street parking spaces. Generally, 5 acres is the minimum size to provide space for a menu of activities, but can be as small as 3 acres, with 7 to 10+ acres considered optimal. Ideally, it should be connected to other park system components.

Community Park: Focus is on meeting community-based active and passive public recreational needs, serving at least two or more neighborhoods. Designed to provide active and structured recreational opportunities for youth group activities (often not feasible nor desirable at neighborhood parks), as well as provide informal individual exercise. It can also preserve unique natural features. Typically include multiple athletic fields and sport courts, play structures, picnic shelters/sitting areas, extensive internal trails, passive open space and any unique natural areas. Nature study areas, facilities for cultural activities, skate parks, swimming pools, restroom facilities, and indoor recreation centers are also appropriate. Service area ranges from ½ to 3-mile radius. Ease of pedestrian access remains a concern, although a significant number of people arrive by car. Parking lots should be provided. Optimal size of park is between 20 and 50 acres, however smaller parks with a very concentrated menu of activities can function as community parks. Ideally, internal trails should connect to a community trail system or greenway.

Large Urban/Suburban Park: Serves a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. These parks are designed to serve the entire

community, and perhaps residents of adjacent municipalities. They can provide a wide variety of specialized public active recreational needs, including sports complexes (heavily programmed athletic fields and sport courts used for league play and tournaments), passive recreational needs, cultural attractions, as well as preserve unique natural features. Designed to accommodate large numbers of people, usually exceed 50 acres with 75 or more acres being optimal. Because of their size and the number of facilities offered, they require more support facilities such as significant off-street parking, restrooms, concession stand, fan seating, multi-purpose building, storage, lighted facilities, etc. Sites should be accessible from major thoroughfares, and provide multiple access points.

School-Park: Public school sites with facilities that could serve as a neighborhood or community park. Combining the resources of a municipality and a school district allows for expanding the recreation opportunities available to the community. Establishing a clearly defined joint-use agreement between the agencies is critical to making the school-park relationship workable.

Special Use Park or Recreation Facilities: Covers a broad range of public parks and recreation facilities oriented toward a single-purpose use. Examples include: arboretum, performing arts facility, amphitheater, museums, heritage/cultural park, community center, arena, stadium, swimming pool, fairgrounds, camps, etc. Size is variable.

Natural Resource Area: Public lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, ecosystems and for visual aesthetics. Typically include state gamelands, state forests, municipal watersheds, sanctuaries, and nature preserves. Examples of the types of resources to be preserved

include: geologic features, watersheds, rare/threatened/endangered species, forests/woodlands, wildlife habitat, wetlands/floodplains/marshes, water bodies/riparian buffer, steep slopes/ridgelines, etc. The objective is to enhance the livability and character of a community by preserving as many of its natural amenities as possible. Resource quality and uniqueness is the primary determinant when it comes to selecting a site for preservation. They can function as greenways and habitat corridors. Although these natural areas are resource rather than user based, they can provide some passive/active recreational opportunities, such as nature study, picnic, trails, swimming, camping, etc. Clearly the emphasis is on conservation and preservation and development should be kept to a level that preserves the integrity of the resource. Size is variable.

Greenway Corridor Linear: public park corridors that focus on passive recreation and conserving the natural environment. Serve to tie park components together and provide for pedestrian movement between parks and throughout the developed community. Can be land based or water based. Typically developed to include trails for different modes of recreation travel such as: hiking, walking, jogging, bicycling, in-line skating, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, canoeing, etc. It can include bike lanes along existing road right-of-way, abandoned railroad right-of-ways, utility right-of-ways. Many greenways are located along waterways and support flood-plain management, water quality enhancement, and fish/wildlife habitat protection. While most greenway corridors function as a combination of recreation use and environmental conservation, some function for environmental protection and are not specifically designed for human passage. They vary greatly in scale from narrow ribbons (20 feet wide, although 50 feet is often considered minimum) to

wider corridors (200 feet wide and greater). The optimal width for wildlife corridors is 1,000 feet.



Bicycling in a Greenway Corridor

Private Park/Recreation Facility: Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system. This category is divided into two sub-groups: commercial recreation (for-profit) and not-for-profit park/recreation. Examples of commercial recreation include: health and fitness clubs, golf courses, driving ranges, miniature golf, ski areas, water parks, amusement parks, campgrounds, bowling lanes, picnic groves, etc. Examples of not-for profit recreation include properties owned by quasi-public organizations, neighborhood associations, YMCA, churches, fire companies, etc. such as: swimming pools, sportsman clubs, camps, homeowner association common land, trails, preserves and tot-lots ballfields.

Municipal Park and Recreation System Guidelines

There are several tools that can be used to evaluate a municipal park and recreation system. One measure is the traditional acres per 1,000 population guideline.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggests that a public park system, at a minimum, be composed of a core system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 population. This local, close-to-home space should be composed of a number of different park types including mini-parks, neighborhood parks and community parks. Also, they suggest an additional 15 to 20 acres per 1,000 population in regional space including natural resource areas. In 1996, NRPA refined their traditional land standards and instead suggest that local park standards be based on a level of service (LOS) analysis. Even though LOS is measured in acres per 1,000 people these guidelines reflect the amount of land, the types of facilities and programs needed to meet recreation demand as determined by a needs assessment. This requires first-hand knowledge of the community and how community residents use the parks. Each community is expected to shape their own basic level of service to fit individual circumstances and it is up to each community to determine what amount of parkland is suitable for its residents. For the purposes of this plan and for simplicity sake, the traditional guidelines will be used. These guidelines may not be what is best for all communities, but it provides guidance for creating a park system. Municipalities are encouraged to use the LOS formula when preparing or updating their individual/joint plans.

Another measure of a municipal park system is the distance people live from a park, in terms of walkability. Focus is less on the number of acres of parkland provided and more on the distribution and determining areas of the community that are

under-served by current facilities. Parkland should be sited throughout the municipality in a way that every neighborhood and every resident is equitably served. While there is no standard for accepted distance, preferably, people and parks are no farther than a five minute (1/4 mile or less) walk in dense (urban) areas or five minutes apart by bicycle in more suburban sections. Distances over ½ mile to a park almost guarantees that most people will either skip the trip or drive. Once we have to drive to a park it doesn't matter how far the park is because it has become a formal destination and not a place to drop in on.

NRPA have suggested outdoor facility development standards which expresses the exact spatial and dimensional requirements for a specific recreation facility. (See NRPA's *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*)

Inventory of Park and Recreation Facilities

The scope of this update involves an analysis of park and recreational opportunities that are available in Berks County through public, non-profit/not-for-profit, or private interests. Inventories of existing and proposed facilities represented a tedious undertaking involving the assistance of various agencies, municipal and school district officials, and concerned individuals. Information was compiled from county tax parcel information, surveys, public input and stakeholder meetings, municipal comprehensive plans, municipal park and recreation plans, and various plans developed by non-profits. This inventory is ever evolving, as constant reassessment of needs and modifications of park facilities is vital. (See Appendix for the inventory of facilities by region and municipality.)

Ownership

In Berks County every level of government, as well as non-profits/not-for-profits, and the private sector share the responsibility to provide citizens with adequate recreation and leisure opportunities. The public sector includes municipal, county, state and the federal government who provide park and recreation facilities/programs for use by the general public supported primarily by tax dollars. Non-profit/not-for-profit recreation providers rely heavily on volunteers, donations, fund raisers, membership fees and are typically social/service/civic organizations, such as lions clubs, churches, fire companies, scout camps, little league organizations and swimming pool associations. The private sector includes commercial recreation businesses, such as golf courses, fitness clubs, ski resorts, miniature golf courses and driving ranges. Together, these recreation providers deliver an inter-related system of leisure and recreation opportunities on 71,000+ acres or thirteen percent of the county land area. The total acreage breakdown by ownership is shown in the following chart. The largest landowner is the Commonwealth with nearly 30,000 acres of gamelands, state parks, and state forests.

Park & Recreation Inventory by Ownership- 2006

<u>Type of Facilities</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Public Facilities	
Federal Lands (Nat'l Parks, Nat'l Historic Sites, etc.).....	7,501
State Lands (Parks, Gamelands, Forest).....	29,801
County Park Lands.....	1,138
Public Regional Sub-Total.....	38,440

Municipal Park Lands, Passive & Active Recreation.....	3,149
Municipal Managed Natural Resource Lands..... (Municipal Watersheds: 10,807)	12,705
Public Local Sub-Total.....	15,854
Public Total.....	54,294***

Private Facilities

Non-Profit, Owned (Berks Co. Conservancy land, Hawk Mt., etc.).....	2,900
Non-Profit, Eased (Berks Co. Conservancy, Wildlands Conservancy)*.....	2,749
Not For Profit, Passive (Sportmans Clubs, Scout Camps, Homeowner Assoc. O/S, etc.)...	4,192
Not For Profit, Active (Swimming Pool Assoc., Little League, Fire Co., Church recreational land., etc.).....	1,679
Commercial (Fitness Clubs, Golf Courses, MiniGolf,SkiAreas,Campgrounds,etc.)**.....	5,517
PrivateTotal.....	17,037

* Eased parcels are conservation easements and do not include agricultural easements as determined by the County Agricultural Land Preservation Board

** Does not include small ventures (Arcades, Karate and Dance Studios, small fitness clubs, gaming, etc.)

*** 10% of County Land Area

Public Parks and Recreation Facilities

Public park and recreation facilities in Berks County consist of municipal, county, state and federal lands. These lands include property specifically managed to provide public passive and active recreation, as well as lands set aside as natural preserves, such as state gamelands, and municipal watershed land. In total, public park and recreation facilities consume approximately 54,294 acres or 9.8 percent of the county's land and water resources. The amount of public park and recreation space has increased by 11,650 acres since 1994. Berks County is fortunate to have a wide range of public park and recreation assets, as well as many of our unique natural and historic features protected by public entities. However, despite the vast inventory of public resources, much of the federal and state land is located along the periphery of the county, and in some cases municipal recreation land is not evenly distributed among its neighborhoods making accessibility problematic for many Berks County residents. Currently, thirty-nine percent of Berks County residents live within a ¼ mile of a public park or recreation area.

Inventory of Federal Lands

The federal government maintains areas that have scenic, historic, conservation or recreation values to the nation. Federal ownership of recreational lands in the county totals over 7,501 acres, the majority of which is associated with Blue Marsh Lake (5,587 acres). Blue Marsh Lake, managed by the U. S. Army Corps of

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Planning Region</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Appalachian Trail	Hawk Mt, Tulpehocken	1,376.04
Blue Marsh Lake/Old Dry Farm Living History Farm	Tulpehocken, Metro	5,587.64
Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site	Southern	<u>537.34</u>
Total Federal Acreage		7,501.02

Engineers, was primarily constructed for flood control with water supply and recreation as secondary uses. However, it has developed into a popular regional recreation venue providing: boating, water skiing, swimming, picnic areas, volleyball and play areas, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, living history farm complex, a variety of winter sports, and thirty+ miles of non-motorized multi-use trails. The federal government also owns 1,376 acres along the ridge of the Blue Mountains (Kittatinny Ridge), forming the northern border of Berks County. Besides protecting the scenic ridgeline these lands serve to protect, in part, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, a nationally known footpath. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site is a National Park Service property located in southern Berks County and Chester County. This site consists of 848 acres, 537 acres of which are located in Berks County. One of the finest examples of a rural 19th century restored iron plantation, Hopewell Furnace is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district.

Inventory of State Lands

State lands provide outdoor recreation in natural settings, environmental education and preserve heritage, natural and wildlife resources. In Berks, more than half the state's ownership is along the Blue Mountains and provides a secondary benefit of protecting the A.T. The Pennsylvania Game Commission owns nearly 20,000 acres of gamelands on ten tracts within Berks County, the majority of which is located along the Blue Mountains. These lands are managed to provide habitat and food for wildlife, but hunting, fishing, hiking, and similar activities are encouraged. Part of the Weiser State Forest is located in Berks County along the Blue Mountains. These 1,515 acres of rugged woodland is located in Forest District #18, and managed by the state's Bureau of Forestry to ensure forest viability and productivity. State Forests are open to the public for hunting, fishing and general recreation. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of State Parks operates the Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center and French Creek State Park. Nolde Forest encompasses more than 628 acres of woodland in Cumru Township, and contains an extensive trail network that makes the center's streams, ponds and diverse habitats accessible to students and casual visitors. The center is maintained for environmental education, but hiking, birding, etc are permitted. French Creek State Park is located along Berks County's southeastern border with Chester County. Nearly 6,000 acres of heavily forested and scenic parkland in Berks County support habitat for plants and

PENNSYLVANIA STATE OWNERSHIP

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Planning Region</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Alsace Forest	Oley Hills	32.86
Charming Forge/Fish & Boat	Tulpehocken	22.43
Conrad Weiser Homestead	Tulpehocken	24.62
Cross Keys/Stoudt's Ferry	Metro	275.1
Desilting Basins		
Daniel Boone Homestead	Southern	494.22
Eplers Landing	Metro	72.33
French Creek State Park	Southern	5,938.69
Gamelands		
#43	Southern	181.16
#52	Southern	1,267.52
#80	Tulpehocken	1,480.98
#106	Hawk Mt.	6,313.31
#110	Hawk Mt., Tulpehocken	7,032.17
#182	Hawk Mt.	263.02
#274	Metro	344.46
#280	Tulpehocken, Metro	2,538.70
#315	Oley Hills	310.74
#324	Metro	7.37
Hamburg Center Watershed	Hawk Mt.	115.01
Kaercher Creek Park (Leased to Berks County)	Hawk Mt.	183.67
Kernsville Rec Area/Desilting Basin	Hawk Mt.	263.73
Leizes Desilting Basin	Metro	41.84
Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center	Metro	628.66
Schuylkill Canal-Five Locks	Hawk Mt.	33.65
Schuylkill Canal-Gibraltar	Southern	8.32
Weiser State Forest	Hawk Mt., Tulpehocken	1,515.82
Wernersville State Hospital Watershed	Tulpehocken	<u>410.55</u>
Total State Acreage		29,800.93

animals. Wide ranges of recreation opportunities are available, including: camping, hiking, fishing, hunting boating, swimming, picnicking, disc golf, orienteering and play areas. Two of the French Creek campsites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as historic districts. French Creek State Park, surrounds Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site and helps preserve lands that the furnace utilized for its natural resources. The Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, aided by volunteer groups, operate two historic homesteads in Berks County, which interpret the life of Daniel Boone and Conrad Weiser. The Daniel Boone Homestead and the Conrad Weiser Homestead are both on the National Register of Historic Places and the Weiser Homestead is also a National Historic Landmark. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission provide opportunities for fishing and boating and their regulation. The Commission's website provides the location of approved trout waters, class A wild trout waters, and boat access/launch ramps throughout Berks County. The Fish and Boat Commission owns the 183-acre Kaercher Creek Park, however leases it to Berks County. Recreation opportunities available at the park include: fishing, boating, picnicking, and play areas. Recreation potential is also available at unique state owned facilities in Berks County. These include watershed land associated with two state hospital complexes, and nine former desilting basins along the Schuylkill River used by the state to facilitate dredging and storage of dredged material associated with the coal industry. Since future dredging is not anticipated downstream of Kernsville Dam, DEP has made the commitment to transfer surplus desilting basins to the local governments for recreation

purposes, if interested. At this time Exeter, Muhlenberg and Union Township's have acquired basins from the state to develop park/recreation facilities. The Schuylkill River Water Trail, designated a National Recreational Trail, runs the 147-

mile length of the Schuylkill River. Water trails are recreational waterways, containing access points and day-use or camping sites for the boating public. The Schuylkill River is considered a Class I-II+ river, containing easy rapids, and is suitable for canoes and kayaks.

Inventory of County Lands

The county’s role is to provide regional park and recreation facilities and programs. The Berks County Parks & Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance, operation and development of over 1,000 acres and 13 (including the state-owned Kaercher Creek Park) park sites, providing active and passive recreation facilities, natural and historic resource protection. The park system features many historic resources including: the Gruber Wagon Works, Wertz’s Red Bridge, Allegheny Aqueduct, and the Leesport Lock House all of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The wagon works is also a National Historic Landmark, and is operated as a museum.



Gring’s Mill Recreation Area

BERKS COUNTY OWNERSHIP		
Facility	Planning region	Acres
Allegheny Aqueduct Historical Park/Beidler House	Southern	34.88
Antietam Lake	Metro, Oley Hills	479.24
Berks County 4-H Center (Leased to 4-H Development Council)	Metro	29.44
Berks Neversink	Southern, Metro	38.24
Camp Joy	Metro	25.46
Hunsicker's Grove	Oley Hills	48.04
Leesport Lock House	Metro	1.37
Reading Fairgrounds (Leased to Agricultural & Horticultural Assoc of Berks Co)	Metro	73.63
Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park		
Berks Leisure Area	Metro	8.5
Gring's Mill Rec. Area	Metro	45.79
Heritage Center	Metro	45.71
Red Bridge Rec. Area	Metro	7.03
Stonecliffe Rec. Area	Metro	12.36
Union Canal Bicycle & Walking Trail	Metro, Tulpehocken	170.68
Youth Recreation Facility	Metro	117.42
Total County Acreage		1,137.79

The C. Howard Hiester Canal Center presents the history of the Union Canal and the Schuylkill Navigation System in an interactive museum setting. The five-mile long Union Canal

Bicycle and Walking Trail, designated as a National Recreation Trail, connects five of the County's park/recreation facilities, not under the purview of the Parks & Recreation Department, but provide leisure opportunities include the Reading Fairgrounds and the 4-H Center. The fairgrounds is leased to and maintained by the Agricultural and Horticultural Association of Berks County as the home for the Reading Fair. Facilities include pole barns for livestock and other exhibitions, and a midway for vendors and amusements. The 4-H Center is leased to and maintained by the 4-H Development Council to foster the 4-H program in Berks County. Facilities include two horse-show rings, and a community building for public exhibitions and recreation purposes.

The Berks County Parks & Recreation Department offers more than 125 recreational and educational programs scheduled throughout the year, including: playground activities, concerts, interpretive lectures and workshops, and annual special events and festivals

Inventory of Municipal Facilities

The role of municipal government is to provide close-to-home park and recreation facilities and programs for the benefit of their residents (see Appendix 5.2 Facilities Inventory). Park and recreation facilities and programs are an essential public service in communities where people desire to live, work, and enjoy life. Municipal parkland grew by 8,100 acres since 1994. Some municipalities have begun to acquire natural resource areas, usually through the subdivision process, that is not used for active recreation other than trails, but used to protect floodplains, wetlands, or other environment resources. These non-recreational lands can be of value to a community,

protecting water quality, improve stormwater management, providing wildlife habitat and providing scenic viewsheds, which can improve the value of adjacent homes. Berks County, in aggregate, appears to be adequately supplied with local close-to-home recreation acreage. Local municipal recreation acreage totals 3,149 in comparison to the NRPA minimum recommended 2,448 acres, based on 2004 population. Countywide, this equates to 8 acres of local close-to-home recreation space per 1,000 persons. However, based on the regional analysis found in Chapter 3, not all regions or municipalities met the minimum NRPA guidelines of 6.25 acres/1,000 population. The Southern Highlands and the Metro Regions are the only regions that exceed the minimum guidelines, while only 28 municipalities have enough municipal recreation acreage to accommodate their current population. The remaining 45 municipalities are deficient in providing recreational facilities for their residents, some more than others. A total of 21 municipalities need less than 10 acres to accommodate current residents, while 24 need more than 10 acres. Sixteen municipalities out of the 45 that are deficient currently provide no recreation facilities. In most cases, these municipalities rely upon adjacent municipal facilities, school district facilities, and/or local service organizations to provide their recreational acreage. Most municipalities will have to increase their recreational acreage, some significantly, over the next decade in order to meet the needs of their growing populations.

Recreation programs are an important service to our residents and many times are overlooked, as municipalities do not fully understand their role in providing leisure activities. Ideally, municipal programs should be planned to offer diverse activities that meet the needs of all ages and interests. Recreation programs are not just athletic activities. A well-planned program also focuses on arts & crafts, performing arts, education, fitness & wellness, and special events

(festivals, parades, and holiday activities). Over sixty percent of Berks County's municipalities provide organized recreation programs for their residents. Of those programs provided, playground programs were clearly offered the most, with athletic leagues/lessons (baseball, softball, soccer and basketball) offered second most. Due to the rural nature of parts of the county and its dispersed population, it is difficult for many of our rural municipalities to address local recreation needs. Only a few municipalities offer a well-rounded recreation program. These municipalities also have progressive public relations program, with websites and newsletters to advertise programs to their residents. In most cases, communities tap the local school district for use of their indoor and outdoor facilities.

A majority of Berks County municipalities have appointed a recreation board or commission to oversee their parkland and recreation programs, while only a handful have park and recreation departments. Several municipalities have recently updated or prepared their first local park and recreation plans. However, a majority of our municipalities rely upon the recreation evaluation provided in their joint comprehensive plans or have obsolete or no recreation plans at all. As varied as our municipal recreation acreage and planning efforts, so is our municipal expenditures on parks and recreation. Annual municipal expenditure in Berks County ranged from \$2.4 million to zero dollars in 2004.

School Districts

Public school districts play a vital role in providing recreation services by allowing community use of their indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, meeting rooms, auditoriums, computer labs, etc. In many rural communities, school districts are often the major provider of recreation facilities.

All of our school districts cooperate with local youth sports organizations to share their gymnasiums and/or sports fields. However, according to our surveys, approximately half of our school districts have agreements with municipalities to share the use of facilities. It is assumed that this moderate use of school facilities by municipalities is due to the fact that many municipalities do not offer any or a very limited schedule of recreation programs. In limited cases, school districts use municipal sports fields for scholastic events. While schools are an important source of recreation facilities for community use, availability (especially of indoor recreation facilities) can be a problem since school related activities have top priority for scheduling.

Non-profit and Private Sectors

These sectors play a significant role in providing recreation and leisure opportunities. They supplement public resources by providing capacity and resources that are beyond the realm of the public sector. Berks County has a host of community groups, other non-profit and private recreation providers that contribute greatly to our recreation /leisure opportunities:

- Countless youth athletic organizations/little leagues/legion programs located in most communities throughout Berks County offering a range of programs including soccer, football, baseball, softball, basketball, wrestling, field hockey, ice hockey, and cheerleading. These programs fulfill the need for youth recreation, and in doing so diminish the burden on municipalities to provide such services. Municipalities should support the work of these organizations financially and/or sharing the use of municipal facilities;
- Service organizations such as Lions and Rotary Clubs are very important throughout the county as they not only

- contribute financially to municipal recreation, but in some cases they own and maintain recreation facilities;
- Outdoor swimming associations are located in over 20 communities;
- Churches often programs for youth and senior citizens, as well as facilities for softball, picnicking, and some are providing community centers and campgrounds;
- Fire companies often provide ballfields, picnic facilities and social halls;
- YMCA, Olivets Boys and Girls Club, Camp Fire USA provide recreation centers and camps;
- 37 Sportsman and Rod & Gun Clubs own over 2,220 acres;
- Homeowner Associations, organized in residential developments, in which the individual owners share common interests and responsibilities for the costs and upkeep of common open space;
- Berks County Sports Commission, a committee of the Greater Reading Convention and Visitors Bureau, promotes Berks County as a destination for state, national and international sporting events. The Commission is responsible for bringing the National Archery tournament and Skate America to Berks County;
- Berks Arts Council hosts the annual Jazz Fest and bandshell concert series, made possible by corporate sponsorship;
- Numerous organizations that annually sponsor festivals and fairs that celebrate our people and our agricultural and industrial heritage;
- several theatrical and musical organizations;
- Commercial recreation entities that provide a wide range of opportunities including, golf courses and driving ranges, miniature golf, bowling alleys, fitness centers, campgrounds, ice and roller skating facilities, rock climbing, racing venues, ski area and museums;
- Six professional sports teams, including baseball, ice hockey, soccer, indoor and outdoor football, and basketball;

- Hawk Mountain Sanctuary is a non-profit organization dedicated to raptor conservation, and is a world-class observation site and field station for raptor migration. The Sanctuary's 2,600 acres is situated along one of the most significant raptor migration flyways in North America;
- The BicyclePA movement involves the development and signing of seven cross-state border to border bicycle routes using lower traffic volume public roads and rail trails. Two BicyclePA routes traverse Berks County. Route S, the states southern east-west route, uses Pa 23 through Caernarvon Township in the southern part of the County. Route L, the states eastern north-south route, follows a north-south route through the rural eastern part of the County. See PennDot's website for maps at www.dot.state.pa..

2.4 Greenway Resources

What is a Greenway?

“A greenway is a corridor of open space. Greenways vary greatly in scale, from narrow ribbons of green that run through urban, suburban, and rural areas to wider corridors that incorporate diverse natural, cultural and scenic features. They can incorporate both public and private property, and can be land-based or water-based. They may follow old railways, canals, or ridge tops, or they may follow stream corridors, shoreline or wetlands, and include water trails for non-motorized craft.”

“Some greenways are recreational corridors or scenic byways that may accommodate motorized and non-motorized vehicles. Others function almost exclusively for environmental protection and are not designed for human passage. Greenways differ in their location and function, but overall, a

greenway will protect natural, cultural and scenic resources, provide recreational benefits, enhance the natural beauty and the quality of life in neighborhoods and communities, and stimulate economic development opportunities.”

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

The County of Berks greenway network is an overlay of the three main elements of the plan; Recreation, Green Infrastructure/Ecology and Heritage Resources. These elements are composed of hubs, nodes and corridors. They range in size and function. Functions of a hub, node or corridor may include one, two or all three of the main elements. (See Chapter 1 for definitions of the greenway network components) A priority of the Plan is to establish interconnectivity of greenways that will ensure the County's most sensitive ecological assets remain viable while expanding access to recreational opportunities and preservation of the County's heritage resources.

The main benefit of the Greenway Network is the preservation of habitat. Certain species require larger areas in order to reproduce. As the habitat areas are developed these species become compromised and either does not reproduce or the genetic stability of the species is lowered. Other species are affected by the loss of interior forests, barriers to their water supply or breeding grounds, or changes in their habitat that in turn affect their food supply or breeding grounds. Through the Greenway Network, which will interconnect the hubs and nodes with corridors, preservation of the most important ecological areas in the County of Berks will occur and will interconnect with other Counties to form a regional greenway network.

Other benefits of the Greenway Network are the creation of additional interconnected recreational opportunities and the

preservation of historic and heritage resources. With the large recreational facilities, such as Blue Marsh Lake, the Appalachian Trail and Lake Ontelaunee located within the County of Berks and numerous historic and heritage resources “clusters” when linked to the ecological factors create a unique ability to draw tourists to the area.

In order to define the parameters of the main elements of the Plan, steering committees, made up of persons with specific knowledge of each element, were created. These steering committees reviewed the background data for each of the three elements and made suggestions as to the accuracy, importance and prioritization of each data set based upon their own individual experiences. This information along with the public survey input and various other survey information collected throughout the County helped to create and prioritize the Greenway Network.

The Greenway Network identifies, by priority and type, the greenways, hubs and nodes that are the most important in the County of Berks to preserve. Some of these designations are based entirely upon the need to protect habitat, while others are ranked high due to the combination of the three elements. While individual municipalities or not-for-profit organizations may also have priorities that do not necessarily reflect what is shown on the Greenway Network; that does not mean that their projects are not noteworthy. In many cases projects are reflected in the Chapter 3 region recommendations, which are high priorities for that region, but are not considered regional on a County, Multi-County, State or Federal ranking, and therefore not reflected on the Greenway Network.

Chapter 3

Implementation Plan

Chapter 3 – Implementation Plan

The Implementation chapter of this Plan outlines the overall countywide actions for each of the three major elements – Ecology, Heritage and Park & Recreation. It also introduces the Berks County Greenway Network, which depicts the system of hubs, nodes and corridors to be promoted and implemented by our partners. The countywide recommendations are followed by a brief overview of each of our five regions, which includes a matrix of recommendations and maps identifying each region’s ecologic, heritage and park resources.

3.1 Countywide Implementation

Ecology

One of the major attractions of Berks County is the large amounts of natural areas that are still fairly “untouched” by development. Unfortunately with the demand for land increasing and the desire to build homes in the “country”; these largely untouched natural areas are slowly being eaten away. The irony of these new developments is that many are named for the natural resources that they have destroyed or altered. (Orchard View, Oak Ridge ...)

The highest ecological priority is to **establish and protect the hubs, corridors and nodes** and interconnect them with greenways. This system will provide the protection of the County’s most environmentally sensitive areas while also preserving the highest quality habitat. In order for species to survive and prosper there must be sufficient quality habitat and interconnection of this habitat for foraging, diversification and propagation.

With this in mind the County used the Natural Lands Trust’s Smart Conservation Modeling process to identify the top habitat areas of the County. The model created a conservation resource data layer based upon four subgroups: Vertebrate, Aquatic, Terrestrial and PNDI habitat areas. The information from the modeling process and input from the steering committees and other studies indicated areas with the highest conservation values.

The three most important and largest, ecological areas are the Big Woods, Oley Hills, and the Kittatinny Ridge. During the modeling process these three areas contained more of the identified highest valued conservation areas for ecological habitat preservation than anywhere else within the County.

Land Use Regulations and Easements The key to establishing and protecting these habitat areas is conservation regulations and a source of funding for easements and acquisition. The County has begun this process by adopting the Natural Land, Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program. One part of this program is the Conservation Zoning Incentive Program (CZIP). The CZIP establishes minimum standards to be included in municipal zoning to help protect environmentally sensitive and ecologically important areas. These smart growth regulations include:

- Floodplain protection
- Wetland protection
- Riparian Buffers
- Steep slopes
- Moderate slopes
- Vegetation Management
- Timber management

- Historic Preservation
- Protection of EV and EQ streams
- Wellhead Protection
- Trail Protection
- Interconnection of undisturbed areas

The second part of the Natural Land, Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program allows those municipalities that have zoning regulations that meet the conservation zoning minimum criteria to access funding for the purchase of easements that are consistent with the County's planning priorities. Part three allows non-profit land trusts to also purchase easements or acquire land within a municipality that has zoning that meets the conservation zoning minimum criteria. While this program is a great start, the County needs to determine a funding source to continue the program in future years. It is also very important to support and help local groups and municipalities in their efforts to seek outside funding sources for projects consistent with the County's planning priorities. This will maximize available funding. Historically few municipalities within the County access funding through sources outside of the County.

Water Quality In addition to the smart growth development regulations mentioned above, it is important for municipalities to incorporate regulations and undertake programs that will help to restore and preserve water ways and drinking water supplies. Degraded streams and public water supplies not only affect the ecological habitat, but also have an enormous impact on the treatment costs for public drinking water.

Support of local, regional, state and federal organizations Many different groups and organizations have a vested interest in the preservation of the County's ecological habitats. These groups include:

- Local rod and gun club's that own large undisturbed areas for hunting and fishing
- non-profit conservancies that are actively seeking to preserve land
- churches and schools that control considerable acreage
- local, state and federal agencies that target a variety of programs for water quality improvement, water quantity controls, recreation, forestry, fishing, hunting, tourism.

Through coordination with these various organizations the County's goal towards preservation of its natural resources will occur faster and be more economically feasible.

Education and Awareness In order for the public to understand the importance of the County's natural resources to their everyday quality of life, educational programs are needed to raise their awareness to these issues. Many people do not understand how the loss of the County's natural resources would affect their lives. Only when their wells become contaminated or they are faced with a situation that directly affects them do they understand the importance of preserving and conserving natural resources. Educational programs will also help citizens to participate in decisions about spending tax dollars for conservation programs.

Database Maintenance Changes in the PNDI and ecological habitat information must be tracked so that future updates are easier to accomplish. Also, up-to-date information will help to prioritize funding to maximize results.

Eco Tourism A wide variety of activities attracts a significant number of tourists to Berks County. These activities include bird watching at Hawk Mountain, boating on Blue Marsh, hiking the Appalachian Trail, and hunting and fishing throughout the

County. This tourism benefits our economy and our environment. Businesses in the County target specific tourists and rely upon them for their economic viability. This economic benefit helps to promote the environmental awareness of residents by engaging them in conservation which promotes the local economy.

Parks and Recreation

The need for recreation facilities increases as our population grows, as development consumes more green space and as people realize the need to maintain a healthy level of physical activity. Restoring our existing parks, creating new parks, and developing regional trail networks are investments that will lead to greater civic pride and change perceptions of residents and visitors about the health of Berks County and its commitment to our quality of life. In turn, these amenities can contribute to economic renewal and growth by stimulating tourism, retail, small business and cultural activity.

Trails are the outdoor recreation activity most often requested in both national and local recreation surveys. Trails and greenways are valued for their ability to link people with destinations and enhance the beauty of community centers. The ability to avoid congested streets and travel through natural areas is a large factor in a community's livability as trails provide natural, scenic areas that cause people to want to be outside and active. The development of

“Trails connect communities, they connect people to the outdoors and they are an economic development tool for the trail towns that lie along them.”

Pennsylvania Governor Rendell

community trails and greenways has been happening for decades, but linking these separate trails into a regional network is relatively new. As trails begin to interconnect, regional networks emerge creating linkages within and between communities.

Establishing a continuous regional trail network inter-connecting communities throughout Berks County as shown on the Trail Network Map is the top recreation recommendation. This will be a green infrastructure upon which Berks can build for decades to come. The Schuylkill River Land and Water Trail (SRT) will become the backbone of this linear park system. In Berks County, when complete, the SRT will extend 40+ miles and directly pass through 17 separate and diverse municipalities. Two sections of the trail are nearing completion—the SRT-Thun Section and the SRT-Bartram Section. The Thun Section runs from Reading to Pottstown, Montgomery County, and the Bartram Section travels from Hamburg to Auburn, Schuylkill County. Planning is just being completed to determine the possible trail alignment from Reading to Hamburg. Numerous groups and public entities will have to support the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (SRHA) to assemble the parcels of land and acquire the funding to construct the trail in the coming years.

Host municipalities and the County should work with the SRHA when subdivision and land developments are proposed along the future alignment. The County should explore adopting an Official Map and Ordinance to reserve the future SRT alignment. It is recommended that as major sections of the SRT are completed that they become part of the County's linear park system. This is part of a larger effort by the SRHA to create a 140-mile trail network between Pottsville and Philadelphia, traversing five counties. Major portions of this trail are complete

or are in development stages. SRHA has formed a Trail Council to work together to create a unified trail system. This network also provides regional connections to other state designated greenways-the Appalachian Trail, Horse-Shoe Trail, and the proposed Highlands Trail, which will traverse eastern and southern Berks. Additional land needs to be acquired along portions of both the Appalachian Trail and Horse-Shoe Trail located in Berks County to buffer and preserve the trail.

The local network is well underway as two tributary trails; the County's Union Canal Trail and the Wyomissing Creek Trail, already connect to the SRT providing access to additional communities and destinations, such as museums, hospitals, county parks and the Blue Marsh HUB. The County's proposed Hay Creek Trail, planned to connect to the SRT in Birdsboro, will cross the Horse-Shoe Trail providing access to French Creek State Park and Hopewell Furnace National Park, traverses Bryn Eyre, and will connect to the proposed Chester County trail network in Elverson. The Twin Valley School District's central campus can be easily connected to the trail by cooperating with an adjacent local youth recreation organization.

Future trails are being planned to connect Neversink Mountain, and Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center to the SRT. In addition, many Berks County communities are planning trails that will connect their neighborhoods and local parks to the SRT and its local network. It is hoped that the trail network, once established, will form loop trails to provide users with alternate experiences. With so much of our history tied to the Schuylkill River Corridor, this trail network presents a way to highlight that heritage. It provides an opportunity for people to bike, walk, jog along the waterway and experience the engineering feats associated with the canals and railroads, which are reminders of our prosperity and progress, and the industries that relied on

them for transportation. Interpretive and wayfinding signage, trailheads, other pedestrian and bicycle amenities, and boat landings should be provided at appropriate locations along the trail network. In many cases, adjacent local parks can serve as trailheads to the SRT. SRHA has created a standardized system of signs, so that users recognize the entire trail as a single unit. Municipalities and other recreation providers located along this trail network are encouraged to use these flexible sign guidelines.

Trail management and maintenance are important to ensure a trail user's experience is pleasant and safe. Volunteer organizations can be the eyes and ears of the trail network. While trails are popular and successful once open, local residents have a range of concerns during their development regarding the impact the trail will have on the community. Research suggests that trail use helps ensure trail safety, as the presence of others helps minimize undesirable behavior, and trails can bolster property values of adjacent properties. This trail network should be supplemented by creating signature parks that provide quality recreation experiences, stimulates community revitalization, and creates attractive destination points along the trail system. Signature parks are currently being planned on Neversink Mountain, in Union Township, Muhlenberg Township, Tilden Township and Hamburg Borough, and the Reading urban area riverfronts. The creation of this network of trails and parks depends upon the commitment, partnership and coordination between our local jurisdictions, public agencies, non-profits, private sector and grassroots support.

Other top recreation priorities include:

Refocus the mission of the County's Parks and Recreation Department. In September 2006 the Berks County Parks Department underwent a Peer Review by parks and recreation planning professionals. This peer review process evaluated the parks and recreation department and offered a number of recommendations to improve and expand the department. The review recommends that the County should reconsider the basic mission and way that the department delivers services. This means shifting resources from some activities and services to different priorities. The Peer Review and its recommendations are contained in a subsequent section of this plan. By taking on the additional passive parkland and trails, the County will have to consider additional staff and equipment needs. Active recreation facilities and programs should be de-emphasized.

In order to take the leadership role in implementing this Plan, the County should hire a trail coordinator who would assist all partners in the implementation and maintenance of this trail network. Currently, the County does not have any staff that is actively working to create the greenway network. While the County has had funding from State and Federal sources for the acquisition and construction of specific trail projects, it has not always been successful because of a lack of project staff. A new position should be developed for Trail Coordinator whose job would be to oversee the creation of the greenway network.

Other County projects that merit attention include:

- Enhancement of existing parks and historic resources (structures, museum collection and exhibits)
- Acquisition of additional land to buffer historic resources at both the Berks County Heritage Center and the Leesport Lockhouse

- Completion of the Hay Creek Trail
- Creating and implementing a master plan for the Antietam Lake property
- Assume ownership/maintenance of completed sections of the SRT
- Renewing the long-term lease or acquiring Kaercher Creek Park from the state
- Explore ownership of Neversink Mountain Preserve
- Creation of Confluence Point Park as a formal connection between the Union Canal Trail and the SRT
- Complete/update master plans for all county parks

Providing close-to-home active recreation should be the responsibility of the local municipalities. It is essential that all municipalities prepare/update a Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan to guide their recreation planning. Reassessment of needs ensures that facilities and programs provide the service their users seek. Where appropriate, municipalities should prepare joint plans, create recreation boards and share facilities with adjacent jurisdictions. Municipalities should form cooperative use agreements with local school districts for joint use of school facilities that supplement recreation facilities and programs. A capital improvement program should be developed that provides adequate funding for operation and maintenance, new facilities and programs. Alternative funding sources should be explored including a variety of grants, corporate sponsorship, endowments, volunteer program and user fees. Land use ordinances should be assessed for adequate recreation provisions, sensitive design techniques, growing greener provisions and smart growth concepts. There is a new focus on the relationship between community planning and design, and the health and physical activity of residents. Conventional design and single-use zoning of neighborhoods cause

recreation facilities to be isolated and inaccessible. Tools that communities are using to promote smart growth also help enhance public health include:

- Permit TND (Traditional Neighborhood Development) and other compact mixed-use development.
- Create walkable communities by providing infrastructure that supports pedestrian and bicycle activity; require a network of sidewalks and trails in new developments; retrofit developed areas with sidewalks and trails; institute traffic calming measures that slow vehicular traffic; create safe routes to schools and link open spaces.
- Require street connectivity; ensure that streets in new developments link up with street stubs provided in older developments; provide multiple points of linkage to adjoining properties.
- The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code provides municipalities the authority to adopt an Official Map /Ordinance, and collect recreation impact fees and/or land-in-lieu of fees through the subdivision and land development process. The municipality must have a formally adopted recreation plan in order to require public dedication of land for park and recreation purposes. The Official Map allows municipalities to reserve for future taking or acquisition of land for public use, including park and recreation areas.

Economic-Tourism Potential. Encourage the collective effort of the public, private and non-profit sectors in providing park and recreation facilities, festivals and entertainment. We should build upon the economic potential of these combined recreation destinations and events, as they will draw visitors from near and far. Create a marketing strategy that advocates and sustains this tourism.

Heritage

The following recommendations will allow the County to both protect and build upon its important heritage resources.

Currently, the County does not employ any staff that is charged with overall heritage preservation duties. A **Heritage Coordinator** is needed to implement the recommendations of this plan and coordinate local preservation activities. The coordinator would change the approach to preservation from reactive to proactive. Duties would include raising awareness, securing funds, and managing.

Continue to Identify Historic Resources must be a priority for moving forward. This will create the factual and accurate basis for municipal regulations that will preserve remaining assets and reinforce the region's historic character. Additional opportunities include: land use regulations, historic districts/HARBs, Main Street/Elm Street Programs, façade improvement programs and Traditional Neighborhood Development.

Supporting and Promoting the Efforts of Non-Profit Organizations and the Public is crucial as these groups have traditionally taken the lead in preserving heritage resources. Conservation groups can be supported by donations and endowments as well as through volunteer assistance. Since preservation efforts sometimes meet resistance, it is important that the projects have substantial public support.

Promoting Heritage Tourism by tourist agencies and the private sector is an indirect and often overlooked method of historic preservation. Establishing a thriving tourist economy, with elements based on heritage resources, creates a valuable income and tax base (and helps offset the misnomer that

historic preservation is not profitable). Early marketing efforts can include brochures, festivals/events and walking/biking/self guided tours. Long-term investments can include historically oriented parks, and museums. Finally, promoting heritage tourism has secondary benefits that include a sense of pride in one's community and further raising awareness for preservation of heritage resources.

Greenway Network

The greenway network is composed of a system of hubs, nodes and corridors that highlight our significant ecological habitats, historic, cultural and recreational resources. The purpose is to identify an overall greenway network that will provide a framework for statewide, regional and local greenway planning, and implementation. The desired long-term outcome is a network that functions as a whole, resulting in a seamless green infrastructure that is vital to the health of Berks County's ecological systems and human communities. The network components range in size and function, as depicted on the Berks County Greenway Network Map located at the end of this section.

Ecological Hub- act as anchors for the network and are primarily large areas of significant natural resource value that support native species, maintain vital ecological functions, and protect significant geologic features. They provide habitat for wildlife moving to or through them. If located in flyways, serve as a resting point and gathering location for migratory birds. Many of these hubs support quality water resources. Most are based entirely upon the need to protect the ecological habitat or geologic feature through a variety of preservation or conservation (allowing low-impact development) techniques. Others, while displaying significant natural resource, also

contain regional parkland or heritage resources. Twenty Ecological Hubs are identified:

Blue Marsh	Mt Penn/Antietam/Neversink
Brecknock Heights	Nolde
Daniel Boone	Northkill Headwaters
Hawk Mt/The Pinnacle	Oley Hills
Lake Ontelaunee	Perkiomen Uplands
Little Manatawny	Schuylkill Palisades
Lower Allegheny	South Mountain
Lower Ironstone	Spring Hills
Lower Sacony	The Big Woods
Monocacy Hill	Trout Run

Destination Hub- act as anchors for the network and are urban type communities with concentrations of cultural, historic and local recreational resources. The opportunity exists to become major destinations providing dynamic public spaces, and a variety of entertainment, hospitality, other tourism-related activity. Most are ideal locations for trailhead commerce. Six Destination Hubs are identified:

Bernville	Kutztown
Boyertown	Leesport
Fleetwood	Sinking Spring
Greater Reading	

Destination/Ecological Hub- act as anchors for the network and are comprised of a variety of significant natural and man-made resources and activity, providing major destinations. The opportunity exists to become major destinations providing dynamic public spaces, and a variety of entertainment, hospitality, other tourism-related activity. Most are ideal

locations for trailhead commerce. Six Destination/Ecological Hubs are identified:

Birdsboro	RiverPlace
Hamburg	Robesonia
Mohnton	St. Lawrence

Nodes- they are smaller versions of the three types of hubs, typically of local significance. Consist of identifiable groupings of resources, a single point of interest, a cross roads of two ecological corridors, smaller boroughs or villages. They may be suitable for trailhead commerce. There are three ecological nodes, eighteen destination nodes and eleven destination/ecological nodes identified.

Greenway Corridors- are linear features that link together our hubs and nodes. They traverse ridge-tops, are riparian buffers along waterways, or are ecological areas of value. Generally, corridor width is depicted wider than needed to allow for location flexibility or to accommodate multiple uses. Where corridors are shown to narrow it indicates possible “choke” points that may need special attention. Corridors can function as ecological and/or recreational with either showcasing historic resources. Ecological corridors are linear undeveloped, preserved green space that assist wildlife migration, facilitate the flow of other ecological processes, and can provide limited passive opportunities for people to interact with nature. By allowing animal and plant species to spread beyond an isolated Hub, a species health can be maintained. Recommended width of ecological corridors is a minimum of 1,000 feet. Recreation corridors provide location for trails and can be designed to accommodate hikers, bicyclists and/or equestrians. While recreation corridors may promote wildlife movement, it is secondary to the recreational use. The corridor network

consists of primary corridors and a variety of secondary corridors:

Primary Connections- primary corridor of statewide, multi-county or countywide significance, and provide the opportunity for linkages to other counties. Many of these corridors are essential for the ecological and recreational networks to function. They form a regional network to which secondary corridors may connect.

- Kittatinny Ridge Greenway (Ecological and Recreational)
- Schuylkill River Greenway (Ecological, Recreational, Historical)
- Highlands Greenway (Note that this greenway is composed of five sections-Antietam, Horse-Shoe, Perkiomen, South Mountain, and Trout Run) (Ecological and Recreational)
- Tulpehocken Greenway (Ecological and Recreational)
- Maiden Creek Greenways (Ecological and Recreational)
- Northkill Greenway (Ecological)
- Allegheny Greenway (Ecological)
- East Penn Valley Greenways (Ecological and Recreational)

Secondary Connections- secondary corridor of countywide/multi-municipal significance that compliment the primary connections. Many assist the ecological network.

Oley Hills Greenways
Oley Valley Greenways

Additional Connections- corridor of multi-municipal/local significance that connect to secondary or primary corridors. Many have the opportunity to function as recreational/heritage corridors.

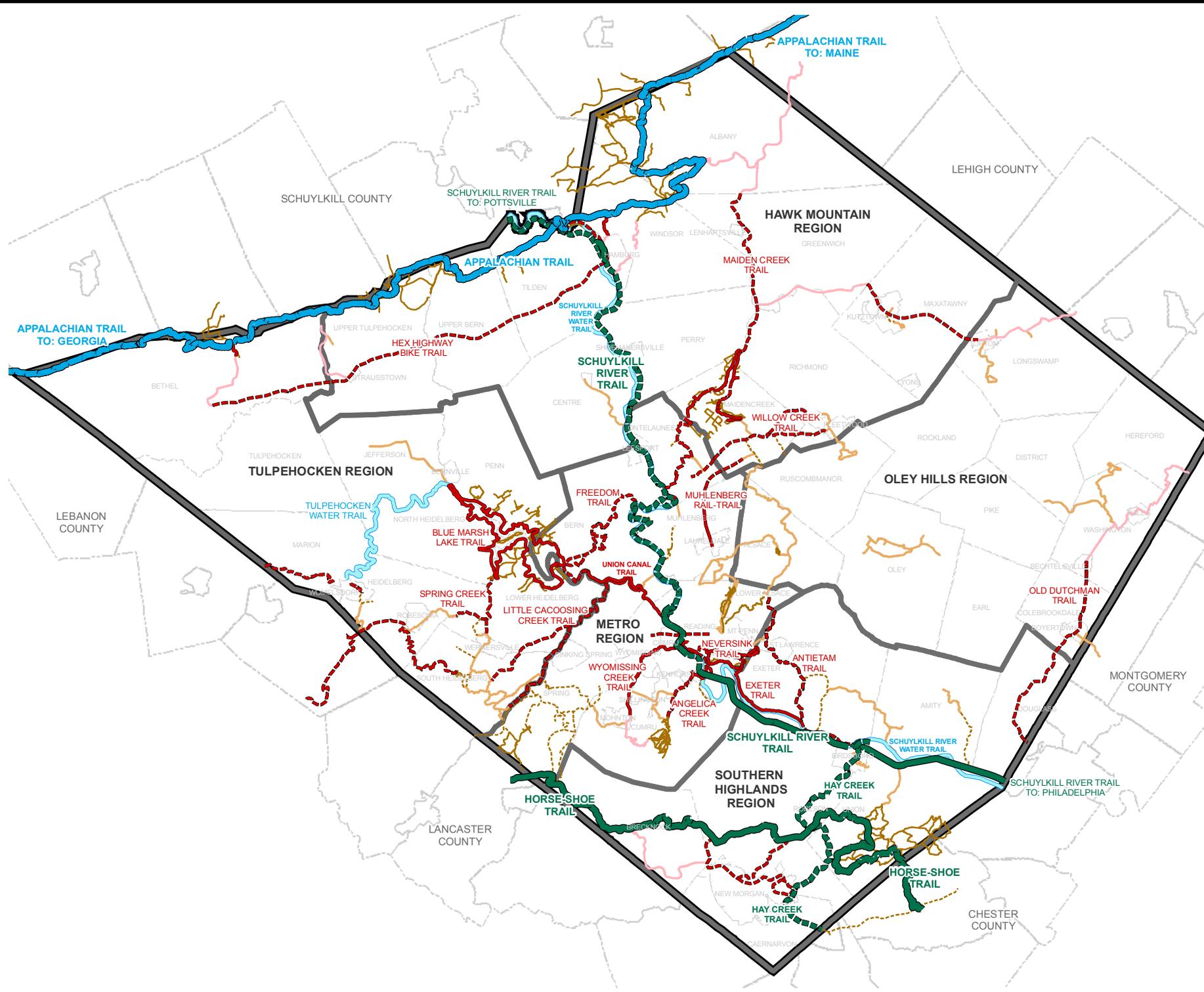
- Andulhea Greenway
- Cacoosing Valley Greenways
- Exeter Trails
- Hex Highway
- Leaf Creek Trail
- Muhlenberg Trails
- Old Dutchman Trail
- Willow Creek Greenways

It is important to note that the greenway network does not require or imply public ownership of all the land in the system. Privately owned land will play an important role, particularly in the conservation of the ecological hubs, nodes and corridors. The rarity or ecological importance determines the level of conservation or preservation needed to protect the resource.

Partners-The Greenway Network is by nature a blend of various resources and opportunities, which means that no one entity can be responsible for its creation. Implementing this network over many years will require the combined efforts of many stakeholders, including all levels of government, the non-profit community, as well as the private sector. Municipalities will have to take an active role because they have the ability to assemble portions of the greenway network through the development process. Non-profits should take the lead where conservation rather than public use is the objective. Individual land stewardship will be important.

Securing funding- Lack of funding is a major problem for most of our public and non-profit partners. In order to adequately implement this greenway network there needs to be dependable funding sources to initiate programs, buy conservation easements, build and maintain parks and trails, conserve ecological habitat, restore historical resources, and ultimately complete the extensive greenway network throughout Berks County. We all have to commit to establishing a dedicated source of public funding and aggressively explore alternate sources to supplement our public investment. A list of financing resources is located in Chapter 5, Section 5.

BERKS COUNTY TRAIL NETWORK



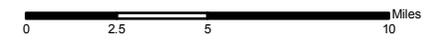
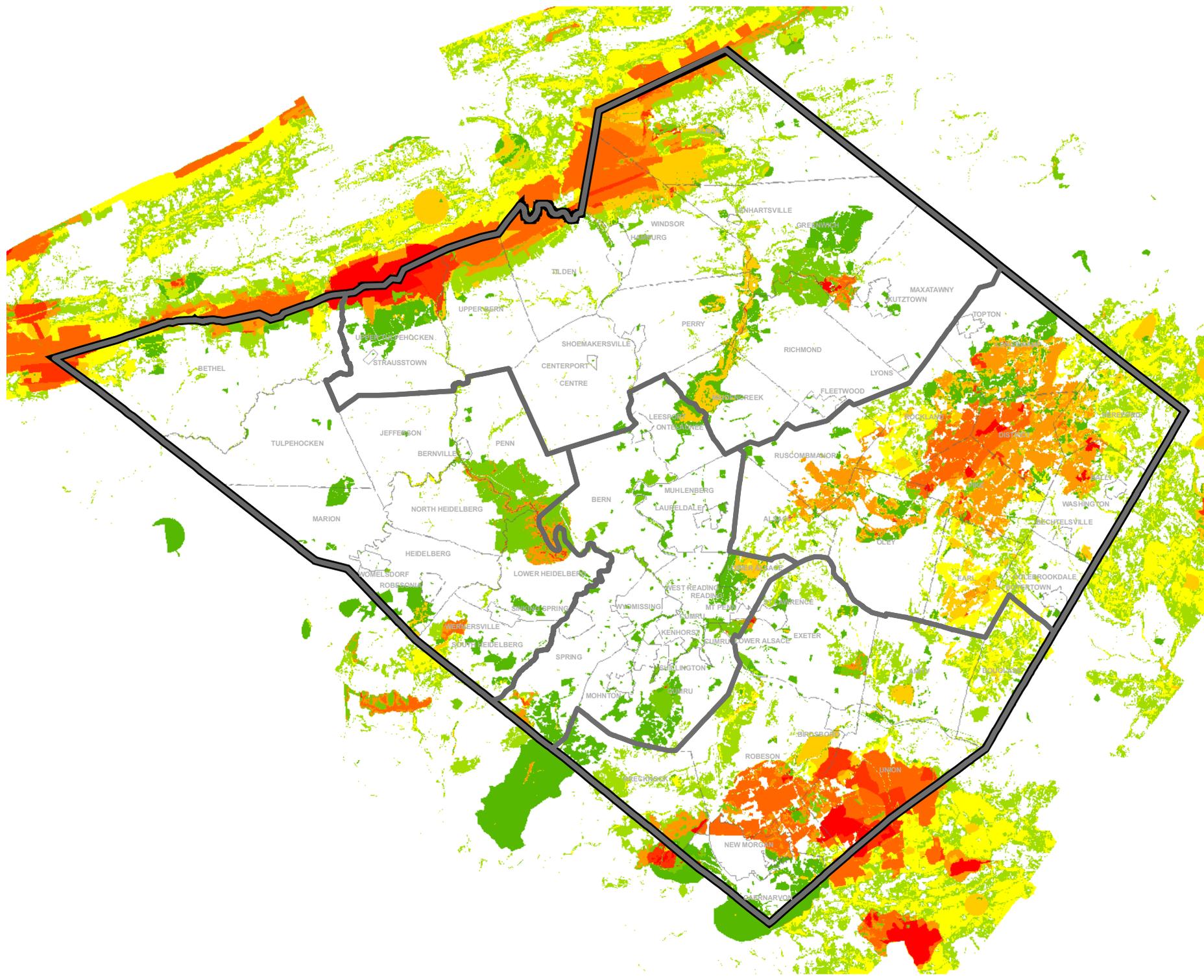
Trail Network

- Hierarchy**
- Interstate
 - Intercounty
 - Regional
 - Local
 - Proposed Intercounty
 - Proposed Regional
 - Proposed Local
 - Water Trail
 - Potential Regional Connection
 - Potential Local Connection
- Regions**
- Regions
 - Municipal Bounds

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
with The Berks County Parks Department
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Berks County Ecologic Resources Draft for Public Review



Ecologic Modeling

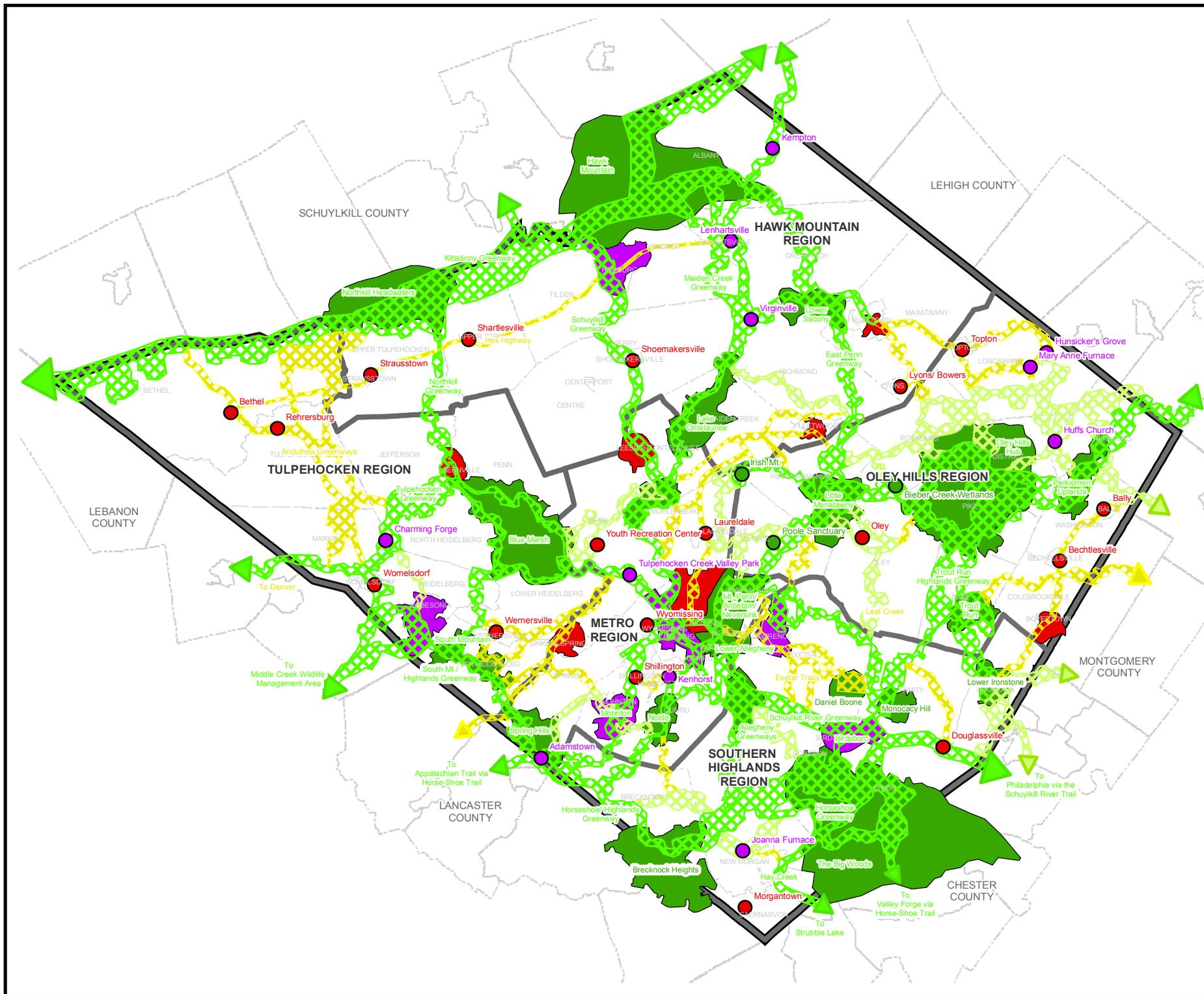
- 1 - High Value
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 - Highest Value

- Municipal Boundaries
- Streams
- Regions

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
with The Berks County Parks Department
The Natural Lands Trust
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

BERKS COUNTY GREENWAY NETWORK



Greenway Hubs

- Ecological
- Destination/ Ecological
- Destination

Greenway Corridors

- Primary Connection
- Secondary Connection
- Additional Connection

Greenway Nodes

- Ecological
- Destination/ Ecological
- Destination

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
with The Berks County Parks Department
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Chapter 3.2

Hawk Mountain Region

3.2 Hawk Mountain Region

The Hawk Mountain Region has a diverse composition. Like the Tulpehocken Region, its northern bounds are made up of an ecologic corridor called the Kittatinny Ridge. From north to south through the center of the region runs the Schuylkill, a designated Pennsylvania Scenic River (Act 283). There is an extensive German heritage that can still be observed within the region's citizens and architecture. Recreational resources vary in size and ownership but overall are sufficiently provided for within the region.

Recreation

Recreation is provided by municipal and regional parks and includes amenities like hiking, biking, fishing, boating, tot-lots and picnicking. Additional facilities are provided by the school districts within the area that in many instances allow citizens to use their facilities at no cost. According to our analysis, the Hawk Mountain Region's municipalities adequately provide recreational opportunities for their citizens. However, population stressors spilling over from Lehigh County could potentially create future need.

Since the last Berks County Recreation Plan completed in 1993, which identified the Schuylkill River Corridor as a High Priority, much has been accomplished in creating Schuylkill River Trail connections. Building on the nearly complete trail that extends from Philadelphia to Reading, the Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA) is now setting its sites on connecting Reading to Hamburg and Pottsville. The Bartram section of the Schuylkill River Trail has portions planned or under construction. The SRGA's priority is to establish connectivity by using a combination of on or off road trail linkages. Once connectivity is achieved, the priority will shift to converting on-road portions of the trail to off road.

With the nationally recognized Appalachian and Schuylkill River Heritage Area trails passing through the region, there is much potential for providing connections from these trails to populated areas (walking and trails were items that ranked highly within our survey results, see Chapter 5 Section 2). Boroughs like Hamburg and Shoemakersville are situated perfectly to capitalize on the prospective tourism that the Schuylkill River Trail could bring to the region. Similarly, Strausstown's proximity to the Appalachian Trail could prospectively contribute to the borough's economy if a hiking linkage were created (read more about would-be recreationally related business within Chapter 2.3.a).



Berks Bicycle Club

Existing and Recommended Recreation Acreages

Municipality	Current Acre- Est. Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2010 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2020 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre
Albany Township	49.03- 1697- 10.61	1806- 11.29	1934- 12.09
Centerport Borough	3.07- 330- 2.06	367- 2.29	409- 2.56
Centre Township	0- 3916- 24.48	4307- 26.92	4869- 30.43
Fleetwood Borough	37.51- 3996- 24.98	4281- 26.76	4703- 29.39
Greenwich Township	0- 3499- 21.87	3873- 24.21	4315- 26.97
Hamburg Borough	26.83- 4153- 25.96	4155- 25.97	4245- 26.53
Kutztown Borough	48.61- 5144- 32.15	5602- 35.01	6039- 37.74
Lenhartsville Borough	0- 171- 1.07	161- 1.01	143- 0.89
Lyons Borough	3.03- 508- 3.18	460- 2.87	445- 2.78
Maidencreek Township	76.38- 7914- 49.46	8488- 53.05	11121- 69.51
Maxatawny Township	26.41- 7049- 44.06	6353- 39.71	6659- 41.62
Perry Township	19.88- 2536- 15.85	2572- 16.07	2597- 16.23
Richmond Township	0- 3574- 22.34	3660- 22.87	3764- 23.25

Shoemakers- ville Borough	13.9- 2117- 13.23	2446- 15.29	2973- 18.58
Strausstown Borough	0- 337- 2.11	319- 1.99	303- 1.89
Tilden Township	7.15- 3684- 23.03	4166- 26.04	4961- 31.01
Upper Bern Township	8.2- 1580- 9.88	1659- 10.37	1748- 10.92
Upper Tulpehocken Township	5.68- 1602- 10.01	1660- 10.37	1849- 11.56
Windsor Township	3.17- 2424- 15.15	2461- 15.38	2656- 16.6
TOTALS	328.85- 56,231- 351.44	58796- 367.47	65733- 410.55

Abbreviations: Rec.= Recommended; Pop.= Population; Est.= Estimated; Min.-Minimum
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 Estimates
PaDEP 2006 State Water Plan Population Projections, 2010 and 2020
Population Projections
National Recreation & Park Association, NRPA suggests that a park system, at a
minimum, be composed of a core system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to
10.5 acres of developed close-to-home space per 1,000 population.
Note: Municipalities in **bold** have sufficient acreage.

Lake Ontelaunee is a regional recreation activity contributor providing walking/biking trails, picnicking and fishing. Another regional resource is the Berks County Parks Department's Kaercher Creek Park, which provides amenities ranging from fishing/boating and tot-lots to picnicking. Municipal cooperatives should be considered for maintaining existing parks as well as potentially creating recreational opportunities in the future.

Ecology

Along the Hawk Mountain Region's northern border is the Kittatinny Ridge, designated a "Mega Greenway" by the state.

3.2 Hawk Mountain Region

The region's ridge is a well known location for observing the migration of various bird species but is best known for hawk watching. Additionally, the ridge provides a strong ecological hub as well as a large un-fragmented area for specie movement. Additional ecologic resources include but are not limited to the Maiden Creek Greenways and the Schuylkill River corridor.

Within the mid portion of the region is the Lower Sacony hub. The hub's strategic centralized location and long-term viability is an essential factor in the county greenway system. It strengthens the connections between the Hawk Mountain hub south to the Little Manatawny and Oley Hills hubs.



Hawk Mountain

Similar to the Lower Sacony hub in stature and importance is the Lake Ontelaunee hub. Lake Ontelaunee, with a surface area of 1,100 acres and capacity of 3,264 million gallons of water, is rich with aquatic life but also plays an important role in bridging the ecologic gap between the Hawk Mountain hub to the north with the Schuylkill Palisades hub to the south.

Serving a purpose that is comparable to the Hawk Mountain hub is the Northkill Headwaters hub. The Northkill serves as a vital East-West hub within the Kittatinny Ridge Greenway. Nearly as important, the hub is the ingress/egress for specie movements

originating from the south utilizing the Northkill Greenway. The long-term health of the Northkill Headwaters hub will undoubtedly affect the strength of the Northkill Greenway connection as well as the County's overall ecologic greenway system.

Heritage

A deep German heritage is apparent in the Hawk Mountain region with a distinct dialect and architecture. The Kutztown Heritage Festival celebrates the German customs/traditions and has become a major source of tourist dollars for the region as well as the County. While some features are permanently preserved, others are being lost. The loss of barns and their hex signs, iconic of German heritage, is prompting the preservation efforts.

Many towns dot the region's countryside and all provide their own unique contribution to the County's history. Kutztown



Caboose from Reading Railroad

borough properties, along with stately buildings found within Kutztown University's Campus, are rich with historic architecture and every effort should be made to protect these features.

Hamburg is another community that has not been overly fragmented historically or architecturally. These boroughs, with their preserved architecture, are already experiencing revitalization. Several other boroughs within the region that have similar historic and architectural characteristics, like Fleetwood, Lenhartsville, Lyons, Strausstown and the village of Virginville have the same potential for continued revitalization.

Listed below are the sites and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the Hawk Mountain Region has 7 sites and 9 districts that have been technically deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Also, there are another 309 historic sites on record at the Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Commission. Finally, 159 more sites have been identified by historic preservation groups as having some local significance. Identified National Historic Register sites include:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| - Bellmans Union Church | - Kutztown School Bldg. |
| - Brobst Grist Mill | - Lenhart Farm |
| - Daniel Berk Log House | - Merit Underware Co. |
| - Dauberville Bridge | - Merkel Grist Mill |
| - Dreibelbis Mill | - Merkel Mill Complex |
| - H.K. Deisher Knitting Mill | - Moselem Farms Mill |
| - Hamburg Armory | - Schaumboch's Tavern |
| - Hottenstein Mansion | - Seyfert Mill |
| - Kauffman's Mill | - Stein Mill |
| - Kutz Mill | - Trexler Bridge |
| - Kutz Mill Bridge | |

Identified National Historic Register districts include:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| - Boyer-Mertz Farm | - Christian Schlegel Farm |
| - Joel Drebelbis Farm | - Dale Siegfried Farm |
| - Guldin Mill | - Trexler Historic District |
| - Jacob Leiby Farm | - Virginville Historic |

While there are many sites either listed on or identified as being potentially listed on the National Historic Register, it is important that remaining resource clusters be identified and preserved as

this will help the eligibility of those sites in the future (see chapter 2.1 regarding eligibility). This plan identifies themes for the Hawk Mountain Region. These themes should be considered when conducting historic resource surveys or assembling a historic preservation plan. As additional data is collected more themes may emerge or the themes identified below may be more focused (ex: farm type, barns, mill type, etc).

- Farms: Pennsylvania Bank Barns
- Mills: Grist Mills
- Family name derived buildings and districts
- Bridges: stone and iron

Greenway Section

The Greenway designations for the Hawk Mountain Region are well rounded and include ecologic, recreational and historic resources. The key primary ecologic feature within the Hawk Mountain Region's portion of the Greenway network is the Kittatinny Ridge. The Ridge has been designated as one of the State's "Mega Greenways" because of its ecologic value and because within it is a portion of the Appalachian Trail.

The matrix below shows the Hawk Mountain Region's identified Greenway Network features. The matrix also lists usage opportunities, implementation priorities, and potential partners.

3.2 Hawk Mountain Region

Hawk Mountain Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status - logistics	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Fleetwood Borough	Regional Recreational Trail	Mid Term - The Borough should actively pursue trail connections to the existing Muhlenburg Trail.	Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Fleetwood Borough	Recreational based economic development	Long term - Based on connection with the Muhlenburg Trail, Fleetwood Borough could establish regional trail based businesses.	Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Hamburg Borough	Tourism based Economic Development	Short term - Relating to recent recreation/economic developments that make the region a tourist destination and the borough's proximity to the inter aggressive marketing campaign efforts should continue. A combined emphasis should be placed on promoting the traveler/tourist oriented commerce as well as the small town and historic amenities that are also established within the borough.	Municipality, Berks Tourist Bureau	Municipal, DCNR
Hamburg Borough	Kaercher Creek Park	Short term - Develop a park master plan outlining any future expansions as well as any major needs with regards to the existing dam and facilities	Berks County	Municipal, DCNR
Hamburg Borough	Kaercher Creek Park	Mid Term - Begin process of acquiring Kaercher Creek ownership from the State of Pennsylvania by conducting any needed studies.	Berks County	Municipal, DCNR
Hamburg Borough	Kernsville Dam	Short term - Berks County should co-sign with Blue Mountain Wildlife to lease Kernsville Dam area from BAMR.	Berks County	Municipal, DCNR, County
Hamburg Borough	Kernsville Dam	Ongoing - efforts should continue to improve the Kernsville Dam area ecologically	Blue Mountain Wildlife, Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Hamburg Borough	Recreational Trail	Short term and Ongoing - Actively participate with the Schuylkill River Trail alignment location process. Prepare for and establish Borough connectivity to said trail.	Municipalities, SRHA	Municipal, DCNR, William Penn
Hamburg Borough	Reading Railroad Museum	Short term and Ongoing - Efforts to establish and sustain the Reading Railroad Museum should be fully supported. Additionally, local municipalities should consider community events based on the Railroad/Museum to offer support, bolster use and to promote the region's history/heritage. The museum has extremely high potential to serve as a major tourist attraction.	Municipalities, local historical society, Berks County Historical Society, Berks County Museum Board, Berks County Visitors Bureau	Municipal, DCNR
Hawk Mountain	Hawk Mountain Sanctuary/Important Bird Area (IBA)	Continued - support the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary's continued sustainability by helping promote this attraction especially during the hawk migration and fall foliage seasons.	Albany and Windsor, Berks County Visitors Bureau	Municipal, DCNR
		Efforts to buffer this important bird migratory area by land and easement purchase should continue to preserve its longterm viability.	Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Hex Highway	Scenic Driving Tour - Create a self guided brochure allowing participants to drive at their own pace while learning about and appreciating historic, cultural and natural resources.	Short term - A low cost, low impact initial project for the corridor aimed at raising historic, cultural and natural resource awareness	Partnering municipalities, Berks Historic Council, Museum Council, Berks Visitors Beureau	Municipal, DCNR
Hex Highway	Establish Bicycle Route - Based on the same rationale of the driving tour, utilize the road's moderate grades to design and implement a bike lane.	Mid term - Municipal support is essential as additional portion of road burm would be needed for a bike lane (implemented during road repaving projects to alleviate cost). Signage and line painting would also be required for safety.	Partnering municipalities, Berks Bike Club, Reading Area Transportatoin Authority, Berks Visitors Beureau	Municipal, DCNR

3.2 Hawk Mountain Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Kaercher Creek Park	Preserve Long Term viability	Mid-Term - re-negotiate lease agreement with the State or buy the park outright	Berks County	Municipal, DCNR
Kaercher Creek Park	Maintain Facilities	Short term and Ongoing - Make needed repairs to the dam and facilities features. Update signage to be consistent with current standardized design.	Berks County	Municipal, DCNR
Kempton Borough	Recreational Trail	Long Term - Borough residents and municipal officials should seek a Maiden Creek Trail connection through the region, connecting to the borough, and north toward Leaser Lake in Lehigh County.	Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Kernsville Dam	Preserve Ecologic Value of Area	Short term and Ongoing - Efforts should be made to buffer and preserve the natural value of the aquatic life above the dam as well as the surrounding woodland.	Municipalities, Blue Mountain Wildlife, Inc.	Municipal, DCNR
Kittatinny Ridge Greenway	Protect Kittatinny Ridge Viewshed	Mid Term - incorporate language within zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances that prevent scarring developments on the ridge.	Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Kittatinny Ridge Greenway	Protect Kittatinny Ridge Ecology/Important Bird Area (IBA)	Short term and Ongoing - Protect the Ridge's ecologic system especially with regards to preserving the migratory bird environment.	Municipalities, EACs, Berks Conservancy, Appalachian Mountain Club	Municipal, DCNR
Kittatinny Ridge Greenway	Appalachian Trail Protection and Support	Ongoing - support the longterm viability of the Appalachian Trail by helping maintain trail/road crossings and safety of trailheads. The Appalachian Trail is an under utilized source of tourism.	Municipalities, Appalachian Mountain Club	Municipal, DCNR

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Kutztown Hub	Continued revitalization efforts	Midterm - Building upon the Borough's Main Street program, continued efforts should be considered including the Elm Street Program. Aggressive marketing based on the Borough's heritage and preserved architecture must be continued. Historic properties which have undergone conversions that are not consistent with their originally intended use should be targeted for preservation and reclamation.	Kutztown Borough	Municipal, DCED
Kutztown Hub	Maxatawny Historic Preservation/District	Short term and Continued - The region's heritage, character and charm are reliant on effective historic preservation. Based on historic survey findings, historic district designations should be considered. Maxatawny Township should consider establishing a historic district for appropriate portions of Kutztown University's campus as well as the Hottenstein Mansion area. Additionally, future development should match the character and feel of the region.	Municipalities, local historical society, Berks County Historical Society, Berks County Museum Board	Municipal, DCED
Lake Ontelaunee	Ecologic Resources	Lake Ontelaunee's abundant and thriving aquatic and water fowl environments should be protected. This can be achieved by requiring more stringent water quality Best Management Practices throughout the surrounding region.	Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Lake Ontelaunee	Bird migration area	Short term and Continued - During their journey, flocks of migrating birds often pass through Lake Ontelaunee undoubtedly on their way to or from Hawk Mountain. Efforts should be made to preserve areas that accommodate differing species.	Municipalities, PA Game Commission	Municipal, DCNR

3.2 Hawk Mountain Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Lenhartsville Borough	Tourism based Economic Development	Short term and Ongoing - The region has become a tourist destination due to its heritage, wildlife and attractions. The combination of the borough's historic nature and proximity these features make it a logical locale for traveler/tourist oriented commerce. These uses could include but are not limited to cafes, small shops as well as bed'n'breakfasts. Any development or property rehabilitation must match the historic character of the borough.	Municipality, Berks Chamber of Commerce, Berks Visitors Bureau	Municipal, DCNR
Lenhartsville Borough	Recreational Trail	Mid term - There is an opportunity to establish a recreational trail within efforts for preserving the Maiden Creek's riparian corridor. Lenhartsville would be a destination along the scenic corridor and the village's citizens would have to play a role in championing such a project.	Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Maiden Creek Greenway	Recreational Trail	Mid term - There is an opportunity to establish a recreational trail within efforts for preserving the Maiden Creek's riparian corridor. In addition to the health benefits for the region's citizens, the trail could also be used as an educational tool highlighting the benefits of Best Management Practices for protection of creek's riparian buffer and water quality.	local municipalities, DCNR, Berks County Planning Commission	Municipal, DCNR
Maiden Creek Greenway North	Recreational Trail	Long term - There is an opportunity to extend the potential Maiden Creek Trail north through Kempton and into Lehigh County to the Leaser Lake area.	local municipalities, DCNR, Berks County, Lehigh County	Municipal, DCNR
Maxatawny Greenway	Recreational Trail	Mid term - There is an opportunity to establish a recreational trail connectors between boroughs by utilizing established Joint Planning cooperatives within this portion of the Hawk Mountain Region. The trail would provide health benefits for the region's citizens.	local municipalities, DCNR, Berks County Planning Commission	Municipal, DCNR

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Northkill Headwaters Hub*	Ecologic Resources* (*portions of this hub are within the Hawk Mountain Region so additional inter-municipal cooperation will be required)	Short term and Continued - continually update comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances in an effort to guide growth to appropriate locations. Special care should be given to habitat as two Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) sites are within this area.	Municipality, Berks County Planning Commission, PaDEP	Municipal, DCNR
Schuylkill River Greenway	Recreational Trail	Short term - Trail efforts by the Schuylkill River Greenway Association have begun. Support and aid should be provided by the by the municipalities. The trail will be a valuable recreational opportunity as well as a potential economic stimulus for the region	Berks County, Schuylkill River Greenway Assoc., Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Schuylkill River Greenway	Install uniform wayfinding and interpretive signage for region-wide land/water trails, parks, heritage resources using the Schuylkill River Heritage Area sign design guidelines	Short term and Ongoing - a)install signs (Trail Blades, Trailhead, Directional Highway) on Schuylkill River Trail	Municipalities, SRGA, Berks County	William Penn Foundation Grant
Schuylkill River Greenway		Short term and Ongoing - b)install uniform signs in parks along the SRT	Municipalities, SRGA, Berks County	Municipal, DCNR
Schuylkill River Greenway	Water Trail	Short term - The water trail should be promoted. Additional boat access to the trail must be provided.	Municipalities, SRGA, Berks County	Municipal, DCNR
Schuylkill River Greenway	Recreational Trail	Short term and Ongoing - Development of the Schuylkill trail should follow the phases outlined within the SRGA's Reading to Hamburg feasibility study. Ongoing efforts should be made to aquire land and easements from Reading to Hamburg.	Municipalities, SRGA, Berks County	Municipal, DCNR

3.2 Hawk Mountain Region

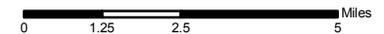
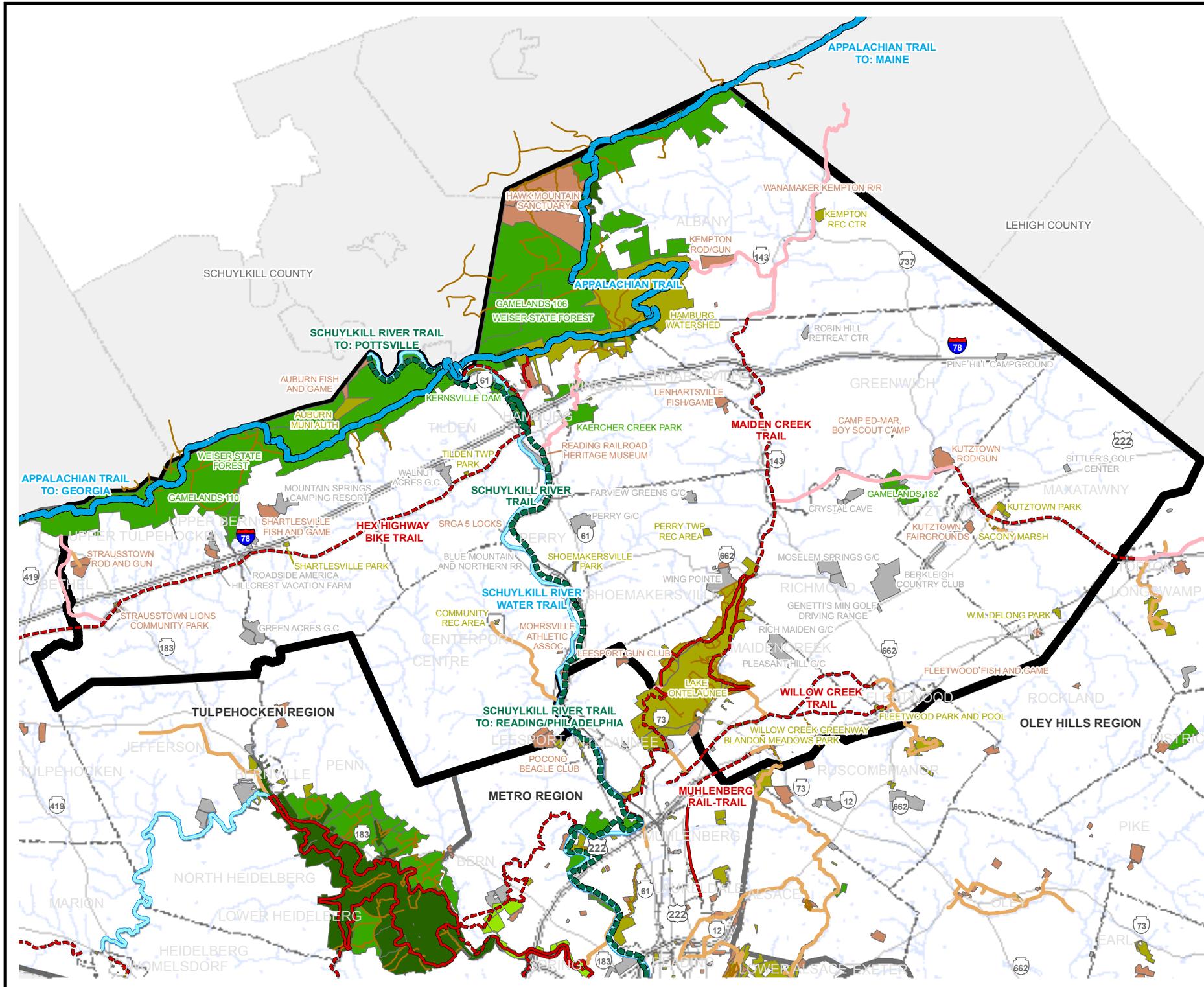
Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Shartlesville Borough	Appalachian Trail connector	Short term - Identify a corridor and establish a trail connector between the village and the Appalachian Trail. This is the first step at making the town a designated stop for trail users as well as a potential starting point as well. Trail related tourist businesses could follow.	Municipality, Berks Chamber of Commerce, Berks Visitors Beureau	Municipal, DCNR
Shoemakersville Borough	Recreational Trail	Actively participate with the Schuylkill River Trail alignment location process. Prepare for and establish Borough connectivity to said trail.	SRHA, Municipalities, Berks County	Municipal, DCNR
Shoemakersville Borough	Recreationally based Economic Development	Long term - Shoemakersville Borough could establish Schuylkill River Trail based businesses.	Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR
Strausstown Borough	Establish Trail Head Commerce - based on Hex Highway road and bicycle tour programs	Long Term - Parking areas, community festival grounds and tourist related businesses would be appropriate. Marketing could be tied to Appalachian Trail Connector initiative and spearheaded by a potential regional Chamber of Commerce.	Municipality, Berks Chamber of Commerce, Berks Visitors Beureau	Municipal, DCNR
Virginville Borough	Recreational Trail	Mid term - There is an opportunity to establish a recreational trail within efforts for preserving the Maiden Creek's riparian corridor. Virginville would be a destination along the scenic corridor and the village's citizens would have to play a role in championing such a project.	Municipalities	Municipal
Virginville Borough	Recreationally based Economic Development	Long term - Once established, a Maiden Creek trail should be regionally marketed to establish trail related economic development.	Municipality, Berks Chamber of Commerce, Berks Visitors Beureau	Municipal

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Regional Ecologic	Implement Stream and tributary corridor protection measures	Short term and continued - Streams and their tributaries of the Tulpehocken Region must be protected. Steams and their tributaries of any size, are severely affected by disturbance within their riparian buffer zone. Example activities that should not occur within the zone include but are not limited to mowing, livestock grazing/Xing. Activities like stream damming, excavation and re-routing/re-structuring must be fully permitted prior to start of the activity.	Tulpehocken Region citizens, local municipalities, Berks County, PaDEP	Municipal, DCNR
Regional Ecologic	Buffer protection for Kittattinny Ridge and AT	Short term and continued - The ridge must be protected from development and fragmentation by effective land use regulations as well as a continued effort to aquire and ease buffer lands.	Municipalities, Berks County	Municipal
Regional Ecologic	Enact land use regulations pertaining to natural resource protection	Short term and continued - All municipalities should periodically review their zoning to be sure that regulations support preservation efforts. Implementation of the Berks Count CZIP program should be considered in areas of high ecologic value	Municipalities, Berks County	Municipal
Regional Ecologic	Viewshed protection	Short term - Incorporate language within zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances that effectively prevents scarring of the ridge by strictly enforcing development regulations on steep slopes and regulating forestry practices.	Municipalities, Berks County	Municipal
Regional Ecologic	Natural Feature Protections	Mid Term - Within enacted CZIP areas, municipalities can utilize the Municipal Land Protection Program to purchase easements land.	Municipalities, Berks County	Municipal, County
Regional Heritage	Historic Surveys should be completed for all Municipalities within the region	An inventory must be conducted as a precursor to their preservation. The Region's and County's history as well as character and charm are reliant an these efforts.	Municipalities, Berks County, Local Historical Societies, Berks Museum Council	Municipal, County

3.2 Hawk Mountain Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Regional Heritage	Strengthen municipal planning efforts to encourage continued integrity of historic resources	a)develop regulations/policies that protect heritage resources; develop land use regulations that require new construction to compliment surroundings (develop design guidelines), encourage adaptive reuse, make easier to rehabilitate, discourage demolition	Municipalities, Berks County	Municipal, DCED
		b)develop/expand façade improvement programs to enhance important streetscapes	Municipalities	Municipal, DCED
		c)promote revitalization efforts in commercial core and surrounding residential neighborhoods of historic downtowns by adopting/maintaining Main Street and Elm Street Programs	Municipalities	Municipal, DCED
		d)create Historic Districts/HARB(Historic Architectural Review Board) where there is integrity and concentration of significant resources	Municipalities	Municipal
Regional Recreation	Recreational Opportunities	A continuous effort should be made to evaluate the recreational needs of Berks County's Citizens. Municipalities should strive to provide adequate recreational resources.	Municipalities, Berks County Planning Commission	Municipal
Regional Recreation	Joint Recreational Cooperatives	Municipalities should consider cooperative buying arrangements to potentially lower cost. Joint recreational boards as well as regional parks that are jointly operated, maintained and financed should also be considered.	Municipalities, Berks Center for Community Leadership, Berks County Planning Commission	Municipal

Recreation Resources: Hawk Mountain Region



Trail Network

Hierarchy

- Interstate
- Intercounty
- Regional
- Local
- Proposed Intercounty
- - - Proposed Regional
- - - Proposed Local
- Water Trail
- Potential Regional Connection
- Potential Local Connection

Recreation Facilities

Ownership Categories

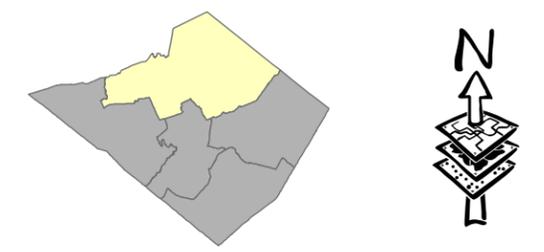
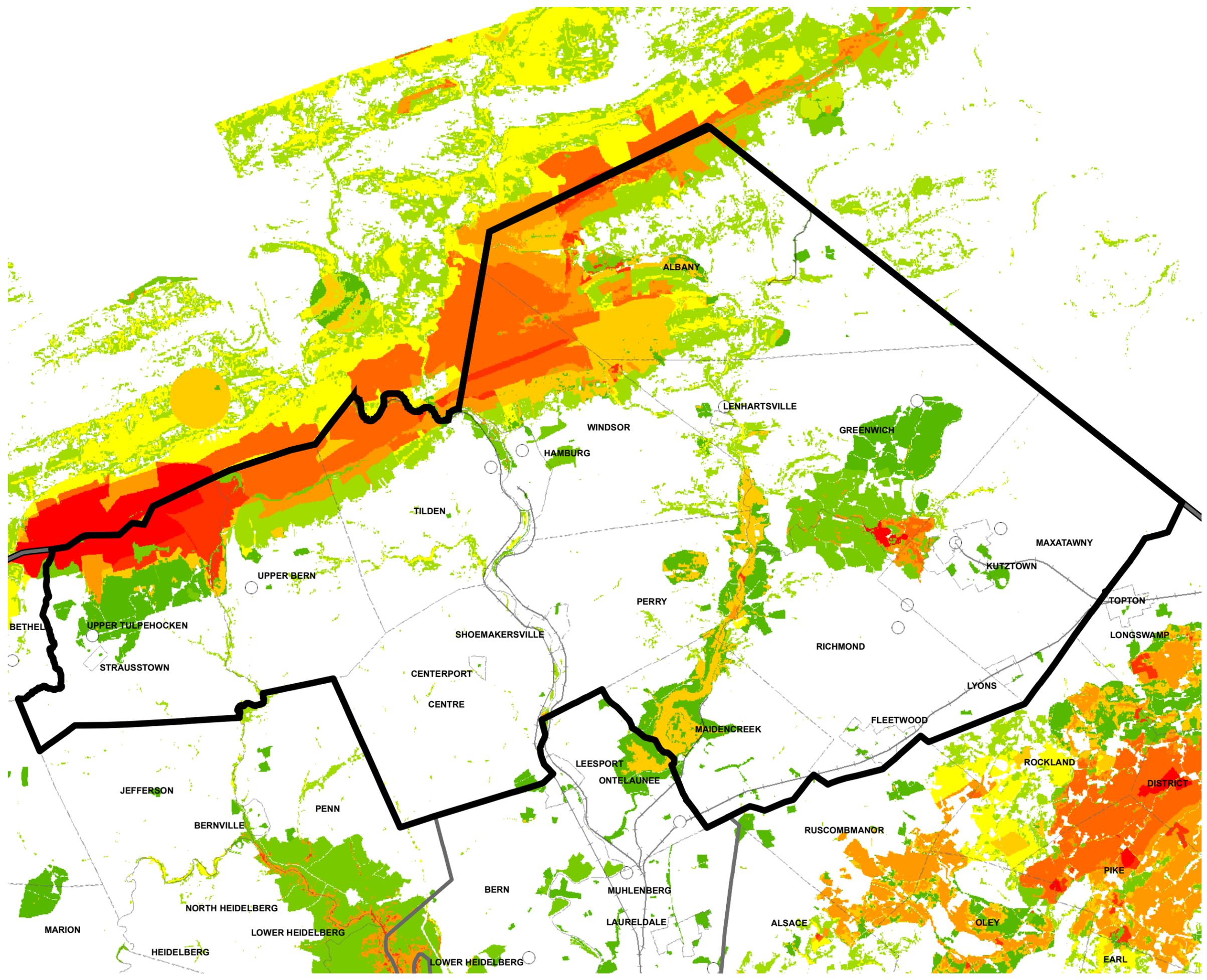
- Federal
- State
- County
- Municipal
- Non-Profit
- Private

- Regions
- Limited Access Highway
- Municipal Bounds
- Railroad
- Streams

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
with The Berks County Parks Department
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Ecologic Resources: Hawk Mountain Region



Ecologic Modeling

	1 - High Value
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
	10 - Highest Value

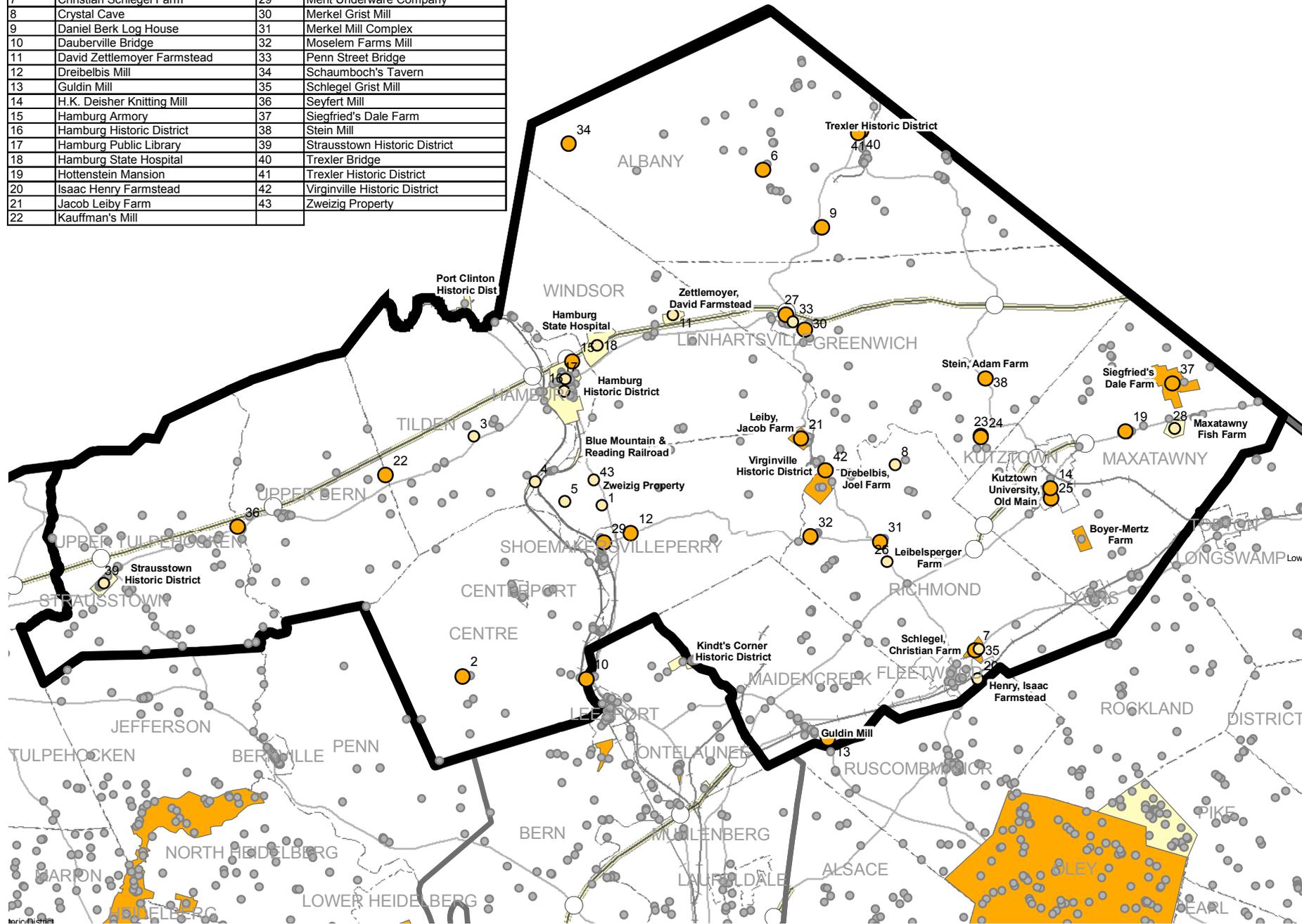
	Major Interchange
	Limited Access Highway
	Municipal Boundaries
	Major Highways
	Railroad
	Streams
	Regions

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with The Berks County Parks Department
The Natural Lands Trust
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Historic Resources: Hawk Mountain Region

Map ID	Historic Feature	Map ID	Historic Feature
1	Amela Levan Property	23	Kutz Mill
2	Bellmans Union Church	24	Kutz Mill Bridge
3	Benjamin Sontag Farmstead	25	Kutztown 1892 Public School Buil
4	Berne Station Bridge	26	Leibelsperger Farm
5	Blue Mountain & Reading Railroad	27	Lenhart Farm
6	Brobst Grist Mill	28	Maxatawny Fish Farm
7	Christian Schlegel Farm	29	Merit Underware Company
8	Crystal Cave	30	Merkel Grist Mill
9	Daniel Berk Log House	31	Merkel Mill Complex
10	Dauberville Bridge	32	Moselem Farms Mill
11	David Zettlemoyer Farmstead	33	Penn Street Bridge
12	Dreibelbis Mill	34	Schaumboch's Tavern
13	Guldin Mill	35	Schlegel Grist Mill
14	H.K. Deisher Knitting Mill	36	Seyfert Mill
15	Hamburg Armory	37	Siegfried's Dale Farm
16	Hamburg Historic District	38	Stein Mill
17	Hamburg Public Library	39	Strausstown Historic District
18	Hamburg State Hospital	40	Trexler Bridge
19	Hottenstein Mansion	41	Trexler Historic District
20	Isaac Henry Farmstead	42	Virginville Historic District
21	Jacob Leiby Farm	43	Zweizig Property
22	Kauffman's Mill		



Legend

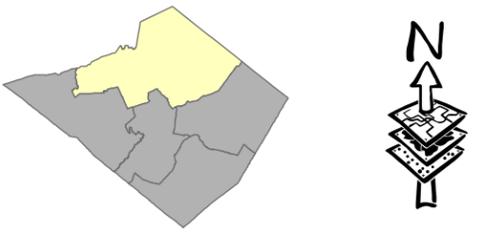
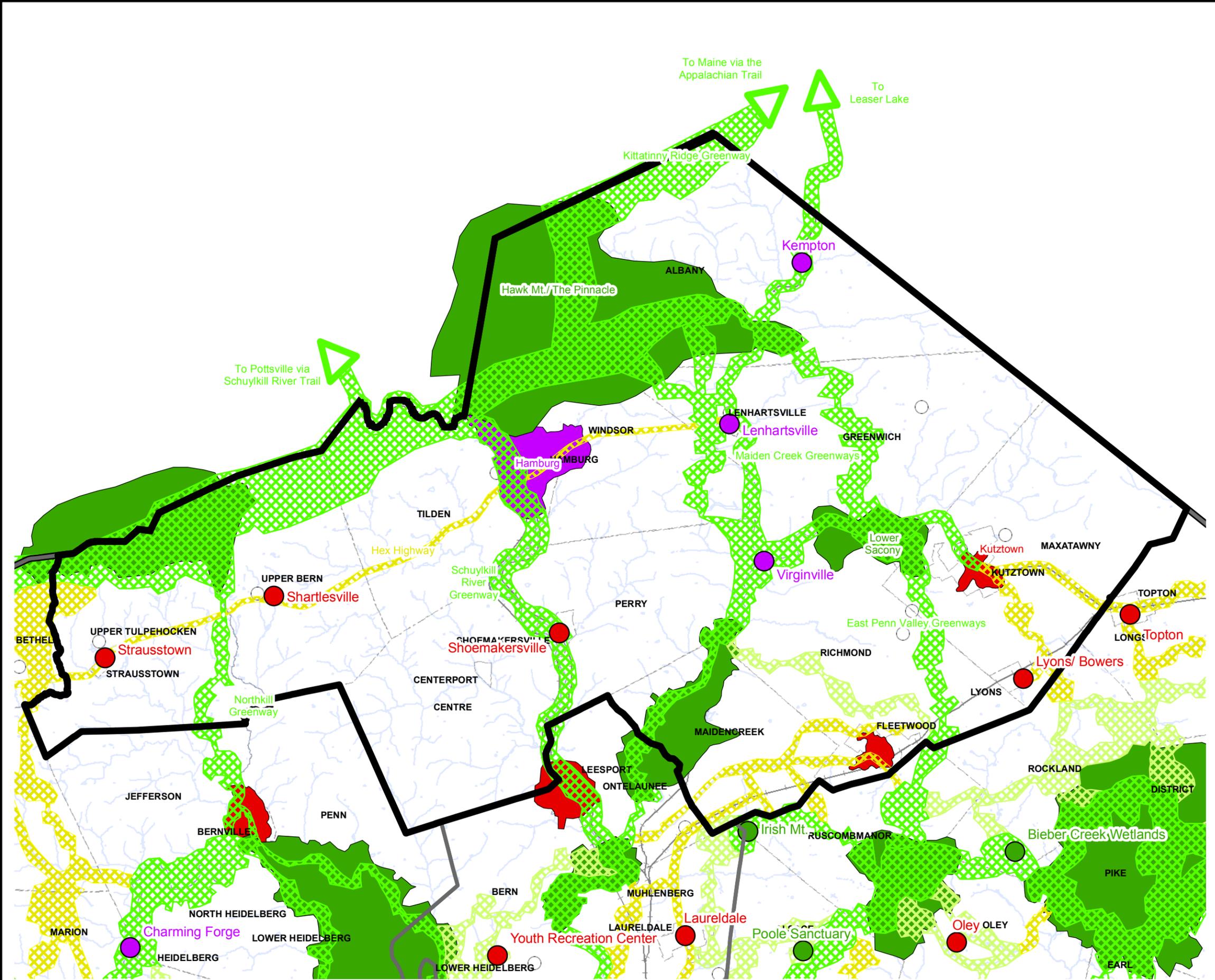
- Historic Sites**
 - National Register Listed
 - National Register Eligible
 - Other Sites*
- Historic Districts**
 - National Register Listed
 - National Register Eligible
- Major Interchange
- Limited Access Highway
- Major Highways
- Municipal Bounds
- Streams
- Railroad
- Regions

* includes sites identified within surveys conducted by one or more of the following groups: Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Council, Berks County Conservancy, George Meiser and local historical societies.

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with The Berks County Parks Department
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Greenway Network: Hawk Mountain Region



Legend

- Greenway Priority Corridor**
 - 1 (Green cross-hatch pattern)
 - 2 (Light green cross-hatch pattern)
 - 3 (Yellow cross-hatch pattern)
- Greenway Hubs**
 - Ecological (Green solid circle)
 - Destination/ Ecological (Purple solid circle)
 - Destination (Red solid circle)
- Greenway Nodes**
 - Ecological (Green solid circle)
 - Destination/ Ecological (Purple solid circle)
 - Destination (Red solid circle)
- Other Symbols**
 - Major Interchange (Circle with a dot)
 - Limited Access Highway (Thick black line)
 - Major Highways (Thin black line)
 - Railroad (Line with cross-ticks)
 - Streams (Blue line)
 - Regions (Grey outline)
 - Municipal Boundaries (Dashed line)

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
 with The Berks County Parks Department
 The Natural Lands Trust
 The Berks County Conservancy
 PA DCNR
 Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Chapter 3.3

Metro Region

3.3 Metro Region

This region contains the Reading urbanized area and is situated near the geographic center of Berks County. Besides the City of Reading, six townships (Ontelaunee, Bern, Muhlenberg, Lower Alsace, Spring, and Cumru) comprise the region along with nine boroughs (Leesport, Laureldale, Sinking Spring, Wyomissing, West Reading, Mount Penn, Kenhorst, Shillington, and Mohnton). The City of Reading serves as the county seat, and the region is the population and cultural center of the county. Even though the region encompasses only 68,085 acres, or approximately 12 % of the total county area, the 2004 population estimate indicates 188,018 persons or 48 % of the County's population resides in this region. Due to minority migration to the County, particularly Latino, the metro region's population and resultant economy is becoming increasingly diverse.

The metro region has a rich history, and abundant natural, recreational and cultural resources. These resources are an integral component of the region's landscape, and contribute to the quality of life of not only the region's residents but for residents of the entire county.

Recreation

The metro region provides the largest amount, and most diversified recreation and leisure opportunities of all the regions in Berks County. Together the metro region municipalities provide more than 100 park and recreation areas totaling 1,500 acres. This is an equivalent of 8 acres of local close-to-home recreation space per 1,000 persons. While this amount of local public parkland space is adequate for the overall residents in the region, it is not distributed proportionately among the municipalities. Muhlenberg, Reading, Spring, and Wyomissing account for over 80% of the local recreation land in the region. Meanwhile, six other of the region's municipalities fall short of even a basic amount of recreation land for their citizens, three providing only 26 acres of combined parkland, and three with no

parkland. Measured on an acres-per-capita basis, Muhlenberg ranks first with 22.7 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents (while planned, not all acquired parkland in Muhlenberg is developed), followed by Wyomissing (20.4 acres/1,000 pop.) and Shillington (12.5 acres/1,000 pop.). According to traditional NRPA parkland guidelines, only 6 of the 16 municipalities in the region have a sufficient amount of developed recreation areas to meet the needs of today's residents, while Muhlenberg, Shillington and Wyomissing have ample acreage to meet the needs of future population growth. When parkland is measured



South Temple Neighborhood Park

as a percent of the total size of the municipality, the leader is Shillington, with nearly 10 % of its land protected as municipal parkland. Wyomissing, Laureldale, Reading, Muhlenberg and West Reading all provide more than 5 % of its land area in park and recreation land.

While the amount of parkland provided is important, the distribution of that acreage throughout suburban and urban communities is critical. In those municipalities providing sufficient acreage, the distribution of parkland is generally good. However, there are a few neighborhoods that are underserved by current facilities, leaving segments of the population too far

from a park to use it easily, conveniently, or frequently. The metro municipalities should avoid “having met the acreage standard” by providing a single large park. All municipalities should examine the distribution of their parklands and provide a more balanced and accessible system. Once a community is developed, acquiring land for parks and recreation can be difficult and expensive. The redevelopment process is a tool that can be used to increase parkland in municipalities which are considered “built out”. For those municipalities with weak park systems that are still developing, setting aside adequate parkland at appropriate locations through the land development process is critical.

While providing parkland and recreational facilities is an important municipal function, so is providing a diverse recreation program. Most of the municipalities in this region provide a playground program. Several provide a more complete program including open gyms, concerts, festivals and holiday events, sports leagues, trips, and various art, music and dance programs.

Existing and Recommended Recreation Acreages

Municipality	Current Acre- Est. Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2010 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2020 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre
Bern Township	9.97- 7029- 43.93	7563- 47.27	8485- 53.03
Cumru Township	12.81- 4476- 90.48	15058- 94.11	15975- 99.84
Kenhort Borough	9.47- 2649- 16.56	2423- 15.14	2177- 13.61
Laureldale Borough	75.51- 3741- 23.38	3590- 22.44	3536- 22.1
Leesport Borough	16.01- 1891- 11.82	2120- 13.25	2244- 14.02

Lower Alsace Township	0- 4464- 27.9	4255- 26.59	4074- 25.46
Mohnton Borough	18.07- 3046- 19.04	3356- 20.97	3798- 23.74
Mt. Penn Borough	0- 2980- 18.63	2992- 18.7	3058- 19.11
Muhlenberg Township	394.85- 17393- 108.71	17016- 106.35	18565- 116.03
Ontelaunee Township	0- 1214- 7.59	1128- 7.05	1009- 6.31
Reading City	353.28- 80727- 504.54	82244- 514.02	84303- 526.89
Shillington Borough	62.97- 5020- 31.38	4750- 29.69	4615- 28.84
Sinking Spring Borough	3.23- 3339- 20.87	2627- 16.42	2720- 17
Spring Township	230.86- 24903- 155.64	25572- 159.82	28158- 175.99
West Reading Borough	19.08- 4004- 25.03	3801- 23.76	3641- 22.76
Wyomissing Borough	226.86- 11142- 69.64	11488- 71.8	10994- 68.71
TOTALS	1432.96- 188018- 1175.11	189983- 1187.38	197352- 1233.44

Abbreviations: Rec.= Recommended; Pop.= Population; Est.=Estimated; Min.-Minimum

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 Estimates

PaDEP 2006 State Water Plan Population Projections, 2010 and 2020 Population Projections

National Recreation & Park Association, NRPA suggests that a park system, at a minimum, be composed of a core system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed close-to-home space per 1,000 population.

Note: Municipalities in **bold** have sufficient acreage.

3.3 Metro Region

Building and maintaining an adequate park system requires a strong financial commitment by a municipality. In 2005, the metro region municipalities spent nearly five million dollars on their public park and recreation systems. However, 84% of that amount was spent by Reading, Muhlenberg, Wyomissing and Spring alone. From the period 2001 to 2005, Reading had the largest five-year average park and recreation budget. West Reading had the highest per capita spending, followed by Wyomissing, Muhlenberg, Shillington, and Leesport. Most municipalities are struggling to make ends meet, and parks and recreation are frequently lower priority than other municipal services. Municipalities that value their parks have established a dependable and dedicated source of funding, and are using alternative sources to supplement their public investment.

Municipal recreation land is supplemented by 2,306 acres of municipal natural lands, 940 acres of county parkland, 1,685 acres of state lands, 850 acres of federal parkland and school facilities associated with six public school districts. The core of the County's park system, the Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park, is located in the metro region. This park contains the popular Union Canal Trail, which receives heavy usage and is outgrowing its capacity.



Stonecliff Action Park

The public park and recreation system in the metro region is supplemented by private and not-for-profit entities providing a substantial variety of recreation and leisure opportunities. Local youth organizations play a large role in providing a variety of sports programs throughout the region. It is essential that the support and coordination between these organizations, municipalities, and school districts continue in order to provide efficient and well-rounded programs. Joint use agreements making school facilities available for community use after school hours should be executed. Churches and fire companies are often overlooked as recreation providers, but many have picnic facilities, ball fields, social halls and recreation centers. Of the 21 outdoor swimming pools in the metro region, 16 are owned by not-for-profit associations. Many of these pool associations are struggling financially and may need public support. A joint purchasing program should also be explored. The metro region has a concentration of cultural and entertainment attractions



6th and Amity Playground

such as museums, theatres, art galleries, a center for the arts, and the stadium and civic center, home to several professional sports teams. A variety of private recreation entities including six golf courses, eight fitness and sport centers, three roller-

skating centers, and two bowling lanes among others are located throughout the metro region. All contribute to the recreation system by filling a void the public sector cannot.

Local Recreational Strategy Municipalities should continue to provide the close-to-home active recreation facilities and programs, look for ways to connect those facilities and important destinations, and link them to the regional network. Those municipalities with adequate park systems should continue reassessment of needs and modifications based on acreage and distribution. Those with weak or no system need to find a way to get into the game. All municipalities need to discover a way to provide adequate funding and commit to it.

Regional Recreation Strategy Improving the quality of life in the region is critical to the economic success of the urban setting. Quality of life is about having open space, modern-day amenities and a strong and vibrant urban center. Parkland and recreation help make our communities livable, and allow our metro communities to become denser over time. Parks, trail networks and close to home nature help that density work. The urban core is fortunate to be immediately surrounded by numerous natural resources, interspersed by regional and local parks, museums, and vibrant historic communities. The



Union Canal Trail

overriding recreation strategy of this region is to establish a regional trail network that connects these natural resources to each other and to where our people live, work and play. The spine of this network is the Schuylkill River Trail (SRT), and through a system of tributary trails that link to the SRT we can connect our communities and provide access to our parks, historic and cultural districts, and economic destinations. When completed, the network will be a linear park extending throughout the metro region and beyond. Much of this system either exists or is in various stages of planning, acquisition or development. Since the network will be centered on the SRT, the immediate focus will be on upgrading the existing trail, completing missing gaps, providing signage (wayfinding and interpretative) and trailheads, and enhancing links to adjacent existing local trails and parks.

- Linking the SRT to the Wyomissing Creek Trail provides access to the West Reading and Wyomissing park facilities, the Reading Public Museum, the Wyomissing School District facilities, and the Reading Hospital campus. The feasibility of extending this trail along the creek to the Mohnton Hub should be explored.
- Improving the connection between the SRT and the County's Union Canal Trail by establishing a new passive park at the confluence of the Schuylkill River and Tulpehocken Creek will provide SRT users access to the County's Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park system, Penn State Berks Campus, St Joseph Hospital and ultimately the vast network of trails at the Blue Marsh Hub.
- Establishing the Angelica Creek Trail provides access from the SRT to the City of Reading's renovated Angelica Park and Environmental Center, and Alvernia College. The feasibility of extending this trail to the Nolde Hub via Kenhorst Borough and Cumru Township is being investigated.

3.3 Metro Region

- Establish the “Penn Corridor” urban trail from Reading’s City Park through West Reading to the Wyomissing Node, and link to the SRT on both sides of the river.
- Provide trail connections to Schlegel Park, Bertolet Fishing Dock, Riverfront Park, Barbey Playground, and Baer Park.
- Provide access to the Schuylkill River Water Trail by enhancing and creating new boat landings for canoes and kayaks.
- Other major recreation projects in the region are the addition of the Antietam Lake property to the County Park System, and the creation of a new park on Neversink Mountain. Future ownership and maintenance responsibilities of Neversink Mountain Preserve will have to be determined among the six host municipalities, the County, and the Berks County Conservancy. The County Parks and Recreation Department will be re-evaluating their mission. It is anticipated that their focus will shift more to passive activities, greenway and trail development, and heritage resources and less on traditional recreation. For details, see the department’s Peer Review in Chapter 4.
- Long term efforts will concentrate on the northern extension of the SRT from Confluence Point/Schuylkill Ave Bridge in Reading to Leesport, and eventually to Hamburg. Once this section is established, trail connections to Lake Ontelaunee and Leesport parks should be explored.
- Other future trail projects that will link key resources are:
 - Neversink Connector Trail which will connect Neversink Mountain Preserve to the SRT via Reading’s Riverfront Park;
 - Mineral Springs Trail connecting Neversink Mountain Preserve to Antietam Park via Pandora Park, Mineral Springs Park and the Mt Penn Reserve using the historic gravity railroad bed where possible;

- Recent Greenway Plans completed by Spring and Muhlenberg Townships have identified potential trails that will link their communities to the regional trail network.

Riverfront Renaissance The waterfront is an untapped resource. Creating the trail network along the river allows the community to experience the river up close, and this physical and visual access provides the opportunity to create lively, diverse places. New signature parks are planned for the Reading riverfront, the West Reading/Cumru riverfront and the Muhlenberg riverfront. Regenerating the riverfront as a human realm will further enhance the urban area and small communities along the network with new economic and tourism opportunities. An active riverfront can stimulate the market for a mixture of residential, cultural, retail, hospitality and entertainment uses.

Partners The development and maintenance of this network will require a cooperative effort of private citizens, businesses, non-profit entities, local municipalities, the county, as well as state and federal agencies. Certainly the business, nonprofit and philanthropic communities may actually drive the vision at the outset, but it is likely that the public sector will own and care for these new assets. It is recommended that the completed portions of the Schuylkill River Trail be transferred to the County of Berks to become an extension of the County’s linear park system. Even though the County would be responsible for maintenance and operation of the trail, the County should build partnerships with host municipalities and other stakeholders for assistance. The private and non-profit sector remain active partners with the public sector. Several non-profit entities, and partnerships have been instrumental in spearheading these quality of life initiatives and the riverfront renaissance including, the Berks County Conservancy, Schuylkill River Heritage Area, RiverPlace Development Corporation, Greater Reading as a Greenway & Recreation HUB, and the Institute for a Competitive Greater Reading (ICGR).

- The Berks County Conservancy, while involved in the development and improvement of many trail, park, urban greening and community gardening projects in the metro region, has invested significant resources over the last decade acquiring land, developing and maintaining trails, and promoting the Neversink Mountain Preserve. Due to their efforts the mountain is being preserved and is accessible to the public. Determining ultimate ownership, trailhead development, signage, marketing, and connecting its trail network to the SRT and Mt. Penn/Antietam are key future projects.
- The Schuylkill River Heritage Area's major focus in the metro region is the continued development and maintenance of the Schuylkill River Land and Water Trails. Recent projects include construction of the trail bridge over Lancaster Avenue, construction of the Brentwood Trailhead, realignment of the trail between Lancaster Ave and the Brentwood Trailhead, installation of signage, installation of a Heritage Gateway at RACC, and completion of the Feasibility Study to continue the Schuylkill River Trail north from Reading to Hamburg. Once completed sections of the SRT are transferred to the County of Berks, the primary focus of SRHA will then become the extension of the trail north from downtown Reading. SRHA has developed a Sign Design Guideline Manual to create a consistent visual element and message for the land and water trail's interpretive and wayfinding signs in the Heritage Area. The guidelines outlined in the manual provide a flexible framework for SRHA partners to develop signs that can be customized for their individual sites. Municipalities with parks/trails along or near the SRT are encouraged to use these signs. The manual is available by contacting the SRHA.
- RiverPlace Development Corporation is a community based non-profit initiative with the mission *"To use the power of the River as a catalyst to unite communities and foster economic development."* By reconnecting to the river, their vision is to create a destination where the Berks County Community comes together to enjoy living, playing and working in and on both sides of the River and its neighborhoods. Their focus area is along the Schuylkill River from the Schuylkill Avenue Bridge to Angelica Creek. One of the key principles of the RiverPlace Master Plan is to complete the gaps in the existing riverside trail system which will form a single continuous trail that moves from bank to bank with a system of loops and makes connections with adjacent neighborhoods. Other priorities are to improve the riverfront festival site, establish new signature parks in the central riverfront and at Confluence Point, improve and create new boat landings, and make streetscape improvements.
- The Greater Reading as a Greenway & Recreation Hub partnership consists of the Berks County Conservancy, RiverPlace Development Corp., Schuylkill River Heritage Area, PaDCNR, Berks County Planning Commission, and the City of Reading. The partnership's goal is to protect, connect, and improve the natural treasures in the metro region, make them easily accessible for recreational use, and promote them as a key component to the quality of life pursued in Greater Reading. Since the overall vision of these individual entities is similar, the HUB partnership was formed to coordinate the efforts of its partners in implementing the vision project by project.
- The Initiative for a Competitive Greater Reading (ICGR) is an organization composed of a range of private sector, public sector and civic leaders formed to shape a competitive economic strategy for Greater Reading. One of its key strategies is to develop the "Penn Corridor", the area that includes Penn Street and Penn Ave. from the City of Reading through West Reading to the Borough of Wyomissing, into an entertainment, hospitality and tourism Hub for residents and visitors alike. Creating this vibrant

3.3 Metro Region

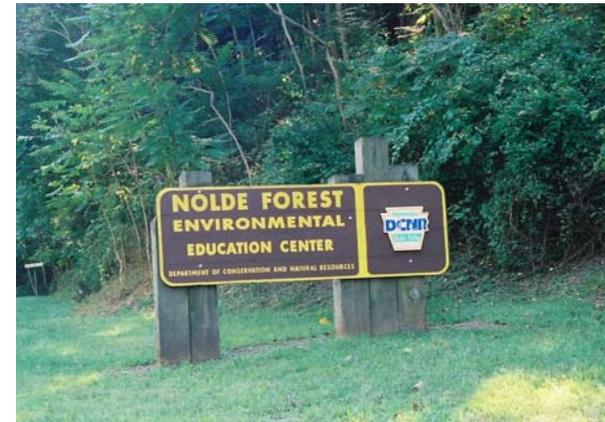
urban pedestrian-friendly corridor for the arts, culture, dining and other entertainment works hand-in-hand with the Schuylkill River renaissance initiative.

Ecology

A special characteristic of this region is that many natural resources and distinct natural communities are within the Reading Urban Area. Mt. Penn (Antietam Preserve) and Neversink Mountain frame the urban area, forming its eastern and southern boundaries, while the Schuylkill River and its tributaries flow right through the heart of the region. These features provide open space, vistas and environmental education opportunities rarely found in an urban setting. An important characteristic of these mountains is their visibility, as they can be seen from areas throughout the metropolitan area and beyond and they provide a green backdrop to the growing urban and suburban areas. Scenic views and panoramas are also available from atop the mountains themselves. These mountains, along with Irish Mountain, are part of the Reading Prong section of the New England Province and form the western ridge of the Pennsylvania Highlands. Host municipalities should focus on protecting their ridgelines through planning, land use regulation and acquisition.

The Schuylkill River and its network of tributary streams are another dynamic natural feature of the region. Water quality in this network is variable, but improving due to environmental awareness, mine reclamation, groundwater treatment, stormwater management, and stream bank restoration efforts. The waters of the Schuylkill River suffer from mine, agricultural and urban runoff. The aquatic ecosystem of the river should improve with the above-mentioned efforts and the slated removal of Felix Dam. Tributaries to the river watershed within the Metro Region are the Tulpehocken Creek, Maiden Creek, Laurel Run, Wyomissing Creek, Angelica Creek, and the Cacoosing Creek. The principal bodies of water in the region are Antietam Lake, Bernharts Reservoir, and portions of Lake

Ontelaunee and Blue Marsh Lake, both of which are drinking water sources. Residents have historically lived and worked close to waterways, and it is no different with the water courses mentioned above. Industrial and residential use is common within their floodplains, posing flood threats. Protection of our water resources is vital in order to enhance our aquatic ecosystems and drinking water supplies. Communities within the region should focus on stream restoration, riparian buffers, floodplain protection, stormwater management and water quality best management practices.



Nolde provides environmental education programs

Despite impacts on our environment from a growing population, areas of significant natural value still exist. Significant hubs and nodes identified by our ecological analysis are located along the periphery of the region. Blue Marsh, Mt. Penn (including Antietam and Neversink), Lake Ontelaunee, Nolde, and Spring Hills hubs and Irish Mountain node exhibit exemplary natural features and habitat resources that are important for ecological diversity. Conservation of these natural resources is important, and where development is to occur, natural buffers should be created and care taken to ensure that protected sites do not become islands surrounded by development. The

interconnection of these hubs/node and their corridors is critical in providing connectivity for both ecological functions and for the passage of wildlife. The identified natural corridors that connect these hubs to each other and to ecological hubs outside the region should also be maintained, through conservation development subdivision techniques or fee simple and easement acquisition. Several of these hubs and corridors (Antietam Reservoir, Neversink Mt., Angelica Creek Watershed, Little Muddy Creek, and Vinemont Dale) are identified in the Berks County Natural Areas Inventory for containing prime natural communities, animal/plant species of concern or locally significant geologic features. Special attention should be given to protect these specific resources. As ecological awareness has highlighted the interdependence of all living things, there has been the realization that our natural resources must be carefully conserved to ensure biological diversity.

Heritage

The metro regions heritage took centuries to create with many interacting elements, including Indian and immigrant settlement, agriculture, industrial revolution, architecture, canals, railroads, and multi-ethnic cultural traditions. But, much of the region's history is tied to the Schuylkill River and its valley corridor. The abundant natural resources and productive soils attracted European settlers to Reading and made it an early bread basket and industrial center for the colonies. The river valley played an important role as a transportation artery carrying goods to and from the Philadelphia market. Topographic barriers defined the limits of the City and forced families and industries to develop north and west shaping Reading's suburban communities. The canal system, and later the railroad, fueled the growth of Reading and its suburbs as a major industrial center. The mills and factories employed thousands of people and made Greater Reading an industrial powerhouse throughout the 19th and much of the 20th centuries. Two notable industries were Wyomissing Industries and the Reading Company (Reading Railroad). The

Reading Railroad was a major force as it influenced industry, labor and politics. The locomotive shops, located in Reading, set technological standards for the entire railroad industry. The Textile Machine Works, which manufactured knitting and braiding machines, was the first of three companies that formed Wyomissing Industries. The two other companies were the Berkshire Knitting Mills, which grew to become the largest full-fashioned knitting mill in the world, and the Narrow Fabric Company, manufacturer of diversified narrow fabric goods. The founders of Wyomissing Industries gave rise to the planned community of Wyomissing, the Reading Hospital, the Reading Public Museum, and the Buttonwood Street Bridge.

Historic resources can be found in every community in the metro region. Each tells a story that spans centuries, gives our



The recently restored “American House” along the Penn Street Corridor in Reading

communities' character and are valued by our citizens. The metro region has 35 National Register Historic Sites and six National Register Historic Districts. These districts include bridges, churches, residences, schools, factories, firehouses and institutional buildings. Additionally, the Gruber Wagon Works is a National Historic Landmark. The City of Reading has

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created three historic districts (Callowhill, Prince, & Centre Park Historic Districts) reflecting over two centuries of rich architecture. The City's Historic District Ordinance protects the integrity of these three districts. Complicated additions, remodeling and restoration require review by the Reading Board of Historical Architectural Review. The City exhibits a variety of architectural styles and elaborate craftsmanship associated with its architectural woodwork, ornamental brick and stone masonry, ironwork and art glass. Unfortunately, many of these architectural details are slowly being lost along with the craftsmanship skills.

Reading was originally laid out by Thomas and Richard Penn, sons of William Penn, in a rectangular grid pattern of streets characteristic of Philadelphia, but lacked its open green squares. John Nolen produced comprehensive plans for the "Replanning of Reading" in 1910 for the Civic Association of Reading, addressing beautifying Penn Square, grouping public buildings, improving street/bridge network and constructing a bypass, adding playgrounds and parks, and improving housing conditions. Two specific recommendations of interest were *"To secure at once for playground purposes as many open spaces as possible, especially in the settled sections of the city,"* and *"To get possession of the finest natural features around Reading-its mountain-tops, valleys, river-banks, and creeks- and set them aside as public parks."*

Some of the metro regions boroughs and townships had their beginnings as small crossroad villages when development grew in the vicinity of inns located for the convenience of the traveler or developed around a specific industry, lockhouse or railroad depot. Each community and neighborhood has its own identity and character determined by its development pattern, age and style of architecture, streetscape and landmarks. Their value becomes apparent when they are viewed as a whole, not as a series of independent, unrelated structures.

Preservation of the "environment" is just as significant as that of any of its parts. Many of the metro region's historic resources have character, variety, craftsmanship, and a human scale often lacking in today's construction. Little by little our historic resources are threatened or lost by unchecked development, prohibitive costs, neglect and abandonment, misguided improvements or lack of policies and regulations. Being the caretakers of this heritage charges us with a responsibility to protect it for ourselves and for generations to come.

Private and non-profit organizations have long been promoting historic preservation, but usually concentrate on their own



Leesport Lock House

interests. While there is interest in preservation efforts, commitment can be inconsistent, and there is a general lack of coordination and leadership. The County should address these problems by supporting a heritage coordinator to coordinate the interests and efforts of individuals, groups, private and public sector. This position could offer technical assistance with current preservation technology, coordinate preservation programs with economic development programs, review ordinances, help qualify sites for listing on the register, assist with district certification, apply for federal/state loans and grants, be the

liaison between local, state and federal agencies, assist with inventories and maintaining a historic survey data base, maintain a list of contractors who have skills required for preservation work, prepare public education information, and coordinate heritage tourism strategies, etc. The County's Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park System has extensive historic structures, museum collections and the County sponsors heritage festivals. Attention should be given to improving and

enhancing these historic resources with the intent to increase tourism. There are extensive historic resources throughout the metro region. Each community should evaluate their resources and determine their own preservation strategy. Historic preservation tools can be found in Chapter 2, Section 2. To compliment these local efforts, the County Heritage coordinator may organize regional or countywide preservation and tourism efforts.

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Metro Region Matrix					
Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Schuylkill River Greenway Land & Water Trails/Parks- Complete development of trails and associated parks to establish the spine for a continuous trail network, and create riverfront recreation/heritage tourism opportunities	County of Berks should take ownership of completed sections of the Schuylkill River Land Trail-Thun Section as an expansion of the County Park System. County should take responsibility for the trail itself with host municipalities taking responsibility for parks the trail may pass through.	Short term	a)determine need for additional staff, equipment, and maintenance budget, etc to accommodate additional responsibilities; assess SRGA Bridge Inventory Report, determine bridge inspection intervals/maintenance	County of Berks	
		Short term	b) explore partnerships to assist with maintenance responsibilities	County of Berks	
		Short term-Mid term	c)negotiate transfer of trail with SRGA	County of Berks, SRGA	
		Short term-Mid term	d)explore options to expand trailheads and locate new trailheads	County of Berks	

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source	
Schuylkill River Greenway Con't		Mid-Long term	e)pave trail,where appropriate in urban areas	County of Berks		
		Short term-ongoing	f)participate with SRHA Trail Council to create/maintain a unified trail system	BCPC, BCP&R		
	County of Berks should hire a county-wide Greenway Trail Coordinator with the primary purpose to implement the greenway/trail recommendations contained in this plan	Short term			County of Berks, State	County of Berks, State
	Realign Schuylkill River Trail between Brentwood Drive and Lancaster Ave	Short term	a) construction-estimated completion 2007	SRGA		State Grants
		Short term	b) landscape Brentwood Trailhead and Lancaster Ave. pedestrian bridge-estimated completion 2007	SRGA		
	Upgrade Schuylkill River Trail between Old Wyomissing Rd and RACC bridge	Short term	Pave existing trail- may need temporary improvements till PennDot determines Rt 422 redesign; coordinate with property owners	RDC, SRGA, County of Berks, Cumru, City of Reading		
Extend First Ave to Old Wyomissing Rd and construct bridge over Wyomissing Creek w/provision for the Schuylkill River Trail ; develop Window on the Water Park	Long-term	Determine feasibility; coordinate with PennDot Rt 422 redesign	Cumru, West Reading, City of Reading, County of Berks, RDC, SRGA			
	Completed	a)prepare underwater pier stability study				

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Schuylkill River Greenway Con't	Make improvements to RACC Pedestrian Bridge carrying the Schuylkill River Trail over the Schuylkill River, and secure an easement for Schuylkill River Trail thru RACC property	Short term	b)transfer ownership of bridge to County and secure an easement for trail thru RACC	RACC, County of Berks	
		Short term	c)stabilize bridge	City of Reading, RACC, County of Berks	
		Immedite	d)prepare detail design and engineering for bridge/landings improvements	County of Berks, SRGA, RDC, City of Reading, West Reading, Cumru	
		Mid-term	e)construct improvements to bridge and landings	RDC, SRGA, County of Berks	
	Maintain the Schuylkill River Heritage Area Gateway at RACC and explore need for additional gateways	Ongoing		SRGA, RACC	
	Develop Philosopher's Landing Park	Short term	a)acquire property from RACC	City of Reading, RACC	
		Short term	b)prepare design and engineering	RDC, City of Reading	
		Immed-Mid-term	c) construct amphitheatre/park/trail	RDC, City of Reading	
	Complete missing Schuylkill River Trail link from Philosopher's Landing to Dana Memorial Park	Short term	a)acquire property from Norfolk Southern	BCC, RDC, SRGA, County of Berks, City of Reading	
		Short term	b)prepare trail design construct trail		35,000 DCNR, 35,000 RDC

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Schuylkill River Greenway Con't	Develop Confluence Point Park as a County Park (extension of Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park)	Short term	a)transfer property to County	County of Berks, City of Reading	
		Short term	b)prepare master plan; explore relocating the Schuylkill River Trail to a newly constructed pedestrian bridge over the Schuylkill River connecting Dana Memorial Park to Confluence Point Park	County of Berks, City of Reading, RDC	20,000 DCNR, 20,000 County
		Mid-term	c) prepare design and engineering	Co. of Berks	
		Mid-term	d)construct park/trail	Co. of Berks	
	Extend Schuylkill River Trail north through metro region from Schuylkill Ave. Bridge	Mid-long term	a)identify trail alignment (see Feasibility Study); acquire property where necessary; construct trail/trailheads; sign trail	SRGA with support from host municipalities and County of Berks	
		Long-term	b)evaluate additional maintenance and operation costs; explore partnerships to assist w/maintenance, transfer completed trail to County as part of County Park System	SRGA, County of Berks	
	Incorporate Schuylkill River Trail into Muhlenberg's river front parks	Short term	a)coordinate with Muhlenberg Twp and their development of Jim Dietrich Park; phase development in accordance with park master plan; Muhlenberg Greenway Plan recognizes park as a SRT trailhead w/facilities and water access	Muhlenberg, SRGA	

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source	
Schuylkill River Greenway con't		Ongoing	b)coordinate with Muhlenberg Twp and their maintenance of existing parks (Kelly's Lock Overlook, Pioneer Grove, Laurel Run Community Park, Felix Dam Park) and their development of Riverside Basin Park and Rivervale Meadows Park	Muhlenberg, SRGA		
	Explore development of whitewater park	Long-term	Determine feasibility/location and prepare master plan			
	Develop/improve boat landings for the Schuylkill River Water Trail at multiple locations including:	Short term	a)Kerper's Landing		City of Reading, UGI	
			b)Jackson's Landing at Heritage Park		City of Reading	
		Mid-term	c)Confluence Point Park		Co. of Berks	
			d)Epler's Landing		State	
			e)Jim Dietrich Park		Muhlenberg	
			f)Pioneer Grove		Muhlenberg	
		g)SRGA Rickenbach Rd. Property		SRGA		
		h)SRGA Leesport Landing		SRGA		

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Schuylkill River Greenway con't	Establish visual access of the river by thinning areas of vegetation to create select views	Short term		Host Municipalities, PennDot, RDC, Volunteers	
	Expand the marketing and the advertising of the Schuylkill River National & State Heritage Area Land & Water Trails to stimulate local and regional economies through heritage tourism	Mid-term	a)Refine regions tourism marketing strategy	Reading & Berks County Visitors Bureau, SRHA, RDC	
		Short term, Ongoing	b)Develop/maintain trail guide for the Schuylkill River Trail	SRHA	
		Mid-term, ongoing	c)Develop/maintain metro region trail guide	Visitors Bureau, RDC	
	Explore options to encourage the private sector to provide trail head commerce and outdoor recreation services along the Schuylkill River Water and Land Trails and tributary trails	Short term, ongoing		Private sector, RDC, Host Municipalities	
	Install uniform wayfinding and interpretive signage for region-wide land/water trails, parks, heritage resources using the Schuylkill River Heritage Area sign design guidelines	Short term, ongoing	a)install signs (Trail Blades, Trailhead, Directional Highway) on Schuylkill River Trail (Thun Section -Reading to Pottstown-Est. completion 2007; install interpretive signs in the future)	SRGA	William Penn Foundation Grant
		Ongoing	b)install uniform signs in parks along the SRT	Host municipalities	

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
	Improve visitor services through the provision of pedestrian amenities, including handicapped access, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, restrooms, bike racks, gateways, interpretive exhibits, trail heads, brochure/maps where appropriate	Ongoing			
	Strengthen connections between neighborhoods and the trail network with universally accessible pedestrian friendly streetscapes	Ongoing			
Complete tributary trails/resources that directly connect to Schuylkill River Trail	Develop Angelica Creek Trail	Short term	a) improve/construct trail link from Angelica Park to Schuylkill River Trail	City of Reading	
		Short term	b)conduct feasibility study for extending trail from Angelica Park to Nolde Forest EEC	BCC, City of Reading, Cumru, Kenhorst, Nolde Forest EEC, Alvernia College	PA DCNR, Cumru, Alvernia College, William Penn Foundation
		Mid-term	c) design and construct trail from Angelica Park to Nolde Forest EEC		
		Long-term	d)conduct feasibility study for extending trail from Nolde Forest EEC to Sovereign Sports Park and Horse-Shoe Trail		

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Complete tributary trails/resources that connect to SRT con't	Link Schlegel Park to Schuylkill River Trail	Short term	Construct paved trail approx. 500 ft by 10 ft wide. Est. completion 2007	City of Reading	Part of Berks Co. OSRAC Grant to City(\$23,545), in-kind service from City, UGI, RDC
	Wyomissing Creek Trail-Link Wyomissing Parks trail system to Schuylkill River Trail	Short term	a)City acquire easement from Wyomissing Valley Jt.Munic. Authority (Est. completion 2007)	RDC, BCC, Wyomissing V. Jt. Auth., City of Reading , County of Berks	Pa DCNR, County of Berks (\$12,038-CDBG), RDC, Wyomissing Jt Authority
		Short term	b)improve trail from Museum Rd to Parkview Rd; construct trail on acquired easement and under RR underpass to SRT (Est. completion 2007)	RDC, City of Reading, West Reading, Wyomissing, Wyo. V Jt. Auth., Reading Hospital Reading Public Museum, UGI	Part of Berks Co. OSRAC Grant to City(\$23,545), in-kind service from City, UGI, RDC; State
		Ongoing	c)renovate Reading Public Museum grounds, with improved connection to Reading Hospital Campus	Reading Public Museum, Reading Hospital, Reading School District, West Reading, City of Reading, Wyomissing	
		Ongoing	d)improve other trail segments in Wyomissing Park trail system, as necessary , with improved connection to Wyomissing School District facilities		
		Mid-term	e)conduct feasibility study for extending trail to Mohnton		

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Complete tributary trails/resources that connect to SRT con't	Develop West Shore Trail North, connecting to the Schuylkill River Trail at the RACC Bridge and proceeding north with access to the Bertolet Dock and Penn Street Bridge	Short term	a)acquire land; determine ownership (West Reading)	RDC, County of Berks, West Reading	County Redev. Auth. acquiring Mt Top and Rdg Co properties, OSRAC funding
		Mid-term	b)prepare feasibility study	RDC, West Reading	
		Mid-term	c)prepare design and engineering		
		Mid to Long-term	d)construct trail/boardwalk		
	Develop Neversink Connector Trail linking Neversink Mt. trail system to Schuylkill River Trail via Heritage Park & Reading Riverfront Park	Short term	a)conduct feasibility study	BCC, City of Reading, RDC	
		Short term-mid-term	b)acquire property/easements (Est completion 2007 for one easement)	City of Reading, BCC, RDC	Part of Berks Co. OSRAC Grant to City(\$23,545), in-kind service from City, UGI, RDC for initial easement acquisition
		Mid-term	c)trail design and construction		

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
	Develop Reading's, West Reading's, and Wyomissing's hospitality and tourism resources (arts, culture, dining, retail, entertainment) along the Penn Corridor into a single entertainment destination, providing a link to the Schuylkill River Trail	Short term	a) improve stability, function and pedestrian friendly streetscape of the Penn Street Bridge; dependent upon results of engineering study to determine Penn St. Bridge replacement or repair	PennDot, City of Reading, West Reading, RDC, ICGR	
		Short term, ongoing	b) provide coordinated events, marketing, map/brochure, and uniform signage, lighting, pedestrian friendly streetscape along Penn Corridor	City of Reading, West Reading, Wyomissing, RDC, ICGR	
	Link Barbey's Playground Trail to Schuylkill River Trail	Short term	Est. completion 2007	City of Reading	
	Improve connection between Union Canal Trail and Schuylkill River Trail	Short term	a)improve trail connection by striping and signing a bike lane on Blair Ave. (Est. completion 2007)	City of Reading	Part of Berks Co. OSRAC Grant to City(\$23,545), in-kind service from City, UGI, RDC
		Mid-term	b)coordinate with design/construction of Confluence Point Park	Co. of Berks, City of Reading	
	Link Muhlenberg Twp's Laurel Run Linear Park/associated parks and proposed Stoudt's Ferry Bridge Road Trail to Schuylkill River Trail	Mid-term			

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Complete tributary trails/resources that connect to SRT con't	Establish Freedom Trail, linking Union Canal Trail and Blue Marsh Lake to Lake Ontelaunee trail network, with a connection to the Schuylkill River Trail	Long-term		private sector	
	Link Leesport recreational facilities to Schuylkill River Trail	Mid-Long term		Boro of Leesport	
	Strengthen connections between neighborhoods and the trail network with universally accessible pedestrian friendly streetscapes	Short term, ongoing		Municipalities	
	Install uniform wayfinding and interpretive signage for region-wide land/water trails, parks, heritage resources using the Schuylkill River Heritage Area sign design guidelines	Ongoing			
	Improve visitor services through the provision of pedestrian amenities, including handicapped access, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, restrooms, bike racks, gateways, interpretive exhibits, trail heads, brochure/maps where appropriate	Ongoing			

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Complete other trail network development with an emphasis on important community & school resource connections, as well as regional connections	Develop Lock 54 Trail, linking Angelica Creek Trail to Lock 54 located on SRGA-Mifflin Arm property with spur trail to viewing area of Lock 49	Mid-term	a)conduct feasibility study	RDC, SRGA, Cumru, City of Reading	
		Mid-term	b)explore transfer of SRGA-Mifflin Arm property to Cumru and development as a park		
	Provide trail connection from St. Joseph Medical Center to Berks County Heritage Center/Union Canal Trail	Short term		Hospital, County of Berks, Bern, landowner	
	Develop Spring Twp trail network in accordance with Twp greenway plan and provide connections to Union Canal Trail, Horse-Shoe Trail, Wyomissing Creek Trail, Nolde Forest EE Center	Ongoing		Spring Twp	
	Link Lake Ontelaunee trail network to Willow Creek Greenway	Mid-Long term		Maidencreek, Ontelaunee, City of Reading, PennDot	
	Improve/create trail links between Antietam Preserve & Mt. Penn Preserve	Mid-term		BCC, Co. of Berks, City of Reading	
	Link Mt. Penn Preserve to Neversink Mt. via urban trail	Mid-term		City of Reading, BCC	
	Link Neversink Mt. to Exeter's River Trail	Mid-term	Improve trail and signage	Exeter Township, BCC	

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Complete other trail networks con't	Construct Muhlenberg Rail Trail	Short term	a) construct 2.5 mile trail as per master plan	Muhlenberg	
		Short term	b)explore extending trail north to Blandon, along the existing rail corridor	Ontelaunee, Maidencreek, Muhlenberg, railroad	
		Mid-term	c)explore extending trail south to City of Reading, along the existing rail corridor and to Mt. Penn Preserve	City of Reading, Muhlenberg, railroad	
	County of Berks should construct Blue Marsh Connector linking Union Canal Trail to Blue Marsh trail network	Short term	Execute contract for construction, and complete construction; estimated completion 2007	County of Berks, PennDot	Federal Transportation Enhancement Program
	County of Berks should renovate existing county park facilities within the Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park	Short term, ongoing	a)maintain a capital improvement plan that adequately maintains/renovates county park facilities and historic resouces	County of Berks	
		Short term, ongoing	b)prepare/update master plans for parks	County of Berks	
		Ongoing	c) install wayfinding and interpretive signage using SRHA sign design guidelines	County of Berks	
		Short term	d)explore relocating administration and maintenance operations to Heritage Center	County of Berks	
		Short term	e)explore acquisition of additional land at Heritage Center for expansion and to buffer historic resouces	County of Berks, adjacent landowners	

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
	County of Berks should evaluate and refocus mission of Berks County Parks and Recreation Department	Short term	Use Berks County Parks and Recreation Peer Review, September, 2006	County of Berks	
	Explore providing a direct connection between the proposed Highlands Trail and the Metro Region's trail network and destinations	Long-term		Appalachian Mt Club, Highlands Coalition	
	Improve connectivity in urban and suburban sidewalk systems-create walkable environments	Short term, ongoing	a)identify critical sidewalk corridors between neighborhoods, employment centers, community facilities, and cultural resources	Municipalities	Safe Routes to School Program
		Ongoing	b)develop critical sidewalk corridor program, addressing maintenance of existing sidewalks, missing sidewalks, crosswalk safety, traffic calming devises, ADA accessibility, and lighting where appropriate		
		Ongoing	c)create community gathering places, where appropriate		
	Promote improvement to existing roadways to accommodate safe bicycle use (refer to Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan for Berks County, dated March 2002, prepared for Reading Metropolitan Planning Organization)-	Ongoing	a)identify critical on-road bicycle corridors between neighborhoods, employment centers, community facilities, and cultural resources	Municipalities, PennDot	

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Complete other trail networks con't		Ongoing	b)develop critical on-road bicycle corridor program to implement roadway-based improvements-add bicycle lane when repave		
	Install uniform wayfinding and interpretive signage for region-wide land trails, parks,heritage resources using the Schuylkill River Heritage Area sign design guidelines, where appropriate	Ongoing			
	Improve visitor services through the provision of pedestrian amenities, including handicapped access, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, restrooms, bike racks, gateways, interpretive exhibits, trail heads, brochure/maps where appropriate	Ongoing			
Develop new parks and maintain/revitalize existing parks	Develop Neversink Mt. Preserve based on feasibility study and concept plan -preserve ecological resources while promoting passive recreational, scenic, and historic resources, including the railroad and resort heritage	Short term	a)determine ownership and operational responsibilities (County of Berks should explore taking over these responsibilities)	BCC, County of Berks, City of Reading, Cumru, Lower Alsace, Exeter, Mt. Penn, St. Lawrence	
		Short term-mid term	b)finish acquisition and resolve easement language conflicts (public access)		
		Short term-mid term	c)construct trailheads, improve trail network		
		Short term, ongoing	d)install wayfinding and interpretive signage using SRHA sign design guidelines		

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source	
		Short term, ongoing	e)prepare brochure/map and conduct marketing campaign			
		Long-term	f)construct visitors center			
	County of Berks should develop Antietam Preserve as a County Park -preserve ecological resources, while promoting passive recreational, environmental education, and scenic resources		Short term	a)complete acquisition	City of Reading, County of Berks, State	
			Short term, completed in 2007	b)prepare boundary survey and GIS assessment	Co. of Berks	
			Short term	c)prepare master plan (maintain equine access) and determine additional staff and maintenance costs ; explore partnerships to assist w/maintenance responsibilities	DCNR, County of Berks, Lower Alsace	
			Short term	d)repair dam	County of Berks, Lower Alsace, State	
			Immed-Mid-term	e)make improvements as recommended in master plan	County of Berks	
			Immed-Mid-term	f)install wayfinding and interpretive signage using SRHA sign design guidelines	County of Berks	
			Immed-Mid-term	g)prepare brochure/map; explore coordinating with City to include Mt. Penn Preserve	County of Berks	
	Resolve ownership of Earl Trust lands on Neversink Mt. and Mt. Penn	Short term			BCC, City of Reading, County of Berks, Bank	
	County of Berks should explore acquisition of additional land adjacent to Leesport Lockhouse	Short term			County of Berks	

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Develop new parks and maintain/revitalize existing parks can't	Develop Shiloh Hills Park by phasing development in accordance with master plan	Ongoing		Spring Twp	
	Re-construct Angelica Park/Environmental Center	Short term		City of Reading	
	Maintain/Improve resources within Mt. Penn Reserve - preserve ecological resources while promoting passive recreation, limited active recreation, scenic and heritage resources	Short term-mid term	a)prepare master plan	City of Reading	
		Short term	b)restore/maintain Pagoda; explore accessory use to provide economic sustainability	City of Reading	
		Short term	c)explore designating Skyline Drive and Duryea Drive as Pennsylvania Byways	City of Reading, Lower Alsace, Alsace	
		Short term, ongoing	d)restore/maintain stone walls along Skyline Drive		Potential funding thru Pa Byways Program, Transportation Enhancement
Short term, ongoing		e)improve Skyline Drive overlooks, and restore views by thinning vegetation			
Short term, ongoing	f)maintain/improve existing active recreational facilities, camp located within preserve	City of Reading			
Mid-term	g)explore development of trail/trailhead network on historic gravity railroad with links to recreational facilities within preserve, adjacent parks, Reading School District facilities and to the City	City of Reading, BCC			

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Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
			itself		
		Short term-mid term	h)install wayfinding and interpretive signage using SRHA sign design guidelines	City of Reading	
		Short term-mid term	i)prepare brochure/map of preserve; explore coordinating with County to include Antietam property	City of Reading	
	Bern Township should explore acquiring Cross Keys and Stoudt's Ferry Desilting Basins for recreation/preservation purposes	Short term		Bern, State	
	Explore options to enhance First Energy Stadium	Short term		City of Reading, Reading Phillies Organization	
	Municipalities should prepare/update greenway, park and recreation plans consistent with this Plan	Short term, Ongoing	a)municipalities should focus on the provision of local close-to-home recreation and greenways; municipalities deficient in local recreation land should add land/facilities or explore regional solutions/partnerships	Municipalities	
		Short term, Ongoing	b)municipalities should offer a full variety of affordable recreation programs; municipalities with deficient recreation programs should explore participating in adjacent municipal programs	Municipalities	

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Develop new parks and maintain/revitalize existing parks con't		Ongoing	c)municipalities should develop an ongoing capital improvements program with scheduled maintenance/upgrades to their existing recreation resources	Municipalities	
		Short term, Ongoing	d)municipalities should explore need for community centers	Municipalities	
		Ongoing	e)municipalities should seek county, state, federal, private grants, corporate sponsorships and partnerships for greenway planning and development	Municipalities	
		Short term	f)municipalities should require the public dedication of land for park/recreation purposes through the subdivision process and the option for construction of recreation facilities, fees in-lieu thereof or a combination	Municipalities	
		Short term, Ongoing	g)municipalities should explore adopting an Official Map reserving lands for public park/recreation purposes	Municipalities	
		Ongoing	h)municipalities should support little league/youth programs and other service organizations	Municipalities	
	Install uniform wayfinding and interpretive signage for region-wide land trails, parks, heritage resources using the Schuylkill River Heritage Area sign design guidelines, where appropriate	Ongoing			

3.3 Metro Region

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
	Improve visitor services through the provision of pedestrian amenities, including handicapped access, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, restrooms, bike racks, gateways, interpretive exhibits, trail heads, brochure/maps where appropriate	Ongoing			
	Municipalities, school districts, little league/youth organizations should explore or continue to share facilities	Ongoing			
	Swimming pool associations should explore partnerships to assist with joint purchasing, etc	Short term		B. C. Center for Community Leadership, pool assoc.	
	Explore the need for and develop community gardens in urban areas	Ongoing		BCC, municipalities	
	Expand heritage initiatives -promote a greater understanding of our history, heritage resources and the value of protecting them	Establish/expand heritage tourism opportunities as an economic tool	Short term, ongoing	a)Implement the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum Development Study	RCT & HS
		Mid-term	1)enhance existing interpretive center at Temple Station		
		Long-term	2)develop interpretive center in Reading as the southern terminus of the Museum Complex and acquire a use agreement for use of the Richmond Street Industrial RR Tracks		

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source	
Expand heritage initiatives con't		Ongoing	b)implement long-range expansion planned at Mid Atlantic Air Museum	Mid-Atlantic Air Museum		
		Ongoing	c)develop self-guided walking/driving tours that highlight historic themes or locations	Historical Society, Visitors Bureau, Municipalities		
		Ongoing	d)provide interpretive heritage exhibits/signage for significant historical resources (river/canal, industries, Mt Penn and Neversink resorts, Carsonia Park, architecture, etc.)			
		Ongoing	e)expand upon heritage related festivals/events			
	Promote leadership, cooperation among heritage stakeholders	Short term	a)County of Berks should explore creating a position for a Heritage Resources Coordinator with county-wide responsibilities; role would include historic preservation planning, facilitate collaboration of stakeholders, technical assistance, data management, education, heritage tourism	County of Berks, Heritage Stakeholders		
		Short term	b)Historical Society of Berks County should explore expanding their mission to include county-wide vision and historic preservation responsibilities	Historical Society of BC		
	Short term, ongoing	c)Heritage stakeholders should coordinate programs and events and marketing	Historical Society of BC, Heritage Stakeholders, Visitors Bureau			

3.3 Metro Region

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
	Identify, and assess heritage resources and create and maintain an inventory of resources for use by all stakeholders	Short term, ongoing	a)survey heritage resources	Local Historical Societies, Municipalities	
		Short term	b)create GIS database of inventory	BCPC	
		Ongoing	c)maintain inventory	BCPC, Local Historical Societies, Municipalities	
		Ongoing	d)promote continued nomination of significant properties/districts to local, state and National Register programs	Heritage stakeholders	
	Strengthen municipal planning efforts to encourage continued integrity of historic resources	Short term, ongoing	a)develop regulations/policies that protect heritage resources; develop land use regulations that require new construction to compliment surroundings (develop design guidelines), encourage adaptive reuse, make easier to rehabilitate, discourage demolition	Municipalities	
		Ongoing	b)develop/expand façade improvement programs to enhance important streetscapes	Municipalities	
		Ongoing	c)promote revitalization efforts in commercial core and surrounding residential neighborhoods of historic downtowns by adopting/maintaining Main Street and Elm Street Programs	Municipalities	
		Ongoing	d)create Historic Districts/HARB(Historic Architectural Review Board) where there is integrity and concentration of significant resources	Municipalities	

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
Expand heritage initiatives can't	County of Berks should enhance their historic resources located within the County Park System	Short term, ongoing	a)capital improvement plan should address maintenance/rehabilitation of historic structures within the County Park System, as well as museum collection/archive management, exhibit maintenance	County of Berks	
		Mid-term	b)take advantage of historic assets/tourist attractions at Heritage Center; explore development of Visitors Center for Wagon Works and Canal Center, and Wagon Display Structure; determine additional staff needs	County of Berks	
Preserve ecological corridors/resources- provide a seamless connectivity of resources within the ecological corridors/hub network	Protect/conserv e ecological environments of Irish Mt., Spring Hills, Nolde, Blue Marsh, Schuylkill Palisades, and Lake Ontelaunee and their connecting corridors	Short term, ongoing		Host municipalites, landowners	
		Short term, ongoing	Revise municipal land use ordinances to implement CZIP; encourage conservation development design, and use of conservation easements	County of Berks, municipalities	
		Short term, ongoing	a)coordinate stream restoration/stabilization projects	Municipalities, Berks County Conservation District, Trout Unlimited, BCC	

3.3 Metro Region

Feature	Opportunity/Action	Priority Status	Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated \$ Source
		Short term	b)add riparian buffer protective measures into zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances	Municipalities	
	Improve water quality	Short term, ongoing	a)adopt/implement Act 167 Plans, and updates	Municipalities, County of Berks	
		Short term, ongoing	b)implement MS 4 projects	Municipalities, County of Berks	
		Short term, ongoing	c)promote use of stormwater bmps	Municipalities, County of Berks	
	Restore tree cover along streets, in parks and other public lands in communities with low tree cover	Ongoing	a)establish/maintain Shade Tree Programs	Municipalities	
		Ongoing	b)explore partnerships for sharing arborists	Municipalities	
	Protect Natural Areas Inventory sites	Ongoing	a)County should distribute any updates of the inventory to municipalities	County of Berks	
		Short term, ongoing	b)municipalities should incorporate the Natural Areas Inventory into their planning documents/process	Municipalities	
	Provide floodplain regulations that exceed the federal and state minimum guidelines with the intent of maintaining floodplains in their natural state	Short term		Municipalities	

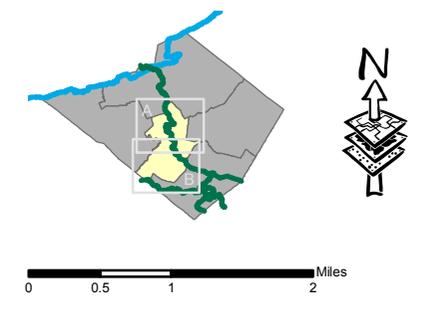
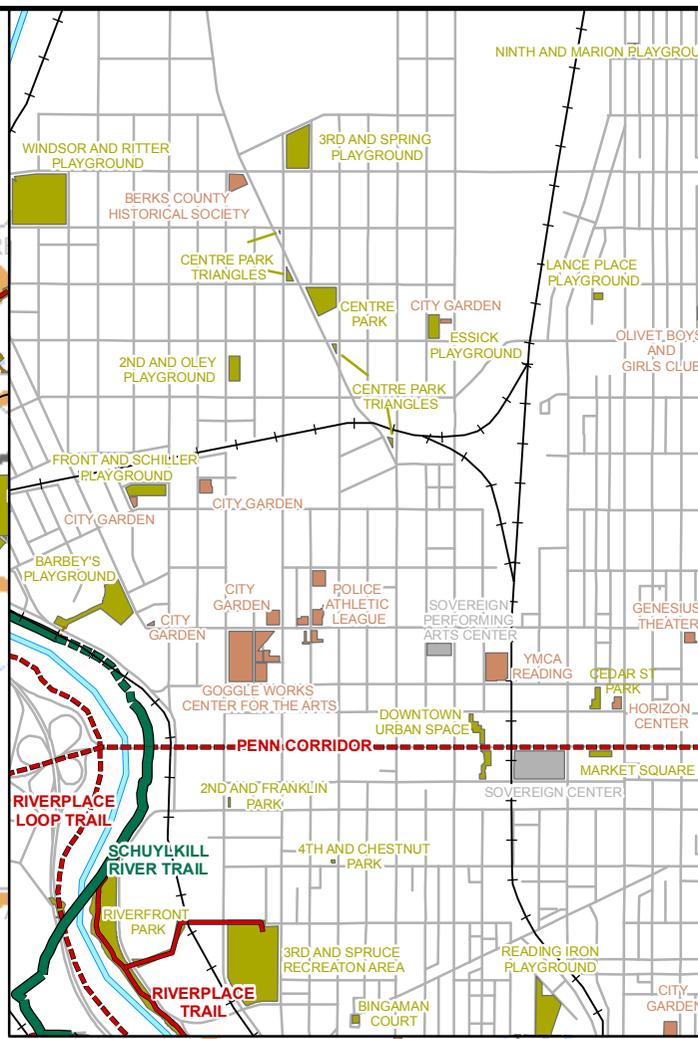
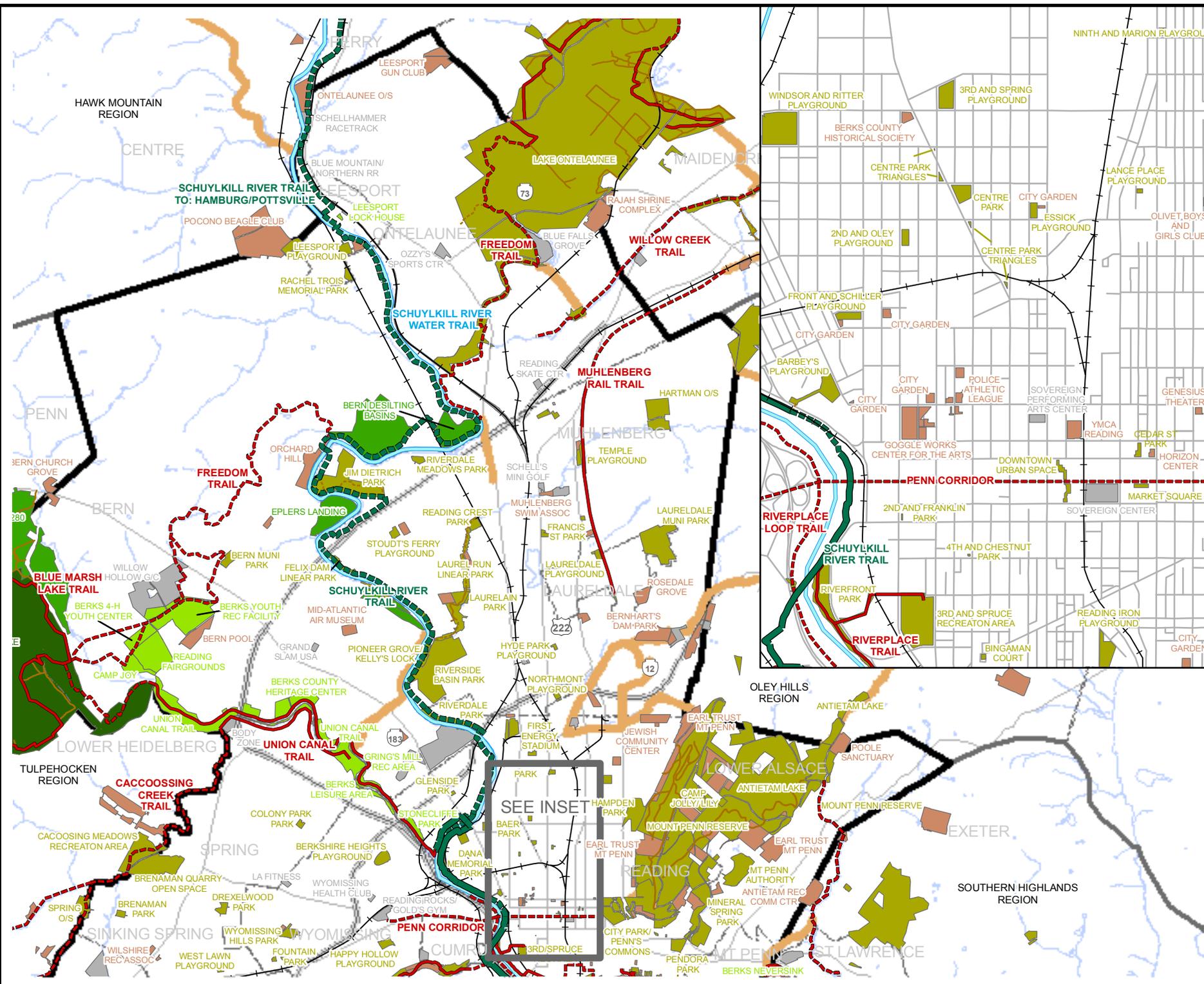
Notes:

Priority Status Short term-1 to 3 years Mid-term-3 to 7 years Long-term-7+ years

BCC-Berks County Conservancy, RDC-RiverPlace Development Corp., SRGA-Schuylkill River Greenway Assoc.(managing entity), SRHA-Schuylkill River Heritage Area (marketing name), ICGR-Initiative for a Competitive Greater Reading, RCT & HS-Reading Company Technical & Historical Society



Recreation Resources: Metro Region - Map A



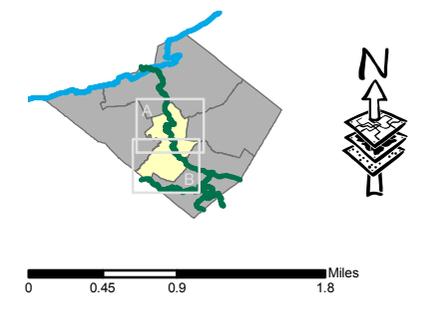
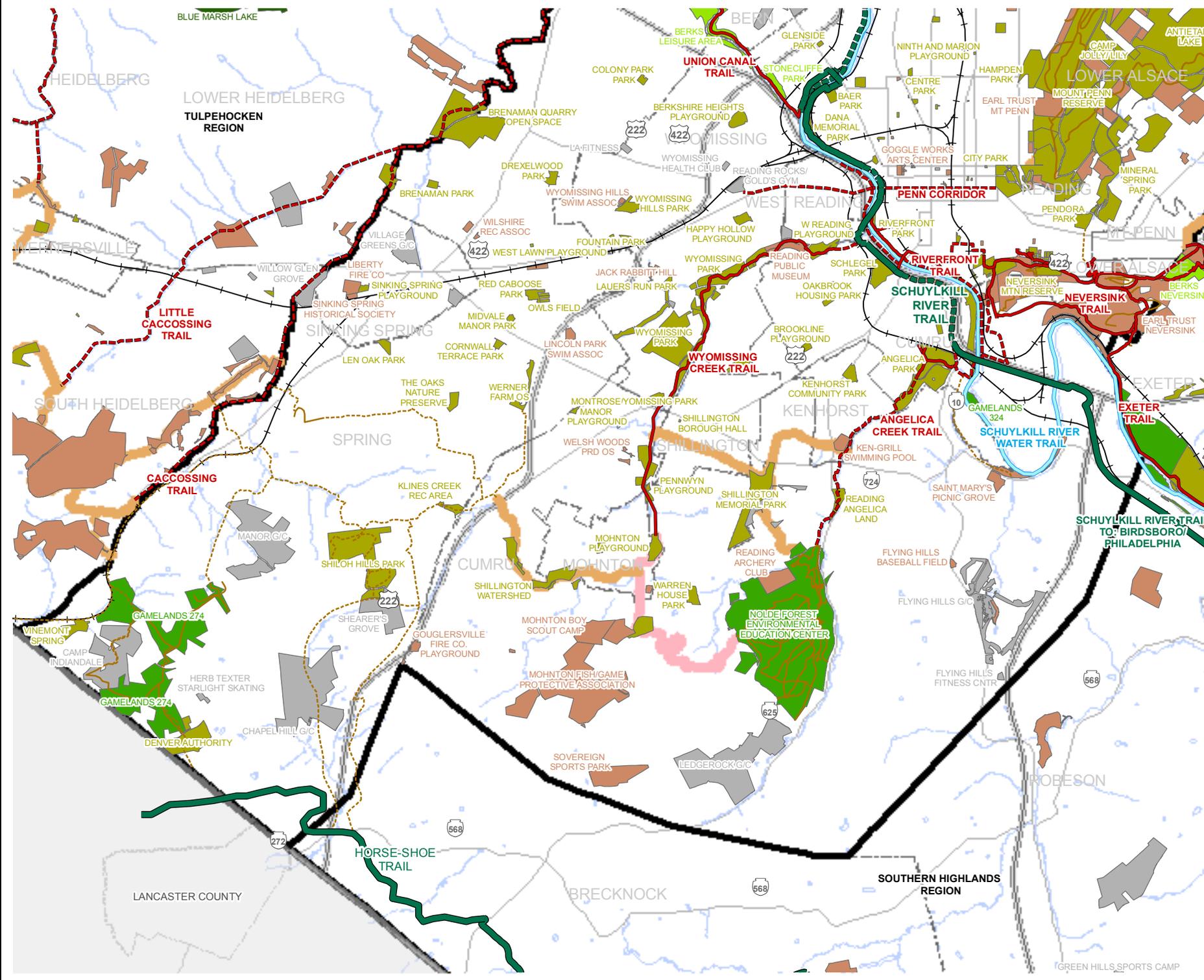
Trail Network Hierarchy		Recreation Facilities Ownership Categories	
	Interstate		Federal
	Intercounty		State
	Regional		County
	Local		Municipal
	Proposed Intercounty		Non-Profit
	Proposed Regional		Private
	Proposed Local		
	Water Trail		
	Potential Regional Connection		
	Potential Local Connection		

	Regions
	Limited Access Highway
	Municipal Bounds
	railroad2020
	Streams

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
with The Berks County Parks Department
The Natural Lands Trust
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Recreation Resources: Metro Region - Map B

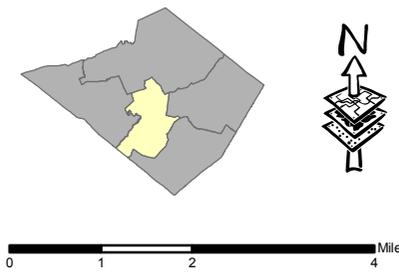
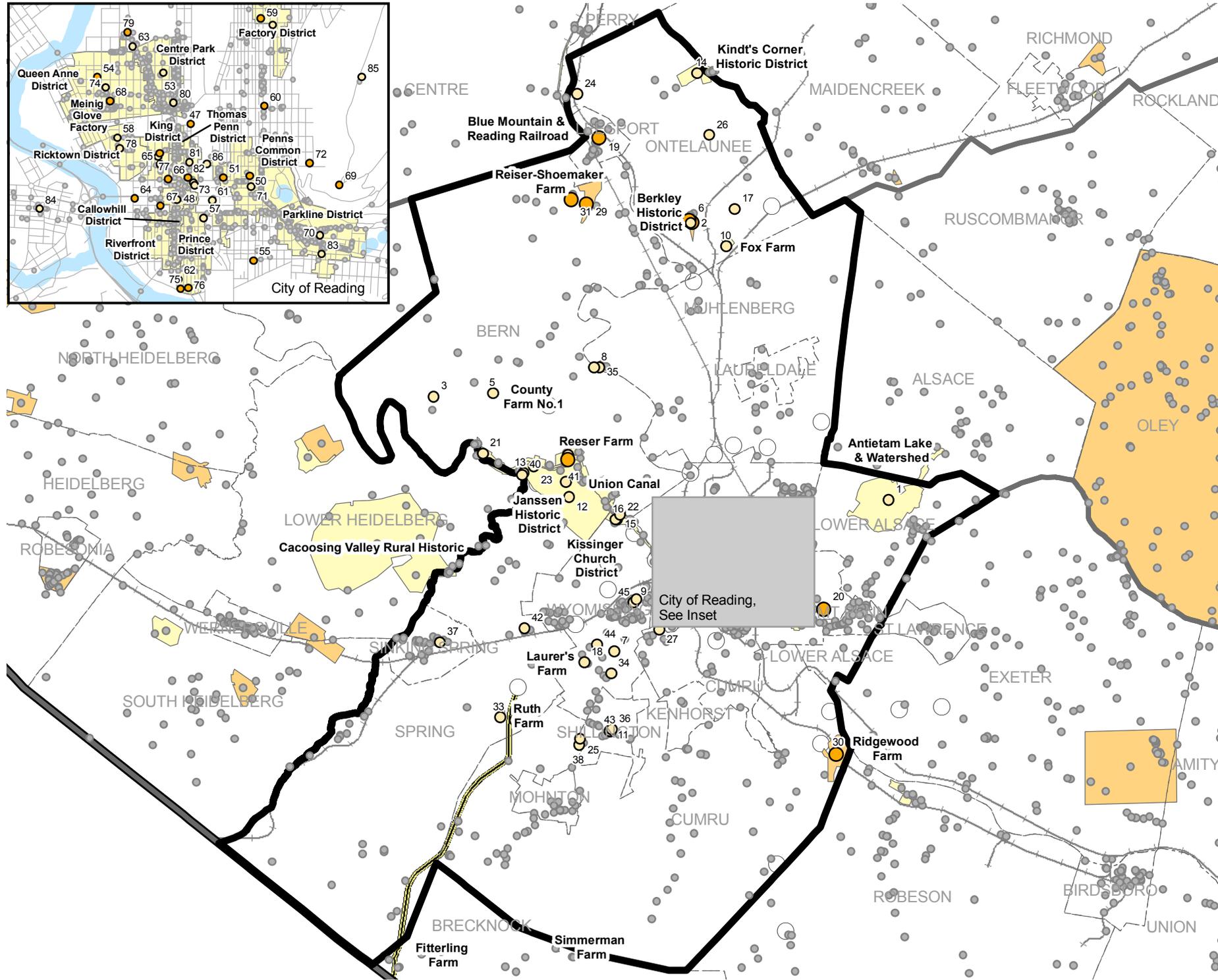


Trail Network		Recreation Facilities	
Hierarchy		Ownership Categories	
	Interstate		Federal
	Intercounty		State
	Regional		County
	Local		Municipal
	Proposed Intercounty		Non-Profit
	Proposed Regional		Private
	Proposed Local		
	Water Trail		
	Potential Regional Connection		Regions
	Potential Local Connection		Limited Access Highway
			Municipal Bounds
			railroad2020
			Streams

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
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Historic Resources: Metro Region

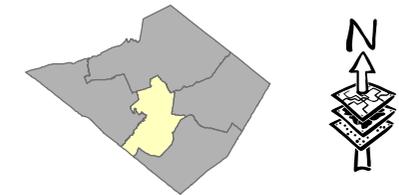
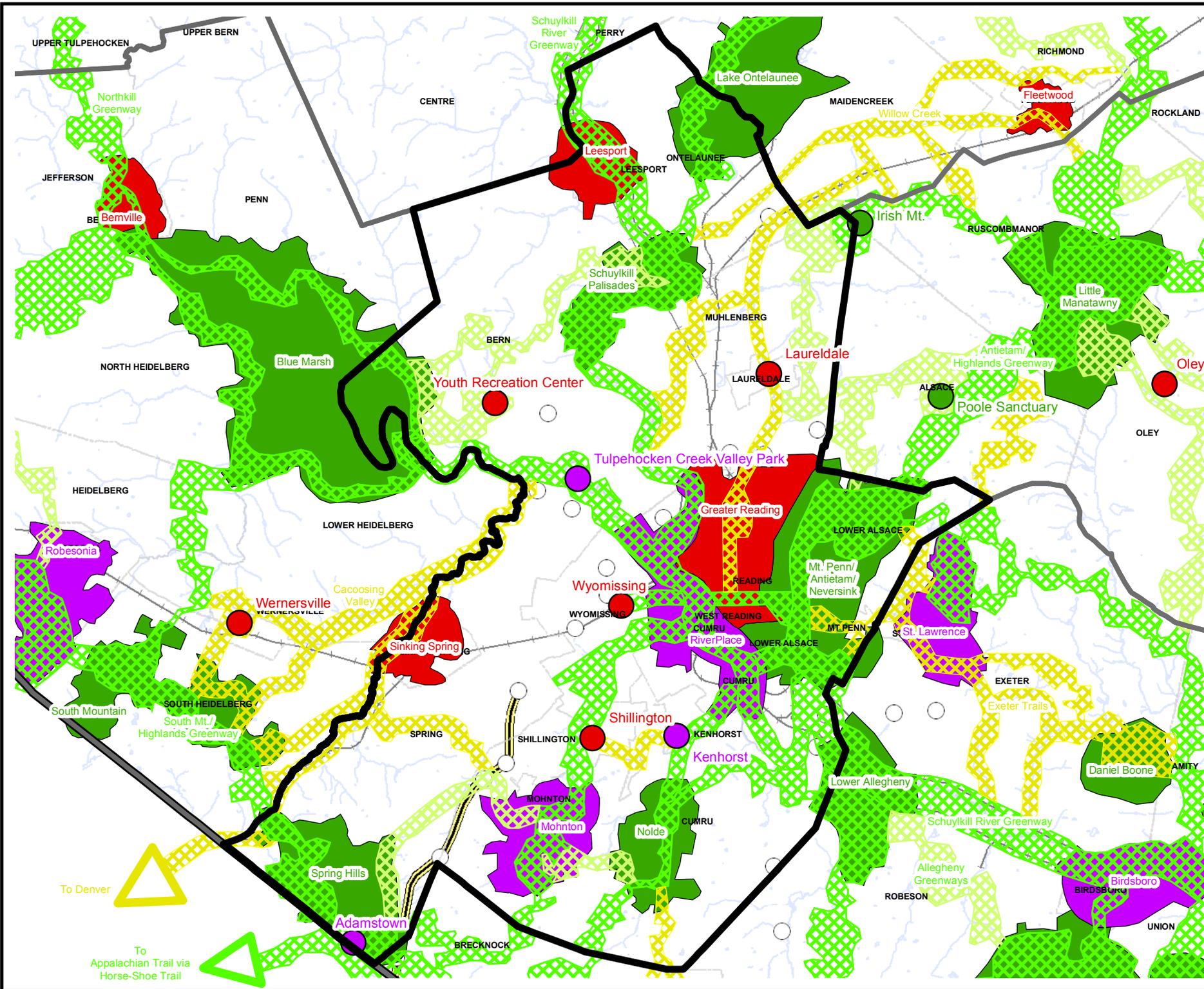


- Legend**
- Historic Sites**
 - National Historic Register Listed (Orange circle)
 - National Historic Register Eligible (Yellow circle)
 - Other Sites* (Grey circle)
 - Historic Districts**
 - National Register Listed (Orange shaded area)
 - National Register Eligible (Yellow shaded area)
 - Infrastructure**
 - Major Interchange (White circle with black border)
 - Limited Access Highway (Thick black line)
 - Major Highways (Thin black line)
 - Municipal Bounds (Dashed line)
 - Streams (Blue line)
 - Railroad (Line with cross-ticks)
 - Regions (Thick black outline)

* includes sites identified within surveys conducted by one or more of the following groups: Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Council, Berks County Conservancy, George Meiser and local historical societies.

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Greenway Network: Metro Region



Legend

	Greenway Priority Corridor 1		Major Interchange
	Greenway Priority Corridor 2		Limited Access Highway
	Greenway Priority Corridor 3		Major Highways
	Ecological Greenway Hub		Railroad
	Destination/Ecological Greenway Hub		Streams
	Destination Greenway Hub		Regions
	Ecological Greenway Node		
	Destination/Ecological Greenway Node		
	Destination Greenway Node		
	Municipal Boundaries		

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Chapter 3.4

Oley Hills Region

3.4 Oley Hills Region

The Oley Hills Region is as diverse in its landscape as the other Berks County non-metropolitan regions. The region contains large swaths of ecological resources and agricultural lands along with small villages and boroughs interconnected by local roads and two lane state routes. The area also contains many historic sites. Currently, recreational opportunities are very limited within the region, with most of those existing in just a few of the municipalities or supplied by the local school districts. Due to the availability of land this region is seeing a steady growth in both population and new housing units, which in turns leads to additional recreational needs for its residents and consumption of more land.

Recreation

The region contains the least amount of acreage designated for open space and recreation of all of the regions in Berks County. Of the 15 municipalities within the region, only five meet the recommended minimum acreage of recreational land to meet population needs, and two municipalities provide no recreational acreage for their residents. While the region as a whole is only 10.57 acres deficient this is due to 3 municipalities that own larger parks. Most of the facilities are small municipal or community parks. Most municipalities rely upon the use of school district facilities to meet the demands for organized recreation. This area also contains the least amount of federal, state and county-owned land of all the regions. Out of the 29,800 acres of state land in the County, only 343.6 acres is located in the Oley Hills. Other than a few scattered opportunities within an existing park, the region contains no public trail systems and no interconnection of trails to other facilities.

Existing and Recommended Recreation Acreages

Municipality	Current Acre- Est. Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2010 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2020 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre
Alsace Township	3.48- 3717- 23.23	3789- 23.68	3964- 24.77
Bally Borough	8.51- 1098- 6.86	1056- 6.6	1104- 6.9
Bechtelsville Borough	12.43- 951- 5.94	981- 6.13	1029- 6.43
Boyertown Borough	46.62- 3927- 24.54	3892- 24.32	3975- 24.84
Colebrookdale Township	1.49- 5412- 33.83	5597- 34.98	5623- 35.14
District Township	49.73- 1504- 9.4	1618- 10.11	1826- 11.41
Earl Township	70.95- 3206- 20.04	3298- 20.61	3424- 21.4
Hereford Township	16.96- 3232- 20.2	3345- 20.91	3503- 21.89
Longswamp Township	31.61- 5731- 35.82	6137- 38.36	6490- 40.56
Oley Township	13.25- 3629- 22.68	3871- 24.19	4121- 25.76
Pike Township	0- 1842- 11.51	1986- 12.41	2301- 14.38
Rockland Township	0- 3862- 24.14	4669- 29.18	5679- 35.49
Ruscombmanor Township	13.22- 4042- 25.26	4386- 27.41	5018- 31.36

Topton Borough	10.17- 1962- 12.26	2028- 12.67	2040- 12.75
Washington Township	9.46- 3637- 22.73	3724- 23.27	4200- 26.25
TOTALS	287.88- 47752- 298.45	50377- 314.83	54297- 339.33

Abbreviations: Rec.= Recommended; Pop.= Population; Est.=Estimated; Min.-Minimum

Sources:U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 Estimates

PaDEP 2006 State Water Plan Population Projections, 2010 and 2020
Population Projections

National Recreation & Park Association, NRPA suggests that a park system,
at a minimum, be composed of a core system of parklands, with a total of
6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed close-to-home space per 1,000 population.

Note: Municipalities in **bold** have sufficient acreage.

Generally, recreational opportunities for the Oley Hills Region are underdeveloped for both active and passive types of recreation. Six of the 15 municipalities spend 1% or less of their annual budget on recreation. Most of the municipalities are not accessing recreational grants available from the County or State



Recreational Fishing at Hunsickers Grove

to improve or expand their parks or to acquire land for parks. Our survey results indicate that residents are interested in walking trails, natural areas and children's playgrounds; see Chapter 5.1 for additional survey results.

The Appalachian Mountain Club is currently in the process of identifying a trail corridor for the Highlands Corridor, which is a nationally designated corridor of interconnecting forests and hills stretching from Pennsylvania to Connecticut. The trail proposed for the Pennsylvania portion will eventually interconnect with an existing trail that runs from New Jersey to Connecticut. The general goal of the Pennsylvania trail is to interconnect existing trails and recreational land to form both a linear trail and a looping trail system to meet the needs of both residents and tourists.

Ecology

The Oley Hills is the largest and highest valued ecological resource in the region and is one of the highest ranking resources Countywide. This resource is a key habitat area for all types of birds, mammals, reptiles and fish due to the existence of large undisturbed land masses and unpolluted streams. Other important ecologic resources are the Little Manatawny, Trout Run and the Perkiomen Uplands, which all contain large interconnected land masses that are mostly undisturbed by development. The region also is home to a number of Natural Areas Inventory sites as designated by the Natural Areas Inventory Study for Berks County. These sites are identified due to the existence of Exceptional Value and High Quality streams, rare and endangered plants and animals (both state and federal listings), significant woodlands, and good quality habitats. The Oley Hills Region contains five of the twelve state-designated Exceptional Value streams; Bieber, Pine, Oysterville, and Sacony Creeks and the West Branch of the Perkiomen Creek.

The Oley Hills is also identified as a Hub by the Pennsylvania Highlands, which is part of the larger Highlands Corridor. The

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection recently designated the Highlands as a State-wide Significant Greenway. This is important due to the potential for grant funds to purchase development rights in the Oley Hills to protect the natural resources. A major concern remarked upon by the Highlands Coalition is that the Oley Hills contains very important habitat areas, but has the least amount of protected lands.



Goose and gosling

Heritage

The history of the Oley Hills Region dates back to the beginning of the 18th Century with the establishment of settlements by the Swedes, Huguenots (French Protestants) and the Germans. The Germans arrived in the region in 1710 and established a settlement along the Manatawny Creek in Oley Township. The Germans, unlike previous settlers, relied upon agriculture as their principal means of income. This influx changed the region from a primarily trade oriented society to one based upon agriculture. The region is widely known for its historic farmsteads, stone houses, barns, cemeteries, churches and early industrial

activities such as the Oley Forge, Oley Furnace, mills of various types and mining activity. The region contains many small villages and crossroads, which were once stagecoach stops or trading posts for early travelers. With the bypassing of the region by major road projects and railroad connections the area has maintained its rural and agricultural identity. However, with the continued expansion outward of residential developments from Southeastern Pennsylvania into Berks County, many of these historic resources are endangered.

The Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles, located in Boyertown, highlights the transportation heritage of Southeastern Pennsylvania. The Museum includes items and information about cars built by Reading automobile pioneer Charles E. Duryea and parts of the original 1872 carriage factory, which still stands.

The region contains many historic sites. Most of these sites are not on an official register. However, the local historical societies that represent the area are working towards categorizing all of the sites that are potentially eligible for the National Historic Register.

Identified National Historic Register and eligible sites include:

- 200 N. Reading Ave.
- Apler Stone Cabin
- Bahr Mill Complex
- Barto Bridge
- Bechtelsville Hotel/Bar
- Bechtelsville Store & Post Office
- Borneman Mill
- Boyer Store
- Boyertown Post Office
- Edwin Bechtel House
- Greisemer's Mill Bridge
- Hartman Cider Press
- Henry Fisher House
- Hill Homestead
- Keim Homestead
- Knabb-Beiber Mill
- Long/Haweter Mill
- Mill At Lobachsville
- Nicholas Johnson Mill
- Phillip Christmans House
- Pikeville Hotel
- Pleasantville Bridge
- Reiff Homestead
- Sally Ann Furnace Complex
- Weiger-Schelly House
- Yoder Mill

Identified National Historic Districts include:

- Oley Township
- Hunter's Mill
- Gehman, John Farm

It is extremely important to complete the inventory of known historical sites in order to try protect the area's heritage. The local historical societies and the County Historical Society need to work together to officially identify and categorize these sites. Most of the municipalities do not have any type of regulations that will protect these sites from destruction or demolition by neglect. Oley Township is the only municipality with an Historic Review Board that regulates historic structures. While the Historic Review Board is a great tool there are other tools that are also helpful in preserving the heritage of the region. (See chapter 2.1 regarding eligibility and chapter 5.8 for preservation tools) Also, Oley Township is the only Township in the United States that is listed on the Register of Historic Places.



Historic Pleasantville Covered Bridge re-opening

The entire region is part of the federally designated Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area. The benefit of this designation is funding for preservation of historical, cultural, natural and recreational resources along with education and interpretation of the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley.

Greenway Section

The Greenways in this region are predominantly habitat related with some historic and recreational connections. The most important Greenways are the ones that interconnect with the Oley Hills, Little Manatawny, Trout Run and the Perkiomen Uplands Hubs. The Greenways that interconnect with these Hubs are most important due to the interconnection with other Counties and States through the Highlands Corridor.

The Highlands Coalition is in the early stages of trying to protect the Greenways and Hubs of Pennsylvania, which include a majority of the areas defined as such in the Oley Hills Region.

3.4 Oley Hills Region

OLEY HILLS REGION MATRIX				
Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status - Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Perkiomen Highlands Greenway - Key link in the PA Highlands Corridor between Lehigh and Chester Counties through Berks County's hubs to the south and west of the County	High ecological value; preserve interconnections between Hubs for continued habitat value	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards and adopt MLPP	Hereford Township, Berks County, Lehigh County, Montgomery County, Highlands Coalition	Berks County (line of credit), Lehigh & Montgomery Counties, State, Highlands (Federal)
Trail connections linking population centers to existing facilities and natural areas	Recreational trail opportunity; the Highlands Coalition proposes to build a trail that will interconnect key PA State lands with an existing trail that runs to Connetquot	Short term & on-going; identify possible trail easement location Mid-term; acquire easements	Hereford Township, Berks, Lehigh and Montgomery Counties, Highlands Coalition	Counties, State, Highlands (Federal)
	Link the Oley Hills Hub and Greenways to the Perkiomen Uplands Hub and Greenways and connect to Lehigh & Montgomery Counties	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards and adopt MLPP	Oley, Pike, District, Washington, and Hereford Townships, Bally and Bectelsville Boroughs, local organizations; Berks, Lehigh & Montgomery Counties, Highlands	Non-Profits, Counties, State, Highlands (Federal)
Oley Hills Highland Greenway	Protection of the corridors through the Oley Hills Hub should occur to prevent isolated habitat areas	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Berks County, District, Pike, Earl, Oley, and Rockland Townships, BCC	Berks County (line of credit), State, Federal

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue
Antietam Highlands Greenway	Connect existing preserved pockets (Poole Sanctuary and State Forest Land) to the Little Manatawny Hub and the Mt. Penn/Neversink Hub	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Berks County, Alsace Township, BCC	Non-Profit, Berks County (line of credit), State
Trail connections linking population centers to existing facilities and natural areas	Link Antietam Lake to the Poole Sanctuary and the Alsace State Forest	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Alsace and Lower Alsace Townships, Berks County Conservancy, County of Berks	Non-Profits, Berks County (line of credit), State
Trout Run Highlands Greenway	Connect the Trout Run Reservoir to the Oley Hills Hub/Corridors and the Leaf Creek Corridor/Monacacy Hill Hub	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Berks County, Earl and Colebrookdale Townships, Boyertown Borough	Berks County (line of credit) State, Federal
	Preserve the PNDI site Shenkel Hill Forest, which includes Pinnacle Point Slope	Short term & on-going	Earl Township, Delaware County	Municipal, Delaware County
East Penn Greenways (Antietam Highlands to Kittatiny)	Connect the Metro Region to the Kittatiny Ridge through the Little Manatawny Hub and East Penn Greenways	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Berks County, Alsace, Ruscombmanor and Rockland Townships, BCC	Non-profits, Berks County (line of credit), State, Federal
Irish Mountain Greenway	Connect Irish Mountain ecological node to the Little Manatawny Hub	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Berks County, Alsace and Muhlenberg Townships	Berks County (line of credit), State, Federal
Trail connections linking population centers to existing facilities and natural areas	Link Maiden creek to the Alsace State Forest	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Maiden creek Township, Maiden creek Municipal Authority, Ruscombmanor Township, Alsace Township	Non-profits, OSRAC, State

3.4 Oley Hills Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue
Oley Greenway	Connect the Oley Hills Hub to the Little Manatawny Hub	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Berks County, Oley, Ruscombmanor, and Alsace Townships, BCC	Non-Profits, Berks County (line of credit), State, Federal
Trail connections linking population centers to existing facilities and natural areas	Link the Poole Sanctuary and Alsace State Forest through the Little Manatawny Hub to the Village of Oley	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Alsace and Oley Townships, Berks County Conservancy, Oley School District, Oley Valley Youth League, County of Berks	Non-Profits, Berks County (line of credit), State, OSRAC
	Link the Village of Oley to the Oley Hills Hub and Greenways	Short term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Oley Township, local organizations, Berks County, Highlands	OSRAC, State, Highlands Coalition
Oley Hills Greenway Network	Interconnect the ecological hubs with the various destination/ecological and destination nodes	Mid-term & on-going	Berks County, Longswamp, Hereford, District, and Rockland Townships, Topton and Lyons Boroughs, BCC	Berks County (line of credit), State, Federal
	Preserve the PNDI SA506; nesting location for a state rare bird	Mid-term & on-going	Hereford and District Townships	Municipal, State, Federal
Perkiomen Uplands to Unami Hills	Regional interconnection of the Perkiomen Uplands Hub to the destination nodes and through to Montgomery County	Mid-term & on-going	Hereford and Washington Townships, Montgomery County	State, Federal
Irish Mountain to Antietam Highlands (includes both splits)	Ecological corridor connections	Mid-term & on-going	Alsace, Maidencreek and Muhlenberg Townships, BCC	State, Federal
Trail connections linking population centers to existing facilities and natural areas	Link Muhlenberg/Laureldale to the Poole Sanctuary	On-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Muhlenberg and Alsace Townships, Laureldale Borough, BCC, Berks County	Non-Profits, Berks County (line of credit), State

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue
Trout Run to Unami Hills Highlands	Regional interconnection of the Trout Run Hub to the destination nodes and through to Montgomery County	Mid-term & on-going	Berks County, Earl, Colebrookdale, and Washington Townships, Boyertown, and Bechtlesville Boroughs, Montgomery County	State, Federal
Mertztown to Oley Hills Greenway	Preserve and maintain the High Quality stream designation of the Little Lehigh Creek; create vegetated riparian buffers	Mid-term & on-going	Longswamp Township	State, Federal
	Preseve the PNDI site SA507, a state endangered animal	Mid-term & on-going	Longswamp and District Township	Municipal, State, Federal
Lyons Borough to Oley Hills & East Penn Valley Greenways	Protect the seeps and wetlands in the Boyers Junction areas where populations of state endangered SP503 grows	Mid-term - On-going; adopt CZIP standards, identify key easement needed	Richmond, Rockland, Ruscombmanor Townships, and Lyons Borough	Municipal, Berks County, State, Federal
	Ecological corridor connections	Mid-term - On-going; adopt CZIP standards, identify key easement needed	Richmond and Rockland Townships and Lyons Borough	Municipal, Berks County, State
Willow Creek Corridors to the Irish Mt and Little Manatawny Hubs	Ecological corridor connections	Mid-term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Maidencreek and Ruscombmanor Townships	Municipal, State, Federal
St. Lawrence/Mt. Penn/Lower Alsace area to the Antietam Highlands Greenway	Ecological corridor connections	Mid-term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Lower Alsace, Exeter and Alsace Townships	Municipal, State, Federal

3.4 Oley Hills Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue
Little Lehigh Greenways	Ecological corridor connections between the Oley Hills Greenways and the Hunsicker's Grove & Mary Ann Furnace Nodes and the Topton Area	Mid-term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Topton Borough, Longswamp Township, Non-profits	Municipal, County (line of credit), State
	Protect the PNDI site; state endangered species	Short term; protect the habitat area	Longswamp Township, Berks County, Berks County Conservancy	Non-Profit, Municipal, State
Trail connections linking population centers to existing facilities and natural areas	Link Topton Watershed to Topton Community Park	Mid-term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Topton Borough, Topton Authority and Longswamp Township	Municipal, OSRAC, State
	Link Topton Borough to Hunsicker's Grove Park	Mid-term & on-going; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	Topton Borough, Longswamp Township, Berks County	Municipal, County, State
Greater Trout Run Hub	Preserve and maintain the exceptional value stream designation; create vegetated riparian buffers	Short term - on-going; adopt CZIP standards and determine the need for riparian easements	Berks County, Earl Township, Boyertown Borough	Municipal, Berks County (line of credit), State, Federal
	Preserve the Boyertown Watershed; limit development	Short term - on-going; adopt zoning standards to protect the watershed and permanently restrict development	Berks County, Earl Township, Boyertown Borough	Municipal, Berks County, State, Federal
	Preserve the ecological integrity of the area	Short term - on-going; adopt CZIP standards and permanently ease key parcels, adopt MLPP	Berks County, Earl and Colebrookdale Townships	Municipal, Berks County (line of credit), State, Federal

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue
Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network	To establish the Berks portion of the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network.	Short term and Ongoing – Work with the Appalachian Mountain Club and local trail organizations to utilize existing and proposed trail alignments as well as creating new connections to establish a Berks County portion of the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network		Municipalities, Appalachian Mountain Club, Trail Organizations, DCNR, County of Berks, land trusts
Little Manatawny Hub	Preserve habitat for PNDI SP512, SA533; animal and plant species of concern (includes entire Little Manatawny Creek Watershed)	Short term - on-going; adopt CZIP standards, remove invasive exotic species	Berks County; Oley, Alsace, Ruscombmanor and Rockland Townships	Municipal, Berks County, State
Feature	Preserve and maintain the exceptional value stream designation within the basin; create vegetated riparian buffers Opportunity	Short term - on-going; adopt CZIP standards and determine the need for riparian easements Priority Status – Next Steps	All Municipalities Partners	Municipal, Berks County, State, Federal Anticipated Revenue
	Preserve the ecological integrity of the area	Short term - on-going; adopt CZIP standards and permanently ease key parcels, adopt MLPP	Berks County; Oley, Alsace, Ruscombmanor and Rockland Townships	Non-Profit, Municipal, Berks County (line of credit), State
Bieber Creek Wetlands Node	Preserve the PNDI SP504	Short term - on-going; adopt CZIP, identify areas that need easements	Rockland and Oley Townships, BCC	Municipal, Berks County, State
Oley Hills Hub	Preserve PNDI sites throughout the Hubs/Corridors; NC512, SP502, SP510	Short term - On-going; adopt CZIP standards, identify areas that need easements, adopt MLPP	Berks County, District, Rockland, Oley, Pike, and Earl Townships, BCC	Municipal, Berks County, State, Federal
	Preserve the ecological integrity of the area	Short term - on-going; adopt CZIP standards and permanently ease key parcels, adopt MLPP	Berks County; Oley, Rockland, Pike, District, and Earl Townships, BCC	Non-Profit, Municipal, Berks County (line of credit), State

3.4 Oley Hills Region

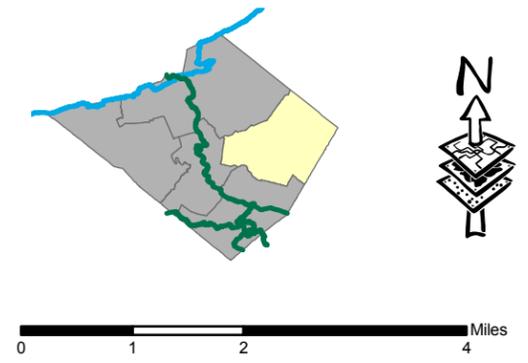
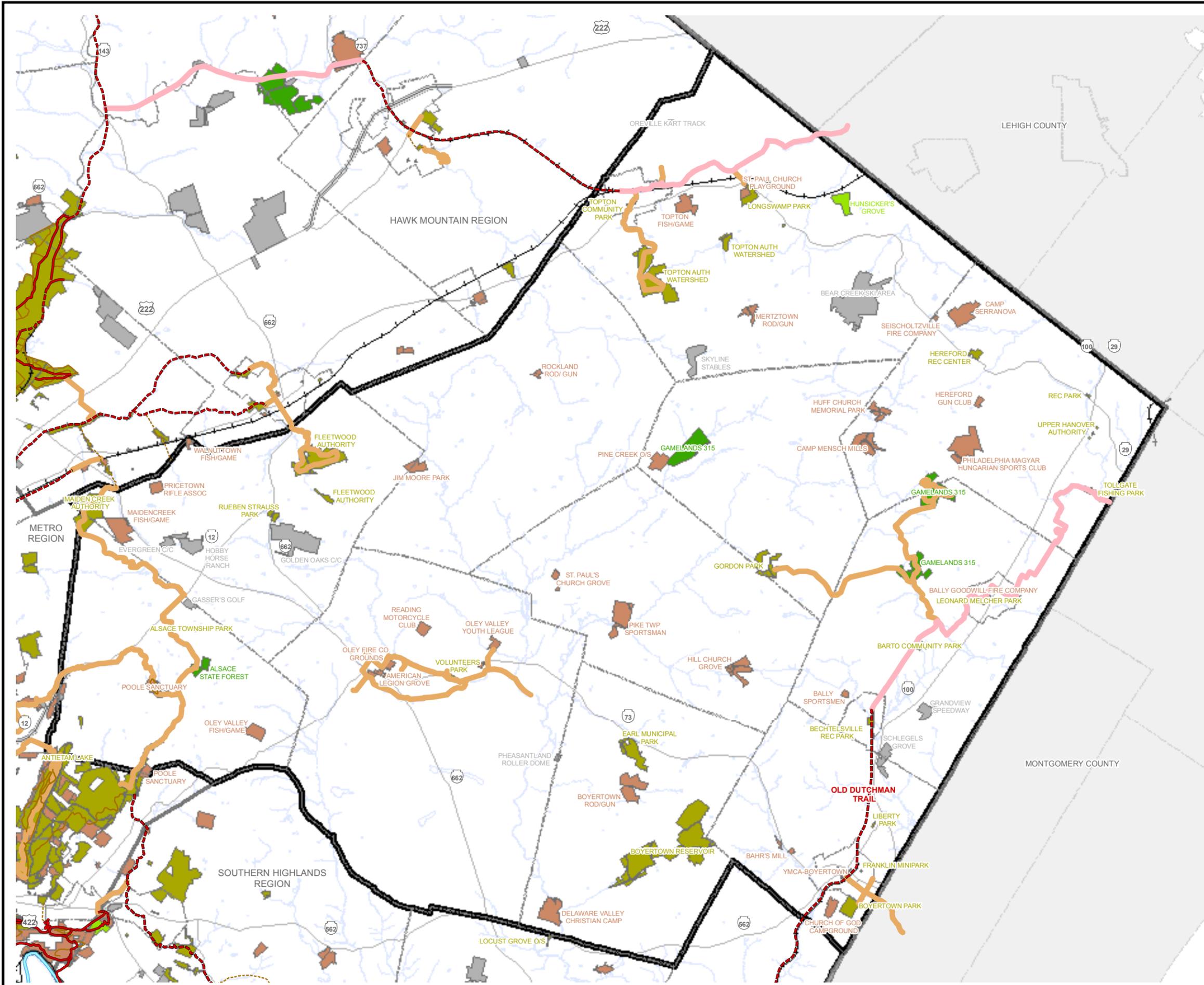
Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue
Perkiomen Uplands Hub	Preserve PNDI site SA506	Short term; adopt CZIP standards, identify areas that need easements	Hereford and Washington Townships	Municipal, Berks County, State, Federal
	Identify a trail corridor through the Hub that will provide access for the Highland Corridor without impacting the ecology	Short term - On-going; identify possible trail easement location: Mid-term; acquire easements and construct	Appalachian Mountain Club & Highlands Coalition, Counties, Hereford and Washington Townships	Municipal, Berks County, State, Highlands Coalition (Federal)
	Preserve the ecological integrity of the area	Short term - on-going; adopt CZIP standards and permanently ease key parcels, adopt MLPP	Berks County, Hereford and Washington Townships	Non-profits, Municipal, Berks County (line of credit), State, Federal
Mt. Penn/Antietam Hub (little section)	Preserve the ecological integrity of the area	Short term; identify key areas that need acquisition or easements	Berks County	Berks County, State
		Short term; adopt CZIP standards, adopt MLPP	BCC, Alsace and Lower Alsace Townships	Non-Profits, Municipal, Berks County (line of credit), State
Hunsicker's Grove	a) Complete master plan for park b) Expand recreational opportunities c) Make improvements to facilities d) Acquire additional land surrounding park for buffer area	On-going	Berks County	Berks County, State
Bicycle/Pedestrian Access	Municipalities when completing road projects should upgrade shoulders to improve safety and access	On-going	Municipalities	PennDot/Liquid fuels funds, municipalities, state grants
	Improve State Bicycle/Pedestrian Route L	Short term and On-going; Make safety improvements	Municipalities, Berks County, PennDot	PennDot

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue
	Implement recommendations from the Berks County Bicycle Pedestrian Plan 2002	On-going; Make identified safety improvements	Municipalities, Berks County, PennDot	PennDot/Liquid fuels funds, municipalities, state grants
Old Dutchman Trail	Should rail service ever be abandoned - rail trail from Pottstown to Bechtelsville	Long Term	PennDot, Municipalities, County of Berks	PennDot, Berks County, State
Add additional municipal park acreage	Oley Township - acquire and build a park	Short term - On-going; locate a suitable site	Oley Township	State, OSRAC
	Rockland Township - acquire and build a park	Short term - On-going; locate a suitable site	Rockland Township	State, OSRAC
	Colebrookdale Township - acquire and build a multi-use community park	Short term - On-going; locate a suitable site	Colebrookdale Township	State, OSRAC
Coordination of Facilities and Services	Eastern Berks Region should create a regional recreation board	Short term; adopt intergovernmental agreement, identify potential projects Mid-term; Implement programs	District, Longswamp and Rockland Townships and Topton Borough	State
	Municipalities need to formalize agreements for the use of school facilities	On-going; Create formal agreements with Schools for use of facilities when not in use for school activities	All Municipalities	Municipal, School Districts
Add swimming facility	Oley Township - investigate feasibility of building a swimming facility	Mid-term; determine feasibility and cost estimates	Oley Township, local organizations	Non-Profit, Municipal, State
Heritage Tourism	Expand, promote the Boyertown Museum of historic vehicles	Short term - Ongoing	Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles, Berks County Museum Council, State, Boyertown Borough, Visitor's Bureau	Municipal, Berks County Museum Council, State

3.4 Oley Hills Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue
	Interconnection between nodes to promote commerce in historic and ecological node areas	Short term - On-going; brochures promoting area	municipalities; Berks Visitors Bureau	Municipalities, Berks Visitors Bureau, State, Highlands
	Establish a driving tour highlighting the areas historic farms, bridges, and mills	Short term - On-going	Oley Region Municipalities, Daniel Boone Homestead	Municipalities, State
Protect Historical Structures	Update ordinances to protect historical structures	Short term - On-going	municipalities, historical societies	municipalities, historical societies, Berks County, State

Recreation Resources: Oley Hills Region



Trail Network Hierarchy

- Interstate
- Intercounty
- Regional
- Local
- - - Proposed Intercounty
- - - Proposed Regional
- - - Proposed Local
- Water Trail
- Potential Regional Connection
- Potential Local Connection

Recreation Facilities Ownership Categories

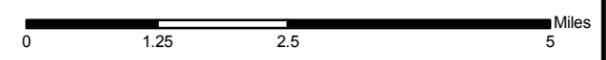
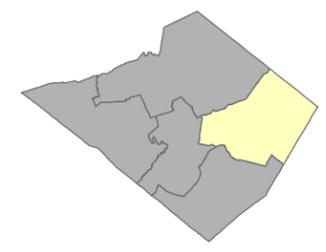
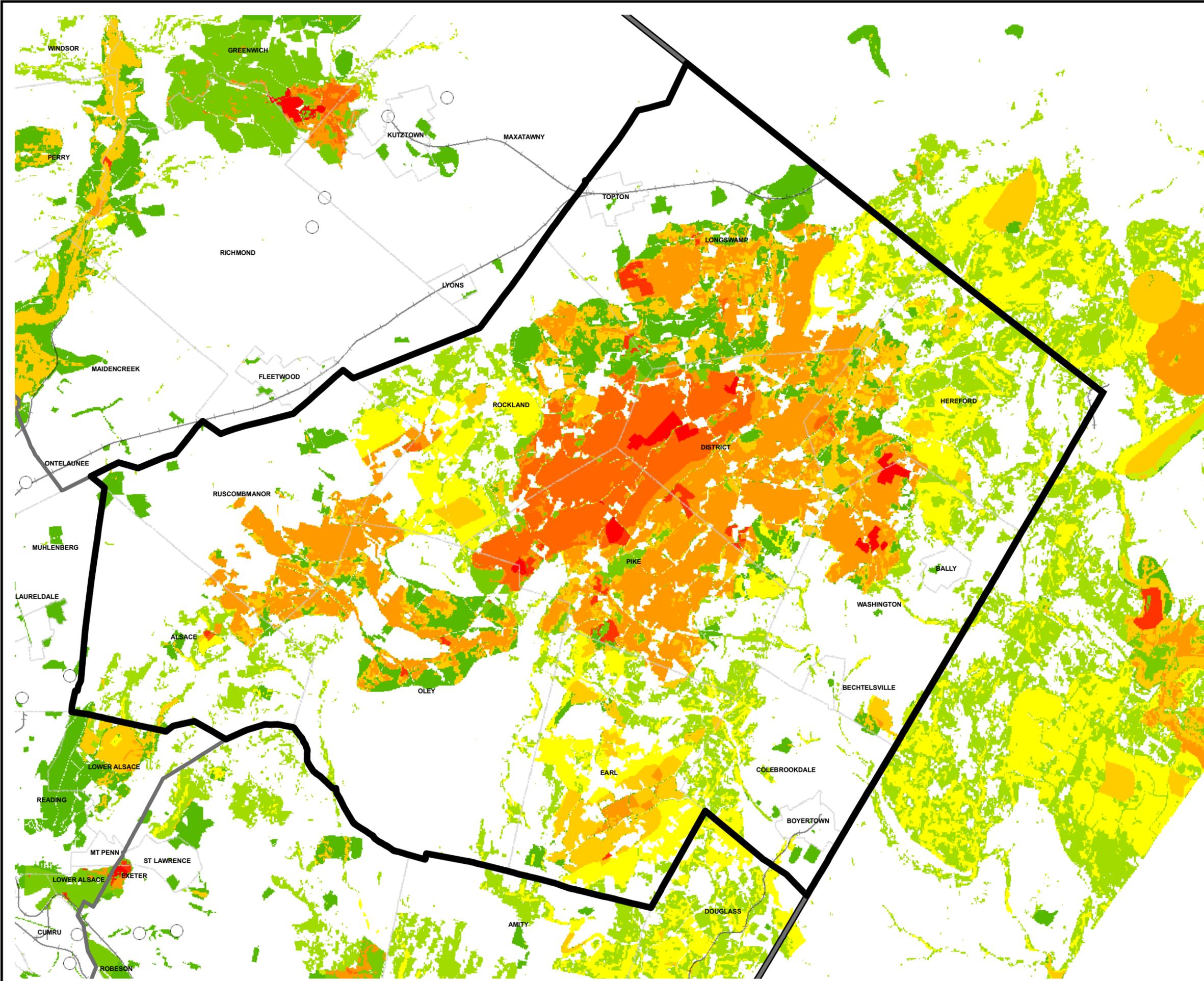
- Federal
- State
- County
- Municipal
- Non-Profit
- Private

- Regions
- Limited Access Highway
- municipal
- railroad2020
- Streams

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
with The Berks County Parks Department
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Ecologic Resources: Oley Hills Region



Legend

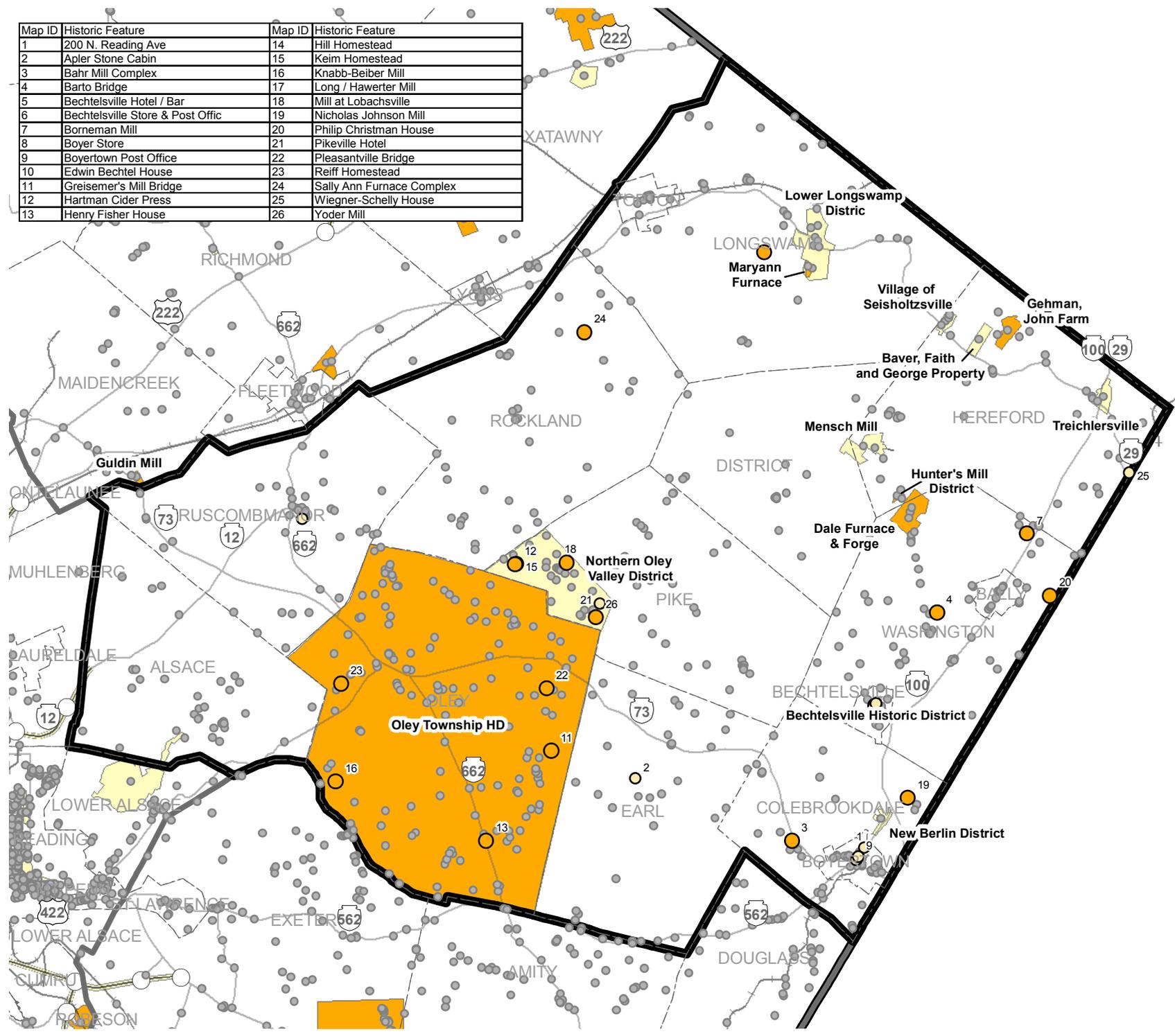
- 1 - High Value
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 - Highest Value
- Major Interchange
- Limited Access Highway
- Municipal Boundaries
- Major Highways
- Railroad
- Streams
- Regions

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The Natural Lands Trust
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
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Thanks to All

Historic Resources: Oley Hills Region

Map ID	Historic Feature	Map ID	Historic Feature
1	200 N. Reading Ave	14	Hill Homestead
2	Apler Stone Cabin	15	Keim Homestead
3	Bahr Mill Complex	16	Knabb-Beiber Mill
4	Barto Bridge	17	Long / Hawerter Mill
5	Bechtelsville Hotel / Bar	18	Mill at Lobachville
6	Bechtelsville Store & Post Office	19	Nicholas Johnson Mill
7	Borneman Mill	20	Philip Christman House
8	Boyer Store	21	Pikeville Hotel
9	Boyertown Post Office	22	Pleasantville Bridge
10	Edwin Bechtel House	23	Reiff Homestead
11	Greisemer's Mill Bridge	24	Sally Ann Furnace Complex
12	Hartman Cider Press	25	Wiegner-Schelly House
13	Henry Fisher House	26	Yoder Mill



Legend

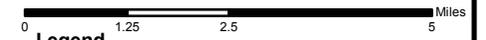
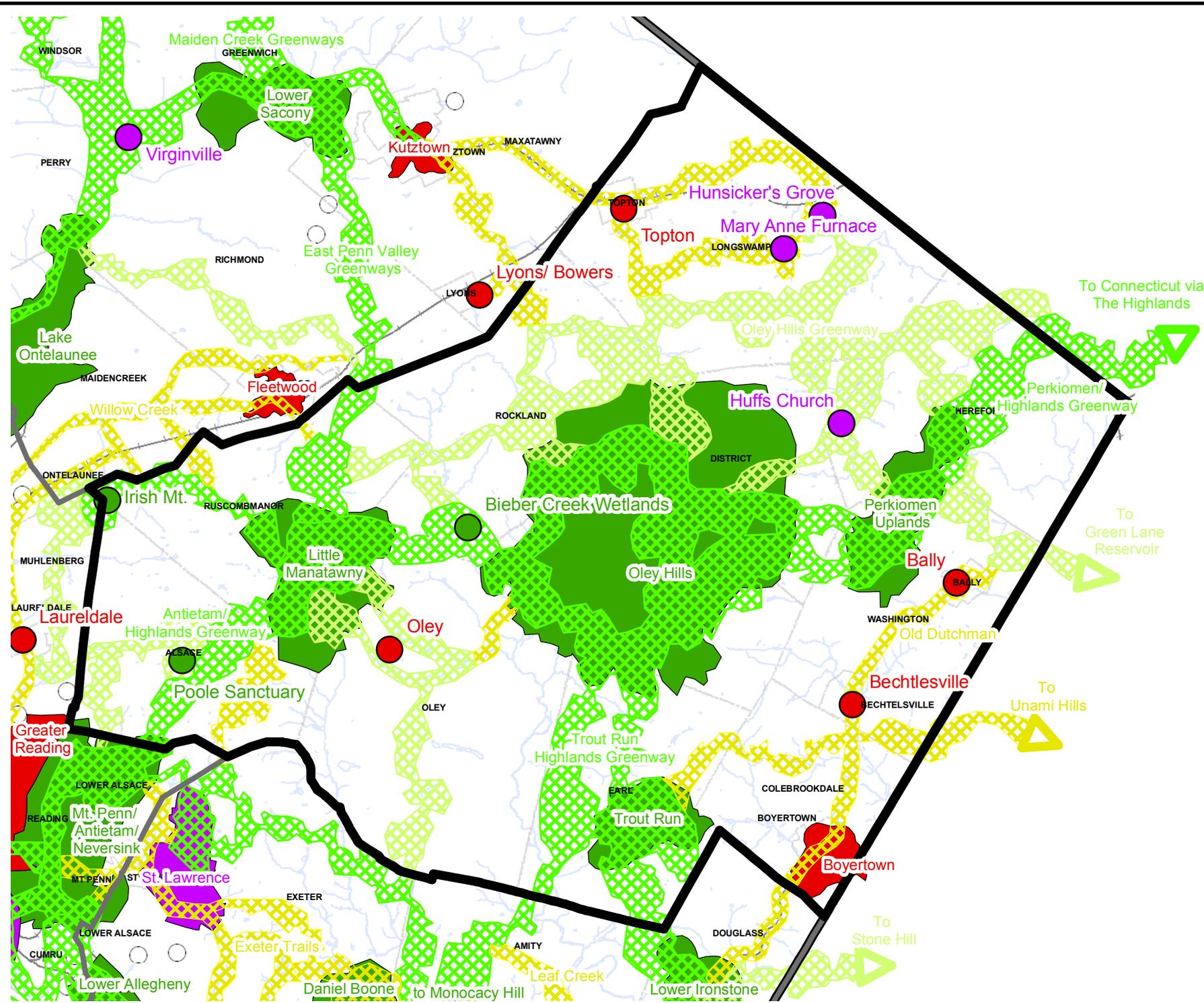
- Historic Sites**
- National Register Listed
 - National Register Eligible
 - Other Sites*
- Historic Districts**
- National Register Listed
 - National Register Eligible
- Other Features**
- Major Interchange
 - Limited Access Highway
 - Major Highways
 - Municipal Bounds
 - Streams
 - Railroad
 - Regions

* includes sites identified within surveys conducted by one or more of the following groups: Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Council, Berks County Conservancy, George Meiser and local historical societies.

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Greenway Network: Oley Hills Region



- Legend**
- Greenway Priority Corridor**
 - 1 (Dark Green Cross-hatch)
 - 2 (Light Green Cross-hatch)
 - 3 (Yellow Cross-hatch)
 - Greenway Hubs**
 - Ecological (Green Circle)
 - Destination/ Ecological (Purple Circle)
 - Destination (Red Circle)
 - Greenway Nodes**
 - Ecological (Green Circle)
 - Destination/ Ecological (Purple Circle)
 - Destination (Red Circle)
 - Other Symbols**
 - Major Interchange (Circle with cross)
 - Limited Access Highway (Double line)
 - Major Highways (Thick black line)
 - Railroad (Line with cross-ticks)
 - Streams (Blue line)
 - Regions (Thick black outline)
 - Municipal Boundaries (Dashed line)

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The Natural Lands Trust
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders
Thanks to All

Chapter 3.5

Southern Highlands Region

3.5 Southern Highlands Region

The Southern Highlands Region is located within the southern portion of Berks County and bordered by the Metro Region to the north and Lancaster and Chester Counties to the southwest and southeast. Throughout this region is an abundance of recreational, ecological and historical resources. This region is considered to be one area of the County that is going to see a steady rise in population as more and more people move into the area along the US 422 and Pennsylvania Turnpike corridors. New Morgan Borough has been the site of a number of ambitious development proposals that could contribute significantly to the region's population.

The Southern Highlands Region has a multitude of recreational, ecological and historical resources with the majority being geared toward passive recreation. The Schuylkill River Greenway/Trail extends through this region ultimately winding its way to Philadelphia. The Horse-Shoe Trail crosses the Southern Highlands Region as it traverses into neighboring Chester County. The County has plans to create the Hay Creek Trail which would run from Elverson, through the Borough of New Morgan, onto the Schuylkill River Trail in Birdsboro. There is the Federally-owned Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site which is considered the most complete extant iron plantation, illustrating over 100 years of American iron manufacturing. Hopewell provides unparalleled opportunity to enhance public understanding of American iron-making from the American Revolution to the rise of the steel industry.

Not only does this region contain a significant national landmark, but surrounding Hopewell Furnace NHS and in the western portion of the region are French Creek State Park and State Gamelands 52. Each of these facilities provides important ecological habitat as well as recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, kayaking/canoeing, and hunting. These facilities are all located in what is known as the Hopewell Big Woods, the heart of the Pennsylvania Highlands. Although the previously

mentioned are large resources there are also many smaller recreational opportunities scattered throughout the region. When totaled, the Southern Highlands Region as a whole has more than twice the existing recreational acreage recommended by the National Recreation & Park Association.

Recreation

Recreation is mainly of the passive type in this region. There are large State and Federally-owned parks within the Southern Highlands and they provide much of the recreational opportunities to not only the citizens of the region but the citizens of neighboring Counties as well as all of Berks County. School districts, municipalities and privately-owned facilities cater mainly to the local need of residents. Although there seems to be a



A couple biking along the Schuylkill River Trail

surplus of recreational opportunities, when all acreages are combined four out of ten of the municipalities located within the Southern Highlands Region are deficient in providing adequate active recreational acreage for their citizens according to the National Recreation & Park Association.

Parks and trails, as well as other recreational amenities found within the Southern Highlands Region are important assets for local, regional, and state residents. The need for these types of resources is increasing in Pennsylvania. Several significant parks and recreational trails are located within the region, and are described below.

Parks The most significant park resource in terms of sheer size is French Creek State Park, at over 7,400 acres. It contains camping and fishing areas, trails, two lakes, and a swimming pool. It is fully contained within the Hopewell Big Woods area. The Horse-Shoe Trail also passes through the park.

The Birdsboro Municipal Authority Land, locally referred to as the Birdsboro Waters property, encompasses 1,800 acres in Robeson and Union Townships. The property contains reservoirs and wooded areas and is the source of public drinking water for the Borough of Birdsboro. It currently has no formal public access, but the area is used heavily for outdoor recreational activities, including rock climbing, walking, hiking, mountain biking, fishing, and bird watching.

Glen Morgan Lake - Carr's Recreation Park is a small private lake about 150 acres in size. The lake seems to function more as a marsh than as a man-made lake. This area is a highly productive wetland habitat. Until 1995 the area was inaccessible as private land. It is now a recreation park with access allowable by fee. Glen Morgan Lake is located within what is known as Carr's Recreation Park. It is a developed area offering many recreational opportunities including golf, mountain biking, in-line skating, hiking and picnicking. Glen Morgan Lake is not suitable for boating therefore ensuring the long-term stability of waterfowl habitat.

Horse-Shoe Trail - The Horse-Shoe Trail is a bridle and walking path that stretches from the Appalachian Trail north of Harrisburg to Valley Forge Park in Montgomery County. Within the Southern

Highlands Region, the trail passes through Brecknock, Robeson and Union Townships and within French Creek State Park in

Existing and Recommended Recreation Acreages

Municipality	Current Acre- Est. Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2010 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2020 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre
Amity Township	155.56- 10819- 67.62	10225- 63.91	12197- 76.23
Birdsboro Borough	37.48- 5184- 32.4	5848- 36.55	6666- 41.66
Brecknock Township	0- 4738- 29.61	5399- 33.74	6196- 38.72
Caernarvon Township	64.81- 3197- 19.98	2610- 16.31	2955- 18.47
Douglass Township	41.27- 3404- 21.28	3475- 21.72	3400- 21.25
Exeter Township	396.2- 23869- 149.18	24456- 152.85	28098- 175.61
New Morgan Borough	0- 35- 0.22	470- 0.29	510- 0.32
Robeson Township	18.79- 7325- 45.78	7961- 49.76	8952- 55.95
St. Lawrence Borough	1.62- 1798- 11.24	2023- 12.64	2267- 14.17
Union Township	153.68- 3574- 22.34	3816- 23.85	3979- 24.87
TOTALS	869.41- 63943- 399.64	65860- 411.62	74761- 467.25

Abbreviations: Rec.= Recommended; Pop.= Population; Est.=Estimated; Min.-Minimum
Sources:U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 Estimates (continued on next page)

3.5 Southern Highlands Region

PaDEP 2006 State Water Plan Population Projections, 2010 and 2020 Population Projections

National Recreation & Park Association, NRPA suggests that a park system, at a minimum, be composed of a core system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed close-to-home space per 1,000 population.

Note: Municipalities in **bold** have sufficient acreage.

Berks County, continuing southeast into Warwick County Park in Chester County. This trail is a major pedestrian and hiking connector route that links key destinations within the Southern Highlands Region and provides connections to areas outside the region.

The Horse-Shoe Trail runs east-west through the region. The Horse-Shoe Trail connects to several trails within French Creek State Park, including the Six Penny, Boone and Mill Creek Trails. The Horse-Shoe trail is being considered as a designated section of the proposed Highlands Trail within Pennsylvania.

Schuylkill River Heritage Trail and the Thun Trail Section - The Schuylkill River Trail is part of the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area, which extends from Philadelphia northwest to Pottsville, along the Schuylkill River. The Berks section of this trail is called the Thun Trail and it follows the former Pennsylvania Railroad Schuylkill Branch built along the route of the historic Schuylkill Canal. Some sections are incomplete and it is very important to finish the connection to Montgomery County.

Hay Creek Trail - The Hay Creek Trail is proposed to eventually run from Elverson, through the Borough of New Morgan, onto the Schuylkill River Trail in Birdsboro. An informal trail currently runs along the closed section of Route 82 in Robeson Township. Another section of trail along Hay Creek is located within Birdsboro and is locally referred to as the Mountz Trail. Berks County is pursuing the purchase of right-of-way easements to develop a trail along the abandoned railroad line in Robeson and Union Townships, following a former rail bed operated by Wilmington and Northern railroad. The proposed Hay Creek Trail could make use of a combination of the Route 82 corridor,

Mountz Trail, and the abandoned railroad corridor. It is anticipated that, when complete, the Hay Creek Trail and the Horse-Shoe Trail will intersect.

Generally, the Southern Highlands Region has many opportunities for recreation with the majority being existing and proposed trails for walking and biking. However, there is a need for more municipal parks within certain municipalities.

Ecology

The Southern Highlands Region contains many important ecological areas. The Hopewell Big Woods Hub is the most important. This Hub encompasses the Hopewell Furnace NHS and French Creek State Park. This area provides ample resources and natural habitat for numerous species of plants and animals. There are also smaller hubs that provide important specie habitat. Some of the smaller hubs in this region are Allegheny Heights, Lower Allegheny, Daniel Boone Homestead, Monocacy Hill, and Lower Ironstone. These Hubs are scattered



Hay Creek

throughout the region but are connected through existing and proposed greenways that serve as migration avenues for various species.

The Hay Creek Watershed is in this region. This watershed is a 22-square mile area that includes portions of Robeson, Brecknock, Union and Caernarvon Townships and Birdsboro and New Morgan Boroughs. The Hay Creek Watershed includes an Important Bird Area at Glen Morgan Lake in New Morgan Borough. This area and the rest of the watershed provide habitat for numerous bird species. Of particular note is the sighting of American Bald Eagles (a federally threatened species and Pennsylvania Endangered species).

The entire Hay Creek Watershed is also designated as an important Mammal Area by the Important Mammal Area Project (IMAP), as a component of the Hopewell Big Woods. IMAP is a joint partnership of the National Wildlife Federation, PA Wildlife Federation, PA Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Mammal Technical Committee/PA Biological Survey, and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Land animals found in the watershed include skunks, voles, moles, mice, shrews, rabbits, chipmunks, squirrels, muskrat, mink, opossum, raccoons, groundhogs, fox, and white-tailed deer.

Other animals and insects found in the Hay Creek Watershed include salamanders, frogs, snakes, turtles, dragonflies, stoneflies, damselflies and mosquitoes. Fish species include Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout, Brook Trout, Rosyside Dace, Cutlips Minnow, Common Shiner, Swallowtail Shiner, Spottfin Shiner, Blacknose Dace, Brown Bullhead, Rock Bass, American Eel, Redbreast Sunfish, Green Sunfish, Pumpkinseed, Bluegill, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Tessellated Darter, Chain Pickerel, Pike and Muskellunge.

The Hopewell Big Woods is the largest remaining contiguous forest in southeast Pennsylvania and is a critical treasure within the Highlands Region, which stretches along the ridges from

south central Pennsylvania to northeastern Connecticut. The largest forest type within the Hopewell Big Woods is the dry oak-heath forest, followed by the red oak-mixed hardwood forest on lower elevations. The two other significant forest types of the Hopewell Big Woods are red maple forest and tulip tree-beech-maple. Understory shrubs and trees include spicebush, ironwood, blueberry, maple leaf viburnum, sassafras, mountain laurel, and mountain azalea.

The heart of the Pennsylvania Highlands, the Hopewell Big Woods, encompasses roughly 100 square miles of contiguous forest. Assets identified in the Hopewell Big Woods include the Hay Creek and French Creek Watersheds, Glen Morgan Lake, and Birdsboro Waters – because of their pristine waters, rich cultural and historical resources, and significant recreational opportunities.

Two state-designated Exceptional Value streams, Hay Creek and French Creek, flow through the Hopewell Big Woods. The creeks provide drinking water to the residents of Birdsboro Borough and support reproducing native trout as well as a variety of wetlands, including Pine Swamp, considered a “globally unique” broadleaf acidic swamp.

The rocky terrain and unique wetlands of the Hopewell Big Woods provide crucial habitat for dozens of plants and animals, including the bog turtle, a Federal threatened species, and bog bluegrass, a Pennsylvania threatened plant species. Other animals known to live in the Hopewell Big Woods include black bear, bobcat, fox and mink. The Pennsylvania Biological Survey has designated the Hopewell Big Woods as an Important Mammal Area due to its diverse and abundant wildlife.

The National Audubon Society has designated the Hopewell Big Woods as an Important Bird Area (IBA), based upon documentation of more than 200 bird species living there. IBA's are sites that provide essential habitat for one or more species of bird. They include sites for breeding, wintering, and/or migrating

birds. IBA's may be a few acres or thousands of acres, but usually they are discrete sites that stand out from the surrounding landscape. They may include public or private lands, or both, and they may be protected or unprotected. Some species of note in the Big Woods include the cerulean warbler and scarlet tanager. The Glen Morgan Lake IBA, also within the Hopewell Big Woods, supports an impressive diversity of birdlife, including the bald eagle and pied-billed grebe.

Coventry Forge, the birthplace of the American colonial iron industry, and numerous iron furnaces, forges and mills are located in the Hopewell Big Woods. Among these are Joanna Furnace and Hopewell Furnace National historic Site, which interpret the iron-making industry. Hopewell Furnace is surrounded by French Creek State Park, which provides outdoor recreation and tourism. The Thun Trail, Horse-Shoe Trail, State Gamelands No. 43, and Warwick County Park offer recreation opportunities such as fishing, hiking, rock climbing, and canoeing.

While 14,800 acres of the Hopewell Big Woods are currently protected in State Parks, State Gamelands, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, and conservation easements, an astounding 58,000 acres of the Hopewell Big woods are unprotected. Development pressures in this part of Pennsylvania are intense.

Because of developmental pressures on the region as a whole more needs to be done to protect these vital areas. Municipalities need to step up conservation initiatives and update their ordinances so that specific areas with historical, recreational and ecological significance are protected. These areas provide valuable assets to the migration of different species of birds, mammals and reptile. And the trail systems are important for leisure time activities and the fitness of the residents.

Within the Southern Highlands Region are the following Ecologic Hubs of significance (see map)

Highest:

- ID – Hopewell Big Woods
- ID – Allegheny Heights
- ID – Lower Allegheny
- ID – Daniel Boone
- ID – Monocacy Hill

High:

- ID – Brecknock Heights
- ID – Neversink
- ID – Guldin Schwartzwold
- ID – Lower Ironstone

Within the Southern Highlands Region are the following Ecologic Corridors of significance (see map):

Highest:

- ID – Horse-Shoe Highlands Greenway (including the six penny connection)
- ID – Mohnton to Horse-Shoe Crossings
- ID – Nolde to Horse-Shoe Highlands
- ID – Allegheny West Greenways
- ID – North Exeter Greenway (connects to Antietam and Neversink)
- ID – Trout Run Highlands Greenway (west and east sections)

High:

- ID – Nolde to Adahi Greenway
- ID – Horse-Shoe to Adahi Greenway
- ID – Allegheny East Greenway
- ID – Lower Ironstone to Unami Hills
- ID – Lower Ironstone to Pottstown
- ID – Bryn Eyre to Horse-Shoe

Heritage

The Southern Highlands Region has a rich and diverse heritage that is reflected in the historic and cultural resources that are integrated within the existing land use patterns. The preservation of these historic and cultural resources is essential to establish a community bond from past generations to future generations. Since these resources are not renewable, it is essential to recognize their value and promote a future land use plan that is based upon fundamental principals in an effort to preserve, protect, and enhance their presence within the region.

The Southern Highlands Region contains numerous buildings and sites that have historical and cultural significance. The Berks

County Conservancy had previously completed municipal surveys to document the location, historical significance, and architectural features of each site. However, these surveys must be comprehensively updated to account for recent changes in the municipal landscape. This future planning effort should be considered a high priority since an effective historical and cultural resource plan will promote community pride, economic vitality, and tourism.



Hopewell Furnace

The National Register of Historic Places is a comprehensive listing of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of historical and cultural significance to the locality, state or nation. Within the Southern Highlands Region, there are 29 sites that are either listed on the National Historic Register or are considered eligible for the National Historic Registry (NHR). The following table provides a brief description of these national historical sites. National Historic Register sites include:

- Allegheny Aqueduct
- Boonecroft
- Griesemer Mill Complex
- John Bishop House
- Bitler Farm
- Geiger Mill
- Ironstone Bridge
- Levan Farm

- Mill Tract Farm
- Snyder Mill
- Thompson Mill
- White Horse Tavern
- Old Swedes House
- St. Michaels
- Weidner Mill

Identified National Historic Register districts include:

- Daniel Boone Homestead
- Hopewell Furnace NHS
- Morgantown Historic District
- French Creek Six Penny
- Joanna Furnace Complex
- French Creek Organized Group Camp

While there are many sites either listed on or identified as being potentially listed on the National Historic Register, it is important that remaining resource clusters be identified and preserved as this will help the eligibility of those sites in the future. We have identified the following themes for the Southern Highlands Region. These themes should be considered when conducting historic resource surveys or assembling a historic preservation plan.

- Gristmills – early examples of buildings used to process grain into flour
- Furnaces – early examples of “iron plantations” and American industrialization

Greenway Section

The Southern Highlands Region contains both proposed and existing greenway corridors. The greenway designations are based primarily on ecologic and historical resource findings as well as recreation. According to this plan the major greenways of the area follow existing corridors that are used by migrating animals and people for recreational purposes. The Schuylkill River Greenway, which encompasses the Thun Trail and the Schuylkill River Trail is the most important greenway for this region. Various other greenways traverse the region and all are connected to the Hopewell Big Woods Area. As stated before Hopewell Big Woods is identified as an important ecological and recreational area for the region.

Southern Highlands Region Matrix

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status-Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
The Big Woods - Largest continuous woodland area in southeastern PA	Ecological - Continue to conserve, protect and enhance this area as a important habitat area for various species of animals.	Mid-term - Marketing and advertisement to increase awareness of this important area.	Host Municipalities, County of Berks, Chester County	State, Federal, County
French Creek State Park - over 7,000 acre state park with 2 lakes, extensive woodlands, camping, boating, pool, tot lot, trails and disc golf course	Ecological - Continue to conserve, protect and enhance this area.	Mid-term - Marketing and advertisement to increase awareness of this important ecological resource.	Host Municipalities, State, Berks Visitors Bureau	State, Federal
	Recreational - Promote as most significant park resource in the region.	Mid-term - Marketing and advertisement to increase awareness of this important recreational resource.	Host Municipalities, State, Berks Visitors Bureau	State, Federal
Hay Creek Trail - trail from Elverson through New Morgan eventually connecting to the SRT	Recreation - Make use of a combination of the Route 82 corridor, Mountz Trail, and the abandoned railroad corridor. Connect to the Horse-Shoe Trail. Acquire railroad ROW.	Short term - Create master site plan. Right of way acquisition, planning, design and construction. Use/establish standard signage developed by SRGA to sign trails that have a connection to the SRT. Rehab existing bridges and construct two more. Provide trailheads and signage. Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering. Use/establish standard signage developed by SRGA to sign trails that have a connection to the SRT.	County of Berks, PennDOT, Hay Creek Watershed Assoc., Host Municipalities	County, Municipal, PennDOT, DCNR

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Schuylkill River Trail/Thun Trail - regional trail along the Schuylkill River, eventual continuous trail link from Reading to Philadelphia.	Recreation - Complete connections to make a continuous off-road trail along the Schuylkill River corridor.	Short term - Complete segment through Birdsboro	County of Berks, SRGA, RDC, BCC, Host Municipalities	County, State, SRGA, DCNR
Horse-Shoe Trail - bridle and walking trail that stretches from the Appalachian Trail north of Harrisburg to Valley Forge Park in Montgomery County.	Recreation - A regional trail extending across the region connecting to various destinations. Designate as a section of the proposed Highlands Trail within PA. Adopt an MLPP.	Mid-term - Secure permanent protection of the trail right-of-way off-road.	Horse-Shoe Trail Club, Host Municipalities, DCNR, County of Berks, Lancaster County	County line of credit
Pennsylvania Highlands - Trail Network	To establish the Berks portion of the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network.	Short term and Ongoing – Work with the Appalachian Mountain Club and local trail organizations to utilize existing and proposed trail alignments as well as creating new connections to establish a Berks County portion of the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network		Municipalities, Appalachian Mountain Club, Trail Organizations, DCNR, County of Berks, land trusts
Joanna Furnace - a historically and culturally significant iron production facility dating back to 1971. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Restored charcoal iron furnace.	Ecological - Continue to conserve, protect and enhance this area.	Mid-term - Stream bank restoration projects.	BCC, SRGA	Federal, State, DCNR
	Destination - Important historical representation of early settlement	Mid-term - Marketing and advertisement to increase awareness and visitation to this significant historic site.	Berks Visitors Bureau, Berks Chamber of Commerce, Historical Society of Berks County	Federal, State

3.5 Southern Highlands Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
	Recreation - Trail connection from this area to adjacent or nearby existing trail systems	Ongoing - Create trail access to the Horse-Shoe Trail.	Horse-Shoe Trail Club, County of Berks, Lancaster County	Federal, State, County, Municipal
Birdsboro Hub - Historic resource destination.	Destination - Potential tourist destination.	Mid-Term - Historic area needs to be inventoried and mapped.	SRGA, County of Berks, Municipality, Berks Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce	Municipal, SRGA, DCNR
	Recreation - Schuylkill River Greenway connector	Mid-Term - Establish a trail connection for the continued off-road route of the SRT. Use/establish standard signage developed by SRGA to sign trails that have a connection to the SRT.	SRGA, County of Berks, Municipality	Municipal, SRGA, DCNR
Doulassville Node - historic village and resources of Old Morlatton Village	Destination - Schuylkill River Trail connection area. Trailhead for picking up the SRT.	Mid-Term - Establish a trail connection and area for trail access. Use/establish standard signage developed by SRGA to sign trails that have a connection to the SRT.	Municipality, SRGA	Municipal, DCNR
St. Lawrence Hub - important destination and ecological hub for various greenway access and ecological preservation and migration.	Destination - Trail head area for the Exeter Trails eventually connecting to the Schuylkill River Trail/Thun Trail.	Mid-term - Establish a trail system eventually connecting to the SRT. Use/establish standard signage developed by SRGA to sign trails that have a connection to the SRT.	Municipality, SRGA	Municipal, DCNR
	Ecological - Preserve and protect lands in this area for specie habitat.	Mid-term - Establish access to adjacent greenways and institute protective measures into ordinances for preservation of area.	Municipality	Municipal, DCNR

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Daniel Boone Hub - important destination, historic and ecological area. Nationally... registered historic site and district are within this area.	Ecological - Continued preservation of this area for it's ecological importance and wildfire habitat.	Mid-term - Protect and expand the natural and historic resources and	Host Municipalities	State, Federal, Municipal, DCNR
	Destination - Important historical area and opportunity for tourism revenue to be brought into the surrounding municipalities.	Mid-term - Advertise as a destination point for tourism and recreational opportunity through connection to existing trail networks.	Host Municipalities	State, Federal, Municipal, DCNR
	Recreation - Possible trail connection area for access onto adjacent trail systems. Possible driving tour through this area.	Long-term - provide recreational trail connections to the St. Lawrence, Monocacy Hill and Birdsboro hubs. Pursue signage for driving tourism/scenic byway.	Host Municipalities	State, Federal, Municipal, DCNR
Lower Ironstone Hub - important ecological area for the migration of wildlife throughout the region.	Ecological - Continue preservation of this important ecological area.	Long-term - Preservation as a natural area with connections to Stone Hill and Pottstown.	Host Municipalities	DCNR, Municipal
Lower Allegheny Hub - important ecological area and possible trail head area for the SRT.	Ecological - Continue preservation of this important ecological area.	Mid-term - Preservation of this area with potential connects to the SRT and Big Woods. Examine the potential for various trail connections to other recreation areas throughout the region. Use/establish standard signage developed by SRGA to sign trails that have a connection to the SRT.	Host Municipalities	Municipal, DCNR

3.5 Southern Highlands Region

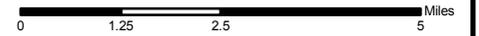
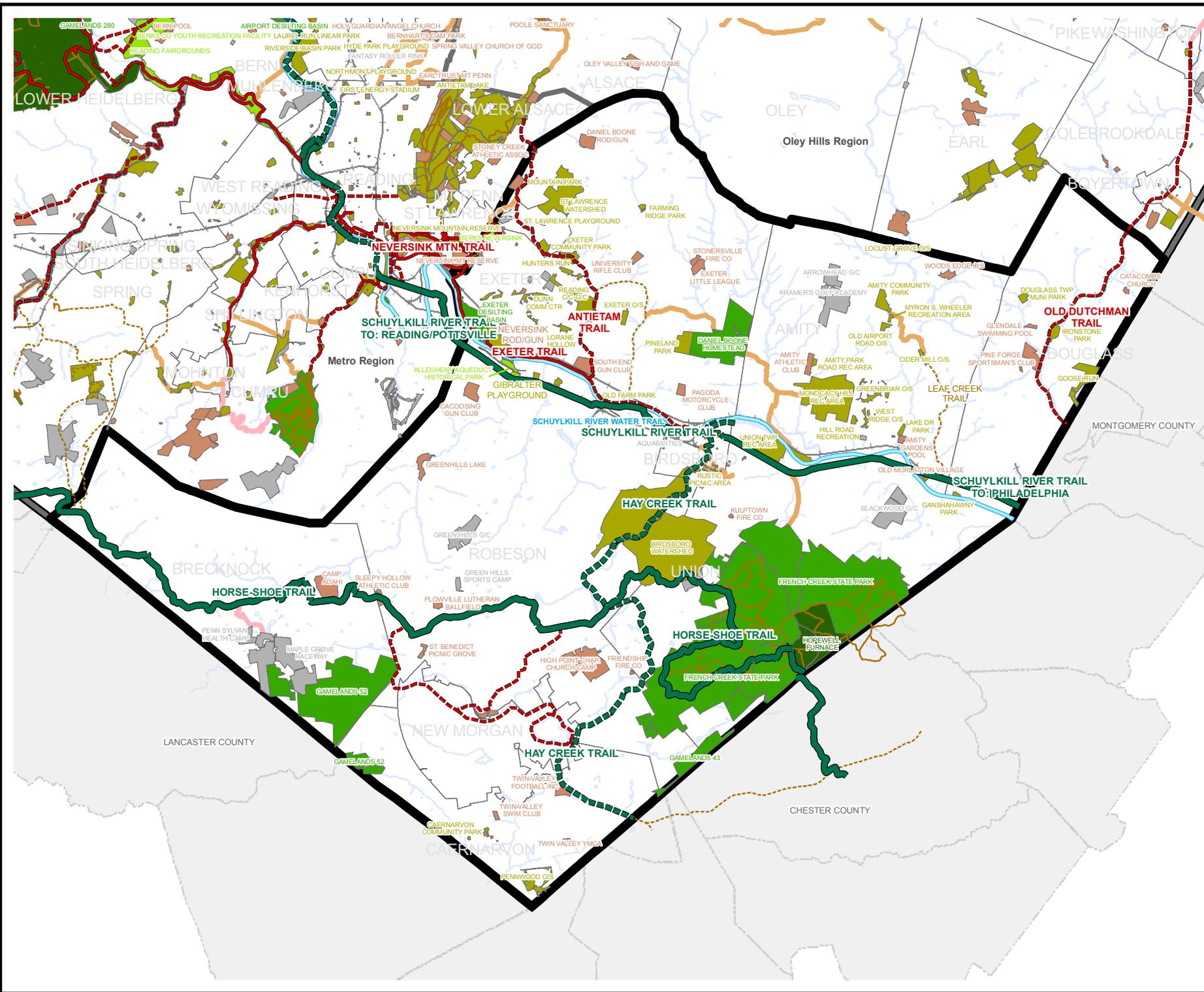
Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
<p>Monocacy Hill Hub - 420 acre forest located within Amity Township. Features over 5 miles of woodland trails and is open year round for a variety of activities.</p>	<p>Ecological - Continue to preserve and protect this natural area.</p>	<p>Mid-term - Marketing and advertisement to increase awareness of this important area and to limit developmental pressures. Protect and expand the natural and recreational resources.</p>	<p>Monocacy Hill Conservation Assn., PA Game Commission, Host Municipalities</p>	<p>Municipal, DCNR</p>
	<p>Recreation - Possible trail connections can be made to existing adjacent recreation areas.</p>	<p>Long-term - Trail connections should be sought from the Monocacy Recreation area to the Daniel Boone and Birdsboro hubs.</p>	<p>Host Municipalities</p>	<p>Municipal, DCNR</p>
<p>Brecknock Heights Hub - important ecological area with diverse natural attributes. Encompasses State Game Lands #52.</p>	<p>Ecological - Continue to preserve and protect this natural area.</p>	<p>Mid-term - Examine the potential for the creation of connectors to the Horse-Shoe/Highlands Greenway and the Big Woods.</p>	<p>Host Municipalities, Lancaster County</p>	<p>Municipal, DCNR</p>

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
<p>Morgantown Node - Destination node with historic resources. Named after Colonel Morgan from the revolutionary war. Crossroads of the Nanticoke and Allegheny Native American Indian paths.</p>	<p>Destination - Potential for regional historic destination and tourism. Stop along the BicyclePA Route S corridor crossing the southern portion of Pennsylvania.</p>	<p>Short term - An inventory must be conducted of historic resources within the village as a precursor to their preservation. Based on survey finding, a historic district designation should be considered. Additional development should match the character and feel of the village. Examine the potential for a regional historic destination. Promote as an area with various historic amenities. Regional access to the Turnpike and Route 176. Promote as a stop on the BikePA Route S corridor.</p>	<p>Municipality, Berks Visitors Bureau, Berks Chamber of Commerce, County of Berks, BicyclePA</p>	<p>Municipal, DCNR</p>
<p>Leaf Creek Greenway - Priority 3 greenway connecting the Trout Run/Highlands Greenway to the SRT.</p>	<p>Recreation - Preservation of this area for future connections to regional trails.</p>	<p>Long-term - Examine the potential trail passage through this corridor.</p>	<p>Host Municipalities, SRGA, BCC</p>	<p>Municipal, County, DCNR</p>
<p>Allegheny Greenways - a former Native American Indian path. Historic corridor.</p>	<p>Recreation - Explore the opportunity for creating a trail network based on the path of the Native American Trail. Possible connections to local parks.</p>	<p>Mid-term - Mapping of the trail with potential access to local recreational opportunities.</p>	<p>Host Municipalities, SRGA, BCC, County of Berks</p>	<p>Municipal, County, DCNR</p>

3.5 Southern Highlands Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
<p>Allegheny Aqueduct Historic Park/Beidler House - A 112-foot long restored historic aqueduct built in 1824 by the Schuylkill Navigation Company Canal System to carry the water of the canal and canal boats over the Allegheny Creek. The House dates to 1783 and was built for the operator of a nearby grist mill.</p>	<p>Historic - create and/or expand the living history program. Preserve historic structures for interpretive tourism.</p>	<p>Short term - Create master plan for the site. Rehabilitate the Beidler House for use as interpretive center. Provide educational exhibits and displays. Utilize artifacts for education.</p>	<p>County of Berks, SRGA, Berks Historical Society</p>	<p>County, State, Municipal, DCNR</p>
	<p>Recreation - Trails in the vicinity should connect to this area. Boat launch area for connection to the Schuylkill water trail.</p>	<p>Short term - Create master plan for the site. Replace entrance sign with standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering. Complete boundary survey. Construct a connecting trail system to include Beidler House, Aqueduct, Schuylkill River, Exeter Township, and Thun Trail. Construct parking areas. Provides signage, lighting and landscaping. Construct boat launching facility on the Schuylkill River to become part of SRGA's water trail. Construct picnic pavilion.</p>	<p>County of Berks, SRGA, Berks Historical Society, Exeter Township</p>	<p>County, State, Municipal, DCNR, SRGA</p>
<p>Union Township Recreation Area - 30 acre partially developed community park.</p>	<p>Recreation - create a community park and expand in the future. Trails in the vicinity should connect to this recreational area.</p>	<p>Short term - using the master plan already prepared the Township should incorporate a more diverse set of facilities so that varying age and activity preferences can be served by this area.</p>	<p>Union Township, SRGA, DCNR, County of Berks</p>	<p>Municipal, State, County</p>

Recreation Resources: Southern Highlands Region



Trail Network Hierarchy

- Interstate
- Intercounty
- Regional
- Local
- Proposed Intercounty
- Proposed Regional
- Proposed Local
- Water Trail
- Potential Regional Connection
- Potential Local Connection

Recreation Facilities Ownership Categories

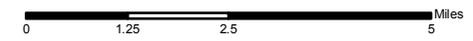
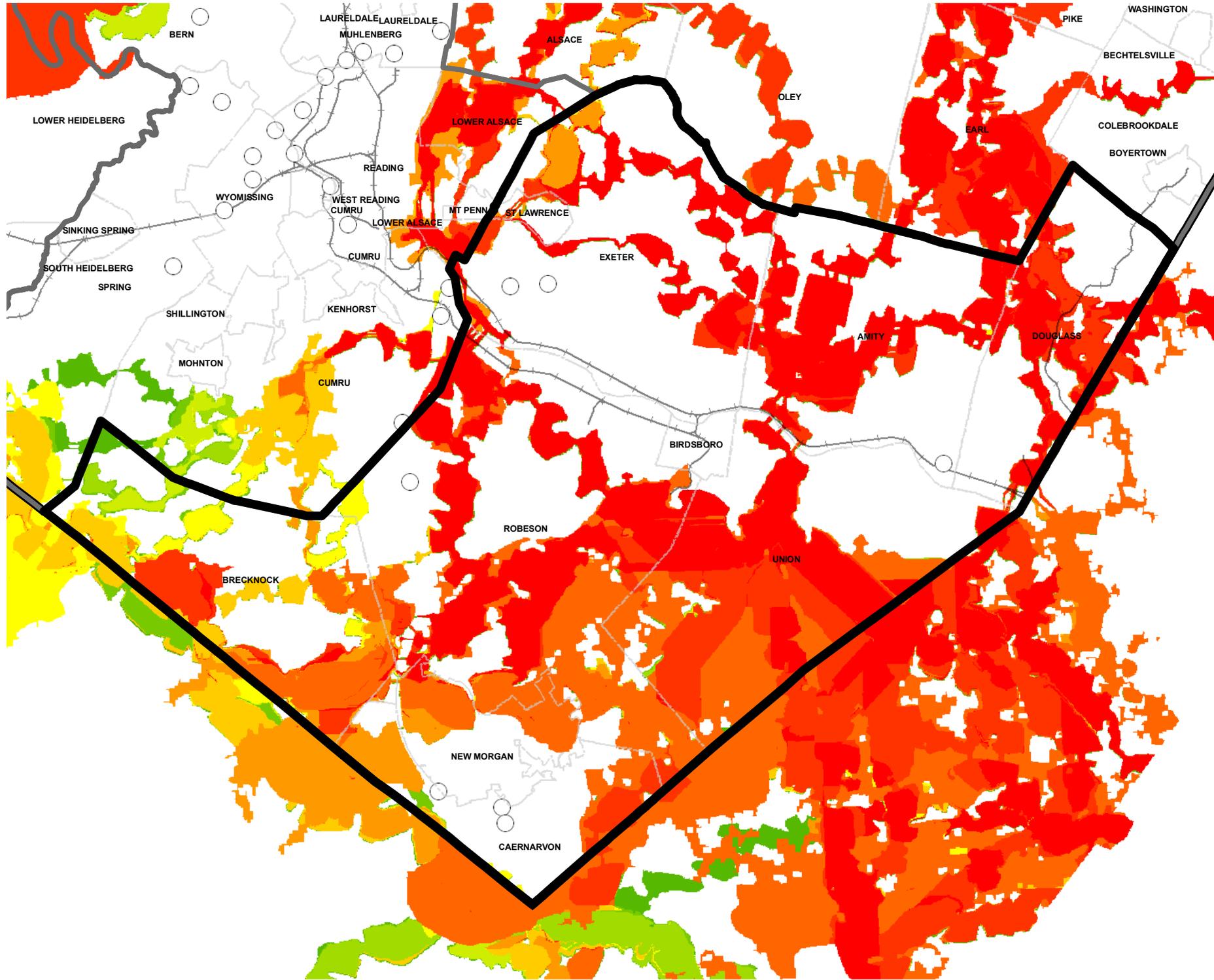
- Federal
- State
- County
- Municipal
- Non-Profit
- Private

- Regions
- Limited Access Highway
- Municipal Bounds
- + Railroad
- Streams

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with The Berks County Parks Department
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Ecologic Resources: Southern Highlands



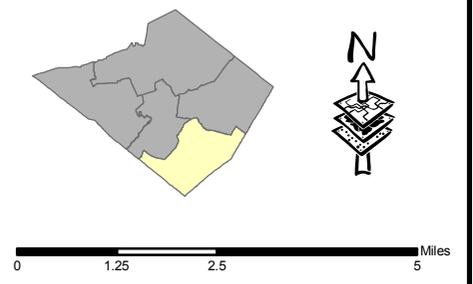
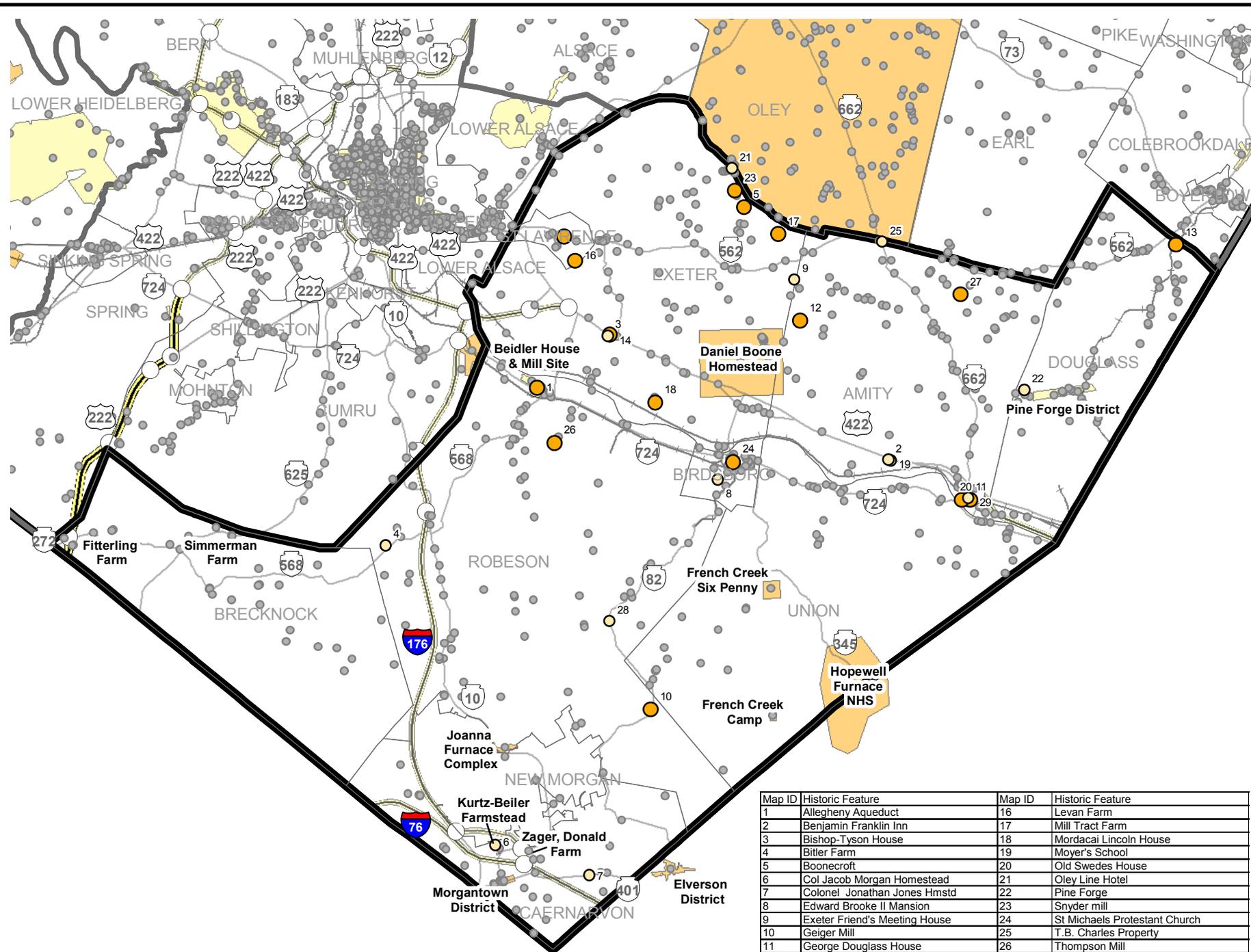
Legend

- 1 - High Value
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 - Highest Value
- Major Interchange
- Limited Access Highway
- Municipal Boundaries
- Major Highways
- Railroad
- Streams
- Regions

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PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Historic Resources: Southern Highlands Region



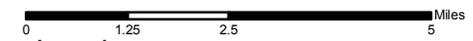
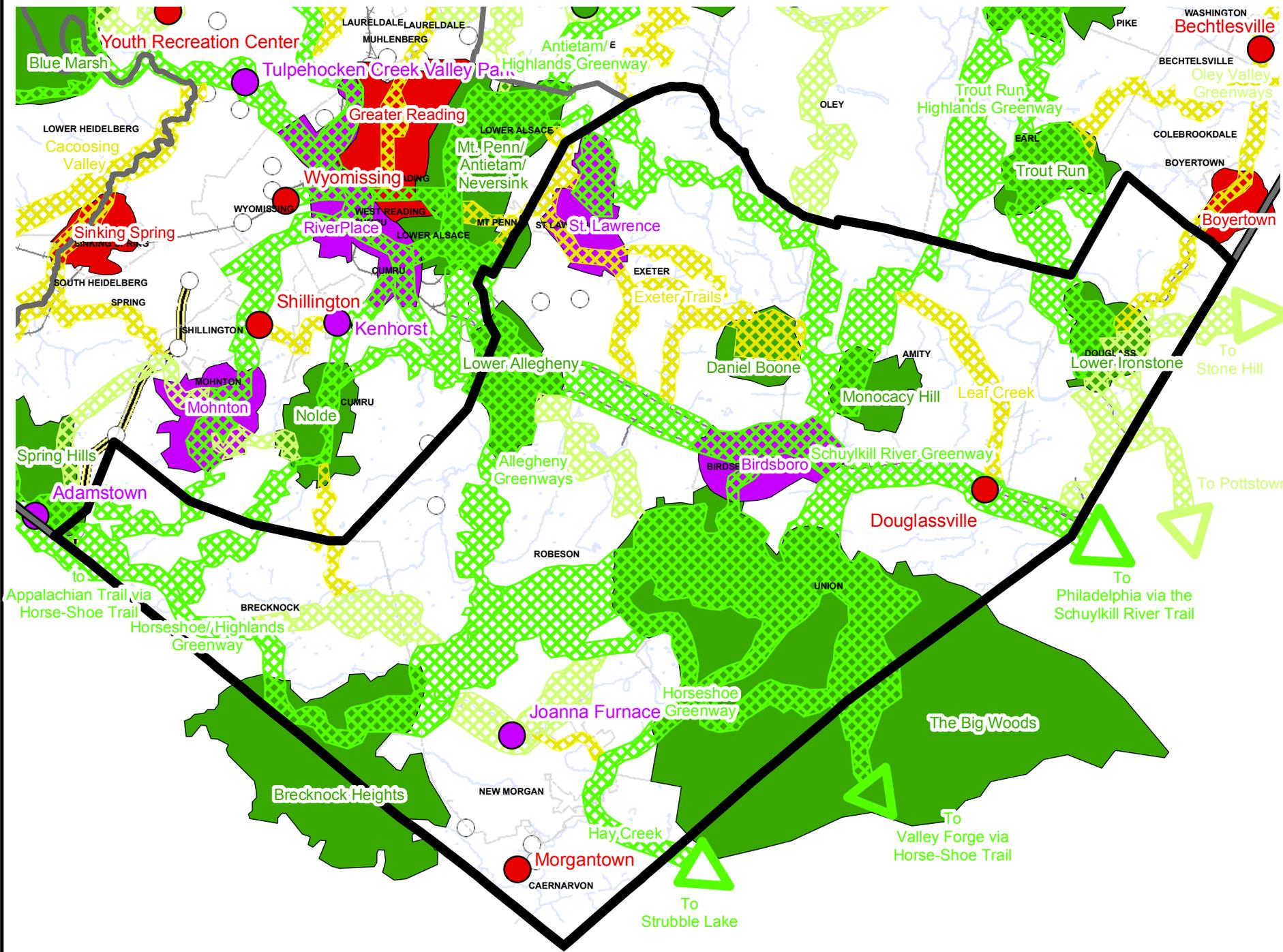
- Legend**
- Historic Sites**
 - National Register Listed
 - National Register Eligible
 - Other Sites*
 - Historic Districts**
 - National Register Listed
 - National Register Eligible
 - Major Interchange
 - Limited Access Highway
 - Major Highways
 - Municipal Bounds
 - Streams
 - Railroad
 - Regions

* includes sites identified within surveys conducted by one or more of the following groups: Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Council, Berks County Conservancy, George Meiser and local historical societies.

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Thanks to All

Greenway Network: Southern Highlands Region



Legend

- Greenway Priority Corridor**
 - 1 (Green cross-hatch)
 - 2 (Yellow cross-hatch)
 - 3 (Orange cross-hatch)
- Greenway Hubs**
 - Ecological (Green solid)
 - Destination/ Ecological (Purple solid)
 - Destination (Red solid)
- Greenway Nodes**
 - Ecological (Green circle)
 - Destination/ Ecological (Purple circle)
 - Destination (Red circle)
- Other Features**
 - Major Interchange (Circle with cross)
 - Limited Access Highway (Double line)
 - Major Highways (Single line)
 - Railroad (Line with cross-ticks)
 - Streams (Blue line)
 - Regions (Thick black outline)
 - Municipal Boundaries (Thin grey outline)

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The Natural Lands Trust
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Chapter 3.6

Tulpehocken Region

3.6 Tulpehocken Region

The Tulpehocken Region has a diverse composition. On its northern border is a swath of ecologic resources known as the Kittatinny Ridge. Historic resources are plentiful consisting of small boroughs and farms throughout the rolling agricultural landscape. Current recreational resources are mainly supplied by the Blue Marsh Lake, school districts and select municipalities.

Recreation

Recreation is mainly provided by the Blue Marsh Lake which affords amenities such as hiking, biking, fishing, boating, tot-lots and picnicking. Additional burden is carried by the school districts within the area which citizens to use the facilities at little or no



Blue Marsh swim area

cost. According to our analysis, (#) of the Tulpehocken Region’s 13 municipalities adequately provide recreational opportunities for their citizens, (#) are deficient and (#) provide no recreational opportunities.

The Appalachian Trail is an important recreational and economic asset to the region and County, but it could be used to leverage more opportunities. There is potential for a trail connection between the Village of Bethel and the Appalachian Trail. This connection would allow the residents of Bethel to access the trail and would also provide trail users with the opportunity to visit the village.

Generally, recreation resources for the Tulpehocken Region are underdeveloped. Blue Marsh Lake is the major regional recreation resource providing walking, biking and horse trails, tot-lots, swimming, boating and picnicking. Despite the offerings by Blue Marsh, there is a need for either additional municipal parks and/or joint municipal cooperatives for creating more regional park opportunities. Our survey results indicate an interest in walking trails, natural areas and children’s playgrounds.

Existing and Recommended Recreation Acreages

Municipality	Current Acre- Est. Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2010 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre	Projected 2020 Pop.- Rec. Min. Acre
Bernville Borough	12.68- 874- 5.46	892- 5.57	948- 5.92
Bethel Township	0- 4375- 27.34	4584- 28.65	5043- 31.52
Heidelberg Township	4.63- 1721- 10.76	1661- 10.38	1742- 10.89
Jefferson Township	32.7- 1913- 11.96	1744- 10.9	1915- 11.97
Lower Heidelberg Townshi	0- 4761- 29.76	5205- 32.53	6766- 42.29
Marion Township	5.89- 1583- 9.89	1683- 10.52	1820- 11.37

North Heidelberg Townshi	0-1363-8.52	1532-9.57	1642-10.26
Penn Township	36.14-2121-13.26	2392-14.95	2656-16.6
Robesonia Borough	7.16-2052-12.83	2187-13.67	2305-14.41
South Heidelberg Townshi	20.86-6468-40.43	6553-40.96	7642-47.76
Tulpehocken Township	0-3466-21.66	3638-22.74	4043-25.27
Wernersville Borough	9.53-2278-14.24	2313-14.46	2506-15.66
Womelsdorf Borough	12.19-2719-16.99	2993-18.71	3350-20.94
TOTALS	141.78-35694-223.09	37377-233.61	42378-264.86

Abbreviations: Rec.= Recommended; Pop.= Population; Est.=Estimated; Min.-Minimum

Sources:U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 Estimates

PaDEP 2006 State Water Plan Population Projections, 2010 and 2020 Population Projections

National Recreation & Park Association, NRPA suggests that a park system, at a minimum, be composed of a core system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed close-to-home space per 1,000 population.

Note: Municipalities in **bold** have sufficient acreage.

Ecology

The Kittatinny Ridge is the Tulpehocken Region's main ecologic feature. The ridge runs along the northern border of the Tulpehocken Region and is designated a "Mega Greenway" by the state. The Ridge's bounds serve as a valuable hub as well as corridor for specie habitat and movement. The additional ecologic elements, found within the southern portion of the region, are the South Mountain/Highlands Greenway and the

Tulpehocken Greenway corridors. Modeling confirmed suspicions that ecologic corridor connectivity would be difficult throughout the remainder of the Tulpehocken Region due to large expanses of agriculture which are not conducive to specie habitat or movement (for more about specie movement and habitat see Chapter 2.1).

Blue Marsh Lake, which has the capacity of roughly 5.7 billion gallons of water, was created from the damming of the Tulpehocken Creek and is a primary ecologic hub within the region. Various species of water fowl use the lake for feeding and reproduction.



Ecologic Resource Blue Marsh Lake

Heritage

Agriculture has been this region's economic mainstay since it was settled by pioneers during the 1700s. This agricultural heritage is apparent when we look at the historic resource clusters of the region. Historic farms are the first observable theme. Another theme related to agriculture is the region's many boroughs

3.6 Tulpehocken Region

(typically established as early trading posts due to agricultural development, see chapter 2). These boroughs have well preserved architecture within their downtown districts and in many cases are prime candidates for revitalization.

Within the region there are 15 National Historic Register Sites and nine eligible National Historic Register Sites. In addition, the Tulpehocken Region has 13 historic sites on record at the Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Commission. Finally, done by independent surveys, 566 sites have been identified by historic preservation groups having some local significance.

National Historic Register sites include:

- Hain Mill
- John Nicholas & Elizabeth Moyer property
- Spannuth Mill
- Peter Spycker House
- S-Bridge
- Lerch Tavern
- Wertz Mill

National Historic Register districts include:

- Stouchburg Historic District
- Womelsdorf Historic District
- Kissling Farm
- Knorr / Bare Farm
- Stupp-Oxenreider Farm
- Grand View Dairy Farm
- Old Dry Road Farm

While there are many sites either listed on or identified as being potentially listed on the National Historic Register, it is important that remaining resource clusters be identified and preserved as this will help the eligibility of those sites in the future (see chapter 2.1 regarding eligibility). This plan has identified themes for the Tulpehocken Region. These themes should be considered when conducting historic resource surveys or assembling a historic preservation plan. As additional data is collected more themes

may emerge or the themes identified below may be more focused (ex: farm type, barns, mill type, etc).

- Farms
- Mills



Pomeroy Mansion

Greenway Section

The Greenway designations for the Tulpehocken Region are based predominantly on ecologic and historic resource findings with Blue Marsh Lake standing out because of its combined ecologic and recreational value. The key primary feature within the Tulpehocken Region's portion of the Greenway network is the Kittatinny Ridge. The Ridge has been designated as one of the State's "Mega Greenways" because of its ecologic value and because within it is portion of the Appalachian Trail.

The matrix below shows the Tulpehocken Region's identified Greenway Network features. The matrix also lists usage opportunities, implementation priorities, and potential partners.

Tulpehocken Region Projects

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status - logistics	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Andulhea Greenway	Establish: Appalachian Trail Connector (exclusively western prong that extends from Rehrersburg through Village of Bethel to Kittatinny Ridge Greenway)	Short term - The Appalachian Trail is an established tourist attraction and an untapped potential source of income for the local economy. The connector would provide recreational value to citizens.	Municipalities, Berks Chamber of Commerce, National Park Service-Appalachian Trail, Berks Visitors Beureau, Berks County Parks Department	
Andulhea Greenway	Bicycle Route - From the Village of Bethel to Womelsdorf utilizing the Route 419 corridor.	Mid term - Municipal support is essential as additional portion of road burm would be needed for a bike lane (implemented during road repaving projects to alleviate cost). Signage and line painting would also be required for safety. This would compliment efforts for bicycling on the Hex Highway.	Partnering municipalities, Berks Bike Club, Reading Area Transportation Authority, Berks Visitors Beureau	
Bernville Hub	Development of recreationally oriented tourist businesses and amenities	Mid term - Based on Bernville's proximity to Blue Marsh Recreational Area, zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances should be modified to accommodate potential development that would strengthen the region's economy in relation to boating/water sports, mountain biking, fishing as well as accommodate businesses that support recreational tourism in general. The development of a regional chamber of commerce would be beneficial in the promotion of said amenities.	Municipality, Berks County Visitors Bureau, Berks County Chamber of Commerce	

3.6 Tulpehocken Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Bethel Node	Appalachian Trail/ Hex Highway trailhead	Mid term - Logically following the establishment of the Hex Highway driving tour and Andulhea Appalachian connector, bicycle route and the Appalachian Trail connector would be the need for supportive facilities and business.	Municipality, Berks County Visitors Bureau, Berks County Chamber of Commerce	
Blue Marsh	Recreational investment	Continued - Sustain existing recreational facilities emphasizing low ecologic impact activities where appropriate. Incorporate seamless link between Blue Marsh and the County Trail system along the Tulpehocken Creek. Care should be given not to disturb ecology (esp. bird habitat).		
Blue Marsh	Freedom Trail trailhead	Mid term - cooperate with the creation of the Freedom Trail by providing connectivity. Parking signage should also be considered.		
Cacoosing Valley Greenway	Establish: Regional Trail and link	Long Term - Utilizing portions of the Cacoosing Creek riparian corridor, establish a recreational trail to potentially link Sinking Spring, Wernersville and the Spring Township trail system to the County Trail system.	Municipalities, Berks County Planning Commission, Berks County Parks Department	
Hex Highway	Scenic Driving Tour - Create a self guided brochure allowing participants to drive at their own pace while learning about and appreciating historic, cultural and natural resources.	Short term - A low cost, low impact initial project for the corridor aimed at raising historic, cultural and natural resource awareness	Partnering municipalities, Berks Historic Council, Museum Council, Berks Visitors Beureau	

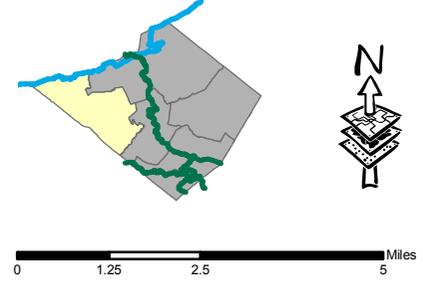
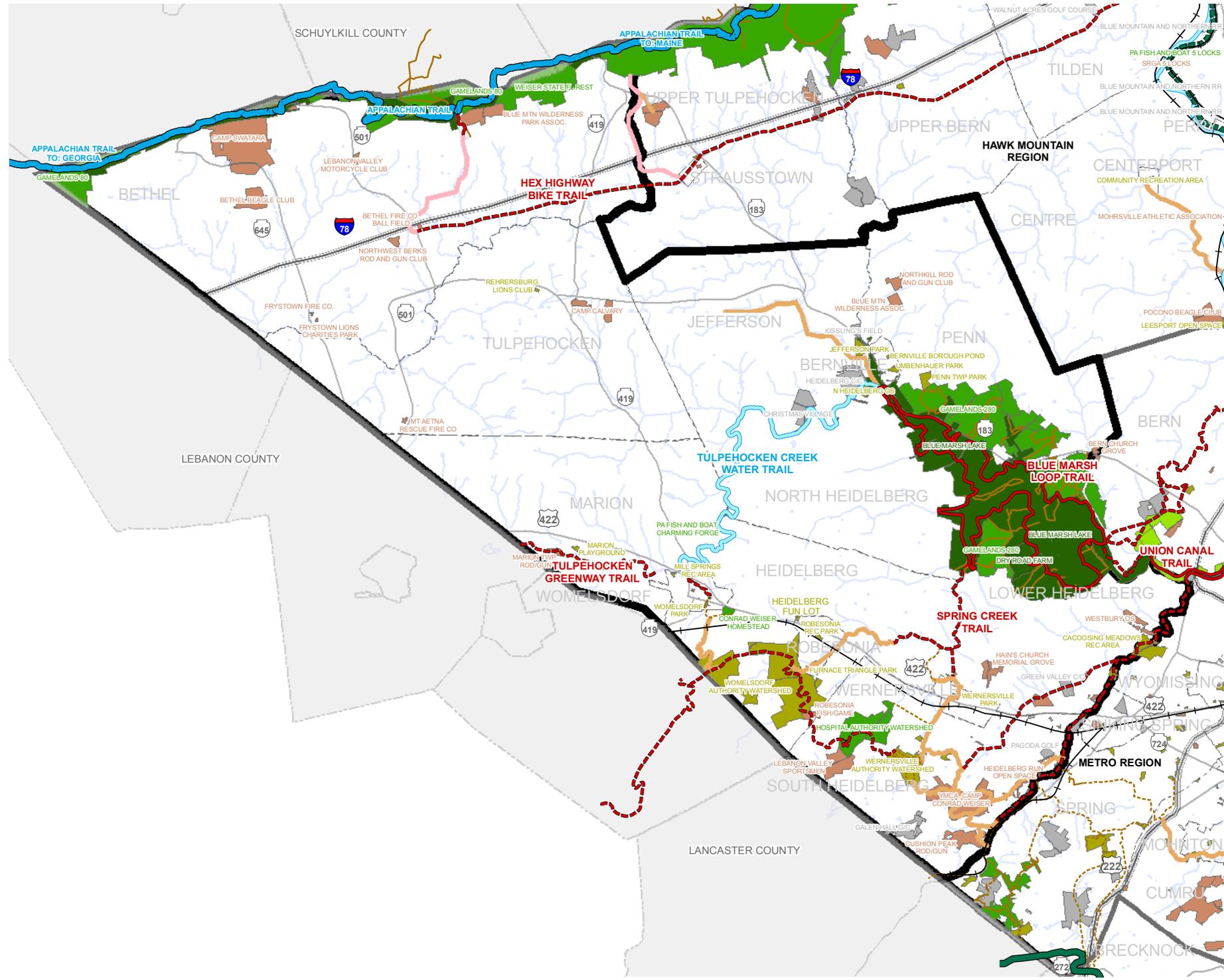
Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Hex Highway	Establish Bicycle Route - Based on the same rationale of the driving tour, utilize the road's moderate grades to design and implement a bike lane.	Mid term - Municipal support is essential as additional portion of road burm would be needed for a bike lane (implemented during road repaving projects to alleviate cost). Signage and line painting would also be required for safety.	Partnering municipalities, Berks Bike Club, Reading Area Transportation Authority, Berks Visitors Beureau	
Kittatinny Ridge Greenway	Protect Kittatinny Ridge Viewshed	Mid Term - incorporate language within zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances that prevent scarring developments on the ridge.	Municipalities	
Kittatinny Ridge Greenway	Appalachian Trail Protection and Support	Continued - support the longterm viability of the Appalachian Trail by helping maintain trail/road crossings and safety of trailheads. The Appalachian Trail is an under utilized source of tourism.	Municipalities	
Tulpehocken Greenway	Promote water trail - originally proposed within Tully Plan	Short term and Continued - Raise awareness of existing water trail. Provide signage to and parking for launch sites.	Municipality	
Tulpehocken Greenway	Promote trail interconnectivity with neighboring counties	Long Term - maintain awareness and dialogue during trail initiatives of Lancaster and Lebanon Counties to advance trail interconnectivity.	Municipality, Berks County Planning Commission, neighboring counties	
Womelsdorf Node	Historic Preservation	Short term and Continued - This area is very pertinent to the region as well as the county as it is home to the Conrad Weiser Homestead, a National Historic Landmark. To sustain Robeson's character, effective measures of preservation must be in place.	Municipality, local historical society, Berks County Planning Commission	

3.6 Tulpehocken Region

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Womelsdorf Node	Main Street	Mid term - A Main Street program should be considered. Funding is available for said program which in turn will open additional funding sources for street scape and infrastructure improvements. Such a program would dovetail nicely with a regional chamber of commerce.	Municipality, Berks County Visitors Bureau, Berks County Chamber of Commerce	
Womelsdorf Node	Historic Architecture Review Board	Long Term - After establishing a detailed inventory and historic district as well as updating ordinances for historic preservation, a Historic Architecture Review Board should be considered.	Municipality, local historical society, Berks County Museum Council	
Regional Ecologic	Implement Stream and tributary corridor protection measures	Short term and continued - Streams and their tributaries of the Tulpehocken Region must be protected. Steams and their tributaries of any size, are severely affected by disturbance within their riparian buffer zone. Example activities that should not occur within the zone include but are not limited to mowing, livestock grazing/Xing. Activities like stream damming, excavation and re-routing/re-structuring must be fully permitted prior to start of the activity.	Tulpehock Region citizens, local municipalities, Berks County, PaDEP	
Regional Ecologic	Enact land use regulations pertaining to natural resource protection	Short term and continued - All municipalities should periodically review their zoning to be sure that regulations support preservation efforts. Implementation of the Berks Count CZIP program should be considered in areas of high ecologic value	Municipalities, Berks County	
Regional Ecologic	Viewshed protection	Short term - Incorporate language within zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances that effectively prevents scarring of the ridge by strictly enforcing development regulations on steep slopes and regulating forestry practices.	Municipalities	

Feature	Opportunity	Priority Status – Next Steps	Partners	Anticipated Revenue Source
Regional Ecologic	Natural Feature Protections	Mid Term - Within enacted CZIP areas, municipalities can utilize the Municipal Land Protection Program to purchase easements land.	Municipalities, Berks County	
Regional Heritage	Historic Surveys should be completed for all Municipalities within the region	An inventory must be conducted as a precursor to their preservation. The Region's and County's history as well as character and charm are reliant an these efforts.	Municipalities, Berks County, Local Historical Societies, Berks Museum Council	
Regional Recreation	Recreational Opportunities	A continuous effort should be made to evaluate the recreational needs of Berks County's Citizens. Municipalities should strive to provide adaqueate recreational resources.	Municipalities, Berks County Planning Commission	
Regional Recreation	Joint Recreational Cooperatives	Municipalities should consider cooperative buying arrangements to potentially lower cost. Joint recreational boards as well as regional parks that are jointly operated, maintained and financed should also be considered.	Municipalities, Berks Center for Community Leadership, Berks County Planning Commission	

Recreation Resources: Tulpehocken Region

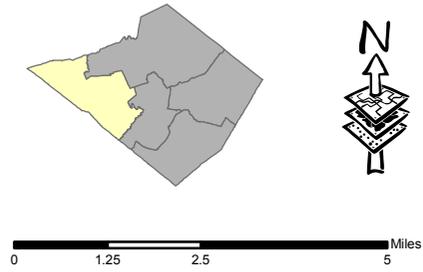
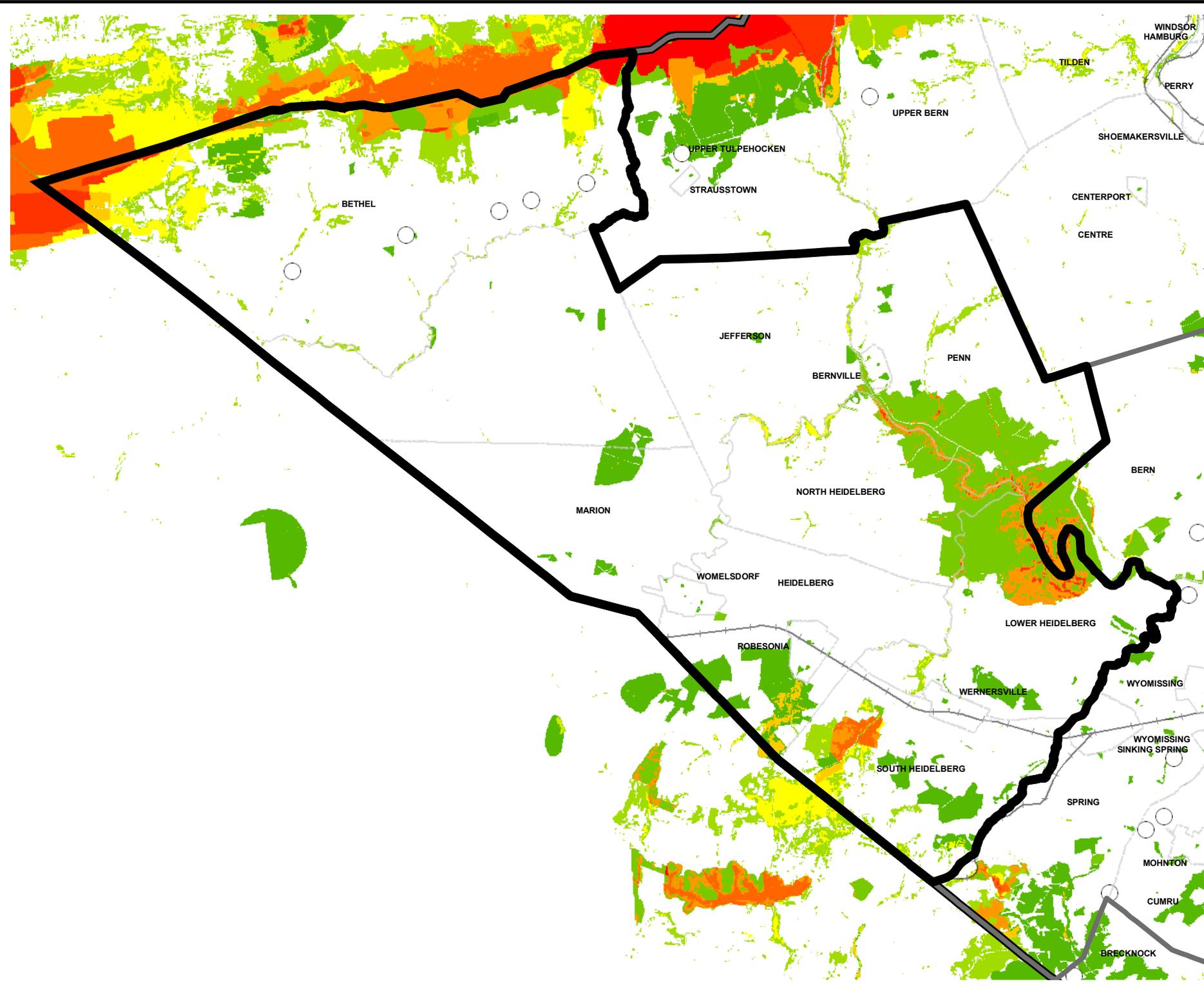


Trail Network Hierarchy		Recreation Facilities Ownership Categories	
	Interstate		Federal
	Intercounty		State
	Regional		County
	Local		Municipal
	Proposed Intercounty		Non-Profit
	Proposed Regional		Private
	Proposed Local		
	Water Trail		
	Potential Regional Connection		
	Potential Local Connection		
	Regions		
	Municipal Bounds		
	Limited Access Highway		
	railroad		
	Streams		

Prepared by the Berks County Planning Commission
with The Berks County Parks Department
The Berks County Conservancy
PA DCNR
Steering Committees and Numerous Stakeholders

Thanks to All

Ecologic Resources: Tulpehocken Region



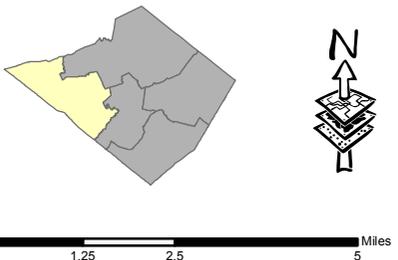
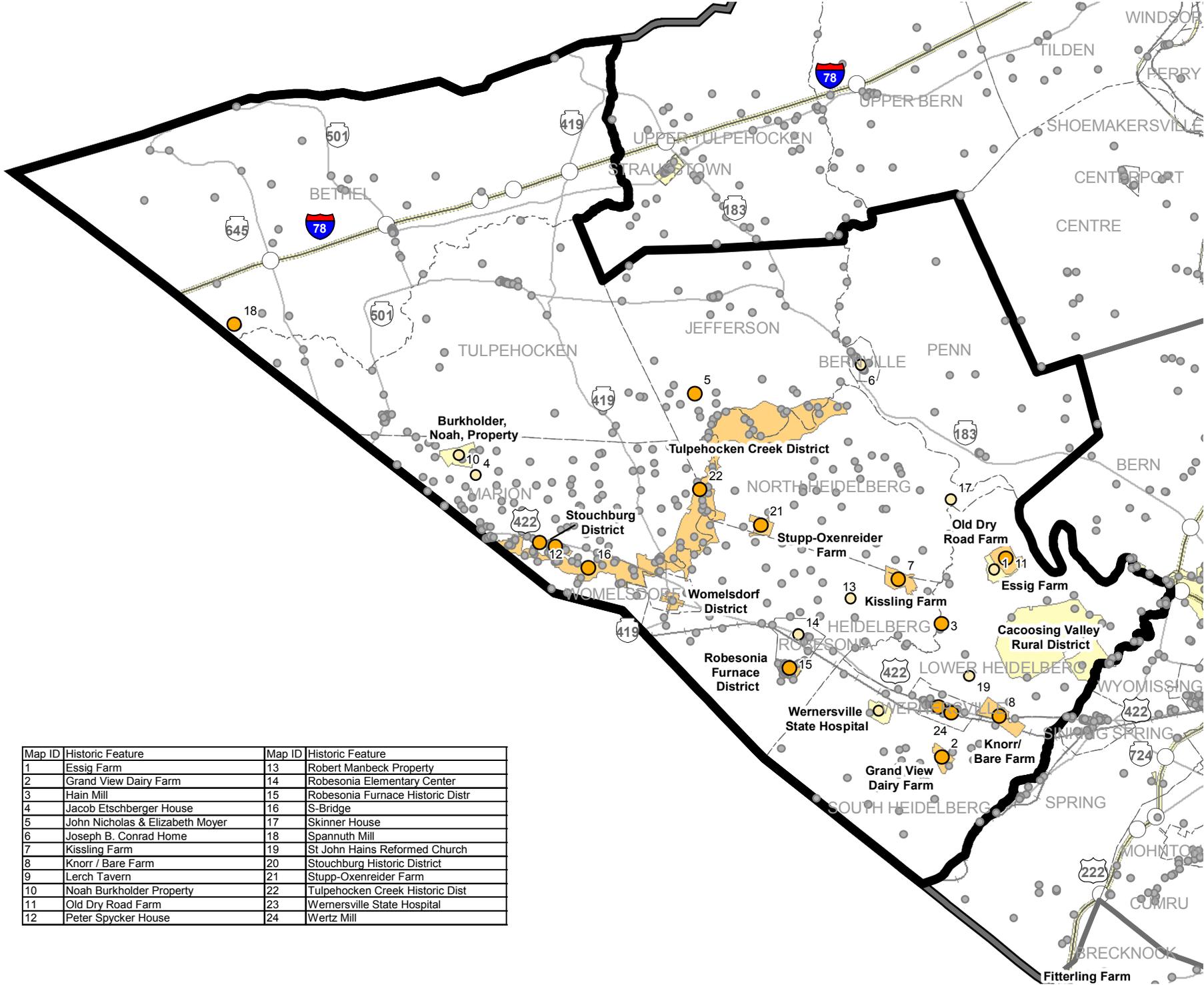
Legend

	1 - High Value		Major Interchange
	2		Limited Access Highway
	3		Municipal Boundaries
	4		Major Highways
	5		Railroad
	6		Streams
	7		Regions
	8		
	9		
	10 - Highest Value		

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Historic Resources: Tulpehocken Region



- Legend**
- Historic Sites**
- National Register Listed
 - National Register Eligible
 - Other Sites*
- Historic Districts**
- National Register Listed
 - National Register Eligible
- Other Symbols**
- Major Interchange
 - Limited Access Highway
 - Major Highways
 - Municipal Bounds
 - Streams
 - Railroad
 - Regions

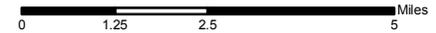
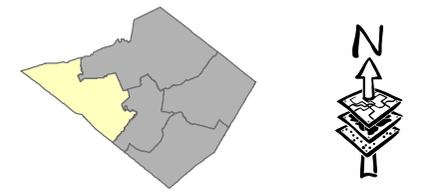
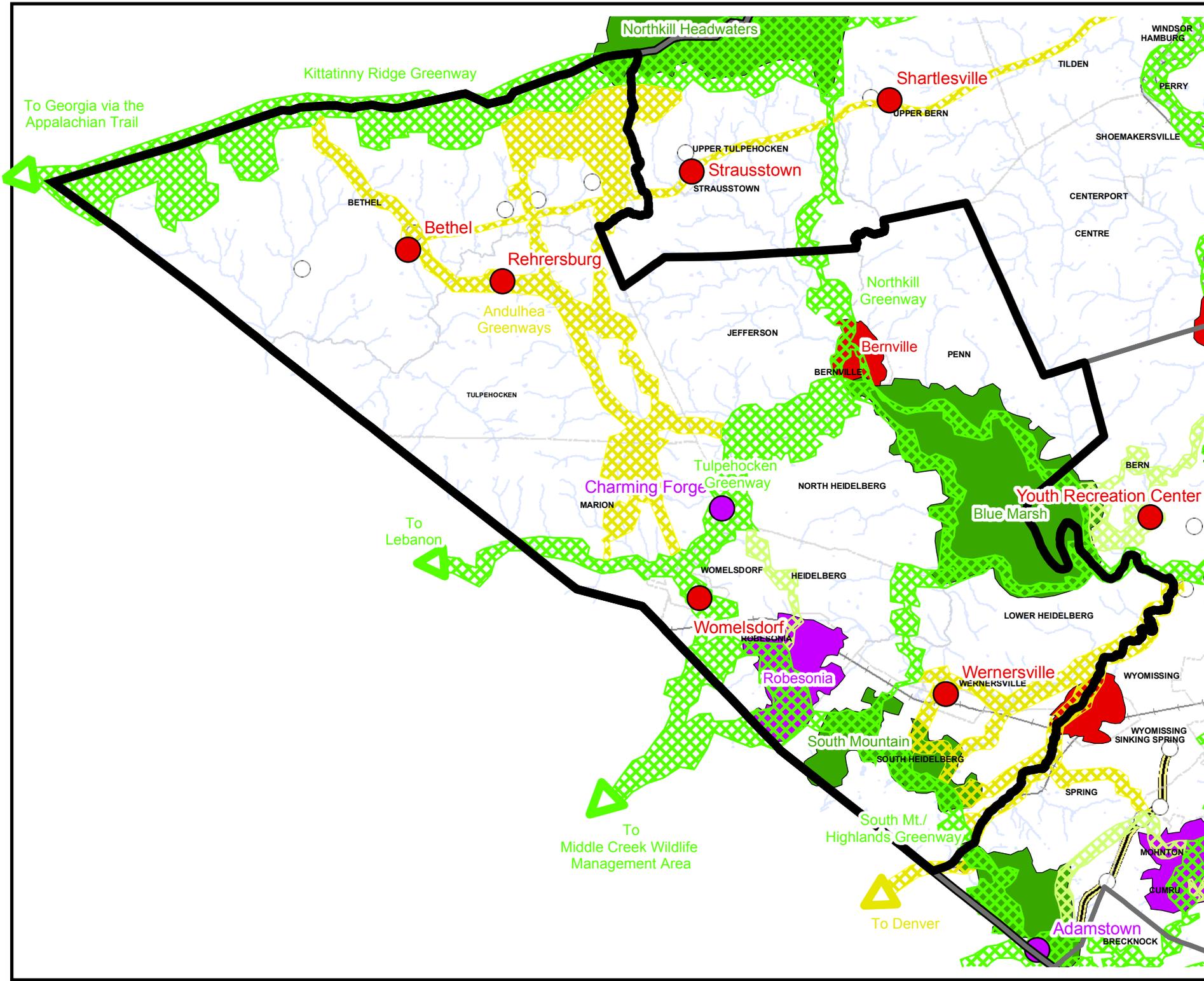
* includes sites identified within surveys conducted by one or more of the following groups: Pennsylvania Museum and Historic Council, Berks County Conservancy, George Meiser and local historical societies.

Map ID	Historic Feature	Map ID	Historic Feature
1	Essig Farm	13	Robert Manbeck Property
2	Grand View Dairy Farm	14	Robesonia Elementary Center
3	Hain Mill	15	Robesonia Furnace Historic Distr
4	Jacob Etschberger House	16	S-Bridge
5	John Nicholas & Elizabeth Moyer	17	Skinner House
6	Joseph B. Conrad Home	18	Spannuth Mill
7	Kissling Farm	19	St John Hains Reformed Church
8	Knorr / Bare Farm	20	Stouchburg Historic District
9	Lerch Tavern	21	Stupp-Oxenreider Farm
10	Noah Burkholder Property	22	Tulpehocken Creek Historic Dist
11	Old Dry Road Farm	23	Wernersville State Hospital
12	Peter Spycker House	24	Wertz Mill

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Greenway Network: Tulpehocken Region



Legend

- Greenway Priority Corridor**
 - 1 (Green cross-hatch)
 - 2 (Yellow cross-hatch)
 - 3 (Orange cross-hatch)
- Greenway Hubs**
 - Ecological (Green circle)
 - Destination/ Ecological (Purple circle)
 - Destination (Red circle)
- Greenway Nodes**
 - Ecological (Green circle)
 - Destination/ Ecological (Purple circle)
 - Destination (Red circle)
- Other Features**
 - Major Interchange (White circle with black outline)
 - Limited Access Highway (Thick black line)
 - Major Highways (Thin black line)
 - Railroad (Black line with cross-ticks)
 - Streams (Blue line)
 - Regions (Thick black outline)
 - Municipal Boundaries (Dashed grey line)

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The Natural Lands Trust
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Thanks to All

Chapter 4

**Berks County
Parks and Recreation
Department**

Chapter 4 County of Berks Park & Recreation

Mission Statement:

The Berks County Parks and Recreation Department is dedicated to planning, developing and maintaining a system of parks that provide recreation and leisure, environmental education and awareness, and cultural and historic education. The open spaces, recreational areas, and historical sites within the parks will be clean, safe, attractive, and will support a wide range of citizen participation and involvement.

Goals and Objectives:

It is the goal of the Parks and Recreation Department to make available to the citizens of Berks County a park system that is safe, attractive and clean; to preserve open space through the development and expansion of the park system; to enhance our park system activities and recreational programming to ensure a mix of activities that appeal to all ages and cultures; to preserve the historical facilities within our park system and to make those facilities available to our citizens; to maintain our parks in excellent condition through an effective program of preventive maintenance; to increase the public awareness of our park system and to encourage and motivate use and support; and to obtain adequate funding to ensure our system can be maintained and supported at levels appropriate to our needs through a combination of public and private partnership funding.

WORKLOAD INDICATORS

	<i>Actual 2005</i>	<i>Actual 2006</i>	<i>Estimated 2007</i>	<i>Projected 2008</i>
<i>Attendance Figures</i>	376,824	382,500	415,500	448,740
<i>Number of Special Events Held</i>	51	57	53	56
<i>Educational Programs Sponsored</i>	78	65	60	55

Organization, Administration and Personnel:

General Operation and Basic Function

The 1,180-acre Parks & Recreation Department includes the 5-mile long Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park system, Kaercher Creek Park, the Allegheny Aqueduct Historical Park, the Leesport Lockhouse, Camp Joy, Antietam Lake, Hunsicker's Grove and the Youth Recreation Facility. Within the Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park are a number of different recreational and historic areas including: the Union Canal Bicycle and Walking Trail designated as a National Recreation Trail, the Red Bridge Recreation Area, Stonecliffe Recreation Area and Action Park, the Berks Leisure Area, the Gring's Mill Recreation Area, the Berks County Heritage Center, and the restored Union Canal Lock No. 47E.

The Berks County Heritage Center encompasses the Gruber Wagon Works, a National Historic Landmark built in 1882; the C. Howard Hiester Canal Center which has artifacts of the Schuylkill Navigation System and focuses on the history of the Union and

Schuylkill Canals, Wertz's "Red" Covered Bridge, listed on the National Register and built in 1867; Melcher's Grist Mill and the Deppen Cemetery. The Heritage Center is open for tours May through October.

The 1824 Allegheny Aqueduct (which includes 1783 Beidler House), located in Gibraltar, and the 1845 Leesport Lock House are both listed on the National Register of Historic Sites.

The Recreation Division coordinates a wide range of programs and training of leaders for playgrounds throughout the County. The season's culminating activity is the playground Festival of Arts, which encompasses music, dance, costume, drama, art and the awards presentation. The Recreation staff also works with the Office of Aging in promoting Senior Week in the Park and the Senior Art, Photography and Woodworking Contest.

The maintenance portion of this department is comprised of 13 full-time and 39 part-time employees. They are responsible for the overall upkeep of all buildings, grounds and equipment. These services are in cooperation with volunteers, youth detention and prison labor. These services are supported within the County level through the facilities and engineering department by means of tradesmen level repairs.

Programs and Festivals

The Department presents a summer Sunday evening concert series – Memorial Day through Labor Day, an Interpretive Series of programs, lectures and workshops throughout the year, and a Kid's Summer Series. The department works cooperatively with the Roving Nature Center to present environmental education day camps. The department offers a summer adult volleyball league,

tennis clinics and "Match & Play" for tennis players. The Action Park features an annual Skills and Tricks Competition, and camps for beginner skateboarders and BMX bikers. Annual special events include an Easter "Egg-stravaganza", Go Fly a Kite Day, Children's Fishing Rodeo, the Fiddle and Acoustic Music Mini-Fest, the Heritage Festival and Pa German Day Celebration, Living History programs at the Beidler house, and the month-long Holiday Lights program in December.



Horse pulling at the Heritage Festival

Facilities, Equipment and Projects

The Department preserves and maintains over 1,180 acres of land; 13 different parks, including nine athletic fields, 6 historic sites and more than 60 additional structures. Facilities are available for picnic, athletic and other special event rentals.

- **Facilities:** The 62 structures in the department are primarily maintained by the department's own employees. Most painting, carpentry, plumbing and roofing projects are completed in-house. Major repairs are contracted out.
- **Equipment:** The grounds equipment this department uses totals more than 160 pieces and 15 vehicles. Other pieces would include small power hand tools, sound equipment and tents. All of these items are maintained within the department by Parks and Recreation employees with the exception of vehicles and certain repairs on larger tractors.
- **Projects:** Capital and operating project lists are generated and updated monthly. The capital project list currently stands at approximately 44 jobs. Most will be forwarded to the next year for completion with only a few to be finished within the fiscal year.

Ranger Statement

The security/ranger portion of the department is comprised of 12 part-time rangers and 1 part-time supervisor. They are responsible for the overall well-being of staff and park patrons through leisure visits or reservations. They are, in essence, the designated liaison for our department interacting with park visitors on a regular basis. They are also to uphold the ordinance and regulations prescribed through verbal warnings and regular ticketing.

Volunteers

The Department depends on the assistance and support of a staff of volunteers to offer programs to the public. There are currently 138 volunteers on our mailing list – of that number 117 volunteered in 2006. These people assist with activities at special events with duties ranging from program handout and information, to face painting, crafts workshops, craft preparation, decorating, herb garden maintenance, painting of park buildings, parking assistants, Santa's, Easter Bunny, MC's at events, home-crafts demonstrations, snack bar and country store clerks, ticket desk duties, as well as tour guides at the Heritage Center. The total number of hours per year averages about 30 hours per person, however there is a small group who volunteer well over 200 hours each year. The department also relies on the support of several local schools and colleges to support the larger events with



Volunteers preparing for Easter Egg-stravaganza

volunteer staff. The Reading Muhlenberg Vo-Tech School has been involved for 10 years.

The department recruits through the Volunteer Center of the United Way, word-of-mouth and at public speaking programs. Training for volunteers begins each March and runs throughout the season as necessary. Staff attends college volunteer fairs and events for recruitment, as time permits.

A monthly newsletter is sent out to keep volunteers informed of all Department activities. An annual volunteer recognition dinner is scheduled each spring before the season kicks off. Field trips are planned that may be of interest. Volunteers are invited to attend training workshops as available.

Without these people the department would not be able to offer the variety of different activities at each event. Volunteers are crucial to our overall operation.

Public Relations

All events, festivals, concerts and programs are promoted through press releases and public service announcements to media contacts in print, radio and television. Events are marketed at no cost through various methods. Advertising of events is determined by event size and budget.

The department provides Public Outreach programs to various service organizations, groups and schools. Logos for the Parks and the Heritage Center are utilized on printed materials and new park signage.

Parks & Recreation Board

The Board is appointed by the County Commissioners for a four-year term. They serve on committees that support the operation and functions of the Parks and Recreation Department – Personnel; Planning, Acquisition and Development; Programs and Services; Budget; Foundation /Funding and the Open Space Council. They report to the County Commissioners. The Board maintains and administers a checking and savings account to assist with Department operations.

Friends of Berks County Parks Fund

The Parks and Recreation Department partnered with Berks County Community Foundation to establish the Friends of Berks County Parks Fund. Members of the public can make a tax-deductible gift to the fund. The Parks and Recreation Board can make a recommendation as to how those funds will be used.

Cooperative Effort With Other Recreation Providers

The department works regularly with other local Parks & Recreation agencies within the County, sharing information, ideas and occasionally equipment. This group attempts to meet monthly to keep up to date on activities and to discuss common problems to reach solutions. All members willingly share resources and expertise as needed.

Berks County Parks and Recreation Department is the lead organization in a countywide partnership of over 12 agencies

representing recreation, health and education promoting the Keystone Active Zone campaign. In 2007, a second activity book was published for students in grades 4-6, with a variety of activities to be completed at parks, playgrounds or trails over the summer. County parks can be found on the www.KeystoneActiveZone.com website. This group will be putting together a map of the County listing public parks and trails with the assistance of the Berks County Planning Commission.

4.1 Facility Profiles

Below are descriptions of existing County maintained facilities followed by an overview of proposed and potential projects.

*Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park Note: Collectively the Union Canal Trail, Stonecliffe, Berks Leisure Area, Grings Mill Recreation Area, the Heritage Center and the Red Bridge Recreation Area are known as the Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park.

Antietam Lake

Description and History: The Antietam Lake property was a 479.24-acre city owned watershed consisting of a small man-made lake and its associated forested lands. This watershed was part of the city's water supply system until the 1970's, is used by County residents for passive recreation pursuits, particularly fishing and hiking, and contains the Reading Nature Center and a late century stone farmhouse. Combined with the adjacent Mt. Penn Reserve, owned by the City of Reading, and Earl Trust land, these properties form a 1600+ acre green backdrop along the eastern boundary of the City. The majority of the Antietam Lake property is located in Lower Alsace Township with a small portion extending into Alsace Township.

Since 2000 the City of Reading has been considering selling the Antietam Lake property. After many legal issues, including the City wanting to sell it to a private investor and developer, the County proceeded with condemnation in 2005 and filed a Declaration of Taking to acquire fee simple title to the property for a public recreation place and a public park. Lower Alsace Township and the State are contributing financially to help the

County with the purchase of the property. Currently, the County, Township and Reading Water Authority are sharing maintenance responsibilities. The County will have to address repair issues with the dam, inventory the property and prepare a master plan for the park land.

Location: Lower Alsace Township, 230 Angora Road

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Natural Resource Area

Total Area: 479.24 Acres

Allegheny Aqueduct Historic Park/Beidler House and Grist Mill

Description and History: The aqueduct is a 112-foot long structure consisting of five red sandstone and brownstone arches,



Built in 1824, Allegheny Aqueduct built for the Schuylkill Canal System

built in 1824 as part of the Schuylkill Navigation Company Canal System to carry the water of the canal and canal boats over the Allegheny Creek. Operation of both the canal and aqueduct ended in 1931. In 1983, the Schuylkill River Greenway Association began efforts to restore the aqueduct, and had the structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. Adjacent to the aqueduct property stands the 1783 Beidler House built for the operator of a nearby grist mill. The County acquired these properties and has plans for developing this area into a County interpretive historical park.

Location: Robeson Township; 1130 Old River Road, Gibraltar, near Rt. 724

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Special Use Park

Total Area: 34.9 acres

Managed Area: 9.57

Historic structures: 1824 Aqueduct (National Register of Historic Places), 1783 Beidler House (eligible for National Register), 1762 Mill ruins

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Aqueduct

Restored House

Grist Mill ruins

Restrooms

Parking: 4 regular, 1 handicap

Handicap Accessibility: parking, restrooms and first floor of house

Programs/Festivals hosted: A Walk Through Time-Open House and Living History Program, Colonial Candlelight Holiday Reception

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Site development
- Complete boundary survey
- Construct picnic pavilion and supporting facilities
- Construct a connecting trail system to include Beidler House, Aqueduct, Schuylkill River, Exeter Township, and Thun Trail
- Construct parking areas
- Provide signage, lighting, landscaping
- Construct boat launching facility on the Schuylkill River to become part of SRGA's water trail
- Rehabilitate Beidler House to become Interpretive Center
- Provide educational exhibits and displays
- Establish meeting room for school groups and office space
- Utilize artifacts from C. Howard Hiester Canal Collection
- Sediment removal or stream deflectors

Berks Leisure Area

Description and History: The senior citizens of Berks County were responsible for the naming of this facility and also contributed financially to the development. Facilities include a picnic pavilion, badminton and shuffleboard courts, and horseshoe pits. The Sheeler House, a colonial revival structure, serves as the office for the Recreation staff and the County Park Rangers. The iron and wood footbridge provides access to the

Union Canal Trail on the opposite side of the Tulpehocken Creek. This bridge marks the location of a mule bridge that was used for the operation of the Union Canal. Crossing over the bridge are the remains of lift Lock No. 51.

Location: Wyomissing Borough; 1901 Tulpehocken Road near Berkshire Blvd.

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Total Area: 7.1 acres

Managed Area: 6.5

Historic structures: None

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Pavilion
Electricity with reservation
Restrooms - seasonal
Picnic tables
Grills
Large Stone Barbeque Grill
Badminton (1)
Horseshoes (1)
Quoits (1)
Shuffleboard (2)
Walking Trail
Footbridge
Information Bulletin Board



Foot bridge connecting Berks Leisure Area to the Union Canal Trail

Handicap Accessibility: parking, restrooms, and picnic areas

2 – Parking Areas

Staff parking: 6 (1 HC)

Ranger Vehicle Spaces: 4

Remaining Spaces: 26 (2 HC)

Total: 39 (3HC)

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Steps/wall restoration
- Repoint all stonework
- Replace roof on pavilion
- Repair stone stairway

Camp Joy

Description and History: Camp Joy serves as a weekday resident/day camp during the summer months. It is also available to organized groups for picnics, retreats, and other events on summer weekends and throughout the week during the autumn, winter, and spring. A central lodge houses a kitchen, dining room, showers, restrooms and a multi-purpose-room. Six overnight cabins and outdoor recreation facilities are also available.

Location: Bern Township, south of County Welfare Road on Berks County Welfare Tract, 1120 Berks Road

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Special Use Park

Total Area: 25.4 acres

Managed Area: 17.7

Historic structures: the Pool and Bathhouse were constructed in 1935-39 as a W.P.A. project

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Lodge
6 Cabins
Staff Cabin
3 Gazebos
Softball Field
Basketball Court
Volleyball Court

Horseshoe pits
Quoits
Grills
Picnic Tables
Concrete Bridge over Marietta Creek
Handicap Accessibility: limited - parking, lodge (first floor only), no restroom access
Parking Area
Total: ~30 spaces

Programs/Festivals hosted:

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Rehabilitate restrooms
- Pave existing stone parking area
- Paint exterior of lodge and cabins
- Replace plumbing and electrical lines
- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Masonry repairs around lodge
- Color coat basketball court

Gring's Mill Recreation Area

Description and History: This park was the former site of a commercial grist mill, barn and homestead constructed by William Gring. These historic buildings house the Berks County Parks and Recreation Department's administration (1831 stone house) and maintenance offices (1811 grist mill). The 1896 barn has been converted into a visitor's information area, housing limited group meeting facilities, snack bar and restrooms. Outdoor recreation facilities include tennis courts, softball field, picnic area and children's play area, exercise course, and sand

and macadam volleyball courts. Annual festivals, several interpretive lecture programs, and Sunday evening concerts at the outdoor amphitheatre highlight summer activities. Gring's Mill also hosts the Holiday Lights Program during the month of December. The concrete bridge and dam were built around 1931 to provide access from the Althouse home to the rest of his property. An electrical generating station on the bridge provided electricity for experiments by Scott Althouse, owner of Althouse Chemical Company. The bridge now connects the recreation area to the Union Canal Trail located on the opposite side of the Tulpehocken Creek.

Location: Spring Township, 2083 Tulpehocken Road.

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Community Park

Total Area: 45.8 acres

Managed Area: 32.56

Historic structures: 1831 stone house, 1811 grist mill, 1896 barn, 1931 bridge, Tully House and barn

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Park office building
Maintenance building
Visitors center/snack bar/meeting room (electricity with reservation) /information area
Tully house and barn
Amphitheatre
Baseball/Softball Field
ParCourse 18 Station Exercise cluster

Fitness course
Horseshoes (2)
Quoits (2)
Grills
Picnic Tables
Play equipment
1 Lighted Shuffleboard Court
Sand Volleyball
Lighted Volleyball courts (2)
Tennis courts (6)
Walking Trail
Bridge
Picnic Area (electricity with reservation)
Picnic area restrooms (seasonal use only)
Year-round restrooms
Information Bulletin Board
Handicap Accessibility: parking, restrooms, picnic areas and barn, no access to office
Parking Areas
Tennis Courts: 25 (1 HC)
Gravel Lot: ~16
Office/Barn Area: 12
Main lot: 52 (3 HC)
Total: 105 (4 HC)

Programs/Festivals hosted: Holiday Lights, Summer Concert Series, Senior Week in the Park, Eggstravaganza, adult co-ed volleyball league, tennis clinics, and various interpretive programs

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering

- Construct picnic pavilion with restrooms
- Rehabilitate outdoor amphitheatre
- Construct a structure that provides shelter for musicians and better sound distribution
- Replace electrical wiring and outlets
- Change stonework and improve performing surface in amphitheatre
- Rehabilitate Tully House facility
- Perform structural work on stone bank barn, paint roof
- Improve access road and create handicap parking area and service delivery
- Upgrade electrical system
- Rehabilitate play area, meeting all safety requirements
- Replace and rehabilitate playground equipment
- Install new play surface
- Install new security and fire system in maintenance building
- Rehabilitate "Tully the Turtle" area in amphitheatre
- Develop parking area for visitors and staff at Park Office
- Develop interpretive display for barn lower level
- Bridge inspection/rehabilitaiton
- Repair/replace_sliding mill doors
- Asphalt barn ramp and parking lot
- Generating station roof repairs
- Upper restroom refurbishment
- Office landscape design
- New maintenance facility
- Stone wall restoration at office
- Overhead wire at restrooms needs to be buried underground

Berks County Heritage Center

Description and History: The Heritage Center has been developed as an historical interpretive complex of relocated and restored structures commemorating important eras of our cultural

history. The Gruber Wagon Works, C. Howard Hiester Canal Center, Wertz's Bridge, the Deppen Cemetery, Melcher's Grist Mill, Reeser Farm House, various memorials, and remnants of the Union Canal towpath are all located within the Heritage Center. The Heritage Center hosts the annual Heritage Festival in October and several other annual events, along with a seasonal interpretive series featuring workshops and programs for all ages.

Gruber Wagon Works- Erected in 1882 by Franklin Gruber, the wagon works is recognized as one of the most complete surviving examples of an integrated rural manufactory of its kind in the nation. The wagon works fashioned wagons for farm and industrial use until production stopped in the 1950's. The two and one-half story T-shaped frame building holds over 19,000 artifacts, machinery and tools, and depicts the business' peak production years of the early 1900's. Originally located near Mt. Pleasant in Berks County, the wagon works was moved by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1976-1977 to prevent its inundation



Gruber Wagons and the Wagon Works

by the Blue Marsh Lake project. In 1972, the shop was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1978, the wagon works was designated as a National Historic Landmark by the United States Government, commemorating its historical significance as an industry from a bygone era of American craftsmen.

C. Howard Hiester Canal Center- This education center presents the story of the important contribution the canal transportation system made to the history of Berks County and this country's early growth. Canals saw their rise and fall in the 19th century. They offered means of bulk transportation and travel in the era prior to railroads when the only alternative to walking was the horse and wagon. The C. Howard Hiester canal collection consists of artifacts from the active days of local canals, and is considered to be the most extensive private collection of



C. Howard Hiester Canal Center

19th century canal memorabilia in existence today. This collection is displayed in the restored barn at the Heritage Center.

Wertz's (Red) Bridge- The Wertz's "Red" Bridge is a 204-foot clear span combination truss arch wooden covered bridge built in 1867. The bridge, listed on the National Register of Historic



Historic Wertz's "Red" Bridge

Places in 1979, is recognized as the longest single span covered bridge still in existence in Pennsylvania today. The covered bridge allows pedestrians to pass over the Tulpehocken Creek, and links the Heritage Center and Union Canal Trail to the Red Bridge Recreation Area.

Deppen Cemetery- Also known as the Catholic Cemetery, was relocated from its original location near Mount Pleasant. Buried here are Irish workers who died of "Swamp Fever" while building

the Union Canal, in addition to local residents from Mount Pleasant.

Melcher's Grist Mill- Relocated from Bally, Berks County, this restored grist mill was built around 1888 for the Nicklos Melcher family. The mill represents a rare and complete example of a water-powered farm mill used to serve only the needs of the farm on which it was located. This family-owned mill operated through the use of millstones for grinding cornmeal and grains into feed for animals.

Reeser Farm House- This early 19th century stone farmhouse, barn and several outbuildings represents the agricultural life-style of early Berks County. The land was actively farmed until 1978 when the farm was acquired by Berks County for development of its park system. The farmhouse serves as the main office and information center for the Heritage Center, and the barn houses the canal center and visitor conveniences.

Location: Bern Township; along the Tulpehocken Creek at 1102 Red Bridge Road, 1/2 mile southwest of the Rte. 183 and Rte. 222 interchange.

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Special Use Park

Total Area: 41.4 acres

Managed Area: 40.64

Historic structures: 1882 Gruber Wagon Works (National Historic Landmark, National Register of Historic Places), Wertz's Red Bridge (National Register of Historic Places), 1888 Melcher's Grist Mill, Early 19th century Reeser's Farm House and barn (housing the Canal Center) and other outbuildings, Mildred the Canal Houseboat, Deppen Cemetery

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Park office
 Wagon Works Museum
 Iron Storage Shed
 Canal Center Museum
 Silo
 Houseboat (Mildred)
 Grist Mill
 Covered Bridge
 Meeting Area
 Brick Smokehouse
 Milkhouse
 Wooden Pig Pen
 Pumphouse
 Windmill
 Herb Garden
 Walking Trail
 Open Field
 Cemetery
 Bicentennial Monument
 Police Memorial
 Distelfink Sculpture
 Restrooms (year round)
 Maintenance Building
 Picnic Tables
 Handicap Accessibility: yes – limited parking, restrooms, canal center, first floor office, limited access at wagon museum
 Snack Bar
 Country Store
 Parking Area
 Shop Area: 5

Office Area: 4
Main Lot: ~ 60 (2 HC)
Total: ~ 70

Programs/Festivals hosted: Tuesday to Sunday tours May through October, Heritage Festival, Fiddle & Acoustic Music Mini Fest, Big Wheel Mini-apolis 500, Step Back In Time, Various Interpretive Programs, Nature Day Camps

Master Plan: Berks County Heritage Center Master Plan, Prepared by John Milner Associates, 1980; Rosser Study

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Rehabilitate Gruber Wagon Works: Replace deteriorating exterior siding without changing the historic aura of the inside of the building; Rehabilitate/replace windows and doors; Exterior painting
- Construct visitors center to serve Wagon Works and Canal Center. Center should include entrance/ticket area, orientation theater, gift shop, restrooms, restoration work shop, public meeting/program room, and staff administration offices.
- Construct exhibit/display structure (pre-engineered building) adjacent to Gruber Wagon Works, approximately 10,000 square feet, with climate control, fire and security systems, lighting to exhibit wagons, sleighs, and other artifacts.
- Construct additional pre-engineered maintenance building, approximately 8,000 to 10,000 square feet to house maintenance activities of the department.
- Archival and collection storage area with proper climate control
- Asphalt maintenance driveway
- Master lock system (half complete)
- Security system at maintenance facility

- Re-trench phone line to maintenance building
- Masonry work around barn
- Fuel tanks installed at maintenance building
- Investigate acquisition of adjacent land

Hunsicker's Grove

Description and History: The park was the site of an early iron ore quarry, which supplied a nearby iron furnace. In 1929, Levinus Hunsicker acquired the property from the Crane Ironworks Company. The small quarry filled with water creates a three-acre lake. The property remained in the Hunsicker family, and was converted into a commercial picnic grove. The County acquired the grove in 1994, and made structural, mechanical, and cosmetic improvements to the pavilion, kitchen and restrooms before re-opening the facility. The grove is now a public park and also available by reservation for large group picnics.



Pond at Hunsicker's Grove

Location: Longswamp Township, 9350 Longswamp Road, Mertztown

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Special Use Park

Total Area: 48 acres

Managed Area: 16.26

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Lake/quarry
 Fishing Dock
 2 Pavilions, 1 with kitchen (electricity with reservation)
 Restroom
 Small Bungalow Cottage/utility room
 Picnic Tables
 Grills
 Large Stone/Brick Barbecue Grill (3)
 Gazebo
 Horseshoes (1)
 Quoits (1)
 Sand Volleyball
 Walking Trail
 Handicap Accessibility: parking, restrooms, picnic areas and fishing dock
 Parking Areas
 Gravel/Stone lot: 108 spaces
 HC lot near restrooms: 4 spaces
Total: 112

Programs/Festivals hosted: Children's Fishing Rodeo, summer concert series

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Construct new play area with playground equipment and surfacing
- Install oven hood in kitchen area of pavilion
- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Riparian buffer installed for overflow stream from pond
- Bungalow removed or rehabilitated
- Improve walking trail

Kaercher Creek Park

Description and History: The park is developed around a 40-acre man-made lake, complete with a fishing dock, boat dock and a boat-launching ramp for non-motorized boats. The Pennsylvania Fish Commission stocks the lake with a variety of fish. Family oriented facilities feature a lodge, picnic pavilion, children's play apparatus, walking trails and volleyball courts. Several concerts and interpretive programs are presented at the park throughout the summer.

Proposed plans by the Northern Berks Recreation Commission include a baseball field, midget and full-size soccer fields, and parking.

Location: Windsor Township, 3401 Old Route 22 (State Street)



Pavilion at Kaercher Creek Park

Ownership: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania acting through the Pennsylvania Fish Commission. The commonwealth leased the site to the County for a forty-year term in January, 1973. In 2007, 22.5 acres were sub-leased to North Berks Recreation Commission.

Classification: Large Urban/Suburban Park

Total Area: 183.7 acres

Managed Area: 47.99

Historic structures: None

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

- Pavilion
- Lodge w/meeting area
- Exercise cluster
- Fishing dock
- Fishing area-handicap accessible
- Horseshoes (2)
- Play equipment
- Quoits (2)
- Volleyball (2)
- Sand Volleyball
- Walking Trail
- Grills
- Large Stone Barbeque Grills (2)
- Picnic tables
- Restrooms
- Electricity with reservations
- Boat Launching Ramp
- Information Bulletin Board
- Handicap Accessibility: restrooms, lodge, picnic areas and fishing dock
- Parking Areas:
 - Leisure area parking: 76 (2 HC)
 - Boat area parking: 16 regular (1 HC)
16 extra long (1 HC)
- Total: 108 (4 HC)**

Programs/Festivals hosted: Summer concert series, and various interpretive programs

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Rehabilitate lodge building: Repair windows and doors; Exterior and interior painting
- Rehabilitate Bathrooms: Replace fixtures, lighting; Paint and repair as needed; Replace doors and windows

- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Dam repairs
- Water fountains
- Master lock system
- Color coat volleyball courts
- Construct heated break room in maintenance area of lodge
- Asphalt (repair) main entrance to park
- New signage for walking trail
- Renew lease with Commonwealth or negotiate purchase

Leesport Lock House

Description and History: The lock house was built in 1834 by the Schuylkill Navigation Company next to the canal lock in Leesport to house the lock keeper and his family. The lock keeper not only operated the lock, but also maintained the canal half-way between the locks before and after the lock house. His family raised fruit and vegetables to sell to the boatmen and passengers, and also prepared meals for these people. The Leesport Lock House Foundation purchased the house in 1976 and restored it to the period of 1880-1910 when canal usage and community life were at their height. The following year the property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The County acquired the property in 1992 and maintains the grounds, the exterior and mechanical systems of the two and one-half story stone building. The Foundation continues to use and care for the interior and furnishings of the lock house. The building is available for small group meetings and educational tours.

Location: Leesport Borough; 27 E. Wall Street, two blocks west of Rt. 61

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Special Use Park

Total Area: 1.4 acres

Managed Area: 1.37

Historic structures: 1834 lock house (National register of Historic Places)

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Meeting area

Restrooms

Handicap Accessibility: limited

Programs/Festivals hosted: Interpretive programs

Hosted by Leesport Lock House Foundation:

Strawberry Fest and Pig Roast

Holiday Open House

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Rehabilitate lock house
- Exterior painting
- Replace wooden porch
- Repair house foundation
- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Investigate Acquisition of adjacent land

Red Bridge Recreation Area

Description and History: The recreation area consists of a picnic pavilion, badminton court, and children's play area. A short path connects the park to Wertz's "Red" Bridge, which allows pedestrians to pass over the Tulpehocken Creek to the Union Canal Trail and Berks County Heritage Center.

Location: Spring Township, 2141 Tulpehocken Road.

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Total Area: 4.33 acres

Managed Area: 4.33

Historic structures: None

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

- Pavilion
- Electricity with reservation
- Badminton Court
- Fishing area-accessible
- Horseshoes (1)
- Quoits (1)
- Play equipment
- Walking trail
- Grills
- Large Stone Barbecue Grill
- Picnic tables
- Restrooms
- Handicap accessibility: parking, restrooms, picnic areas and pavilion

Parking Area

Total: 37 (1 HC)

Programs/Festivals hosted:

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Rehabilitate restroom
- Replace fixtures, lighting
- Paint and repair as needed
- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Stream bank restoration
- Upgrade play equipment

Stonecliffe Recreation Area

Description and History: This area, built between 1969 and 1971, was the first park built in the County system. The recreation area is situated on land that formerly was Gring's limestone quarry in the late 19th to 20th century. Family-oriented recreation



Union Canal Trail at Stonecliffe Recreation Area

and athletics are the focus of this park, as facilities include a children's play area, picnic area, fitness station, fishing dock, volleyball and basketball courts, an Action Park for skaters and bikers, and a soccer field. The Union Canal Trail passes through the park along the Tulpehocken Creek.

Location: City of Reading, at Columbia Street/Monroe Street, 1200 Monroe Street

Ownership: County of Berks

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Total Area: 11.3 acres

Managed Area: 11.09

Historic structures: None

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Lighted Action Park for Bikes/Blades/Boards includes quarter pipes that range in height from 3-5', three-sided pyramid with curved rectangular grind rail, double pump hump, grind box with angled edge, skate table with kicker ramp, kinked rectangular grind rail, straight round grind rail, kinked round grind rail, 5' hip and spine, and 3 ledges.

Lighted Basketball court

Volleyball Courts (2)

ParCourse Exercise Course with Disabled Option

3/8 mile Bicycle Skills Course

Fishing dock/Pier

Play equipment

Shuffleboard (2)

Checkers Tables (2)

Soccer field

Walking trail

Grills

Picnic tables

Restrooms - seasonal

Information Bulletin Board

Handicap accessibility: parking, restrooms, picnic areas, and action park

Parking Areas

Lower lot: 56 (4 HC)

Upper lot: 51

Total: 107 (4 HC)

Programs/Festivals hosted: Triple B Skills & Tricks Competition

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Rehabilitate restrooms by replacing fixtures, lighting, painting and repairs as needed
- Replace damaged metal doors and windows
- Resurface basketball court and walkways
- Rehabilitate soccer field
- Install new playground equipment and surfacing
- Replace drinking fountains and outdoor lights
- Signage and landscaping
- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- CDBG restoration project
- Landscape design
- Masonry repairs of flagstone and brick

Union Canal Bicycle and Walking Trail

Description and History: The trail winds along the Tulpehocken Creek, tracing the former canal towpath (canal operated from 1827 to 1884) from the Reading City limits northward to Reber's Bridge. Designated as a National Recreation Trail, this four and one-half mile trail is utilized year-round for hiking, jogging, biking, cross-country skiing, bird watching, and as a means for visiting the recreation and historic areas. Located along the trail is Union Canal Lock No. 47E, which was restored in 1976. Access points to the trail are located at Stonecliffe Recreation Area, Berks Leisure Area, Gring's Mill Recreation Area, Berks County Heritage Center, Red Bridge Recreation Area, and at Reber's Bridge. Built of crushed stone the trail averages 6-8 feet in width.



Walkers and Bicyclists on Union Canal Trail

Location: City of Reading and Bern Township, along the Tulpehocken Creek

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Greenway

Total Area: 170.7 acres

Managed Area: 31.97

Historic structures: Union Canal Lock No. 47E and other canal and mill remnants

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

- Walking trail
- Various canal and mill related remnants
- Handicap accessibility
- Footbridge over Plum Creek
- Restored Canal Lock (Lock #47)
- Footbridge over Union Canal Stream
- Footbridge over drainage stream

Programs/Festivals hosted:

Site of many fundraising walks for non-profit groups

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Signage put in place at Lock 47E
- Restoration of lock gates and stone walls of Lock 47E

Youth Recreation Facility

Description and History: Constructed in 1991-92 at one of the County-owned farms that make-up the 800+ acre Berks County North Campus, this active recreation facility is comprised of four soccer fields and four ball fields: a legion baseball field, little league field, softball field, and tee-ball field. Teams interested in using these fields must make arrangements with the County park office. The adaptive nature trail, designed for physically challenged individuals, is also located at this facility. Three different elevated wooden trails weave through the pine grove. An adaptive play area for physically challenged children is being developed for this facility.

Location: Bern Township, 1098 County Welfare Road

Ownership: Berks County

Classification: Sports Complex

Total Area: 117.42 acres

Managed Area: 62.82

Historic structures: 19th century Farmstead

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Adaptive Nature Trail
 4 Soccer fields (one lighted)
 Lighted softball field
 Tee-ball field
 Little league baseball field
 Legion baseball field
 Concession stand

Restrooms – Seasonal

Farm house

Barn

Maintenance Building

Brick Smokehouse

Corn Crib

Press Box Building

Handicap accessibility: parking, restrooms, adaptive trail and other field areas

Parking Areas

Shop Area/Small lot: 9

Adaptive Recreation Area: 24 (2 HC)

Main Lot: 273 (8 HC)

Total: 306 (10 HC)

Programs/Festivals hosted: Go Fly a Kite Day

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering
- Phase I for Adaptive Play Area
 - Construct restroom facility
 - Construct two shelters, one for picnic activities and the other as a play shelter
 - Complete paved walkway system
 - Install drinking fountain, benches, lighting and 911 call box
 - Landscaping

Long-term needs:

- Phase II for Adaptive Play Area
 - Construct play areas with apparatus and courts, usable by individuals with disabilities
 - Construct sensory garden and interpretive trail for individuals with sight difficulties

- Exterior painting of barn, house and other structures visible from County Welfare Road
- Lighting in lower level of barn
- New parking lot near soccer field #2
- Paint barn and corncrib

- Construct 8' wide trail using crushed stone
- Rehabilitation of four existing bridges
- Construct two new footbridges across Hay Creek
- Provide trailheads and signage
- Landscaping
- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering

Proposed County Park Projects

Hay Creek Trail

Description and History: Proposed acquisition and development of a walking and bicycle trail along the former railroad line near Hay Creek. The abandoned rail line extends 9.7 miles from just south of Birdsboro to Elverson, Chester County. This trail would provide a critical link to an inter-county trail system, with potential connections to the Thun Trail (Schuylkill River Trail), Horse-Shoe Trail, French Creek State Park, and Chester County trails. The project has received funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Transportation Enhancement Program and is currently approaching the acquisition phase.

Location: Robeson Township, Union Township, Caernarvon Township, New Morgan Borough

Ownership: Currently private-ROW to be acquired by County

Classification: Greenway

Short-term repairs or needs:

Acquisition of 9.72 miles of railroad ROW (Coatesville Secondary Track)

Long-term needs:

Union Canal Trail-Blue Marsh Connector Trail

Description and History: To be constructed in 2007-08, this trail will close a two-mile missing link between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Blue Marsh Lake Trail system and Berks County's Union Canal Trail. By extending the Union Canal Trail from Reber's Bridge to the Blue Marsh Dam Stilling Basin, it will create a 40-mile trail network from the City of Reading to Bernville. The trail will be constructed on the Union Canal towpath for the lower section and on a new alignment for the major section of the two-mile length. An existing parking area and access road is provided mid-way on the trail length. The trail will vary in width from 6' to 12', depending on location and terrain, and will consist of a stone base with stone screening placed on top. Construction is funded through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Transportation Enhancement Program and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Location: Bern Township, along Tulpehocken Creek.

Ownership: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers owns most of the property on which the trail is located, except for several hundred feet on County land. The COE will provide law enforcement for the portion of the trail located within their property boundary. The County Parks Department will maintain the entire two-mile trail under the same program used for the County's Union Canal Trail.

Classification: Greenway

Managed Area: 8' wide trail, 2 miles is length

Historic structures: Union Canal Ruins

Existing uses/facilities and Condition:

Short-term repairs or needs:

- Construction of 2-mile connector trail
- Replace entrance sign with a standard sign using uniform design, color and lettering

Long-term needs:

Overall priority: High Priority-construction

Potential County Park Projects

Neversink Mountain Park

Description and History: Neversink Mountain is one of two mountains that frame the City of Reading. The mountain forms the southeastern boundary of the City, and is comprised of land in five additional surrounding municipalities. These six communities account for more than 35% of all housing units in Berks County. Neversink Mountain possesses several unique characteristics and opportunities. One of the more important characteristics of the mountain is its visibility. It can be seen from areas throughout the metropolitan area as it provides a green background to the growing urban and suburban areas. Extensive scenic views and

panoramas are also available from the mountain itself. Neversink Mountain is approximately 2 miles in length and averages about one mile in width, and includes approximately 1,350 acres. It has three distinct peaks, a hollowed-out hidden cove in the eastern end, and its rocky walls on the south side form the horseshoe curve in the Schuylkill River. The mountain has a special series of environments and several rare and endangered plant and animal species are identified by PNDI. The mountain also has a unique history including lumbering, quarrying, transportation, and as a tourism mecca in the late 1800's. Tourist attractions and resort hotels were developed on the mountain, primarily by the Neversink Mountain Railroad Company, and were served by trolley and train. All of these former uses have left a legacy of over 20 miles of scenic trails that provide access to the mountaintop.

In the 1990's two studies and a resulting long range plan were prepared for the Berks County Conservancy and the City of Reading, both recommending that the mountain be preserved as a natural park and wildlife sanctuary, and be placed under the stewardship of a single entity. The County's 1994 Open Space and Recreation Plan also recommended that it be protected and used for passive recreation, including trails, scenic overlooks, picnic areas, and nature study. In addition to the recommendations mentioned above, major components of the long-range plan include:

- Size of park should be approximately 900 acres.
- Primary access would be via hiking and biking trails. Motor vehicle access would be limited to access points/parking lots located around the base of the mountain and to an area at the top that is central to the ridge where a visitor's center would be located.

- Overall, approximately 12 miles of hiking/biking trails are proposed, using much of the existing trail system, especially the bed of the former Neversink Mountain Railroad. Many of the lesser trails would be closed to provide for larger undisturbed tracts for wildlife sanctuary.
- The trail system would consist of four components. There would be a ridge top network that would allow for the exploration of all peaks, ridge environment and high-elevation vantage points. A mid-level trail system would encircle most of the mountain and connect to the ridge top system. At key points along the lower slopes, access trails would connect the mid-level trails with parking areas and local streets. A fourth component would link the mountain to the Schuylkill River.
- Opportunity exists to develop more than 25 scenic overlooks.
- Preserve and restore some of the historic features and remnants.

Since the completion of the studies, land acquisition has been spearheaded by the Berks County Conservancy with financial support from the County, State, and William Penn Foundation. Approximately two-thirds of the land has been acquired (eased or fee-simple). It has been suggested that Berks County assume the primary responsibility for project development and park operations. However, while supporting acquisition efforts the County has not agreed to take responsibility for development of the site as a County park at this time.

Chapter 4.2 Major Projects and Capital Budgets

Approved 2007 Capital Budget (Major Projects above \$50,000)

1. Antietam Lake: Acquisition, repairs to structure of dam and improvements

\$4,000,000 Growing Greener
\$2,000,000 DCNR Grant

2. Construction of a 2-mile connector between the end of the Union Canal Trail at Reber's Bridge Road and the Blue Marsh Trail system at Stilling Basin Road (to be completed in 2008):

\$377,242 Penn DOT Grant
\$288,438 General Fund
\$180,000 DCNR Grant

3. Hay Creek Trail – acquisition of 79 parcels to assemble the 9.72 miles of trail (to be completed in 2008)

\$439,838 Growing Greener
\$131,596 Penn DOT Grant

4. Rehabilitation of Stonecliffe Recreation Area located in the 19th Ward, City of Reading; the County's first park area completed 1969-1971.

\$ 182,425 CDBG Program

5. Gruber Wagon Works rehabilitation to determine structural defects, replace deteriorated exterior siding, windows and doors.

Estimated \$100,000 CDBG program and
PA Historical and Museum Commission

6. Consulting Services required to prepare cost estimates, construction drawings, and specifications for grant applications and major projects.

\$75,000 General Fund

7. Replacement of entrance signs at 11 County Parks

\$55,000 General Fund

Proposed 2008 Capital Budget (Major projects above \$50,000)

1. Antietam Lake

A. Repairs of dam required by PA Dept. of Environmental Protection.

\$ 1,159,438 County Growing Greener
\$ 840,562 State Growing Greener
\$ 1,000,000 Municipal Funds

B. Master Plan, site improvements, park and recreational development.

\$ 500,000 other municipal funds

2. Completion of the 2-mile connector trail between the Union Canal Trail and Blue Marsh Trail system

\$ 188,621 Penn DOT grant

\$ 144,219 General Fund
\$ 90,000 DCNR grant

3. Complete acquisition of 79 parcels to assemble the proposed 9.72 mile Hay Creek Trail

\$376,898 Penn DOT grant
\$413,102 PA Growing Greener II

4. Rehabilitation of Stonecliffe Recreation Area located in the 19th Ward, City of Reading

\$ 182,425 CDBG Grant
\$ 240,000 DCNR Grant
\$ 57,575 General Fund

5. Adaptive Recreation Area – Install restrooms and picnic pavilions at the Youth Recreation Facility to serve individuals with disabilities.

\$ 102,300 DCNR grant
\$ 102,300 General Fund

6. Construct Wagon Shed/Exhibit and Storage Facility at Gruber Wagon Works, National Historic Landmark.

\$220,000 General Fund

7. Consulting services required for major projects and grant submissions.

\$ 60,000 General Fund

**Proposed 2009 Capital Budget
(Major projects above \$50,000)**

1. Consulting services, trail construction, bridge repair for Hay Creek Trail.

\$1,369,086 County Growing Greener
\$ 130,914 PA Growing Greener II

2. Rehabilitation of the Gruber Wagon Works, a National Historic Landmark – to include structural restoration, replacing deteriorated exterior siding, doors and windows

\$ To Be Decided – CDBG Program
PA Historical and Museum Commission

Major Projects Listed for Funding Consideration

1. Based on the County's Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan, consideration should be given to preserving future County park land, historic preservation and/or open space protection.

2. Consideration should be given to easement acquisition for the protection of threatened County park land, historic sites, or other recreation facilities.

3. Rehabilitate playground areas at Hunsicker's Grove, Kaercher Creek Park and Gring's Mill Recreation Area.

4. Upgrade electrical service at Gring's Mill Recreation Area; installed in 1974 with 600 AMP service. Holiday Lights program has reached maximum capacity.

5. Construct picnic pavilion with fireplace and restrooms at Gring's Mill Recreation Area; (no shelter exists at the present time – water and sewer connections are in place).
6. Develop the Allegheny Aqueduct Historical Park to include:
 - a. Boat launching dock for the Schuylkill River Water Trail
 - b. Boundary survey, construct roadway, parking area, picnic shelter and trails.
 - c. Utilize the 1783 Beidler House located at Allegheny Aqueduct Historical Park for canal exhibits, display, meeting rooms and office space.
7. Rehabilitate Gring's Mill Amphitheatre which was built in 1974; install backdrop panels and cover for better sound distribution, replace electric wiring and outlets, change stonework.
8. Rehabilitation work required on the concrete bridge at Gring's Mill Recreation Area.
9. Visitor's Center for Berks County Heritage Center to include orientation room, theater area, office and workshop space.
10. Restoration of Union Canal Lock #47 adjacent to the bicycle and walking trail.

Chapter 4.3 County of Berks Parks and Recreation Board Recommendations

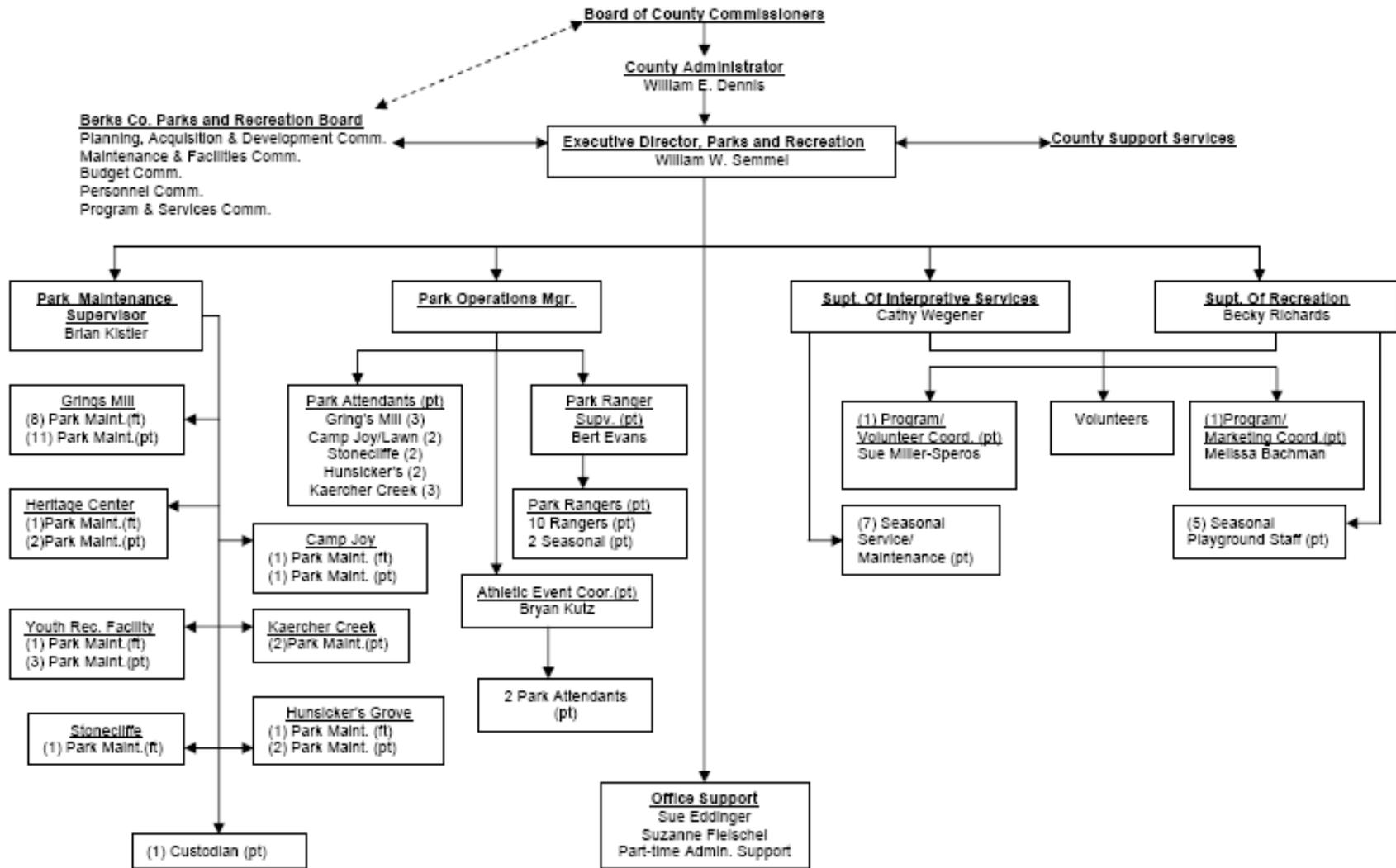
The Berks County Parks and Recreation Board (Board) is a nine-member advisory board appointed by the County Commissioner. The Board is making the following recommendations in determining the future of the Berks County Parks and Recreation Department (Department):

- Upon adoption of the Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan by the County Commissioners, the Planning Commission, in cooperation with the Board, should establish a priority listing of the most important regional land, natural areas, historic resources and linkages for inclusion into the County's park system. The Berks County Open Space and Recreation Advisory Council should be involved in this process.
 - The Planning Commission, Board, and Open Space and Recreation Council should be considering long-term acquisition of regional park sites that can be purchased now for future development. The County's line-of-credit funding program should be utilized for the acquisition/easement of future sites along with the protection needed to existing park sites.
 - The County should evaluate all existing park, recreation and historic sites within the present system to determine whether additional land should be acquired to protect the property from development, encroachment, or other non-compatible uses. At the same time, consideration should be given to divesting or leasing certain sites, if appropriate.
 - The Department should continue its networking with the Berks County Museum Council, the Society for the Preservation of the Gruber Wagon Works, and local historical organizations. Should the opportunity arise, the Board should consider the transfer of historic structures to other organizations capable of operating and maintaining them.
- The Program and Services Committee should meet with Department staff to evaluate and determine what programs and events support the Department's mission. Criteria for retaining or eliminating programs should be based on attendance, costs per participant, staff time and service provided to the public.
 - With the reduction of the maintenance staff, the Maintenance and Facilities Committee must work with the Department to keep all existing areas maintained at the same level. Preventative maintenance initiatives must be established and performed if maintenance costs are to be kept in line. The current operation of outdated and unsafe equipment burdens the County with undue costs which new, more efficient equipment would relieve. All additional park, recreation or historic sites placed under the present system will require additional funding to operate and maintain them.
 - As the future direction of the Berks County Parks and Recreation Department is determined by the County Commissioners, Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Board, a system analysis should be completed by an outside consulting group to determine staffing levels and new skills needed to meet the future roles and responsibilities of the Department.
 - As the County park system continues to grow; with the acquisition of Antietam Lake; construction of the Union Canal Connector Trail; acquisition and development of the Hay Creek Trail; and possible transfer of the Schuylkill

River Trail, additional staff will be required for the administration, operation and maintenance of these facilities. The Board sees a need for and recommends:

- (1) Full-time Maintenance Worker and (2) Part-Time Park Rangers – to be added as soon as the County assumes maintenance and security responsibilities for Antietam Lake
- Trails Manager – individual to coordinate and manage the County’s existing and proposed trails:
 - a. Union Canal Bicycle and Walking Trail
 - b. 2-mile connector trail to the Blue Marsh trail system
 - c. Existing and proposed trail system at Antietam Lake
 - d. Acquisition and construction of the 9.72- mile Hay Creek Trail.
 - e. County involvement in the abandoned Route 82 trail at Birdsboro.
 - f. Proposed transfer of the Thun Trail from Reading south to the Montgomery County line
 - g. Possible trail system on Neversink Mountain.
- Archivist/Museum Coordinator – at present the County operates and maintains six historic sites/structures; most notable is the Gruber Wagon Works, designated as a National Historic Landmark. A full-time person should be retained capable of recording and cataloguing all artifacts/records; applying for historic preservation grants; determining preservation and maintenance needs; and assisting with the operation of historic sites.
- Change the Park Ranger status from part-time to full-time as the security needs of the Department have increased. The present Park Ranger staff is 12, all part-time, which makes it difficult to schedule and have the security that is required at all park, recreation and historic sites throughout the year. With an increase in park attendance and reservations, along with the new parks and trails, the County should be considering the safety of the public using the park system.
- The Board must advocate for adequate funding to insure the park system can be maintained and supported at levels appropriate to its needs.
- The County should continue to fund consulting services within the Department’s capital budget for use in preparing site plans, cost estimates and construction drawings required for grant applications and the budget process.
- The Board will continue to evaluate the Department’s program and reservation fees on an annual basis.
- The County is presently leasing Kaercher Creek Park from the PA Fish and Boat Commission. Consideration must be given to whether the County will re-negotiate its lease in 2013 or consider transfer of ownership.
- Recommendation has been made to have the County take over ownership of the Schuylkill River Trail (Thun Trail) from Reading south to the Montgomery County line. Should this transfer occur, the County must provide the staffing along with the funding to operate and maintain another addition to the park system. The Department should also be represented on the Board of the Schuylkill National and State Heritage Area.

Berks County Parks and Recreation Department Organizational Chart



4.5 Berks County Parks and Recreation Department Peer Review

Peer Review Preface

During 2006 the County hired a consultant to coordinate a peer review of the Berks County Parks and Recreation Department. The purpose of this review was for a team of peers to evaluate the Parks and Recreation Department as well as its facilities and develop recommendations to improve the department's services and better meet citizens' needs. This review was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

In the near future, the Berks County Parks and Recreation Board and the County Commissioners will discuss how to implement the recommendations of the Peer Review.

Berks County Parks and Recreation Department Peer Review

Introduction

This peer review team report is dedicated to moving Berks County into its future role for parks, recreation, greenways and open space. The report recommendations focus the Parks and Recreation Department's priorities on its key mission: preserving and celebrating Berks County's abundant natural resources and rich cultural heritage.

Four parks and recreation professionals helped craft this report: Ron Ahlbrandt, Director, Montgomery County Parks and

Heritage Services Department; Ed Chubb, Director, Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department; Sue Landes, Executive Director, Lancaster Recreation Commission; and John Mikowychok, Director, Chester County Department of Parks and Recreation.

As working professionals, we know well the trials of shaping extensive park systems and recreation programs amid tight budgets and escalating costs. We know, too, the rewards of working with citizen volunteers, community agencies and corporate partners.

Berks County is blessed with regional parks and trails, scenic waterways and rich heritage resources. These assets form a quality of life that you have shown you are dedicated to improving – by considering this peer review team report. Spectacular parks and memorable recreation programs don't enhance the quality of one's life, they define it.

The Berks County Parks and Recreation Department put itself squarely under scrutiny in a bid to improve. The peer review team was welcomed into Berks County to ask questions, to look around.

The timeline for the peer review was as follows:

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| May/June 2006: | Review inventory materials on facilities, administration, personnel, programs, maintenance and finances of the Berks County Parks and Recreation Department. |
| July 2006: | Interview key persons including staff, County Commissioners and major stakeholders; tour Berks County park sites. |

September 2006: Submit report with recommendations to incorporate into the Berks County Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan to improve Parks and Recreation Department services and better meet citizen needs.

Report Structure

This peer review team report contains an overview evaluation of the operation of the Berks County Parks and Recreation Department and recommendations for its future. As such, it will become a section of the 2006 Berks County Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan.

This report is the result of three days of work by the four parks and recreation professionals who made up the peer review team: a day of touring the parks, a day of interviews and a day back at home to reflect on what we saw and heard and put our thoughts down on paper.

The report begins with a brief description of the Berks County Parks and Recreation Department. Next, the significant assets of the Department and the issues we feel are important to address are discussed. Recommendations are then presented to position the Department to take on its future role for parks, recreation, greenways and open space. The appendix includes a summary of the results of key person interviews and descriptions of the three county parks and recreation departments represented by team members.

Snapshot Description

The Berks County Parks and Recreation Department is a system of 1,138 acres of community and regional parks and historical facilities serving 373,638 residents (2000 population). This acreage total includes the recently acquired and undeveloped Antietam Lake property. The County's most stellar

group of park properties is within the greenbelt along the Tulpehocken Creek. This includes the Berks County Heritage Center, Union Canal Bicycle and Walking Trail and the Gring's Mill, Red Bridge, Berks Leisure and Stonecliffe Recreation Areas.

The Department operates two interpretive facilities at the Heritage Center complex, the C. Howard Hiester Canal Center and Museum and the Gruber Wagon Works. Both facilities complement the meandering Tulpehocken Creek and take visitors back into the 19th century through authentic interpretation to showcase the County's heritage related to commerce. The Department also manages smaller historical sites including the Leesport Lock House and Allegheny Aqueduct Historical Park.

The Allegheny Aqueduct Historical Park and Beidler House and Mill properties along the Schuylkill River can potentially be connected to the Thun Trail. There are also opportunities for connector trails from the Union Canal Bicycle and Walking Trail to Blue Marsh Lake (a two-mile connection), the Hay Creek Trail (9.7 miles) and the Neversink Mountain Park (potentially, 12 miles of trails with over 25 scenic overlooks). These properties represent a bright future for Berks County, particularly if funds can be leveraged from other governmental and private sources.

Berks County's park system encompasses special projects from prior administration's priorities such as lighted ball fields, a police memorial and a bicentennial memorial. These facilities were expensive to construct and are expensive to maintain. The Department operates several other specialized resources: the skate park at the Stonecliffe Recreation Area, the elevated, handicapped accessible trail at the Youth Recreation Facility; and the lodge facilities at Camp Joy.

The Department manages small to mid-sized parks in the more rural areas of Berks County that surround small bodies of water, including a Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission facility

(Kaercher Creek Park, 184 acres, 40+-acre lake) and a former quarry site (Hunsicker’s Grove, 48 acres, three-acre lake). The above sites, along with plans to preserve Antietam Lake, (560 acres, 13-acre lake) position Berks County to accommodate one of the fastest-growing activities in outdoor recreation over the past decade, the paddle sports of canoeing and kayaking. Coupled with its landholdings along the Tulpehocken Creek and Schuylkill River, the Department could make an identity for itself, recreation-wise, on water-based parks alone.

More than 125 educational and recreational programs and special events are held for County residents to enjoy and experience the park system.

The Department’s mission is: *The Berks County Parks and Recreation Department is charged with the development, operation and maintenance of all County-owned parks, recreation facilities and historic sites. The Department is responsible for providing recreational opportunities as well as addressing the interpretive and educational needs as related to these facilities.*

According to its organizational chart, the Department employs 20 full-time and 64 part-time staff. It has an operating budget (2006) of \$1.8 million, consisting of \$1.3 million for payroll and \$.5 million for services and supplies. The Heritage Center and Youth Recreation Facility are separate cost centers with budgets of \$97,775 and \$70,257 (2006) not included in the Parks and Recreation Department budget. Full-time salaries associated with these properties, however, are a part of the overall Department budget. A capital improvements budget of \$2.2 million comes mainly from grant funds. Estimated revenue to be generated through user fees and charges in 2006 is \$71,500.

Assets and Issues

The key assets of and issues facing the recreation, parks and open space system are presented so that Berks County can

clearly see its opportunities and challenges for the future. This establishes the current situation within the County’s parks and recreation system, and shows areas to build upon and areas to improve.

Study Area	Assets	Issues
Recreation Administration	<p>The County has had citizen involvement in its park system since 1964, when the first park was acquired and the Park Board was formed. It merged with the Recreation Board in 1970.</p> <p>Current professional staff is very committed to and capable of meeting the current objectives of the Department.</p> <p>Current Director of Parks and Recreation has provided extensive, innovative leadership and professionalism in development of the current park system.</p> <p>The Heritage Center has a strong core of 40 some volunteers who help to staff its operation.</p>	<p>The Park and Recreation Board is not actively involved in advocating for and implementing the mission of the Department.</p> <p>The direction of the Department (regional trail system, heritage resources, active and passive recreation, etc.) is not clearly defined.</p> <p>The Department is not an active partner with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association to develop and maintain trail opportunities along the Schuylkill River. The Department does not play a significant role in the preservation of open space in the County.</p> <p>The Department Director is expected to retire within five years and a new Director needs to be appointed.</p> <p>Staffing levels for the Department are the same as they were back in the early 1980s, 25 years ago. Key positions to support the Department’s mission do not exist.</p> <p>Department administrative staff is housed in two or three different locations.</p>
(continued) Recreation Administration		<p>Marketing and publicity for Department facilities and services is very limited.</p> <p>The Department has no full-time park rangers.</p> <p>The Department has three part-time employees for every one full-time employee.</p> <p>Current full-time salaries for professional staff aren’t high enough to attract qualified, experienced individuals when positions need to be filled.</p> <p>The title of the Department does not reflect the facilities it operates or its overall responsibilities. Heritage Services, Trails and Greenways are missing.</p> <p>Department appears to not be a major player in many County initiatives that are related to parks and recreation</p>

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Study Area	Assets	Issues
		such as the line of credit program. Gruber Wagon Works and Canal Center collections and archives are not being preserved and recorded as they should be, due to not having an archivist on staff.
Park Land and Recreation Facilities	<p>16 sites are managed by the County.</p> <p>The County has been in the parks business for over 40 years.</p> <p>County operates some great regional facilities that impact the urban and suburban core of Reading (Stonecliffe, Gring's Mill, Union Canal Trail, Heritage Center).</p> <p>Heritage resources are impressive. The Gruber Wagon Works is a National Historic Landmark.</p> <p>The County has led the way for stream valley preservation starting with the Tulpehocken Creek corridor in the 1960s.</p>	<p>10 of 16 the sites are located in the Metro Reading region: Bern Township (5), City of Reading (2), Wyomissing Borough (1) and Spring Township (2). Other regions are underserved by the County. Department facilities are absent in the east and west.</p> <p>County owns a number of small park sites that are not regional attractions.</p> <p>The Director of Parks and Recreation does not seem to be involved in the planning process for land acquisition.</p> <p>Some sites under County ownership are unrelated to the Department's mission. Such sites drain the Department's maintenance resources.</p> <p>There is no trail to connect the Union Canal Towpath and the Blue Marsh trails. The Hay Creek Trail is not completed.</p> <p>Park entrance signs are not consistent. Some are in bad shape. Few directional road signs exist to help visitors locate park entrances.</p>
(continued) Park Land and Recreation Facilities	<p>The trail system is starting to become regional in nature.</p>	<p>The County is being asked to take over the ownership, operation and maintenance of the Schuylkill River Trail from Reading to Pottstown, Hay Creek Trail and Neversink Mountain properties (465+ acres). Maintenance management plans and operational costs have not been determined for these sites or for the Antietam Lake property.</p> <p>Most of the County park system development took place from the late 1960s to mid 1970s. Capital repair and rehabilitation needs are mounting up.</p>
Recreation Programs	A diverse schedule of recreation programs is offered.	Some current programming may not be appropriate as the County's role.
Park	Overall grounds maintenance is	Maintenance management plans are not completed for

Study Area	Assets	Issues
Maintenance, Security and Accessibility	good.	<p>existing parks, making it difficult to evaluate the ability of current staff to take on new initiatives.</p> <p>The Department has been assigned responsibilities which have resulted in under staffing and under funding.</p> <p>Park sites have lots of mowed grass acreage.</p> <p>Historic buildings are costly to maintain.</p> <p>Housing of maintenance equipment is scattered over more than 10 different facilities.</p> <p>Grounds maintenance equipment is outdated.</p> <p>The maintenance headquarters at Gring's Mill is in a very poor location, at the center of public activity areas.</p>
Finances	The Natural Land, Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program is an excellent start to funding preservation of important natural areas and open space.	<p>Funding is the most critical issue facing the Department. Funds are needed to support and effectively maintain the expanding park system and historic sites. Sites are being added while the availability of additional public funding is limited.</p> <p>The Parks and Recreation Department has been left out of the decision-making process for how the line of credit funds will be spent.</p>
(continued) Finances		<p>The line of credit program does not seem to address the purchase of additional County park land.</p> <p>Adequate funds are not budgeted annually for capital repairs and improvements to existing facilities.</p> <p>No revenue policy exists for the Department.</p> <p>Fees charged for the use of Department facilities may be below market rates.</p> <p>The Friends of Berks County Parks Fund has no plan in place to raise money. It currently totals about \$15,000.</p> <p>Maintenance management and operations costs for Antietam Lake have not been determined. The task of estimating these costs was started but not finished.</p>

Recommendations

The Parks and Recreation Department has challenges it must address if existing County facilities are to remain well-maintained, safe and attractive. The Department's ability to meet these challenges hinges on determining the Department's priorities and key responsibilities to Berks County citizens and on obtaining the necessary resources. By refocusing its mission, the Department will be better positioned to continue to meet residents' needs for regional parks and greenways, while providing memorable community events to celebrate Berks County's rich heritage.

As stewards of the County's open space resources, the Department needs to capitalize on new opportunities and tap partnership resources to best to serve the public. Important decisions need to be made about new opportunities such as the Neversink Mountain properties, Schuylkill River Trail and Antietam Lake.

What should the role of the County Parks and Recreation Department be for parks, greenways, open space, recreation programs, heritage services and trails?

The following recommendations help to answer this question. They provide elected officials, board members, staff, community organizations and citizens with tools that can lead Berks County towards the future to do the best job possible in creating, enhancing and sustaining its parks and open space system.

#1 – Evaluating Current Parks and Historic Sites against Mission

A clear vision is needed for a centralized system of County parks, historic sites, greenways, trails and natural areas. County parks and open space assets should be planned, managed and maintained as an integrated, coordinated system, linked by trails and greenways. The Department must also maintain the balance between public enjoyment of open space and historic

sites, and the need to protect the character of the resources themselves.

Those resources which have the potential to provide the broadest public benefit and are of County-wide significance should be emphasized and protected within the County system. The County park system should provide mostly passive recreation opportunities for enjoyment of scenic natural resources. Active recreation facilities should be de-emphasized, with the exception of trails.

Berks County does not presently have a "parks system." The County needs to identify what the parks system should be from a physical standpoint, and then determine how its resources will be established and operated as an integrated County system.

The "anchor sites" for the County park system should be determined. To do this, County park sites and historic properties should be prioritized in order of importance as part of the parks system. The functional uses of each park should be evaluated to determine if they serve a regional significance. If a current facility is determined to be more localized in nature, the County should consider alternative ownership methods that maintain public access such as divestiture or leasing. Current park sites that the County should consider divesting, leasing or contracting out include the Youth Recreation Facility and Camp Joy.

- The County should divest itself of management of active recreation facilities with intense maintenance requirements, particularly lighted ball fields. Those responsibilities typically rest with local municipalities, not county departments. The facilities at the **Youth Recreation Facility** could be sold or leased to Bern Township as a community park. A cooperative, long-term agreement with Bern Township or an outright bargain sale of the property would provide local control over these active-use facilities, while freeing up the County

Parks and Recreation Department to focus its resources on other priorities.

- The Department should explore private management of its **Camp Joy** facility. The large meeting room in the lodge, coupled with support facilities (commercial kitchen, patio, fireplace, restrooms and small break-out rooms), pool and outdoor activity areas, cabins and spacious grounds may make a suitable summer day camp or retreat facility. The Department should consider hiring a consultant to make recommendations for improvements which will spur private investment and successful, adaptive re-use. This facility has the potential to ultimately be a major revenue generator for the County, rather than an expense. If it is not feasible to contract the operation of Camp Joy, the County should consider hiring a staff person to market and operate the facility. Camp Joy has tremendous revenue potential and is not presently being utilized to its fullest. Camp Joy facilities should produce revenue that will easily offset the salary and benefits. A marketing and programming plan needs to be developed for its use and promotion.

#2 – Determining the Future Direction of the Department

The Department should take the lead role in greenway and trail development and acquisition. Completing the County trail system should be a major priority for the Department. These trails are a significant resource to linking existing resources in the current parks and open space system. Park usage trends are moving away from traditional parks and towards greenways and trails.

The Department should focus its attention on improving and enhancing those historic resources having the most potential to improve tourism and economic development. The Heritage Center facilities should be at the top of the list.

The County Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan should identify the most important regionally significant land, natural areas, historic resources and linkages to acquire for the future County park system.

The County is being asked to take on and is considering ownership of many sites. Antietam Lake, regional lands at Neversink Mountain, regional trails along the Schuylkill River and trail connections are more aligned with the Department's traditional mission than some of the existing County park sites. These potential new park sites are all important to the County's open space system.

- **The Thun Trail:** The Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA) will be finishing the Schuylkill River Trail Thun Section from Pottstown to Reading very soon. A grant has been received to do the trail signage and fund a staff person's salary for two years to do a marketing and maintenance plan. Every County that the trail passes through (Schuylkill, Chester, Montgomery and Philadelphia) has accepted ownership and maintenance responsibilities for it. Berks County needs to do the same. This trail should definitely become a part of the County parks system. Two other Schuylkill River Trail pieces, the Berks County section of an 8 ½-mile section from Hamburg to Auburn called the Bartrum Trail and a 30-mile stretch from Hamburg to Reading, should also become County responsibility when they are finished.
- **Antietam Lake:** Given its history as a recreation spot for the greater Reading area, its role as a watershed and the support from area municipalities, Antietam Lake should be preserved and become a County park. The County needs to fully understand the commitment it will take to create a safe and positive park experience and give the Department the resources necessary to accommodate development and maintenance of the park.

- Neversink Mountain Park: This regional park will potentially be 900 acres. Neversink Mountain has a unique history, special environmental areas, extensive scenic views and over 20 miles of trails. This vast open space area is visible from the entire metropolitan Reading area. The County should take over ownership and assume the responsibility for this park's development and operation. This wonderful natural resource should be protected and enhanced so that residents may enjoy it.
- Hay Creek Trail: The acquisition and development of this 9.7-mile abandoned rail line into a walking and bicycle trail should be a major priority for the County. The Hay Creek Trail will provide critical links to an inter-county trail system. Once completed, the Department should operate and maintain this trail.
- Extension of the Union Canal Trail to Blue Marsh: This is an essential connection to the existing trail system at Blue Marsh Lake. With the popularity of the current County trail, completing this extension should be made a high priority.

#3 – Undertaking a Systems Analysis

A systems analysis of all operational functions of the Department should be completed by an outside consultant group to determine staffing levels and new skills needed to meet the future roles and responsibilities of the Department. An independent study should be done of facility maintenance, landscape maintenance and visitor services (including recreation programs and interpretive services) for the County park system.

Assessing the operational requirements of the park system and the appropriate level of County staff and funding needed to

maintain the existing system will also help to determine the ability of the Department to take on new initiatives.

Examples of areas that could provide savings are:

- Some park acreage may not need to be mowed; it may be better off maintained in a natural state.
- Maintenance equipment is housed in many different facilities. Consolidating this equipment somewhat will improve staff ability to perform maintenance by centralizing needed tools, equipment and supplies.
- Grounds maintenance equipment may be outdated and inefficient. Replacement of this equipment may save money as less man hours are needed to maintain both the equipment and the park areas.

A thorough evaluation of the maintenance and operation practices for the facilities and landscapes of each County park site should be undertaken to identify the appropriate level of care, required equipment and necessary staff. A park maintenance system should be adopted that is prioritized across the system, not just for individual parks.

For example, Montgomery County recently solicited proposals for Facility Maintenance, Landscape Maintenance and Visitor Services Plans similar to the ones suggested here for Berks County. The scope of work topic list for Landscape Maintenance is included in this report's appendix.

#4 – Eliminating Non-Essential Recreation Programs

An evaluation should take place to determine what types of recreation programs should be provided by the Department, because some of the current County-operated programs do not support the Department's core mission. For example, playground programs, tennis lessons and volleyball leagues are not recreation programs typically provided by County government. Sponsoring these types of recreation programs is a waste of precious staff resources. It also results in unnecessary

duplication of programs that are being provided or should be provided by municipal parks and recreation departments and non-profit and for-profit recreation providers, rather than County government.

Interpretive programs, environmental education programs and special events that bring people out to the parks do support the Department's mission and should continue. However, labor-intensive special events should be evaluated for the return on investment. Does the attendance warrant the financial commitment of staff resources?

Program staff resources could be better focused on supporting the Department's core mission and the important task of marketing the parks system rather than running municipal athletic leagues. Recommendation #5 reinforces this need.

#5 – Increasing Community Awareness of the Park System

A strong marketing approach is needed to make residents aware of the parks, programs, trails, historic resources, facilities and greenways owned and operated by the County. An orchestrated marketing plan should be developed that emphasizes customer satisfaction, opportunities for eco-tourism and heritage tourism, volunteer support and private sector involvement in funding.

The Department should publish a newsletter three times each year. These types of items should be included in the newsletter: park improvements, volunteer needs, maintenance activities, nature-related news, upcoming programs, staff and volunteer news, facility reservation information, recent donations and park directions.

Along with the newsletter, the Department should begin a membership program. County Parks membership should be operated through the Friends of Berks County Parks Fund. The benefits of membership could include items such as: a one-year subscription to the newsletter, special event coupons, special

“members first” programs, pavilion rental discount, program calendar and first chance to register for programs. Membership categories should be developed at set fees, such as: student, individual, family, contributor, patrons and corporate, with a fee scale from \$10 to \$250. An opportunity to give an additional tax deductible contribution to the Friends of Berks County Parks Fund should be offered.

Education of government, business and community leaders about the value of the County park system and parks and recreation in general should be a priority. Such efforts are important to acquire community partnerships and financial support. The County's natural, scenic and historic resources can become destinations for heritage and eco-tourism that will spur economic development, community revitalization and increased visitation. Spreading this message is the primary responsibility of staff and the Parks and Recreation Board.

#6 – Re-Evaluating Program Fees

Many of the recreation and interpretive programs offered by the County have fees. These fees are nominal (\$2 to \$5, except for tennis lessons and volleyball leagues). However, fees limit participation by low-income residents. It may also not be cost effective to charge fees because administering them is time consuming. The County is spending precious staff resources collecting little bits of money. The County should consider making its recreation and interpretive programs free to the public. This will open the program doors to all, regardless of income, and eliminate the time spent collecting money. The Department should offer most programs with no pre-registration required if the program has no fee. Large-scale special events could still have fees which may be easiest to administer as per vehicle parking fees. An entire season of interpretive programs can be underwritten by a business, as well. Any costs associated with offering the programs can be covered this way, and the public can be admitted free of charge.

#7 – Implementing the Line of Credit Program

A top priority for the line of credit funding should be addressing the deferred maintenance and capital improvement needs within the existing County park system. Commitment of capital dollars is a must to keep existing facilities from declining and the cost for needed repairs from escalating.

Another top priority should be the County acquisition of properties of regional significance that fit into the mission of the Department. Recommendation #8 provides more details on this. Natural resources and open space protection are important. However, if the open space is not accessible to the public, it does not meet citizen's needs for recreation.

Decisions on what land to acquire with the line of credit funding should be based on unbiased professional recommendations. The Open Space and Recreation Advisory Board should not be the decision making body. Its role should be to review the recommendations and provide advice. This money is precious and needs to be spent in the best way possible for the benefit of present and future County citizens. A professional without vested interest in certain sites should prioritize projects for funding.

The line of credit funds should be used to leverage other money. A municipal open space planning and acquisition program should be developed that will provide matching funds to municipalities to do Open Space Plans and acquire property for future park and trail development. This type of program will encourage local involvement in parks, recreation and open space and act as a springboard for improved local planning. A component which provides matching monies to develop active recreation facilities such as ball fields will go a long way to increase the long-term responsibilities for this type of recreation with local municipalities, and decrease the County's need to continue providing them.

The County has a small municipal park land grant program in place currently. It is not funded sufficiently to make much of a difference in municipal park land acquisition. The grant amounts need to be substantially higher.

#8 – Acquiring Additional Regional Park Land

Sections of the County lack County parks. The County should consider long-term acquisitions of regional park sites in the southeast and western parts of the County. The County park system is centered in the central Reading area (Wyomissing Borough, Bern and Spring Townships, City of Reading), with outposts in the north central (Windsor Township, leased), northeast (Longswamp Township), and south central (Robeson Township) areas of the County. The Department should work with the County Planning Commission to consider appropriate, available open space acreages of 200-500 acres in the southeast and, as a second priority, to the extreme west/northwest, so Berks County residents have a regional County park within a Planning Commission-determined service area. Land needs to be purchased before it's gone and lost to development.

Sizable open space parcels for a regional park in the southeast may be hard to come by. Also, the County's planning processes may consider the "Big Woods areas" of French Creek State Park and Hopewell Furnace as sufficient regional open space. Or, the Department's trail connections for the long-term may address a County presence in this area.

The Department's northeast park, the 48-acre Hunsicker's Grove, is a fine facility with some great amenities. The acreage of this park should be increased. As adjacent land becomes available, the County should purchase it to bring this site to a regional park size. Land should also be added to other existing park sites when it is available.

Acquisition of natural corridors and abandoned railroad lines for trails and greenways is important and should be done quickly

when land becomes available. The Berks County Conservancy can purchase property and obtain funds faster than the County. The Department should work closely with the Conservancy on land acquisition.

Development of parks and trails should be done in future years when funding becomes available. The priority now should be to purchase land for future expansion of the park system.

#9 – Purchasing and Preserving Kaercher Creek Park

The County should re-negotiate its long-term lease with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission for Kaercher Creek Park, and acquire it by fee-simple ownership as a regional County Park. This facility is ample size for a regional park (nearly 200 acres) and it has attractive water-based frontage for long-term County park development. This outright purchase will insure that the acreage is kept in open space, and the County's investments in capital development will be maximized.

Kaercher Creek Park's potential for passive water-based recreation fits in with the mission of the Department. It provides a regional park in an area of the County outside of the Metro Reading section and is close to a population center.

The County should *not* lease the southeast portion of Kaercher Creek Park to the Northern Berks Recreation Commission for active recreation for local sports leagues. This lake deserves a critical mass of undeveloped land and buffers from conflicting active recreation, to make it a wildlife and people sanctuary. There are sufficient open space areas in the immediate vicinity of this park that a local municipality can acquire and develop with active-use facilities without compromising the aesthetic character of this lake.

The County should also not over-develop Kaercher Creek Park with waterfront facilities; the mass of forested land on the south side of the lake should be preserved and managed for its mature forest ecosystem, with minimal intrusion of trails. This lake has the potential to provide passive, lakefront recreation which

complements the active, water-based recreation activities of Blue Marsh Lake. Possibilities include: a nature center, fishing piers, sailboat and boat launching areas, lakefront trails for hiking and biking, shore fishing areas and segregated wildlife areas.

Berks County could minimize its ongoing maintenance costs at Kaercher Creek Park by converting many mowed turf areas to warm season grass meadows, and increasing natural plantings and "no-mow" treatments at the lake's edge. This would result in greatly reduced manpower costs, improved water recharge, improved wildlife diversity, lessened problems with nuisance wildlife such as Canadian geese and ultimately improved ecology in the lake. The County should consider expanding its land holdings eastward, to preserve the stream corridor which feeds the lake and to increase total acreage of the property to 250-400 acres. This will reduce agricultural runoff, prevent residential developments from compromising lake views, increase the lake's capacity for passive recreation use such as group pavilions, and increase the desirability of this regional park as a destination for more residents.

#10 – Pursuing Collaborative Partnerships for Historic Properties

The County should continue its networking with local historical commissions and the Berks County Historical Society. In particular, efforts with the former could yield long-term agreements for managing other historic buildings. The successful collaboration at the Leesport Lock House – where the similarly-named Foundation maintains the interior and the Department maintains the exterior – should be emulated at other properties such as the Beidler House in Robeson Township.

Areas such as the Leesport Lock House and the Beidler House will continue to require Department financial and staff resources for their operation. The visitor usage of these facilities, their relationship to the adjacent trails or park areas and their potential best use should be evaluated. The County should

encourage the preservation and utilization of historic buildings but not necessarily own them unless the acquisition is important to the park system.

The County should apply for a PHMC Keystone grant to do an analysis and major maintenance plan to preserve and maintain its historic resources. A report should also be completed on adaptive uses of the facilities.

#11 – Increasing Involvement with SRGA

The Director of the Department (or his designee as an alternate) should have a standing seat on the Board of the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area, also known as the Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA). The County's connections to the Schuylkill River and its tributaries form an integral part of the Department's purpose and mission. The SRGA shares this vision and the two entities would mutually benefit from increased networking for existing projects as well as future trail connections.

For example, the Allegheny Aqueduct Historical Park is accessible from the Schuylkill River Trail. With its historical significance as being on the National Register of Historic Places it will be an important park within the County greenway system. The Leesport Lock House is also located along the Schuylkill River.

#12 – Re-Naming Parks

The County should abandon generic names for its parks and recreation areas in favor of more memorable and more marketable titles. Examples of generic names include the "Berks Leisure Area" and "Youth Recreation Facility." Generic titles like these have the effect of making the facilities sound dull and uninviting. A park's name should give it a specific identity with some pizzazz.

For instance, amusement theme park names like "Great Adventure," "Kings Dominion" and "Dorney Park Wildwater

Kingdom" contain action words or reference historical features. Berks County's park names should make people inquire about the name's origins. A park's name should make its location unique and unmistakable in promotional campaigns.

Good examples exist within the County park system now: "Stonecliffe Recreation Area," "Hunsicker's Grove," and "Gring's Mill" all have names with a well-grounded, local orientation that invite visitors to come out and explore.

#13 – Promoting the Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park

The facilities along the Tulpehocken Creek should be promoted under one name to unify their purpose. The larger Gring's Mill and the Heritage Center facilities should be integrated with smaller facilities such as the Red Bridge Recreation Area, Union Canal Bicycle and Walking Trail and the Berks Leisure Area into a cohesive, linear 370-acre regional park. The Department has used the name "Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park" to encompass these properties; however, this name is not used in any promotional material or on any park signs. Marketing these park sites together can start with the name Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park being more prominently used at each site, in newsletters and brochures and on the Department's website.

#14 – Installing New Park Entrance and Road Signs

The park entrance signs at all County park sites should be replaced with unified signs designed to show visually that this is a park system. The Department logo should be used on the signs. Road signs to direct visitors to the park entrances are also needed.

#15 – Changing the Department Name

The abundance and integrity of the Department's historical and cultural facilities place that component on par with its natural resources and parks and recreation facilities. The County should integrate "Heritage" into the Department's name.

In addition, Berks County has had a long and successful greenway preservation history and the new Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan places a major emphasis on identifying greenways and hubs. This points to an increased role for the Parks and Recreation Department to operate and maintain not only the Tulpehocken Creek sites and but also new trail and greenway endeavors.

A new title for the Department could be: Berks County Parks, Greenways and Heritage Services Department.

#16 – Identifying the Department’s Future Leader

Berks County Parks and Recreation Department has made an indelible mark on the County’s preservation of publicly-accessible open space, while integrating its historical resources into a system of parks and linear corridors under the able leadership of its long-time Director, Bill Semmel. As Bill nears the end of his career, the County will need to replace him with a person who can successfully lead the Department into its future.

The Director of Parks and Recreation position needs to be redefined so that work is directed to key issues of developing new partnerships and initiatives, preserving open space and focusing on regional objectives with future-oriented leadership. The following factors are key qualifications, skills and traits for the next Director:

- Master’s Degree in parks and recreation, public administration or closely related field, with a minimum of 10 years of parks and recreation administration experience.
- Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP).
- Preferred management style that is collaborative and emphasizes team management.

- Ability to create a sound fiscal program that includes budgeting, capital projects, budget management and the development of creative funding strategies, including fund raising.
- Administrative skills based on positive human relations, interactive communication skills, ability to delegate and maintain high visibility and accessibility.
- An in-depth understanding of the Commissioner/Department Head relationship and the ability to cultivate a positive working relationship with all Commissioners.
- An in-depth understanding of the mission of a dynamic park and recreation department and the importance, as well as the role of, an advisory parks and recreation board in accomplishing that mission.
- Ability to function effectively in a fast-paced environment and deal with people under stressful and demanding situations.
- Ability to maintain and improve Department services with a high level of customer satisfaction.
- Knowledge of how to network. Being out in the public with key stakeholders and organizations should occupy about 60 percent of a Director’s time. About 20 percent of the time should be focused on putting in place management systems that support effective decision making. The remaining 20 percent of the time should be spent on operations via delegation, reporting, evaluating and kicking things up to the next level.
- Great public speaking ability and excellent written communication skills. Putting forth the vision of an outstanding parks and recreation system is important.

The Director has to be able to convince business people, the tourism industry, County officials, non-profits and others about the value and benefits of the Berks County parks system along with its potential.

- Evidence of a high level of professional expertise and skills to manage the parks and recreation system.
- Ability to recognize opportunities that are there for the taking. The person has to be clued in and have a level of awareness about how to tap resources. He or she has to be self-motivated and industrious.
- Ability to be patient while working with a sense of urgency, being inclined to seek help and recognize limits. The person must be able to work within reality while working the system.
- Great integrity, honesty, self-confidence and charisma with superb leadership skills.

#17 – Exploring Revenue Generation Opportunities

Private and public sponsorship and collaboration should be developed. To sustain a viable park and historic sites system the private and public sectors must work together to provide financial and volunteer support.

Realistically, finding and obtaining new sources of financial support is going to require hiring an experienced professional. County investment in a development staff position will pay off in increased funding for County projects. The Friends of Berks County Parks Fund should be the vehicle for funding solicitation. People are more willing to give money to a foundation than to government.

A percentage of County hotel tax revenues should be considered as a way to fund capital improvement and operations needs at historic properties. These sites are definitely tourist

destinations; tax dollars that come mainly from outside the County should help to pay for major maintenance and development projects. These tax dollars can be leveraged with grants from DCNR, DCED and DEP.

Maintenance fees should be charged to outside groups when they use a County park for a fundraising event, such as a walk-a-thon. The fee should completely cover the costs of items such as maintenance and ranger services.

Current revenue generated by the Department from its facilities and services is extremely minimal. The Department should adopt a revenue policy which sets standards for how fees will be determined. Fees charged for current facilities should be set at the “going rate” for similar facilities which will help to recover more of the facility operating costs. The park system needs to maximize income at its existing revenue-producing facilities (Camp Joy, pavilions and snack bars).

#18 – Strengthening the Friends of Berks County Parks Fund

The County needs a volunteer board that is dedicated solely to raising and managing funds to improve and expand park land and recreation facilities. A Friends of Berks County Parks Fund Board should be formed and a development plan should be put in place to allow citizens and businesses to invest in the County parks system. Appointing the right individuals will be the key to this board’s success. This Fund should be used for monetary donations to enhance the parks system, and the board that is recommended would focus entirely on soliciting and raising money. A planned giving and endowment program should be started, so that individuals have a way to leave money to the Fund in their estate plans.

#19 – Prioritizing Staffing Needs

The continued growth of the parks system will require the hiring of more staff. The County’s capacity to plan, staff, support and manage its parks and open space areas needs to be enhanced.

The Department should have an organizational structure that provides the Director with key resource professionals for facility development and maintenance, heritage preservation, tourism development and funding resource development (private funds and grants).

Successful implementation of the Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan will require sufficient staff to accomplish Plan goals in a timely manner. The County should create these additional staff positions as a high priority:

- At least one full-time maintenance position. A staff position will be needed for the Antietam Lake property.
- A full-time development officer to build partnerships and raise funds for the Friends of the Berks County Parks Fund. To make money, the County needs to spend money.
- A full-time marketing specialist to promote public awareness of the parks system, promote the parks and historic sites as tourist destinations and foster volunteer support.
- A full-time historic preservation/ heritage person to interface with state agencies and grant sources to maintain and develop historic sites. The County has a major commitment to historic preservation. This staff position should work with municipalities on the results of the County-wide survey of historic properties (done as part of this Plan) to create a County inventory.
- A full-time chief park ranger to coordinate the park ranger staff and provide environmental education and interpretive services programs.
- A full-time open space planner to implement the recommendations of the Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan and the line of credit funding program.

Funding for additional full-time maintenance staff is limited, plus there is not enough off-season maintenance work to add full-time staff. For these reasons the County should strongly

consider offering part-time maintenance positions with health insurance benefits. This will lower turnover rates and attract well-qualified candidates. At least three of the current part-time maintenance positions should be reclassified to part-time ranger positions for trail security and maintenance. Ideally these positions should also offer health insurance benefits. Another staff position for the County to consider is an archivist position to preserve and record what the County already owns.

The Department's administrative staff (with the exception of the Superintendent of Interpretive Services who is essentially a site manager and whose office should remain at the Heritage Center) should be housed at the same office. Doing so will enhance communication and the ability of staff to work together to meet the Department's mission. It will also increase work efficiency through items like shared copiers, networked computers and shared clerical help. Perhaps the best reason for the administrative staff to be in one place is to most conveniently serve the public.

#20 – Implementing the Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan

The Planning Commission should be the lead agency with the responsibility to implement the Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan. Projects recommended in the Plan should be prioritized. A Planning Commission employee should be appointed to coordinate Plan implementation. Ideally, because of the magnitude and importance of this Plan, this should be a new staff position.

The Parks and Recreation Department should work closely with the Planning Commission on Plan implementation. The Department should be responsible for operations and development, while the Planning Commission should coordinate acquisition and financing projects.

#21 – Preparing Site Specific Park Master Plans

New or updated Master Plans should be completed for all current County park facilities and future acquisitions of regional significance (such as Antietam Lake) to determine future operational cost. This process will enable the County to identify development and program priorities. There is a great need for capital investment in the current County parks system. A Capital Improvement Plan prioritizing improvements and repairs over a five-year period is essential to properly maintain park, historic and trail assets.

Appendix

Key Person Interview Results

The peer review team interviewed 27 key people in person. Each was asked the same questions, which are included at the end of this section. A summary of the interview results follows.

The Role of Berks County Parks and Recreation Department:

- Trails and Parks – The Department exists to provide publicly accessible open space, park areas and recreation facilities for residents to enjoy. Trails and greenways should be a major focus for the County. The County should take the lead role in trail development and operation to create a regional, multi-jurisdictional system of parks and trails. The Department should help to preserve lands for future parks and trails as land values are increasing and development is happening in the east and north sections of the County. The Department should provide leadership and common vision for trails and greenways because individual municipalities cannot do this.
- Historic Preservation – Historic preservation is part of the culture of the County and should be a high priority for the Department. As far as historic preservation, the County

has no inventory or historic marker program. No agency is taking the lead.

- Land Preservation – Preserving land and open space should be a priority. It should be more important than operating parks. The Department should provide the leadership to buy land and bank it for potential future development as parks or trails.
- Recreation Opportunities – The Department should offer opportunities that allow citizens to interact with nature and history. The Department should also serve as a clearinghouse of outdoor recreation opportunities available to County citizens, whether they are County, municipality, state, non-profit or for-profit operated.

Concerns about Parks and Recreation Department:

- Staffing – Staff should be in one office so that they can “operate as a team.” The Department is understaffed and probably not “top heavy” enough with upper management and especially senior staff. Staff needs to reflect the population’s diversity, particularly Latinos. The Department may be reaching the time when a stepped up enforcement and security role is needed for park rangers. Staff feels stretched thin in terms of security and administration.
The job description for the Director should be re-written. Planning for parks should be the responsibility of the Planning Commission, not the Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks and Recreation Department doesn’t have the staff or vision. The Department has too many part-time and not enough full-time staff. The current number of staff is the same as in the mid-1970s. The Department could use Superintendents at some regional parks.

- Marketing – Marketing should be a much higher priority. The Department needs to do a much better job promoting parks and getting people out to them. The Parks and Recreation Department is not highly visible. There is little recognition by the public of the park system, its mission and its importance to the community.
- Programs – Recreation programs need to change and get re-focused. They are serving a limited audience. Cooperative programming is needed. Programs should be evaluated as to their benefit and the reasons they are offered. The recreation staff is highly productive. However, there should be more integration between event planning and overall efforts to revitalize communities. County special events are important and should be continued.
- Pace of Work – Projects don't get completed. Projects don't move forward. Work is too slow. Too many grant extensions are needed. Union Canal Trail and Hay Creek Trail are not finished. There seems to be no middle role between planning and operations. The Department needs to have a project development and completion focus.
- Leadership – What was done in the past was fine, but the Parks and Recreation Department is ready to move to another level now with new leadership.
- Mission – The Department's mission is not well defined. The Department considers itself a maintenance and recreation department, not a player in what's happening outside the current parks. There is no guiding mission for some historic properties owned by the County. They are open limited hours and generate little revenue.
- Finances and Maintenance Management – The Department needs to provide a realistic assessment of

long-term capital needs and the on-going cost to maintain properties. The proper budget should be determined for the park areas currently operated and those to be added in the future. The Department does a nice job of mowing grass but trail and building maintenance gets deferred. The Friends of the Berks County Parks and their associated fund are in place; however, they could be more broadly focused to all areas of the County. User demand should justify expenses. Parks that are heavily used should receive more funds for operation.

Skill Set for Next Parks and Recreation Director: On the question of who will take William Semmel's place when he retires, and be successful: The next person will need to have great presentation skills and the ability to influence people, have networking skills to build partnerships and be assertive in asking the tough questions regarding increased funding for the Department.

The Director should also be a professional in the parks and recreation field with the proper education and background, plus years of experience. He or she needs to have excellent political, management and communication skills. The next Director should be a go-getter who can determine what resources are needed to get a project done and then lead the way and get it done in a timely manner. He or she should have strong business sense and financial savvy with an understanding of costs and constraints. The ability to provide advice and details on how the County park system should be shaped, with a broad vision and big picture view of where the County park system fits in the overall County scheme, will be important. Other key assets would be someone who 1) is visionary, with an awareness of how citizen demands and the field of parks and recreation are changing; 2) has marketing savvy, with an understanding of what the public wants and the ability to carry the message and advocate for parks and recreation; and 3) has strategic planning

and partnership development, project management and grant writing skills.

Concerns about Maintenance and Capital Improvements:

Virtually everyone interviewed had genuine concerns for the continued maintenance of and capital improvements for the Department's parks and heritage resources. When interviewees were asked to prioritize Berks County's funding commitment to five areas, "Maintenance of Existing Parks" and "Capital Repair and Improvements to Existing Parks" were ranked as the top priorities. Most recognized that Open Space Protection was an over-riding need, but commented that maintaining what the County already owns was ultimately a greater priority. There was strong consensus that protection of open space is necessary while it's still possible, financially and availability wise. This concept was articulated by most of the interviewees.

Many expressed their amazement with the quality and quantity of maintenance of the County's facilities. Several expressed their belief that County employees are genuinely dedicated to their work and maintain facilities with an efficiency that creates an image of parks that seem beyond the manpower resources available. All felt the facilities were well maintained but were probably being done with limited personnel and equipment. More preventive maintenance programs are needed, to keep the County from spending far more due to the lack of preventive maintenance. Staff members are concerned about deterioration of the exterior of Gruber Wagon Works.

There was concern that the Department cannot continue to have more properties assigned to it for maintenance without an increase in maintenance staff. Otherwise, the Department won't be able to sustain the workload for the long-term. The general consensus was that acquisition of Antietam Lake should proceed with the County taking the lead as long as the resources to maintain it are available. Some felt there is too much maintenance along stream corridors, with mowing to the water's edge.

Concerns about Historic Preservation:

Many felt that, in the absence of a strong County role and assumption of historic preservation responsibilities, local municipalities would not preserve historic properties. This suggests that the County Planning Commission should provide education to municipalities on the roles of local Historical Commissions, which may foster greater local involvement in historic building preservation. Another comment was that Berks County should employ its own, full-time Historic Preservation Officer. There were questions as to whether the Berks County Historical Society should take on a greater role for remote facilities. There were questions by more than one person about the role of the Berks County Historical Society in meeting some local historic preservation needs. Several persons were not aware of this Society's projects, noting that they were only aware that the Society maintains an historical collection in Reading. This suggests that the Society needs to broaden its publicity and outreach programs and serve as a catalyst for local historical commissions.

Concerns about the Wagon Works/Canal Center:

There should be some industrial equipment actually operated at the Heritage Center, and specifically at the Wagon Works. There needs to be precautions taken in planning this, to avoid hazards to visitors; however, these obstacles can be overcome. The end result will be greatly increased interpretation. With the exception of local school groups, most visitors to the Canal Center are from outside the County. This suggests a targeted marketing effort to Berks County adults. Museum exhibits at the Canal Center are too static; they need to be rotated or new exhibits developed to encourage repeat visits.

Divestiture of Some Facilities:

Several persons expressed concern that "Once it's lost, you don't get it back." There were some who expressed methods of insuring against this loss, such as conservation easements for facilities transferred to others. Many persons interviewed noted

that, in the absence of the County Parks and Recreation Department's provision of facilities for active recreation, local municipalities would not meet this need.

Funding and Utilization of the New Line of Credit:

Concern was expressed that there is an increasing shift away from open space preservation towards farmland preservation. While farmland preservation is important, the public access benefits of increased funding for parks are significant and should not be a secondary priority. The Department needs an advocacy group and a constituency which will support them receiving a portion of the upcoming \$36 million line of credit. As far the \$36 million line of credit, the Department was not at the table and obviously not a dynamic part of what was going on.

Municipalities should be required to prepare Open Space and Recreation Plans to receive County funds from the line of credit program. The County should provide a large matching funds program that will entice municipalities to plan for and preserve open space and park land. Municipalities should be given a financial incentive to do a plan, such as not being able to participate in the line of credit program unless a plan has been completed or receiving funds from the line of credit program to complete Open Space and Recreation Plans.

Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan Implementation:

The majority of those interviewed agreed that the implementation of the new Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan should rest primarily with the Berks County Planning Commission, with Parks and Recreation Department collaboration. The majority of those interviewed agreed that the Planning Commission with the assistance of the Parks and Recreation Department and key advisory boards should take the lead in developing recommendations for the County Commissioners on open space, parks and greenway acquisitions. The Berks County Conservancy can purchase property faster and can obtain funds quicker than the County. The Conservancy role should be to identify special places and

preserve critical habitats, wildlife corridors and environmentally sensitive areas. It can also match funds and partners and collaborative efforts.

List of Key Persons

1. Judy Schwank, Berks County Commissioner
2. Mark Scott, Berks County Commissioner
3. Tom Gajewski, Berks County Commissioner
4. Bill Dennis, Berks County Administrator
5. Kim Murphy, Berks County Conservancy
6. Bob Behling, Executive Vice President, River Place Development Corporation
7. Kurt Zwikl, Executive Director, Schuylkill River Heritage Area
8. Bob Moore, Chair, Berks County Parks and Recreation Board
9. Cheryl Auchenbach, Berks County Planning Commission
10. Scott Wales, Berks County Planning Commission
11. Shannon Rossman, Berks County Planning Commission
12. Russell Riegel, Volunteer/Part-Time Maintenance, Berks County Heritage Center
13. Tom Moore, Director of Philanthropic Services, Berks County Community Foundation
14. Glenn Weinrich, Canal Historian/Volunteer, Berks County Heritage Center
15. Brian Kistler, Park Maintenance Supervisor, Berks County
16. Cathy Wegener, Superintendent of Interpretive Services, Berks County
17. Phil Whitmoyer, Volunteer, Berks County Heritage Center
18. Leon Mazurie, Director, Spring Township Parks and Recreation Department
19. Joe Seltzer, Director, Exeter Township Parks and Recreation Department
20. Bryan Kutz, Youth Recreation Facility Coordinator, Berks County
21. Leonard Good, Trout Unlimited

22. Bob Showalter, Berks County Parks and Recreation Board
23. Al Schoenebeck, Park Manager, Blue Marsh Lake
24. Eileen Shoener, Volunteer and Former Berks County Parks and Recreation Board Member
25. Becky Richards, Superintendent of Recreation, Berks County
26. Neil McNutt, Former Park Operations Manager, Berks County
27. Jim Thorne, National Lands Trust

Key Person Interview Questions

1. What do you think Berks County government's role should be for:
Parks? Trails and Greenways? Historic Preservation? Interpretive Services? Environmental Education? Recreation Programs? Technical Assistance to Local Government for Parks and Recreation?
2. What major concerns and issues do you have concerning the Berks County Parks and Recreation Department? What would you change, if you could? What isn't happening that should be? Why?
3. Are you willing to spend/allocate County funds for capital repairs to existing County parks facilities?
4. What agency should be responsible for implementing this Greenway, Parks and Recreation Plan? What's your greatest expectation for this plan?
5. Would you support other ways to operate and maintain some County sites, rather than County staff? For example, lease, contract or divestiture?
6. Do you know the mission of the County Parks and Recreation Department?
7. What is your perception of: How County parks are maintained? How County parks are visited? How County recreation programs are attended? How the County Parks and Recreation Department is staffed?
8. Why isn't a significant portion of the proposed \$36 million County line of credit allocated to capital projects for repair and upkeep of existing County parks? Have you considered a municipal open space acquisition program similar to Lancaster, Chester and Montgomery County programs, with County money matched by local governments?
9. Maintenance needs increase as land is acquired. Would you support increased staffing for the Parks and Recreation Department for sites such as Antietam Lake?
10. What do you see as the skill set and qualifications needed for the next Berks County Parks and Recreation Director to move the Department into the future?
11. Given that Berks County has limited funds, what is your priority ranking for the following (top = 1, bottom = 5):
Open Space Protection? ____
Development of Trails and Greenways? ____
Provision of Recreation Programs/Env. Education/Interpretive Services? ____
Maintenance of Existing Parks? ____
Capital Repair and Improvements to Existing Parks? ____
12. Is there anything else you'd like us to know???

Snapshot Descriptions of Chester, Dauphin and Montgomery County Departments

Chester County Department of Parks and Recreation

The Chester County Department of Parks and Recreation is a system of regional parks, historical sites and trails that serves 433,501 residents (2000 population). The Department manages some 5,000 acres of open space, including three regional parks, one special purpose park (Springton Manor Farm, a model farm with a National Register Manor House), three silt basins along the Schuylkill River (including the Black Rock Sanctuary, a 120-acre property with wetlands, interpretive trail and river-front boat launch) and two regional trails. There are also three park sites varying in size from 400-500 acres each, targeted as future regional parks.

The Department's mission is: *To enhance the quality of life through educational programs, recreational opportunities and partnerships. The Department serves the community by protecting and managing open space while interpreting natural, cultural and historical resources.*

The Department employs 56 full-time and 83 part-time, seasonal employees. It has a budget (2006) of \$6.2 million, consisting of \$3.8 million for payroll, \$2.1 million for operating supplies and services and \$.3 million for capital equipment. The Department also has a capital bond program for acquisition, large-scale development and infrastructure replacement of \$3.6 million (2006).

Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department

The Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department consists of four small regional parks, Fort Hunter Park and Conservancy, Wildwood Lake Sanctuary with Olewine Nature Center, Wiconisco Creek Park and Lykens Glen Park, totaling 500+ acres. Its park system serves 251,798 residents (2000 population). Presently the County is a partner with a 501c3, incorporated association endeavoring to develop a 20+-mile rail-

trail in northern Dauphin County. Recreation programs are conducted by the Department for the benefit of the citizens of the County and park special events are a feature of each of the parks, including Fort Hunter Day, Wetlands Weekend at Wildwood and the Lykens Glen Fall Fest.

The Department's mission is:

- *To provide publicly-accessible facilities and programs that will enrich the lives of Dauphin County residents through constructive, wholesome leisure activities.*
- *To improve the physical and mental health of county citizens through participation in special events, recreation programs and outdoor activities.*
- *To improve park facilities that are safe, attractive and well managed so that they contribute to the quality of life for individuals, families and businesses.*
- *To preserve publicly valued open space, unique areas, historic sites and other large tracts of land that otherwise would not be protected by individuals or local units of government.*
- *To encourage the wise use of natural resources by providing environmental education opportunities to children and adults that stress ecological concepts and relationships.*

The annual budget (2006) of the Department is \$1.6 million in three cost centers: general department administration, Fort Hunter and Wildwood. Full-time salaries amount to \$636,300 for 15 positions and \$82,000 for 10 part-time positions. Expenditures for the Wildwood and Fort Hunter cost centers, which amount to \$517,000, are paid for out of the county's hotel/bed tax dollars. Operating expenses for Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department are roughly \$1 million.

Montgomery County Parks and Heritage Services Department

The Montgomery County Parks and Heritage Services Department owns and/or manages more than 6,000 acres of public open space, including eight parks, a major natural area, five historic sites and lands along four primary County greenways, with 34 miles of existing County trails to be augmented by another 28 miles scheduled for development by 2007. Parks, historic sites and trails are interconnected, as well as linking to local community and regional resources. The Department serves 750,097 residents (2000 population).

The Department's mission is: *To provide the premier system of natural, recreational and historical sites in this region and state by giving an exceptional visitor experience that encourages respect and understanding for the County's natural and cultural resources.*

The Department has a full-time staff of 90 and it employs 58 part-time staff. It has an operating budget (2006) of \$6.4 million, consisting of \$5.5 million for payroll and benefits and \$.9 million for operating supplies and services. The Department has a capital projects fund of \$1.4 million, and has approved park and historic site improvement projects totaling \$2.6 million that are funded through the County's Green Fields/Green Towns program (2006). Additionally, this open space program has earmarked \$11 million (2006) for protection of land and development of County trails and greenways, acquisition of significant parcels of open space that have been identified in the County open space plan, and protection of land and improvements to the Schuylkill Greenway.

<p>Montgomery County Parks and Heritage Services Scope Topic List: Landscape Management RFP</p>
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1. Basic System Goals

a. Consistency and correlation of plans, expertise, and objectives

- Consistency with strategic plan objectives and recommendations
- Consistency with Facilities Maintenance and Visitor Services implementation plans
- Integration of staff expertise, experience, and goals
- Appropriate relationship to local and regional objectives

b. Consistency in level of care of county-managed landscapes

- System wide consistency of high-quality landscape maintenance
- Ongoing consistency of landscape maintenance at each site
- Consistency of maintenance for trails and trail corridors

c. Standards of care for county-managed landscapes

- Desirable and realistic system wide level of care
- Appropriate level of care for specific landscape types

d. Diversity of county-owned and/or managed landscape types

- Variable levels of formal management for public-use versus background landscapes
- Various types of landscapes at each site
- Various types of landscapes within trail corridors
 - Landscapes in transition or maintained in interrupted successional stage
 - Landscapes as habitat and natural resource
 - Types of county owned and/or managed landscapes
 - Critical natural areas/habitats
 - Natural landscapes / native vegetation areas
 - Woodlands

Meadows and fields
Ponds, streams, reservoirs, shorelines
Floodplains and riparian buffers

- General park landscapes
 - Agricultural landscapes – crop fields, pastures
 - Intensive use areas – playing fields, picnic areas
 - Heritage landscapes
 - Historic gardens
 - Formal or informal parking facilities
 - Public squares
 - Trails and pathways within specific sites
 - Multi-use trails and trail context landscapes
- Different care level for emergency landscape maintenance

e. Overall balance between resource protection and public use or access

- Characterizing the landscape and prioritizing its resource value
- Understanding the management needs of the landscape
- Understanding the significance of the landscape – scenic, heritage, context
- Public expectations for access to the landscape
 - Threshold of damage for type of landscape

f. Effective level of landscape care and maintenance

- Carrying capacity of landscape types and individual site landscapes
- Desirability /need for public access and activity
- Opportunities for landscape restoration
- Impact of landscape use on adjoining environmental systems
- Impact of landscape character on scenic views
- Opportunities for best management practices / sustaining critical species

- Opportunities for interpretation, demonstration, environmental education
- Opportunities to facilitate wildlife migration corridors

g. Special considerations for heritage landscapes and historic gardens

- Level of authenticity of the heritage landscape
- Period plantings versus period-type plantings
- Role and authenticity of site furnishings, garden elements, vistas, materials
- Need for research and documentation
 - Relationship of heritage landscape context to historic experience
- Visual relationship between historic buildings and surrounding site
 - Character of the heritage landscape
 - Special maintenance techniques
 - Opportunities for public access and enjoyment
 - Opportunities for historic restoration and interpretation
 - Archeological considerations

h. Special considerations for trail landscapes

- Maintaining scenic and natural beauty of trail experience
- Working with edge and linear landscape areas
- Buffering trail users from adjoining uses
- Protecting the privacy of adjoining properties
- Screen and barrier plantings for access control
- Channeling trail traffic through sensitive landscapes
- Modifying the landscape to include scenic overlooks, fishing / canoe access, etc.
- Landscape protection policies during trail construction
- Landscape considerations in selecting trail alignments
- Restoration of corridor landscapes
- Managing litter, graffiti

i. Incorporation of green construction techniques

- Garden structures, pathways, infrastructure
- Blending with required authenticity of landscape
- Opportunities for education and interpretation

j. Use of best management practices

- Priority policy for use in county system
- Publicity and use of demonstration projects
- BMPs for IPM, storm water management, groundwater recharge
- Environmentally friendly, non-polluting, organic approach
- Energy efficiency

2. Information Gathering and Evaluation

a. Baseline Conditions

● System wide

- Existing types of landscapes; approximate acreages by management type
- Overall issues – health, condition, landscape integrity, native vs invasives
- Personnel – including numbers, job descriptions, and skillsets
- Maintenance records, work tracking
- Stewardship partnerships, cooperative relationships
- Funding streams
- Equipment – types and quantities

● Site specific

- Heritage landscapes, special scenic areas, NAI sites
- Unique habitat areas, migration corridors, high quality streams
- Demonstration projects and landscape restoration areas

- Historic and special purpose gardens; volunteer projects
- Special maintenance techniques as in controlled burn, meadow mowing
- Landscape management agreements with farmers, foresters, etc.
- Estimated carrying capacity
 - Public use landscapes
 - Background landscapes

b. Current needs assessment per existing conditions

- Evaluation of immediate landscape maintenance needs
- Prioritization and timeline for deferrable landscape maintenance needs
- Cost/benefit analysis of current versus change in management techniques
- Support resources needed
- Limits on, or increase of, public access

c. Projected needs assessment per system goals

- Equipment, storage, and infrastructure
- Support resources
- Site specific management strategies to be addressed in separate site master plan
- Long-term landscape management/maintenance plans
- Resource management and conservation plans

d. Models for study and reference

- Examples of natural landscape management strategies in public landscapes
- Models for green construction and best management practices
- Models for research, restoration, and management of heritage landscapes
- Models for restoration and management of high-use

trail landscapes

- Models for effective personnel and equipment allocation

3. Recommendations

a. Establishing carrying capacity

- Clarifying specific needs and sensitivity of landscape types
- Assessment of landscape threats (deer damage, pollution, storm water runoff)
- Specific thresholds or seasons of public access to minimize damage
- Tailoring uses and visitor limits to landscape carrying capacity

b. Standards for landscape management

- System wide landscape management standards
- Landscape-specific standards by type of landscape
 - Heritage/cultural related landscape standards
 - Public use landscape management standards
 - Trail landscape management standards
- Realistic expectations of level of care and degree of access
- Degree of fragmentation versus large landscape maintenance blocks
- Sustainability of landscape use and technique over time
- Feasibility of access to maintain as desired
- Deer management policy

c. Visitor accessibility

- ADA/universal accessibility
- Controlling and channeling public access
- Scheduling and performing landscape management in public use areas
- Scenic access to “off-limits” landscapes
- Controlling access during specific seasons or during storm events

- Avoiding damage from overuse or inappropriate use
- Seasonal or occasional event use of sensitive landscapes
 - Access to water resources

d. Safety and security

- Identifying and repairing potentially dangerous landscape situations
- Visitor safety in the landscape; accessibility for patrolling and emergencies
- Safety priorities and guidelines
 - Priority/emergency maintenance relating to public safety
 - Protection of public during landscape maintenance activity
 - Employees doing maintenance work
 - Responsible equipment use
- Hazardous materials use and storage
- Warning signs and landscape barriers
- Hazard trees
- Disaster protocols
- Safe work practices; training of personnel in OSHA regulations

e. Staffing

- Overall needs and policies
 - Evaluation of job descriptions and skill sets
 - Making the most of existing expertise
 - Numbers and roles
 - System level
 - Site specific in coordination with master plans and maintenance plans
 - Credentials and Certifications
 - Coordination and flow of responsibilities
 - System staff
 - Site staff
- Specialized needs

- Ongoing training staff in natural landscape installation, maintenance, restoration
- Specialized training/credentials for:
 - arboriculture, forest and meadow management, ecological systems
 - proper planting, mowing, mulching techniques, pest and invasive controls
 - plant identification, riparian restoration, controlled burn
 - landscape best management practices
- Specialized expertise: heritage landscape management/restoration/interpretation
- Coordination of land management strategies with skillsets of maintenance staff
- Skills and responsibilities of contractors/subcontractors
- Coordination and supervision for contractors/subcontractors/vendors

f. Equipment, technological needs, support services

- Equipment and materials
 - Sharing of equipment
 - Site specific equipment needs
 - Storage and transportation of equipment and materials
 - Supply chain issues
 - Specifications
 - Efficient allocation, appropriate types and quantities
 - Outsourcing landscape management to minimize equipment needs
- Equipment maintenance
 - Division of labor with Facilities Maintenance staff
 - Staff skillsets versus outsourcing
- Technological needs
 - Cell phones, communications devices
 - Portable computers for work tracking, record keeping
 - Internet access

- Support services
 - Sharing personnel; utilizing specialized staff talents/expertise
 - Timely support from system staff, other departments, outside resources

g. Coordination and cooperation

- Departmental roles, relationships, and responsibilities
 - Between regions
 - System to site specific
 - Retaining efficiency, timeliness, site-specific knowledge
- Other departments
 - Public Property, Roads and Bridges, Planning Commission
 - Commissioners
- Other agencies and authorities – resolution of conflicting land use objectives
- Utilities – maintenance of shared corridors
- Formal landscape management relationships with farmers, other landowners
- Outsourcing – formalized contracts and agreements

h. Outreach and partnerships

- Using volunteer experts and willing service organizations
- Using court adjudicated volunteers
- Coordinating grant and demonstration projects with non-profit partners
- Collaborative landscape restoration projects – municipal or state partners
- Public relations; using the landscape as a teaching tool

i. Monitoring and measurement

- Measures of success – public perception, public safety

- Measures of success – habitat restoration, scenic improvement, cost reductions
- Measures of success – numbers of site and trail users
- Work tracking, scheduling
- Incorporating new techniques and approaches
- Evaluating results of green construction, best management practices
- Regular assessment of direction, goal setting, cost/benefit

j. Property boundary and encroachment issues

- Identifying key and problem boundaries
- Addressing encroachments, dumping, incompatible management techniques
- Landscape management techniques for controlling inappropriate access
- Being a good neighbor

4. Financial considerations

a. Budgeting

- Determining budgetary needs and future projections
- Allocating budget resources – system-wide versus project specific
- Routine landscape maintenance versus landscape improvement/restoration
- Dealing with unexpected costs

b. Cost centers

- Sharing and projecting budgets with other departments

c. Funding

- Other public / private sources – grants, cost-sharing
- Donations, gifts, sponsorships

d. Balancing public dollars with levels of care

- Appropriate balance
- Ensuring funding for appropriate management of sensitive areas
- Increasing funding as new land is acquired
- Increasing resources as new trail miles are added

5. Policy manual, guidelines, appendices, action steps

a. Format, distribution, and purpose of manual

b. Process of updating

c. Incorporation of both system wide and program specific guidelines

d. Appendices

- Best management practices and green construction methods
- Relationship to site master plans and resource management plans
- Recommended reference library; “librarian” responsibilities
- Relevant models
- Implementation matrix – roles, responsibilities, timeline
- Additional recommended studies or products
- Budget guidelines
- Funding strategies

Chapter 5

Appendix

Appendix 5.1

**Berks County School
District Survey
Results**

5.1 School Survey Results

During the public participation process of the Plan, five school districts were asked to have one of their 8th grade classes fill out the 4-part citizen survey form. Four school districts participated; Exeter, Governor Mifflin, Wilson and Wyomissing. Our goal was to have at least 125-150 student responses from different parts of the County, in order to determine if the Plan addressed the younger age appropriately when prioritizing projects and funding opportunities. A total of 127 surveys were filled out and returned.

The survey sent to the school districts are the same survey that was sent to a percentage of Berks County households. The survey contains 4-parts. The first 3 parts of the survey ask students to rank their individual preference versus what they feel is needed by the community for recreation facilities/activities, heritage/historical resources and green infrastructure. The remaining section asks the students to assess the quality of the programs and activities offered by the Berks County Parks Department. Following is a brief synopsis of the tabulated results of the surveys.

Exeter School District

Recreation Facilities/activities

School District: Exeter		# of Surveys =31
Recreation Facilities/activities:	Individual Preference	Community Need
Baseball/softball fields	3	3
Basketball courts	7	4
Boating areas	5	3
Bowling lanes	10	3
Camping areas	7	3
Children's playgrounds	2	4
Community gardens	0	3

Community recreation centers	2	3
Cross-country ski areas	2	0
Downhill ski areas	4	1
Equestrian trails	2	2
Fishing areas	3	2
Golf courses	2	1
Handicapped accessible activity areas	1	2
Hunting areas	2	1
Ice Skating/Hockey rinks	10	7
Indoor fitness centers	7	2
Museums/Heritage Parks/Historical sites	0	2
Natural areas	1	0
Other group sports fields	5	2
Outdoor entertainment	6	3
Picnic areas	3	3
Scenic drives	1	2
Senior citizen activity area	0	2
Skate/Bike park	13	13
Sledding areas	7	1
Soccer fields	4	2
Swimming pools	14	8
Tennis courts	2	0
Volleyball courts	4	0
Walking/hiking/biking trails	2	3
Other: Paintball/theme parks	1	0
Other: Hangouts for kids	1	0
Other: Indoor tracks open to community	0	1
Other:	0	0

Generally the students individual preference and what they felt were needed in the community are consistent. Students chose

5.1 School Survey Results

swimming pools, skate/bike park, ice skating/hockey rinks and bowling lanes, tying for third, as their top three individual choices. Under community needs students top choices were skate/bike park, swimming pools and ice skating/hockey rinks. Active recreational activities scored higher than passive ones.

Heritage/Historical Resources

School District: Exeter		
Heritage/Historical Resources:	Individual Preferences	Community Need
Canals/locks/dams	4	6
Historic architectural style	9	2
Historic bridges	10	3
Historic churches/cemeteries	11	8
Historic community buildings	11	9
Historic farms	4	4
Historic geologic landmarks	11	5
Historic grist mills	2	0
Historic hotels/resorts	9	5
Historic industry	2	3
Historic railroads/trolleys	5	4
Important historic persons	5	1
Indian Heritage	3	5
Iron & steel heritage	7	2
Scenic/historic theme highways	7	3
Underground railroad	11	10
WPA/CCC projects	6	6

The categories historic churches/cemeteries, historic community buildings, historic geologic landmarks and the underground railroad all tied for first place under the students individual preferences. However, the students clearly identified the top three areas that the community needed to preserve; underground railroad, historic community buildings and historic churches/cemeteries.

Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure	Individual Preferences	Community Need
Bird habitat	9	3
Contiguous grassland	11	7
Fish habitat	9	5
Floodplains	2	4
Groundwater recharge areas	2	2
Headwaters, springs, vernal pools	11	5
Interior forests	9	5
Mammal habitat	11	3
Native vegetation	2	1
Rare/endangered animal habitat	12	8
Rare/endangered plant habitat	3	5
Reptile habitat	4	3
Ridgelines	4	0
Riparian (waterway) buffers	3	1
Scenic views	8	5
Steep slopes	6	10
Streams/other water bodies	12	3
Unique geological features	6	5
Wetlands	4	1

There was a tie for both 1st and 2nd place in the individual preference part; rare/endangered animal habitat, streams/other water bodies were 1st and mammal habitat, headwaters/springs/vernal pools and contiguous grassland tied for 2nd place. Under community needs however, steep slopes ranked 1st, followed by rare/endangered animal habitat and contiguous grassland.

Berks County Parks Department Program

School District: Exeter	Program Quality	
Athletic sports leagues/clinics	Adaquate	11
	Expand	13
	Improve	3
Youth programs	Adaquate	11
	Expand	9
	Improve	3
Fitness Programs	Adaquate	8
	Expand	15
	Improve	2
Senior Programs	Adaquate	12
	Expand	7
	Improve	3
Holiday events	Adaquate	10
	Expand	11
	Improve	4
Environmental Education	Adaquate	15
	Expand	7
	Improve	1
Festivals	Adaquate	16
	Expand	8
	Improve	1
Cultural/Heritage education	Adaquate	9
	Expand	7
	Improve	4
Arts and crafts/hobbies	Adaquate	11
	Expand	10
	Improve	2
Interpretive lecture series	Adaquate	19
	Expand	1
	Improve	0
Summer concert series	Adaquate	8
	Expand	9
	Improve	8

Overall the students seemed please with the quality of the program and many would like to see the programs expanded. The summer concert series is the only program that many of the students felt should be improved. Most of the improvements requested by the students were either related to expanding the type of music offered or the time/day of the week.

Governor Mifflin Area School District

Recreation Facilities/activities

School District: Governor Mifflin		# of Surveys =29
Recreation Facilities/activities:	Individual Preference	Community Need
Baseball/softball fields	3	0
Basketball courts	6	2
Boating areas	3	2
Bowling lanes	7	2
Camping areas	6	1
Children's playgrounds	3	6
Community gardens	3	4
Community recreation centers	3	6
Cross-country ski areas	2	2
Downhill ski areas	6	1
Equestrian trails	2	2
Fishing areas	3	3
Golf courses	7	3
Handicapped accessible activity areas	0	8
Hunting areas	2	0
Ice Skating/Hockey rinks	8	0
Indoor fitness centers	5	1
Museums/Heritage Parks/Historical sites	6	6

5.1 School Survey Results

Natural areas	1	3
Other group sports fields	4	3
Outdoor entertainment	10	1
Picnic areas	3	6
Scenic drives	1	0
Senior citizen activity area	0	3
Skate/Bike park	7	3
Sledding areas	9	0
Soccer fields	3	1
Swimming pools	4	4
Tennis courts	3	2
Volleyball courts	10	5
Walking/hiking/biking trails	7	5
Other: Apartments	1	0
Other: Movie Theaters	1	0
Other: Comic Stores	1	0
Other: Paintball Fields	1	0
Other:	0	0

The students' ideas of what they want individually and what the community needs were very different. Individual preferences included; outdoor entertainment and volleyball courts tied for 1st, followed by sledding areas and ice skate/hockey rinks. While there choices for community needs was handicapped accessible activity areas followed by a four-way tie with children's playgrounds, picnic areas, community recreation centers, and museums/heritage parks/ historical sites.

Heritage/Historical Resources

School District: Governor Mifflin		# Surveys =
Heritage/Historical Resources:	Individual Preferences	Community Need
Canals/locks/dams	5	2
Historic architectural style	6	4
Historic bridges	11	8

Historic churches/cemeteries	13	6
Historic community buildings	14	9
Historic farms	10	4
Historic geologic landmarks	6	6
Historic grist mills	3	0
Historic hotels/resorts	15	4
Historic industry	3	2
Historic railroads/trolleys	10	6
Important historic persons	5	7
Indian Heritage	12	6
Iron & steel heritage	8	1
Scenic/historic theme highways	8	5
Underground railroad	9	6
WPA/CCC projects	6	4

The categories historic hotels, historic community buildings and historic churches/cemeteries were the top three choices for individual preferences. While the students' top three choices for community needs were historic community buildings, historic bridges and important historic persons.

Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure	Individual Preferences	Community Need
Bird habitat	8	5
Contiguous grassland	11	6
Fish habitat	12	4
Floodplains	3	1
Groundwater recharge areas	3	1
Headwaters, springs, vernal pools	12	3
Interior forests	7	5
Mammal habitat	9	8
Native vegetation	4	8

Rare/endangered animal habitat	11	12
Rare/endangered plant habitat	7	10
Reptile habitat	12	2
Ridgelines	0	0
Riparian (waterway) buffers	3	2
Scenic views	9	4
Steep slopes	6	1
Streams/other water bodies	7	5
Unique geological features	10	2
Wetlands	5	2

In a three-way tie for 1st place the students' individual preferences were fish habitat, headwater/springs/vernal pools and reptile habitat. However, the students' chose very differently under community needs; rare/endangered animal habitat, rare/endangered plant habitat and a two-way tie for 3rd place between mammal habitat and native vegetation.

Berks County Parks Department Program

School District: Governor Mifflin	Program Quality	
Athletic sports leagues/clinics	Adaquate	11
	Expand	13
	Improve	8
Youth programs	Adaquate	6
	Expand	15
	Improve	10
Fitness Programs	Adaquate	11
	Expand	10
	Improve	8
Senior Programs	Adaquate	10
	Expand	11
	Improve	7
Holiday events	Adaquate	8

	Expand	14
	Improve	9
Environmental Education	Adaquate	8
	Expand	15
	Improve	8
Festivals	Adaquate	5
	Expand	12
	Improve	15
Cultural/Heritage education	Adaquate	10
	Expand	13
	Improve	7
Arts and crafts/hobbies	Adaquate	7
	Expand	16
	Improve	6
Interpretive lecture series	Adaquate	16
	Expand	6
	Improve	5
Summer concert series	Adaquate	11
	Expand	10
	Improve	11

In general the students felt that the programs were adequate or they would like to see them expand, however there are four programs that the students felt require improvement; youth programs, holiday events, festivals and the summer concert series. Most of the comments were about needing to improve the advertisement of the programs to the students. Many of the students' expressed interest but had never heard of some of the program offerings.

Wilson School District

Recreation Facilities/activities

School District: Wilson		# of Surveys =33
Recreation Facilities/activities:	Individual Preference	Community Need
Baseball/softball fields	3	2
Basketball courts	8	2
Boating areas	6	4
Bowling lanes	6	5
Camping areas	6	4
Children's playgrounds	4	7
Community gardens	3	0
Community recreation centers	4	5
Cross-country ski areas	0	0
Downhill ski areas	8	1
Equestrian trails	2	0
Fishing areas	7	4
Golf courses	5	5
Handicapped accessible activity areas	0	11
Hunting areas	9	1
Ice Skating/Hockey rinks	9	3
Indoor fitness centers	5	4
Museums/Heritage Parks/Historical sites	2	7
Natural areas	1	2
Other group sports fields	5	0
Outdoor entertainment	6	2
Picnic areas	1	3
Scenic drives	3	3
Senior citizen activity area	0	4
Skate/Bike park	14	4
Sledding areas	10	2

Soccer fields	6	2
Swimming pools	11	3
Tennis courts	4	2
Volleyball courts	6	1
Walking/hiking/biking trails	13	9
Other: Lacrosse Fields	1	0
Other:	0	0

The students' viewpoints for individual preference versus community needs were very different except for one. The students' chose skate/bike park as their top individual preference followed by walking/hiking/biking trails and sledding. For community needs the students' chose handicapped accessible activity areas as their 1st choice then walking/hiking/biking trails and tied for 3rd were Museums/Heritage Parks/Historical Sites and children's playgrounds.

Heritage/Historical Resources

School District: Wilson		
Heritage/Historical Resources:	Individual Preferences	Community Need
Canals/locks/dams	5	8
Historic architectural style	12	5
Historic bridges	15	9
Historic churches/cemeteries	8	10
Historic community buildings	13	11
Historic farms	4	3
Historic geologic landmarks	15	11
Historic grist mills	2	0
Historic hotels/resorts	11	8
Historic industry	3	4

Historic railroads/trolleys	12	5
Important historic persons	10	5
Indian Heritage	9	5
Iron & steel heritage	8	3
Scenic/historic theme highways	6	1
Underground railroad	16	11
WPA/CCC projects	5	1

The 1st choice under individual preferences was underground railroad with a tie for 2nd place between historic bridges and historic geologic landmarks. Consistently, the top choice for community needs was a three-way tie between underground railroad, historic geologic landmarks and historic community buildings, which also ranked high under individual preferences.

Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure	Individual Preferences	Community Need
Bird habitat	7	10
Contiguous grassland	7	3
Fish habitat	10	2
Floodplains	3	4
Groundwater recharge areas	1	6
Headwaters, springs, vernal pools	7	3
Interior forests	6	5
Mammal habitat	16	11
Native vegetation	2	4
Rare/endangered animal habitat	17	17
Rare/endangered plant habitat	4	8
Reptile habitat	14	2
Ridgelines	1	0
Riparian (waterway) buffers	0	1
Scenic views	14	6

Steep slopes	12	2
Streams/other water bodies	14	2
Unique geological features	14	3
Wetlands	7	9

The students' top individual choice was rare/endangered animal habitat, mammal habitat, and a four-way tie for 3rd between reptile habitat, scenic views, streams/other water bodies and unique geologic features. The students were consistent with their first two choices for community needs in rare/endangered animal habitat and mammal habitat, but their 3rd choice was bird habitat.

Berks County Parks Department Program

School District: Wilson	Program Quality	
Athletic sports leagues/clinics	Adaquate	15
	Expand	12
	Improve	3
Youth programs	Adaquate	16
	Expand	10
	Improve	4
Fitness Programs	Adaquate	12
	Expand	8
	Improve	6
Senior Programs	Adaquate	11
	Expand	8
	Improve	5
Holiday events	Adaquate	13
	Expand	13
	Improve	3
Environmental Education	Adaquate	10
	Expand	12
	Improve	5
Festivals	Adaquate	14

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	Expand	15
	Improve	1
Cultural/Heritage education	Adaquate	18
	Expand	7
	Improve	4
Arts and crafts/hobbies	Adaquate	10
	Expand	13
	Improve	6
Interpretive lecture series	Adaquate	22
	Expand	4
	Improve	1
Summer concert series	Adaquate	15
	Expand	13
	Improve	0

Most of the students felt that the existing programs were either fine or just needed some expansion. A number of the students requested additional music options, while other students mentioned adding field trips that were either environmental or historic in nature.

Wyomissing School District

Recreation Facilities/activities

School District: Wyomissing		# of Surveys =34
Recreation Facilities/activities:	Individual Preference	Community Need
Baseball/softball fields	7	3
Basketball courts	13	7
Boating areas	4	2
Bowling lanes	2	1
Camping areas	2	1
Children's playgrounds	3	6
Community gardens	1	3

Community recreation centers	5	3
Cross-country ski areas	0	0
Downhill ski areas	6	2
Equestrian trails	3	0
Fishing areas	6	0
Golf courses	3	1
Handicapped accessible activity areas	4	10
Hunting areas	4	4
Ice Skating/Hockey rinks	7	2
Indoor fitness centers	5	7
Museums/Heritage Parks/Historical sites	1	3
Natural areas	3	5
Other group sports fields	13	1
Outdoor entertainment	5	3
Picnic areas	5	2
Scenic drives	0	1
Senior citizen activity area	0	3
Skate/Bike park	11	6
Sledding areas	10	2
Soccer fields	1	1
Swimming pools	17	5
Tennis courts	4	0
Volleyball courts	5	0
Walking/hiking/biking trails	6	4
Other: Football Fields	0	1
Other: Badminton Courts	1	0
Other: Paintball Fields	2	1
Other:	0	0
Other:	0	0

The students were most interested in active sports. They chose for individual preferences tennis courts then a two-way tie for 2nd between basketball and group sports fields. Their top choice for

community needs was handicapped accessible activity areas followed by a tie for 2nd between basketball and indoor fitness centers. Skate/bike park was close behind under both choices.

Heritage/Historical Resources

School District: Wyomissing		
Heritage/Historical Resources:	Individual Preferences	Community Need
Canals/locks/dams	7	5
Historic architectural style	7	6
Historic bridges	7	5
Historic churches/cemeteries	6	5
Historic community buildings	12	10
Historic farms	6	7
Historic geologic landmarks	11	8
Historic grist mills	3	0
Historic hotels/resorts	13	5
Historic industry	4	0
Historic railroads/trolleys	8	3
Important historic persons	7	6
Indian Heritage	9	5
Iron & steel heritage	6	0
Scenic/historic theme highways	3	3
Underground railroad	10	10
WPA/CCC projects	5	3

The students' individual preferences were historic hotels, historic community buildings and historic geologic landmarks. Under community needs there was a tie for 1st place between historic community buildings and underground railroad with historic geologic landmarks a consistent 3rd.

Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure	Individual Preferences	Community Need
Bird habitat	9	4
Contiguous grassland	10	12
Fish habitat	9	6
Floodplains	4	3
Groundwater recharge areas	3	2
Headwaters, springs, vernal pools	9	7
Interior forests	7	7
Mammal habitat	15	5
Native vegetation	4	3
Rare/endangered animal habitat	16	15
Rare/endangered plant habitat	8	8
Reptile habitat	11	3
Ridgelines	1	2
Riparian (waterway) buffers	1	0
Scenic views	8	4
Steep slopes	8	3
Streams/other water bodies	8	3
Unique geological features	3	2
Wetlands	7	3

The students' individual choices were rare/endangered animal habitat, mammal habitat and reptile habitat. The students' were consistent with their 1st community needs choice of rare/endangered animal habitat, then chose contiguous grassland and rare/endangered plant habitat for 2nd and 3rd.

Berks County Parks Department Programs

School District: Wyomissing	Program Quality	
Athletic sports leagues/clinics	Adaquate	9
	Expand	14
	Improve	8
Youth programs	Adaquate	11
	Expand	7
	Improve	6
Fitness Programs	Adaquate	8
	Expand	9
	Improve	10
Senior Programs	Adaquate	4
	Expand	8
	Improve	6
Holiday events	Adaquate	11
	Expand	12
	Improve	7
Environmental Education	Adaquate	5
	Expand	15
	Improve	7
Festivals	Adaquate	7
	Expand	16
	Improve	7
Cultural/Heritage education	Adaquate	9
	Expand	12

	Improve	9
Arts and crafts/hobbies	Adaquate	17
	Expand	7
	Improve	6
Interpretive lecture series	Adaquate	7
	Expand	6
	Improve	5
Summer concert series	Adaquate	13
	Expand	12
	Improve	9

Generally the students either were happy with the programs or wanted them expanded, however the following programs they felt could use improvements; fitness programs, holiday events, environmental education, festivals and cultural/heritage education. For the most part the students asked for additional music offerings, change in time offered and additional field trip options.

Appendix 5.2

Facility Inventory

Hawk Mountain Region: Recreational Facilities Inventory

MUNICIPALITY/FACILITY	OWNER	PARK TYPE	FACILITIES*	ACREAGE
ALBANY				
ALBANY HISTORICAL SOCIETY	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	0.87
APPALACHIAN TRAIL	Federal	Greenway	CA, HI	239.33
BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE	Non-Profit			4.27
GAMELANDS 106	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	3693.64
HAWK MOUNTAIN SANCTUARY	Non-Profit	Private Park	HI, NS	1623.76
KEMPTON COMMUNITY RECREATION CTR	Municipal	Community	BB, BY, CA, CO, HI, IE, NS, OF, PA, SF, TE, TL	49.03
KEMPTON ROD AND GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI, SR	141.39
LEHIGH VALLEY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY	Non-Profit	Private Park		4.31
WANAMAHER KEMPTON RR	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	17.06
			Total	5773.66
CENTERPORT				
CENTERPORT BOROUGH BLDG	Municipal		BT	0.48
CENTERPORT COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal			3.07
CENTRAL BERKS FIRE CO GROUNDS	Non-Profit			2.36
COMMUNITY RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT	3.07
			Total	8.98
CENTRE				
MOHRSVILLE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, OF, TL	6.11
POCONO BEAGLE CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU	119.05
			Total	125.16
FLEETWOOD				
EAST LOCUST STREET PARK	Municipal	Mini	BT,PA, TL	1.22
EAST WASHINGTON STREET PARK	Municipal	Mini		0.46
FLEETWOOD PARK AND POOL	Municipal	Community	BT, FI, HI, IH, OF, OA, PA, SW, TL	19.57
WEST ARCH STREET PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	BT, VB	0.54
WILLOW RUN OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Greenway		13.15

5.2 – Hawk Mountain Region
Facilities Inventory

YMCA-FLEETWOOD	Non-Profit	Private Park	CO	1.59
			Total	36.53
GREENWICH				
APPALACHIAN TRAIL	Federal	Greenway	CA, HI	35.16
BLUE ROCKS CAMPGROUND	Private	Private Park	CA,HI, OF	52.51
CAMP ED-MAR, BOY SCOUT CAMP	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA	11.09
DUTCHMILL CAMPGROUND	Private	Private Park	CA, TL	9.84
GAMELANDS 182	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	240.05
KUTZTOWN ROD AND GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI,HU, PA, SR	139.14
PINE HILL CAMPGROUND	Private	Private Park	CA,OF	24.27
ROBIN HILL RETREAT CENTER	Private	Private Park	BO, CA, FI,OF, SW	26.18
			Total	538.24
HAMBURG				
BICENTENNIAL WALKWAY	Municipal	Greenway	BO, FI, HI, PA	16.23
HAMBURG CENTER WATERSHED	State	Natural Resource	NS	8.38
HAMBURG COMMUNITY PARK AND POOL	Municipal	Community	BB, BT, HI, IH, OF, OA, PA, SW, TE, TL	10.05
HAMBURG GAME ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BW, FI, PA, SR	18.34
HAMBURG TOT-LOT	Municipal	Mini	TL	0.56
HOFFMAN LANES	Private	Private Park	BW	0.14
KERNSVILLE DAM AND DESILTING BASIN	State	Natural Resource	HA, HI, NS	52.78
PA FISH/BOAT KAERCHER CREEK PARK	State	Large Urban	BI, FI, HI, PA, TL, VS,	10.00
			Total	116.48
KUTZTOWN				
EXCLUSIVELY FIELD HOCKEY	Private	Private Park	FH	1.70
KUTZTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	0.97
KUTZTOWN COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, BT, OA, PA, TE, TL, VB	43.23
KUTZTOWN FAIRGROUNDS	Non-Profit	Private Park	OA, PA	29.23
KUTZTOWN FIRE HALL	Non-Profit	Private Park		0.64
KUTZTOWN POOL	Municipal	Single Purpose	BT, PA, SW, VB	5.38
KUTZTOWN TRAIN STATION	Non-Profit	Single Purpose	MU	0.56
SACONY MARSH	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	7.06
			Total	88.77

5.2 Hawk Mountain Region
Facilities Inventory

LENHARTSVILLE

LENHARTSVILLE PARK	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, TL	0.24
			Total	0.24

LYONS

LYONS FIRE CO BALLFIELD	Non-Profit	Single Purpose	BB,	23.16
LYONS MUNICIPAL PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA	3.03
			Total	26.19

MAIDENCREEK

AQUABILITIES SWIM SCHOOL	Private	Private Park	SW,	1.86
BLANDON FIRE CO PLAYGROUND	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, BT, PA, TE, TL	6.79
BLANDON MEADOWS PARK	Municipal	Greenway		6.91
KIDS COVE	Municipal	Mini	TL,	0.30
LAKE ONTELAUNEE	Municipal	Natural Resource	FI, HI, HU, NS	2285.56
MAIDEN CREEK COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, BT, HI, PA, SO, TL	17.40
MAIDEN CREEK OPEN SPACE	Municipal			7.08
MAIDENCREEK MUNICIPAL BLDG.	Municipal	Neighborhood	TE,	5.90
MAIDENCREEK OPENSOURCE	Municipal	Natural Resource		2.92
MAIER'S GROVE	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, OF, PA, TL	5.93
ONTELAUNEE HEIGHTS PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BY	9.01
PLEASANT HILL GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO	100.72
RAJAH SHRINE COMPLEX	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA, HB, IE, PA, SO	31.58
RICH MAIDEN GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO	88.86
SHADY GLEN PICNIC GROVE	Private	Private Park	PA	7.34
TREETOPS PARK	Municipal	Mini	TL	0.42
WILLOW CREEK GREENWAY	Municipal	Greenway	BT, BI, HI, PA, TL	36.43
			Total	2615.01

MAXATAWNY

SITTLER'S GOLF CENTER	Private	Private Park	GD, GM	13.74
W.M. DELONG PARK	Municipal	Community	FI, OF, PA	26.41
			Total	40.15

PERRY

FARVIEW GREENS GOLF CLUB	Private	Private Park	GO	48.55
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5.2 – Hawk Mountain Region
Facilities Inventory

PA FISH AND BOAT 5 LOCKS	State	Greenway	BO, FI, NS	33.65
PERRY GAME ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU	21.66
PERRY GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO	149.02
PERRY TOWNSHIP RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Community	OF, PA, TL	19.88
WING POINTE	Private	Private Park	HU, SR	184.47
Total				457.23

RICHMOND

BERKLEIGH COUNTRY CLUB	Private	Private Park	GO, GD, SW, TE, TL	303.26
CRYSTAL CAVE	Private	Private Park	GM, NS, PA	100.42
DEKA SOFTBALL FIELD	Private	Private Park	OF	2.64
FLEETWOOD FISH AND GAME	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI,SR	15.70
GAMELANDS 182	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	22.96
GENETTI'S MINI GOLF/ RANGE	Private	Private Park	GD	9.05
MOSELEM SPRINGS GOLF CLUB	Private	Private Park	GO, GD	177.93
SACONY PARK CAMPSITES	Private	Private Park	CA, FI, OF	10.66
SMITH FIELD	Non-Profit	Private Park	BY	2.84
WALNUTTOWN FISH AND GAME	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI, HU	7.68
Total				653.14

SHOEMAKERSVILLE

SHOEMAKERSVILLE MUNICIPAL PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, BT,OF, PA, SF, SW, TE, TL, VB	13.89
Total				13.89

STRAUSSTOWN

STRAUSSTOWN LIONS COMMUNITY PARK	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA	3.51
UPPER TULPEHOCKEN PARK	Municipal			3.86
Total				7.37

TILDEN

AUBURN FISH AND GAME	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI,HU	55.69
AUBURN MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY	Municipal	Natural Resource		130.63
GAMELANDS 110	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	1946.18
KERNSVILLE DAM AND DESILTING BASIN	State	Natural Resource	HA, HI, NS	263.73
SRGA 5 LOCKS	Non-Profit	Private Park	BI, HI, HB	0.76
SRGA BARTRAM	Non-Profit	Private Park	BI, HI	36.76

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Facilities Inventory

TILDEN TOWNSHIP RECREATION PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	PA	7.15
WALNUT ACRES GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO	73.71
WEISER STATE FOREST	State	Natural Resource	CA, FI, HI, HU, NS	1515.81
Total				4030.42

UPPER BERN

APPALACHIAN CAMP SITE	Private	Private Park	CA, HU, OF, PA, SR	86.63
GAMELANDS 110	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	2181.61
MOUNTAIN SPRINGS CAMPING RESORT	Private	Private Park	BI, CA, FI, HI, OF	102.96
ROADSIDE AMERICA	Private	Private Park	MU	14.92
SHARTLESVILLE COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, OF, PA, TE	8.20
SHARTLESVILLE FISH/GAME	Non-Profit	Private Park		92.62
Total				2486.94

UPPER TULPEHOCKEN

BLUE MOUNTAIN MUZZLE LOADERS	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU, SR	41.18
GAMELANDS 110	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	3100.06
GREEN ACRES GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO, GD, PA	166.20
HILLCREST VACATION FARM	Private	Private Park	CA, OF, PA	26.44
PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH CAMPSITES	Private	Private Park	CA, OF, TL	41.54
STRAUSSTOWN ROD AND GUN	Non-Profit	Private Park	SR	102.72
UPPER TULPEHOCKEN PARK	Municipal			1.82
Total				3479.96

WINDSOR

APPALACHIAN TRAIL	Federal	Greenway	CA, HI	179.01
BLUE MOUNTAIN AND NORTHERN RR	Private	Private Park	MU	164.11
EDENBERG RECREATION PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, OF, PA	3.17
GAMELANDS 106	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	2619.66
HAMBURG CENTER WATERSHED	State	Natural Resource	NS	115.01
HAMBURG WATERSHED	Municipal	Natural Resource	BO, CA, FI, HI, PA, TL	106.62
KERNSVILLE DAM AND DESILTING BASIN	State	Natural Resource	HA, HI, NS	13.03
LENHARTSVILLE FISH AND GAME	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI, PA	58.27
OLIVET BLUE MOUNTAIN CAMP	Non-Profit	Private Park	BO, CA, FI, HB, SW, TE	112.88
PA FISH/BOAT KAERCHER CREEK PARK	State	Large Urban	BI, FI, HI, PA, TL, VS	173.66

5.2 – Hawk Mountain Region
Facilities Inventory

WEISER STATE FOREST	State	Natural Resource	CA, FI, HI, HU, NS	855.75
			Total	4401.17

*Refer to table below for abbreviation interpretation

BB	Baseball	FT	Fitness	IE	Indoor Entertainment	SD	Skiing – Downhill
BY	Baseball – Youth	FB	Football	IF	Indoor Fitness	SX	Skiing – Cross Country
BT	Basketball	GO	Golf	MU	Museum	SO	Soccer
BI	Biking	GD	Golf – Driving Range	NS	Nature Study	SF	Softball
BO	Boating	GM	Golf – Miniature	OF	Open Field sports	SW	Swimming
BW	Bowling	HA	Handicapped Accessible	OA	Outdoor Amphitheatre	TE	Tennis
CA	Camping	HI	Hiking	PA	Picnic Area	TL	Tot-Lot
CO	Community Ctr.	HB	Horse Back	RB	Racquetball	TR	Track
FH	Field Hockey	HU	Hunting	SR	Shooting Range	VB	Volleyball
FI	Fishing	IH	Ice Hockey	SB	Skate Board	VS	Volleyball – Sand

Metro Region: Recreational Facilities Inventory

MUNICIPALITY/FACILITY	OWNER	PARK TYPE	FACILITIES*	ACREAGE
BERN				
BLUE MARSH LAKE	Federal	Natural Resource	BI, BO, FI, HI, HB, HU, MU, NS, PA, SX, SW	850.91
GRAND SLAM USA	Private	Private Park		3.24
AIRPORT DESILTING BASIN	State	Natural Resource	FI, NS	41.84
BERKS CO YOUTH RECREATION FACILITY	County	Sports Complex	BB, BY,HA, HI, SO, SF	117.40
BERKS COUNTY 4-H YOUTH CENTER	County	Single Purpose	CO, HB	29.44
BERKS COUNTY HERITAGE CENTER	County	Single Purpose	BI,HI, MU	44.64
BERKSHIRE COUNTRY CLUB	Private	Private Park	GO, GD, SW, TE	115.75
BERN CHURCH GROVE	Non-Profit	Private Park	BY,PA	8.18
BERN DESILTING BASINS	State	Natural Resource	FI, HI	275.10
BERN MUNICIPAL BUILDING PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, PA, TE, TL, VB	9.96
BERN POOL	Non-Profit	Private Park	BY,PA, SW	26.28
CAMP JOY	County	Single Purpose	BB, BY, BT, CA,PA, SF, SW, VB	25.46
EPLERS CHURCH RECREATION AREA	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, BT, TL	4.16
GAMELANDS 280	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	315.34
LEESPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	0.25
MID ATLANTIC AIR MUSEUM	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	10.55
ORCHARD HILL	Non-Profit	Private Park	BO, FI	31.13
PA FISH AND BOAT EPLERS LANDING	State	Greenway	BO, FI, HI, NS, PA	72.33
READING AIRPORT OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource	FI, NS	8.88
READING FAIRGROUNDS	County	Single Purpose		73.63
SRGA BERN-LEESPORT	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI, HI, HB, MU	21.40
UNION CANAL TRAIL	County	Greenway	BI, FI, HI, SX	144.92
WILLOW HOLLOW GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO, PA	119.77
WODENSHIRE COUNTRY CLUB-POOL	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, SW	5.34
			Total	2355.90

CUMRU

5.2 – Metro Region
Facilities Inventory

CUMRU OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	29.54
FLYING HILLS BASEBALL FIELD	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB	2.17
FLYING HILLS COMMON OPEN SPACE	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, HI, TL	4.19
FLYING HILLS FITNESS CNTR	Private	Private Park	BW,IF, RB	3.87
FLYING HILLS GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO	105.33
FLYING HILLS POOL	Private	Private Park	SW	3.20
GAMELANDS 324	State	Natural Resource	FI, HU	7.37
GOUGLERSVILLE FIRE CO. PLAYGROUND	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, OF, PA, TL	5.56
LEDGEROCK GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park		208.09
MOHNTON BOY SCOUT CAMP	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA,NS	35.37
MOHNTON FISH AND GAME PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	SR	246.53
MONTROSE MANOR PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, PA, TL	1.50
NOLDE FOREST ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER	State	Natural Resource	BI, CA, FI, HI, HB, NS, PA	628.66
OVERBROOK HOMEOWNERS	Private	Private Park		21.91
PENNWYN PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, TL, VB	1.32
READING ANGELICA LAND	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	12.39
READING ARCHERY CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park		31.18
SAINT MARY'S PICNIC GROVE	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA, TL	10.65
SHILLINGTON WATERSHED	Municipal	Natural Resource		59.04
SKATEAWAY	Private	Private Park		1.44
SOVEREIGN SPORTS PARK	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, SO	48.69
SRGA CUMRU	Non-Profit	Private Park	BI, FI, HI, HB	16.78
WARREN HOUSE PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, CO, VB	9.98
WELSH WOODS PRD OS	Non-Profit	Private Park	FT,HI, PA, TL	2.97
			Total	1497.73
KENHORST				
KENHORST COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TE, TL, VB	9.47
KEN-GRILL SWIMMING POOL	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA, SW	10.05
			Total	19.52
LAURELDALE				
LAURELDALE MUNICIPAL PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, IH, PA	71.15

LAURELDALE PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, OF, PA, SF, TL	3.78
LAURELDALE RECREATION CENTER	Municipal	Single Purpose	CO	0.57
			Total	75.50

LEESPORT

LEESPORT LOCK HOUSE	County	Single Purpose	MU	1.37
LEESPORT OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource		22.27
LEESPORT PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Community	BB, BT, HA, OF, PA, SF, SW, TE, TL	10.39
RACHEL TROIS MEMORIAL PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TL	5.61
			Total	39.64

LOWER ALSACE

ANTIETAM LAKE	Municipal	Natural Resource	BI, FI, HI	479.24
CAMP JOLLY/ LILY	Municipal	Single Purpose	CA, CO, HA, NS, PA	3.72
MT PENN AUTHORITY	Municipal	Natural Resource		40.82
READING LIEDERKRANZ	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, PA	5.39
TRINITY UCC PLAYLOT	Non-Profit	Private Park	TL	3.25
			Total	534.42

MOHNTON

MOHNTON FAMILY SWIMMING ASSOC.	Non-Profit	Private Park	SW	2.35
MOHNTON PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, FI, OF, PA, TL, VB	13.97
MOHNTON SCHOOL TRACT	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, TE	4.10
			Total	20.42

MUHLENBERG

ALSACE LUTHERAN CHURCH PARK	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, SF	7.51
BERNHART'S DAM PARK	Non-Profit	Natural Resource	FI	36.88
BODY WORKS HEALTH AND FITNESS CLUB	Private	Single Purpose		0.40
CALVERY CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, PA, TL	9.62
CHEROKEE RANCH PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TL, VB	4.33
CLIFFHANGERS MOUNTAINEERING	Private	Private Park		0.85
FANTASY ROLLER RINK	Private	Private Park		2.03
FELIX DAM LINEAR PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	FI, HI, NS, PA	9.20
FRANCIS STREET POCKET PARK	Municipal	Natural Resource		3.37
GOOD SHEPARD CHURCH	Non-Profit	Private Park	CO, TL	6.31

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HARTMAN OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource	HI, NS	48.37
HOLY GUARDIAN ANGEL CHURCH	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT	5.87
HYDE PARK PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, OF, PA, TL	1.67
JIM DIETRICH PARK	Municipal	Large Urban	BB, BY, BT, BI, BO, CA, CO, FH, FI, FT, FB, HA, HI, IH, MU, NS, OF, OA, PA, SB, SO	108.76
KIDS PEACE	Private	Private Park	BT, OF, SF, TL	10.04
LAUREL RUN LINEAR PARK	Municipal	Greenway	BI, FI, HI, OF, SO	47.91
LAUREL RUN PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, FI, PA	5.14
LAUREL RUN SWIMMING ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, PA, SW, TE, TL	4.17
LAURELAIN PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BI, HI, SO, TL	12.86
MT. LAUREL AVENUE PARK	Municipal	Natural Resource		0.27
MUHLENBERG RAIL TRAIL	Municipal	Greenway		34.62
MUHLENBERG RECREATION BUILDING	Municipal	Single Purpose	CO	2.89
MUHLENBERG SWIM ASSOC.	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, OF, PA, SW, VB	3.77
MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP BUILDING	Municipal	Single Purpose	CO	2.67
MUHLENBERG TWP. ATHLETIC ASSOC.	Non-Profit	Private Park	BY	2.89
PIONEER GROVE/KELLY'S LOCK	Municipal	Greenway	FI, PA	19.06
READING CREST PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BY, PA, SO, TL	8.51
READING RAILROAD HERITAGE MUSEUM	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	6.97
RIVERDALE MEADOWS PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood		5.66
RIVERSIDE BASIN PARK	Municipal	Large Urban	BI, HI, SR	122.39
ROSEDALE GROVE	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA	14.97
RR TEMPLE STATION	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		0.39
SHELL'S MINIATURE GOLF	Private	Private Park	GM	2.95
SOUTH TEMPLE POCKET PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	PA, TL, VS	6.17
SPRING VALLEY CHURCH OF GOD	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT	18.81
STOUDT'S FERRY PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BY, BT, PA, SO, TL	5.64
TEMPLE FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA	2.54
TEMPLE PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, OF, PA, TL	4.85
WOODEN WAVES SKATE PARK	Private	Private Park	SB	10.74
			Total	602.05

ONTELAUNEE

BLUE FALLS GROVE	Private	Private Park	BO, FI, OF, PA, SW	28.54
LAKE ONTELAUNEE	Municipal	Natural Resource	FI, HI, HU, NS	1018.14
LEESPORT GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA, SR	36.13
ONTELAUNEE MUNICIPAL LAND	Municipal			11.10
ONTELAUNEE OPEN SPACE	Non-Profit	Natural Resource	NS	16.57
ONTELAUNEE OPEN SPACE	Non-Profit	Natural Resource	NS	14.90
OZZY'S SPORTS FUN CENTER	Private	Private Park	GM, IE, PA	9.52
READING SKATE CENTER	Private	Private Park	IH	4.29
SHELLHAMMER RACETRACK	Private	Private Park		7.70
			Total	1146.89

READING

10TH AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, SO, TL, VB	6.35
11TH AND PIKE PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, CO, OF, TL, VB	5.32
13TH AND UNION PLAYGROUND	Non-Profit	Neighborhood	OF, TL	5.18
2ND AND FRANKLIN	Municipal	Mini	PA	0.04
2ND AND OLEY PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	BT, TL	0.59
3RD AND SPRING PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BY, BT, OF, TL	1.81
3RD AND SPRUCE RECREATON AREA	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BY, BT, CO, IF, OF, TE, TL, VB	8.12
4TH AND CHESTNUT	Municipal	Mini	PA	0.02
6TH AND AMITY PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	BB, BY, BT, OF, TL	2.08
AMF HEISTER LANES INC.	Private	Private Park	BW	4.81
ANGELICA PARK	Municipal	Large Urban	FI, IH, OF, PA, TE	83.98
BAER PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BY, BT, PA, SF, TE, TL, VB	7.82
BARBEY'S PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, TL, VB	2.33
BERKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	0.50
BINGAMAN COURT	Municipal	Mini	PA	0.11
BROOKLINE PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TL, VB	3.60
CEDAR STREET PARK	Municipal	Mini	PA	0.32
CENTRE PARK	Municipal	Mini		1.28
CENTRE PARK TRIANGLES	Municipal	Mini		0.20
CITY GARDEN	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		0.14
CITY GARDEN	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		0.10

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CITY GARDEN	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		0.12
CITY GARDEN	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		0.04
CITY GARDEN	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		0.63
CITY GARDEN	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		0.33
CITY GARDEN	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		0.38
CITY PARK/PENN'S COMMONS	Municipal	Community	BT, OA, TL, VB	33.38
COLLEGE MANOR SWIMMING POOL	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, SW, VB	1.26
DANA MEMORIAL PARK	Municipal	Greenway	BI, FI, HI	16.53
DOWNTOWN URBAN SPACE	Municipal	Mini	PA	0.83
E.J. DIVES PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TL, VB	2.65
EAST READING SWIMMING ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, SW, VB	0.66
EGELMAN'S PARK	Municipal	Community	BI,HI, PA	22.16
ESSICK PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	BT, TL, VB	0.54
FIRST ENERGY STADIUM	Municipal	Single Purpose		15.88
FRONT AND SCHILLER PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	BT, TL	0.86
GENESIUS THEATER	Non-Profit	Private Park	IE	0.23
GEORGE FIELD	Non-Profit	School	BB, FB,SO	5.33
GLENSIDE HOUSING PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, TL	1.27
GOGGLE WORKS CENTER FOR THE ARTS	Non-Profit	Community	MU	3.89
HAMPDEN PARK	Municipal	Community	SB, SO, TE	33.06
HERITAGE PARK	Municipal	Greenway	BI, FI, HI	4.43
HILLSIDE OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	21.66
HILLSIDE PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BY, BT, OF, SF, TL	3.15
HILLSIDE SWIM ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, SW, VB	2.62
HORIZON CENTER	Non-Profit	Private Park	CO	0.21
JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, IF, RB, SW, VB	17.35
KEFFER PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BY, BT, CO, TL	2.63
KELSHNER FIELD-ALBRIGHT COLLEGE	Private	School	BB, OF	5.40
LANCE PLACE PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	TL	0.12
MARKET SQUARE	Municipal	Mini	PA	0.29
MINERAL SPRING PARK	Municipal	Community	HI, PA	36.66
MOUNT PENN RESERVE	Municipal	Natural Resource	BI, HI, HB, PA	739.97

NEVERSINK MOUNTAIN RESERVE	Municipal	Natural Resource	BI, HI	53.36
NEVERSINK PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TL	2.99
NINTH AND MARION PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	TL	0.27
NORTHMONT PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BY, BT, OF, TL	3.17
NORTHWEST SWIMMING POOL ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, SW	1.92
OAKBROOK HOUSING PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TL	3.71
OLIVET BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, CO, IF, SW	0.81
PENDORA PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BY, BT, CO, OF, PA, TE, TL, VB	12.02
POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, IF, SW, TL	1.16
READING IRON PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	BT, OF, TL	1.93
READING OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Greenway	BI, FI, HI	30.19
READING PUBLIC MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU, NS	21.72
RIVERDALE PARK	Municipal	Greenway	FI, HI	21.65
RIVERFRONT PARK	Municipal	Greenway	BI, BO, HI, PA	6.85
SCHLEGEL PARK	Municipal	Community	BT, CO, OF, PA, SW, TE, TL	24.34
SOVEREIGN CENTER	Private	Private Park	IE	2.96
SOVEREIGN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER	Private	Private Park	IE	0.64
SPRUCE STREET WALKWAY	Municipal	Greenway	HI	0.80
STONECLIFFE PARK	County	Neighborhood	BT, BI, FI, FT, FB, HI, OF, PA, SB, SO, TL, VB	12.30
STONECLIFFE/READING PASSIVE RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Greenway	BI, FI, PA	10.83
WINDSOR AND RITTER PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TL	5.59
YARNELL PARK	Municipal	Mini	OF	0.70
YMCA-READING	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, HA, IF, RB, SW, VB	1.27
			Total	1330.40
SHILLINGTON				
SHILLINGTON ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	IE, IF	0.22
SHILLINGTON BOROUGH HALL	Municipal		IE	1.03
SHILLINGTON COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER	Municipal	Single Purpose	CO	0.25
SHILLINGTON MEMORIAL PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, BT, FI, IH, NS, OA, PA, SW, TE, TL	62.72
			Total	64.22
SINKING SPRING				
LIBERTY FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF	11.42

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SINKING SPRING HISTORICAL SOCIETY	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	2.71
SINKING SPRING PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, PA, TE, TL, VB	3.23
VILLAGE GREENS GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO	32.13
WILLOW GLEN GROVE	Private	Private Park	PA	21.57
			Total	71.06

SPRING

BERKS LANES/COLONIAL FITNESS & SPORTS	Private	Private Park	BW,IF, RB	9.66
BODY ZONE	Private	Private Park	BT, FH,HA, IH, IF, OF, RB, SO, SW, TE, TR, VB	12.17
BRENAMAN PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TL, VB	4.01
BRENAMAN QUARRY OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource		69.08
CACOOSING MEADOWS RECREATON AREA	Municipal	Large Urban	BB, BT, FI, HI, OF, PA, SO, TL, VB	19.24
CAMP INDIANDALE	Private	Private Park	CA,HI, NS, PA	125.12
CHAPEL HILL GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO, PA	206.37
COLONY PARK PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TE, TL, VB	3.24
CORNWALL TERRACE PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TE, TL, VB	3.36
DENVER AUTHORITY	Municipal	Natural Resource		51.90
DREXELWOOD PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TL, VB	7.15
GAMELANDS 274	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	344.46
GENERAL FRANK'S FIELD-WEST WYO ATHLETIC ASSN	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, OF	4.11
GRING'S MILL RECREATION AREA	County	Community	BI, FI, FT,HI, OF, OA, PA, TE, TL, VB, VS	1.05
GRING'S MILL RECREATION AREA	County	Community	BI, FI, FT,HI, OF, OA, PA, TE, TL, VB, VS	43.69
HERB TEXTER STARLIGHT SKATING	Private	Private Park		3.54
KERRY IRWIN FIELD	Municipal	Mini	BT,	0.49
KLINES CREEK RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TL	8.31
LEN OAK PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	PA, TL	6.23
LINCOLN PARK SWIM ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA, SW, TE	5.47
MANOR GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO	29.19
MANOR GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO, GD, PA	123.35
MIDVALE MANOR PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, OF	2.50
OWLS FIELD	Municipal	Single Purpose	BB	12.26
RED BRIDGE RECREATION AREA	County	Neighborhood	BI, FI, HI, PA, TL	4.90
RED CABOOSE PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, PA, SF, TL, VB	8.03

SHEARER'S GROVE	Private	Private Park	OF, PA	54.82
SHILOH HILLS PARK	Municipal	Large Urban		128.13
SPRING OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	5.64
THE OAKS NATURE PRESERVE	Municipal	Natural Resource	HI	7.96
VINEMONT SPRING	Municipal			17.31
WERNER FARM OS	Municipal	Natural Resource	HI	11.58
WEST LAWN PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	OA, PA, TL	1.17
WILSHIRE RECREATION ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	SW, TL	4.22
			Total	1339.71

WEST READING

BERTOLET FISHING DOCK	Municipal	Mini	FI	0.31
SCOTTISH RITE CATHEDRAL	Private	Private Park	IE	6.63
WEST READING PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Community	BB, BY, BT, BI, FI, HI, OF, PA, SW, TL, TR	18.76
			Total	25.70

WYOMISSING

BERKS LEISURE AREA	County	Neighborhood	BI,HI, NS, PA	9.27
BERKS LEISURE AREA	County	Neighborhood	BI,HI, NS, PA	0.45
BERKS TENNIS CLUB	Private	Private Park	TE	1.58
BERKSHIRE HEIGHTS PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TL	12.26
FOUNTAIN PARK	Municipal	Mini		1.32
HAPPY HOLLOW PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, PA, TE, TL	7.50
JACK RABBITT HILL	Non-Profit	Private Park	NS	6.81
LA FITNESS	Private	Sports Complex	IF	3.65
LAUERS RUN PARK	Municipal	Greenway		9.39
READING ROCKS/ GOLD'S GYM	Private	Private Park		11.78
WYOMISSING COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, SF, TL	1.86
WYOMISSING CREEK TRAIL	Municipal	Greenway	BT, BI, FI, HI, IH, MU, NS, OF, OA, PA	19.69
WYOMISSING HEALTH CLUB	Private	Private Park	IF	2.24
WYOMISSING HILLS PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TL	11.52
WYOMISSING HILLS SWIM ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	SW	1.84
WYOMISSING OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource		30.00
WYOMISSING PARK	Municipal	Greenway	BT, BI, FI, HI, IH, MU, NS, OF, OA, PA	163.30

Total	294.46

*Refer to table below for abbreviation interpretation

BB	Baseball	FT	Fitness	IE	Indoor Entertainment	SD	Skiing – Downhill
BY	Baseball – Youth	FB	Football	IF	Indoor Fitness	SX	Skiing – Cross Country
BT	Basketball	GO	Golf	MU	Museum	SO	Soccer
BI	Biking	GD	Golf – Driving Range	NS	Nature Study	SF	Softball
BO	Boating	GM	Golf – Miniature	OF	Open Field sports	SW	Swimming
BW	Bowling	HA	Handicapped Accessible	OA	Outdoor Amphitheatre	TE	Tennis
CA	Camping	HI	Hiking	PA	Picnic Area	TL	Tot-Lot
CO	Community Ctr.	HB	Horse Back	RB	Racquetball	TR	Track
FH	Field Hockey	HU	Hunting	SR	Shooting Range	VB	Volleyball
FI	Fishing	IH	Ice Hockey	SB	Skate Board	VS	Volleyball – Sand

Oley Hills Region: Recreational Facilities Inventory

MUNICIPALITY/FACILITY	OWNER	PARK TYPE	FACILITIES*	ACREAGE
ALSACE				
ALSACE STATE FOREST	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	32.86
ALSACE TOWNSHIP PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BY,PA, TL, VB	3.48
GASSER'S GOLF	Private	Private Park	GD, GM	14.96
GRAND SLAM SPORTS COMPLEX	Private	Private Park		4.12
OLEY VALLEY FISH AND GAME	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI,HU, PA	42.31
POOLE SANCTUARY	Non-Profit	Private Park	NS	51.51
			Total	149.24
BALLY				
BALLY GOODWILL FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF	5.44
LEONARD MELCHER PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	OF, PA, SW, TE	8.51
			Total	13.95
BECHTELSVILLE				
BECHTELSVILLE PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, HI, NS, OF, PA, TE, TL	12.43
			Total	12.43
BOYERTOWN				
BOYERTOWN COMMUNITY LIBRARY	Municipal		IE	0.12
BOYERTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY	Private	Private Park	MU	0.21
BOYERTOWN MUSEUM - HISTORIC VEHICLES	Non-Profit	Single Purpose	MU	1.67
BOYERTOWN MUSEUM - HISTORIC VEHICLES	Private	Private Park	MU	1.67
BOYERTOWN PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, BT,HI, IH, OF, OA, PA, SW, TL	44.70
BOYERTOWN PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	OF	1.59
FRANKLIN MINIPARK	Municipal	Mini	BT,TL	0.34
SALVATION ARMY	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT	0.22
YMCA-BOYERTOWN	Non-Profit	Private Park	IF, PA	1.27
			Total	51.79

5.2 – Oley Hills Region
Facilities Inventory

COLEBROOKDALE

BAHR'S MILL	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	6.30
CHURCH OF GOD CAMPGROUND	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA, OF, PA	31.00
GABLESVILLE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, CO,OF	4.30
LIBERTY PARK	Municipal	Mini	OA, PA	1.49
SCHLEGELS GROVE	Private	Private Park	CA, FI,HI	43.96
			Total	87.05

DISTRIC

GAMELANDS 315	State	Natural Resource	FI,HI, HU	116.95
GORDON PARK	Municipal	Community	BB,PA, TE, TL, VS	54.42
PINE CREEK OPEN SPACE	Non-Profit	Private Park	NS	43.87
			Total	215.24

EARL

BOYERTOWN RESERVOIR	Municipal	Natural Resource		449.24
BOYERTOWN ROD AND GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU, SR	86.72
DELAWARE VALLEY CHRISTIAN CAMP	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA, FI,OF, PA	81.34
EARL MUNICIPAL PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, HI, NS, OF, PA, TL	70.95
PHEASANTLAND ROLLER DOME	Private	Private Park		5.75
			Total	694.00

HEREFORD

CAMP MENSCH MILLS	Non-Profit	Private Park	BI, CA, FI,HI, HU, OF, PA, SW	69.51
CAMP SERRANOVA	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA,OF, PA, SW	80.27
GAMELANDS 315	State	Natural Resource	FI, HI, HU	29.55
HEREFORD ESTATES RECREATION PARK	Municipal	Mini	BT, TE, TL	1.66
HEREFORD GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Single Purpose	HU, SR	10.28
HEREFORD RECREATION CENTER	Municipal	Community	BT, CO, HA, OF, PA, TE, TL	15.30
HUFF CHURCH MEMORIAL PARK	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA	34.17
MAGYAR HUNGARIAN SPORTS CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA,SW	122.05
SEISCHOLTZVILLE FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF	3.43
TOLLGATE FISHING PARK	Municipal	Natural Resource	FI,PA	15.94
UPPER HANOVER AUTHORITY	Municipal	Natural Resource		2.97
			Total	385.13

LONGSWAMP

BEAR CREEK SKI AREA	Private	Private Park	SD, SW	308.96
HUNSICKER'S GROVE	County	Single Purpose	FI,PA, VS	48.04
LONGSWAMP PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, BT, HI, OF, PA, SO, TE, TL, VB	31.60
MERTZTOWN ROD AND GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU, PA, SR	26.16
OREVILLE KART TRACK	Private	Private Park		5.31
SKYLINE STABLES	Private	Private Park	HB	57.87
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH PLAYGROUND	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT,OF, PA	14.69
TOPTON AUTHORITY WATERSHED	Municipal	Natural Resource		231.79
TOPTON FISH AND GAME	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI,SR	54.96
			Total	779.38

OLEY

AMERICAN LEGION GROVE	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA	9.72
FRIEDEN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT,OF, VB	8.35
NEW LIFE BIBLE CHURCH	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF	6.31
OLEY FAIRGROUNDS	Non-Profit	Private Park		0.36
OLEY FIRE COMPANY GROUNDS	Non-Profit	Private Park	BW, OA, PA	15.32
OLEY VALLEY YOUTH LEAGUE	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, BY, FH, SO, SF	18.86
READING MOTORCYCLE CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park		23.31
VOLUNTEERS PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	PA	13.25
			Total	95.48

PIKE

HILL CHURCH GROVE	Non-Profit	Private Park	OA, PA	56.63
PIKE TOWNSHIP SPORTSMAN ASSOC.	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI, HU	89.59
ST. PAUL'S LOBACHSVILLE CHURCH GROVE	Non-Profit	Private Park	OA, PA	10.34
			Total	156.56

ROCKLAND

ROCKLAND ROD AND GUN	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU, SR	8.51
			Total	8.51

RUSCOMBMANOR

EVERGREEN COUNTRY CLUB	Private	Private Park	OF, PA	30.80
FLEETWOOD AUTHORITY	Municipal	Natural Resource		184.13

5.2 – Oley Hills Region
Facilities Inventory

GOLDEN OAKS COUNTRY CLUB	Private	Private Park	GO, GD	169.40
HOBBY HORSE RANCH	Private	Private Park	HB	49.00
JIM MOORE PARK	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI, PA	33.88
MAIDEN CREEK AUTHORITY	Municipal	Natural Resource		124.07
MAIDENCREEK FISH AND GAME CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU	84.34
PRICETOWN RIFLE ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	SR	22.88
RUEBEN STRAUSS PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, OF, PA, TE, TL	13.21
Total				711.71

TOPTON

TOPTON COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, OF, PA, SW, TE, TL	10.17
Total				10.17

WASHINGTON

BALLY SPORTSMEN	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU, PA	8.02
BARTO COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	OF	9.46
GAMELANDS 315	State	Natural Resource	FI, HI, HU	164.23
GRANDVIEW SPEEDWAY	Private	Private Park		35.05
Total				216.76

*Refer to table below for abbreviation interpretation

BB	Baseball	FT	Fitness	IE	Indoor Entertainment	SD	Skiing – Downhill
BY	Baseball – Youth	FB	Football	IF	Indoor Fitness	SX	Skiing – Cross Country
BT	Basketball	GO	Golf	MU	Museum	SO	Soccer
BI	Biking	GD	Golf – Driving Range	NS	Nature Study	SF	Softball
BO	Boating	GM	Golf – Miniature	OF	Open Field sports	SW	Swimming
BW	Bowling	HA	Handicapped Accessible	OA	Outdoor Amphitheatre	TE	Tennis
CA	Camping	HI	Hiking	PA	Picnic Area	TL	Tot-Lot
CO	Community Ctr.	HB	Horse Back	RB	Racquetball	TR	Track
FH	Field Hockey	HU	Hunting	SR	Shooting Range	VB	Volleyball
FI	Fishing	IH	Ice Hockey	SB	Skate Board	VS	Volleyball – Sand

Southern Highlands Region: Recreational Facilities Inventory

MUNICIPALITY/FACILITY	OWNER	PARK TYPE	FACILITIES*	ACREAGE
AMITY				
AMITY ATHLETIC CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, PA, SW, TE	27.02
AMITY COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Community	HI, OF, TE, TL	44.60
AMITY GARDENS POOL	Non-Profit	Private Park	SW	13.37
AMITY PARK ROAD RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Neighborhood	SO	6.98
AMITY SCHUYLKILL RIVER OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Greenway		32.27
ARROWHEAD GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO, PA	212.30
CIDER MILL OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Greenway	NS	11.02
GREENBRIAR OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Greenway	HI	31.85
HILL ROAD RECREATION	Municipal	Neighborhood	BY, OF, PA	8.07
KRAMER'S GOLF ACADEMY	Private	Private Park	GO	18.49
LAKE DRIVE PARK AND RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Community	BB, BY, BT, HI, OF, PA, TE, TL	22.45
LOCUST GROVE OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Greenway		1.41
LOCUST GROVE RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Mini	BT, PA, TL	0.41
MARY MERRITTS DOLL MUSEUM	Private	Private Park	MU	5.81
MARY MERRITTS MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD	Private	Private Park	MU	1.76
MONOCACY HILL RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Natural Resource	BI, HI, HB, HU, NS, PA	428.30
MYRON S. WHEELER RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Neighborhood	BY, OF, PA	5.52
OLD AIRPORT ROAD OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	11.99
OLD MORLATTON VILLAGE	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	14.17
WEST RIDGE OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Greenway	HI	23.24
WOODS EDGE OPEN SPACE	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, SO	19.54
			Total	940.57
BIRDSBORO				
AQUABILITIES	Private	Private Park	SW	4.15
MAIN BIRD	Municipal	Mini	FI, PA, TL	4.38
BIRDSBORO COMMUNITY CENTER	Municipal	Single Purpose	BT, CO, IF	0.67
BIRDSBORO OS1	Municipal	Natural Resource		13.27

5.2 – Southern Highlands
Region Facilities Inventory

BIRDSBORO OS2	Municipal	Natural Resource		3.44
BIRDSBORO VEST POCKET PARK	Municipal	Mini	PA, TE, TL	1.15
LINCOLN PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	TL	0.35
OPTIMIST FIELD	Municipal	Single Purpose	BB	3.15
RUSTIC PICNIC AREA	Municipal	Community	BT, FI, OF, PA, TL, VB	22.76
TEXAS FIELD	Municipal	Single Purpose	BY	5.02
			Total	58.34

BRECKNOCK

CAMP ADAHI	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, BY, CA, FI, NS, OF, PA, SW	105.30
GAMELANDS 52	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	1170.09
MAPLE GROVE RACEWAY	Private	Private Park	CA, OF, PA, TL	449.92
PENN SYLVAN HEALTH CAMP	Private	Private Park	CA, FI, NS, PA, SW	77.54
			Total	1802.85

CAERNARVON

CAERNARVON COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, TL	5.53
FRIENDSHIP FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, OA	1.43
GAMELANDS 43	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	5.69
GAMELANDS 52	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	104.34
MORGAN CIRCLE	Municipal	Mini		1.78
MORGANTOWN ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB	2.64
PENNWOOD OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Community	HI, SO	57.18
SOUTH STREET PARK	Municipal	Mini	TE	0.32
TWIN VALLEY FOOTBALL INC	Non-Profit	Single Purpose	FB	31.41
TWIN VALLEY SWIM CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, SW	8.37
TWIN VALLEY YMCA	Non-Profit			19.21
			Total	237.90

DOUGLASS

CATACOMBS CHURCH	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, OF	5.98
DOUGLASS TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BY, BT, PA, SF, TE, TL	15.19
GANSHAWAWNY PARK	Municipal	Natural Resource		6.20
GLENDALE SWIMMING POOL	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, PA, SW	7.79
GOOSE RUN	Municipal	Natural Resource	HU	88.65
IRONSTONE PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, BT, FI, HI, OF, PA, TL	26.08

J LANES	Private	Single Purpose	BW	1.94
PINE FORGE SPORTSMAN'S CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU	58.75
			Total	210.58

EXETER

ANTIETAM VALLEY RECREATION/COMMUNITY CENTER	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, CO, OF, PA, SW, TL	24.16
BERKS NEVERSINK	County	Natural Resource		36.23
BOWLORAMA	Private	Private Park	BW, IE	5.26
CRESTWOOD PARK	Municipal	Mini	OF	1.01
CRESTWOOD SWIM CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA, SW	4.94
DANIEL BOONE HOMESTEAD	State	Single Purpose	HI, MU, PA	494.22
DANIEL BOONE ROD AND GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI,SR	43.52
DUNN COMMUNITY CENTER	Municipal	Community	CO,HI, PA, TL, VB	32.08
EXETER COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Community	BT, HI, OF, PA, TE, TL, VB	26.43
EXETER DESILTING BASIN	State	Natural Resource	FI, HI, NS	151.40
EXETER LITTLE LEAGUE	Non-Profit	Private Park	BY	29.65
EXETER OPEN SPACE	Municipal			65.83
FARMING RIDGE PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, TE	7.79
HILLCREST RAQUET CLUB	Private	Private Park	TE	14.91
HUNTERS RUN	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	41.39
LORANE HOLLOW	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TE, TL	11.86
MOUNTAIN PARK	Municipal	Mini	BT, PA, TL	2.64
NEVERSINK ROD AND GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	SR	13.64
OLD FARM PARK	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	10.64
PAGODA MOTORCYCLE CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA	19.95
PINELAND PARK	Municipal		BB, BT,HI, OF, PA, SO, TL, VB	72.83
READING COUNTRY CLUB GOLF COURSE	Municipal	Private Park	GO	133.02
SOUTH END GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	SR	56.59
ST LAWRENCE AUTHORITY WATERSHED	Municipal	Natural Resource		249.08
STONERSVILLE FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, BY	11.89
STONEY CREEK ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit		SW	4.76
TROUT RUN SPORTS COMPLEX	Municipal	Large Urban	OF, PA	116.80
UNIVERSITY RIFLE CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	SR	18.17
VALHALLA FITNESS CENTER	Private	Single Purpose	IF	1.90

5.2 – Southern Highlands
Region Facilities Inventory

VENZKE DRIVING RANGE	Private	Private Park	GD, GM	16.11
			Total	1718.70

ROBESON

ALLEGHENY AQUEDUCT HISTORICAL PARK	County	Single Purpose	MU	34.88
BIRDSBORO WATERSHED	Municipal	Natural Resource		1141.55
CACOOSING GUN CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA, SR	47.11
FRENCH CREEK STATE PARK	State	Natural Resource	BI, BO, CA, FI,HA, HI, HB, HU, NS, OA, PA, SW, TL	235.40
FRIENDSHIP FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB	2.85
GAMELANDS 43	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	100.35
GIBRALTER PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT,OF, PA, TL, VB	9.11
GREEN HILLS GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO	124.66
GREEN HILLS SPORTS CAMP	Private	Private Park	PA, SR, SB, SO	13.90
GREENHILLS LAKE	Non-Profit	Single Purpose		38.02
HIGH POINT CHAP. CHURCH CAMP	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, CA, FI,HB, SW	223.15
JOANNA FURNACE	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	22.08
PLOWVILLE EVANG. LUTHERAN CHURCH BALLFIELD	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB	15.21
ROBESON TOWNSHIP BUILDING BALLFIELDS	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB,OF	9.68
SCHUYLKILL CANAL	State		MU	8.32
SLEEPY HOLLOW ATHLETIC CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT,OF, SW, TL, VB	21.41
ST. BENEDICT PICNIC GROVE	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, PA	13.33
THUN TRAIL	Non-Profit	Private Park	BI,HI	76.86
			Total	2137.87

ST. LAWRENCE

KOLLINTZAS MINIATURE GOLF	Private	Single Purpose	GM	1.04
ST. LAWRENCE PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Mini	BT,OF, TE, TL	1.62
WORLD'S GYM	Private	Private Park	IF	15.22
			Total	17.88

UNION

BIRDSBORO ARCH/ROD/GUN CLUB	Private	Private Park	HU, SR	50.7
BIRDSBORO WATERSHED	Municipal	Natural Resource		608
BLACKWOOD GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO, GD, GM, PA	220.79
FRENCH CREEK STATE PARK	State	Natural Resource	BI, BO, CA, FI,HA, HI, HB, HU, NS, OA, PA, SW, TL	5703.28

GAMELANDS 43	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	75.10
HOPEWELL FURNACE	Federal	Single Purpose	MU	537.34
KULPTOWN FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	PA	3.55
MAPLE GROVE PARK	Municipal	Natural Resource	NS	1.38
MAPLE SPRINGS SWIMMING ASSOCIATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT,PA, SW	3.55
UNION TOWNSHIP RECREATION AREA	Municipal	Large Urban	BB	153.67
			Total	7255.96

*Refer to table below for abbreviation interpretation

BB	Baseball	FT	Fitness	IE	Indoor Entertainment	SD	Skiing – Downhill
BY	Baseball – Youth	FB	Football	IF	Indoor Fitness	SX	Skiing – Cross Country
BT	Basketball	GO	Golf	MU	Museum	SO	Soccer
BI	Biking	GD	Golf – Driving Range	NS	Nature Study	SF	Softball
BO	Boating	GM	Golf – Miniature	OF	Open Field sports	SW	Swimming
BW	Bowling	HA	Handicapped Accessible	OA	Outdoor Amphitheatre	TE	Tennis
CA	Camping	HI	Hiking	PA	Picnic Area	TL	Tot-Lot
CO	Community Ctr.	HB	Horse Back	RB	Racquetball	TR	Track
FH	Field Hockey	HU	Hunting	SR	Shooting Range	VB	Volleyball
FI	Fishing	IH	Ice Hockey	SB	Skate Board	VS	Volleyball – Sand

Tulpehocken Region: Recreational Facilities Inventory

MUNICIPALITY/FACILITY	OWNER	PARK TYPE	FACILITIES*	ACREAGE
BERNVILLE				
CLAY PARK	Municipal	Mini	FI	1.87
BLUE MARSH LAKE	Federal	Natural Resource	BI, BO, FI, HI, HB, HU, MU, NS, PA, SX, SW	45.57
UMBENHAUER PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	FI, OA, PA	10.8
WESTERN BERKS SWIM ASSOC	Non-Profit	Private Park	SW	1.44
			Total	59.68
BETHEL				
BETHEL BEAGLE CLUB	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU	121.8
BETHEL FIRE COMPANY BALL	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF	5.39
BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA, HI, NS	156.85
CAMP SWATARA	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA, FI, HU, OF, SW	706.2
FRYSTOWN FIRE COMPANY	Non-Profit	Private Park	OF, PA, TL	2.74
FRYSTOWN LIONS CHARITIES	Non-Profit	Community	BB, PA	2.07
GAMELANDS 80	State	Natural Resource	CA, FI, HI, HU, NS	1480.97
GAMELANDS 110	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	273.01
LEBANON VALLEY MOTORCYCL	Non-Profit	Private Park		15.46
NORTHWEST BERKS ROD/GUN	Non-Profit	Private Park	SR	19.13
WEISER STATE FOREST	State	Natural Resource	CA, FI, HI, HU, NS	144.49
APPALACHIAN TRAIL	Federal	Greenway	CA, HI	922.52
			Total	3850.63
HEIDELBERG				
CONRAD WEISER HOMESTEAD	State	Single Purpose	IH, MU, PA	24.62
HEIDELBERG FUN LOT	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TL, VB	4.63
CHARMING FORGE	State	Natural Resource	BO, FI, NS	22.42
ROBESONIA FISH AND GAME	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI, HU, PA, SR	26.22
ROBESONIA SWIMMING ASSOC	Non-Profit	Private Park	SW	2.1
WOMELSDORF WATER AUTH.	Municipal	Natural Resource		1176.56
			Total	1256.55

5.2 Tulpehocken Region
Facilities Inventory

JEFFERSON

BLUE MARSH LAKE	Federal	Natural Resource	BI, BO, FI, HI, HB, HU, MU, NS, PA, SX, SW	56.22
CHRISTMAS VILLAGE	Private	Private Park		142.56
HEIDELBERG COUNTRY CLUB	Private	Private Park	GO, HI, HB, IH, SW, TE	144.88
JEFFERSON PARK	Municipal	Community	BY, OF, PA, SO	32.7
KISSLING'S FIELD	Private	Private Park	SF	23.47
			Total	399.83

LOWER HEIDELBERG

BLUE MARSH LAKE	Federal	Natural Resource	BI, BO, FI, HI, HB, HU, MU, NS, PA, SX, SW	1957.04
CALVARY BIBLE CHURCH	Non-Profit	Private Park	VS	46.97
DRY ROAD FARM	Federal	Single Purpose	CA, HI, HB, MU, NS	227.33
GAMELANDS 280	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	363.73
GREEN VALLEY C/C	Private	Private Park	BT, PA, SW, TE, TL, VB	52.66
GREEN VALLEY ESTATES OS	Non-Profit	Private Park	TL	14.17
HAIN'S CHURCH	Non-Profit	Private Park	BB, OA, PA, TL	61.51
SADDLEBROOK VILLAGE	Non-Profit	Private Park		9.76
WESTBURY DEVELOPMENT OS	Non-Profit	Private Park		62.99
			Total	2796.16

MARION

MARION PLAYGROUND	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, OF, PA, TE	5.88
MARION TWP. ROD/GUN	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU, PA, SR	20.42
			Total	26.3

NORTH HEIDELBERG

BLUE MARSH LAKE	Federal	Natural Resource	BI, BO, FI, HI, HB, HU, MU, NS, PA, SX, SW	1418.69
N HEIDELBERG OPEN SPACE	Municipal	Single Purpose		20.68
			Total	1439.37

PENN

BLUE MARSH LAKE	Federal	Natural Resource	BI, BO, FI, HI, HB, HU, MU, NS, PA, SX, SW	1031.85
BLUE MTN. WILDERNESS ASSOC.	Non-Profit	Private Park	NS	34.22
GAMELANDS 280	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	1859.73
NORTHKILL ROD/GUN	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU	36.95
PENN TOWNSHIP PARK	Municipal	Community	BT, TE	36.14

5.2 – Tulpehocken Region
Facilities Inventory

Total	2998.89
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ROBESONIA

FRIENDS OF ROBESONIA FUR	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	3.74
FURNACE TRIANGLE PARK	Municipal	Mini	FI, NS, PA	1.81
HENRY P. ROBINSON MEMORI	Municipal	Mini		0.06
ROBESONIA RECREATION PAR	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, IH, OF, PA, TE, TL	5.27
Total				10.88

SOUTH HEIDELBERG

BELLE ALTO PARK	Municipal	Mini	TL	0.34
BERKS COUNTY HOCKEY	Private	Private Park		2.02
BROOKVILLE HOMEOWNERS	Non-Profit	Private Park		2.67
CUSHION PEAK ROD AND GUN	Non-Profit	Private Park	HI, PA	138.14
GALEN HALL GOLF COURSE	Private	Private Park	GO, PA	121.45
HEIDELBERG RUN O/S	Non-Profit	Private Park		72.05
HOSPITAL AUTHORITY WATER	State	Natural Resource		410.55
GAMELANDS 280	State	Natural Resource	HI, HU, NS	363.73
LEBANON VALLEY SPORTSMEN	Non-Profit	Private Park	HU	141.47
PAGODA GOLF	Private	Private Park	GD, GM	23.83
SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARK	Municipal	Community	BB, BT, IH, OF, PA, TE, TL	18.8
SPRING MEADOWS PARK	Municipal	Mini	BT, PA, TL	1.71
SPRING VALLEY ATHLETIC	Private	Private Park	TE	4.29
WERNERSVILLE AUTHORITY	Municipal	Natural Resource		196.49
YMCA, CAMP CONRAD WEISER	Non-Profit	Private Park	BT, CA, HI, HB, NS, OF, OA	417.56
Total				1915.1

TULPEHOCKEN

CAMP CALVARY	Non-Profit	Private Park	CA	83.31
MOUNT AETNA LIONS CLUB	Non-Profit	Community	BB, PA	0.89
MT AETNA RESCUE FIRE CO	Non-Profit		BB, PA	4.38
REHRERSBURG LIONS CLUB	Municipal	Mini	PA, SF	3.31
Total				91.89

WERNERSVILLE

HEIDELBERG HERITAGE	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	0.77
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5.2 Tulpehocken Region
Facilities Inventory

WERNERSVILLE PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	BB, BT, OF, PA, TE, VB	7.99
WERNERSVILLE PLAYLOT	Municipal	Mini	OF, TE, TL	1.52
WERNERSVILLE TRAIN STATION	Non-Profit	Private Park	MU	0.07
			Total	10.35

WOMELSDORF

MILL SPRINGS RECREATION	Municipal	Neighborhood	BT, PA, TL	2.72
WOMELSDORF BOROUGH HALL	Municipal	Single Purpose	CO	0.09
WOMELSDORF COMMUNITY PARK	Municipal	Neighborhood	FI, PA, TL	4.2
WOMELSDORF MITEY MITE BB	Municipal	Single Purpose	BB, BY, OF	2.43
WOMELSDORF ROD/GUN	Non-Profit	Private Park	FI, HU	1.24
WOMELSDORF SWIM ASSOC	Municipal	Single Purpose	SW	13.39
			Total	24.07

*Refer to table below for abbreviation interpretation

BB	Baseball	FT	Fitness	IE	Indoor Entertainment	SD	Skiing – Downhill
BY	Baseball – Youth	FB	Football	IF	Indoor Fitness	SX	Skiing – Cross Country
BT	Basketball	GO	Golf	MU	Museum	SO	Soccer
BI	Biking	GD	Golf – Driving Range	NS	Nature Study	SF	Softball
BO	Boating	GM	Golf – Miniature	OF	Open Field sports	SW	Swimming
BW	Bowling	HA	Handicapped Accessible	OA	Outdoor Amphitheatre	TE	Tennis
CA	Camping	HI	Hiking	PA	Picnic Area	TL	Tot-Lot
CO	Community Ctr.	HB	Horse Back	RB	Racquetball	TR	Track
FH	Field Hockey	HU	Hunting	SR	Shooting Range	VB	Volleyball
FI	Fishing	IH	Ice Hockey	SB	Skate Board	VS	Volleyball – Sand

5.2 – Tulpehocken Region
Facilities Inventory



Appendix 5.3

GIS Process

Chapter 5.3 GIS Process

NLT Smart Conservation Model/ Berks County Ecological Element Methodology

Introduction:

As part of the update for the Berks County Greenways Parks and Recreation Plan, a conservation landscape design was constructed with the result being an ecological network, which served to maintain biodiversity in Berks County and connect to additional areas in the Northern Piedmont of Pennsylvania. This landscape design was conducted using the Smart Conservation model proposed by the Natural Lands Trust. Over the course of 2 years a steering committee of environmental experts from Berks County worked with the Planning Commission, and the Natural Lands Trust to develop an ecological network consisting of Hubs and Corridors. This network was constructed using GIS datasets of protected lands from Berks County, PNDI Natural Areas Inventory, and Conservation Resource layers including Penn State/ERRI/PA Gap project data. What follows is a step-by-step explanation of the process that we followed, including a flow chart from the Natural Lands Trust and mapping which demonstrates the numerous steps involved.

Data Sets:

The NLT Smart Conservation methodology needed three main data layers in which to operate the Model. A ranked protected lands dataset was provided by the Planning Commission. An updated PNDI dataset was used from the Nature Conservancy and ranked by the Natural Lands Trust, and the Natural Lands Trust provided comprehensive Conservation Resource layer.

The Conservation Resource data layer consisted of numerous datasets from the Natural Lands Trust (NLT), which were constructed for the entire Northern Piedmont of Pennsylvania.

These conservation data layers from NLT can be broken down into four subgroups.

The first subgroup called “Potential Vertebrate Habitat” consists of data layers from the Penn State/ERRI/ Pennsylvania Gap project. According to NLT, “ In 2001 PSU/ERRI released their habitat modeling layers to *predict* where vertebrate species are most likely to be found in Pennsylvania according to land cover, species range and other habitat determinants, such as elevation, topography or other mapable spatial determinants. NLT, using these datasets embarked on the “Smart Conservation” project which “convened “Expert Taxa Advisory Groups” which ranked 4 taxa groups (Birds, Mammals, Fish, Herps) according to their Conservation Value. This extensive process began by removing any non-native species or any species not endemic to Pennsylvania Piedmont region, ranking for each species (1-10) according to its conservation value, and then assembling all values by species into its respective taxa group. The Conservation Value was “derived by considering various aspects of a species role in the ecosystem, such as whether it is a keystone species, sensitive to disturbance, fragmentation, or whether it is overabundant. General population trends were also considered, while population size was also a consideration if such information was known.” (NLT Smart Conservation Greensweep 2004) The final Potential Vertebrate Habitat layers quantiled 1-10 are shown by Taxa Group on Map 1.

The second subgroup was called the Aquatic Habitat Subgroup. This group was assembled using numerous water-associated datasets. These datasets included Water Quality (DEP 303d list), National Wetland Inventory (NWI), Hydric Soils, Floodplains, Forested Water Quality, Riparian Buffer Quality, Headwaters Protection, Impervious Cover 2000 and Impervious Cover Change 1985-2000. NLT scored each one of these datasets, many with the help of the Aquatics Advisory Group. The combined datasets were then quantiled (1-10) with the resulting dataset shown on map 2.

The third subgroup, called Terrestrial Resources, also can be found on Map 2. This subgroup consisted of numerous terrestrial layers such as Steep Slopes, Interior Forest Habitat, Natural Vegetation Habitat Blocks, Contiguous Grassland Habitat, and Contiguous Barren-Transitional (Scrub-Shrub) Habitat. These datasets were also ranked and then quantiled on a 1-10 score.

The final subgroup consists of the PNDI Natural Areas Inventory, which is conducted by the Nature Conservancy of Pennsylvania by County. This data was then scored using specific methodology by the Natural Lands Trust. “The Nature Conservancy (TNC’s) explicit procedures for ranking and maintaining data on rare species and natural communities have made possible the use of a more sophisticated method of assigning rarity value.” The process developed by the Natural Lands Trust “uses three measures to arrive at a composite rarity ranking; the rarest element, the number of rare elements, and a weighted average element-occurrence score” (NLT Rarity Assessment- Criteria and Methodology 2003).

These four subgroups were combined into a single “Conservation Resource Layer”. The breakdown of this layer (Table 1) shows that each subgroup was not weighted equally. The Potential Vertebrate Habitat consists of 22.34% of the score, the Aquatic Resource group consists of 40.52% of the group, and the Terrestrial Resource group is 17.14% of the group. PNDI consists of the final 20%. Combined these layers account for 100%. This layer formed one third of the 3 main layers used in this ecological assessment.

The second main data layer was the PNDI Natural Areas Inventory discussed above. In addition to being 20% of the Conservation Resource layer, this was used as a separate layer in the Smart Conservation Model process. NLT used the 2003 Berks County PNDI update from the Nature Conservancy and inserted this scored dataset into the Northern Piedmont layer.

The final data layer consisted of over 500 parks, recreation, and passive open space parcels which were extracted from the Berks County Mapping Department’s Tax parcel database. Additional conservation easements from the Berks County Conservancy and adjacent land preservation groups were also added. Agricultural land preservation easements held by the State, County or local conservancy were specifically not included in this analysis. These data layers were then attributed as to the ownership, park type, and activity. The Berks County Planning Commission staff then ranked these parcels on a 1-10 scale similar to the ranking produced by the Natural Lands Trust for their Model. Because of the comprehensive nature of this inventory (the most comprehensive to date), the ranking that the Planning Commission provided did override the NLT protected lands datasets for the Northern Piedmont in Berks County.

1. The Initial idea of this plan came out of our Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2003. Three areas identified on the Plan illustrated Permanent Open Space, Rural Conservation, and Environmental Hazards (Floodplains). These three general categories are shown on Data Frame #1 on the enclosed Map.
2. BCPC decided that the Rural Conservation Area was adequate, but did not provide enough detail as to the most ecological sensitive areas in the county (the best of the best). We applied for and received money from DCNR to conduct our Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan, which is an update of our Open Space and Recreation Plan adopted in 1994. As part of our Scope of work we included a contract with the Natural Lands Trust (NLT) to assist us in developing the Green Infrastructure piece of the Plan using their “Smart Conservation” Model.
3. BCPC conducted a kick off meeting at Nolde S.P. at which Clare Billet of NLT discussed the Smart Conservation Model and the role that each piece (Protected Lands, PNDI- rare species, and Conservation Resources) played in the model. Handouts illustrated the Protected Lands Values, Generating PNDI Scores and Developing the Conservation Resources Values for Terrestrial, Aquatic, and 4 Taxa Groups (Mammals,

Fish, Birds, and Herps). BCPC sent our “clip” layer of the Project Area (one municipality deep adjacent to Berks County) to NLT.

4. BCPC generated our “Protected Lands” GIS dataset with assigned values of protected land based upon its level of ecological protectedness. These values were almost identical to the one proposed by NLT/ Expert Advisory Committee. This dataset was forwarded to NLT.

The following are the weights given for the “protected lands” within and adjacent to the County.

Value attribute within both shapefiles:

Federal Land Fee Simple	10
State Land Fee Simple	9
County Land Fee Simple	8
Non- Profit Fee Simple	7
Non- Profit Easements	6
Municipal Fee Simple (Natural)	5
Municipal Authority Fee Simple	3
Municipal Fee Simple (Active/Natural Combo)	3
Not for Profit Fee Simple (Natural)	2
Municipal Fee Simple (Active)	1
Not for Profit Fee Simple (Active)	1

5. BCPC forwarded to NLT an updated PNDI dataset from the Fall of 2003. NLT calculated the PNDI Scores based upon their methodology.

6. NLT with assistance from their subcontractor, Avencia Inc., sent all data used in developing their Smart Conservation Model of Hub development to BCPC. This included Updated PNDI datasets, our “Protected Lands” Dataset and all the datasets, which their Conservation Resources layer was based. In addition, 2 Draft Hub layers were also sent along with the Model used to develop them. One draft Hub layer used the top 10% of Conservation Resources, in addition to the other 2 layers,

Protected Lands and PNDI; the other used the “standard” top 20% of conservation resources with the other 2 layers.

7. BCPC decided that certain edits were needed, and that the Hub Layers using either 10% or 20% would need to be further refined with the help of the Steering Committee.

8. First, all existing development, roads, and Future or Designated Growth Areas from our Vision 2020 Plan were removed from the PNDI and the Conservation Resources Layer. This was discussed previously with NLT due to the pace of development in Berks County and the age of the Conservation Resources Dataset (early 1990’s).

9. Second, a new dataset was constructed using NLT methodology; these 2 edited layers, and the Protected Lands dataset. We felt at this time that with equal weight to PNDI and Protected Lands the Conservation Values were not being accentuated and in addition, the weight of all three overlaid together was not being represented. Therefore, we decided to create a new layer that would illustrate this concern and discuss this problem with the Steering Committee. This new layer used the same 3 layers but weights Conservation Resources 50%, with PNDI and Protected Lands being weighted 25% each. These 3 layers were then “summed”, and then reclassified into a 1-10 Quantile. We liked what we saw and we felt this better represented the data. Therefore this layer demonstrates those areas that not only have high Conservation Resource Values, but overlay with PNDI and Protected lands and produce a higher Value.

10. Third, at the Steering Committee Meeting our methodology was explained, and the new Map was used as a work map to decide where hubs should occur. The Committee decided that we should use classes 6-10 as our Hubs, and Buffer any isolated island of 6-10 appropriately using the PNDI, Protected Lands, or the Conservation Resource Layer as a Guide. In addition, certain areas were discussed at length and drawings on the work map were also included in our edits. During these discussions it was noted that this work map was being used as a guide, and that NLT would take our edits and rerun their Model for the SE PA Piedmont using their

methodology, and return it to us for final tweaking and review with you.

11. Fourth, BCPC produced a new “clip” layer based upon the map, extracting the classes above, smoothing the boundaries and manually editing areas were needed. It was then used to “clip” the revised (see above) standard top 20% Conservation Resource Values, and the PNDI layers.

12. Finally, BCPC ran the 2 clipped and edited layers with the Protected Lands Dataset using NLT Methodology, and derived the Hubs layer. Hubs that were less than 250 acres were deleted and Hubs that were long and skinny @ 1000’ wide were also deleted and will be reinserted as corridors. Those corridors were identified, (along with other “high value” corridors) digitized, and are shown with our Hubs. They will be taken into account separately when NLT runs the corridors analysis. [FYI – HUBS shown have been buffered slightly to additionally smooth edges.]

13. Upon receipt of the 2 clipped and edited datasets (PNDI and Conservation Resource Values) and our finalized Protected Lands dataset, NLT ran the Model for the entire SE PA Piedmont.

14. The final hubs were generated and were sent to the steering committee for review. They each contained a Smart Conservation Score, which a combination of Hub size, Hub shape, and a Zonal Mean represented by the combination of the Conservation Resource score, PNDI score, and Protected lands score. Some hubs defined through our process were removed due to size. A 250-acre “cutoff” was used. These hubs were then quantiled and separated into 3 classes.

15. In total, there are 3 sets of corridors. Class A corridors are those which link all the Class A hubs (see page 6 of the attached methodology). These corridors are linking the hubs that are generally the largest, and the ones with the highest “Smart Conservation” scores. Class B corridors (again see page 6) range from large low scoring hubs to small high scoring hubs. Class C corridors, including edits, which I made, and restoration corridors are still under development at NLT/ Avencia and will be forwarded to you upon completion. Please understand, that a

corridor may, and often does use other hubs as it moves across a landscape. Therefore, Class B corridors will use Class A, B or C hubs, for example to leap frog to their required destination and vice versa.

16. From these maps we asked the steering committee to help us “Prioritize” each corridor. In addition to the prioritization of the corridors, we would like your help to eliminate any corridors that for whatever reason are not viable. It could be because of development issues, or extremely bad habitat fragmentation (e.g. should be a restoration corridor), or they felt that it was just not needed based upon the other corridors in the network. (Keep in mind that NLT has stated that we currently may have 50% more corridors than we really need to have a successful ecological network. That doesn’t mean we have to eliminate 50% of the corridors, but it does focus one on the “got to have it” piece with our limited resources).

17. In order to assist in evaluating the corridors we conducted a ranking of the Overall Northern Piedmont Corridor Network. This resulted in a Total Score for each corridor found on map 1. Their scoring process involves the 5 total metrics we discussed previously. They are asking for your assistance in determining the percentage or weight for each corridor metric.

If you recalled we were going to include the underlying “Cost Surface” score, the “Ecological” score, the “Corridor Count” score, the “Length” score and the “Hub Connection” score, so you could begin the process to prioritize the Corridors. The 2nd map that we sent out addresses the Cost Surface, Ecology and the Count. The Length and the Hub Connection score were not mapped. The “default” weight percentage for each metric would, of course, be 20% of the total score with the total score = 100%. However, this may not be appropriate. You may think that one or more metrics should be ranked higher and therefore get a higher score. The following is a brief description of each metric:

Cost Surface: can be considered as the ease of movement of a species across a landscape that may contain barriers. Not only are the types of barriers addressed, such as Interstate Highways, county roads, railroads, streams ect., but their density is also considered. These 2 factors make up the majority of the Permeability Layer. The Permeability Layer is what is used in our model to run the “least cost path” toolset.

The Ecological Surface: is the quality of the underlying landscape (which makes up the rest of the Permeability Layer). This surface is the same surface we used to determine our Hubs. That is to say, it is a combination of PNDI, protected lands and the Smart Conservation Dataset, that when overlaid, the highest value of each cell was used. This was shown on the Hub Map that was sent out several months ago.

Corridor Count: is the score that depicts how often certain corridors are selected based upon the Cost and Ecology (Permeability Layer). Every time the corridor was chosen, the underlying cells were “checked” with a 1. Therefore, the higher the number the more often that route was chosen.

Corridor Length: describes the length of the corridor in question. It has been proven that corridors facilitate movement of species and therefore contribute to Biodiversity. The shorter and wider the corridor, the better for the species. For this project, the length metric was generated for each corridor. The shorter the corridor the higher the metric score.

Hub Connection: was generated by averaging the two connected hub scores for each corridor. Some feel that the higher the score, the more ecologically important that corridor may be due to the ranking of the Hubs. This may or may not show up on the Ecological metric as being particularly high, because it measures the corridor surface not what it connects. However, with this metric the corridor importance would not be lost.

The final weighting of each Corridor Metric was as follows.

Cost Surface	30%
Ecology	25%
Corridor Count	10%
Length	10%
Hub Connection	25%
Total Weight =	100%

18. I have enclosed one large map called Network Max. This map shows the combination of the weighted metrics and the hub values with the maximum cell value shown (1-10). In some cases the corridor may be more “valuable” than the hub, and in some cases the hubs will show up as more “valuable”. In any case, remember that it is the network that is needed to be successful, not just any individual hub and corridor.

In addition, please find 5 smaller maps. These are the 5 metric maps we discussed previously, and a map showing our currently “protected lands” in relation to the big map enclosed. You can decide to include this info in your prioritization process if you would like.

19. Finally, the restoration corridors are complete but are not yet edited. These restoration corridors and the maps enclosed will be discussed at our meeting on Tuesday. Please come prepared to identify a Priority I, II, and III corridor network. We will also include the restoration piece in the discussions.

20. At the final ecological steering committee meeting the Network Max map and 5 corridor maps was used to define a Priority I, II, and III ecological network. Certain areas were refined due to development issues (housing, quarries, ect.).



Appendix 5.4

Demographics

5.4 Demographics by Region

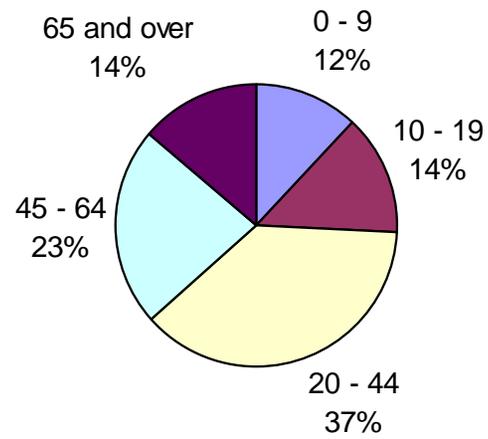
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

Hawk Mountain Region

Hawk Mountain Region Population Distribution, Year 2000						
Municipality	Total Population	Percent of Total Population				
		0 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 44	45 - 64	65 and over
Albany township	1,662	14.1	15.6	33.5	26.4	10.4
Centerport borough	327	12.8	13.1	37.9	22.9	13.1
Centre township	3,631	12.7	14.3	35.8	26.6	10.6
Fleetwood borough	4,018	13.6	13.1	36.8	20.9	15.6
Greenwich township	3,386	13.1	15.3	36.2	26.3	9.2
Hamburg borough	4,114	11.9	11.3	32.8	23.4	20.6
Kutztown borough	5,067	5.8	13.7	50.5	13.8	16.2
Lenhartsville borough	173	11	8.7	37.6	26	16.8
Lyons borough	504	12.5	12.3	45.9	18.7	10.7
Maidencreek township	6,553	16.7	14.1	40.2	20.7	8.3
Maxatawny township	5,982	7.2	30.5	37.8	16.3	8.1
Perry township	2,517	11	12.9	33.4	29.5	13.3
Richmond township	3,500	12	13.6	35.3	24.7	14.4
Shoemakersville borough	2,124	7.9	10	36.3	20.5	25.3
Strausstown borough	339	11.8	14.2	33.6	20.6	19.8
Tilden township	3,553	13.9	12.8	35.6	22.5	15.2
Upper Bern township	1,479	11.9	14.1	38.9	23.9	11.1
Upper Tulpehocken township	1,495	14.6	15.7	35.1	24.5	10
Windsor township	2,392	10.7	12.1	35.6	28.1	13.5
Total	52,816	225.2	267.4	708.8	436.3	262.2
Regional Totals		11.8	14.1	37.3	23	13.8

Hawk Mountain Region Population Distribution

Year 2000

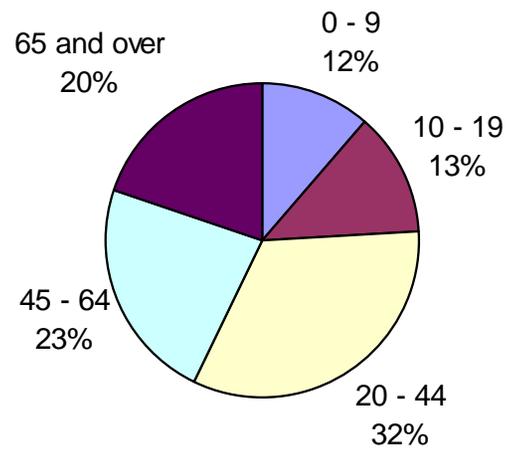


Metro Region Region

Metro Region Population Distribution, Year 2000						
Municipality	Total Population	Percent of Total Population				
		0 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 44	45 - 64	65 and over
Bern township	6,758	7.5	11.7	35.5	25.1	20.2
Cumru township	13,816	9.8	11.5	31.8	27.4	19.7
Kenhorst borough	2,679	9.4	10.2	33	22.8	24.6
Laureldale borough	3,759	10.7	11.1	30.8	24.8	22.4
Leesport borough	1,805	14.3	15.1	39.7	19.2	11.6
Lower Alsace township	4,478	11.1	12.7	33.2	23.6	19.5
Mohnton borough	2,963	13.4	14.2	36.9	22.5	12.9
Mount Penn borough	3,016	13.5	13	35.5	21.6	16.3
Muhlenberg township	16,305	10.1	12.2	30.4	24.1	23.2
Ontelaunee township	1,217	10.3	9.8	34.4	26.6	18.8
Reading city	81,207	17.6	15.9	37.2	17	12.4
Shillington borough	5,059	11.1	12.1	34.2	21.1	21.5
Sinking Spring borough	2,639	10.8	10.6	35.6	20.5	22.5
Spring township	21,805	12.1	13.2	32.3	25.2	17.1
West Lawn borough	1,597	14	11.9	36.9	20	19.3
West Reading borough	4,049	11.3	9.4	35.1	18	26.3
Wyomissing borough	8,587	8.6	17.7	22.1	22.7	28.8
Wyomissing Hills borough	2,568	10.7	14.4	23.7	31	20.1
Total	184,307	206.3	226.7	598.3	413.2	357.2
Regional Average		11.5	12.6	33.2	22.9	19.8

Metro Region Population Distribution

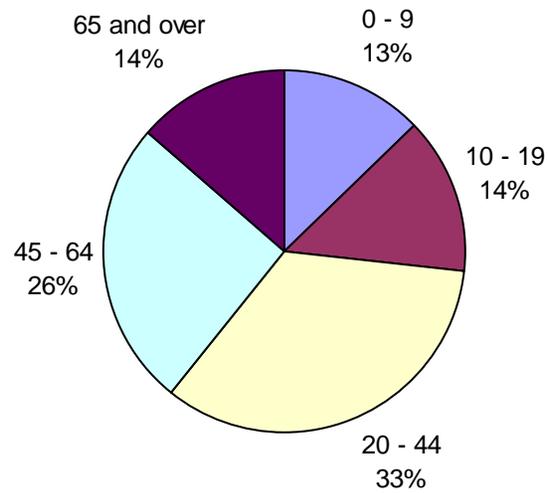
Year 2000



Oley Hills Region

Oley Hills Region Population Distribution, Year 2000						
Municipality	Total Population	Percent of Total Population				
		0 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 44	45 - 64	65 and over
Alsace township	3,689	10.5	13.3	31.6	28.3	16.3
Bally borough	1,062	12.5	12.4	33.3	23	18.8
Bechtelsville borough	931	15.3	14.1	39.6	18.5	12.5
Boyertown borough	3,940	11.6	11.3	25	21	21.2
Colebrookdale township	5,270	11.6	14.9	34.8	25.3	13.4
District township	1,449	13.9	14.7	33.9	28.8	8.8
Earl township	3,050	11.4	14.4	35.8	29	9.4
Hereford township	3,174	11.9	15	34.8	26.1	12.4
Longswamp township	5,608	12.4	13.3	33	24.3	17.2
Oley township	3,583	11.3	15	35.3	24.4	14.2
Pike township	1,677	14	14.9	33.2	28	9.9
Rockland township	3,765	14.5	14.5	35.8	26.1	9.1
Ruscombmanor township	3,776	11.8	15	32.6	28.6	12
Topton borough	1,948	12.9	12.2	35.6	23.9	15.6
Washington township	3,354	13.5	14.4	34.7	25.8	11.5
Total	46,276	189.1	209.4	509	381.1	202.3
Regional Average		12.6	14	33.9	25.4	13.5

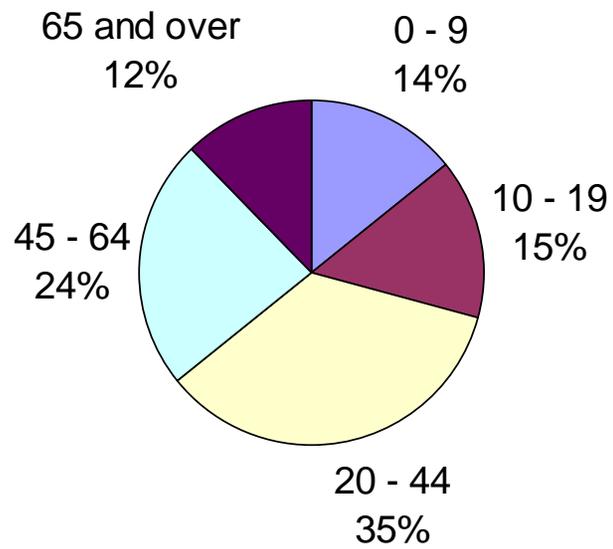
Oley Hills Region Population Distribution Year 2000



Southern Highlands Region

Southern Region Population Distribution, Year 2000						
		Percent of Total Population				
Municipality	Total Population	0 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 44	45 - 64	65 and over
Amity township	8,867	16.1	13.4	36.6	24.1	9.8
Birdsboro borough	5,064	16.8	14.2	38.2	20	10.8
Brecknock township	4,459	14.3	15.3	34.4	26.8	9.2
Caernarvon township	2,312	13.4	14.7	33.7	24.1	14.2
Douglass township	3,327	10.7	18.5	32.4	25.9	12.5
Exeter township	21,161	13.7	13.5	34	25	13.8
New Morgan borough	35	20	20	40	11.4	8.6
Robeson township	6,869	13.3	15.4	33.5	26.5	11.3
St. Lawrence borough	1,812	12.5	13.6	34.2	23.5	16.3
Union township	3,453	10.1	13.5	32	29.7	14.7
Total	57,359	140.9	152.1	349	237	121.2
Regional Average		14.1	15.2	34.9	23.7	12.1

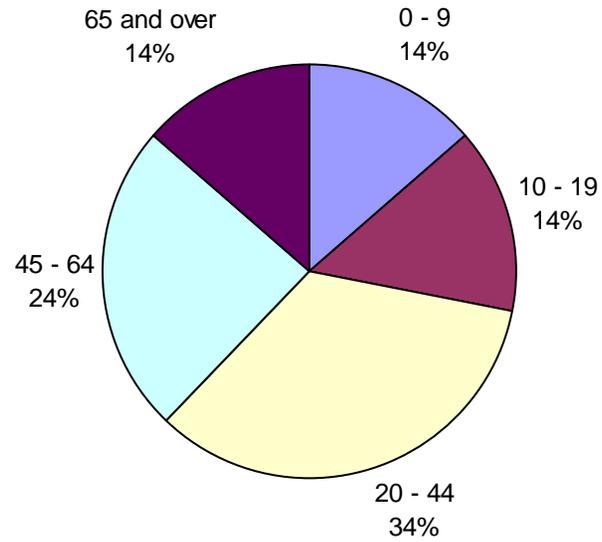
Southern Region Population Distribution Year 2000



Tulpehocken Region

Tulpehocken Region Population Distribution, Year 2000						
Municipality	Total Population	Percent of Total Population				
		0 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 44	45 - 64	65 and over
Bernville borough	865	15.5	10.6	37.7	20.1	16.1
Bethel township	4,166	14.9	14.8	35.1	24.6	10.6
Heidelberg township	1,636	12.9	17.6	29.6	27	12.8
Jefferson township	1,604	14.2	14.8	31.1	26.3	13.5
Lower Heidelberg township	4,150	14.8	13.9	30.3	23	18
Marion township	1,573	13.5	18.7	32.1	25.2	10.6
North Heidelberg township	1,325	13.4	13.9	30.8	31.5	10.5
Penn township	1,993	12.5	15	34.2	27.4	10.9
Robesonia borough	2,036	12	14.5	35.6	23.3	14.4
South Heidelberg township	5,491	12.6	13.4	34.7	27.4	11.8
Tulpehocken township	3,290	15.3	16.3	39.9	19.6	9
Wernersville borough	2,150	11.1	11.1	35.2	21.3	21.3
Womelsdorf borough	2,599	13.9	12.2	37.2	20.5	16.1
Total	32,878	176.6	186.8	443.5	317.2	175.6
Regional Average		13.6	14.4	34.1	24.4	13.5

Tulpehocken Region Population Distribution Year 2000



Appendix 5.5

Funding Opportunities

5.5 Local Government Funding Opportunities

Taxes

Greenways can be funded through sales tax revenues. One example of a community that is using sales tax dollars to fund bicycle and pedestrian facilities is Cobb County, Georgia, where citizens voted to implement a one percent local sales tax to provide funding for transportation projects. Over four years, Cobb County Department of Transportation will receive \$3.8 million of this sales tax revenue for bicycle improvements alone, to be used as a match for federal dollars. Another example is Oklahoma City, where voters approved a temporary \$0.01 sales tax, which generated millions of dollars for greenway acquisition and development.

Impact Fees

Impact fees are monetary one-time charges levied by a local government on new development. Unlike required dedications, impact fees can be applied to finance greenway facilities located outside the boundary of development. These fees can be levied through the subdivision or building permit process to finance greenways.

Bond Referendums

Communities across the nation have successfully placed propositions on local ballots to support greenway development. Since bonds rely on the support of the voting

population, an aggressive education and awareness program will need to be implemented prior to any referendum vote.

Capital Improvements Program

Some local governments have initiated a yearly appropriation for greenway and trail development in the capital improvements program.

Private Sector Sources

Many communities have solicited greenway funding from a variety of private foundations, corporations, and other conservation-minded benefactors. As a general rule, local foundations and businesses will have a greater interest in and be more likely to fund local projects. These local sources should be approached first, before seeking funds outside the community.

Local Businesses

Local industries and private businesses may agree to provide support for development of greenways through:

- Donations of cash to a specific greenway segment;
- Donations of services by corporations to reduce the cost of the greenway;
- Implementation, including equipment and labor to construct and install elements of a trail;

- Donations in the cost of materials purchased from local businesses which support greenway implementation and can supply essential products for facility development.

This method of raising funds requires a great deal of staff coordination. Sometimes materials donated are considered waste materials by local industries and clean fill.

Trail Sponsors

A sponsorship program for trail amenities allows for smaller donations to be received both from individuals and businesses. The program must be well planned and organized, with design standards and associated costs established for each amenity. Project elements which may be funded can include wayside exhibits, benches, trash receptacles, entry signage, and picnic areas. Usually, plaques recognizing the individual contributors are placed on the constructed amenities or at a prominent entry point to the trail.

Volunteer Work

Community volunteers may help with trail construction, maintenance, fund raising and a whole host of other activities. Potential sources of volunteer labor could include local bicyclists, local historical groups, neighborhood associations, local churches, conservation groups, school groups, and local civic clubs such as Kiwanis, Rotary and Lions Clubs.

A manual for greenway volunteers should be developed to guide and regulate volunteer work. The manual could include a description of appropriate volunteer efforts, request forms,

waiver and release forms, and a completion form (volunteers are asked to summarize their accomplishments). To better organize volunteer activity, a municipality could develop an “Adopt-a-Spot” program. Participants who adopt a segment of trail are responsible for periodic trash pick-up, but can also install landscaping, prune trail-side vegetation, develop wildlife enhancement projects, and install site amenities. All improvements must be consistent with the municipality’s Development Plan and must be approved by the local municipal coordinator. Adopt-a-Spot volunteers are allowed to display their names on a small sign along the adopted section of greenway.

“Buy-a-Foot” Programs

“Buy-a-Foot” programs have been successful in raising funds and awareness for trail and greenway projects across the Country. Under local initiatives, citizens are encouraged to purchase one linear foot of the greenway by donating the cost of construction. An excellent example of a successful endeavor is the High Point (North Carolina) Greenway “Buy-a-Foot” campaign, in which linear greenway “feet” were sold at a cost of \$25 per foot. Those who donated were given a greenway T-shirt and a certificate. This project provided an estimated \$5,000 in funds.

Developer Dedications

Cary, North Carolina, has used a dedication program to acquire land for its greenway program. Other communities have used such programs to build facilities, such as sidewalks, trail and other amenities, as part of new development. The

developer typically fronts the cost of these improvements and passes the costs along to home buyers.

American Greenways DuPont Awards

The Conservation Fund's American Greenways Program has teamed with the DuPont Corporation and the National Geographic Society to award small grants (\$250 to \$2,000) to stimulate the planning, design and development of greenways. These grants can be used for activities such as mapping, conducting ecological assessments, surveying land, holding conferences, developing brochures, producing interpretive displays, incorporating land trusts, building trails, and other creative projects. Grants cannot be used for academic research, institutional support, lobbying or political activities.

Source: PA DCNR Website

PENNSYLVANIA FUNDING SOURCES

The Community Conservation Partnership Program

www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants

The State of Pennsylvania makes available grant moneys to municipal governments and non-profits through this program to support greenway and park planning, design and development and acquisition.

For more information contact the Northeast regional advisor: (570)963-4157.

Heritage Park Grants

www.dcnr.state.pa.us

DCNR makes grants available to promote public-private partnerships that preserve and enhance natural, cultural,

historic and recreation resources to stimulate economic development through heritage tourism. For more information call (717) 783-0988.

Land Trust Grants

www.dcnr.state.pa.us

DCNR awards land acquisition grants for areas where rare or threatened species exist. For more information call (717) 783-2663.

Rails-to-Trails Grants

The Rails-to-Trails grants provide 50% funding for the planning, acquisition or development of rail-trail corridors. For more information call (717) 772-3704.

Urban and Community Forestry Grants

Can be used to encourage the planting of trees in Pennsylvania communities. For more information call (717) 783-0385.

The Recreational Trails Program (DCNR)

National Recreation Trails Fund Act (NRTFA) or Symms Act Grants. This source of funding is a subset of TEA-21 and is administered by DCNR. For more information call (717) 783-2654.

Rivers Conservation Program

This program seeks to maintain, restore, and enhance rivers throughout Pennsylvania. Before being considered for river conservation, implementation, acquisition, or development projects, a grant applicant must have an approved river conservation plan. For more information call (717) 787-2316.

Source: PA DCNR Website

Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

www.newpa.com

DCED offers a variety of grants that have a relationship to greenways: economic development, travel and tourism, technical assistance and community development. Following is a short list of these grants.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Grants and technical assistance for federal designated municipalities for any type of community development.

Community Revitalization Program (CRP)

Provides grant funds to support local initiatives that promote community stability and quality of life.

Elm Street

Grant funds for planning, technical assistance and physical improvements to residential and mixed use areas in proximity to central business districts.

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.

Growing Greener II

Growing Greener II – Main Street and Downtown Redevelopment Grants to municipalities and non-profits to help a community's downtown redevelopment effort, focusing on the improvement of downtown sites and buildings. The

eligible projects may include approaches that assist in business development and/or public improvements in core communities.

Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund

State grants to improve the physical facilities of public libraries.

Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP)

Provides grant funds for the preparation of community comprehensive plans and the ordinances to implement them.

Local Government Capital Project Loan Program (LGCPL)

Low-interest loans to local government for equipment and facility needs.

Local Municipal Resources and Development Program (LMRDP)

Grants to municipalities for improving quality of life within the community.

Main Street Program

Grants to municipalities to help a community's downtown economic development effort through the establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown revitalization and the management of downtown revitalization efforts by hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator.

Shared Municipal Services Program (SMSP)

Provides grant funds that promote cooperation among municipalities. Also encourages more efficient and effective delivery of municipal services on a cooperative basis.

Tourism Marketing Grant Programs

These are guidelines for Matching Funds & Set-asides as well as Regional Marketing Initiatives and Cultural & Heritage Programs. If you have any questions, please e-mail Janice Collier.

Urban Development Program (UDP)

Provides grants for urban development and improvement projects.

Source: PA DECD Website

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PENNDOT)

www.dot.state.pa.us

Provides various greenway funding options related to transportation.

Pennsylvania Historic & Museum Commission (PHMC)

www.artsnet.org/phmc

See website for grant information.

DEP Growing Greener II

www.growinggreener2.com

Various natural resource related grants.

LOCAL/STATE/FEDERAL NON-PROFIT FUNDING SOURCES**Berks County Conservancy; Reading, PA**

www.berks-conservancy.org

The Conservancy administers and coordinates various grants related to natural resource protection. They also have a very pro-active agriculture and conservation easement program.

Tulpehocken Chapter of Trout Unlimited; Shillington, PA

www.tullytu.org

Conserve, protect and enhance the quality and quantity of cold water resources in Berks County.

Berks County Community Foundation; Reading, PA

www.bccf.org

Various grant available to help specific public benefit organizations.

William Penn Foundation; Southeastern PA

www.williampennfoundation.org

Dedicated to improving the quality of life in the greater Philadelphia region.

Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA); Pottstown, PA

www.schuylkillriver.org

SRGA administers grant funds for the Schuylkill River Heritage Area through the National and State Heritage Area programs. Also administers other grant funds.

Natural Lands Trust (NLT); New Media, PA

www.natlands.org

NLT administers and coordinates various grants related to natural resource protection. They also have a successful easement program.

Heritage Conservancy; Doylestown, PA

www.heritageconservancy.org

The Heritage Conservancy is very active in natural resource protection.

Wildlands Conservancy; Emmaus, PA

www.wildlandspa.org

The Wildlands Conservancy is very active in natural resource protection.

Pennsylvania Environmental Council; Harrisburg, PA

www.pecpa.org

Provides technical assistance to organizations. Helps establish Environmental Advisory Councils. Involvement in the PA Water Trails Program.

Keystone Active Zones

(PA Advocates for Nutrition and Activity (PANA))

www.panaonline.org

PANA is a statewide coalition helping to promote active lifestyle through schools and community outreach.

PA Clearways

www.pacleanways.org

Helps educate and organize volunteers to conduct greenway cleanups and provide ongoing stewardship through adoptions.

PA Recreation and Park Society

www.prps.org

Provides ongoing training on the nuts and bolts of trail development, economic benefits, trail maintenance, ect.

PA Land Trust Association

www.conserveland.org

Capacity building for land trust. Provides local land trusts with conservation education, training and technical assistance service; develops education and promotional materials; and provides small grants to land trusts to help cover the administrative costs of securing conservation easements.

Water Resource Education Network (WREN); Harrisburg, PA

www.wren.palwv.org

WREN is part of the PA League of Women Voters. WREN's main concern is the protection of PA's water resources. They offer a number of small grants related to water resource protection.

Audubon Pennsylvania; Harrisburg, PA

www.pa.audubon

Provides technical assistance to organizations in identifying natural resources. Main interests are related to protection of Important Bird Areas (IBA's).

PA Highlands

www.hIGHLANDSCOALITION.ORG

Dedicated to identify, prioritize and future preservation of critical parcels along the Highlands Corridor.

The Nature Conservancy

PA Field Office; Conshohocken, PA

www.nature.org

Provides technical assistance to organizations and is active in easement acquisition.

Rails to Trails Conservancy

Northeastern United States Field Office; Harrisburg PA

www.railtrails.org

Provides technical assistance in maintaining and establishing rail trails.

BERKS COUNTY FUNDING SOURCES

Berks County Commissioners

www.co.berks.pa.us

The BCC supports many organizations that work towards the protection of our County's natural resources.

For more information call (610) 478-6136

Berks County Planning Commission

www.co.berks.pa.us/planning

The BCPC staff help administer several grant programs. The Natural Land, Farmland and Open Space Conservation Grant Program and the Open Space and Recreation Advisory Council grant program.

For more information call (610)478-6300.

Berks County Conservation District

www.co.berks.pa.us/conservation

The BCCD conducts numerous educational programs on the preservation of the natural resources of Berks County. For more information call (610) 372-4657

Certain funding opportunities listed may or may not be active at this time. Please check with that individual organization for more information.



Appendix 5.6

**School District
Facility Inventory**

School Facility Inventory by District

School	Facilities*	Additional Features
ANTIETAM		
ANTIETAM MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, SO, SF, TE	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, GYM, LIB, CAFÉ
MOUNT PENN ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, GYM
PRIMARY CENTER (PROPOSED)		AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
BOYERTOWN		
BOYERTOWN ELEMENTARY	BT, SF, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB
BOYERTOWN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
COLEBROOKDALE ELEMENTARY	BT, SO, SF, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB
EARL ELEMENTARY	BY, BT, NS, TL	GYM, LIB
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL WEST	BB, FH, FB, IF, SO	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
PINE FORGE ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, TL	GYM, LIB
WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY	BB, SO, SF	GYM, LIB, MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
CONRAD WEISER		
CONRAD WEISER HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, OF, SO, SF, TE	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
CONRAD WEISER MIDDLE SCHOOL	IF	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
EAST ELEMENTARY	BB, SO, SF, TL	GYM, LIB
WEST ELEMENTARY	OF, TL	GYM, LIB
DANIEL BOONE		
AMITY INTERMEDIATE CENTER	BB, BT, TL	GYM, LIB
AMITY PRIMARY CENTER	BT, TL	GYM, LIB
BIRDSBORO ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, TL	GYM, LIB
DANIEL BOONE MIDDLE SCHOOL	BT, FH, FB, IF, OF, SO, TR	GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
DANIEL BOONE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, BT, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
MONOCACY KINDERGARTEN CENTER		

EXETER

JACKSONWALD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	BT, SO, SF, TL	GYM, LIB
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, BT, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
LORANE ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, SO, TL	GYM, LIB
M. LUTHER LAUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	BB, BT, FH, FB, OF, SO, SF, TE, TL, TR	GYM, LIB
REIFFTON	OF, SF, TL	
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, OF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB

FLEETWOOD

ANDREW MAIER ELEMENTARY	BB, SO, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, GYM, LIB
ANDREW MAIER ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, SO, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, GYM, LIB
FLEETWOOD ELEMENTARY	BT, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB
FLEETWOOD ELEMENTARY	BT, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB
HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
MIDDLE SCHOOL	BB, BT, NS, TL	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
MIDDLE SCHOOL	BB, BT, NS, TL	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
RICHMOND ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, SO, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB
RICHMOND ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, SO, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB

HAMBURG

HAMBURG ELEMENTARY	BT, TL	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
HAMBURG HIGH SCHOOL	BB, BT, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
HAMBURG MIDDLE SCHOOL	BT, SO, SF	AUDITORIUM, AUX GYM, LIB
PERRY ELEMENTARY	TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB
STRAUSSTOWN ELEMENTARY	TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB
TILDEN ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, TL	GYM, LIB
UPPER BERN ELEMENTARY	BB, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, LIB

KUTZTOWN

ALBANY ELEMENTARY	SF, TL	GYM, LIB
GREENWICH-LENHARTSVILLE ELEM	BT, SO, TL	GYM, LIB

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FB, SO	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
KUTZTOWN ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, TL	GYM, LIB
MAXATAWNY ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, TL	GYM, LIB
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, BT, FH, FB, IF, NS, SO, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB

MUHLENBERG

ELEMENTARY CENTER	TL	GYM, LIB
HIGH SCHOOL	BB, BT, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, SW, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
MIDDLE SCHOOL	SW	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB

OLEY VALLEY

OLEY VALLEY ELEMENTARY	BB, FH, NS, OF, SO, SF, TL	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
OLEY VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL	BB, BT, FH, IF, OF, SO, SF, TE, TL, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
OLEY VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL	BB, FH, NS, OF, SO, SF, TL	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB

READING

10TH AND PENN	TL	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
12TH AND MARION	TL	GYM, LIB
13TH AND GREEN ELEMENTARY	TL	GYM, LIB
16TH AND HAAK ELEMENTARY	TL	GYM, LIB
AMANDA E. STOUT ELEMENTARY		AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
CABRINI ACADEMY		GYM, LIB
GLENSIDE	BT, OF, TL	GYM, LIB
JOHN PAUL II SPECIALIZED LEARNING CTR		MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM SEATING FOR 300
LAVER'S PARK ELEMENTARY	BB, NS, TL	GYM, LIB
MILLMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TE, TL	GYM, LIB
NORTHEAST MIDDLESCHOOL		AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
NORTHWEST AREA ELEMENTARY		GYM, LIB
NORTHWEST MIDDLE SCHOOL		AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
READING HIGHSCHOOL	FH, FB, IF, OF, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB, SWIMMING POOL
REC FACILITIES	NS, OF, TL	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM
RIVERSIDE		GYM, LIB

5.6 – School Districts
Rec. Facilities Inventory

SOUTHERN MIDDLE SCHOOL		AUDITORIUM, GYM
SOUTHWEST		AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
TENTH AND GREEN ELEMENTARY		GYM, LIB
THIRTEENTH AND UNION ELEMENTARY	BT, SF, TL	GYM, LIB
THOMAS FORD		GYM, LIB
TYSON-SCHOELLER	BT	GYM, LIB

SCHUYLKILL VALLEY

SCHUYLKILL VALLEY ELEMENTARY	TL	GYM, LIB
SCHUYLKILL VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
SCHUYLKILL VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL	SO, SW	GYM, LIB

TWIN VALLEY

HONEYBROOK ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, SO, TL	GYM, LIB
ROBESON ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, NS, TL	GYM, LIB
TWIN VALLEY ELEMENTARY	BT, TL	GYM, LIB
TWIN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
TWIN VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, SO, SF	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB

WILSON

CENTRAL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, IF, SO, SW	GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
CORNWALL TERRACE ELEM SCHOOL	BT, SF	GYM, LIB, MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
LINCOLN PARK ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, TL	LIB, MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
LOWER HEIDELBERG ELEMENTARY	BB, OF, TL	LIB, MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, BT, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
SHILOH HILL ELEMENTARY	BB, OF, SO, TL	GYM, LIB, MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
SOUTHERN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
SPRING RIDGE ELEMENTARY	BB, OF, SO, TL	GYM, LIB, MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
WEST WYOMISSING ELEMENTARY	BB, BT, TL	LIB, MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
WHITFIELD ELEMENTARY	BT, SF	GYM, LIB

WYOMISSING

WEST READING ELEMENTARY		MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, GYM, LIB
WYOMISSING HILLS ELEMENTARY	BB, SO, TL	MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, GYM, LIB
WYOMISSING SENIOR/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, OF, SO, SF, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB, WRESTLING ROOM

OTHERS:

PRIVATE

HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS		AUDITORIUM, GYM, LIB
HOLY NAME HIGH SCHOOL	BB, FH, FB, IF, SO, SF, SW, TE, TR	AUDITORIUM, GYM, AUX GYM, LIB
READING SDA JUNIOR ACADEMY	OF	GYM, LIB
SACRED HEART SCHOOL		GYM, LIB
SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA REG SCHOOL	BB, BT, SO, TL	GYM, LIB
SAINT PETERS SCHOOL	TL	LIB

*Refer to table below for abbreviation interpretation

BB	Baseball	FT	Fitness	IE	Indoor Entertainment	SD	Skiing – Downhill
BY	Baseball – Youth	FB	Football	IF	Indoor Fitness	SX	Skiing – Cross Country
BT	Basketball	GO	Golf	MU	Museum	SO	Soccer
BI	Biking	GD	Golf – Driving Range	NS	Nature Study	SF	Softball
BO	Boating	GM	Golf – Miniature	OF	Open Field sports	SW	Swimming
BW	Bowling	HA	Handicapped Accessible	OA	Outdoor Amphitheatre	TE	Tennis
CA	Camping	HI	Hiking	PA	Picnic Area	TL	Tot-Lot
CO	Community Ctr.	HB	Horse Back	RB	Racquetball	TR	Track
FH	Field Hockey	HU	Hunting	SR	Shooting Range	VB	Volleyball
FI	Fishing	IH	Ice Hockey	SB	Skate Board	VS	Volleyball – Sand

Appendix 5.7

Citizen and Municipal Survey Results

Berks County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan

Citizen Survey Results

As part of the development of the County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan, Berks County conducted a countywide survey in late 2004. The survey was designed to measure the preferences of the citizens of Berks County and solicit public opinions regarding recreation, parks, heritage, and ecological issues, and to provide guidance in developing the Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan.

Methodology

Over 5,000 surveys were mailed to a random sample of county households that was

Facility	Sum*
Walking/hiking/biking trails	1659
Natural area	1034
Children's Playgrounds	841
Museum/Heritage Park	643
Outdoor Entertainment (amphitheatre, fairgrounds)	584
Senior Citizen activity area	573
Hunting areas	560
Scenic drives	557
Picnic areas	525
Fishing areas	480
Golf courses	378
Swimming pools	366
Community Recreation Center	344
Boating areas	325
Camping areas	302
Dog Park	298
Community gardens	291
Baseball/softball fields	254
Soccer fields	181
Handicapped activity area	171
Sledding areas	167
Indoor fitness center (i.e. aerobics, racquet sports, weights)	166
Tennis courts	143
Ice Skating/Hockey rink	138
Basketball courts	128
Skate/BMX Bike Park	127
Cross-country ski areas	121
Equestrian trails	114
Bowling Lanes	105
Other group sports fields (football, lacrosse, hockey)	89
Downhill ski areas	81
Volleyball courts	67

derived from the County's Voter Registration List. The surveys were completed between November 29 and December 31, 2004, and those returned represented a 16%

Questions and results

1. From the following list of recreational facilities, choose five facilities that are most important in satisfying your household's recreational needs. Please rank them from 1 to 5, with 1 being the "Most Important" and 5 being the "Least Important" of your top five choices.

* "Sum" was derived by assigning points to the ranking system as follows:

- A rank of 1 received 5 points
- A rank of 2 received 4 points
- A rank of 3 received 3 points
- A rank of 4 received 2 points
- A rank of 5 received 1 point

Total number of points was then compiled for each facility, and appears in the sum column.

2. From the following list of heritage/historical resources, choose five that are most important to you for preservation and/or interpretation. Please rank them from 1 to 5, with 1 being the “Most Important” and 5 being the “Least Important” of your top five choices.

Heritage Resource	Sum*
Historic villages	1031
Historic churches/cemeteries	949
Historic farms	897
Historic downtowns	856
Historic railroads/trolleys	834
Historic bridges	811
Historic neighborhoods	669
Canals/locks/dams	667
Historic geologic landmarks	656
Indian Heritage	641
Military heritage	559
Historic architectural style	524
Historic community bldgs	405
Important historic persons	346
Underground railroad	331
Historic grist mills	238
Historic hotels/resorts	220
Historic industry	182
Iron and steel heritage	150
WPA projects	145
Historic theme highways	77

Ecological Resource	Sum*
Water Quality	1929
Streams/other water bodies	1187
Scenic views	1085
Mammal Habitat	830
Bird Habitat	776
Interior forests	702
Rare/endangered animal habitat	693
Wetlands	660
Fish Habitat	564
Groundwater recharge areas	448
Headwaters, springs	438
Native vegetation	426
Unique geological features	384
Rare/endangered plant habitat	354
Contiguous grasslands	225
Floodplains	215
Reptile/amphibian Habitat	166
Riparian (waterway) buffers	138
Ridgelines	96
Steep slopes	65

3. From the following list of ecological/natural resources, choose five that are most important to you for preservation or conservation. Please rank them from 1 to 5, with 1 being the “Most Important” and 5 being the “Least Important” of your top five choices.

4. From the following list of recreational programs, choose five programs that are most important in satisfying your household's recreational needs. Please rank them from 1 to 5, with 1 being the "Most Important" and 5 being the "Least Important" of your top five choices.

Recreation Programs	Sum*
Cultural Arts (concerts, theatre, dance)	1360
Fairs/festivals	1234
Holiday events	1027
Athletic/sports leagues/clinics	914
Environmental Education	873
Youth Programs	844
Senior Programs	838
Trips/tours	808
Arts and Crafts/Hobbies	741
Fitness programs	728
Playground program	726
Adult Education	633
Interpretive lecture series	287

5. How much does your household rely on school district facilities during non-school hours to fulfill your recreational needs?

	Extensively (weekly)	Somewhat (monthly)	Seldom	Not At All
Outdoor athletic fields/courts/playgrounds	10.9%	16.7%	21.6%	50.8%
Indoor swimming pool	3%	4.3%	11.3%	81.3%
Gymnasium/weight room	4.4%	5.5%	10.4%	79.7%
Auditorium/classroom	4.1%	7.2%	19.1%	69.7%

6. How much does your household rely on private recreation facilities to fulfill your recreational needs?

	Extensively (weekly)	Somewhat (monthly)	Seldom	Not At All
Fitness clubs	20.9%	9.5%	12.9%	56.7%
Swimming pools	13.8%	14.7%	24.7%	46.8%
Bowling lanes	5.1%	11.4%	31.6%	51.9%
Local athletic associations/clubs	8.1%	9.5%	17.8%	64.6%
Golf courses	11.6%	16.1%	14.1%	58.2%
Rod and gun clubs	7%	12%	13.9%	67.1%
Ski area/tubing	2.7%	8.7%	25.5%	63%
Hockey/ skating	2.2%	6.8%	19%	72%

7. Park Satisfaction-How satisfied are you with the park and recreation areas available to you in Berks County? Please rank each on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Very Satisfied" and 5 being "Very Unsatisfied". If you have never visited the park, please mark with a N.

	Very Satisfied*	Satisfied*	Neutral*	Unsatisfied*	Very Unsatisfied*	Never Visited**
Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park	47.7%	25.1%	14.7%	7.9%	4.6%	36%
Appalachian Trail	44.6%	23.7%	17.4%	9.2%	5%	49.8%
French Creek State Park	43.7%	28%	24.9%	7.9%	4.4%	36.7%
Nolde Forest EE Center	43.1%	27.9%	16.8%	6.9%	5.3%	47.8%
Hopewell Furnace	37.7%	26.9%	21.8%	7.9%	5.7%	39.7%
Daniel Boone Homestead	37%	30.7%	21.3%	6.2%	4.9%	40.3%
Blue Marsh Lake	35.3%	26.6%	23.6%	9.7%	4.8%	20.8%
State Gamelands	31.6%	27%	24.2%	12.2%	5.1%	47.9%
Conrad Weiser Homestead	28.5%	27%	28.5%	12.5%	3.6%	63.7%
Horseshoe Trail	27.3%	27.9%	29.7%	8.7%	6.4%	77.2%
Thun Trail	26.2%	27.2%	27.9%	12.6%	6.1%	60.9%
Kaercher Creek Park	23.6%	24.1%	33.6%	10%	8.6%	70.9%
Lake Ontelaunee	21.4%	26.3%	32.2%	13%	7.1%	40%
Municipal Parks & Playgrounds	21.1%	26.5%	34.7%	11.6%	6.1%	27.9%
Berks Co. Youth Recreation Facility	20%	21.3%	38.7%	8.7%	11.3%	80.1%
Allegheny Aqueduct Park	15.2%	22.2%	41.4%	5.1%	16.2%	86.9%
Hunsicker's Grove	14%	30.6%	42.1%	5%	8.3%	83.8%

* Percent of total respondents that have visited the facility.

** Percent of total respondents.

8. County Action-Please indicate the importance of the following actions, which you feel the County should implement to best satisfy your household's recreation needs in the coming years. Please rank each on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Very Important" and 5 being "Not Needed".

	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Not Needed
Maintain existing park areas	63.5%	19.6%	9.7%	3.1%	4%
Preserve unique natural areas	62.7%	14.8%	11.7%	5.3%	5.6%
Preserve heritage/cultural resources	56.9%	19.8%	13%	5.1%	5.1%
Create regional trail system	44.6%	20.2%	18.2%	7.5%	9.5%
Provide passive park (woodland & trails-Neversink Mt., Antietam Lake)	44.1%	24.7%	16.3%	6.7%	8.1%
Provide active/passive recreation park	30.3%	26.2%	25.3%	6.4%	11.8%
Provide more active recreation facilities	21.9%	13.8%	26.3%	15.4%	22.6%
Provide indoor recreation facility	21.7%	12.5%	20.9%	16.6%	28.1%
Provide recreation program for non-athletic activities	20.5%	27.4%	25.2%	14.3%	12.6%
Support tax increase for additional park/rec opportunities, preserving unique natural areas and heritage resources	13.7%	13.4%	22.7%	12.3%	37.8%
Provide recreation program for organized athletics	10.3%	12.5%	24.7%	21.8%	30.5%

9. Please indicate how you feel about the following statements by circling one response for each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. It is important that greenways/trails connect residential neighborhoods and other elements of my community, such as schools and commercial areas	25.1%	23.2%	30.8%	13%	7.9%
b. It is important to develop a county-wide network of interconnected greenways/trails linking municipalities and regional parks	23.6%	23.8%	29.5%	13.5%	9.6%
c. Acquiring land now for the future development of new parks is just as important as maintaining existing public recreation areas and parks	30.6%	25.4%	24.6%	10.6%	8.8%
d. Local government should do more to increase public awareness of the availability of recreation areas, programs and opportunities	39.7%	29.1%	19.2%	6.4%	5.7%
e. Municipalities in my area should join together to form a joint park and recreation department and share park facilities and programs	29.2%	30.3%	24.5%	9%	7%
f. Parks and protected natural areas increase the value of nearby properties	51%	28%	14.8%	3.7%	2.6%
g. Greenways and trails increase the value of nearby properties	41.9%	26.5%	19.3%	7.5%	4.8%

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
h. Recreation facilities should be lighted for night use	28.8%	18.9%	27.9%	12.4%	12%
i. I use private recreation facilities, and don't foresee a need for additional public recreational facilities	7.6%	8.4%	28.3%	24.6%	31.2%
j. Festivals that replicate and recreate historic experiences are as important as active recreational opportunities	24.7%	29.6%	29.9%	10.8%	5%
k. There should be more sports and recreational programs for youth	16.9%	22.8%	36%	13.9%	10.4%
l. Recreation opportunities for senior citizens are adequate	9.6%	14.5%	39%	22.7%	14.2%
m. Private land developers should be required to assist in the development of recreation facilities or protection of unique natural areas as part of new subdivisions	64%	20.2%	9%	2.1%	4.7%
n. Funding for recreation should be expanded to provide for additional land/facilities, programs and personnel	16.5%	29.1%	32.8%	12.7%	8.9%
o. Critical or unique natural areas should be acquired or otherwise protected for passive parkland or open space purposes	43.1%	26.4%	19.8%	6%	4.8%
p. More sports fields are needed in my area	7%	7.3%	25%	26.3%	34.3%
q. There are an adequate number of playgrounds in my area	28.3%	22.7%	29%	12.4%	7.6%
r. Abandoned railroad right-of-ways should be acquired for use as trails	37.5%	29.5%	21.9%	5.8%	5.3%
s. Public recreation areas near where I live are well maintained	23.2%	34.7%	29.6%	7%	5.6%
t. Public recreation areas and trails near where I live are too crowded	2.9%	7.5%	34.4%	34%	21.2%
u. There are a sufficient number of indoor recreational facilities (gyms, indoor pools, meeting rooms, community center) available for public use	19.7%	16.6%	28.4%	18.9%	16.4%
v. In general, there is a lack of access for disabled people to recreation facilities	8.7%	14.2%	45.4%	17.3%	14.45
w. Churches in my community provides youth programs and recreational opportunities	20.2%	28%	37%	10.4%	4.5%
x. Little league organizations provide an important source of recreational opportunities for the youth in my community	38.2%	32.2%	24%	3.6%	2.1%
y. Preserving/interpreting historical sites are important in keeping our heritage alive and should be incorporated into parkland where appropriate	48%	31.3%	16.3%	2.7%	1.8%
z. Interpretive signs and/or pamphlets highlighting natural, cultural, and heritage resources should be available at parks	38.5%	35.5%	18%	5.2%	2.9%
aa. Road-based auto tours and/or bike tour routes of scenic and historic resources should be mapped and made available	35.1%	31.4%	22%	7.7%	3.8%
bb. Trails for walkers/bikers should be paved instead of crushed gravel/cinder paths	19.8%	16.4%	23.9%	19.9%	19.9%
cc. It is important to preserve habitat and create connections that will allow for the movement of wildlife	57.5%	24.9%	13.2%	3%	1.5%

10. Club Interest-Berks County has numerous clubs devoted to various types of outdoor activities. Please rank your level of interest in joining each of the following types of clubs on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Very Interested" to 5 being "Not Interested".

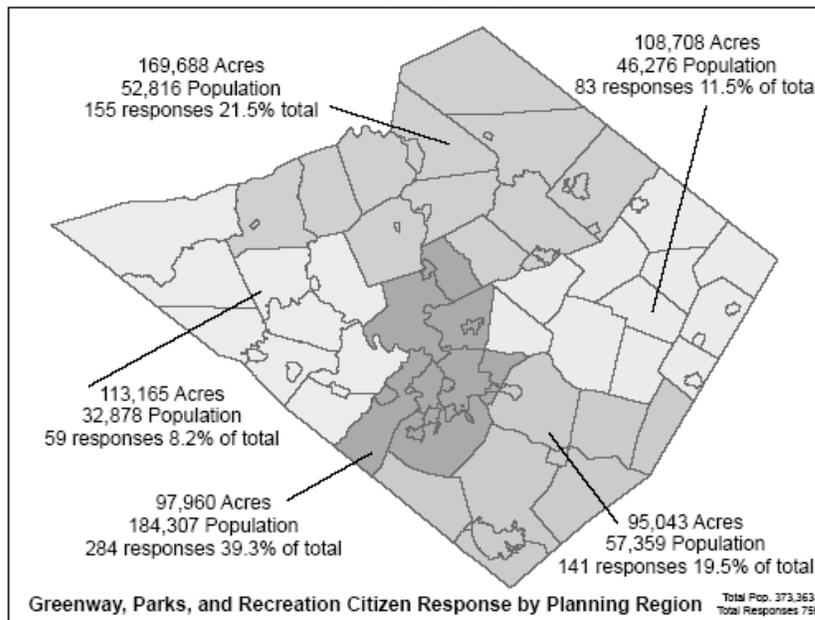
	Very Interested	Interested	Somewhat Interested	Neutral	Not Interested
Hiking Groups	18.9%	18.1%	18.3%	13.3%	31.3%
Environmental/Conservation Groups	18.9%	16.7%	21.6%	15.5%	27.1%
Bird Watching Groups	11.8%	10.4%	17.2%	14.6%	45.9%
Bicycling Groups	9.9%	12.6%	16.8%	13.9%	46.6%
Gardening Groups	12.2%	18.1%	21.2%	12.5%	35.8%
Historical/Cultural Preservation Groups	18%	22.1%	18.8%	14.8%	26.1%
Boating Groups	8.4%	11.2%	14.3%	11.2%	55%
Astronomy Groups	5.5%	9.7%	17.5%	12.6%	54.8%

11. Why are heritage/historic preservation efforts important? Please select no more than three.

	Total number of times selected
Educational Value	507
Provide a Sense of Place	293
Tourism	281
Strengthen communities	276
Improved Quality of Life	272
Aesthetic Value	171
Downtown Revitalization	160
Economic Development	140

Demographic Information

12. Location- What municipality do you live in?



13. Age Groups-Please indicate the number of persons in your household, including yourself, in the following age groups:

Age Group	% of Persons Living in Households that Responded to Survey	% Berks Population
0-19	23.8%	27.6%
20-49	36.3%	42.0%
50-64	23.2%	15.4%
65+	16.7%	15.0%

14. Race-What is your ethnic background? 96% were white

15. Are you Hispanic or Latino? 1.6 % answered yes

16. Educational Attainment-What is the last grade level of schooling that the head of your household has completed?

	Percentage of Respondents	% Berks Population
Non-high school	3.2%	22.0%
High school graduate	24.4%	39.4%
Some college, no degree	15.2%	14.5%
Two-year or tech degree	13.8%	5.7%
Four-year college degree	22%	12.0%
Post-graduate college degree	21.4%	6.4%

17. Income-What is your best estimate of total family income?

	Percentage of Respondents	% Berks Population
Less than \$10,000	1.3%	7.6%
\$10,000-14,999	2.2%	5.6%
\$15,000-24,999	8.7%	12.4%
\$25,000-34,999	11.2%	12.9%
\$35,000-49,999	16.1%	17.1%
\$50,000-74,999	26.4%	22.6%
\$75,000-99,999	16.1%	11.6%
\$100,000+	18.0%	10.2%

Key Results

- The need to maintain the unique natural and heritage resources of Berks County emerged as a key finding. There was strong agreement that critical or unique natural areas should be acquired or otherwise protected for passive parkland or open space purposes, and very strong agreement to preserve wildlife habitat that provides for their movement. Likewise, there was very strong agreement for incorporating historical sites into parkland, as well as providing interpretive signs or pamphlets highlighting heritage resources.
- When asked to prioritize individual types of recreational facilities, multi-purpose trails far out-weighed the other recreational facilities. Other top facilities included: natural areas, playgrounds, museum/heritage parks and outdoor entertainment areas. In general, group/individual sport facilities were least important. Possible new trends include: dog parks, community gardens, and sledding areas.
- The top five heritage resources that respondents indicated were most important to preserve were historic villages, historic churches/cemeteries, historic farms,

- historic downtowns, and historic railroads/trolleys. Historic industry, iron and steel heritage, WPA projects, and theme highways were least important.
- The top five ecological/natural resources that respondents indicated were most important to preserve or conserve were water quality, streams and other water bodies, scenic views, mammal habitat, and bird habitat. Riparian buffers, ridgelines, and steep slopes were least important.
 - When asked to indicate which of the 13 types of recreational programs were most important, Berks Countians indicated cultural arts, festivals and holiday events. Interpretive lectures were least important.
 - One out of two respondents use outdoor school district athletic facilities, however not on a regular basis as one in ten use them weekly. In comparison, over 7 in ten respondents indicated they never use indoor school district facilities.
 - Private recreation facilities are fulfilling an important recreation need. More respondents use swimming pools than any other private facility. One out of every five respondents uses a private fitness club on a weekly basis. Golf courses are also moderately used private facilities.
 - Overall, Berks Countians are satisfied with the public recreation facilities available to them. Respondents indicated they were most satisfied with the Tulpehocken Creek Valley Park, French Creek State Park and Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center. Respondents were least satisfied with Allegheny Aqueduct Park. There were several parks that a large majority of the respondents never visited (i.e. 87% never visited Allegheny Aqueduct Park).
 - When asked the importance of several implementing actions that the County could take, maintaining existing park areas was the number one priority. Other priorities, in descending order, were preserving unique natural areas and heritage/cultural resources, providing passive park areas (such as Neversink Mt. and Antietam Lake), and creating a regional trail system. Providing a recreation program for organized athletics, and an indoor recreation facility were the least important.
 - When asked whether funding for recreation should be expanded, 46 % of the respondents agreed, while 22 % disagreed, and 33% were neutral. When specifically asked if they would support a tax increase to provide for additional park/recreation opportunities, 27% of the respondents indicated that it was very important or important, 23 % were neutral, and 50% indicated that it was unimportant or not needed.
 - There was very strong agreement that private land developers should assist in the development of recreation facilities or the protection of natural areas as part of new subdivisions.
 - There was very strong support for little league organizations.
 - There was strong agreement that government should do more to increase awareness of recreation areas, programs and opportunities, and work cooperatively in providing recreation opportunities.
 - There was strong agreement that parks, protected natural areas, greenways and trails increase the value of nearby properties.
 - There was strong agreement that abandoned railroad right-of-ways should be acquired for use as trails.
 - One in ten respondents felt that public recreation areas and trails were too crowded.
 - A representative response was received from all regions of the County, particularly the northern and southeastern communities. No responses were received from households in Bally Borough or New Morgan Borough. In general, the age of persons living in households that responded to the survey were representative of the County's' age groups, except for a greater percentage of persons in the 50-64 age group. Over 43% of the respondents had a four –year or post-graduate college degree, and over 60% had a family income over \$50,000. The response rate from the ethnic minority community was poor.

Note: The following is additional information that was compiled by the Berks County Planning Commission. This information was not part of the citizen survey.

Berks County Open Space/Recreation Facility Inventory

Ownership of Protected Open Space/Recreation

	Number of Sites	Acres
Federal Lands (Army Corps., National Parks)	4	7501.02
State Lands (Parks, Gameland, Forest)	27	29,952.33
Berks County Park Lands	14	615.02
Municipal Recreation (passive)	51	2,386.53
Municipal Recreation (active/passive)	9	851.47
Municipal Recreation (active)	163	1,537.95
Municipal Managed Lands (water authority)	16	11,358.49
Public Sub Total:	284	54,202.81
Non-Profit Owned (Conservancy, Hawk Mountain, etc.)	16	2,900.06
Non-Profit Eased (Conservancy, Wildlands*)	73	2,748.72
Not for Profit (passive - Scout Camps, Rod/Gun Clubs, etc.)	58	4,192.07
Not for Profit (active – swimming pools, Little League, etc.)	111	1,678.97
Non/Not for Profit Sub Total:	258	11,519.82
Total:	542	65,722.63
Percent of County: 12%		

* Eased Parcels are those easements that have not been determined to be Agricultural Easements by the Agricultural Land Preservation Board.

Class of Open Space/Recreation

	Number of Sites	Acres
Mini Parks	43	41.06
Neighborhood Parks	82	520.27
Community Parks	33	1,066.49
Large Urban/Suburban Parks*	9	1,035.53
Special Use Parks	24	1,592.79
Natural Resource Area	68	47,736.21
Greenways	25	2210.46
Public Sub Total:	284	54,202.81
Private Parks		
Non-Profit/Not for Profit*	185	8,771.10
Commercial for Profit**	98	5,641.60
Private Parks Sub Total:	283	14,412.70
Total:	567	68,615.51

* Does not contain easements in calculations

** Does not include smaller ventures (i.e.- arcades, karate clubs, bingo)

Berks County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan

Municipal Survey Results

As part of the development of the County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan, Berks County conducted a countywide municipal survey in 2005. The survey was designed to take a general inventory of the municipal recreation facilities of Berks County and solicit municipal stances regarding recreation, parks, park programs, heritage, and ecological issues, and to provide guidance in developing the Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan.

Methodology

74 municipal surveys were mailed in January 2005. 38 surveys were returned for a response rate of 51.4%; 11 Boroughs and 17 Townships. Representation of all areas of the County occurred. Municipalities of all types responded to the survey, including small and large rural municipalities and small and large urban/suburban municipalities. The survey was conducted by the Berks County Planning Commission.

Questions and Results

Below are the questions and results of the survey. The questions are numbered as they were in the survey and which begins with question 2 below as the first question on the survey was "Municipal name".

2. Does your municipality currently have:

- | | | |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| A. A Recreation Board? | <u>68.4%</u> YES | <u>31.6%</u> NO |
| B. A Recreation Department? | <u>18.9%</u> YES | <u>81.1%</u> NO |
| C. A current (5 years old or less) Open Space and Recreation Plan? | <u>16.7%</u> YES | <u>83.3%</u> NO |

If you answered "no" to 2C, are you planning on writing or updating an Open Space and Recreation Plan?	<u>33.3%</u> YES	<u>66.7%</u> NO
--	------------------	-----------------

3. Does your municipality have enough public recreation facilities to meet the needs of your residents?

56.8% YES 43.2% NO

If "no", please choose your TOP FIVE priorities.

Public Recreation Facility	% Response*
Basketball Courts	15%
Baseball/Softball Fields	38.5%
Racquet Sport Courts	8%
Picnic Areas	38.5%
Natural Areas	40%
Multi-purpose Fields (soccer, hockey, football)	69%
Swimming Pool (outdoor)	8%
Hiking Trails	54%
Bike Trails	54%
Volleyball Courts	15%
Playground/Tot Lots	54%
Skateboarding Park	38.5%
Indoor Community Center	46%
Other**	15%

* % Response out of 13

** Other includes Environmental Education Area & Dog Park

4. Please indicate the importance of having lighted recreational facilities in your municipality (check ONE).

- 16.7% High Priority
- 33.3% Medium Priority
- 50.0% Low Priority

5. Does your Municipality provide organized recreational programs to your residents?

- 62.2% YES
- 37.8% NO

Please indicate what programs are available by answering YES or NO to each program:

Program	Yes	No
Baseball	38.9%	61.1%
Softball	32.4%	67.6%
Basketball	29.7%	70.3%
Swimming	13.9%	86.1%
Volleyball	18.9%	81.1%
Soccer	33.3%	66.7%
Playground Programs	66.7%	33.3%
Teen Programs	10.8%	89.2%
Senior Citizen Programs	8.3%	91.7%
Environmental Education	0%	100.0%
Tennis/Racquetball	21.6%	78.4%
Indoor Fitness	5.4%	94.6%
Other*	6.7%	93.3%

* Other includes ice-skating, parades, concerts, children activities etc.

6. Are any of your programs:

- a) Run jointly with local school district? 32.3% YES 67.7% NO
- b) Run jointly with adjacent municipality (ies)? 17.2% YES 82.8% NO
- c) Run jointly with local athletic association (s)? 35.5% YES 64.5% NO

7. Would your municipality be interested in a regional recreation board with surrounding municipalities that could enable you to share resources? 48.5% YES 51.5% NO

8. Has your municipality participated in the County's Joint Comprehensive Planning Program? 75.7% YES 24.3% NO

If "yes", would you consider doing a Joint Open Space and Recreation Plan if it was offered 60.9% YES 39.1% NO

9. Does your municipality have facilities that:

- a) Are inter-connected by a trail system or greenway? 23.7% YES 76.3% NO
- b) Have the potential to be connected by a trail system or greenway? 57.1% YES 42.9% NO
- c) Have the potential to connect to adjacent municipalities as part of a regional network of trails or greenways? 42.9% YES 57.1% NO
- d) Would your municipality be willing to interconnect existing or new trail systems, greenways, or recreational facilities with adjacent municipalities? 63.3% YES 36.7% NO

10. What was you municipal recreation expenditure for the following in fiscal year 2003?
Unfortunately, the widely varying and inconsistent forms of response from responding municipalities for this question made tabulation impossible.

11. Does your municipality have a staffed recreation department?

34.2% YES 65.8% NO

12. a) What sources of funding does your municipality use for open space and recreation?

Please answer YES or NO to each of the following choices:

Source of Funding	Yes	No
CDBG Funding	35.1%	64.9%
Developer Fee-In-Lieu Payments	32.4%	67.6%
Park and Recreation Tax	5.4%	94.6%
Corporate Sponsorship	10.8%	89.2%
Developer Land Donation	35.1%	64.9%
Donations	62.2%	37.8%
General Fund	78.4%	21.6%
User Fees	32.4%	67.6%
State Grants	37.8%	62.2%
County Funding	21.6%	78.4%

b) If your municipality accepts Fees-In-Lieu of payments, what are the fees?

26 do not have any kind of fees. 12 have fees. Fee range for municipalities that requires them: \$300.00/lot to \$1,830.00/lot

c) If your municipality does not accept Land Donations, please explain why not.

No municipalities answered this question.

12. Are your current funding sources adequate in providing:

- a) Maintenance of existing facilities? 85.3% YES 14.7% NO
- b) Construction of new facilities? 32.4% YES 67.6% NO
- c) Administration? 67.6% YES 32.4% NO

14. If new monies should become available, what would be the order of priority for the following? (please rank 1 to 5, with 1 being highest priority)

Projects	Highest Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Lowest Priority
Land Acquisition	12.1%	15.2%	6.1%	24.2%	42.4%
Development of new facilities	27.3%	30.3%	27.3%	12.1%	3.0%
Renovation of Existing Facilities	50.0%	6.3%	15.6%	6.3%	21.9%
Conservation of Open Space	15.6%	12.5%	28.1%	28.1%	15.6%
Program Development	3.1%	31.3%	15.6%	25.0%	25.0%

15. Would your municipality consider any of the following funding methods to preserve recreation facilities, open space, environmentally critical areas, or historic properties?
Answer YES or NO to each:

Funding Method	Yes	No
Property Tax Increase	17.6%	82.4%
Bond Issue	23.5%	76.5%
Recreation Tax/Fee	29.4%	70.6%

16. Does your municipality currently have an environmental advisory council (EAC)?
5.3% YES 94.7% NO

If “yes”, would you be interested in a joint environmental advisory council?

The municipalities that currently have an environmental advisory council indicated that they would be interested in participating in a joint EAC.

Additionally, there are several municipalities indicated that they would be interested in either an EAC or a joint EAC.

17. Do you believe your current municipal ordinances are adequate to protect the following? Answer YES or NO to each:

	Yes	No
Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index (PNDI), rare or endangered species	61.8%	38.2%
Wetlands	85.7%	14.3%
Ridgelines	54.5%	45.5%
Scenic Vistas/Roads	57.1%	42.9%
Floodplains	88.9%	11.1%
Forested Lands	58.8%	41.2%
Steep Slopes	71.4%	28.6%
Water Sources	74.3%	25.7%
Historic Resources	57.1%	42.9%

If you answered “no” to any of the above, would your municipality be interested in conservation zoning assistance from the County? 39.1% YES 60.9% NO

18. Does your municipality have any historic sites and/or districts that are maintained with municipal funds? 7.9% YES 92.1% NO
19. Does your municipality have a mechanism (committee, review board) to inventory, preserve, and /or maintain historic resources? 18.4% YES 81.6% NO

Of those that responded as not having a mechanism (committee, review board) to inventory, preserve, and /or maintain historic resources, 30.8% indicated that they would be interested in forming such a mechanism.

Key Results

- A majority of the municipalities have Recreation Boards, but most do not have recreation departments. Most municipalities do not have a current Open Space and Recreation Plan. Only one (1) out of three (3) anticipate writing or updating their Open Space and Recreation Plan.

- In general, the municipalities were split as to whether they had enough public recreation facilities. Over 40% answered that they did not have enough public recreation facilities. Of those that did not have enough public recreation facilities, when asked to prioritize individual types of recreational facilities, multi-purpose fields and hiking trails far out-weighed the other facilities. Other top ranked facilities included bike trails, playground/tot lots, indoor community center, baseball/softball fields and natural areas. While multi-purpose fields were ranked as the highest priority, the majority of the remaining group/individual sports facilities ranked fairly low.
- Municipalities were split evenly over the need for having lighted recreational facilities. 17% of the municipalities ranked this as a high priority and 33% ranked it as a medium priority.
- Over 60% of the municipalities provide organized recreational programs to their residents. Of those programs provided, playground programs were provided the most with baseball, soccer, softball and basketball all grouped close together as the next most often provided programs. No municipality responded as providing environmental education. Senior citizen, teen programs and indoor fitness also scored low according to the survey.
- When asked if a municipality ran a joint program with a local school district, adjacent municipality or a local athletic association the majority answered no. However, if a municipality answered yes they were more likely to run a program with either a school district or athletic association than an adjacent municipality. The possible answer as to why this occurs is the probability that the school district or athletic association has the facilities for that specific program; for example baseball fields.
- Municipalities were split evenly when asked if they would be interested in a regional recreation board that would enable them to share resources.
- Over 75% of the Municipalities were involved in the County's Joint Comprehensive Planning Program. Of those municipalities over 60% indicated that they would consider completing a Joint Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- Most municipalities do not have facilities that are inter-connected with either a trail or greenway system. However, more than half stated that there was a potential for this type of connection. In addition, over 40% of the municipalities answered that their facilities had a potential for interconnection with an adjacent municipality as part of a regional network of trails or greenways. More than 60% of the municipalities indicating the potential for interconnection are willing to interconnect with adjacent municipalities.
- Most municipalities do not have an officially staffed recreation department. However, a number of municipalities do have staff that devotes time to typical recreational department activities. Municipalities in some instances probably do not have separate departments, however they do have personnel specifically charged with maintaining recreation facilities.
- Municipalities overwhelmingly use their general fund and donations for their funding source for open space and recreation. The use of CDBG funds, developer fee-in-lieu payments, developer land donation, user fees, and state grants were all very tightly grouped as the next most popular funding sources. Surprisingly 68% of municipal respondents do not accept fees-in-lieu of payments or land donations. The number one reason for not-accepting fee-in-lieu payments was simply the topic has not been broached.
- Over 85% of the municipalities stated that their current funding was adequate for the maintenance of existing facilities and 67% stated that their funding of administration was also adequate however, only about 32% felt that they had adequate funding for construction of new facilities. In general, municipalities feel that they are capable of maintaining their facilities with their current funding but do not have enough funding for new facilities.
- Municipalities were asked if monies should become available, what priority would they place on certain projects. A large majority of the municipalities were not interested in new land acquisition. However, development of new facilities on existing municipally owned property was the top priority for most municipalities. Also, surprisingly

renovation of existing facilities came in as the second highest priority. Conservation of open space and program development was fairly evenly split. In general, municipalities seem to have room for expansion of facilities without the need for new land acquisitions and while municipalities have stated that they are comfortable with their current maintenance budgets that there is still room for renovations of existing facilities.

- Most of the municipalities were not in favor of any type of recreation tax/fee, bond issues or property tax increases to fund preservation of recreation, open space, environmental areas or historic properties. This is not surprising with the recent publicity of tax hikes for schools, municipalities and the county. Out of the three options, the recreation tax/fee was the most popular funding method considered by municipal respondents at 29.4%.
- The majority of municipalities did not have an environmental advisory council (EAC) nor were they in favor of forming an EAC. However, this is a new concept that many municipalities may not have been exposed to before and there was some interest by several municipalities to the idea.
- Most municipalities believe that their current municipal ordinances adequately protect environmental features. Municipalities did not believe as strongly that ridgelines, scenic vistas/roads, forested land, and historic resources were adequately protected. Most of these features have not received as much pressure for protection until recently. In general, these features are only now receiving attention due to more recent development pressures, which, may account for them not being addressed in some ordinances.
- Overwhelmingly municipalities do not have any historic sites that they are maintaining with municipal funds.
- Municipalities, for the most part, do not have any type of mechanism to inventory, preserve or maintain historic resources. However, there was some interest in forming new committees or review boards for this purpose and their interest in the formation of joint committees or review boards.

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