

A photograph of a dense forest. The foreground is filled with lush green ferns and moss-covered rocks. The middle ground shows several tall, slender trees with thin trunks. In the background, there are larger, more mature trees with thick trunks. The overall scene is a vibrant, green forest floor.

Indiana County Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan

Photo Credit: Old Growth Forest, Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

purposes and goals



Photo Credit: Yellow Creek State Park Wetlands, Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

Purposes

Goals

INDIANA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
 FILE OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
 SESSION OF 2012

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF INDIANA, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING THE INDIANA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, DATED THIS 12th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2012 AS PREPARED BY THE INDIANA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION IN COLLABORATION WITH A COUNTY APPOINTED STEERING COMMITTEE, AND FACILITATED BY THE INDIANA COUNTY OFFICE OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO ARTICLE III AND ARTICLE IX OF THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE.

WHEREAS, Where We Live...A Comprehensive Plan for Indiana County, Pennsylvania, replaces the outdated Indiana County Comprehensive Plan previously adopted by the Indiana County Commissioners in the 1960's; and,

WHEREAS, a copy of the draft Comprehensive Plan, which includes the text, maps, charts and any other items which form the whole of the Comprehensive Plan, was made available for public review at the Indiana County Courthouse, the Indiana County Office of Planning & Development, the Indiana County Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Free Library, the Burrell Township Library, the Saltsburg Library, the Blairsville Library, and the Stapleton-Stabley Library at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, is attached hereto as Exhibit "A"; and,

WHEREAS, the Indiana County Comprehensive Plan includes four documents: "Where We Live...A Comprehensive Plan for Indiana County, Pennsylvania"; "Indiana County Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan"; "Indiana County Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan"; and "More People Biking & Walking More Often: Pedestrian & Bicyclist Transportation Plan for Indiana County"; and,

WHEREAS, the Indiana County Comprehensive Plan was reviewed and recommended for adoption by the Indiana County Planning Commission to the Indiana County Board of Commissioners on June 28, 2012; and,

WHEREAS, the draft Indiana County Comprehensive Plan was sent to the 38 municipalities and 11 school districts within Indiana County, and the contiguous 5 counties, 8 school districts, and 25 municipalities on June 29, 2012; and,

WHEREAS, Indiana County has received no substantial comments from the municipalities and school districts within Indiana County, or from the contiguous counties, school districts, and municipalities within forty-five (45) days of submission of the Indiana County Comprehensive Plan; and,

WHEREAS, notice of a public hearing to present the final Indiana County Comprehensive Plan was forwarded to the Indiana Gazette to be advertised and published on August 8, 2012 and August 14, 2012; and,

resolution

WHEREAS, the Indiana County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing on August 22, 2012 to hear and consider public comments on the final Indiana County Comprehensive Plan, and that the comments received at the public hearing were noted for future planning consideration; and,

WHEREAS, the Indiana County Board of Commissioners, after consideration of comments received, has determined that the Indiana County Comprehensive Plan, as originally set forth in Exhibit "A", should not be substantially revised in whole or in part; and,

WHEREAS, the County has found the Comprehensive Plan is beneficial to the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE INDIANA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, AND IS HEREBY RESOLVED AND ENACTED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE SAME:

SECTION I. The Board of Commissioners of Indiana County, by this Resolution, adopts the Indiana County Comprehensive Plan as attached hereto as Exhibit "A", as pursuant to Article III and Article IX of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

SECTION II. Any and all previous comprehensive planning documents are hereby repealed.

Resolved and enacted this 12th day of September, 2012.

INDIANA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

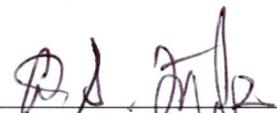
ATTEST:



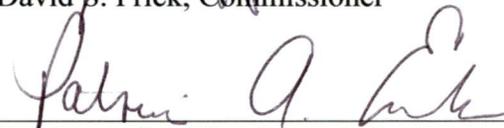
Robin Maryai, Chief Clerk



Rodney D. Ruddock, Chairman



David S. Frick, Commissioner



Patricia A. Evanko, Commissioner

The following individuals and organizations have made the development of the Indiana County Greenways, Open Space and Trails Plan possible:

Steering Committee Members

- Tom Clark—Member, Evergreen Conservancy
- John Dudash—Member, Evergreen Conservancy
- David Frick—Board Member, Indiana County Board of Commissioners
- Linda Gwinn—Board Member, Conemaugh Valley Conservancy
- Delbert Highlands—Member, Indiana County Planning Commission
- Laurie Lafontaine—Member, Indiana County Planning Commission
- Don Peffer—Director of Parks, Indiana Area Recreation and Parks Commission
- Penny Perman—Executive Director, Indiana County Tourist Bureau
- Don Rager—Historical Coordinator, Cherry Tree Heritage Society
- James Resh—Executive Director, Indiana County Conservation District
- John Somonick—Resident
- Nancy Smeltzer—Councilwoman, Smicksburg Borough
- Christopher Tracey—Ecologist, Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program
- Jeff Wagner—NHI Coordinator, Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

Steering Committee Resource Staff

- Leann Chaney—Chief Planner, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
- Ray Green—Intern Planner, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
- Jeffrey Raykes—Senior Planner, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
- Dan Silvis—GIS Coordinator, Indiana County
- Byron Stauffer, Jr.—Executive Director, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
- George Urban—Assistant Director, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development

Additional Contributors

- Andrew JG Schwartz—Managing Principal, Environmental Planning & Design, LLC
- Jack R. Scholl—Senior Principal, Environmental Planning & Design, LLC

Photos: Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program; Environmental Planning & Design, LLC

The Indiana County Greenways Plan is made possible through the support of Indiana County's residents and leaders. This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

acknowledgments

What are Greenways, and why are they important?

Greenways are linear corridors, comprised of both land and water resources, which serve to connect sensitive natural resources and important open spaces.

The Pennsylvania, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is working with state residents to realize the possibilities and benefits of designating these types of corridors.

The development of an integrated greenways network can provide opportunities to:

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

The Indiana County Open Space , Greenways and Trails Plan

Indiana County’s plan to designate a system of greenways is an extension of work that began with the County’s Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. In creating this greenways system, or what is often referred to as a network, the County and its municipalities can work together to strategically provide unique recreation and conservation opportunities to residents and visitors. As part of this effort, several natural resource planning principles are important to consider:

- A. Identified greenways can be comprised of recreation and conservation-oriented corridors and open spaces.
- B. A network of greenways can exist in urban, suburban and rural landscapes.
- C. Opportunity exists to develop greenway connections across county boundaries.

Based upon the presence and patterns of existing natural resources, Indiana County ’s identified greenway projects can provide opportunity to forward local, regional and State-wide conservation and recreation planning initiatives.

purpose and goals | PURPOSES

Indiana County's Greenways Open Space Plan seeks to fulfill numerous purposes and goals.

Purposes of the Plan

The following purposes are listed in order of priority and are based upon comments gained throughout the planning process. Purpose statements identify the "essence" of why the Open Space Plan is important to pursue.

Purpose #1

Conserve important natural resources

Purpose #2

Celebrate cultural heritage

Purpose #3

Bolster economic development

Purpose #4

Promote healthy lifestyles

Purpose #5

Expand recreational opportunities

Purpose #6

Increase non-motorized mobility

Purpose #7

Increase awareness of recreation and environment

Purpose #8

Optimize use of land in the County



Pine Ridge County Park

Indiana County Greenway and Open Space Plan Goals

A goal embodies the desired outcome from an idea. Collectively, the identified purposes have been outlined to work in tandem with the County's overall planning goals. Specific goals of the Greenways Plan include:

- #1 *Conserve unique watersheds and other natural features within the County*
- #2 *Increase visibility, awareness and accessibility to the County's urban and rural cultural resource sites*
- #3 *Expand economic opportunity by fostering tourism and leveraging previous investments*
- #4 *Enhance opportunities for physical, mental and spiritual wellness through expanded recreation opportunities*
- #5 *Integrate existing open space assets to create a countywide recreation network*
- #6 *Enhance existing trail developments utilizing railway corridors, ridgetops and stream valleys*
- #7 *Promote local understanding of existing natural resources within the County*
- #8 *Determine compatible land uses that best leverage open space and trail resources*

Did you know . . .

"The property for Pine Ridge Park was purchased in 1966 and 1967 primarily with federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grants. At the time Pine Ridge was being constructed, Indiana County was simultaneously constructing Blue Spruce Park and Hemlock Lake. Students from Penn State's Landscape Architecture and Recreation Management departments created the original design for Pine Ridge Park. Students submitted park designs in a contest held by the Indiana County Planning Office in 1966. At 635 acres, Pine Ridge Park provides a variety of recreation options. Much of the park remains in a natural state with large stands of mature hardwoods. Tom's Run, a scenic mountain stream, intersects the park. Several miles of hiking and cross-country skiing trails traverse the park."

Source: *Indiana County Parks and Trails*



planning
approach

Photo Credit: Tom's Run, Pine Ridge County Park, Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

County Profile

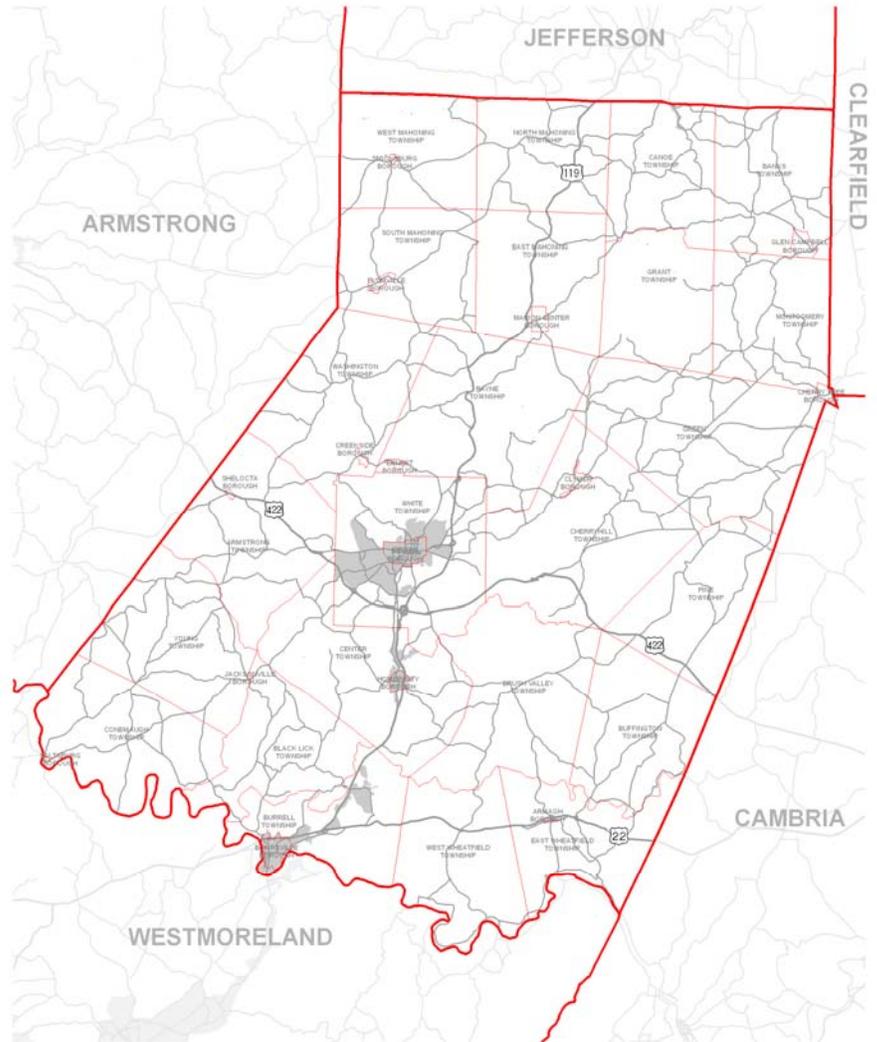
Methodology

Public Participation

County Profile

Indiana County is 834 square miles in size. Approximately 90,000 residents live within the County's 38 municipalities. There are several offices in the County's government structure charged with coordinating and overseeing planning-related projects. The Office of Planning and Development is responsible for overseeing and coordinating growth and economic development for the residents, businesses, and communities of Indiana County.

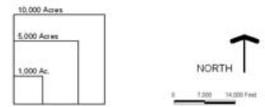
The County's Office of Parks and Trails is charged with the care of three regional parks, three historic sites, two natural areas and two bicycle trails. These existing resources, totaling more than 2,600 acres of land and 36 miles of trail, form the foundation upon which numerous future greenway and open space opportunities can be established.



LEGEND

- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Areas (2000)
- US Highway
- Other Roads

Source: Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission



Consider...

The County's Open Space, Greenways, and Trails planning efforts consider nearly 30 types of resources ranging from land use to biological diversity areas. Sources of the resource information include County data, State and Federal agencies as well as other conservation groups such as the Evergreen Conservancy and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

This section describes the general principles guiding the data gathering and analysis process used to develop the Indiana County Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan. The process is generally described in chronological order and was iterative in nature. The overall goals and key assumptions for the planning process were continually revisited to permit reflection, refinement and the analysis to be re-evaluated.

Background information was gathered and mapping prepared within the County using a computer-based geographic information system (GIS). More than 27 datasets ranging from population and land use to steep slopes, ridgetops and biological diversity areas (BDAs) were gathered and mapped. Using GIS software, the background maps were overlain with one another and relationships were subsequently analyzed. The background mapping and GIS software formed the basis for the analysis process used to define greenway elements.

Data from a wide range of sources was compiled to create the background mapping. Sources included State and Federal agencies, county GIS inventories and non-governmental organizations such as the Evergreen Conservancy and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. In some cases where data was not available in a digital format, GIS mapping was created by digitizing paper maps and other sources. One example of this is the ridgelines dataset. This information was visually identified using United States Geological Survey (UGS) and other topographic information and

digitized from these sources.

One of the important pieces of background mapping for this project was the topography of the County. The location of stream valleys, ridge tops and other landform elements proved to be a key component used to define the extents of potential greenway corridors. Prior to beginning this project, digital topographic information was not available at the same level of detail for the entire region. To ensure compatibility, topographic data was compiled at the same level of detail for the entire County. To do so, the highest quality available data was used to prepare a comprehensive GIS inventory of topography. Because this information was in USGS quadrangle map format, it had to be digitized and matched at the edges of each quadrangle. Previously existing data of the same quality was integrated with newly digitized data to create the comprehensive coverage necessary. The complete topographic coverage included 3-D elevation information which allowed for a much wider range of analysis. This dataset is a significant improvement over the data previously available.

While it formed the basis of the Plan, the mapping information developed for this project, including the topography, is also available for future county and regional projects.

Steering Committee

Throughout the development of the Plan, a group of County residents and leaders met as a Steering Committee to outline desired goals, projects, opportunities and challenges of pursuing greenway, trail and open space efforts.

opportunities and challenges



Photo Credit: Yellow Creek, Pennsylvania, Natural Heritage Program

Opportunities

Challenges

Greenway Features and Analysis

Overview

The process for identifying the future greenway and open space opportunities and challenges that exist in Indiana County builds upon a series of background mapping and related technical research activities.

Opportunities

Opportunities which emerged from the planning process include the following:

UNDERSTANDING EXISTING RESOURCE PATTERNS

Of all land within the County, more than 2/3 of the landscape is comprised of natural resources. More than 20 datasets were evaluated using a computer –based geographic information system (GIS). Elements highlighted in this assessment include watersheds, landform, slopes, ridges/valleys, wetlands/floodplains, woodland habitats, prime agricultural soils, general stream quality, biological diversity areas, State Parks/Forests/Gamelands, transportation, utility corridors, sewer service, water service, historic sites, as well as land and water trails.

Numerous sources were utilized to complete resource mapping. Primary data providers include State and Federal agencies, Indiana County 's GIS inventory and the Indiana County Natural Heritage Inventory. In developing these analyses, the County has gained a comprehensive understanding of the locations, characteristics and relationship of existing natural resource areas.

CONCURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS

Concurrent to the creation of the Greenways, Open Space and Trails Plan, the County developed its Comprehensive Plan, its Natural Heritage Inventory and its Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. Indiana County administers a significant portion of zoning and subdivision reviews and enforcement throughout the County.

Another major planning effort underway in the County is the assessment for conservation in the Little Mahoning Creek watershed. This assessment was supported through the emerging research conducted as part of Western Pennsylvania Conservancy 's conservation and technical assessment initiatives.

Challenges

Both physical characteristics and policies have the potential to be challenges to effective implementation of future greenways and open space planning initiatives. Some challenges include:

- Limited existing ordinance provisions to promote corridor designations
- Limited regulatory tools currently available for implementation
- Limited funding and staffing resources currently available for implementation
- Lack of coordinated implementation approach
- Majority of development in southern portion of County
- Majority of land under private ownership
- Other environmental concerns

Greenway Features and Analysis

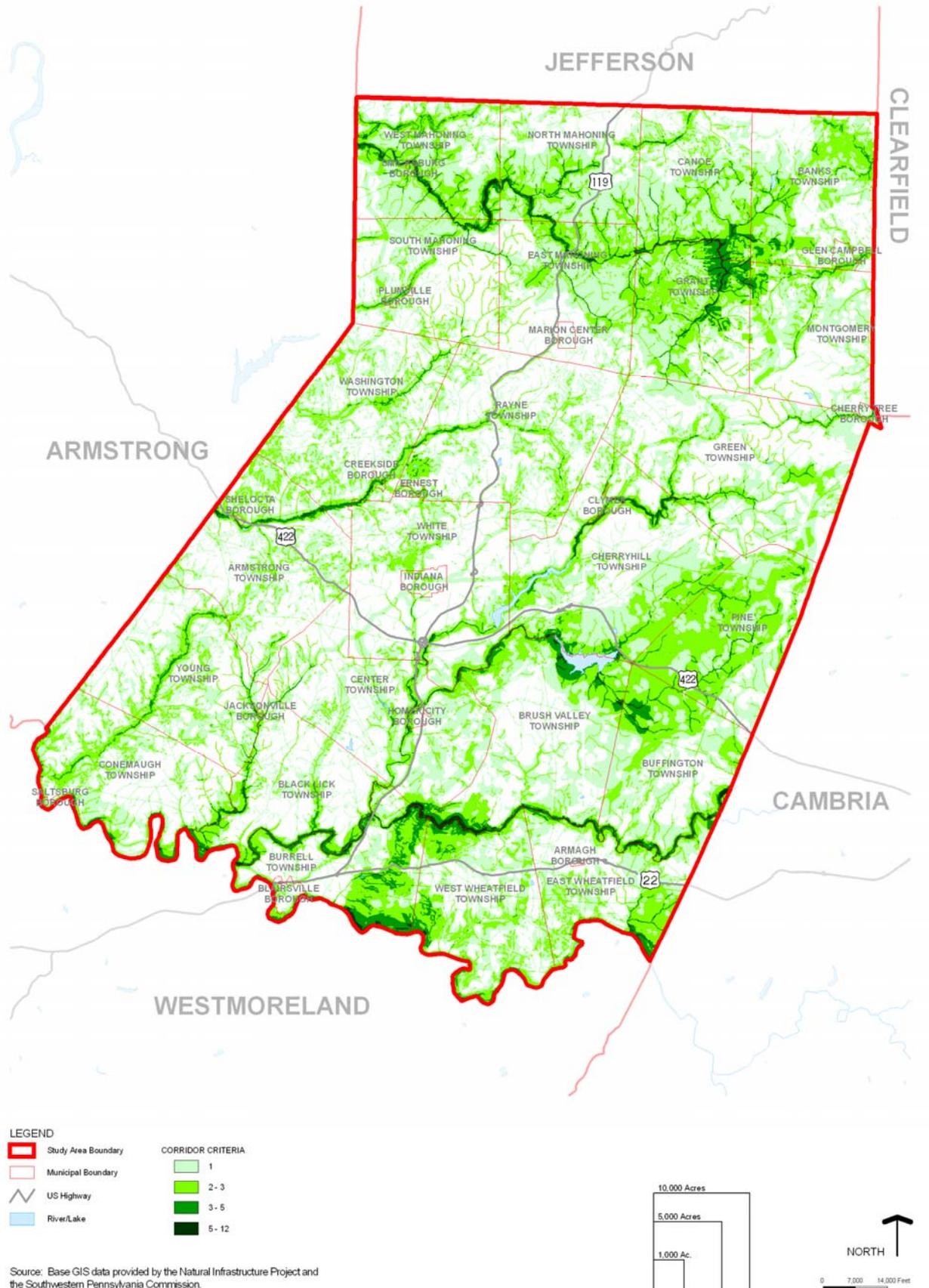
As part of completing the project’s initial analyses, the County’s compiled mapping of the wide range of natural and built resources was layered to determine which areas possess the highest and the least concentration of resources with no significance attached for future use or sensitivity to human interaction. This compilation is represented in the Plan’s Preliminary Resource Composite Map.

PRELIMINARY RESOURCE COMPOSITE MAP

Based upon completed base mapping, the County Steering Committee Members identified what components, or features, could be potentially relevant to future recreation and/or conservation efforts. Selected features, outlined on the table below and illustrated on the Preliminary Resource Composite Map (see facing page), range from wetlands to railroad corridors. At this stage of the planning process, all resources were determined to be equally important or “significant” to the County’s future greenway network. Consequently, lighter areas on the map contain fewer resources; higher concentrations of resources are represented by the map’s darker areas.

Resource	Buffer Distance (feet)
Abandoned Railroads	100
Active Railroads	100
Biological Diversity Areas - High Sensitivity	-
Biological Diversity Areas - Low Sensitivity	-
Cultural Sites	500
Federal Lands	-
Flood Plains	-
Habitable Woodlands	-
High Quality Streams	100
Important Bird Areas / Important Mammal Areas	-
Landscape Conservation Areas	-
Municipal, County, State, Federal Parks and Recreation Areas	-
Ridges	1,000
Reservoir Watersheds	-
Riparian Buffers (streams)	100
Slopes >25%	-
State Forests	-
State Gamelands	-
Trails (land)	500
Trails (water)	500
Trout Stocked Streams	100
Utility Corridors	100
Valleys	1,000
Wetlands	-

Preliminary Resource Composite Map



DESIGNATING RECREATION CORRIDORS/DESTINATIONS

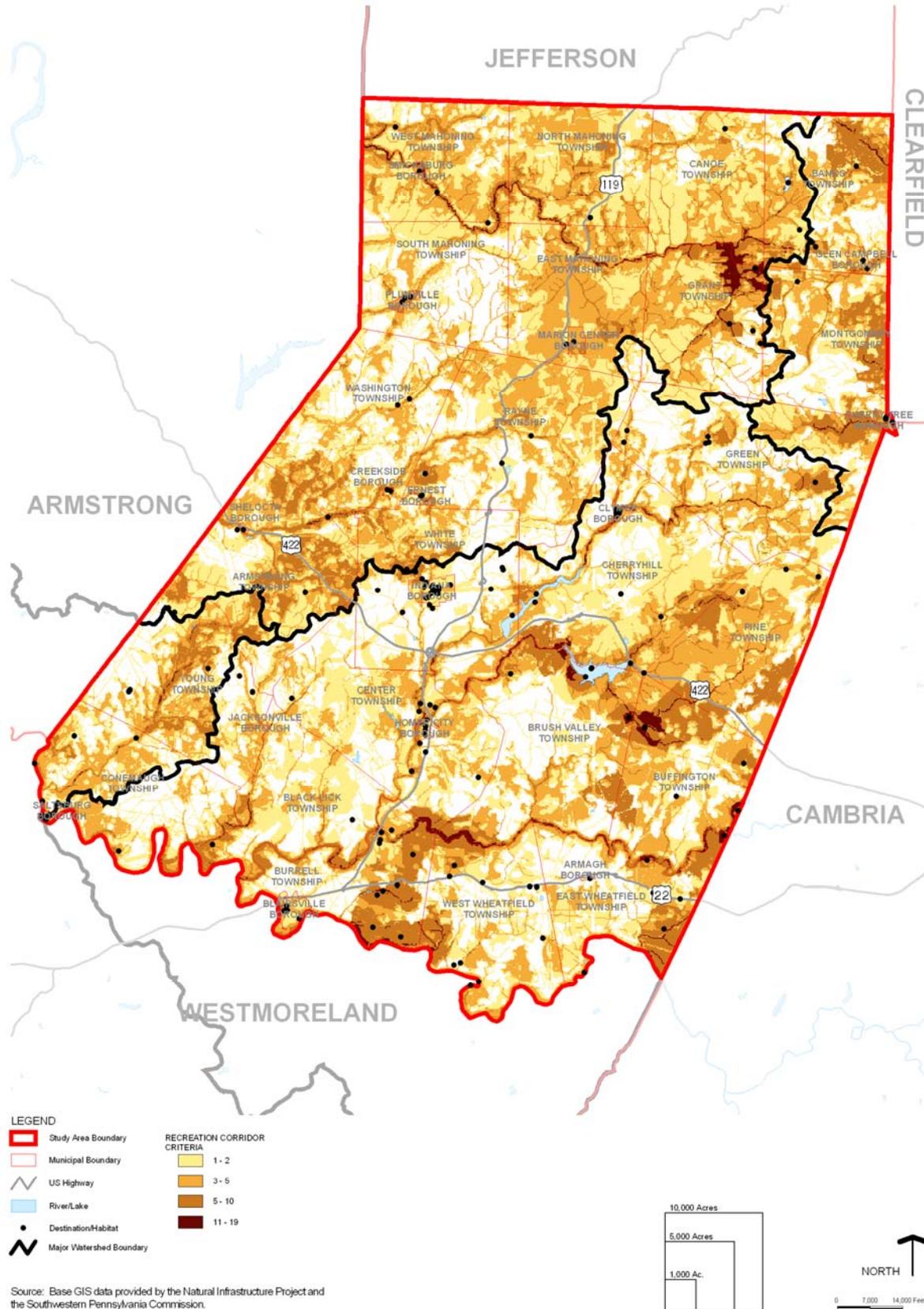
In examining the Composite Analysis of existing resources, the County Steering Committee identified how these varying features could or should not relate to potential recreation. Each resource was evaluated based upon its existing and/or potential role to support human interaction as well as varying levels of recreation intensities. Each resource was then further assessed based upon its potential contribution for enriching the County’s system of greenway corridors and/or a greenway destination. A corridor represents a linear composition or system of natural resources; a destination represents a single point or what often is referred to as a “hub” of activity.

In the table below, those features having a highly significant contribution to a recreation corridor are marked with a +; those with a moderate contribution to a recreation corridor are designated with a ✓; and those features with little to no significance to a recreation corridor are noted with a -. When potential destinations were considered for recreation, features which could contribute to such a place were marked with a O. The map on the facing page identifies where recreation-related features exist. The darker the color, the greater the number of resource features that exist within an area.

Table 2: Recreation-Related Features

Resource	Recreation	
	Corridor	Destination
Abandoned Railroads	+	
Active Railroads	-	
Agricultural Land	✓	
Biological Diversity Areas - High Sensitivity	-	
Biological Diversity Areas - Low Sensitivity	+	O
Contiguous Forest (250 Acres)	+	
Cultural Sites	+	O
Federal Lands	+	O
Fish Habitats	+	
Flood Plains	+	
High Quality Streams	+	
Important Bird Areas / Important Mammal Areas	+	O
Landscape Conservation Areas	✓	
Large Contiguous Forest (1,500 Acres)	+	
Municipal, County, State, Federal Parks and Recreation Areas	+	O
Population Centers (Cities, Boroughs and Villages)	+	O
Ridges	-	
Riparian Buffers (streams)	✓	
Slopes >25%	-	
State Forests	+	
State Gamelands	+	O
Trails (land)	+	
Trails (water)	+	
Utility Corridors	✓	
Valleys	✓	
Wetlands	✓	
Woodland Habitats	+	

Recreation Composite Map



IDENTIFYING CONSERVATION CORRIDORS/DESTINATIONS

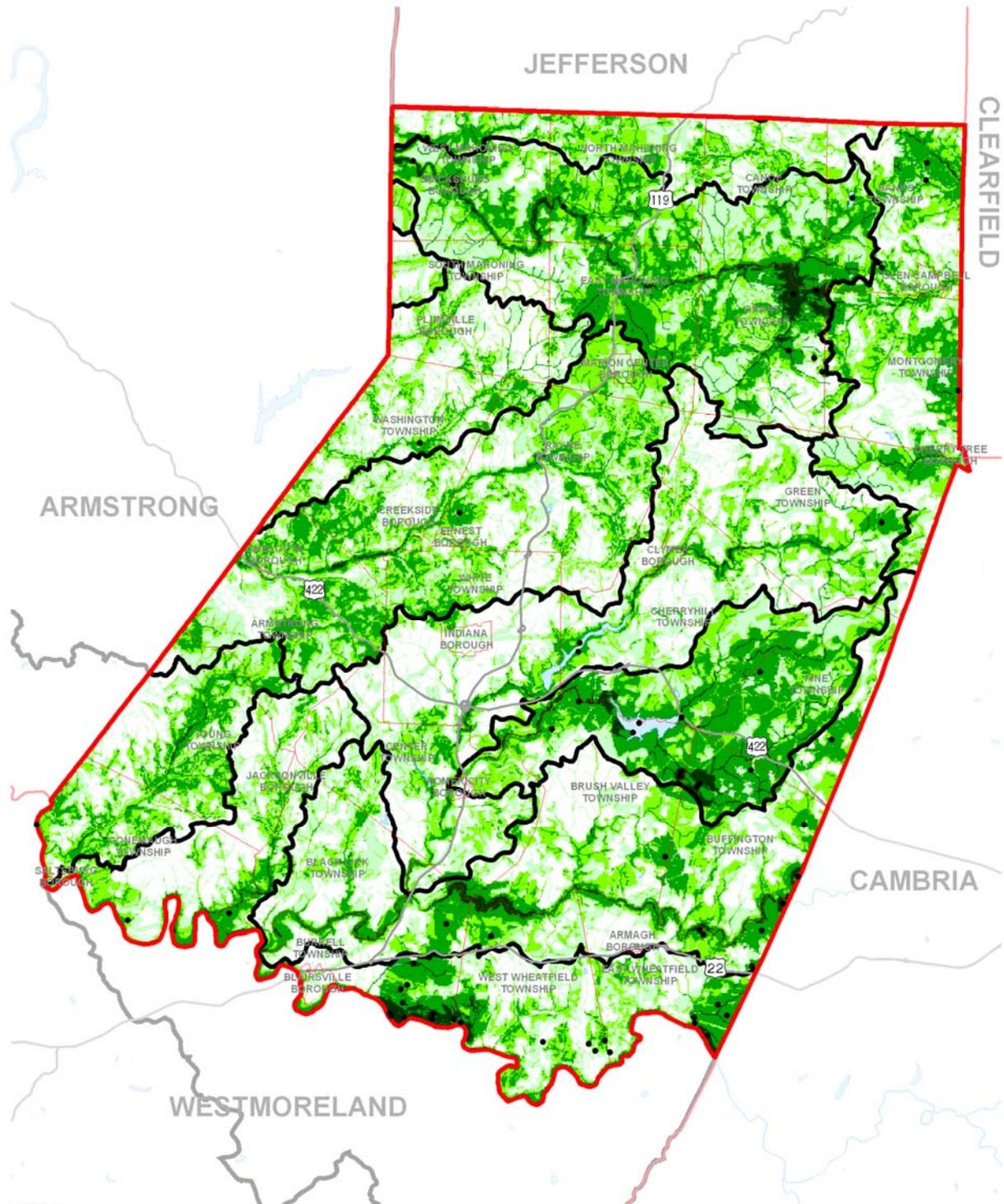
Similar to the analysis and mapping completed for recreation, the County Steering Committee identified how varying resources related to potential conservation goals and objectives. Each resource was evaluated based upon its existing and/or potential role to support wildlife and other ecological systems. Again, similar to the recreation analysis, each resource was further analyzed based upon its potential contribution for enriching the County’s system of conservation corridors and/or conservation destinations.

In the table below, features having a highly significant contribution to a conservation corridor are marked with a +; those with a moderate contribution to a conservation corridor are designated with a ✓; and those features with little to no significance to a conservation corridor are noted with a -. When potential destinations were considered for conservation, features which could contribute to such a place were marked with a O. The map on the facing page identifies where conservation-related features exist. The darker the color, the greater the number of resource features that exist within an area.

Table 3: Conservation-Related Features

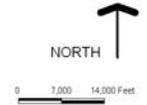
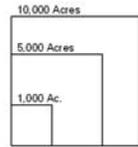
Resource	Conservation	
	Corridor	Destination
Abandoned Railroads	✓	
Active Railroads	-	
Agricultural Land	+	
Abandoned Railroads	✓	
Active Railroads	-	
Agricultural Land	+	
Biological Diversity Areas - High Sensitivity	+	O
Biological Diversity Areas - Low Sensitivity	+	O
Contiguous Forest (250 Acres)	+	
Cultural Sites	-	
Federal Lands	+	O
Fish Habitats	+	
Flood Plains	+	
High Quality Streams	+	
Important Bird Areas / Important Mammal Areas	+	O
Landscape Conservation Areas	+	
Large Contiguous Forest (1,500 Acres)	+	O
Municipal, County, State, Federal Parks and Recreation Areas	+	
Population Centers (Cities, Boroughs and Villages)	-	
Ridges	+	
Riparian Buffers (streams)	+	
Slopes >25%	+	
State Forests	+	O
State Gamelands	+	O
Trails (land)	✓	
Trails (water)	+	
Utility Corridors	-	
Valleys	+	
Wetlands	+	
Woodland Habitats	+	

Conservation Composite Map



- LEGEND**
- Study Area Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - River/Lake
 - Destination/Habitat
 - Major Watershed Boundary

CONSERVATION CORRIDOR CRITERIA	
	1 - 2
	3 - 5
	5 - 10
	11 - 22



Source: Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.

WEIGHTED RESOURCE COMPOSITE

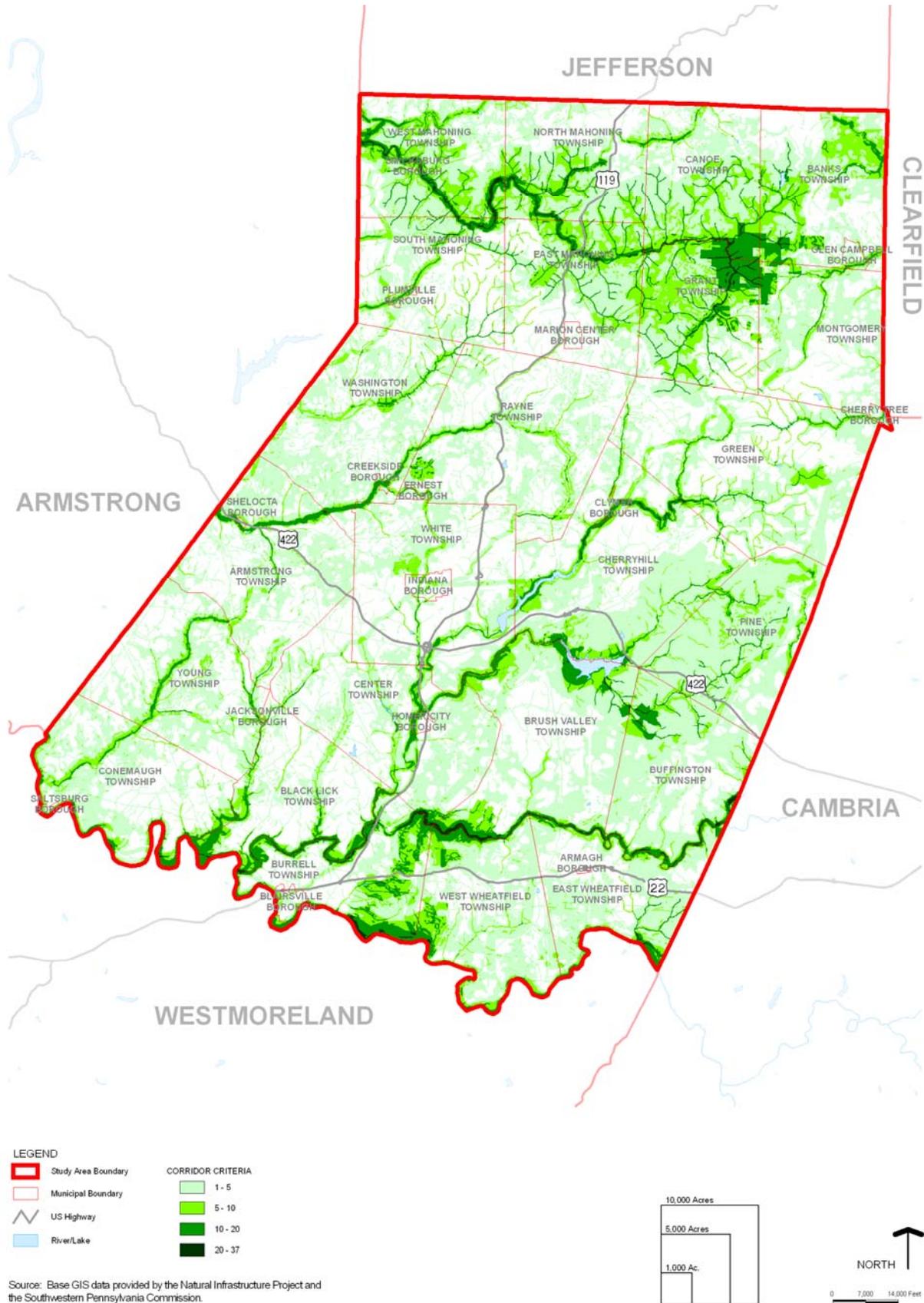
Following review of the Preliminary Conservation Composite Map, each resource was then evaluated on the degree to which it could “contribute” to either future recreation and/or conservation efforts. As part of this assessment, a scoring system was developed, and each feature was weighted accordingly. The results of these scoring assignments are outlined in the table below. The higher the score, the greater the significance that particular resource potentially has to contributing to the County’s open space greenway, and trails network.

On the facing page, the Weighted Resource Composite Map illustrates the results of layering each weighted resource. The darker the shade represents concentrations of highly weighted resources which those which received high scores. Lighter areas represent either one higher scoring resource or a combination of resources which were each assigned lower scores.

Table 4: Weighted Resource Features

Resource	Score
Abandoned Railroads	4
Active Railroads	1
Biological Diversity Areas - High Sensitivity	5
Biological Diversity Areas - Low Sensitivity	5
Cultural Sites	3
Federal Lands	5
Flood Plains	4
Habitable Woodlands	2
High Quality Streams	5
Important Bird Areas / Important Mammal Areas	3
Landscape Conservation Areas	2
Municipal, County, State, Federal Parks and Recreation Areas	5
Ridges	3
Reservoir Watersheds	
Riparian Buffers (streams)	3
Slopes >25%	3
State Forests	5
State Gamelands	5
Trails (land)	4
Trails (water)	4
Trout Stocked Streams	2
Utility Corridors	1
Valleys	3
Wetlands	2

Weighted Resource Composite Map



open space and greenways vision



Photo Credit: Charles F. Lewis Natural Area, Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

Project Corridors
Corridor Types
Planning
Corridors
Characteristics
Investments
Priorities

Project Corridors

Project corridors present a simple abstraction of the greenways and open space network plan. Discrete segments or “projects” are defined where improvements could occur.

As part of these recommendations, the Plan identifies each corridor’s general suitability as it relates to future use for recreation- and/or conservation-oriented activities.

Recreation-oriented project corridors are highlighted as those which present opportunity to introduce more intensive use of land and/or water resources.

Conservation-oriented projects are generally envisioned as those areas which should remain largely similar to their current natural state so that important open space and wildlife areas can continue flourishing.

The adjacent table lists each of the County’s recommended 26 project corridors. The location of each corridor is shown on Project Corridors Plan on the facing page with darker shaded corridors representing conservation opportunities and lighter shaded corridors representing those areas most suitable for recreation greenways and open spaces.

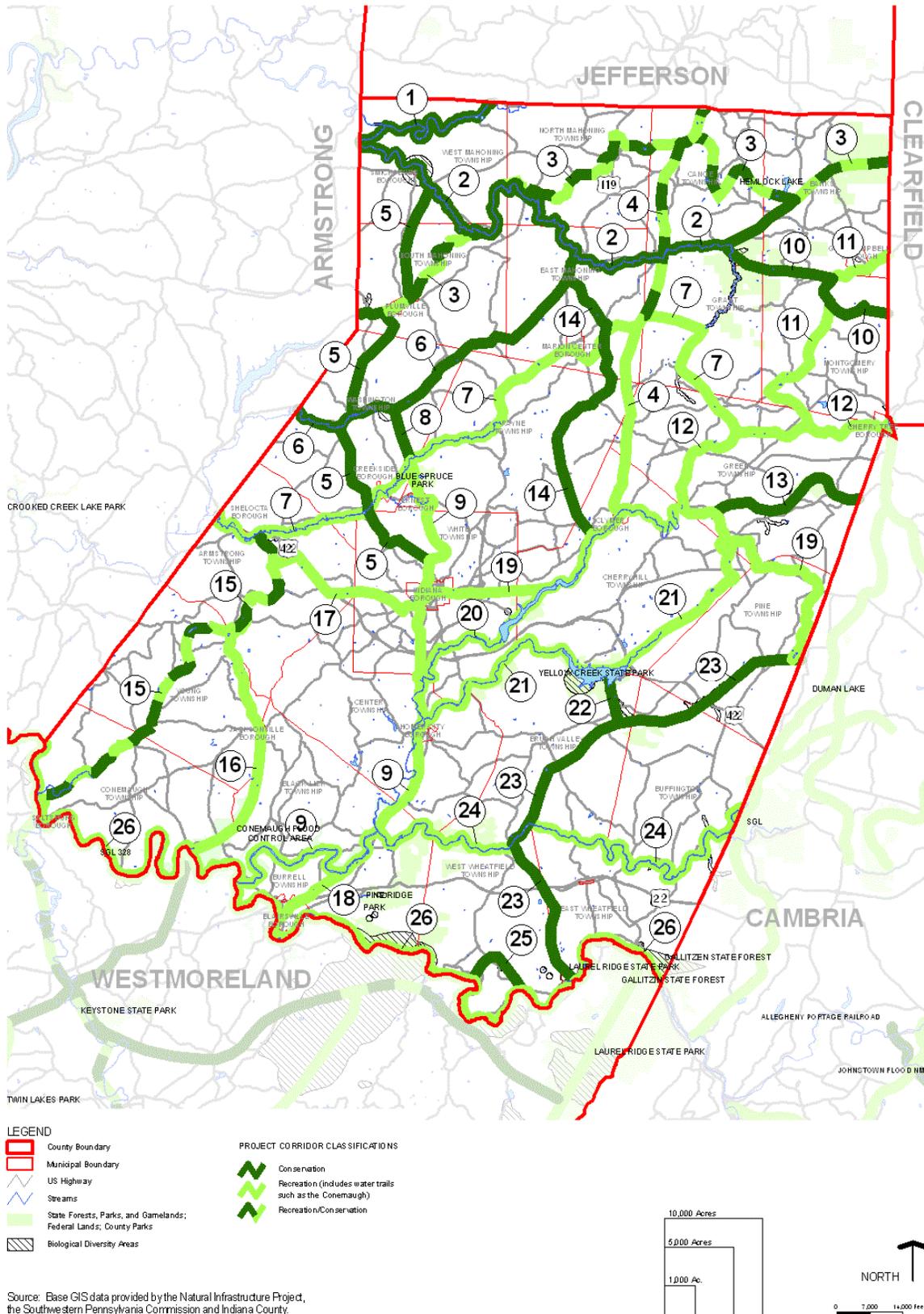
Table 5: Project Corridors

#	NAME
1	Mahoning Creek Corridor
2	Little Mahoning Creek Corridor
3	Sagamore Greenway (includes Plumville Greenway)*
4	Northern Passage
5	Sugar Camp Greenway
6	Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor
7	Crooked Creek Greenway
8	Plum Creek/Crooked Creek Connector
9	Hoodlebug Trail
10	Montgomery Canoe Greenway
11	The Glen Campbell Passage
12	Susquehanna Greenway (includes Cherry Tree Trail)
13	Green Township Wildlife Corridor
14	Clymer/East Mahoning Greenway
15	Black Legs Corridor
16	Aultman Run Corridor
17	Curry Run Passage
18	Hoodlebug/Mainline Canal Connector
19	Two Lick Corridor
20	Hoodlebug Greenway (includes Two Lick Creek Greenway)
21	Yellow Creek Trail
22	The Yellow Creek Connector
23	Little Yellow Creek Greenway
24	Ghost Town Trail**
25	Northern Mainline Canal Loop
26	Harrisburg to Pittsburgh Mainline Canal Greenway™ (includes West Penn Trail/Conemaugh River Greenway)

* As defined in the Indiana County Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

**Also Referred to as the Black Lick Greenway in the Indiana County Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Project Corridors Plan



Corridor Types

There are five types of corridors that comprise the Greenways and Open Space vision including:

TYPE I—OPEN SPACE

No constructed trails; unblazed/unmarked; public access permitted



TYPE II—MAINTAINED DIRT TRAIL

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



TYPE III—IMPROVED/MAINTAINED DIRT TRAIL

Medium impact trails; blazed/marked; multi-purpose trail approximately 6' wide



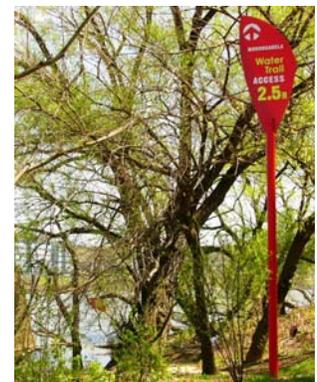
TYPE IV—IMPROVED/MAINTAINED CRUSHED AGGREGATE/ASPHALT TRAIL

High impact trails; blazed/marked; multi-purpose trail approximately 6' - 10' wide



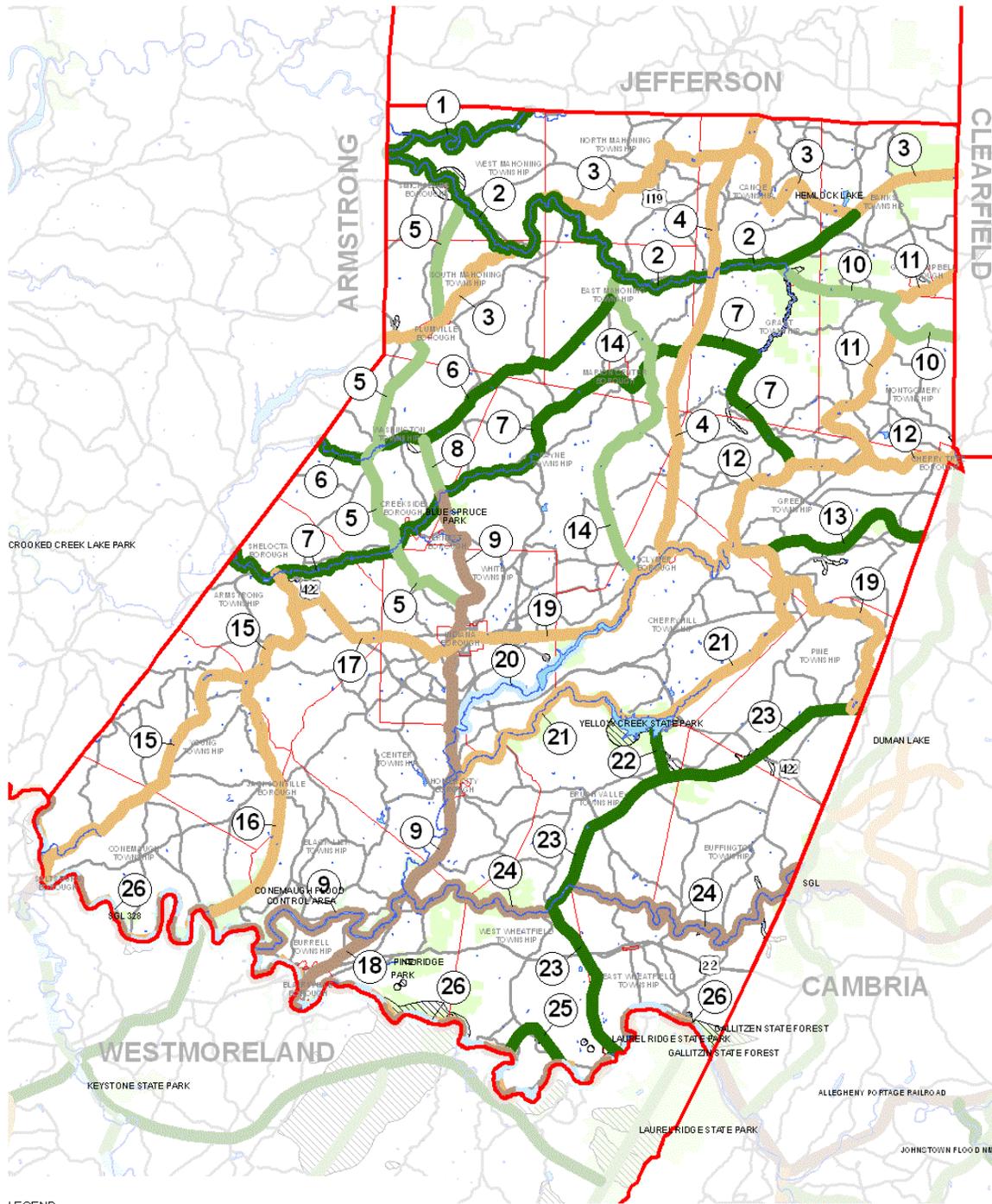
TYPE V—WATER TRAIL

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

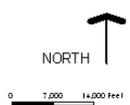
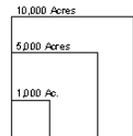


A map of the proposed types of corridors is illustrated on the following page followed by a brief description of each of the County's 26 proposed greenway projects.

Corridor Types Plan



- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - Streams
 - State Forests, Parks, and Gamelands;
 - Federal Lands; County Parks
 - Biological Diversity Areas
- PROJECT CORRIDOR TYPES**
- Type I: Open Space
 - Type II: Maintained Dirt Trail
 - Type III: Improved/Maintained Dirt Trail
 - Type IV: Improved/Maintained Crushed Aggregate/Asphalt Trail
 - Type V: Water Trail



Source: Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and Indiana County.

Land Use Planning Considerations

The feasibility of creating a designated greenways network is largely based upon the evaluation and consideration of the County’s other planning initiatives. The County’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan identifies areas for long-term growth, revitalization and conservation. The relationship of these planned areas in context of the proposed greenway project corridors are illustrated on the following page.

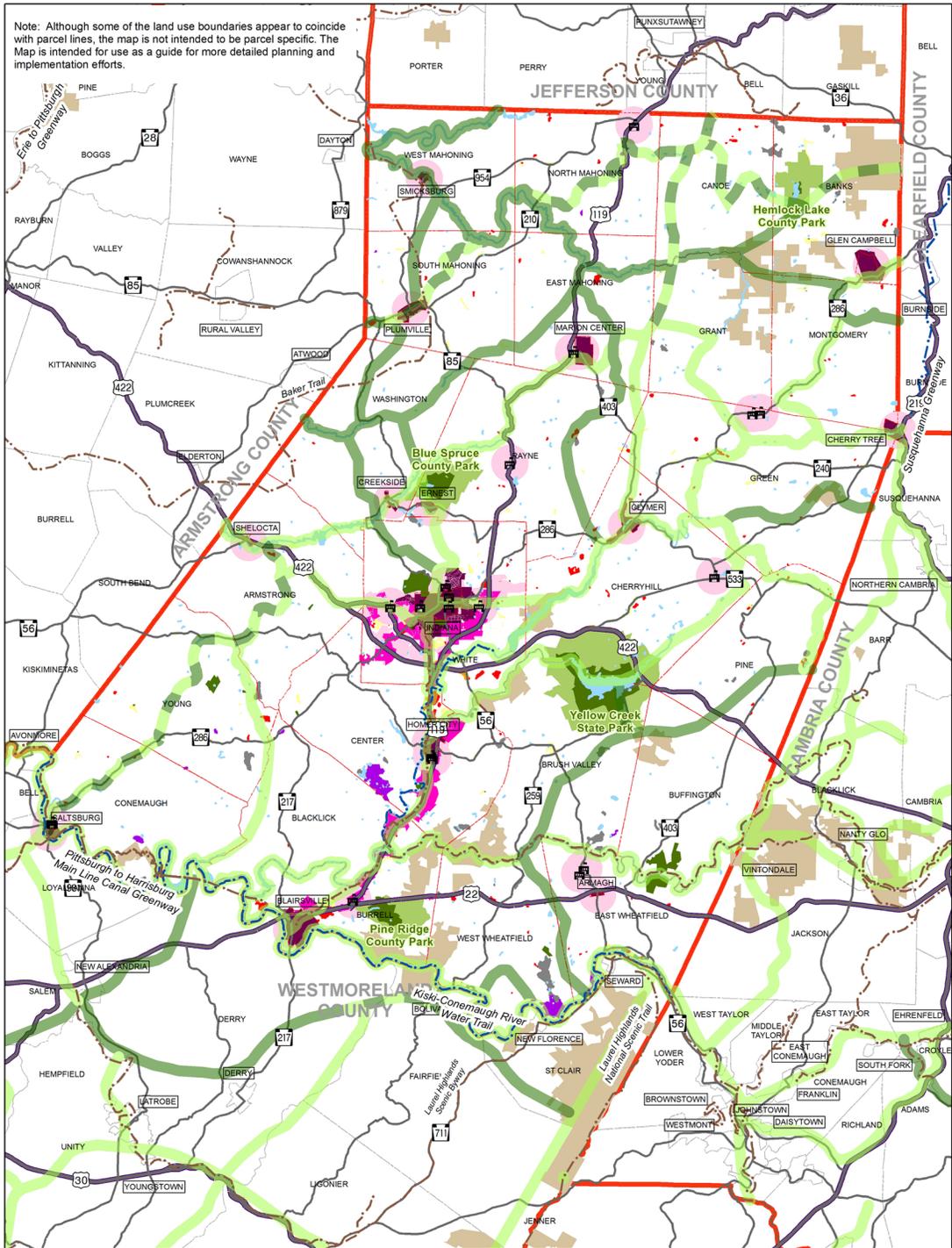
These patterns will influence the feasibility of a greenway, whether an individual corridor or an entire network. Areas geared for growth and/or revitalization present both opportunities and challenges to achieving greenway successes. In turn, as part of the detailed feasibility of a corridor’s location and alignment, the County should assess possible negative impacts, or “threats,” to each project corridor. A “threat” analysis can consider factors such as proximity to public water service, proximity to public sanitary service, location within existing densely populated areas, and location within Indiana County’s identified growth and revitalization areas.

The severity of impacts can be determined by both the number and phasing of features that compose a project corridor. The greater the number of features that exist along a corridor the higher the potential challenge to designating a greenway. However, as illuminated through stakeholder and public feedback gained

throughout the planning process, ensuring the success of desired improvements can be gained through a number of mechanisms. Key mechanisms include the continued promotion of sound planning strategies, preparation of responsive ordinances and encouraged cooperation between the public and private sectors to utilize existing natural resources as assets and enhancements. The County should consider developing a database of property owners that are within the vicinity of potential greenway opportunities so that all stakeholders can be kept abreast of potential project ideas, opportunities and progress.

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan’s recommendations, the County also has the potential to be a host for high power transmission lines included within the US Department of Energy’s proposed National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors. Depending upon which, if any, alignment alternative for these lines may be selected, the County should evaluate what challenges could arise in creating and/or maintaining interconnections among the County’s greenways network.

Land Use Considerations



Note: Although some of the land use boundaries appear to coincide with parcel lines, the map is not intended to be parcel specific. The Map is intended for use as a guide for more detailed planning and implementation efforts.

LEGEND

Future Land Use

- Residential
- Mixed Development
- Industrial
- Water & Wetlands
- Extraction
- Vacant

- Rural Resource Areas
- Parks
- Special Recreation and Conservation Zones
- State Game Lands
- Land Trail
- Water Trail

Designated Growth Area

- Future Growth Area
- Suburban Corridor
- Town Center
- Municipal Boundary
- County Boundary

Greenway Corridors

CLASSIFICATIONS

- CONSERVATION
- RECREATION
- RECREATION/CONSERVATION

Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic, GCS North American Datum 1983
 Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), 2008 and Indiana County Office of Planning & Development



Project Corridors

#1 Mahoning Creek Corridor

Mahoning Creek Corridor is a Type I conservation corridor that runs parallel to the Mahoning Creek in the northwest corner of the County. The 8-mile corridor connects to the Little Mahoning Creek Corridor at the Armstrong County Boundary at its western end and with the Jefferson County boundary at its eastern end, passing through the Little Mahoning Creek and Big Mahoning Creek Watersheds. The Corridor shall serve as open space.

#2 Little Mahoning Creek Corridor

Little Mahoning Creek Corridor is a Type I conservation corridor that traverses the entire County’s northern section from the Armstrong border and Mahoning Creek Corridor in the west to the Clearfield County boundary in the east. The corridor passes notable historic sites including the Lewis Bridge and John B. McCormick House. The 31-mile corridor is primarily located in the Mahoning Creek Watershed and the Susquehanna River Watershed. The Type I designation permits light impact recreation generally designated for activities such as hiking and bird watching. The Corridor links to the Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor, Sagamore Greenway, Sugar Camp Greenway, Northern Passage and the Montgomery Canoe Greenway. Hemlock Lake Park and State gamelands located in the northeastern section of the County are accessible by the Corridor.

#3 Sagamore Greenway

As a recreation counterpart to the Little Mahoning Creek Corridor, the Sagamore Greenway offers nearly 32 miles of Type III: Improved/Maintained Dirt Trail/Road to those within the northernmost portion of Indiana County. The Sagamore Greenway from the Armstrong to Clearfield County line makes this corridor one of the County’s longest recreation-oriented greenways.

#4 Northern Passage

Northern Passage Corridor provides access from a central County location at Clymer Borough to the northern County border with Jefferson County. The Type III recreation corridor provides medium impact recreation activities through several watersheds including Crooked Creek, Two Lick Creek, Little Mahoning Creek and Big Mahoning Creek. The Corridor offers access to several corridors including Two Lick to Black Lick Greenway, Crooked Creek Corridor, Sagamore Greenway and Little Mahoning Creek Corridor.

#5 Sugar Camp Greenway

Sugar Camp Greenway is a Type II recreation Greenway. The 18-mile corridor links to the Hoodlebug Trail at its southern end, intersects both Crooked Creek Corridor and Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor, and offers access through its northern portion to Sagamore Greenway. The corridor travels through the Plum Creek, Crooked Creek and Two Lick Creek watersheds.

#6 Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor

Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor is a major recreation corridor servicing a large area of central Indiana County. The Type I corridor is 31 miles long and offers high impact recreation opportunities such as horseback riding and bicycling. The corridor includes the historic Thomas Covered Bridge as well as links to Northern Passage, Plum Creek/Crooked Creek Connector, Hoodlebug Trail, Susquehanna Greenway, Clymer/ East Mahoning Greenway, Shelocta/ Clarksburg Trail and Curry Run Passage. Little Mahoning Creek, Crooked Creek and Two Lick Creek are watersheds Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor offers access.

#7 Crooked Creek Corridor

The Crooked Creek Greenway completes the third in a series of lengthy conservation-oriented corridors which traverse a significant east-west passage within the County. This Greenway, approximately 32 miles long, is recommended to be comprised of Open Space and categorized as a Type I corridor.

#8 Plum Creek/Crooked Creek Connector

The 2-mile conservation corridor serves as a visual and physical link between the Plum Creek Wildlife and Crooked Creek Corridors. This Type II: Maintained Dirt Trail also creates a more remote/rugged extension of the Hoodlebug Trail accessible to the immediate south of the Connector.

#9 Hoodlebug Trail

Based largely upon the presence of the evolving Trail system, the Hoodlebug Trail is classified as a Type IV: Improved/Maintained Crushed Aggregate/Asphalt Trail project. The 28-mile corridor also links to Curry Run Passage, Two Lick to Black Lick Greenway, Hoodlebug Greenway, Yellow Creek Trail and Ghost Town Trail. The corridor offers access to several historic sites.

The Hoodlebug Trail is a recreation and commuter trail located in the central portion of Indiana County. The trail passes through residential, commercial, and natural settings, providing direct trail access to many local residents and employees of several schools, industries, and small businesses.

The trail follows the abandoned Indiana Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad between the Homer City area and Indiana. Built in the 1850's, the Indiana Branch was the first railroad to be constructed in Indiana County. 'Hoodlebug' was the local nickname for the self-propelled passenger coach that ran on the line until 1940. The corridor also was part of the Catawba Path, a Native American trail that extended from the Carolinas to upstate New York.

The trail, initially developed from Indiana to south of Homer City, has been extended to the confluence of Black Lick Creek and Two Lick Creek near the village of Black Lick. This extension was completed in 2005 as part of PennDOT's Route 119 widening project. The trail was extended along

the Black Lick Creek, linking the Hoodlebug Trail and the Ghost Town Trail at Saylor Park. However a trail ledge washed out along Black Lick Creek in January 2007 and resulted in the closure of this section of trail. The feasibility of re-establishing this connection has been recently completed by the County to determine its suitable location.

From Saylor Park the Hoodlebug Trail is a bicycle route. Heading south the trail enters Park Drive near the Burrell Township Municipal Building, turns onto and crosses Old Indiana Road, then follows Blaire Road to Claire Road. At Claire Road the trail parallels Route 119 for a short distance then passes underneath Route 119 and continues as a trail along Route 119 to Cornell Road near the Blairsville High School. The trail again becomes a bicycle route, extending into Blairsville on Cornell Road, Country Lane and Lear Road. In Blairsville Borough the bicycle route follows Hodge Street, crosses East Market Street and follows Morewood Avenue to its end at WyoTech Park. At WyoTech Park the trail will enter US Army Corps of Engineer property along the Conemaugh River. This section of trail, when constructed, will make a 1.5 mile loop around the southern portion of Blairsville ending at West Market Street, near the Bairdstown Bridge.

#10 Montgomery Canoe Greenway

The 8-mile Montgomery Canoe Greenway extends from the eastern end of the Little Mahoning Creek Corridor to the Clearfield County line.

The Type II: Maintained Dirt Trail conservation corridor offers greenway users the opportunity to enjoy a remote outing accessible from the Glen Campbell Passage just south of Glen Campbell Borough.

#11 The Glen Campbell Passage

The 11-mile Type III: Improved/Maintained Dirt Trail/Road extends from the Clearfield County line near Glen Campbell Borough south to join with the Susquehanna Greenway/Cherry Tree Trail. This configuration provides trail users potentially uninterrupted access from the northeast portion of the county to the Westmoreland County line.

#12 Susquehanna Greenway (includes Cherry Tree Trail)

As another 11-mile recreation corridor, the Susquehanna Greenway is designated as a Type III Improved/Maintained Dirt Trail/Road. A primary element of this greenway is the Cherry Tree Trail. This corridor is envisioned to extend from Cherry Tree Borough to its intersection with the Two Lick Corridor near a portion of the headwaters of the Two Lick Creek located in proximity to the Green and Cherry Hill Township border.

#13 Green Township Wildlife Corridor

The 7-mile conservation corridor is located generally in the east central portion of Green Township adjacent to a series of lands noted for their inclusion as a biological diversity area. Within the sensitivity of these

resources, this Type I: Open Space corridor should be highlighted as an area of low impact for human use.

#14 Clymer/East Mahoning Greenway

The Clymer East Mahoning Greenway is a 13-mile conservation-oriented corridor. The inclusion of a Type II: Maintained Dirt Trail can provide low impact access on this north-south connector which generally links the Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor, the Crooked Green Greenway and the Two Lick Corridor. This Greenway also generally parallels the Northern Passage.

#15 Black Legs Corridor

The Black Legs Corridor is an 18-mile recreation and conservation greenway and open space opportunity. The Type III greenway, generally in proximity to Black Legs Creek, incorporates pedestrian access via an Improved/Maintained Dirt Trail/Road in the southwestern portion of the County. Recent and ongoing resource planning efforts and funding commitments its watershed also highlights its significance for maintained conservation in the short- and long-term.

#16 Aultman Run Corridor

Based upon the presence, extent and sensitivity of resources within the southwestern portion of the County, the Aultman Run Corridor provides an 11-mile recreation corridor for greenway users. A maintained dirt trail (Type II) can be incorporated into this portion of the greenway network to accommodate desired pedestrian access and to minimize potential negative impacts of such access within and surrounding this

watershed. The Corridor generally extends from the north central portion of the Black Leg Corridor to the Mainline Canal Greenway.

#17 Curry Run Passage

The Curry Run Passage is 6-mile Type III recreation corridor providing east-west connection between the northern reaches of the Black Legs Corridor and the Hoodlebug Greenway. In addition to these connections, the County should encourage linking access between Curry Run Passage and the Two Lick Connector in Indiana Borough.

#18 Hoodlebug/Mainline Canal Connector

While smaller in length than many of the County's other greenway corridors, this 4-mile recreation corridor is an important asset to completing trail planning efforts currently being pursued as part of the Hoodlebug Greenway/Trail project. As a Type IV: Maintained/Improved Crushed Aggregate/Asphalt Trail, the Hoodlebug/Mainline Canal Connector seeks to create a formal connection between the portion of the Hoodlebug near the western Ghost Town Trail terminus and Blairsville.

#19 Two Lick Corridor

Within the central part of the County, the Two Lick Corridor serves as a 26-mile recreation corridor generally between Indiana Borough east to the Cambria County line. Based upon the presence of development and potential rights-of-way using a combination of built (e.g. available railroad rights-of-way) and natural resources (e.g. creek corridors), the Two Lick Corridor should be pursued as a Type III:

Maintained/Improved Dirt Trail/Road greenway project.

Based upon additional feedback received as part of this planning process some have expressed interest in developing the recreational component for the Waterworks Conservation Area at the Lucerne 3 site along the upper reaches of Two Lick Creek. The site, is used for wetland remediation from the airport expansion, an AMD treatment facility, and a canoe/kayak launch site.

The site is significant because it can become a new park type: the first conservation area in the Indiana County Parks and Trails System. It is also significant because sections of Two Lick are now true fisheries. Some have expressed that this water both holds and provides reproductive habitat for brown trout.

#20 Hoodlebug Trail/Two Lick Creek Connector

The Hoodlebug Greenway, inclusive of the portion of Two Lick Creek in the southeast portion of White Township, seeks to extend accessibility between the Two Lick Corridor and the Hoodlebug Trail. The Hoodlebug Greenway is an 8-mile recreation corridor proposed for designation as a Type V: Water Trail.

#21 Yellow Creek Trail

The foundation of the proposed 18-mile Yellow Creek Trail is improving pedestrian access to and connections from Yellow Creek State Park. The Type III: Improved/Maintained Dirt

Trail/Road is generally envisioned to parallel Yellow Creek where topography and access are feasible.

#22 The Yellow Creek Connector

The primary purpose of the Yellow Creek Connector is to provide both visual and physical links between Yellow Creek State Park and the Yellow Creek Greenway. The Type I: Open Space conservation corridor is approximately 2 miles in length.

#23 Little Yellow Creek Greenway

The primary conservation corridor of the County 's southeastern landscape is the Little Yellow Creek Greenway. This 21-mile conservation corridor with Type I: Open Space provides the opportunity to link amenities along the Mainline Canal to the Ghost Town Trail and proceeding north to the eastern terminus of the Two Lick Connector.

#24 Ghost Town Trail

Totaling 36 miles in length in Indiana and Cambria Counties, the Indiana County portion of Ghost Town Trail is approximately 22 miles. As a Type IV: improved/maintained crushed aggregate/asphalt trail, this corridor is both a local and regional asset. The Ghost Town Trail is designated as a National Recreation Trail by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Sections in Indiana County are operated by Indiana County Parks and Trails, while those in Cambria County are operated by the Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority. The Cambria & Indiana Trail Council (C & I Trail Council), a non-profit organization, helps to promote the development of trails and greenways in Cambria and

CORRIDORS

greenways and open space vision

Indiana Counties. The trail derives its name from numerous mining towns that once existed along the railroad corridor. There are few remnants of these former towns and most of the ghost towns are located on private property not open to the general public.

The trail was originally established in 1991 when the Kovalchick Salvage Company donated 16 miles of the former Ebensburg & Black Lick Railroad to Indiana County. In 1993, the Cambria & Indiana Railroad donated an additional 4 miles from Rexis to White Mill Station known as the Rexis Branch.

In 2005, an additional 20 miles were added to the trail which included 12 miles in Indiana County and 8 miles in Cambria County. The process of constructing two bridges over Black Lick Creek west of Dilltown is moving forward. Engineering and design is complete. It is anticipated that work will have a summer 2009 completion date. A one-mile trail connection between the two bridges and Dilltown will be built by Indiana County Parks and Trails. When complete, this section will connect the Ghost Town Trail between the villages of Dilltown and Black Lick.

The Ghost Town Trail is open year-round for non-motorized activities and is surfaced with packed limestone.

#25 Northern Mainline Canal Loop

The Northern Mainline Canal Loop extends for approximately 3 miles as a conservation corridor inclusive of a series of biological diversity areas and other sensitive natural resources. To ensure the sensitivity of this concentration of natural resources is safeguarded, pedestrian access to this area should generally be limited to improved dirt trails (Type II).

#26 Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway™

The section of the State-designated Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway™ within Indiana County includes many varying landscapes including the West Penn Trail and the Conemaugh River. In jointly pursuing Greenway corridor and recreation improvements with Westmoreland County, Indiana County residents and visitors have the opportunity to strengthen connections between local and State identified recreation areas, gamelands, biological diversity areas and other historic and cultural landscapes. To optimize land and water accessibility within this Greenway, improvements should be pursued to highlight the corridor's Type IV and Type V possibilities.

Table 6: Corridor Characteristics

The table below presents each project based upon its proposed type and includes general data about its overall length, portions which are current public open spaces, and those areas secured or committed for conservation and/or recreation today. Additional lands which could be incorporated into the proposed greenways network are also noted. For planning purposes, these lands generally represent a 200' width for each corridor. Portions of the designated greenway and open space corridors which are constructed are also noted. Information presented is based upon review of the County's GIS files as well as the proposed Project Corridors Plan.

#	Project / Corridor Name	Type of Corridor	Total Project Length (mi.)	Project / Corridor Length Secured / Committed (mi)	Additional Project / Corridor Area (acres)	Constructed Project/ Corridor Area (mi)	Length of Water Trail (mi.)
1	Mahoning Creek Corridor	I	8.3	-	3,096	-	
2	Little Mahoning Creek Corridor	I	27.1	3.4	10,611	-	
3	Sagamore Greenway (includes Plumville Greenway)	III	31.7		10,308	-	
4	Northern Passage	III	17.9		6,721	7.8	
5	Sugar Camp Greenway	II	18.7	-	7,061	-	
6	Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor	I	13.9		5,211	-	
7	Crooked Creek Corridor	I	32.0		12,045	-	
8	Plum Creek/Crooked Creek Connector	II	2.1		755	-	
9	Hoodlebug Trail	IV	27.9	19.9	3,021	10.0	
10	Montgomery Canoe Greenway	II	8.7	3.2	2,039	-	
11	The Glen Campbell Passage	III	11.1	-	4,154	-	
12	Susquehanna Greenway (includes Cherry Tree Trail)	III	11.4		4,305	-	
13	Green Township Wildlife Corridor	I	7.0	1.7	2,001	-	
14	Clymer/ East Mahoning Greenway	II	13.5		5,098	-	
15	Black Legs Corridor	III	18.4	-	6,948	-	
16	Aultman Run Corridor	III	11.6	3.0	3,247	-	
17	Curry Run Passage	III	6.3	-	2,379	-	
18	Hoodlebug / Mainline Canal Connector	IV	3.4	0.1	1,208	19.1	
19	Two Lick Corridor	III	26.7	1.3	13,971	-	
20	Hoodlebug Greenway (includes Two Lick Creek Greenway)	V	8.1		3,021	-	8.1
21	Yellow Creek Trail	III	18.5	4.1	5,437	-	
22	The Yellow Creek Connector	I	2.2	1.2	378		
23	Little Yellow Creek Greenway	I	21.5	1.3	7,439		
24	Ghost Town Trail	IV	22.9	22.9	0		
25	Northern Mainline Canal Loop	I	3.3		1,208		
26	Harrisburg to Pittsburgh Mainline Canal Greenway (includes West Penn Trail/ Conemaugh River)	IV,V	49.7	21.0	10,837	17.0	49.7
			424.0	83.1	132,499.8	53.9	57.8

Other Notes

Corridor Improvement Types:

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

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

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

IV: Improved / Maintained Crushed Aggregate / Asphalt Trail - blazed / marked; multipurpose trail approximately 6'-10' wide (price: \$75,000-\$120,000/mile)

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

Table 7: Range of Potential Investments

An assessment of costs related to the dedication and/or improvement for each project corridor is presented below. The comparison identifies which corridors could substantiate lower, medium and higher scales of potential investments inclusive of estimated economic factors and commitments of time. As each of the greenway and open space network’s projects are studied further in coming years, the range of costs should also be examined in more detail with considerations given to future development, changes in material costs and implementation timeframe.

#	Project / Corridor	Project Type	Potential Investments (Potential Lands and Improvements)
	Name		
1	Mahoning Creek Corridor	I	Low
2	Little Mahoning Creek Corridor	I	Medium
3	Northern County Crossing (includes Plumville Greenway)	III	Medium
4	Northern Passage	III	Medium
5	Sugar Camp Greenway	II	Medium
6	Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor	I	Medium
7	Crooked Creek Corridor	I	Medium
8	Plum Creek/Crooked Creek Connector	II	Low
9	Hoodlebug Trail	IV	Medium
10	Montgomery Canoe Greenway	II	Low
11	The Glen Campbell Passage	III	Low
12	Susquehanna Greenway (includes Cherry Tree Trail)	III	Medium
13	Green Township Wildlife Corridor	I	Low
14	Clymer/ East Mahoning Greenway	II	Medium
15	Black Legs Corridor	III	Low
16	Aultman Run Corridor	III	Low
17	Curry Run Passage	III	Low
18	Hoodlebug / Mainline Canal Connector	IV	Low
19	Two Lick Corridor	III	High
20	Hoodlebug Greenway (includes Two Lick Creek Greenway)	V	Low
21	Yellow Creek Trail	III	Medium
22	The Yellow Creek Connector	I	Low
23	Little Yellow Creek Greenway	I	Medium
24	Ghost Town Trail	IV	Low
25	Northern Mainline Canal Loop Harrisburg to Pittsburgh	I	Low
26	Mainline Canal Greenway	IV,V	High

Table 8: Corridor Priorities

#	Project / Corridor Name	Project Type	Corridor Type	Initial Project Priority
1	Mahoning Creek Corridor	I	CONSERVATION	Minor
2	Little Mahoning Creek Corridor	I	CONSERVATION	Major
3	Sagamore Greenway (includes Plumville Greenway)	III	RECREATION/ CONSERVATION	Major
4	Northern Passage	III	RECREATION/ CONSERVATION	Minor
5	Sugar Camp Greenway	II	CONSERVATION	Minor
6	Plum Creek Wildlife Corridor	I	CONSERVATION	Minor
7	Crooked Creek Corridor	I	RECREATION	Major
8	Plum Creek/Crooked Creek Connector	II	CONSERVATION	Minor
9	Hoodlebug Trail	IV	RECREATION	Major
10	Montgomery Canoe Greenway	II	CONSERVATION	Minor
11	The Glen Campbell Passage	III	RECREATION	Minor
12	Susquehanna Greenway (includes Cherry Tree Trail)	III	RECREATION	Minor
13	Green Township Wildlife Corridor	I	CONSERVATION	Minor
14	Clymer/ East Mahoning Greenway	II	CONSERVATION	Minor
15	Black Legs Corridor	III	RECREATION/ CONSERVATION	Major
16	Aultman Run Corridor	III	RECREATION	Major
17	Curry Run Passage	III	RECREATION	Minor
18	Hoodlebug / Mainline Canal Connector	IV	RECREATION	Major
19	Two Lick Corridor	III	RECREATION	Major
20	Hoodlebug Greenway (includes Two Lick Creek Greenway)	V	RECREATION	Major
21	Yellow Creek Trail	III	RECREATION	Varies
22	Yellow Creek Connector	I	CONSERVATION	Major
23	Little Yellow Creek Greenway	I	CONSERVATION	Major
24	Ghost Town Trail	IV	RECREATION	Major
25	Northern Mainline Canal Loop	I	CONSERVATION	Minor
26	Harrisburg to Pittsburgh Mainline Canal Greenway (includes West Penn Trail/ Conemaugh River)	IV,V	RECREATION	Major



actions for implementation

Photo Credit: Yellow Creek State Park, Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

Overview

Considerations

Recommendations

Overview

The implementation strategies outlined in the Plan are aimed to promote resource sustainability, add to the County’s economic opportunities, and serve as the basis for maintaining a high quality of life for its residents. The recommended implementation strategies involve a range of stakeholders from the public to the private sectors. Consequently, these strategies focus on participation opportunities for the County, multi-municipal collaborations and non-government organizations.

The formal system of greenways, open spaces and trails proposed as part of this Plan is extensive. In turn, implementation of the recommendations, whether for recreation or conservation, will occur step-by-step, progressing through the years. Key actions where the County should serve as the lead are outlined to the right.

#	Action
1	Assess possible negative impacts, or “threats,” to each project corridor
2	Develop a database of all property owners surrounding potential greenway so that all stakeholders can be kept abreast of potential project ideas, opportunities and progress
3	Evaluate the challenges of creating and/or maintaining interconnections among the County’s greenways network.
4	Develop detailed costs for future development, changes in material costs and implementation time-frame.
5	Conduct a series of "demonstration projects" for particular Corridor study areas.
6	Identify the opportunities and challenges that exist within the Corridor study areas.
7	Identify and pursue opportunities for multi-county initiatives
8	Develop collaborative efforts with surrounding counties to pursue State funding and implementation of corridor projects
9	Complete Feasibility Study for identified "demonstration projects"
10	Evaluate the effectiveness of local and Countywide regulatory measures for conserving natural resources
11	Form an Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan Program (OGT).
12	Work with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to hire a Chief for the Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan Program.
13	Build the partnership with the County Conservation District and the Greenways Working Committee.
14	Develop cooperative relationships with land owners to assure the Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan’s implementation and success.
15	Organize/Host Greenways Programming and Outreach Marketing
16	Create "Friends of the Greenways"
17	Conduct an Annual Greenways "Outing"

Key Implementation Considerations

Several factors are important to consider as the County works with key stakeholders and landowners to achieve successful implementation of the Greenways Plan. The Plan recommendations can be realized through:

- Strengthening communication between County Departments, local municipalities the and private sector
- Maintaining day-to-day support where the County continues to evaluate implementation progress such as the needs, if any, for additional Staff to support short-term and long-term projects
- Establishing and upholding an implementation system based upon potential advantages such as:
 - ◊ Leveraging in-house knowledge and entities that are already established
 - ◊ Gaining input from County elected officials as part of decisions to pursue specific greenway projects and priorities
 - ◊ Formulating a realistic and proactive ownership and management structure to optimize project coordination

Recognizing challenges will exist throughout the Plan’s implementation, developing mechanisms to minimize unwanted results will be necessary. Some of the principle challenges that are likely to occur as part of this Plan include:

- Addressing opportunities and challenges of the County’s existing ordinances and their revisions as it relates to the conservation of identified sensitive natural resources.
- Evaluating staffing needs and exploring mechanisms to support funding of these positions
- Establishing mechanisms to keep local municipalities abreast of issues/projects because local involvement in day-to-day planning, maintenance and other activities may be limited
- Acknowledging ownership of greenways can potentially increase responsibilities and liabilities

Recommendations

The recommendations outlined as part of the County's Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan revolve around several themes:

- Project Areas/Corridors
- Administration/Management
- Outreach
- Funding

PROJECT AREAS/CORRIDORS

While the Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan contains a series of 26 corridor recommendations, there are few which the County should consider pursuing as "demonstration projects. A demonstration project is aimed at creating significant visibility and serve as a spring board for implementation success. As part of this effort, the County's initial conservation-oriented demonstration project is the Little Mahoning Creek Corridor. The recreation-oriented project is the Hoodlebug-Mainline Connector. The status of analysis and focus that each of these projects currently possesses as part of other related resource planning efforts are factored into the following discussions.

Demonstration Project A

Little Mahoning Creek Corridor

The Little Mahoning Creek Corridor lies within the Little Mahoning Creek watershed. This watershed, located in northern Indiana County, is a unique and valuable resource in southwestern Pennsylvania. Although the watershed is within a region known for its bituminous coal, the Creek has been minimally impacted by abandoned mine drainage. This, in addition to the

watershed's rural nature, enables the Creek to house freshwater mussels, fish, amphibian and reptile species and aquatic insect species. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection classifies the creek as a High Quality – Cold Water Fishery.

The Little Mahoning watershed is dominated by agriculture and deciduous forests, comprising approximately 87% of the available land area. The remaining 13% is a combination of light industrial and residential uses. This is a sparsely populated region.

According to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's ongoing research in the Little Mahoning Creek watershed, there are other attributes to consider in addition to the Creek's ecological significance. The Little Mahoning Creek and the surrounding watershed "has a measurable influence on the local economy, particularly with regard to tourism. The stream boasts one of the Commonwealth's most popular special regulation fly fishing only areas. A 4.3-mile stretch of stream is regularly visited by anglers from across the country. The rest of the stream is a popular trout fishery open to all types of fishing tackle. It is heavily stocked with brown and brook trout by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and native brook trout populations exist within some headwater tributaries. Several other species of game fish live in the stream, and are sought by anglers throughout the year."

Based upon the opportunities and research findings within this northern

portion of the County, there are several potential partners which could assist in pursuing this greenway project. These partners include:

- Indiana County Conservation District
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
- Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Marion Center Area School District
- Indiana Area School District
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Ken Sink Chapter of Trout Unlimited
- Evergreen Conservancy
- Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement
- Local municipalities
- Area Foundations

**Demonstration Project B
Hoodlebug/Mainline Connector**

The Hoodlebug Trail runs from Indiana to Blairsville as a bicycle route. The County should identify what opportunities and challenges exist with the identified Corridor for the Hoodlebug/Mainline Connector as to where any other safe linkages could be made to develop a dedicated trail which accesses the Conemaugh River and subsequently the West Penn Trail. Based upon previous planning efforts, it is envisioned one option for this connector could be a bicycle route following Campbell Street and North Walnut Street/Route 217, where pedestrians can connect to the West

Penn Trail network at Newport Road. This is a critical point of linkage that many stakeholders, over a number of years, have been organizing and seeking the success of realizing this project.

IDENTIFY AND PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MULTI-COUNTY INITIATIVES INCLUDING ALIGNMENT OF MAINLINE CANAL GREENWAY AND OTHER REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT CORRIDORS

A Regional “Ask “ represents a multi-county effort which can fulfill a significant goal of agencies in the Commonwealth. In organizing an initiative which can simultaneously address the mission of various State agencies (e.g. PA DCNR, PA DEP and PA Fish and Boat Commission), the groups pursuing a request, or “ask, ” can highlight how each of the agencies ’ aims for outreach can be furthered. Agencies then in turn can then collaborate on identifying and/or matching funds most appropriate to assist in furthering the effort.

In the case of realizing Indiana County ’ s greenway and open space initiatives, the County is encouraged to develop collaborative efforts with surrounding counties such as Westmoreland and Cambria to pursue State funding and implementation of corridor projects including the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway™ and Little Mahoning Creek Corridor.

COMPLETE FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR IDENTIFIED DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Because it is necessary to manage and protect lands through regulation and planning, the County strive to fully

evaluate the feasibility of specific pedestrian connectivity associated with the initial Demonstration Projects. Funding has been obtained. Conservation of lands at the local level should be explored as part of these efforts. The effectiveness of local and County-wide regulatory measures for conserving natural resources should also be evaluated. The following should be considered as part of this assessment:

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

ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT

One of the fundamental components to establishing the Open Space, Greenway and Trails Plan is to develop a practical and responsive implementation structure composed of suitable implementation partners. Key stakeholders in administering the Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan include:

- The Greenways Working Committee
- Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
- Indiana County Office of Parks and Trails
- Indiana County Conservation District
- Other public/quasi-public/special interest groups (e.g. conservation groups, school districts)
- Community Representatives and Organizations (Residents, businesses and the development community)
- Allegheny Ridge Corporation
- Indiana County Planning Commission
- Indiana County Commissioners

Greenways Working Committee

The Greenways Working Committee (GWC), the body guiding the Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan's preparation, is the primary advisory group leading the Plan's implementation efforts. As the Plan's authors, the GWC includes representatives from the Indiana County Board of Commissioners, Indiana County Office of Planning and

RECOMMENDATIONS | actions for implementation

Development, Indiana County Planning Commission, Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Evergreen Conservancy, Indiana Area Recreation and Parks, Indiana County Tourist Bureau, Cherry Tree Heritage Society, Indiana County Conservation District, various municipalities and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Representatives of the Office of Planning and Development should chair the Working Committee with ongoing technical assistance/support provided by the Chief of the newly formed County's Open Space, Greenway and Trails Plan Program (See Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan Program below).

Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan Program

The County should form an Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan Program (OGT). The coordination, project management and outreach of greenway planning activities are substantial undertakings which will require both professional expertise and extensive involvement. Based upon the current work load and roles of the County's various staffing positions, it is recommended that this Program serve as an extension of the Office of Planning and Development. One reason for this configuration is to promote coordination and consistency of planning objectives between the Offices' varying, yet related, planning, parks and open space implementation efforts. Another practical reason for this structure is space; based on the availability of space in the County's

offices, the OGT will be able to readily move into an area within the Office of Parks and Trails.

The County should work with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to hire a Chief for the Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan Program. The Chief's primary responsibilities should be to:

- Establish mechanisms for organizations/businesses/residents to approach the Committee with project ideas and provide grant application assistance
- Create greenways maintenance policies
- Initiates projects including public outreach
- Provides technical support/daily management
- Coordinate joint projects with surrounding county/regional efforts

In the short-term, this Chief could be funded through DCNR's Circuit Rider program. DCNR sponsors a Circuit Rider program to help build local and multi-municipal capacity for implementing open space and recreation plans. As of 2006, DCNR has extended the Circuit Rider program to counties, and it is no longer limited to municipality or non-profit organizations. Circuit Rider grants provide four-years of scaled funding to allow the hiring of a full-time employee to share services through an intergovernmental cooperative effort created by two or more municipalities. Available grant funding for the Circuit Rider's salary decreases from 100

percent the first year to 75 percent the second, 50 percent the third and 25 percent the fourth year thereby allowing the grantee to build the fiscal support necessary to sustain the position. By the fifth year the Circuit Rider shall be supported 100% by the County ultimately housing this position.

Planning Assistance and Advisors

A number of entities can provide planning assistance to the OGT. The County’s Planning Commission can assist the Working Committee with outreach opportunities and selective implementation (such as updates to zoning/subdivision ordinances).

The Indiana County Conservation District should also be targeted to serve an advisor to the Greenways Working Committee. Primary functions of the Conservation District, as related to implementing greenway projects include:

- Promote maintaining continuity of existing natural resources
- Work to designate key streams as links within greenway network
- Partner with County Departments/Staff to develop database of property inventory within designated greenway corridors
- Provide grant assistance
- Promote and offer public education opportunities for topics such as riparian buffers

Many of the current owners of land which can ultimately be incorporated into the greenway network are residents and businesses. Developing

cooperative relationships with land owners is a critical component of the Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan’s implementation and success. Other public/quasi-public/special interest groups (including municipalities, DCNR, etc.) should also be a component. These groups should be approached to provide feedback regarding:

- Sources of potential corridor land through setbacks, dedicated rights-of way/easements and purchases
- Sources of volunteer workforce or workers, land and funding to establish/maintain greenways
- Partners to apply for potential funding

Greenway Owners

Based upon the current initiatives that conservation-oriented groups are completing throughout the County, it is recommended that two Conservancy groups be targeted as those that oversee ownership of the greenways network. The Conemaugh Valley Conservancy and the Evergreen Conservancy could be charged with the primary responsibilities of:

- Owning, or partnering in owning, greenways.
- Maintaining/coordinating maintenance of greenways
- Coordinating planning issues with legal entities

ORGANIZE/HOST GREENWAYS PROGRAMMING AND OUTREACH MARKETING/SIGNAGE

An Outreach Campaign with marketing materials is vital to the success of the Greenways Plan. The marketing

materials shall promote the entire greenway network to organizations, residents and visitors as well as working with service organizations and should include a theme and logo. The marketing plan and materials may also assist in securing funding as well as serve as an awareness tool to develop interest and support. Graphics and information developed as part of the marketing package can also serve as the basis for the Open Space Network 's comprehensive signage system. Signage should be cohesively designed and placed for:

- Trailhead stations
- Regulatory signs
- Directional signs
- Informational signs
- Educational signs

Mechanisms of Outreach

How can this information be effectively conveyed to important audiences? The Outreach Campaign could be exercised through school visits, web-based information, periodic newsletters in cooperation with the distribution of newspapers and/or utility billing and other avenues as desired. These public education opportunities could also be paired with other natural resource initiatives such as the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy 's outreach related to the Little Mahoning Creek Watershed.

CREATE "FRIENDS OF THE GREENWAYS"

Indiana County 's "Friends of the Greenways " program should be established to provide interested citizens and businesses the opportunity to join together and sponsor special programs/activities which promote the

significance and success of greenway efforts.

These " Friends " also can be the sponsoring entity which assists in placing signage along the recreation and conservation corridors. This group should also join together with the County Office of Planning and Development, the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, and the Evergreen Conservancy to host an annual gathering for stakeholders to discuss project corridor status, funding strategies, maintenance, etc.

CONDUCT AN ANNUAL GREENWAYS "OUTING"

The County should host a Greenways " Outing, " or gathering, with key stakeholders and interested citizens. The purpose of the Outing is to share planning goals and to analyze existing projects including their implementation status, technical assistance needs, funding needs, timing as well as to identify critical gaps in the network based upon development patterns and related conservation efforts.

The greatest benefit of the Outing is to develop a formal ongoing strategy and agreement for project coordination between State, County, local and regional stakeholders.

Implementation Tools

OVERVIEW

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

controls to purchasing rights to land.

LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

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

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

REGULATION

Land may be protected through government regulation, which controls land use and development through legislative powers. Examples of various land use and development ordinances

and components of these ordinances, which regulate community growth and protect natural resources, are listed below:

Dedication/Density Transfer

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

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

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

The TDR allows communities to provide additional density in areas where growth is desired and discourage growth/development in areas desirable as preserved open space. The community identifies an area to be developed and an area to be preserved. The municipality's comprehensive plan is a useful guide for identifying these areas. Owners within the area to be preserved are given development credits that can be

sold to land owners in the area to be developed. In order to sell these credits, landowners must place a permanent conservation easement on their property. The purchasing landowner within the area to be developed may then develop at a density that is higher than previously allowed by the municipality.

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

Negotiated Dedications

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

Example. A subdivision/development plan requires the extension of existing municipal infrastructure. The municipality can request that the

developer dedicate a portion of the property to the municipality in exchange for the extension of municipal infrastructure and services. The size of the dedication should be relative to the impact on existing municipal services.

Fee-in-Lieu

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

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

Buffer/Transition Zones

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

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

Zoning/Overlay Zones

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

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

Conservation Subdivision

This tool requires as a condition of development approval that the developer provide public facilities, land for public use or the financing for the provision of these facilities/land.

Some governing bodies encourage the use of conservation subdivision-oriented development patterns to promote increased density/density

bonuses for development in areas with less sensitive natural resources in exchange for maintaining larger areas of undisturbed open space and/or trail connections.

Subdivision Exaction

The size of the facility or amount of financing should be relative to the impact that the development will have on existing public facilities and/or the demand for additional public facilities that the development will create. The facilities, which can include open space, are then dedicated to the municipality/county.

This tool requires as a condition of development approval that the developer provide public facilities, land for public use or the financing for the provision of these facilities/land.

Acquisition

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

Donation/Tax Incentives

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

Fee Simple Purchase

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

EASEMENTS

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

Conservation

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

Preservation

Preservation easements can be used to protect significant built and/or natural features of a property. When applied for the purposes of protecting built assets, the easements general intent is the preservation of a structure's historical value and integrity. Additionally, when used in concert with best management practices, these

easements can protect important elements of the property's landscape. These easements can be applied to the entire property or specific portions of the property. Tax incentives for preservation easements are similar to those associated with conservation easements.

An example of a model Conservation Easement Agreement as prepared by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association is included within the Plan's Background Mapping and Information Chapter.

Public Access

The general intent of public access easements is to provide passage and access through a property in order to link to assets/amenities on adjacent properties. These easements are typically applied to portions of a property rather than the entire property. Public access clauses may be included within conservation and preservation easements or the public access easement may be utilized individually.

Easement Purchase

Negotiations with property owners may fail to yield desired donations of land for the purposes of various easements. In these instances, a county/municipality may purchase an easement on the desired portions of the property.

Deed Restriction/Purchase of Development Rights

A county/municipality can encourage protection of sensitive resources such as prime agricultural land by instituting a purchase of development rights

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

Purchase/Lease Back

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

Option/First Right of Refusal

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

Implementation Resources

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

through Pennsylvania's Greenway Clearinghouse -- pagreenways.org

PENNSYLVANIA DCNR¹

The **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania** provides grant moneys through the **Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2)** to county and municipal governments to support greenway and park planning, acquisition, design and development.

Heritage Park Grants are available to municipalities or nonprofit organizations for promoting public-private partnerships that preserve and enhance natural, cultural, historic and recreation resources to stimulate economic development through heritage tourism.

Land Trust Grants are available to land trusts and conservancies to acquire land for areas that face imminent loss. Land must be open to public use and priority is given to habitats for threatened species.

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

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

RECOMMENDATIONS | actions for implementation

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

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

PENNSYLVANIA DCED²

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

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

Floodplain Land Use Assistance Program Provides grants and technical assistance to encourage the proper use

of land and the management of Floodplain Lands within Pennsylvania.

PA Fish and Boat Commission³

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

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

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

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

FEDERAL FUNDING

The **Land and Water Conservation Fund⁴** provides matching grants to

States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

The **Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)**⁵ funds numerous transportation programs to improve the nation's transportation infrastructure, enhance economic growth, and protect the environment. A portion of Pennsylvania's SAFETEA-LU funds, administered through PENNDOT, go to greenway projects with ties to transportation, historic preservation, bicycle/pedestrian improvements and/or environmental quality.

The **Recreational Trails Program**⁶ is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that provides assistance by making funds available to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses.

The **Farmland Protection Program**⁷ provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA joins with State, tribal, or local governments to acquire conservation easements or other interests from landowners.

The **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program**⁸ from the National Parks Service operates this program aimed at conserving land and water resources for communities. Eligible projects include conservation plans for protecting these resources, trail

development, and greenway development.

The **Wetlands Reserve Program**⁹ is a voluntary program in which the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts and providing the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.

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

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

The **Kodak American Greenways Awards Program**¹¹ provides grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout the United States.

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

¹ <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/general02.aspx>

² <http://www.newpa.com/programFinder.aspx> (accessed 5/8/06)

³ http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/Fish_Boat/grants.htm (accessed 5/9/06)

⁴ <http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/lwcf/> (accessed 5/8/06)

⁵ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/> (accessed 5/8/06)



background
mapping and
information

Photo Credit: Blacklick Creek Natural Area, Pennsylvania 's Natural Heritage Program

Natural Resources

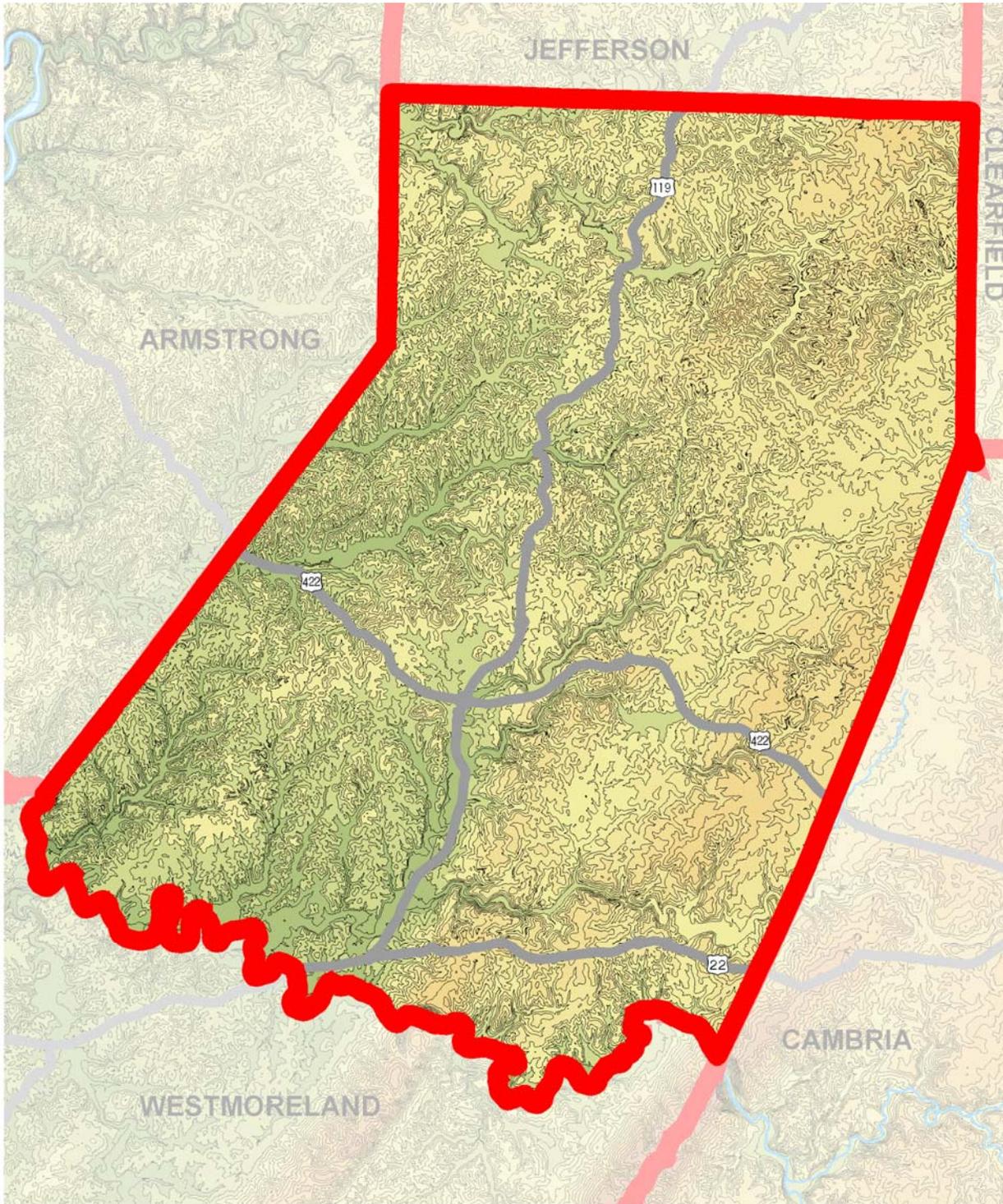
Built Resources

Conservation Easement Model

Landform

Landform is the physical characteristics and components that are present or produced by nature, including soil types, geology, slopes, vegetation, surface water, drainage patterns, aquifers, recharge areas, climate, floodplains, aquatic life, and wildlife. The map depicts a sequential hierarchy of elevation layers that occur every 400 feet of elevation and are each represented by a different color. Topographic contours are also illustrated at 100 foot intervals. This map utilizes digital topographic data generated by the United States Geologic Survey, Land Info International, LLC.

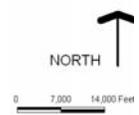
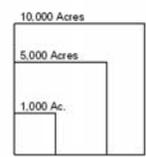
Landform Map



LEGEND

- Study Area Boundary
- US Highway
- River/Stream
- Existing 100' Topography

ELEVATION	
	< 900'
	>900' - 1100'
	>1100' - 1300'
	>1300' - 1500'
	>1500' - 1700'
	>1700' - 1900'
	>1900' - 2100'
	>2100' - 2300'
	>2300' - 2500'
	>2500' - 2700'
	>2700'

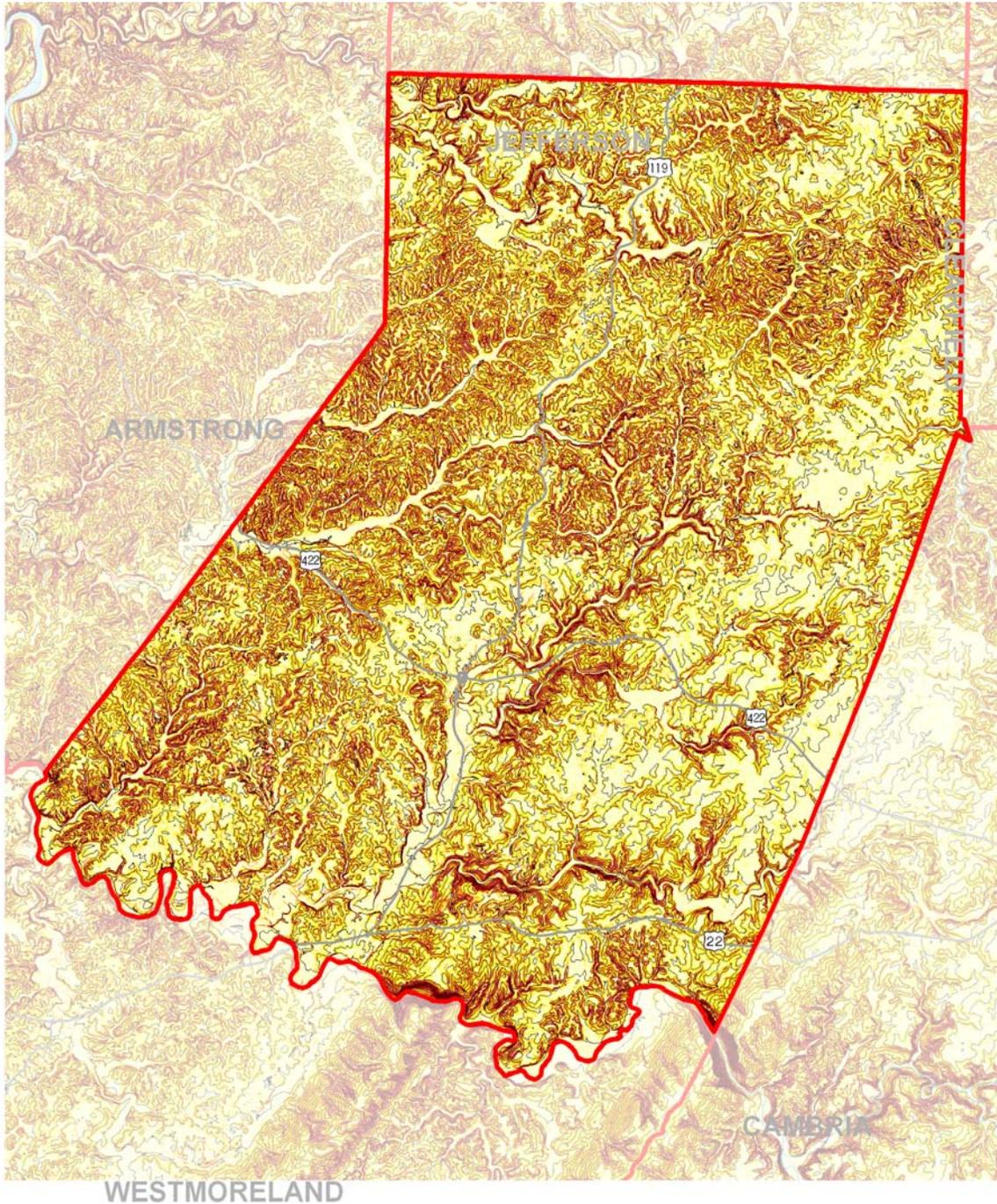


Source: Landform Analysis is based on topography supplied by Land Info International, LLC through the Natural Infrastructure Project

Slope Analysis

The Steep Slopes Maps illustrates the diversity of the County 's hillside slopes. Slopes are calculated based on a 10-foot contour interval and have been categorized into 5 gradients of steepness. Slopes $\geq 25\%$ are naturally sensitive areas that provide open space and foster local biodiversity. The County 's slope characteristics have been approximated using digital topographic data provided by the United States Geologic Survey, Land Info International, LLC and third party computational software.

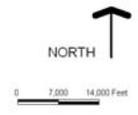
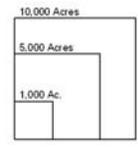
Slope Analysis Map



LEGEND

Study Area Boundary	SLOPE ANALYSIS
US Highway	0 - 8%
River/Stream	>8 - 15%
Existing 100' Topography	>15 - 25%
	>25 - 40%
	>40%

Source: Slope Analysis is based on topography supplied by Land Info International, LLC through the Natural Infrastructure Project



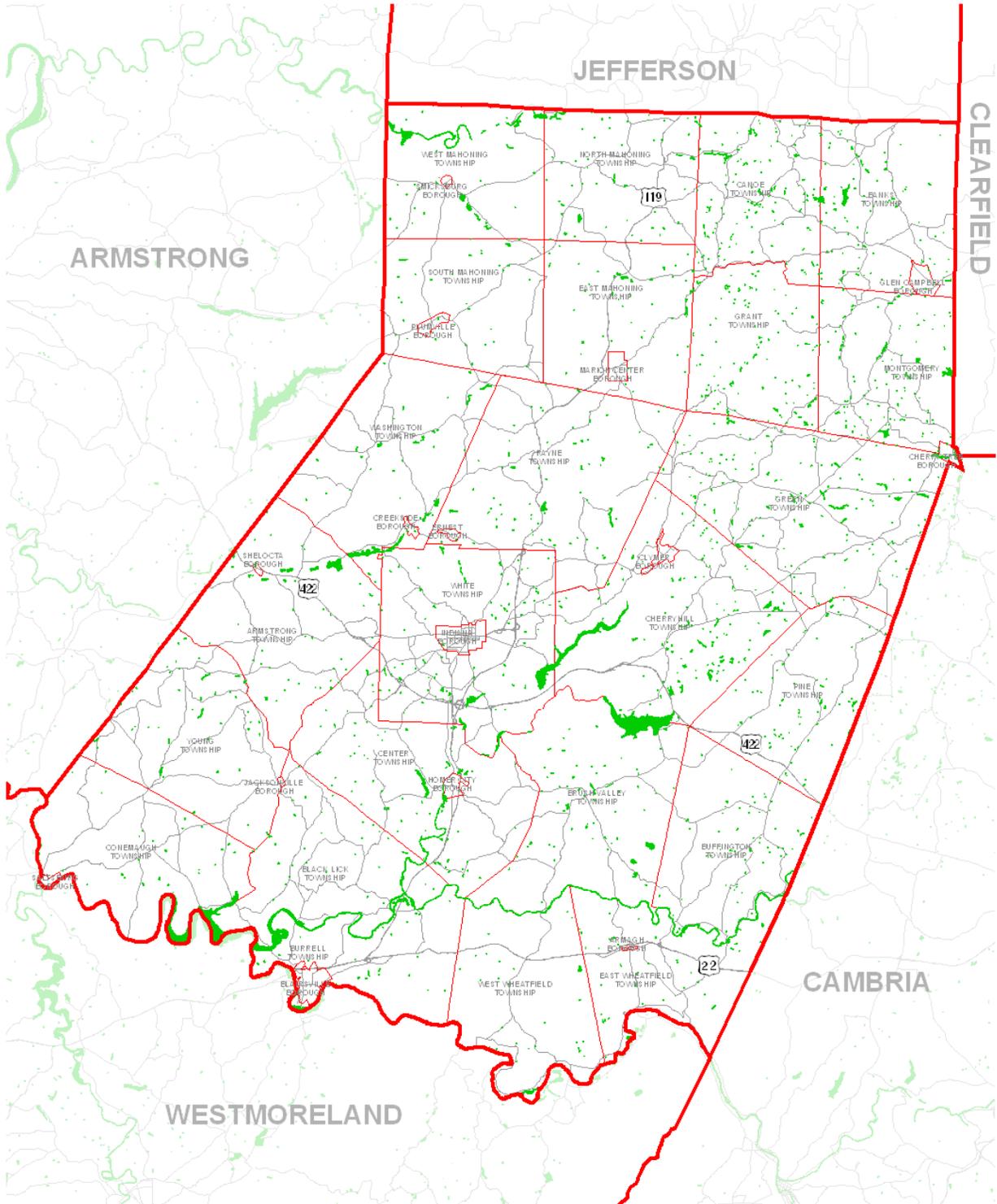
Wetlands and Floodplains

Wetlands are critical areas inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. There are three types of wetlands: lake edge (lacustrine); marshes or bogs (palustrine); and river edge (riverine). Floodplains are land areas susceptible to inundation by water as a result of the floods and also serve an integral role in water quality through groundwater recharge and stormwater runoff. This map documents the location and extent of wetlands and floodplains within the County based upon USGS/FEMA mapping information. These lands are spread throughout the County with concentrations in flat areas near bodies of water.

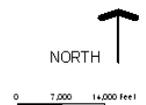
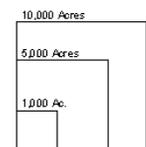
Woodland Habitats

In Indiana County, data was evaluated to determine areas of concentrated woodlands—those that typically can support a range of habitats. Areas with 50 or more contiguous woodland acres are illustrated on the following map. This analysis also corresponds to some other larger scale regional open space and natural resource planning pursued as part of the 9-County Southwestern Pennsylvania Natural Infrastructure project. A variety of deciduous and evergreen woodland species could be present in these habitat areas [and as photographed using satellite imagery.] Several of these areas also are similar to the locations of biological diversity areas. These woodland habitats house several of the Biological Diversity Areas (see pg. 78)

Wetlands Map

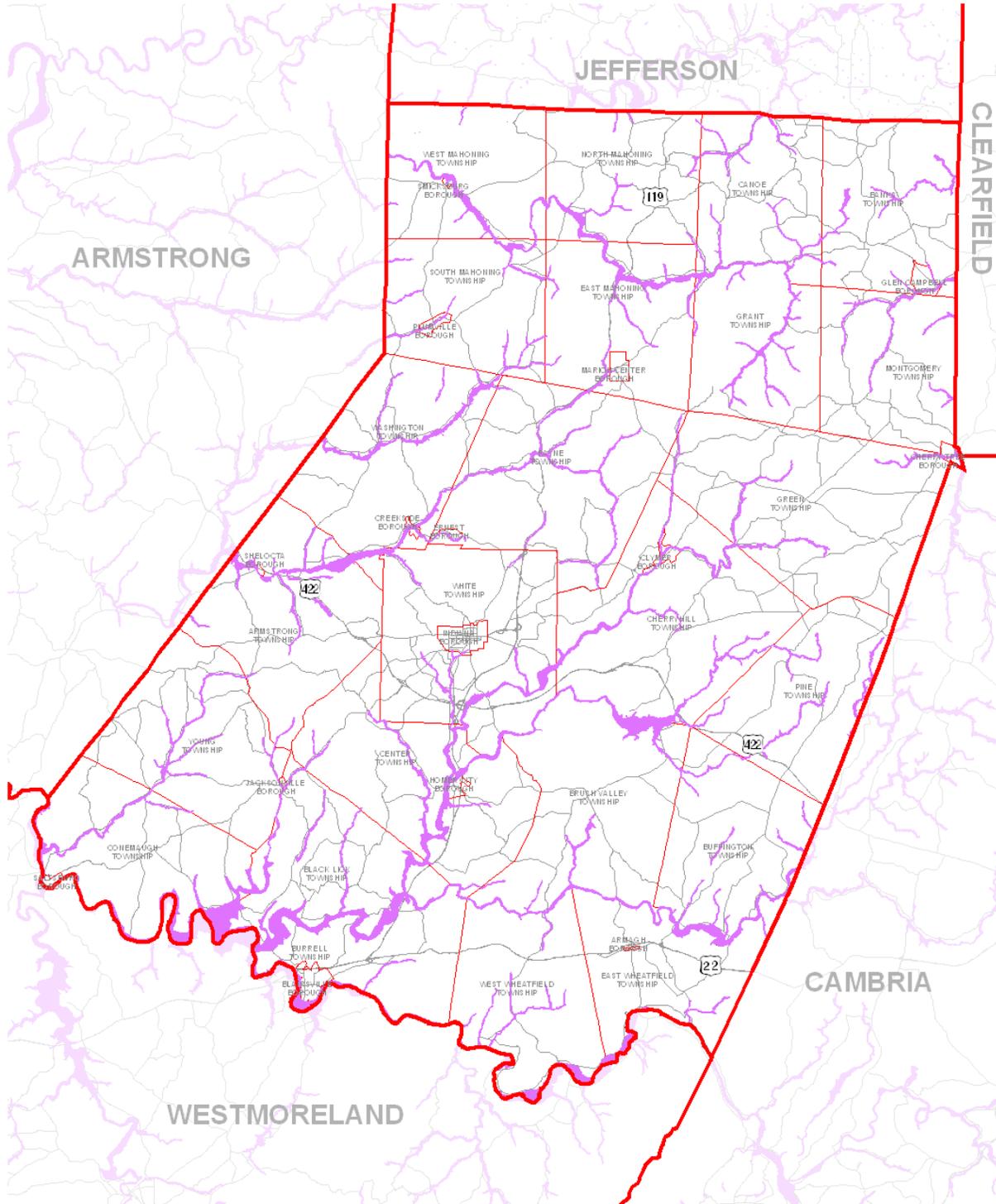


- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - Wetland



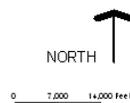
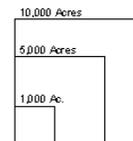
Source: Wetlands and base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, 2002.

Floodplains Map

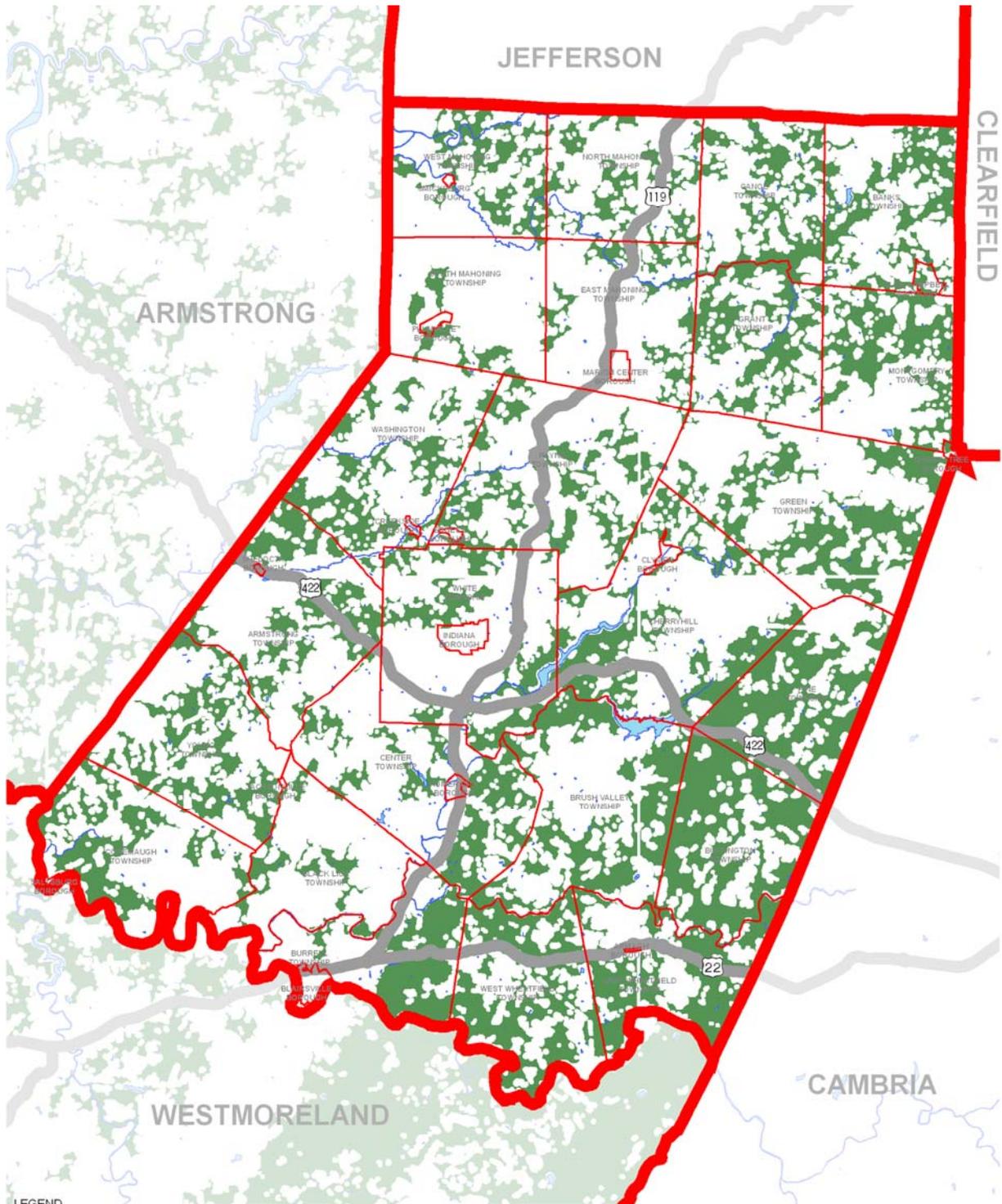


- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - Floodplain

Source: Flood Plane and base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, 2002.



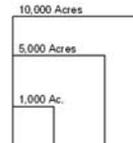
Woodland Habitats Map



- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - Major Streams
 - Woodland Habitat

Criteria: Forested land cover, slopes of 0-4%, interior forests (300' buffer), minimum of 50 acres.

Source: Based on forest density GIS data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Forest Experiment Station, Forestry Inventory and Analysis (SO-FIA). Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



Prime Agricultural Soils

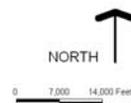
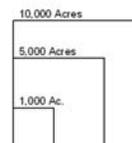
This map shows the areas that contain Prime Agricultural Soils. Prime agricultural soils are those soils classified as Class I, II or III. Another component that could be factored into future planning efforts is Agriculture Security Areas. Agricultural security areas are intended to promote more permanent and viable farming operations over the long term by strengthening the farming community's sense of security in land use and the right to farm. Agricultural security areas are created by local municipalities in cooperation with individual landowners who agree to collectively place at least 250 acres in an agricultural security area.

Prime Agricultural Soils Map



- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - State Roads
 - Streams
 - Prime Agricultural Soil

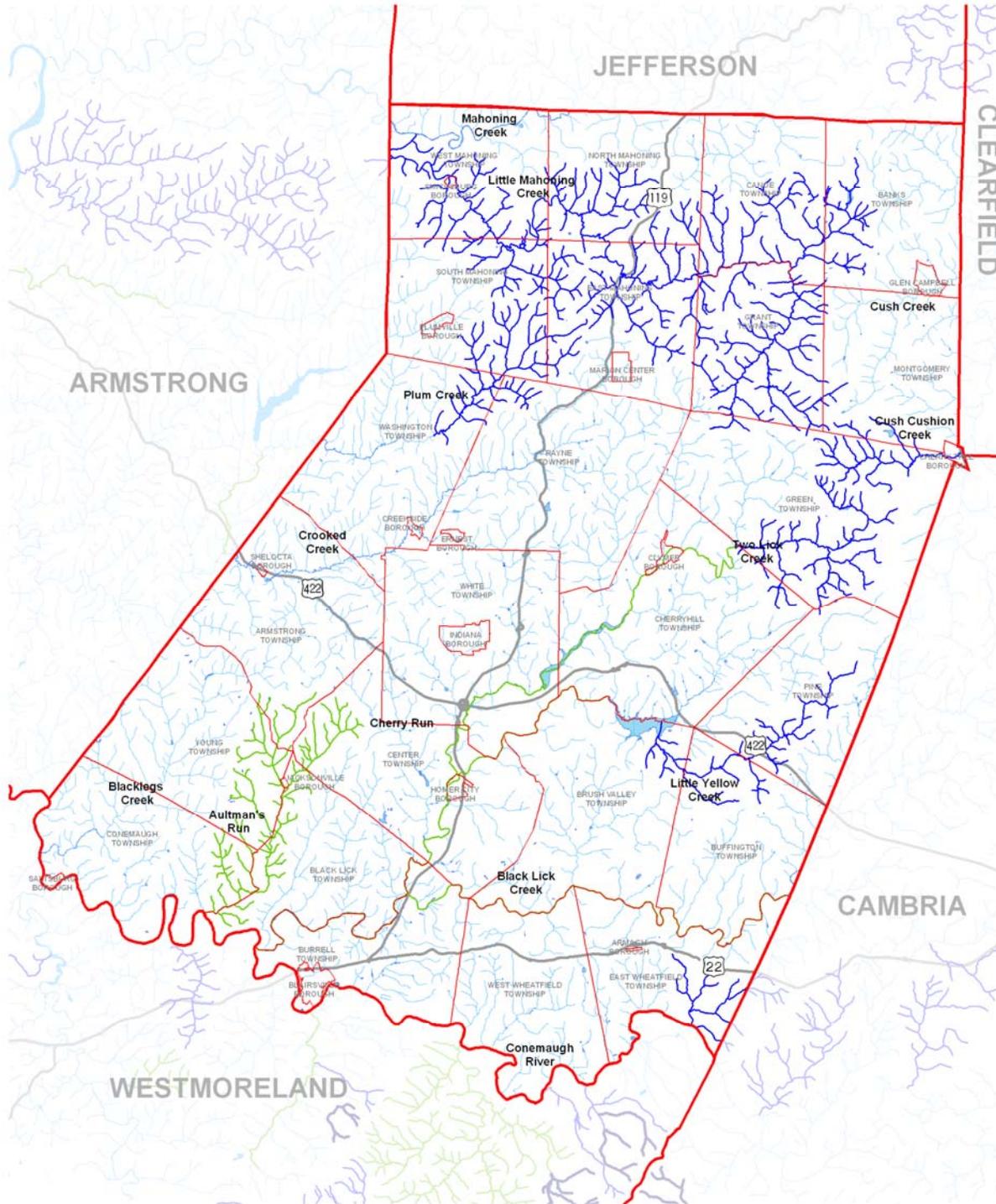
Source: Prime agricultural soil data provided by the STATSGO soils database for Indiana County. Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



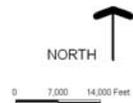
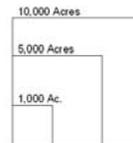
General Stream Quality

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

General Stream Quality Map



- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - ~ Exceptional Quality Stream
 - ~ High Quality Stream
 - ~ Trout Stocked
 - ~ Normal Stream



Source: General Stream Quality is based on Chapter 93 stream data from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 2003.

Biological Diversity Areas and Landscape Conservation Areas

The Indiana County Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) provides information on the location of threatened and endangered species and natural communities within the County. This NHI is part of a state-wide effort conducted through the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program and is expected to be completed by mid-2009. The types of areas mapped are: 1) Biological Diversity Areas (BDA) – designated around populations of rare, threatened and endangered plants, animals and communities; and 2) Landscape Conservation Areas (LCA) – designated around large blocks of relatively intact forest or watersheds that support exceptional aquatic resources. **Based upon research conducted through 2007 and 2008, an initial listing and mapping of these areas is outlined below. The areas are distinguished based on their relationship to core and non-core BDA areas.** Upon publication of the final NHI report, the County should coordinate any updates to the listing and mapping into related conservation and development efforts.

Table 9A: Biological Diversity Areas Descriptions¹ -NHI BDA Core Listing

¹ Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program. 2007. Indiana County Natural Heritage Inventory 2007-09-20 Draft. Pittsburgh, PA

Name	Description	Significance	Sensitivity ¹
Blacklick Creek Natural Area	Rich highly diverse wildflower slope		2
Charles F. Lewis Natural Area			2
Chestnut Ridge BDA	Forested ridgetop and upper watershed whose cave and outcrop communities provide habitat for a number of plant and animal species concern	Exceptional	1
Creekside			
Little Mahoning Creek			3
Pine Ridge County Park BDA	County Park		3
Suncliff			2
Yellow Creek State Park	State Park		3

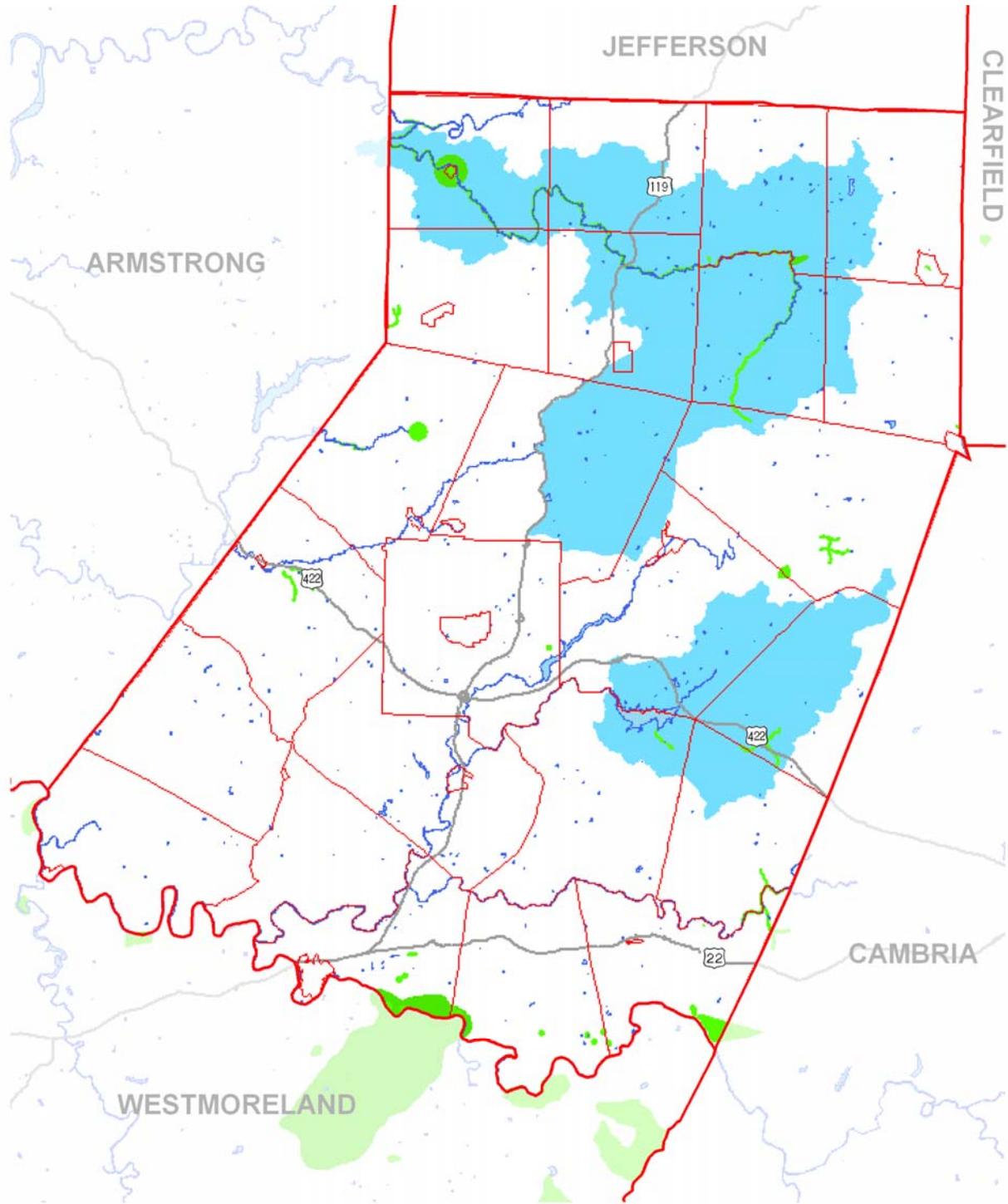
Table 9B: Biological Diversity Areas Descriptions¹ -NHI BDA Non-Core Listing

Name	Description	Significance	Sensitivity ¹
Avonmore Flood plain BDA	Large forested floodplain along the Kiskiminetas River containing a Robust Emergent Marsh Community	Notable	3
Baldwin Creek BDA	Exceptional Value stream watershed within SGL-42	High	3
Burnside Oxbow	Several wetland communities and a population of featherbells (<i>Stenanthium gramineum</i>), a plant species of special concern in Pennsylvania	High	2
Chest Creek South Floodplain	A floodplain area of Chest Creek that hosts a heron rookery	High	3
Chest Creek Wetlands	A floodplain forest community and a seepage wetland community with a plant species of special concern	Exceptional	2
Harbridge Run BDA	Young forest that supports a plant species of special concern	Notable	3
Lower Conemaugh River Slopes BDA	Forested north-facing slope and riparian area along the Conemaugh River, rich in species diversity	County	3
Loyalhanna Bend BDA	Forested floodplain and floodplain swam community along Loyalhanna Creek	County	3
Powdermill Run North BDA	Exceptional Value stream watershed withing SGL 42	High	3
Snyder's Run DBA	Location provides habitat for a plant of special concern	Notable	2
Squirrel Hill DBA	Slopes, floodplain and wetlands along the Conemaugh River with habitat for a plant species of special concern	High	2
Upper Tubmill Creek BDA	Exceptional Value stream watershed under private ownership	High	2

Watersheds

Building on considerations of the US Environmental Protection Agency, “a watershed is the area of land where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes into the same place.” John Wesley Powell, a scientist geographer, further identifies a watershed is "a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of a community." As shown on the following page, the County’s topography creates 12 distinct watersheds. In the United States, it has been most recently calculated by the EPZ that annually more than \$450 billion in food and fiber, manufactured goods, and tourism depends on clean water and healthy watersheds.

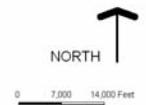
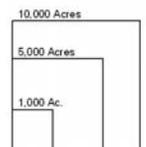
Biological Diversity Areas Map



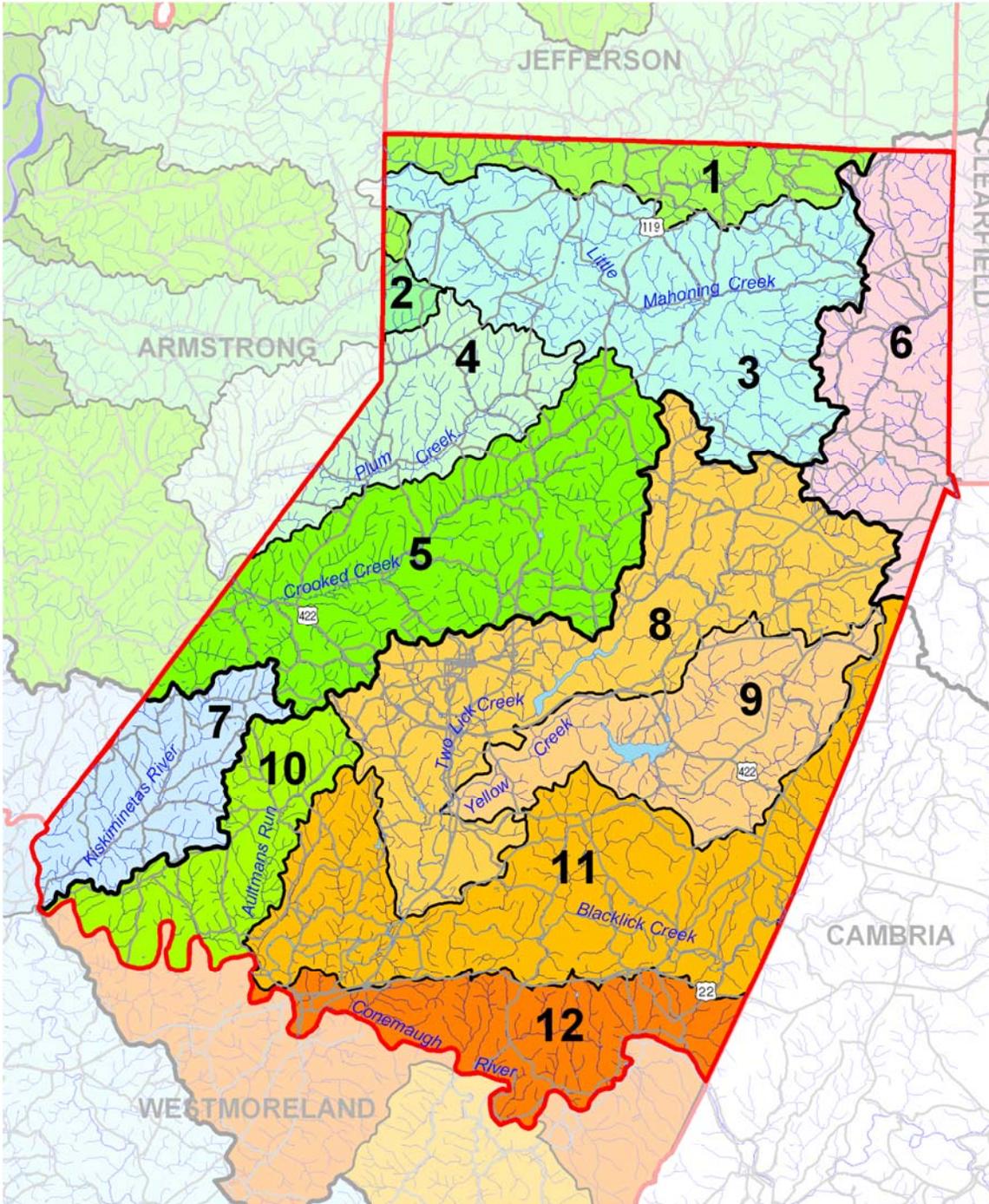
LEGEND

County Boundary	Landscape Conservation Areas (LCA)
Municipal Boundary	Biological Diversity Areas (BDA)
US Highway	
Streams	

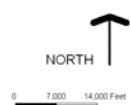
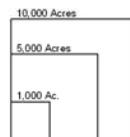
Source: Natural Heritage Inventory data and sensitivity scoring provided by the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program



Watersheds Map



- LEGEND**
- Study Area Boundary
 - Basin
 - Subbasin
 - US Highway
 - River/Stream

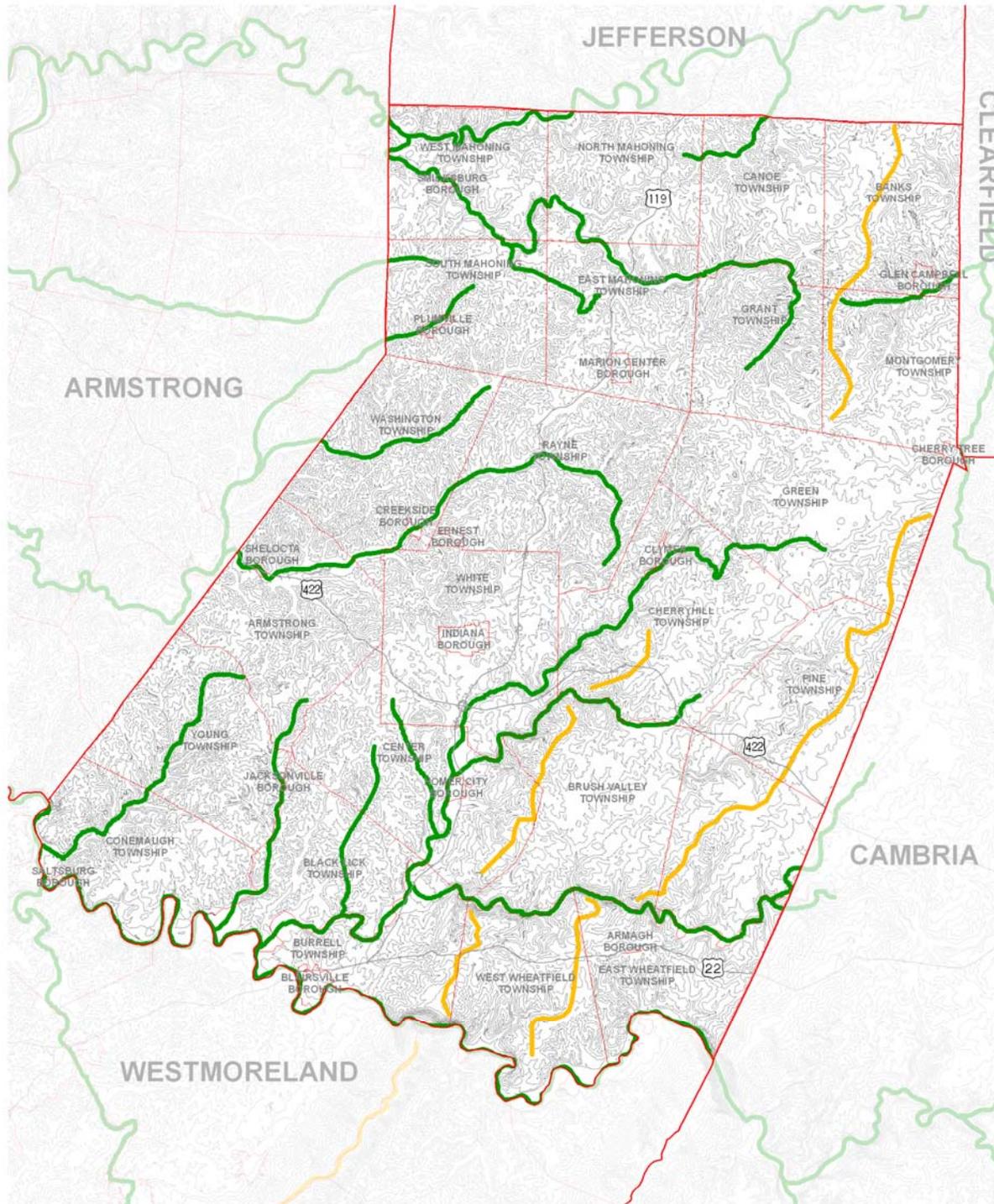


Source: Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.

Ridges and Valleys

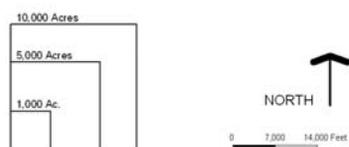
Ridgelines are the lines connecting the highest points along a ridge and separating drainage basins or small-scale drainage systems from one another. The Ridgelines are located in the higher altitudes of the mountain system in the eastern portion of the County. Valleys in the County's rolling western landscape can provide a wide range of opportunity for recreation and/or conservation.

Ridges and Valleys Map



- LEGEND
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundaries
 - US Highway
 - Existing 100' Topography
 - Ridgeline
 - Valley

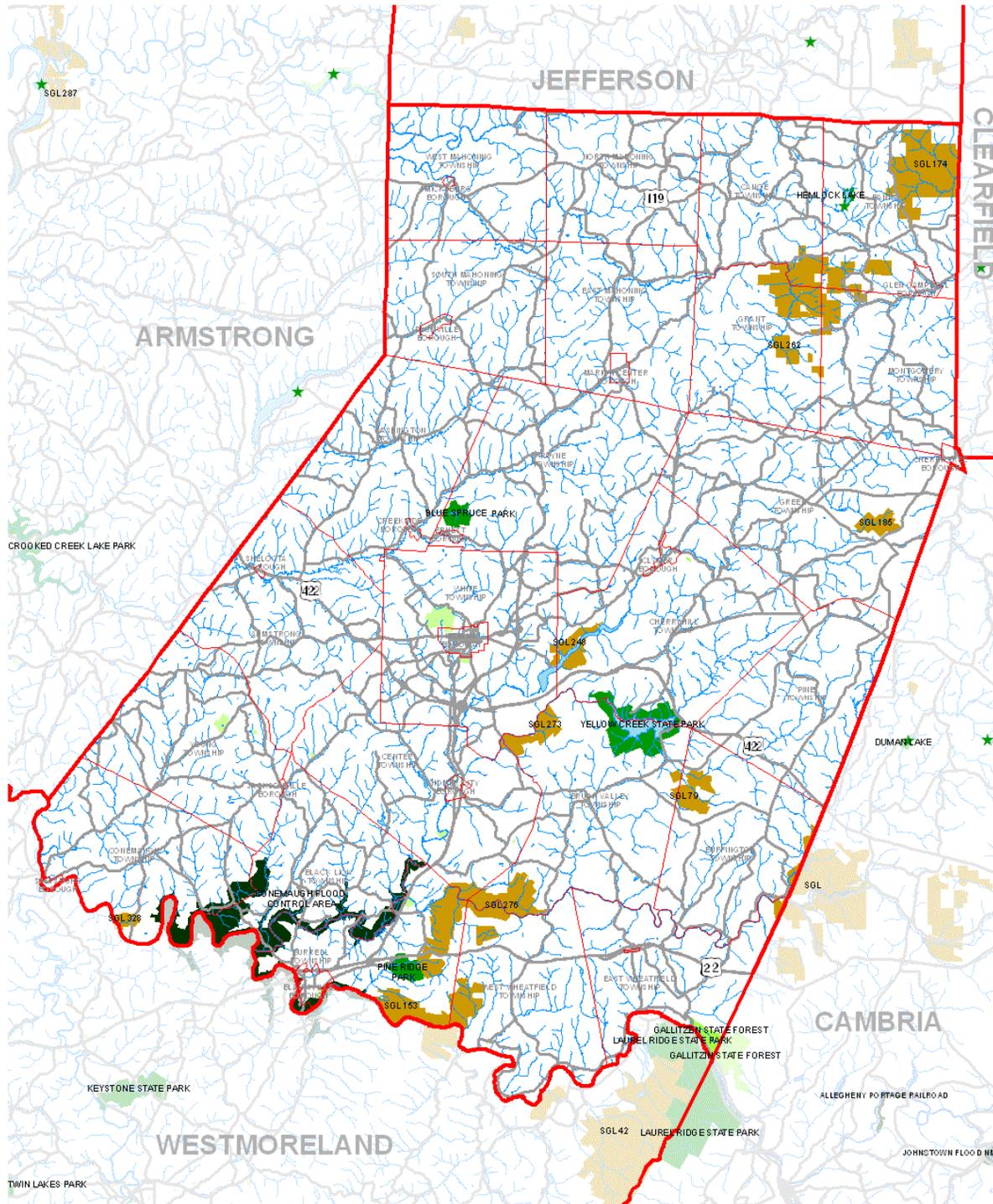
Source: Ridgelines and valleys digitized by Environmental Planning and Design, LLC. Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



Parks, Forests and Gamelands

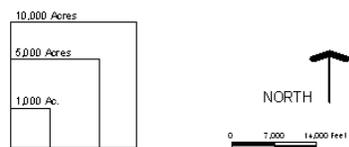
The presence of local, regional, County, federal and State-owned parks, forests and gamelands is illustrated on the following map. These locations often serve as destinations within a greenways and open space network.

Parks, Forests and Gamelands Map



- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - Streams
 - National Parks / Federal Lands
 - State Forests
 - State and County Parks
 - State Gamelands
 - Local Parks
 - ★ Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Properties

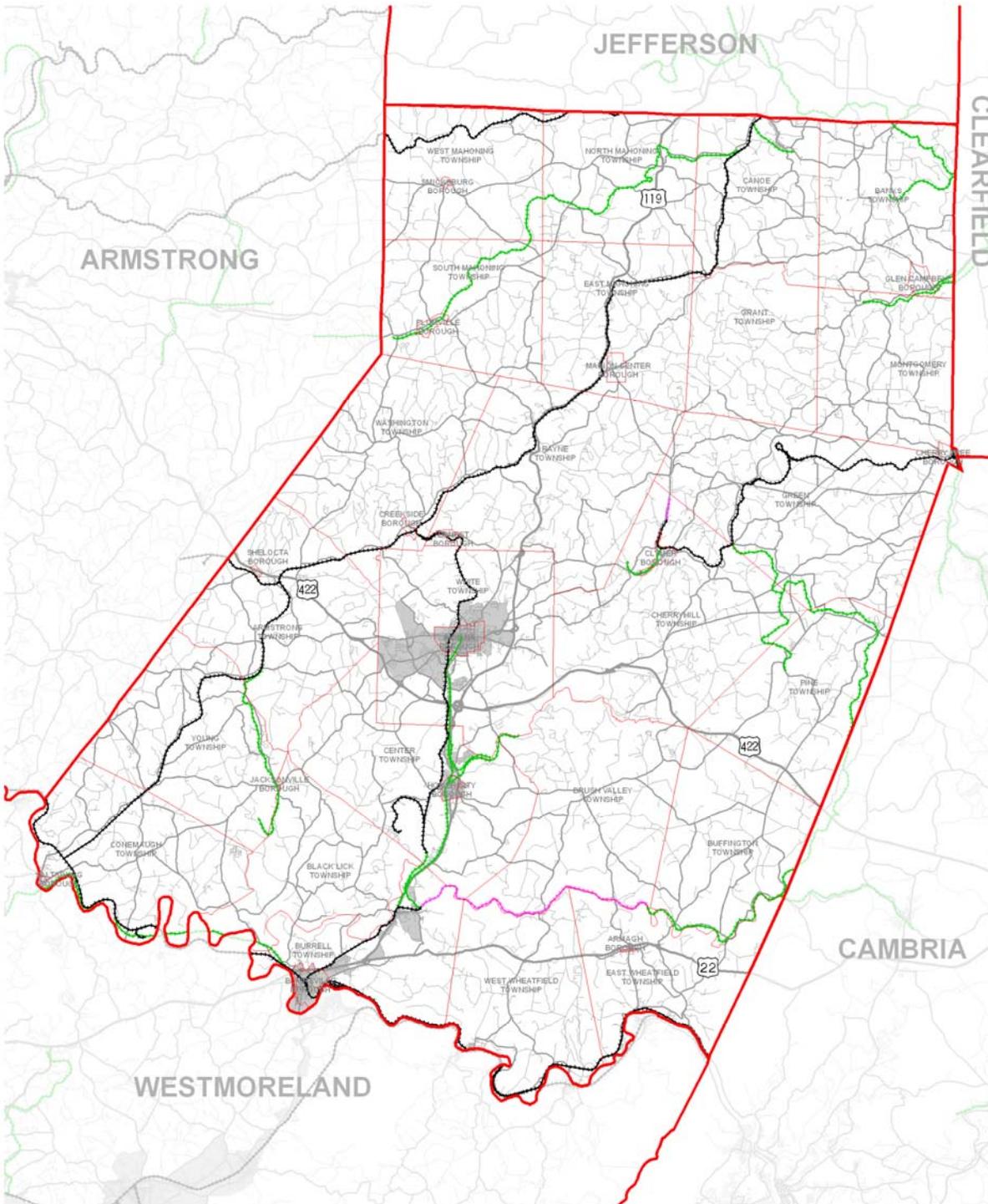
Source: State Parks, County Parks, State Forest and base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, 2002. State Gameland data provided by the Pa. Game Commission, 2004. Pa. Fish and Boat Commission Properties data provided by the Pa. Fish and Boat Commission, 2008. Local Parks data provided by the Conservation Fund, 2004.



Transportation Network

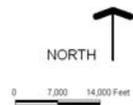
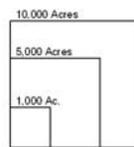
The Transportation System map details existing transportation facilities ranging from local streets to scenic and inter-state highways as well as active railroads. Other forms of transportation routes are also represented including inactive railroads, airports and heliports.

Transportation Network Map



- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Urban Areas (2000)
 - US Highways
 - State Roads
 - Local Roads
 - Active Railroad
 - Inactive Railroad
 - Abandoned Railroad

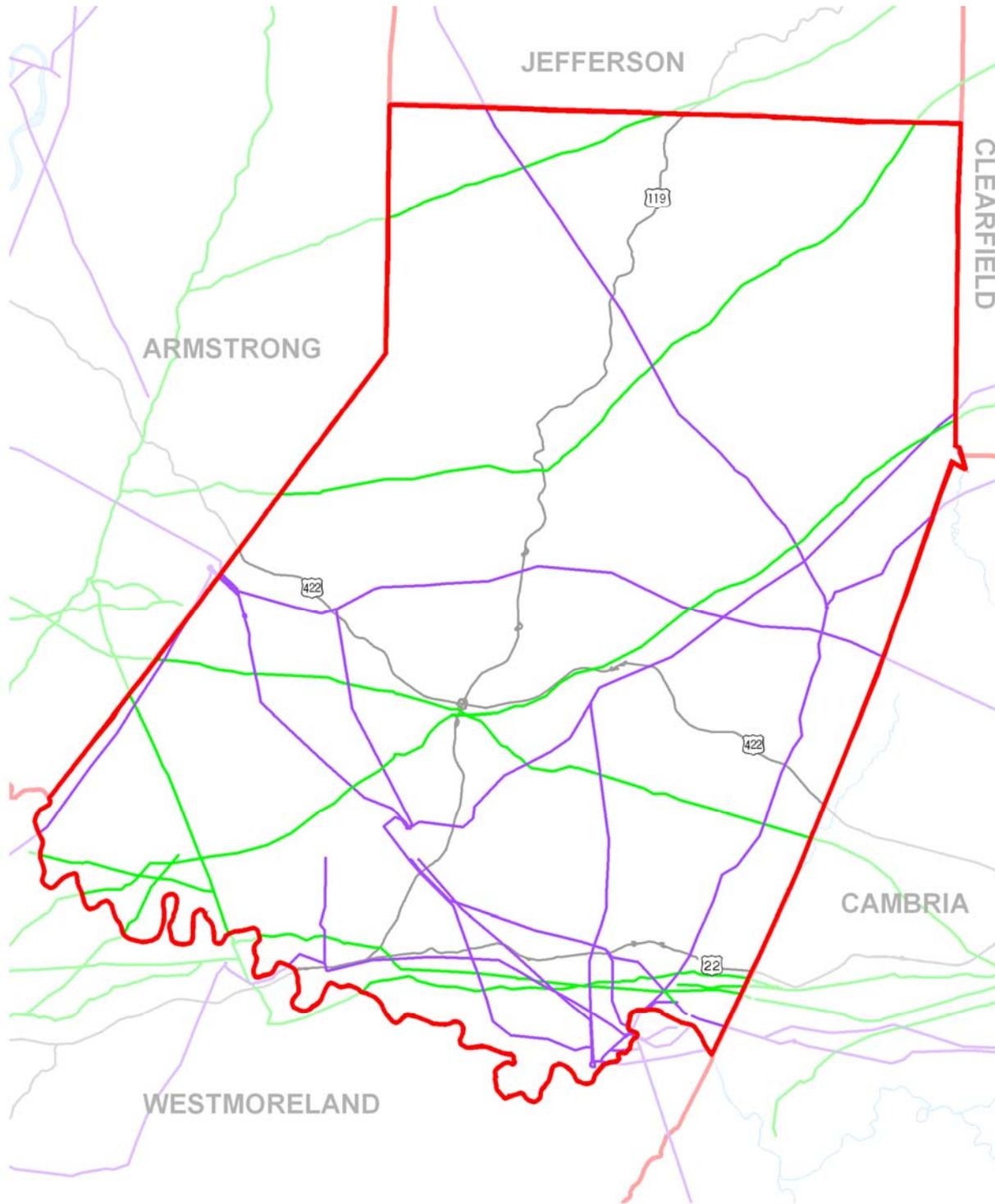
Source: Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



Utility Corridor

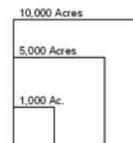
Utility corridors are rights-of-way easements for utility lines on either publicly or privately owned property. The Utility Corridors Map delineates the utility corridors in the County including electric transmission lines and various pipelines critical to infrastructure.

Utility Corridor Map



- LEGEND**
- Study Area Boundary
 - US Highway
 - River/Stream
 - Electric Transmission Line
 - Pipe Line (natural gas, fuel oil, etc.)

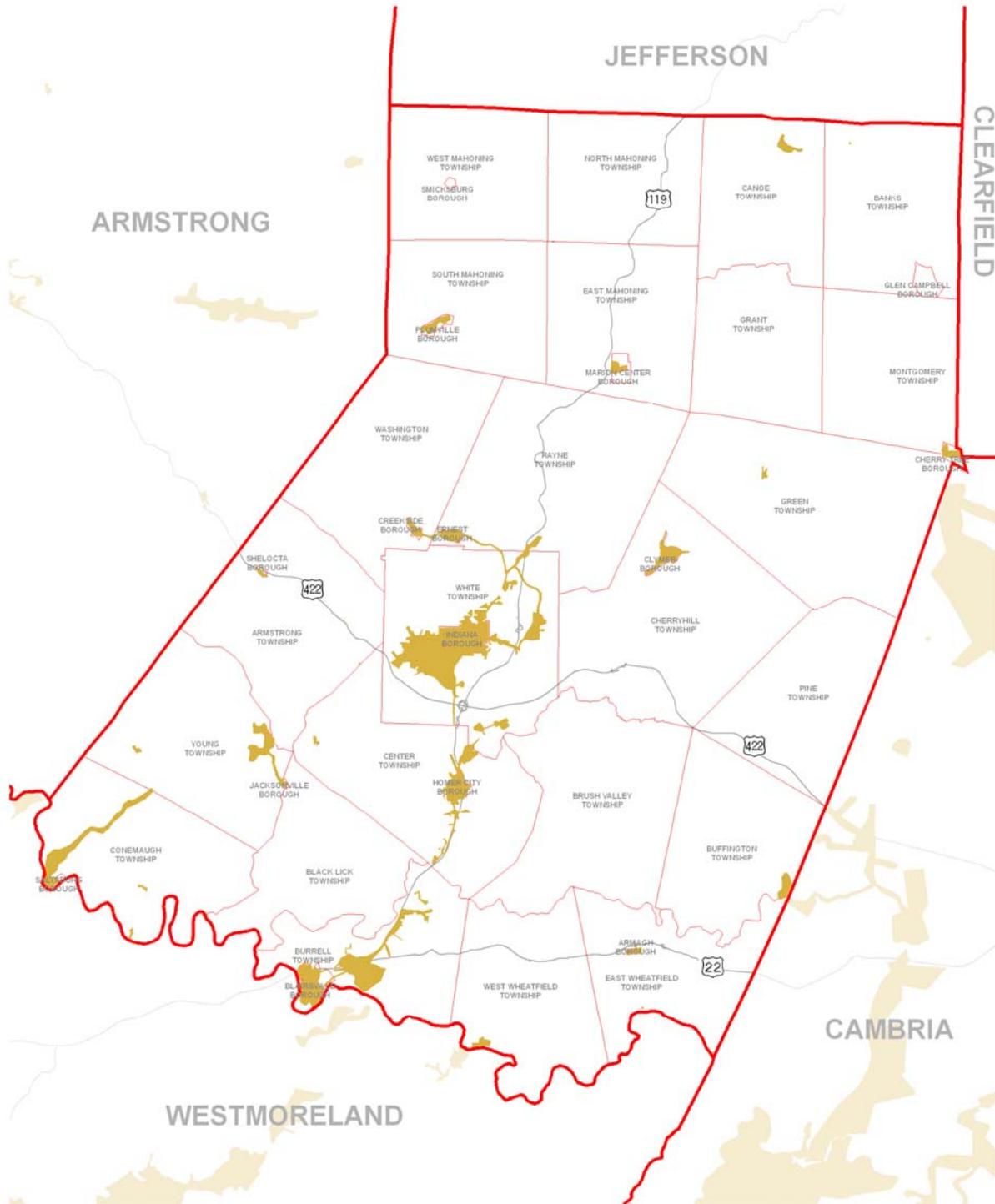
Source: Utility Corridors are based on digital data provided by the United States Geological Survey. Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



Sewer Service

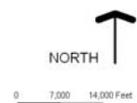
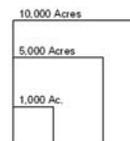
Sanitary sewer service is common within urbanized and developed areas. Undeveloped areas with existing sanitary sewer service increase potential development within that area. The sanitary sewer service map defines those areas with existing service and those where sanitary sewer infrastructure is proposed to be constructed.

Sewer Service Map



- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - Existing Public Sanitary Sewer Service Area

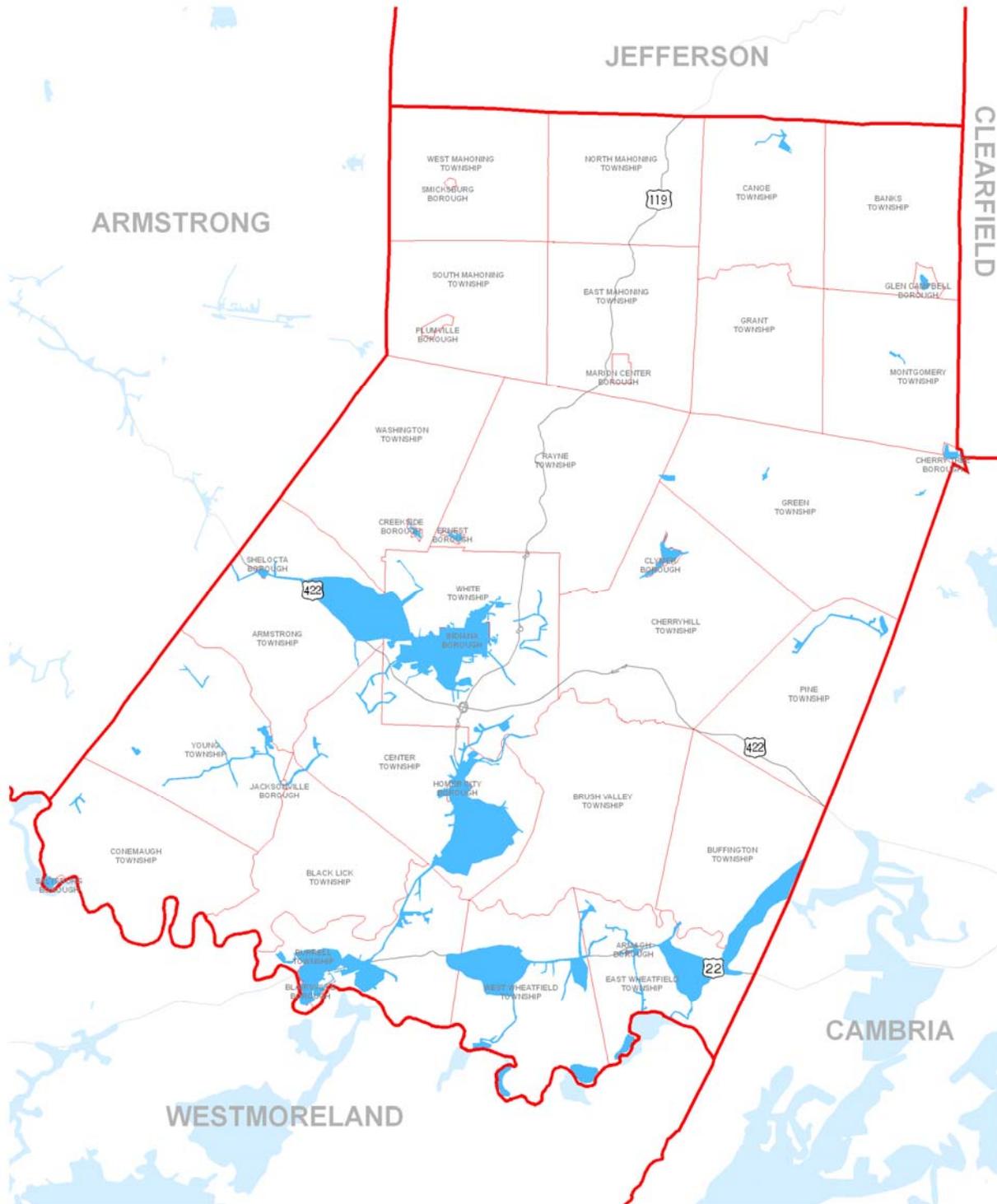
Source: Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



Water Service

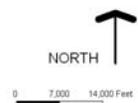
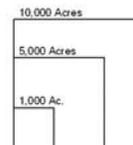
Potable water is water that is satisfactory for direct human consumption, human contact or in the preparation of foods for human consumption. The Potable Water Map defines the areas of the County where potable water is obtainable. The potable water areas are defined by the Natural Infrastructure of Southwestern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

Water Service Map



- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - US Highway
 - Existing Public Water Service Area

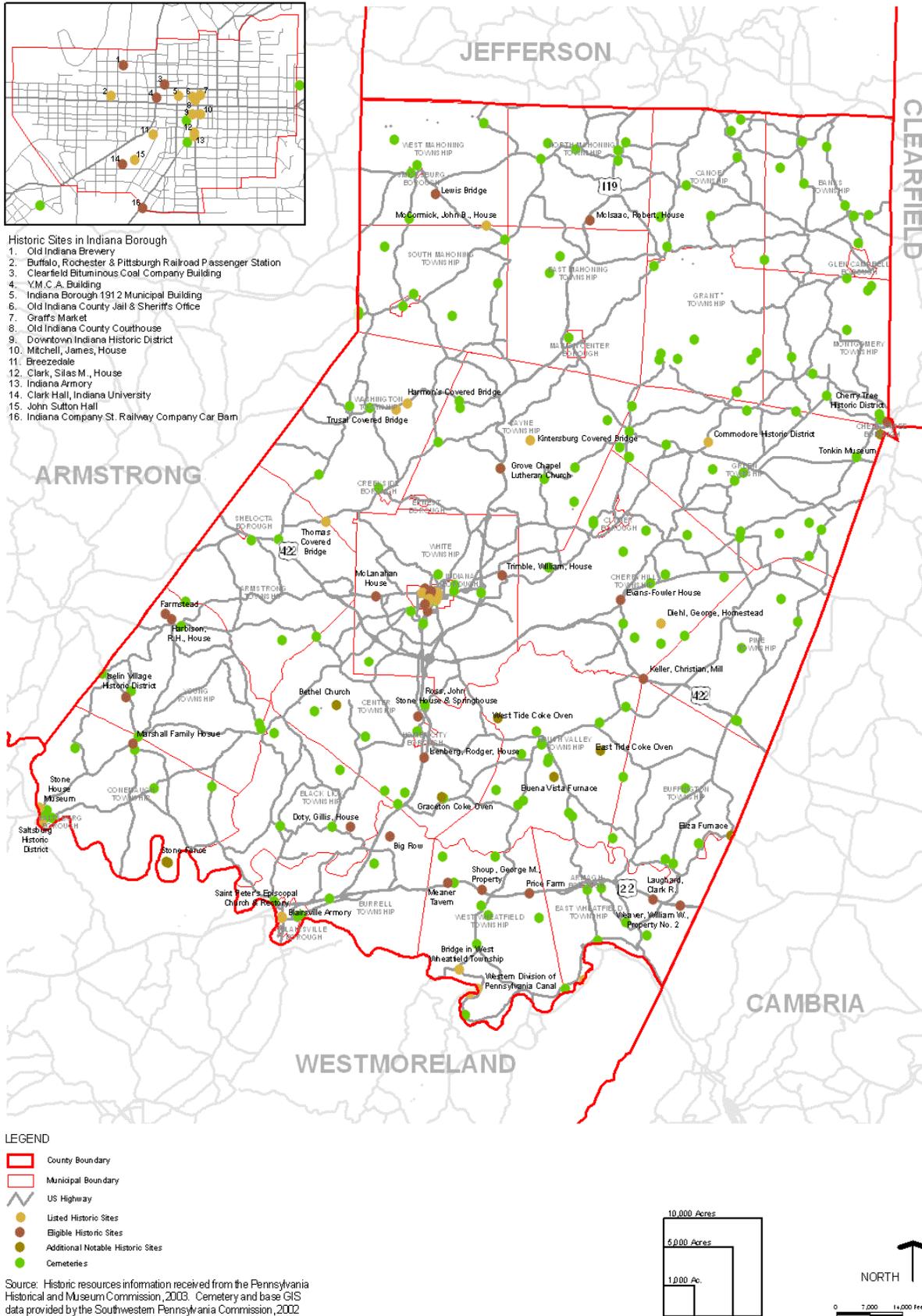
Source: Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



Historic Sites

Historic Sites are locations set aside to commemorate a historical event, activity, or person. The Historical Sites and Landmarks map exhibits sites and landmarks on the National Register of Historic Places as well as significant historic districts.

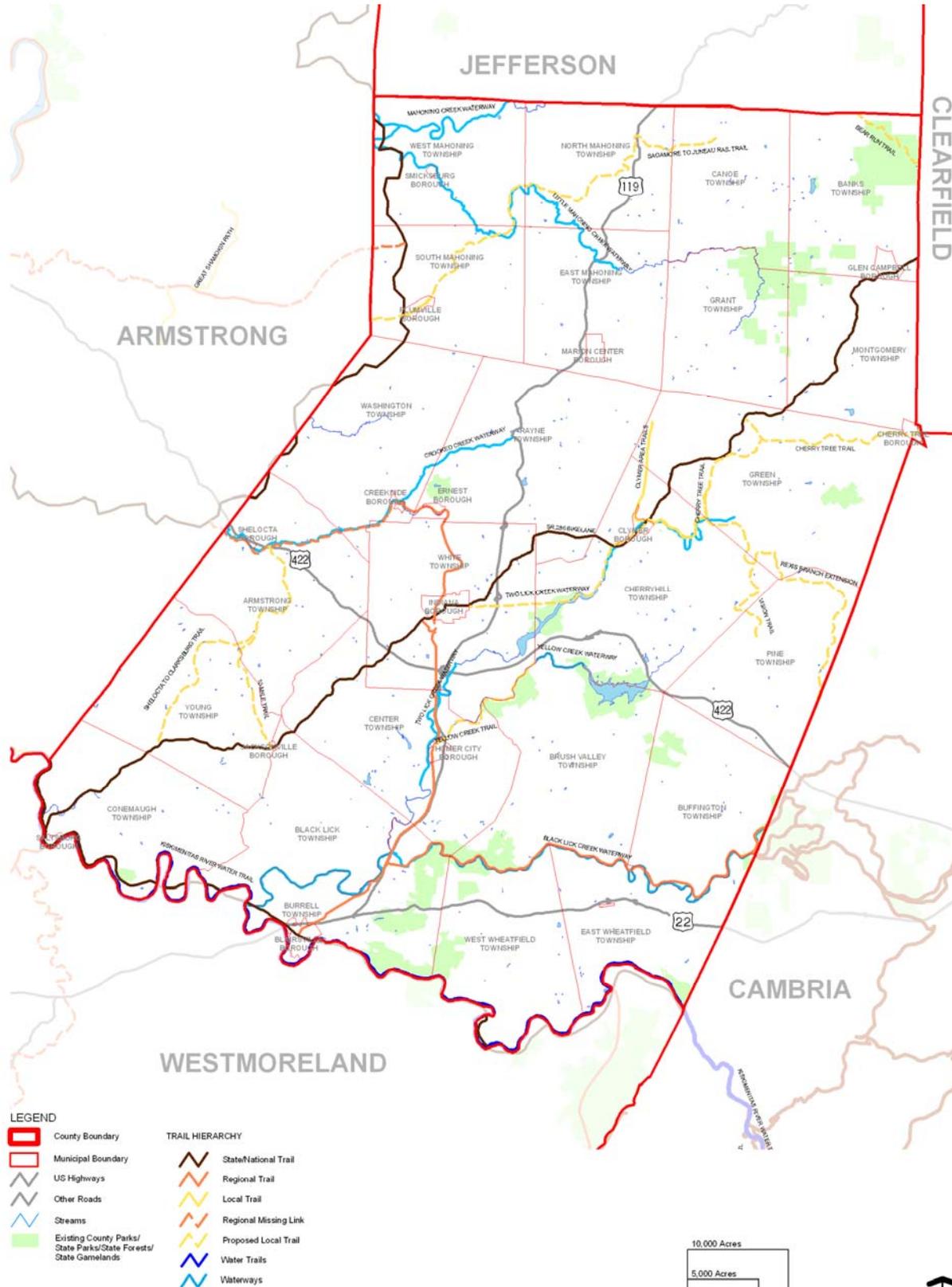
Historic Sites Map



Land and Water Trails

The Land and Water Trails map details where various trails exist throughout the County. The trails illustrated include: local trails, County trails, State/National Trails, water trails and water access. State and National trails typically connect the County to neighboring counties and beyond. County trails generally connect between State and National trails within the County or span multiple municipalities within the County. Local trails, which comprise the majority of the off-road trail network, usually include loops within parks and other short segments of trails. Consequently, most local trails are concentrated in large State Park-type facilities while the County, State and National trails are likely to be found near existing thoroughfares. The County has several existing and proposed trails designed for various outdoor activities including walking, jogging, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, etc.

Land and Water Trails Map



Source: Base GIS data provided by the Natural Infrastructure Project and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission. Additional trails data provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Heritage Trails Project.

A conservation easement can be utilized as part of securing areas for open space. Besides a conservation easement, there are other types of easements or agreements which could be utilized for similar purposes, such as trail easement agreements, fishing access agreements, or riparian forest buffer protection agreements.

Outlined below is a sample conservation easement agreement. The sample agreement is based on a model agreement developed by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association.

THIS CONSERVATION EASEMENT dated as of _____ (the “Easement Date”) is by and between _____ (“the undersigned Owner or Owners”) and _____ (the “Holder”).

Article I. Background

1.01 Property

The undersigned Owner or Owners are the sole owners in fee simple of the Property described in Exhibit “A” (the “Property”). The Property is also described as:

Street Address:

Municipality:

County:

State: Pennsylvania

Parcel Identifier:

Acreage:

1.02 Conservation Plan

Attached as Exhibit “B” is a survey or other graphic depiction of the Property (the “Conservation Plan showing, among other details, the location of one or more of the following areas – the Highest Protection Area, the Standard Protection Area and the Minimal Protection Area.

1.03 Conservation Objectives

This Conservation Easement provides different levels of protection for the areas shown on the Conservation Plan so as to achieve the goals and

resource protection objectives (collectively, the “Conservation Objectives”) for the Property set forth below:

(a) Resource Protection Objectives

(i) **Water Resources.** This Conservation Easement seeks to protect the quality of water resources by maintaining buffer within the vicinity of streams, wetlands and other water resources described in the Baseline Documentation. Barnyard runoff controls and preservation of conservation cover on Steep Slopes are also implemented to protect water resources. These measures help to protect water resources from sediment and non-point pollution and promote the infiltration, detention and natural filtration of storm water. The restrictions also preserve habitat for Native Species dependent on water resources.

(ii) **Forest and Woodland Resources.** This Conservation Easement seeks to promote biological diversity and to perpetuate and foster the growth of a healthy and unfragmented forest or woodland. Features to be protected include Native Species; continuous canopy with multi-tiered understory of trees, shrubs, wildflowers and grasses; natural habitat, breeding sites and corridors for the migration of birds and wildlife. Species other than Native Species often negatively affect the survival of Native Species and disrupt the functioning of ecosystems. Trees store carbon, offsetting the harmful by-products of burning fossil fuels and trap air pollution particulates, cleaning air.

(iii) **Wildlife Resources.** This Conservation Easement seeks to protect large intact areas of wildlife habitat and connect patches of wildlife habitat. Large habitat patches typically support greater biodiversity and can maintain more ecosystem processes than small patches. Large intact habitats allow larger, healthier populations of a species to persist; thus, increasing the chance of survival over time. Fragmentation of large habitats often decreases the connectivity of systems, negatively affecting the movement of species necessary for fulfilling nutri-

tional or reproductive requirements.

(iv) **Scenic Resources.** This Conservation Easement seeks to preserve the relationship of scenic resources within the Property to natural and scenic resources in its surrounds and to protect scenic vistas visible from public rights-of-way and other public access points in the vicinity of the Property.

(v) **Sustainable Land Uses.** This Conservation Easement seeks to ensure that Agriculture, Forestry and other uses, to the extent that they are permitted, are conducted in a manner that will neither diminish the biological integrity of the Property nor deplete natural resources over time nor lead to an irreversible disruption of ecosystems and associated processes. Agricultural and Forestry activities are regulated so as to protect soils of high productivity; to ensure future availability for Sustainable uses; and to minimize adverse effects of Agricultural and Forestry uses on water resources described in the Conservation Objectives.

(vi) **Compatible Land Use and Development.** Certain areas have been sited within the Property to accommodate existing and future development taking into account the entirety of the natural potential of the Property as well as its scenic resources.

(b) Goals

(i) **Highest Protection Area.** This Conservation Easement seeks to protect natural resources within the Highest Protection Area so as to keep them in an undisturbed State except as required to promote and maintain a diverse community of predominantly Native Species.

(ii) **Standard Protection Area.** This Conservation Easement seeks to promote good stewardship of the Standard Protection Area so that its soil and other natural resources will always be able to support Sustainable Agriculture or Sustainable Forestry.

(iii) **Minimal Protection Area.** This Conservation Easement seeks to promote compatible land use and development within the Minimal Protection Area so that it will be available for a wide variety of activities, uses and Additional Improvements subject to the

minimal constraints necessary to achieve Conservation Objectives outside the Minimal Protection Area.

1.04 Baseline Documentation

As of the Easement Date, the undersigned Owner or Owners and Holder have signed for identification purposes the report (the “Baseline Documentation”), to be kept on file at the principal office of Holder, that contains an original, full-size version of the Conservation Plan and other information sufficient to identify on the ground the protection areas identified in this Article; that describes Existing Improvements; that identifies the conservation resources of the Property described in the Conservation Objectives; and that includes, among other information, photographs depicting existing conditions of the Property as of the Easement Date.

1.05 Structure of Conservation Easement

This Conservation Easement is divided into eight Articles. Articles II, III and IV contain the restrictive covenants imposed by the undersigned Owner or Owners on the Property. In Article V the undersigned Owner or Owners grant to Holder and Beneficiaries (if any) certain rights to enforce the restrictive covenants in perpetuity against all Owners of the Property (“Enforcement Rights”). Article V also contains the procedure for Review applicable to those items permitted subject to Review under Articles II, III and IV. Article VI details the procedures for exercise of Enforcement Rights. Article VII contains provisions generally applicable to both Owners and Holder. The last Article entitled “Glossary” contains definitions of capitalized terms used in this Conservation Easement and not defined in this Article I.

1.06 Federal Tax Items

(a) Qualified Conservation Contribution

This Conservation Easement has been donated in whole or in part to Holder by the undersigned Owner or Owners. It is intended to qualify as a charitable donation of a partial interest in real eState (as defined under §170(f)(3)(B)(iii) of the Code, a “Qualified Conservation Contribution”) to a qualified organization (as defined in §1.170(A)-14(c)(1) of the Regulations, a “Qualified Organization”).

(b) Public Benefit

The Baseline Documentation identifies public policy Statements and other factual information supporting the significant public benefit of this Conservation Easement as defined in §1.170A-14(d)(4)(iv) of the Regulations.

(c) Mineral Interests

No Person has retained a qualified mineral interest in the Property of a nature that would disqualify the Conservation Easement for purposes of §1.170A-14(g)(4) of the Regulations.

(d) Property Right

In accordance with §1.170A-14(g)(6) of the Regulations, the undersigned Owner or Owners agree that this Conservation Easement gives rise to a property right, immediately vested in the Holder, that entitles the Holder to compensation upon extinguishment of the easement. The fair market value of the property right is to be determined in accordance with the Regulations; i.e., it is at least equal to the proportionate value that this Conservation Easement as of the Easement Date bears to the value of the Property as a whole as of the Easement Date (the “Proportionate Value”). If the Proportionate Value exceeds the compensation otherwise payable to Holder under Article VI, Holder is entitled to payment of the Proportionate Value. Holder must use any funds received by application of this provision in a manner consistent with the Conservation Objectives.

(e) Notice Required under Regulations

To the extent required for compliance with § 1.170A-13(g)(4)(ii) of the Regulations, and only to the extent such activity is not otherwise subject to Review under this Conservation Easement, Owners agree to notify Holder before exercising any reserved right that may have an adverse impact on the conservation interests associated with the Property.

(f) Qualification under §2031(c) of the Code

To the extent required to qualify for exemption from Federal eState tax under §2031(c) of the Code, and only to the extent such activity is not otherwise

prohibited or limited under this Conservation Easement, Owners agree that commercial recreational uses are not permitted within the Property.

1.07 Beneficiaries

As of the Easement Date, no Beneficiaries of this Conservation Easement have been identified by the undersigned Owner or Owners and Holder.

Article II. Subdivision**2.01 Prohibition**

No Subdivision of the Property is permitted except as set forth below.

2.02 Permitted Subdivision

The following Subdivisions are permitted:

(a) Lot Line Change

Subdivision resulting in (i) no additional Lot; and (ii) no material decrease in the acreage of the Property; or (iii) subject to Review, other change in the boundary of the Property or any Lot not creating any additional Lot.

(b) Transfer to Qualified Organization

Subdivision to permit the transfer of a portion of the Property to a Qualified Organization for use by the Qualified Organization for park, nature preserve, public trail or other conservation purposes consistent with and in furtherance of Conservation Objectives.

(c) Agricultural Lease

Transfer of possession (but not ownership) of land by lease for Sustainable Agriculture or Sustainable Forestry purposes in compliance with applicable requirements of this Conservation Easement.

2.03 Subdivision Requirements**(a) Establishment of Lots; Allocations.**

Prior to transfer of a Lot following a Subdivision, Owners must (i) furnish Holder with the plan of Subdivision approved under Applicable Law and legal description of the each Lot created or reconfigured by the Subdivision; (ii) mark the boundaries

of each Lot with permanent markers; and (iii) allocate in the deed of transfer of a Lot created by the Subdivision those limitations applicable to more than one Lot under this Conservation Easement. This information will become part of the Baseline Documentation incorporated into this Conservation Easement.

(b) Amendment

Holder may require Owners to execute an Amendment of this Conservation Easement to reflect changes and allocations resulting from Subdivision that are not established to the reasonable satisfaction of Holder by recordation in the Public Records of the plan of Subdivision approved under Applicable Law.

Article III. Improvements

3.01 Prohibition

Improvements within the Property are prohibited except as permitted below in this Article.

3.02 Permitted Within Highest Protection Area

The following Improvements are permitted within the Highest Protection Area:

(a) Existing Improvements

Any Existing Improvement may be maintained, repaired and replaced in its existing location. Existing Improvements may be expanded or relocated if the expanded or relocated Improvement complies with requirements applicable to Additional Improvements of the same type.

(b) Existing Agreements

Improvements that Owners are required to allow under Existing Agreements are permitted.

(c) Additional Improvements

The following Additional Improvements are permitted:

- (i) Fences, walls and gates.
- (ii) Regulatory Signs.
- (iii) Habitat enhancement devices such as birdhouses and bat houses.
- (iv) Trails covered (if at all) by wood chips, gravel, or other highly porous surface.

(v) Subject to Review, footbridges, stream crossing structures and stream access structures.

(vi) Subject to Review, Access Drives and Utility Improvements to service Improvements within the Property but only if there is no other reasonably feasible means to provide access and utility services to the Property.

3.03 Permitted Within Standard Protection Area

The following Improvements are permitted within the Standard Protection Area:

(a) Permitted under Preceding Sections

Any Improvement permitted under a preceding section of this Article is permitted.

(b) Additional Improvements

The following Additional Improvements are permitted:

- (i) Agricultural Improvements.
- (ii) Utility Improvements and Site Improvements reasonably required for activities and uses permitted within the Standard Protection Area.

(c) Limitations on Additional Improvements

Additional Improvements permitted within the Standard Protection Area are further limited as follows:

- (i) The Height of Improvements must not exceed ___ feet except for Utility Improvements (such as windmills) providing alternative sources of energy approved by the Holder after Review.
- (ii) Impervious Coverage must not exceed a limit of ___ square feet per roofed Improvement. Impervious Coverage must not exceed a limit of ___ square feet in the aggregate for all Improvements within the Standard Protection Area. The limitation on aggregate Impervious Coverage excludes Impervious Coverage associated with ponds and Access Drives.
- (iii) Access Drives and farm lanes are limited to ___ feet in width and are further limited, in the aggregate, to ___ feet in length.
- (iv) Ponds are limited, in the aggregate, to ___ square feet of Impervious Coverage.
- (v) In addition to Regulatory Signs, signs are limited to a maximum of ___ square feet per sign and ___ square feet in the aggregate for all signs within the Property.

(vi) Utility Improvements must be underground or, subject to Review, may be aboveground where not reasonably feasible to be installed underground or where used as a means of providing alternative sources of energy (such as wind or solar).

The following Utility Improvements are not permitted unless Holder, without any obligation to do so, approves after Review: (A) exterior storage tanks for petroleum or other hazardous or toxic substances (other than reasonable amounts of oil, petroleum or propane gas for uses within the Property permitted under this Conservation Easement); and (B) Utility Improvements servicing Improvements not within the Property.

3.04 Permitted Within Minimal Protection Area

The following Improvements are permitted within Minimal Protection Area:

(a) Permitted under Preceding Sections

Any Improvement permitted under a preceding section of this Article is permitted.

(b) Additional Improvements

The following Additional Improvements are permitted:

- (i) Residential Improvements.
- (ii) Utility Improvements and Site Improvements servicing activities, uses or Improvements permitted within the Property. Signs remain limited as set forth for the Standard Protection Area.

(c) Limitations

- (i) Not more than ___ Improvements (whether an Existing Improvement or Additional Improvement) may contain Dwelling Units (if any) permitted under Article IV.
- (ii) Additional Improvements are subject to a Height limitation of __ feet.

Article IV. Activities; Uses; Disturbance of Resources

4.01 Prohibition

Activities and uses are limited to those permitted below in this Article and provided in any case that the intensity or frequency of the activity or use does not materially and adversely affect maintenance or attainment of Conservation Objectives.

4.02 Density Issues under Applicable Law

(a) Promoting Development outside the Property

Neither the Property nor the grant of this Conservation Easement may be used under Applicable Law to increase density or intensity of use or otherwise promote the development of other lands outside the Property.

(b) Transferable Development Rights

Owners may not transfer for use outside the Property (whether or not for compensation) any development rights allocated to the Property under Applicable Law.

4.03 Permitted Within Highest Protection Area

The following activities and uses are permitted within the Highest Protection Area:

(a) Existing Agreements

Activities, uses and Construction that Owners are required to allow under Existing Agreements.

(b) Disturbance of Resources

- (i) Cutting trees, Construction or other disturbance of resources, including removal of Invasive Species, to the extent reasonably prudent to remove, mitigate or warn against an unreasonable risk of harm to Persons, property or health of Native Species on or about the Property. Owners must take such steps as are reasonable under the circumstances to consult with older prior to taking actions that, but for this provision, would not be permitted or would be permitted only after Review.
- (ii) Planting a diversity of Native Species of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plant materials in accordance with Best Management Practices.
- (iii) Removal and disturbance of soil, rock and vegetative resources to the extent reasonably necessary to accommodate Construction of and

maintain access to Improvements within the Highest Protection Area with restoration as soon as reasonably feasible by replanting with a diversity of Native Species of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plant materials in accordance with Best Management Practices.

(iv) Vehicular use (including motorized vehicular use) in connection with an activity permitted within the Highest Protection Area or otherwise in the case of emergency.

(v) Except within Wet Areas, cutting trees for use on the Property not to exceed ___ cords per year.

(vi) Subject to Review, removal of vegetation to accommodate replanting with a diversity of Native Species of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plant materials.

(vii) Other resource management activities consistent with maintenance or attainment of Conservation Objectives and conducted in accordance with the Resource Management Plan approved for that activity after Review.

(c) Release and Disposal

(i) Application of substances (other than manure) to promote health and growth of vegetation in accordance with manufacturer’s recommendations and Applicable Law. Within Wet Areas only substances approved for aquatic use are permitted.

(ii) Piling of brush and other vegetation to the extent reasonably necessary to accommodate an activity permitted within the Highest Protection Area under this Conservation Easement.

(d) Recreational and Educational Uses

Activities that do not require Improvements other than those permitted within the Highest Protection Area and do not materially and adversely affect maintenance or attainment of Conservation Objectives such as the following: (i) walking, horseback riding on trails, cross-country skiing on trails, bird watching, nature study, fishing and hunting; and (ii) educational or scientific activities consistent with and in furtherance of the Conservation Objectives.

4.04 Permitted Within Standard Protection Area

The following activities and uses are permitted within the Standard Protection Area:

(a) Permitted under Preceding Sections

Activities and uses permitted under preceding sections of this Article are permitted within the Standard Protection Area.

(b) Agricultural and Forestry Uses; Disturbance of Resources

(i) Uses and activities that maintain continuous vegetative cover (other than Invasive Species) such as pasture and grazing use, meadow, turf or lawn.

(ii) Sustainable Agricultural uses that do not maintain continuous vegetative cover (such as plowing, tilling, planting and harvesting field crops, equestrian, horticultural and nursery use) if conducted in accordance with a Soil Conservation Plan furnished to Holder.

(iii) Removal of vegetation and other Construction activities reasonably required to accommodate Improvements permitted within the Standard Protection Area.

(iv) Sustainable Forestry uses in accordance with a Resource Management Plan approved after Review. Woodland Areas within the Standard Protection Area may not be used for or converted to Agricultural uses unless Holder, without any obligation to do so, approves after Review.

(v) Subject to Review, Sustainable Agricultural uses within Steep Slope Areas if conducted in accordance with a Soil Conservation Plan implementing measures to minimize adverse effects on water resources such as a conservation tillage system, conservation cover, conservation cropping sequence, contour farming or cross slope farming.

(vi) Subject to Review, Agricultural uses that involve removal of soil from the Property (such as sod farming and ball-and-burlap nursery or tree-farming uses) if conducted in accordance with a Resource Management Plan providing for, among other features, a soil replenishment program that will qualify the activity as a Sustainable Agricultural use.

(vii) Subject to Review, removal or impoundment of water for activities and uses permitted within the Standard Protection Area under this Conservation Easement but not for sale or transfer outside the Property.

(c) Release and Disposal

(i) Piling and composting of biodegradable materials originating from the Property in furtherance of Agricultural Uses within the Property permitted under this Article. Manure piles must be located so as not to create run-off into Wet Areas.

(ii) Subject to Review, disposal of sanitary sewage effluent from Improvements permitted under Article III if not reasonably feasible to confine such disposal to Minimal Protection Area.

(d) Recreational and Open-Space Uses

Non-commercial recreational and open-space uses that do not require Improvements other than those permitted within the Standard Protection Area; do not materially and adversely affect scenic views and other values described in the Conservation Objectives; and do not require vehicular use other than for resource management purposes.

4.05 Permitted Within Minimal Protection Area

The following activities and uses are permitted within the Minimal Protection Area:

(a) Permitted under Preceding Sections

Activities and uses permitted under preceding sections of this Article are permitted within the Minimal Protection Area.

(b) Disturbance of Resources

Disturbance of resources within the Minimal Protection Area is permitted for residential landscaping purposes and other purposes reasonably related to uses permitted within the Minimal Protection Area. Introduction of Invasive Species remains prohibited.

(c) Release and Disposal

(i) Disposal of sanitary sewage effluent from Improvements permitted under this Article.

(ii) Other piling of materials and non-containerized disposal of substances and materials but only if such disposal is permitted under Applicable Law; does not directly or indirectly create run-off or leaching outside the Minimal Protection and Area; and does not adversely affect Conservation Objectives applicable to the Minimal Protection Area including those pertaining to scenic views.

(d) Residential and Other Uses

(i) Residential use is permitted but limited to not more than ___ Dwelling Units.

(ii) Any occupation, activity or use that is wholly contained within an enclosed Improvement permitted under Article III is permitted. Subject to Review, exterior vehicular parking and signage accessory to such uses may be permitted by Holder.

Article V. Rights and Duties of Holder and Beneficiaries

5.01 Grant to Holder

(a) Grant in Perpetuity

By signing this Conservation Easement and unconditionally delivering it to Holder, the undersigned Owner or Owners, intending to be legally bound, grant and convey to Holder a conservation servitude over the Property in perpetuity for the purpose of administering and enforcing the restrictions and limitations set forth in Articles II, III and IV in furtherance of the Conservation Objectives.

(b) Superior to all Liens

The undersigned Owner or Owners warrant to Holder that the Property is, as of the Easement Date, free and clear of all Liens or, if it is not, that Owners have obtained and attached to this Conservation Easement as an Exhibit the legally binding subordination of any Liens affecting the Property as of the Easement Date.

5.02 Rights and Duties of Holder

The grant to Holder under the preceding section gives Holder the right and duty to perform the following tasks:

(a) Enforcement

To enforce the terms of this Conservation Easement in accordance with the provisions of Article VI including, in addition to other remedies, the right to enter the Property to investigate a suspected, alleged or threatened violation.

(b) Inspection

To enter and inspect the Property for compliance with the requirements of this Conservation Easement upon reasonable notice, in a reasonable manner and at reasonable times.

(c) Review

To exercise rights of Review in accordance with the requirements of this Article as and when required under applicable provisions of this Conservation Easement.

(d) Interpretation

To interpret the terms of this Conservation Easement, apply the terms of this Conservation Easement to factual conditions on or about the Property, respond to requests for information from Persons having an interest in this Conservation Easement or the Property (such as requests for a certification of compliance), and apply the terms of this Conservation Easement to changes occurring or proposed within the Property.

5.03 Other Rights of Holder

The grant to Holder under this Article also permits Holder, without any obligation to do so, to exercise the following rights:

(a) Amendment

To enter into an Amendment with Owners if Holder determines that the Amendment is consistent with and in furtherance of the Conservation Objectives; will not result in any private benefit prohibited under the Code; and otherwise conforms to Holder's policy with respect to Amendments.

(b) Signs

To install one or more signs within the Property identifying the interest of Holder or one or more Beneficiaries in this Conservation Easement. Any signs installed by Holder do not reduce the number or size of signs permitted to Owners under Article III. Signs are to be of the customary size installed by Holder or Beneficiary, as the case may be, and must be installed in locations readable from the public right-of-way and otherwise reasonably acceptable to Owners.

5.04 Review

The following provisions are incorporated into any provision of this Conservation Easement that is subject to Review:

(a) Notice to Holder

At least thirty (30) days before Owners begin or allow any Construction, activity or use that is subject to Review, Owners must notify Holder of the change including with the notice such information as is reasonably sufficient to comply with Review Requirements and otherwise describe the change and its potential impact on natural resources within the Property.

(b) Notice to Owners

Within thirty (30) days after receipt of Owners' notice, Holder must notify Owners of Holder's determination to (i) accept Owners' proposal in whole or in part; (ii) reject Owners' proposal in whole or in part; (iii) accept Owners' proposal conditioned upon compliance with conditions imposed by Holder; or (iv) reject Owners' notice for insufficiency of information on which to base a determination. If Holder gives conditional acceptance under clause (iii), commencement of the proposed Improvement, activity, use or Construction constitutes acceptance by Owners of all conditions set forth in Holder's notice.

(c) Failure to Notify

If Holder fails to notify Owners as required in the preceding subsection, the proposal set forth in Owners notice is deemed approved.

(d) Standard of Reasonableness

Holder's approval will not be unreasonably withheld; however, it is not unreasonable for Holder to disapprove a proposal that may adversely affect natural resources described in the Conservation Objectives or that is otherwise inconsistent with maintenance or attainment of Conservation Objectives.

5.05 Reimbursement

Owners must reimburse Holder for the costs and expenses of Holder reasonably incurred in the course of performing its duties with respect to this Conservation Easement other than monitoring in the ordinary course. These costs and expenses include the allocated costs of employees of Holder.

Article VI. Violation; Remedies**6.01 Breach of Duty****(a) Failure to Enforce**

If Holder fails to enforce this Conservation Easement, or ceases to qualify as a Qualified Organization, then the rights and duties of Holder under this Conservation may be (i) exercised by a Beneficiary or a Qualified Organization designated by a Beneficiary; and/or (ii) transferred to another Qualified Organization by a court of competent jurisdiction.

(b) Transferee

The transferee must be a Qualified Organization and must commit to hold this Conservation Easement exclusively for conservation purposes as defined in the Code.

6.02 Violation of Conservation Easement

If Holder determines that this Conservation Easement is being or has been violated or that a violation is threatened or imminent then the provisions of this Section will apply:

(a) Notice

Holder must notify Owners of the violation. Holder's notice may include its recommendations of measures to be taken by Owners to cure the violation and restore features of the Property damaged or altered as a result of the violation.

(b) Opportunity to Cure

Owners' cure period expires thirty (30) days after the date of Holder's notice to Owners subject to extension for the time reasonably necessary to cure but only if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

(i) Owners cease the activity constituting the violation promptly upon receipt of Holder's notice;

(ii) Owners and Holder agree, within the initial thirty (30) day period, upon the measures Owners will take to cure the violation;

(iii) Owners commence to cure within the initial thirty (30) day period; and

(iv) Owners continue thereafter to use best efforts and due diligence to complete the agreed upon cure.

(c) Imminent Harm

No notice or cure period is required if circumstances require prompt action to prevent or mitigate irreparable harm or alteration to any natural resource or other feature of the Property described in the Conservation Objectives.

6.03 Remedies

Upon expiration of the cure period (if any) described in the preceding Section, Holder may do any one or more of the following:

(a) Coercive Relief

Seek coercive relief to specifically enforce the terms of this Conservation Easement; to restrain present or future violations of this Conservation Easement; and/or to compel restoration of natural resources destroyed or altered as a result of the violation.

(b) Civil Action

Recover from Owners or other Persons responsible for the violation all sums owing to Holder under applicable provisions of this Conservation Easement together with interest thereon from the date due at the Default Rate. These monetary obligations include, among others, Losses and Litigation Expenses.

(c) Self-Help

Enter the Property to prevent or mitigate further damage to or alteration of natural resources of the Property identified in the Conservation Objectives.

6.04 Modification or Termination

If this Conservation Easement is or is about to be modified or terminated by exercise of the power of eminent domain (condemnation) or adjudication of a court of competent jurisdiction sought by a Person other than Holder the following provisions apply:

(a) Compensatory Damages

Holder is entitled to collect from the Person seeking the modification or termination, compensatory damages in an amount equal to the increase in Market Value of the Property resulting from the modification or termination plus reimbursement of Litigation Expenses as if a violation had occurred.

(b) Restitution

Holder or any Beneficiary is entitled to recover from the Person seeking the modification or termination, (i) restitution of amounts paid for this Conservation Easement (if any) and any other sums invested in the Property for the benefit of the public as a result of rights granted under this Conservation Easement plus (ii) reimbursement of Litigation Expenses as if a violation had occurred.

6.05 Remedies Cumulative

The description of Holder 's remedies in this Article does not preclude Holder from exercising any other right or remedy that may at any time be available to Holder under this Article or Applicable Law. If Holder chooses to exercise one remedy, Holder may nevertheless choose to exercise any one or more of the other rights or remedies available to Holder at the same time or at any other time.

6.06 No Waiver

If Holder does not exercise any right or remedy when it is available to Holder, that is not to be interpreted as a waiver of any non-compliance with this Conservation Easement or a waiver of Holder 's rights to exercise its rights or remedies at another time.

6.07 No Fault of Owners

Holder will waive its right to reimbursement under this Article as to Owners (but not other Persons who may be responsible for the violation) if Holder is reasonably satisfied that the violation was not the fault of Owners and could not have been anticipated or prevented by Owners by reasonable means.

6.08 Multiple Owners; Multiple Lots

If different Owners own Lots within the Property, only the Owners of the Lot in violation will be held

responsible for the violation.

6.09 Multiple Owners; Single Lot

If more than one Owner owns the Lot in violation of this Conservation Easement, the Owners of the Lot in violation are jointly and severally liable for the violation regardless of the form of ownership.

6.10 Continuing Liability

If a Lot subject to this Conservation Easement is transferred while a violation remains uncured, the transferor Owners remain liable for the violation jointly and severally with the transferee Owners. This provision does not apply if Holder has issued a certificate of compliance evidencing no violations within thirty (30) days prior to the transfer. It is the responsibility of the Owners to request a certificate of compliance to verify whether violations exist as of the date of transfer.

Article VII. Miscellaneous

7.01 Notices

(a) Requirements

Each Person giving any notice pursuant to this Conservation Easement must give the notice in writing and must use one of the following methods of delivery: (i) personal delivery; (ii) certified mail, return receipt requested and postage prepaid; or (iii) nationally recognized overnight courier, with all fees prepaid.

(b) Address for Notices

Each Person giving a notice must address the notice to the appropriate Person at the receiving party at the address listed below or to another address designated by that Person by notice to the other Person.

If to Owners:

If to Holder:

7.02 Governing Law

The internal laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania govern this Conservation Easement.

7.03 Assignment and Transfer

Neither Owners nor Holder may assign or otherwise transfer any of their respective rights or duties under this Conservation Easement voluntarily or involuntarily, whether by merger, consolidation, dissolution, operation of law or any other manner except as permitted below. Any purported assignment or transfer in violation of this Section is void.

(a) By Holder

Holder may assign its rights and duties under this Conservation Easement, either in whole or in part, but only to a Qualified Organization that executes and records in the Public Records a written agreement assuming the obligations of Holder under this Conservation Easement. The assigning Holder must deliver the Baseline Documentation to the assignee Holder as of the date of the assignment. Holder must assign its rights and duties under this Conservation Easement to another Qualified Organization if Holder becomes the Owner of the Property.

(b) By Owners

This Conservation Easement is a servitude running with the land binding upon the undersigned Owners and, upon recordation in the Public Records, all subsequent Owners of the Property or any portion of the Property are bound by its terms whether or not the Owners had actual notice of this Conservation Easement and whether or not the deed of transfer specifically referred to the transfer being under and subject to this Conservation Easement.

7.04 Binding Agreement

Subject to the restrictions on assignment and transfer set forth in the preceding Section, this Conservation Easement binds and benefits Owners and Holder and their respective personal representatives, successors and assigns.

7.05 No Other Beneficiaries

This Conservation Easement does not confer any

Enforcement Rights or other remedies upon any Person other than Owners, Holder and the Beneficiaries (if any) specifically named in this Conservation Easement. Owners of Lots within or adjoining the Property are not beneficiaries of this Conservation Easement and, accordingly, have no right of approval or joinder in any Amendment other than an Amendment applicable to the Lot owned by such Owners. This provision does not preclude Owners or other Persons having an interest in this Conservation Easement from petitioning a court of competent jurisdiction to exercise remedies available under this Conservation Easement for breach of duty by Holder.

7.06 Amendments, Waivers

No Amendment or waiver of any provision of this Conservation Easement or consent to any departure by Owners from the terms of this Conservation Easement is effective unless the Amendment, waiver or consent is in writing and signed by an authorized signatory for Holder. A waiver or consent is effective only in the specific instance and for the specific purpose given.

7.07 Severability

If any provision of this Conservation Easement is determined to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable, the remaining provisions of this Conservation Easement remain valid, binding and enforceable. To the extent permitted by Applicable Law, the parties waive any provision of Applicable Law that renders any provision of this Conservation Easement invalid, illegal or unenforceable in any respect.

7.08 Counterparts

This Conservation Easement may be signed in multiple counterparts, each of which constitutes an original, and all of which, collectively, constitute only one agreement.

7.09 Indemnity

Owners must indemnify and defend the Indemnified Parties against all Losses and Litigation Expenses arising out of or relating to (a) any breach or viola-

tion of this Conservation Easement or Applicable Law; and (b) damage to property or personal injury (including death) occurring on or about the Property if and to the extent not caused by the negligent or wrongful acts or omissions of an Indemnified Party.

7.10 Guides to Interpretation

(a) Captions

Except for the identification of defined terms in the Glossary, the descriptive headings of the articles, sections and subsections of this Conservation Easement are for convenience only and do not constitute a part of this Conservation Easement.

(b) Glossary

If any term defined in the Glossary is not used in this Conservation Easement, the defined term is to be disregarded as surplus material.

(c) Other Terms

- (i) The word “including” means “including but not limited to”.
- (ii) The word “must” is obligatory; the word “may” is permissive and does not imply any obligation.

(d) Conservation and Preservation Easements Act

This Conservation Easement is intended to be interpreted so as to convey to Holder all of the rights and privileges of a holder of a conservation easement under the Conservation Easements Act.

(e) ReStatement of Servitudes

This Conservation Easement is intended to be interpreted so as to convey to Holder all of the rights and privileges of a holder of a conservation servitude under the ReStatement (Third) of Servitudes.

7.11 Entire Agreement

This is the entire agreement of Owners, Holder and Beneficiaries (if any) pertaining to the subject matter of this Conservation Easement. The terms of this Conservation Easement supersede in full all State-ments and writings between Owners, Holder and others pertaining to the transaction set forth in this Conservation Easement.

7.12 Incorporation by Reference

The following items are incorporated into this Conservation Easement by means of this reference:
The Baseline Documentation
The legal description of the Property attached as Exhibit “A”
The Conservation Plan attached as Exhibit “B”

7.13 Coal Rights Notice

The following notice is given to Owners solely for the purpose of compliance with the requirements of the Conservation Easements Act:

NOTICE: This Conservation Easement may impair the development of coal interests including workable coal seams or coal interests which have been severed from the Property.

Article VIII. Glossary

8.01 Access Drive(s)

Roads or drives providing access to and from Improvements or Minimal Protection Areas and public right-of-way.

8.02 Additional Improvements

All buildings, structures, facilities and other improvements within the Property other than Existing Improvements. The term Additional Improvements includes Agricultural Improvements, Residential Improvements, Utility Improvements and Site Improvements.

8.03 Agricultural Improvements

Improvements used or usable in furtherance of Agricultural uses such as barn, stable, silo, spring house, green house, hoop house, riding arena (whether indoor or outdoor), horse walker, manure storage pit, storage buildings, feeding and irrigation facilities.

8.04 Agricultural or Agriculture

Any one or more of the following and the leasing of land for any of these purposes:

(a) Farming

- (i) Production of vegetables, fruits, seeds, mushrooms, nuts and nursery crops (including trees) for sale.
- (ii) Production of poultry, livestock and their products for sale.
- (iii) Production of field crops, hay or pasture.
- (iv) Production of sod to be removed and planted elsewhere.

(b) Equestrian

Boarding, stabling, raising, feeding, grazing, exercising, riding and training horses and instructing riders.

8.05 Amendment

An amendment, modification or supplement to this Conservation Easement signed by Owners and Holder and recorded in the Public Records.

8.06 Applicable Law

Any Federal, State or local laws, statutes, codes, ordinances, standards and regulations applicable to the Property or this Conservation Easement as amended through the applicable date of reference.

8.07 Beneficiary

Any governmental entity or Qualified Organization that is specifically named as a Beneficiary of this Conservation Easement under Article I.

8.08 Best Management Practices

A series of guidelines or minimum standards (sometimes referred to as BMP 's) recommended by Federal, State and/or county resource management agencies for proper application of farming and forestry operations, non-point pollution of water resources and other disturbances of soil, water and vegetative resources and to protect wildlife habitats. Examples of resource management agencies issuing pertinent BMP 's as of the Easement Date are: the Natural Resource Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (with respect to soil resources); the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (with respect to soil erosion, sedimentation and water resources) and the following sources of BMP 's with respect to

forest and woodland management: the Forest Stewardship Council principles and criteria, Sustainable Forestry Initiative standards, Forest Stewardship Plan requirements, American Tree Farm standards and Best Management Practices for Pennsylvania Forests.

8.09 Code

The Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended through the applicable date of reference.

8.10 Conservation Easements Act

The Pennsylvania Conservation and Preservation Easements Act, Act 29 of 2001, Pub. L. 390 as amended through the applicable date of reference.

8.11 Construction

Any demolition, construction, reconstruction, expansion, exterior alteration, installation or erection of temporary or permanent Improvements; and, whether or not in connection with any of the foregoing, any excavation, dredging, mining, filling or removal of gravel, soil, rock, sand, coal, petroleum or other minerals.

8.12 Default Rate

An annual rate of interest equal at all times to two percent (2%) above the "prime rate" announced from time to time in *The Wall Street Journal*.

8.13 Dwelling Unit

Use or intended use of an Improvement or portion of an Improvement for human habitation by one or more Persons (whether or not related). Existence of a separate kitchen accompanied by sleeping quarters is considered to constitute a separate Dwelling Unit.

8.14 Existing Agreements

Easements and other servitudes affecting the Property prior to the Easement Date and running to the benefit of utility service providers and other Persons that constitute legally binding servitudes prior in right to this Conservation Easement.

8.15 Existing Improvements

Improvements located on, above or under the

Property as of the Easement Date as identified in the Baseline Documentation.

8.16 Existing Lots

Lots existing under Applicable Law as of the Easement Date.

8.17 Forestry

Planting, growing, nurturing, managing and harvesting trees whether for timber and other useful products or for water quality, wildlife habitat and other Conservation Objectives.

8.18 Height

The vertical elevation of an Improvement measured from the average exterior ground elevation of the Improvement to a point, if the Improvement is roofed, midway between the highest and lowest points of the roof excluding chimneys, cupolas, ventilation shafts, weathervanes and similar protrusions or, if the Improvement is unroofed, the top of the Improvement.

8.19 Impervious Coverage

The aggregate area of all surfaces that are not capable of supporting vegetation within the applicable area of reference. Included in Impervious Coverage are the footprints (including roofs, decks, stairs and other extensions) of Improvements; paved or artificially covered surfaces such as crushed stone, gravel, concrete and asphalt; impounded water (such as a built pond); and compacted earth (such as an unpaved roadbed). Excluded from Impervious Coverage are running or non-impounded standing water (such as a naturally occurring lake); bedrock and naturally occurring stone and gravel; and earth (whether covered with vegetation or not) so long as it has not been compacted by non-naturally occurring forces.

8.20 Improvement

Any Existing Improvement or Additional Improvement.

8.21 Indemnified Parties

Holder, each Beneficiary (if any) and their re-

spective members, directors, officers, employees and agents and the heirs, personal representatives, successors and assigns of each of them.

8.22 Invasive Species

A plant species that is (a) non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration; and (b) whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. In cases of uncertainty, publications such as “Plant Invaders of the Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas”, by the National Park Service National Capital Region, Center for Urban Ecology and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chesapeake Bay Field Office are to be used to identify Invasive Species.

8.23 Lien

Any mortgage, lien or other encumbrance securing the payment of money.

8.24 Litigation Expense

Any court filing fee, court cost, arbitration fee or cost, witness fee and each other fee and cost of investigating and defending or asserting any claim of violation or for indemnification under this Conservation Easement including in each case, attorneys’ fees, other professionals’ fees and disbursements.

8.25 Losses

Any liability, loss, claim, settlement payment, cost and expense, interest, award, judgment, damages (including punitive damages), diminution in value, fines, fees and penalties or other charge other than a Litigation Expense.

8.26 Lot

A unit, lot or parcel of real property separated or transferable for separate ownership or lease under Applicable Law.

8.27 Market Value

The fair value that a willing buyer, under no compulsion to buy, would pay to a willing seller, under no compulsion to sell as established by appraisal in accordance with the then-current

edition of Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice issued by the Appraisal Foundation or, if applicable, a qualified appraisal in conformity with §1.170A-13 of the Regulations.

8.28 Native Species

A plant or animal indigenous to the locality under consideration. In cases of uncertainty, published atlases, particularly *The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania: Annotated Checklist and Atlas* by Rhoads and Klein and *Atlas of United States Trees, vols. 1 & 4* by Little are to be used to establish whether or not a species is native.

8.29 Owners

The undersigned Owner or Owners and all Persons after them who hold any interest in all or any part of the Property.

8.30 Person

An individual, organization, trust or other entity.

8.31 Public Records

The public records of the Office for the Recording of Deeds in and for the County in which the Property is located.

8.32 Qualified Organization

A governmental or non-profit entity that (a) has a perpetual existence; (b) is established as a public charity for the purpose of preserving and conserving natural resources, natural habitats, environmentally sensitive areas and other charitable, scientific and educational purposes; (c) meets the criteria of a Qualified Organization under the Regulations; and (d) is duly authorized to acquire and hold conservation easements under Applicable Law.

8.33 Regulations

The provisions of C.F.R. §1.170A-14 as amended through the applicable date of reference.

8.34 Regulatory Signs

Signs (not exceeding one square foot each) to control access to the Property or for informational, directional or interpretive purposes.

8.35 Residential Improvements

Dwellings and Improvements accessory to residential uses such as garage, swimming pool, pool house, tennis court and children's play facilities.

8.36 Resource Management Plan

A record of the decisions and intentions of Owners prepared by a qualified resource management professional for the purpose of protecting natural resources described in the Conservation Objectives during certain operations potentially affecting natural resources protected under this Conservation Easement. The Resource Management Plan (sometimes referred to as the "RMP") includes a resource assessment, identifies appropriate performance standards (based upon Best Management Practices where available and appropriate) and projects a multi-year description of planned activities for identified operations to be conducted in accordance with the plan.

8.37 Review

Review and approval of Holder under the procedure described in Article V.

8.38 Review Requirements

Collectively, any plans, specifications or information required for approval of the Subdivision, activity, use or Construction under Applicable Law (if any) plus (a) the information required under the Review Requirements incorporated into this Conservation Easement either as an Exhibit or as part of the Baseline Documentation or (b) if the information described in clause (a) is inapplicable, unavailable or insufficient under the circumstances, the guidelines for Review of submissions established by Holder as of the applicable date of reference.

8.39 Site Improvements

Unenclosed Improvements such as driveways, walkways, boardwalks, storm water management facilities, bridges, parking areas and other pavements, lighting fixtures, signs, fences, walls, gates, built ponds, berms and landscaping treatments.

8.40 Soil Conservation Plan

A plan for soil conservation and/or sedimentation and erosion control that meets the requirements of Applicable Law.

8.41 Steep Slope Areas

Areas greater than one acre having a slope greater than 15%.

8.42 Subdivision

Any transfer of an Existing Lot into separate ownership; any change in the boundary of the Property or any Lot within the Property; and any creation of a unit, lot or parcel of real property for separate use or ownership by any means including by lease or by implementing the condominium form of ownership.

8.43 Sustainable

Land management practices that provide goods and services from an ecosystem without degradation of biodiversity and resource values at the site and without a decline in the yield of goods and services over time.

8.44 Utility Improvements

Improvements for the reception, storage or transmission of water, sewage, electricity, gas and telecommunications or other sources of power.

8.45 Wet Areas

Areas within 100-feet beyond the edge of water-courses, springs, wetlands and non-impounded standing water.

8.46 Woodland Areas

Area(s) designated on the Conservation Plan and subject to use limitations intended to allow the maintenance or growth of hedgerows or other wooded areas within a portion of the Property that would otherwise be available for Agricultural use.

INTENDING TO BE LEGALLY BOUND, the undersigned Owner or Owners and Holder, by their respective duly authorized representatives,

have signed and delivered this Conservation Easement as of the Easement Date.

Witness/Attest:

Owner 's Name:

Owner 's Name:

By: _____

Name:

Title:

*Acceptance by Beneficiary:
[NAME OF BENEFICIARY]*

By: _____

Name:

Title:

Indiana County Pennsylvania



Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan

May 2006





Acknowledgments

The contributions of the following agencies, groups, and individuals were vital to the successful development of this Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan. They are commended for their interest in the project and the input they provided throughout the planning process.

CURRENT INDIANA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Rodney D. Ruddock, Chairman
Bernie Smith
David Frick

STUDY COMMITTEE

Steve Graff, Todd Bird Club
Linda Gwinn, Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, C & I Trail Council
Delbert Highlands, Indiana County Parks and Trails Advisory Board
Rich Seevers, Indiana Business District
Jan Shellenbarger, Friends of the Parks
John Somonick, Interested Resident
Judy Tomayko, Clymer Parks and Recreation
LeeRoy Vatter, ICSCU
Tony Destefano, Burrell Township
Leslie Henry, Burrell Township
Laurie Lafontaine, Cambria and Indiana Trail Council
Mike Quinn, Conemaugh Valley Conservancy
Don Pepper, Indiana Area Recreation and Parks Commission
Byron Stauffer, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
George Urban, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
Mike Kuzemchak, Indiana County Parks and Trails
Louis Garzarelli, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

KEY PERSON INTERVIEWEES

Louise Bem
Jack Benedict
Ken Bisbee
Rev. Allan Campbell
Leann Chaney
Ed Clark
Ron Crytzer
Dick Gigliotti
John Glass
Roger Good
John (Jack) Hammerle
Tom Harley
Sherene Hess
Jerry Kozusko
James Lafontaine
Garry Leach
Beth Marshall
Tom Miller
Dick Oberlin
Jerry Pickering
George Sennot
Ryan Smith
Rocky Sprowls
George Sulkosky
Whit Watts
Patty White
Becky Wilson
Ginny Winters

This project 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.



Document Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Summary highlights the key findings of the inventory, results of the public participation process, and recommendations for the future of recreation, parks, and open space in the County.

INTRODUCTION

This section provides an overview of Indiana County and its residents. This community background provides a context for the development of this Plan.

CHAPTER 1: **INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT**

This Chapter provides an inventory and assessment of the recreational opportunities, parks, and open spaces in the County.

CHAPTER 2: **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Public input was a key component in the development of this Plan. This chapter describes the public participation process and summarizes the results of each venue of participation.

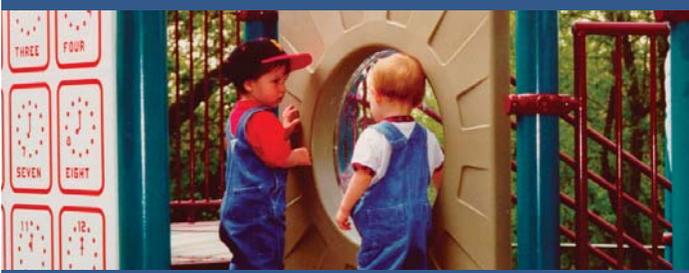
CHAPTER 3: **VISION AND GOALS FOR THE FUTURE, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The public participation process culminated in the Vision and Goals for the future of recreation, parks, and open space, which will guide future efforts. Along with the Vision and Goals, the inventory, assessment, and public participation components are utilized to outline recommendations for the future of recreation, parks, and open space in the County.



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1	Chapter 2: Public Participation	99
Introduction	9	Public Input Summary	100
Benefits of Parks and Recreation	10	Recreation Survey	108
How to Use This Plan	11	Key Person Interviews	113
Review of Existing Planning Documents	12	Chapter 3: Vision and Goals for the Future, Recommendation and Implementation	123
Chapter 1: Inventory and Assessment	17	Strengthen Cooperation	126
Parks and Recreation Serving Indiana County Residents	19	Comprehensive Park and Recreation System	127
Hierarchy of Parks	20	Greenways and Trails	131
Section 1: Indiana County Parks and Recreation ..	25	Potential Greenways in Indiana County	132
Indiana County Parks and Trails	27	Maintain the Indiana County Parks and Trails System	139
County Parks Classification Criteria	28	Variety of Funding Opportunities	147
County Parks Spatial Analysis	47	Opportunities for Recreational and Natural Based Tourism	149
Administration	51	Active, Healthy Lifestyles	150
Financing	59		
Section 2: Regional and Local Parks and Recreation	67		
Regional Recreational Opportunities Outside Indiana County	69		
Regional Recreation Facilities within Indiana County	70		
Local Recreation and Open Space Opportunities ..	72		
Analysis of Local Parks	82		
Recreational Programming	84		
Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	89		
Pennsylvania Greenways	90		
Open Space	91		



Executive Summary

Parks and recreation play a critical role in providing a quality of life that attracts residents, businesses, and economic activities to communities.

Recognizing the importance of parks and recreation to the County, this Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan was initiated. The process used to develop this Plan included extensive public input, detailed inventory and assessment, and the development of recommendations for the future of parks and recreation in Indiana County.

When planning for the future of parks and recreation in Indiana County, it is important to develop an understanding of the County as a whole. Information on demographics and community resources gathered through the County Comprehensive Planning process provided a context within which this Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan was generated. A familiarity with this information ensures the development of a plan that is realistic, sensitive to current issues, and tailored to this unique County.

Input received through the public participation process was an important asset as viable recommendations for the future of parks and recreation were developed. The public input process included public meetings, close work with a project study committee, distribution of a recreation questionnaire, and key person interviews.



The public participation process culminated in the development of Vision and Goals for the Future of Parks and Recreation in Indiana County, which can be found on page 3.

The inventory of recreation facilities included all County and Municipal recreation areas within the County. All inventories included notation of number of facilities and their size and condition. Additionally, the current administration of the parks and recreation system was evaluated. The information was collected to create an overview of existing park and recreation conditions in the County. Professional assessment of the inventories and comparisons to current trends were completed.

This Study recognizes the tremendous importance of greenways and open space in Indiana County and addresses various components of each. The County's Comprehensive Plan, Natural Areas Inventory, and Greenways and Trail Plan will address this in much greater detail.

Drawing upon the public participation, inventory, and assessment, recommendations for the future of recreation and parks were developed. Some of the key recommendations are summarized following the Vision and Goals. Refer to Chapter 3 for additional information and detailed implementation strategies.

V I S I O N A N D G O A L S F O R T H E F U T U R E

Vision

Parks, recreation, and open space provide significant benefits to the County's high quality of life. Indiana County is dedicated to maintaining and improving the parks, recreation, and open space its citizens use and enjoy.

Goals

The County will work to **strengthen cooperation** among local communities, the county, state and federal governments, non-profit organizations, private landowners, businesses and other groups and individuals, in order to implement the strategies of this plan.

Provide and maintain a **comprehensive park and recreation system** throughout the County that will include local, county, state, and federal park properties.

Develop an **extensive countywide trail system** to include non-motorized, bicycling, hiking, and walking trails that run along side roads and streams and through the County's business districts, parks, neighborhoods and open spaces.

Support the efforts of local, regional, and state partners, both public and private, to implement an **interconnected system of greenways and open spaces that protect the natural environment**.

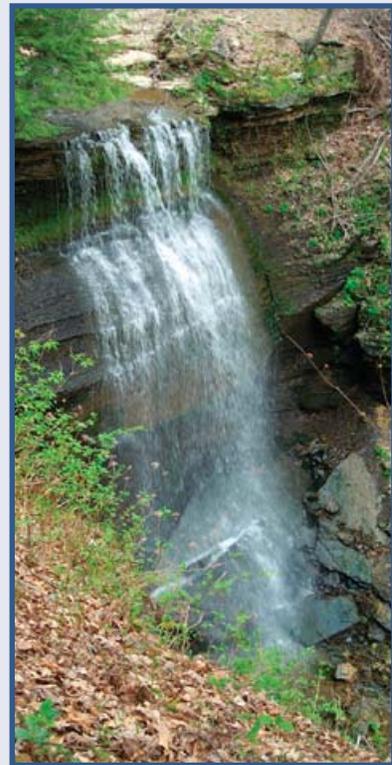
Provide the resources necessary to **maintain the Indiana County Parks and Trails system** as the foundation of the county system, providing regional parks and recreational opportunities for persons of all ages, interests, and abilities.

Aggressively pursue a **variety of funding opportunities** for additions, improvements and acquisitions to the county parks.

Capitalize on **opportunities for recreational and nature-based tourism**.

Advance the County's economy in a sustainable manner.

Promote active, healthy lifestyles for all Indiana County residents.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Complete a County Greenways and Trails Plan

Following adoption of this Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Plan, the County should proceed with the development of a County-wide Greenways and Trails Plan. Starting the Plan soon after completion of the Recreation and Open Space Plan will capitalize on the momentum of the recently-completed planning process. The Greenways and Trails Plan should build upon the information provided in this Recreation and Open Space Plan. It will outline a plan for the construction of trails, conservation of greenway corridors, and identification of opportunities for environmental education. The Plan will also provide a framework for the organization of local efforts throughout the County.

Conduct a County-wide Natural Areas Inventory

Indiana County should conduct a county-wide Natural Areas Inventory (NAI). The NAI provides some of the basis to determine areas within the County that are significant or unique natural resources. It would be best to conduct the NAI prior to the County Greenway and Trail Plan, as this inventory could assist in guiding the designation of greenway corridors.

Strengthen cooperation with the Army Corps of Engineers regarding recreational opportunities at Mahoning Dam

The spatial analysis of the County park service areas indicates that almost all of the County is served by one or two of the following parks: Hemlock Lake, Blue Spruce, and Pine Ridge. However, public input indicates that there may be somewhat of a deficiency of recreational opportunities in the northwestern corner of the County. To help fill this perceived need, there is an opportunity to strengthen cooperation with the Army Corps of Engineers regarding the Mahoning Dam. The facility currently offers many recreational opportunities,

and the County should work with the Army Corps to increase awareness of the existing opportunities and explore the possibility of expanding the number and/or type of opportunities. The property is currently under agreement with the Pennsylvania Game Commission to be open for hunting. Additional public use would be subject to the standards of this program.

Increase awareness of Indiana County's recreational opportunities

Public input received during the planning process indicated a lack of awareness of recreational opportunities in the County. The County should work towards increasing awareness of the locations of county parks and the facilities available. The County should also collaborate with local municipalities and organizations to increase awareness of local recreational opportunities.

This may be done through promotion of the County Park website, distribution of park brochures, provision of informational programs to local organizations, and the placement of public service ads on local radio and television stations.

Develop Master Site Plans for Blue Spruce, Pine Ridge, and Hemlock Lake Parks

Completion of master site plans is recommended for Blue Spruce, Pine Ridge, and Hemlock Lake Parks. These plans will define the vision for future development within the parks.

Repairs and Replacement of County Park Playgrounds

A safety audit was conducted on all County playgrounds. The audit identified hazardous conditions that exist at each of the five playgrounds. Repair and replacement of these playgrounds should be a high priority.

Expand the Indiana County Parks and Trails Staff to Meet Current Needs

The Indiana County Parks and Trails include 2428 acres of parkland, trails and recreational facilities. Many of the facilities are high maintenance type facilities including trails, picnic areas, pavilions, waterfronts, restrooms, lodges, and playgrounds. In addition to regular maintenance of park facilities, the park staff does its own construction of small facilities including restrooms and pavilions within the parks. They also build, maintain, set-up, and remove all items associated with the Blue Spruce Christmas Lights Festival.

In recent years, the County has added twenty (20) miles of trails and 650 acres of parkland to the Parks system. With the parks and trails spread throughout the County, extensive travel time is needed to travel among the parks. All of these things combined require a fully staffed maintenance crew, with adequate funding, appropriate equipment, and sufficient supplies.

Additionally, the development of the regional trail system and its related management and financing has increased the financial needs of the Parks.

This study proposes that new staffing include:

- Two additional maintenance workers (one in the north and one in the south)
- Two seasonal trail maintenance staff
- A trail manager who would supervise and manage construction, expansion, and improvements to the regional trail system

We also propose that the existing Project Coordinator/ Park Naturalist position be changed to that of Assistant Director of Parks.

Develop, Adopt, and Fund a Capital Improvements Budget

Indiana County does not currently fund a long-range capital budget for the parks. Such a plan is needed to address the need for ongoing replacement of maintenance equipment, as well as improvement and expansions to the park system.

Much of the current maintenance equipment is worn and outdated. Many facilities throughout the parks are in need of repair or replacement. These include the hazardous play equipment at Blue Spruce and Pine Ridge Parks, the dam at Blue Spruce, and roads at Hemlock Lake and Pine Ridge Park. There are also a number of additional improvements that are needed at all of the parks. The parks also have significant plans to continue expansion of the regional trail system.

When considered as a whole, the financial commitment of such development and replacement is overly extensive. Under a capital improvements plan, the entire list of development, repairs and replacement is spread out and prioritized over a period of years. While the annual allocation may still be somewhat burdensome, it becomes much more realistic.

SUCCESS OF THIS PLAN

This Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan fosters the continued success of current achievements and presents new directions for the County to explore. Support for the implementation of these recommendations and a strong commitment to the use of this Plan as a guide for the future, will ensure a continued high quality of life in Indiana County for years to come.



PUBLIC SUPPORT AND EDUCATION

Residents' support of future efforts to provide recreational and open space opportunities within the County is critical to the future of a successful system. Immediately following the approval of this planning document, efforts should be made to properly publicize its findings.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Indiana County Commissioners and staff continue to show their commitment to a high quality recreation, park, and open space system. Commitment to funding future projects will greatly influence the success with which the recommendations of this plan are implemented. Alternative funding sources should be continually explored to supplement contributions of the County, local governments, and local organizations.



INVOLVEMENT OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

As the decision-makers within the County, local and County officials should be updated on a regular basis regarding the recommendations of this Plan, the status of implementation, public support, and related issues as they arise.



VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

A strong volunteer base will make a large contribution to the implementation of the recommendations found in this Plan.



INTERGOVERNMENTAL & INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

The successful development of a county-wide recreation, parks, and open space system will depend on the cooperation between local municipalities, between municipalities and the county, and with many local recreation agencies and organizations.

Introduction



Introduction

GOAL

The GOAL OF THIS PLAN is to provide an analysis of the current parks, recreational opportunities, and open spaces in Indiana County and make recommendations for their future.

Opportunities for fulfilling leisure activities are integral parts of a quality lifestyle. The purpose of this study is to provide an analysis of these opportunities in Indiana County and make recommendations for the future. In order to provide a complete view of current conditions, an inventory of significant recreation features throughout the County was conducted.

Recognizing the importance of a quality recreation and open space system, the County Commissioners approved the preparation of this Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan. The planning process included a detailed professional assessment, an extensive public input process, and development of recommendations for the future of parks and open space in Indiana County.

This Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan is designed to serve as a tool for addressing the current and future recreational needs of County residents and to establish a framework for the decisions that must be made in order to provide adequate recreation facilities and programs. This plan is broad in scope, encompassing a variety of issues pertinent to parks, recreation and open space in the County. It will lay the groundwork for the continued successful planning and development of recreational parks and programs.

Concurrently with this Plan, Indiana County is conducting its County Comprehensive Plan. The County Comprehensive Plan includes a variety of background data that has been used in the development of this Plan to understand the make-up of the County. This includes demographic and socio-economic

This plan will lay the groundwork for the planning and development of a successful recreation, park, and open space system.

statistics, cultural features information, natural resource data, statistical facts, and general background information.

Additionally, the County Comprehensive Planning process has analyzed and made recommendations concerning current and future land use throughout the County. The land use recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan will be valuable as the County

works to conduct its Greenway and Trail Plan. Readers of this report should refer to the County Comprehensive Plan to gain a better understanding of the background that supports this Report.

THE BENEFITS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Parks and recreation play a critical role in providing a quality of life that attracts residents, businesses and economic activity to communities. The economic benefits are quite clear, as businesses prefer communities with a high quality of life, including an abundance of open space and nearby recreation.

Environmental Benefits

- Clean water and air
- Preserve wildlife
- Reduce pollution
- Protect ecosystems
- Provide a place to enjoy natures' beauty



Economic Benefits

- Increase tourism
- Enhance land and property value
- Assist in business retention
- Generate revenue
- Reduce vandalism and crime

BENEFITS OF RECREATION, PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Community Benefits

- Reduce crime and delinquency
- Connect families
- Support youth
- Offer lifelines for elderly



Personal Benefits

- Reduce stress
- Increase life expectancy
- Create balance between work and play
- Eliminate boredom and loneliness
- Promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles
- Reduce obesity

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

Indiana County's Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan will be a powerful tool in the County's effort to continually build and support a high quality recreation and open space system. The Plan will serve as a valuable resource in the following ways:

Guideline for the Future

The recommendations presented in this document offer a clear direction for future recreation, park and open space initiatives in the County. Detailed implementation strategies outline a step-by-step process for fulfilling this Plan's recommendations. The wide scope and short, middle, and long-term range of the implementation strategies assist in realistic planning for implementation. The detailed information provided will assist in setting financial goals and the appropriate allocation of needed County support.

Information Source

The broad scope of this Plan includes the documentation and analysis of a variety of issues pertinent to recreation, parks, and open space in Indiana County. The document will be a valuable resource of supporting information as the implementation strategies are completed, new strategies are developed, and documentation of existing conditions is needed.

Public Relations Tool

Residents have a perpetual interest in the growth of a high quality system of recreation, parks, and open space. This Plan will offer convenient, practical information for public consumption. Additionally, several of the key components could be used by the County or local organizations to garner support for proposed projects or funding assistance.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Several park and open space planning studies have been completed in recent years. The following is a brief review of these studies so that their findings can be incorporated into the efforts to implement this Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan.

Master Plan for Old Smicksburg Park

Prepared by Whit Watts, Department of Geography and Regional Planning, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 1996

This document describes and illustrates a desirable and possible future for the development of Old Smicksburg Park, which is currently vacant Army Corps of Engineer property that is planned to become a community park. The program for the new park includes passive recreation, historic interpretation, and community accommodation. The property is currently under a long-term lease between the Corps and the Borough.

The proposed 40-acre park site at Old Smicksburg, which was founded in 1827, is the original site of present-day Smicksburg. This rural community sat in a valley in northwest Indiana County. When the Army Corps of Engineers decided in the 1930's to build a flood protection dam along the stream to protect the City of Pittsburgh, Old Smicksburg was covered with water. Nearly 70 years later, the waters have receded allowing the community to rebuild its history. Through an agreement with the USACE, plans are underway to restore the old community into a beautiful historic and recreation site.

Smicksburg Borough is in the early stages of implementing this Plan.

Top Ten Findings and Recommendations

- Internally, the park is to be developed in a manner that advances both historic interpretation and passive recreational activities. Externally, the park

will advance several design functions to the wider community.

- According to the PNDI, there are no known habitats for protected species on the site.
- Fishing opportunities are limited.
- ADA compliance can be readily accommodated without extensive or costly site work.
- One quarter acre of headwater wetland is located on the site but contained to an area that will not be disturbed by construction activities.
- Archeological investigations are ongoing and will be carried out under a memorandum of understanding.
- Conditions for obtaining a highway access permit can be met.
- Slope and soil conditions are generally favorable for recreational development but site drainage remains problematic.
- Proposed improvements are modest and limited to a small section of the park. The bulk of park acreage will be maintained in an undisturbed condition.
- The need for park maintenance and security can be minimized by concentrating improvements in a limited area subject to informal community surveillance.

Blacklick Valley Natural Area Resource Management Plan and Inventory

Indiana County Parks and Trails, 1996

A study of the Blacklick Valley Natural Area was conducted to determine appropriate management actions needed at this 675-acre site. The study indicates that the natural areas is a diverse site with an outstanding variety of plant and animal species that

are representative of the Blacklick Valley. The site also contains historic remnants of early agricultural activities and the 19th century iron-making industry.

Long Term Actions Needed

- Manage and operate the site to ensure that the “Articles of Agreement” between the County and the donors is being adhered to;
- Begin interpretive and educational programming to enable visitors to understand and appreciate the natural features of the site and their relation to the Blacklick Creek Valley;
- Ensure that the site is properly funded so that routine maintenance, safety, and security are provided at a sufficient level of support;
- Coordinate the operation, promotion and management of the site with other nearby attractions, especially the Ghost Town Trail, Eliza Furnace, and the Buttermilk Falls Natural Area;
- Conduct an on-going review of this management document to assure that the initial management recommendations have been implemented or are still relevant.

All of these recommendations have been completed

A Master Plan for The Eliza Furnace

Indiana County Parks and Trails, 1995

This master plan is the result of a research effort conducted by Indiana County Parks and Trails, IUP Archeological Services, the Eliza Furnace Planning Committee, and Thomas R. Harley, Architects. The study considers the requirements for establishing and operating the Eliza Furnace Historic Site. Preserving the Eliza Furnace, interpreting and educating the visitor about its significance, and helping in the economic development of the Blacklick Creek Valley through

heritage tourism are the major goals of the Eliza Furnace project. The scope of the plan has changed from this original Master Plan. Based on the changes, the project is near completion.

A Master Plan for The Ghost Town Trail

Indiana County Parks and Trails and Northern Cambria Community Development Corporation, 1992

Increasing recreational opportunities, preserving historic and environmental resources, and helping in economic development of the Blacklick Creek Valley are the major goals of the Ghost Town Trail project.

For the Ghost Town Trail to be implemented successfully, the following actions are needed:

- Increased awareness of the trail and its potential to help in improving the general quality of life for the Blacklick Creek Valley needs to be conveyed to the public, governmental agencies, and local governments.
- Improved support for the trail needs to be cultivated through the combined efforts of the Cambria and Indiana Trail Council and trail owners. Support for the trail can also come from trail users. Therefore, it is important that a minimal level of trail development be implemented, when possible, to establish a coalition of trail supporters and to demonstrate the potential of full trail development.
- Promotion of the trail through development of a revised trail brochure and other public relation efforts needs to continue.
- Coalitions between trail owners and others who are not aware of the trail and its potential for the Blacklick Creek Valley need to be established.
- Adequate funding to develop and operate the trail should be actively sought from a variety of funding sources.

- Development of the trail, or at least portions of the trail, needs to be undertaken in the short-term to maintain interest in the trail effort and provide a minimal level of support for current trail users.
- Formulation of a specific site plan or master plan for the Eliza Furnace should be initiated as soon as possible. The importance of the furnace to the trail, and the key role its interpretation can play in highlighting the industrial heritage of the Blacklick Creek Valley, warrants more extensive study of this natural register site.
- Assistance from agencies that can help in the environmental clean-up of the mine and water quality problems in the Blacklick Creek Valley should be sought by trail owners and supporters.
- Coordination between the trail owners, the Cambria and Indiana Trail Council, and local governments needs to be on-going so that the best interests of the trail are kept in the forefront.

Most of this Plan has been completed. As of 2005, there is one link west of Dilltown that remains unfinished. The trail currently totals 36 miles.

Indiana County Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan

In 1999, as part of a continuing professional development program with Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Geography and Regional Planning Department, the Indiana County Office of Planning and Development recruited an intern to begin preparation of a county-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan that would be incorporated into the transportation component of the Indiana County Comprehensive Plan. Activities completed for the Plan included background data collection, identification of major issues and concerns for bicyclists and pedestrians, and preliminary mapping depicting origins and destinations that should have bicycle and pedestrian

linkages. Upon termination of the internship, County planning staff resumed Plan development. The Indiana County Office of Planning and Development anticipates plan completion and adoption in 2005.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan is an element of the County's long-range transportation plan and is an important component of the County's overall strategy to create communities where livability and quality of life are esteemed.

Indiana County Bicycle and Pedestrian Vision

The citizens of Indiana County envision a community where the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians are integrated into an overall transportation system that supports community needs and creates a livable community by promoting healthy lifestyles and neighborhoods through increased bicycling and walking; offers real transportation choices for all people, regardless of age, income, or ability; and permits people to walk or bike with confidence in a safe, attractive, healthy, and connected environment while carrying out everyday activities.

The plan is a policy document, which offers general principles to follow and provides policy and facility recommendations for improving bicycle and pedestrian conditions in Indiana County. These measures will play a significant role in reducing sprawl and congestion, encouraging physical activity, preserving open space, strengthening local businesses, encouraging downtown use, creating vibrant public spaces, and improving access to jobs, transit, and neighborhood amenities throughout the County.

Ultimately, it is a tool to use in achieving transportation goals beyond conventional, automobile-oriented transportation goals; to reap quality of life rewards

involving social, economic, cultural, and environmental benefits that will result from alternative transportation investments.

Blairsville Waterfront Greenway Master Plan

The Borough of Blairsville completed a Master Site Plan for this project in May 2005. The focus of this master plan is the 330-acre greenway bordering the Conemaugh River in Burrell Township, owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Located on the southeastern section of the site is the 25-acre WyoTech Park that includes a baseball field, softball field, and little league field. The Little League Fields (also known as Colt's Fields) are located in the southwestern portion of the site and include three little league fields and a practice field. Located in the northern section of the site is Waterfront Park, which includes a boat launch. All three parks are leased and managed by Blairsville Borough.

The proposed improvements for Blairsville Waterfront Greenway are estimated to cost approximately \$5,000,000. This study recommends that the proposed improvements be constructed in the following four phases, based on the financial capabilities of the Borough and the availability of grants:

- WyoTech Park - Improvements to existing ballfields, addition of a playground, environmental educational trail, BMX trail, camping area, put-in, and shelters.
- Trail System - Construction of a pedestrian and bicycle path connecting each park and existing regional trail system.
- Little League Fields - Improvements to existing ballfields, parking, and road alignment and the addition of a trail head and soccer field.
- Waterfront Park - Addition of a small amphitheater, parking and shelter.

Chapter 1



Chapter 1

Inventory and Assessment

Chapter One provides an in-depth inventory and assessment of parks and recreation opportunities available to Indiana County Residents. It begins by describing categories and types of parks, along with an overview of the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) hierarchy of parks and trails.

The chapter is then broken into two sections to provide detailed inventory and analysis of parks and recreation.

Section A deals specifically with the parks and recreation opportunities made available by the County through the Indiana County Parks and Trails.

Section B addresses all other parks and recreation providers within the County.

Within the region, Indiana County residents have access to a vast range of recreational opportunities.

PARKS AND RECREATION SERVING INDIANA COUNTY RESIDENTS

Numerous municipalities, organizations and entities provide public recreational opportunities for the residents of Indiana County. This report breaks these entities into four categories. They are, 1) County owned or operated facilities (Indiana County Parks and Trails, 2) local municipal parks and recreation, 3) regional parks, and 4) private recreation providers. In order to have a comprehensive understanding of these opportunities, it is important to understand the role that each plays in the County.

Indiana County Parks and Trails

Indiana County Parks and Trails is the parks department for Indiana County. The agency provides a wide variety

The function or use of a park depends on its size, location, and available facilities.

of County-owned or leased parks and trails. Most parks are natural resource or historic oriented facilities. They have developed two major trails that are part of a regional trail system that extends beyond the County boundaries. The parks and trail system is intended to serve residents of the entire County and beyond.

The Mission of Indiana County Parks and Trails is:

- to provide a park system that is responsive and directed by the needs of the people of Indiana County;
- to preserve, protect and enhance county park lands to improve the health of our people and the environmental health of our county;
- to advance our local economy in a sustainable manner;
- to invite and encourage individuals, families, schools, businesses and organizations to become partners in our efforts to invigorate and sustain the county's natural resources for future generations.

Their parks and trails include:

- Blue Spruce Park
- Pine Ridge Park
- Hemlock Lake
- Memorial Park
- Eliza Furnace Historic Site
- Tunnelview Historic Site
- Buttermilk Falls Natural Area
- Blacklick Valley Natural Area
- Ghost Town Trail
- Hoodlebug Trail

Local Parks and Recreation

Many municipalities throughout the County provide local recreation opportunities that are primarily intended for their own local residents. Most of these facilities are community parks that are designed to serve areas and neighborhood parks intended to serve areas within ¼ mile to about five-miles of the park. The parks include facilities such as ballfields, playgrounds, picnic shelters,

basketball, volleyball, and horseshoe courts, and short walking trails. This report identifies forty-seven local, municipally-owned parks and seven recreation sites with just a ballfield within the thirty-eight municipalities in the County. In addition to the local parks there are four community centers and an ice and expo center. These facilities are owned and operated by the local municipalities.

In addition to providing park and recreation facilities, some municipalities provide a variety of recreational programming as well.

Regional Parks

Regional facilities may be located within or outside the Indiana County borders. They include State Parks, Forests, and Gamelands; Federal Recreation Areas; PA Fish Commission Lakes, and; regional trails. These facilities are owned and operated by the state or federal governments, or public organizations.

Private Recreation Providers

These facilities are owned by individuals or companies in the private sector. They may be for profit or non-for-profit entities. In Indiana County they include the YMCA, Two Lick Reservoir, and Mack Park.

Other Recreational Facilities

Other recreation providers in Indiana County include those at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, numerous conservation and environmental groups, sportsman and outdoor recreation organizations, youth sports organizations, and local school districts.

HIERARCHY OF PARKS

The recommendations of this study, with regard to parks, are based on the premise that in order to provide the optimal level of service to County residents, recreation providers must understand and take into consideration the different ways in which people use

recreation facilities. The function or use of a park depends on its size, location and available facilities. Parks can be organized into a “hierarchy” which defines their functions and the types of activities they should be expected to accommodate. The NRPA defines a hierarchy in *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*. The classifications are described in the following table.

NRPA PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATIONS

CLASSIFICATION	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	LOCATION CRITERIA	SITE CRITERIA
MINI-PARK	Used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs.	Less than a 1/4 mile in distance in residential setting	Between 2,500 sq. ft. and one acre in size.
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK	Neighborhood remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on the informal and active and passive recreation.	1/4 to 1/2 mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optional.
SCHOOL-PARK	Depending on the circumstances, combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks, such as neighborhood, community, sports complex and special use.	Determined by location of school district property.	Variable - depends on function.
COMMUNITY PARK	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and 1/2 to 3 miles distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually a minimum of 30 and 50 acres.
LARGE URBAN PARK	Large urban parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. Focus is on meeting community based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves the entire community.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually a minimum of 50 acres, with 75 or more acres being optimal.
NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS	Land set aside for the preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual/aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
GREENWAYS	Effectively tie park systems together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
SPORTS COMPLEX	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by project demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40 to 80 acres being optimal.
SPECIAL USE	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	Variable - dependent on specific use.	Variable.
PRIVATE PARK/ RECREATIONAL FACILITY	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.	Variable - dependent on specific use.	Variable.

Large urban parks focus on meeting community-based recreational needs as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.

NRPA TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS

CLASSIFICATION	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	LOCATION CRITERIA
PARK TRAIL	Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks, and natural areas. Focus is on recreational value and harmony with the natural environment.	Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters. Type II: Multipurpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists/in-line skaters. Type III: Nature trails for pedestrians. May be hard- or soft-surfaced.
CONNECTOR TRAILS	Multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community. Focus is as much on transportation as it is on recreation.	Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters located in independent r.o.w. Type II: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters. Typically located within road r.o.w.
ON-STREET BIKEWAYS	Paved segments of roadways that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.	Bike Route: Designated portions of the roadway for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. Bike Lane: Shared portions of the roadway that provide separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, such as paved shoulders.
ALL-TERRAIN BIKE TRAIL	Off road trail for all-terrain (mountain) bikes.	Single-purpose use trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas.
CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRAIL	Trails developed for traditional and skate-style cross-country skiing.	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas.
EQUESTRIAN TRAIL	Trails developed for horseback riding.	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas. Sometimes developed as multipurpose with hiking and all-terrain biking where conflicts can be controlled.

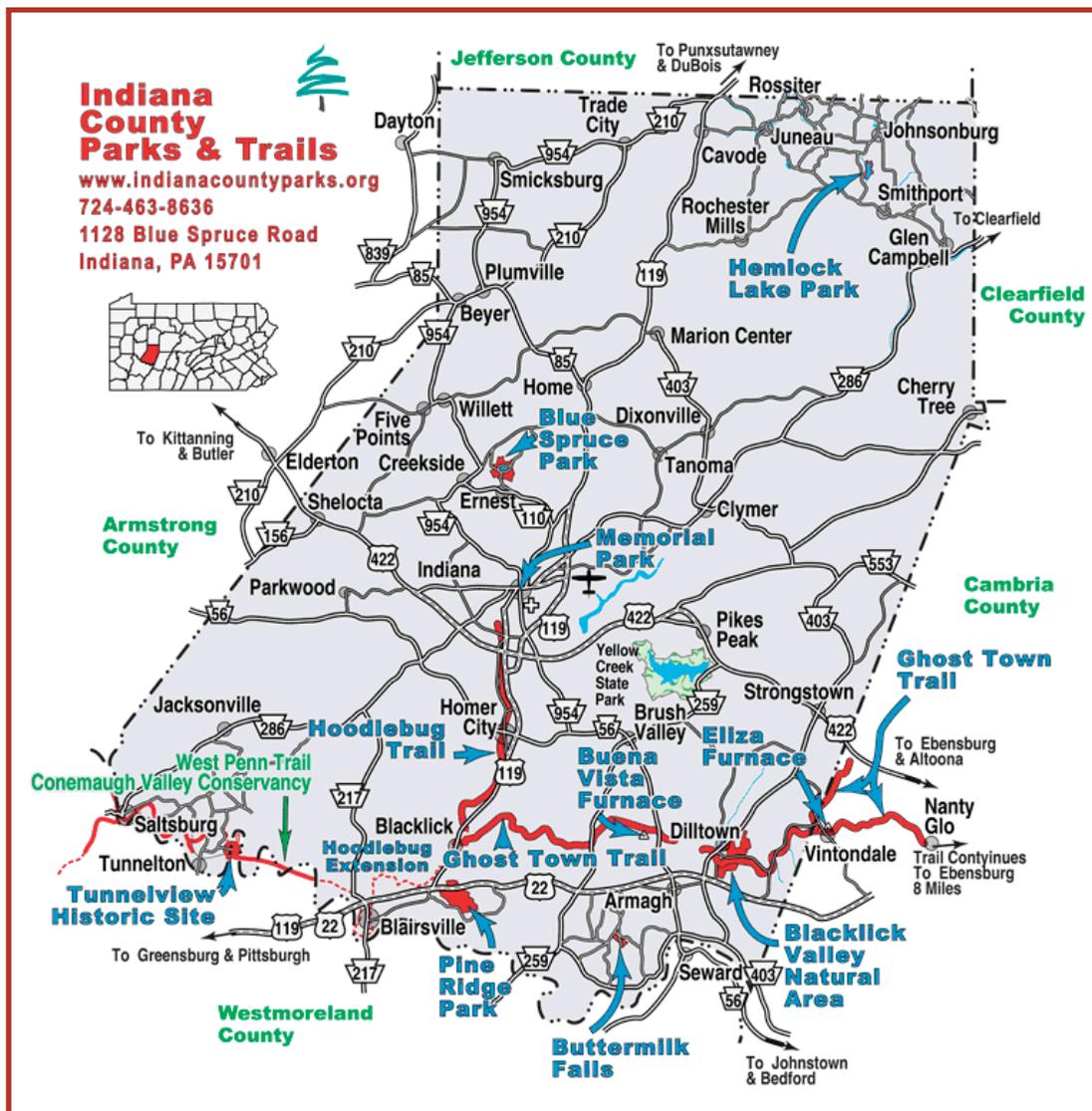
The following pages provide an inventory and description of all parks located within the County, as well as those of regional significance that are located outside Indiana County. A map is included that shows the location of each facility.

Multi-purpose trails emphasize safe bicycle and pedestrian travel to and from parks and around the community.

**Section A:
Indiana County
Parks and Recreation**

INDIANA COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS

The Indiana County park system includes three regional parks, three historic sites, two natural areas, and two bicycle trails. The sites total 2,500 acres of park land. This includes seventy-five acres of water and thirty miles of trails. The parks provide picnic areas, playfields, nature trails, streams, forests, historic sites, and fishing areas.



COUNTY PARKS CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA

By building upon and refining the NRPA standards, Indiana County has developed its own standards to help classify park and open space opportunities within the county. These park classifications will help guide future maintenance, development, and expansion of the park system.

The development and use of land and water resources for outdoor recreation depends to a great extent on their location and resource qualities. Classification of parks is useful to ensure that the management objectives of the county park system are being met.

The character of parks differs and the operation and management considerations of each park will also differ. Indiana County Parks and Trails are classified into the following classes:

- Undeveloped county parks
- Resource-oriented county parks (including natural areas)
- Recreation-oriented county parks
- Historic-oriented county parks
- Trails and Greenways
- Conservation Areas

Based on public input for this Study, this is an appropriate role for the County to play in providing parks and recreation opportunities.

The County's Park system includes nine parks and two trails as noted in the following chart.

Indiana County Parks	Size	NRPA Park designation/County designation
Blacklick Valley Natural Area	713 acres	Natural resource area/resource oriented
Blue Spruce Park	650 acres	Large urban park/resource oriented
Pine Ridge Park	635 acres	Large urban park /resource oriented
Buttermilk Falls	48 acres	Natural resource area/resource oriented
Hemlock Lake	205 acres	Natural resource area/resource oriented
Eliza Furnace Historic Site	2 acres	Special Use/historic oriented
Tunnelview Historic Site	16 acres	Special use/historic oriented
Memorial Park	2 acres	Special use/historic oriented
Buena Vista Historic Site	5 acres	Special use/historic oriented
Total Park Acreage	2268 acres*	

Indiana County Trails	Length	NRPA Trail Designation
Ghost Town Trail	20 miles*	Connector Trail
Hoodlebug Trail	10 miles	Connector Trail

*This total does not include the land acreage for the trails.

**The Ghost Town Trail includes an additional 16 miles of trails in Cambria County.

The Spatial Analysis of county parks found on pages 47 and 49 shows that there is a good distribution of County parks. This Plan recommends that the County develop greenway and trail plan that will help determine the demand and expectation for trails and greenways throughout the County.

In addition to analyzing the service areas of the Indiana County Parks and Trails, the Consultant has also compared the number of acres of County Parks per thousand persons of population in Indiana County with those of nine other counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. The following chart details that comparison. The chart shows that Indiana County has 25.3 acres of County Parks for every one thousand residents. This is the highest of all counties analyzed and four and one-half times as many as the average. The County's 2,268 acres ranks second only to Westmoreland County, which has over 2,700 acres.

The public input from this study shows that Indiana County residents are willing to support, and even demand, this amount of County Park land. There is also a willingness to acquire additional property for the specific purposes of development of trails, for the protection and preservation of natural and historic resources, and to provide protective buffer zones surrounding existing County Parks.

County	Population	County Park Acreage	Acreage per 1,000 Residents
Beaver	181,412	2,265	12.5
Butler	174,083	417	2.4
Clearfield	83,382	950	11.4
Cambria	152,598	71	0.5
Clarion	41,765	50	1.2
Armstrong	72,392	25	0.3
Indiana	89,605	2268	25.3
Somerset	80,023	0	0.0
Westmoreland	369,993	>2700	7.3
Jefferson	45,932	0	0.0
Average acreage per thousand residents			6.1

The following park classifications are designated by the *General Management Guidelines for the Administration of the Indiana County Parks and Trails System*.

Undeveloped County Parks

These include tracts of land or portions of existing parks which have been acquired for future use or development, but have not been master planned or taken on the character of a developed area. Low density recreation will be permitted to the point that the public's health and safety is accommodated or the resource is not endangered. Facility development is limited to only what is necessary until the site is master planned.

Resource-oriented County Parks

This classification includes land tracts of significant scenic or natural value. Parks in this class are retained for the preservation of these outstanding scenic or natural values, and as such, development should be carefully controlled to harmonize with the natural setting. Facilities or development should be limited to only that which is necessary.

Recreation-oriented County Parks

Parks in this class offer recreational activities that have countywide, rather than local drawing power and attract large numbers of groups or individual day-use. It is important that these parks do not offer recreational activities or duplicate services which are already being provided on the local level. These parks should be managed to provide maximum recreational opportunities for large numbers of visitors, but the natural character of the site should be maintained as much as possible.

Historic-oriented County Parks

Historic sites are established to protect and preserve objects, locations, and cultural features pertaining to Indiana County's history. Use of this type of park is

mainly by those persons seeking to interpret the unique character of the park, although recreation and facility development is permitted which is compatible with the park theme.

Trails and Greenways

Trails and greenways are established to protect and preserve linear corridors of open space. These areas may or many not contain a river or stream. Abandoned railroad corridors are also included in this category and present good opportunities to link together parks, natural areas, or recreation sites.

Conservation Areas

These are areas which have been acquired to enhance and improve the environmental or natural conditions of the site. Unlike natural areas, conservation areas usually contain land or water features which may have been significantly altered or degraded. The environmental remediation of these sites is the immediate management goal. Public use of the site is permitted to the extent that the public health and safety can be accommodated.

The following is a brief description and map (where available) of each County Park. Each facility is classified according to the NRPA Hierarchy of Parks and the Indiana County Parks and Trails Classifications. The classifications can be found in parenthesis under each facility name.

Blacklick Valley Natural Area
(natural resource area / resource oriented park)

Natural areas are set aside to protect both typical and unique plant and animal communities and to protect outstanding examples of natural interest and beauty. Facility development at the site has been minimized to protect the site's natural character.

The natural area is composed of three tracts:

- The **Parker** Tract is located south of Blacklick Creek and contains 300 acres. It includes a small parking area and six miles of hiking and cross-country skiing trails.
- The **Caldwell** and **Clarke Run** Tracts form a contiguous 413-acre parcel and lie north of Blacklick Creek. These northern tracts are undeveloped and do not contain established trails. The Ghost Town Trail bisects the property about one-half mile east of Dilltown.

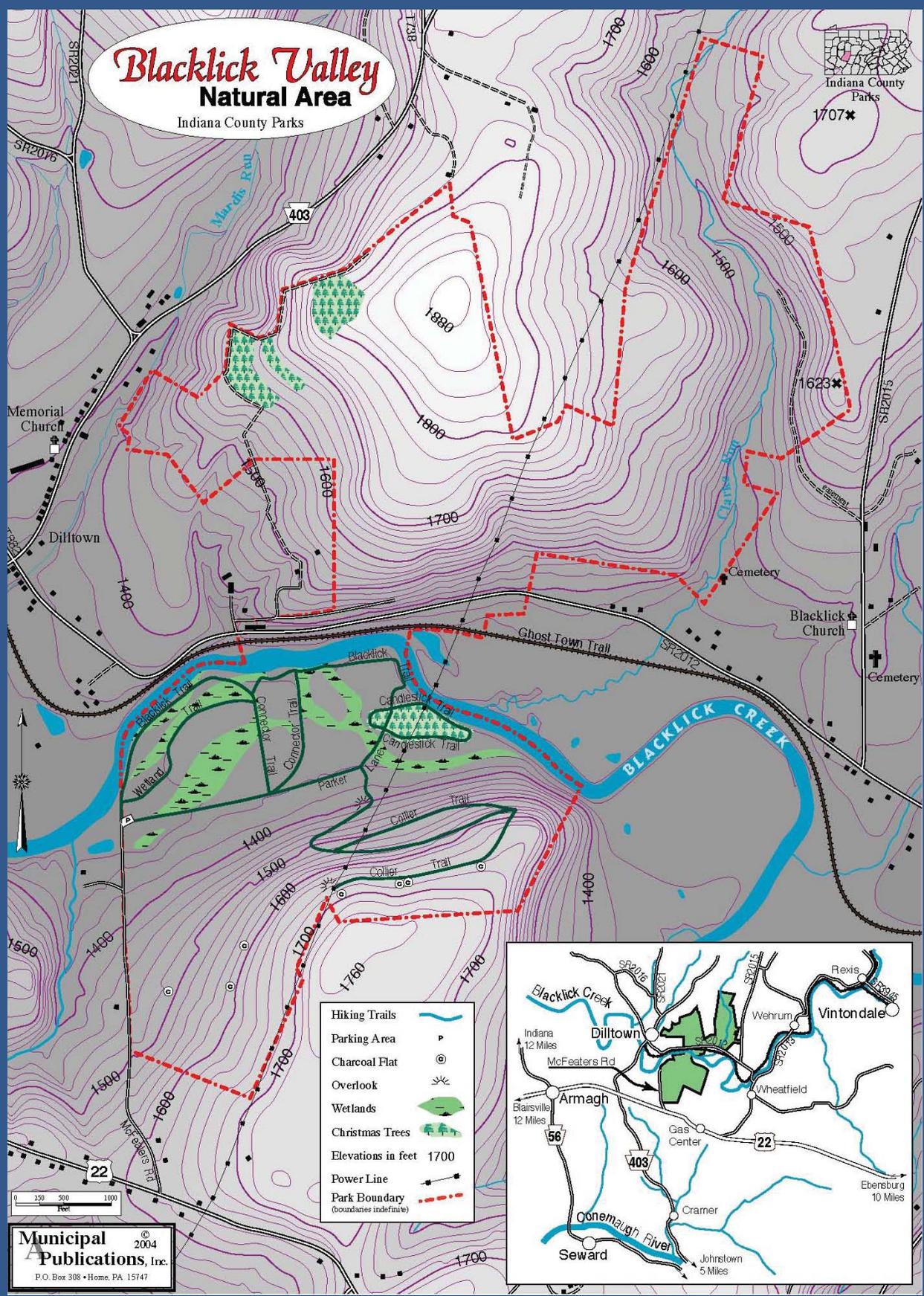
Although the intent of this park is to maintain it as a natural area, some basic facilities would better allow visitors to enjoy and understand its natural beauty. A restroom, small pavilion, and self-guided walking trail would provide for both comfort and education.



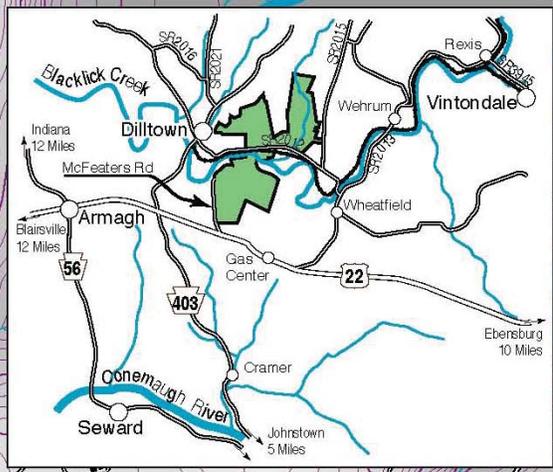
Facility development at the site has been minimized to protect its natural character.

Blacklick Valley Natural Area

Indiana County Parks



- Hiking Trails
- Parking Area
- Charcoal Flat
- Overlook
- Wetlands
- Christmas Trees
- Elevations in feet 1700
- Power Line
- Park Boundary (boundaries indefinite)



Municipal Publications, Inc.
© 2004
P.O. Box 308 • Home, PA 15747

Blue Spruce Park

(large urban park/recreation-oriented park)

Blue Spruce Park is located six miles north of Indiana. The 650-acre park had been used for recreation in the early part of the 20th century and was established as a park in 1966.

The park has four pavilions and two lodges available for public rental. The pavilions seat groups of up to 250 people. Blue Spruce Lodge accommodates 100 people, and the Lakeside Center has an indoor capacity of 50 people, with additional seating on the deck area.

The park also includes two playgrounds, a volleyball court, horseshoe court, multi-use open spaces, and a 12-acre lake that is stocked with trout. There are also six miles of hiking and cross-country skiing trails.

Additionally, the Indiana County Master Gardener's Trial Garden is in the park near the Lakeside Center. The garden offers the opportunity for visitors to view the latest floral and plant selections from the Penn State Gardener's Select program.

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
BLUE SPRUCE PARK - 650 acres							
parking lots	3	fair	--	N	150 spaces	--	located near the entrance to the park; available for all facilities
pavilion #1	1	good	100' x 50'	N	48 shared spaces	w, ue	250 capacity; 2 grills
pavilion #2	1	excellent	25' x 20'	N		w, ue	40 capacity; 1 grill
pavilion #3	1	excellent	35' x 20'	N	12 spaces	w, ue	75 capacity; 1 grill
pavilion #4	1	excellent	25' x 20'	N	no access	w, ue	50 capacity; 1 grill
Blue Spruce Lodge	1	good	55' x 28'	N	60 parking spaces; no ADA	w, ue	100 capacity; fireplace
Lakeside Center	1	good	--	Y	36 parking; no ADA	w, ue	50 capacity
playground (pavilion area)	1	fair	--	N	14 spaces; no ADA	w	see playground audit
playground (lodge area)	1	fair	--	N	lodge parking	w	see playground audit
hiking/skiing trails	--	good	6 miles	N	at front of park	--	--
restroom #1	1	good	25' x 30'	--	--	ue	vault toilets
gazebo	1	excellent	42' circ.	N	shared with pavilions	--	--
restroom #2	1	excellent	15' x 15'	N	--	--	vault toilets
volleyball court	1	--	--	--	at front of park	--	--
horseshoe court	1	--	--	--	at front of park	--	--
lake	1	good	12 acres	--	at front of park	--	--

This 650-acre park has been used for recreation since the early 1900's.

Some outlying areas of the park are open to hunting. Most hunting takes place between October and December, but various seasons are open throughout the year.

The park is also the site of the annual Blue Spruce Park Festival of Lights during the holiday season.

Blue Spruce is the most used park in the County system. Its location, beautiful natural features, and attractive amenities draw tens of thousand of visitors each year. The park is home to a variety of programming sponsored by the "Friends of the Parks". Many organizations utilize the park for service projects, outings, family gatherings, scheduled events or just to relax. The park provides a nice balance of natural features and man-made amenities.

There are three facility deficiencies in the park that need to be addressed in the near future - repairs to Cummings Dam; playground replacement; and improvements and expansions to parking facilities.

Cummings Dam has been identified by the PA Department of Environmental Protection as needing significant repairs. Needed repairs include spillway reparation, installation of a membrane waterproofing system, and replacement of two sluice gate valves. Cost of repairs is expected to exceed \$1,000,000.

The two playgrounds in the park do not meet current safety standards. Specific safety issues are identified in the Playground Safety Audits included in this Plan.

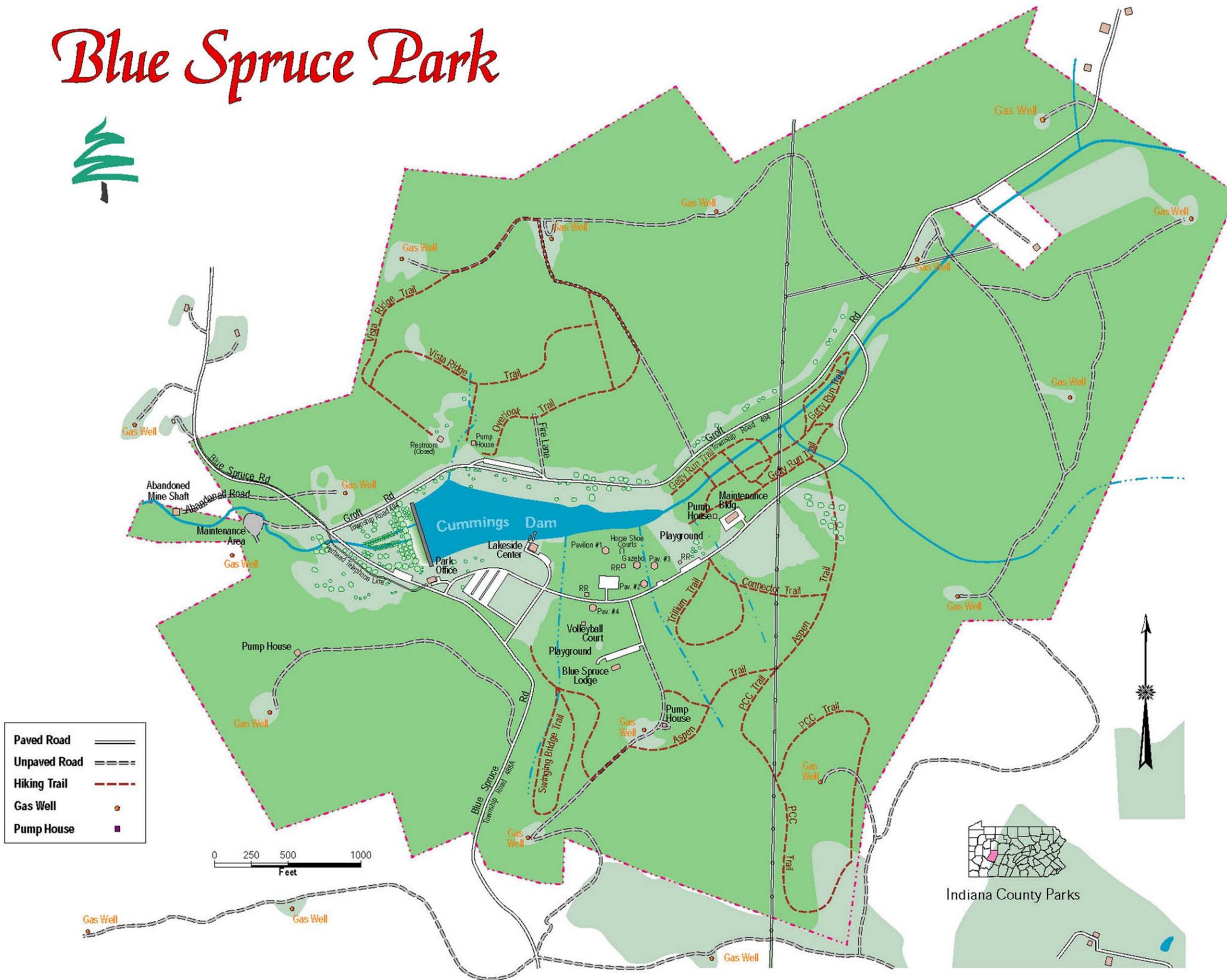
The main play area by the lake can be modified or repaired to meet safety standards but should be scheduled for replacement within five to eight years. The slide that is built into the hillside is in need of immediate major repairs or removal.

The playground located near Blue Spruce Lodge probably cannot be repaired in an appropriate manner to meet safety standards. It should be scheduled for replacement within the next year or two.

There are insufficient parking facilities available for individual facilities within the park. Although there is a large parking lot at the entrance to the park, it is too far from most of the facilities to adequately serve them. Blue Spruce Lodge has sufficient parking but does not meet ADA standards. Parking for Pavilion #4 is shared with Pavilion #1, and parking is permitted along the park road. There are only sixty shared parking spaces for three pavilions, the gazebo and a playground on the lake side of the road. At maximum capacity, these facilities could have more than four hundred users. At least sixty more parking spaces are required for that number of users. Lakeside Center has about 36 parking spaces and should have sixty to seventy-five.

In addition to these three deficiencies, a number of other upgrades need to be made. Restrooms need to be expanded and updated, Pavilion #1 needs some rehabilitation and an updated electrical system, and the water system needs updated and expanded to all facilities within the park.

Blue Spruce Park



Pine Ridge Park

(large urban park / resource-oriented park)

Pine Ridge Park is located three miles east of Blairsville. The property for this 635-acre park was purchased in 1966, and the park design was created by students from Penn State's Landscape Architecture and Recreation Management Departments.

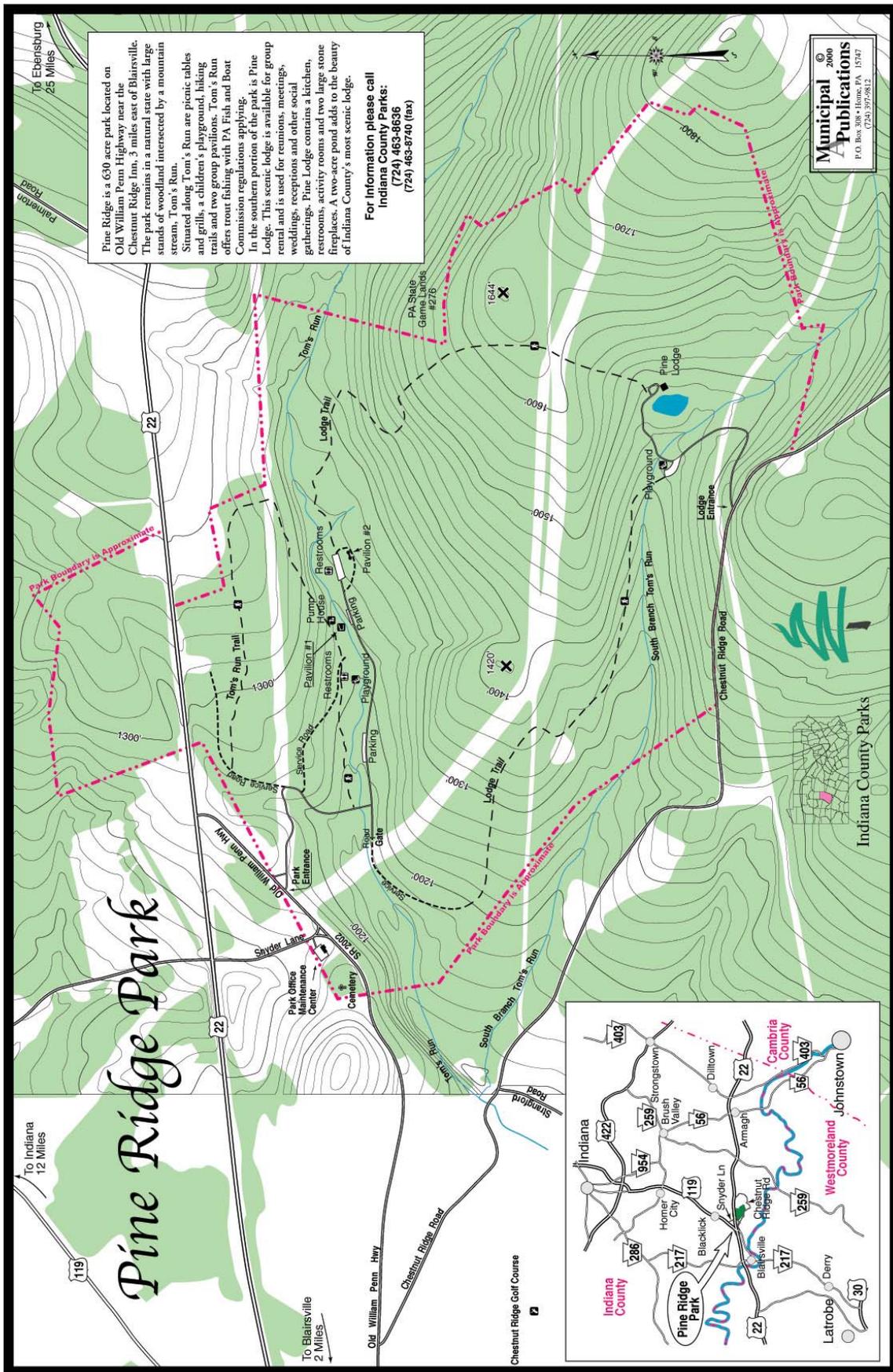
Much of the park is in a natural state. Tom's Run, a scenic mountain stream, intersects the park and offers trout fishing. A two-acre pond is available for catch-

and-release fishing. Several miles of hiking and cross-country skiing trails traverse the park.

The park features picnic tables, grills, playgrounds, restrooms, and two pavilions, which are available for rental. Pine Lodge is available for rental. A playground is located nearby.

The playground areas in Pine Ridge Park are in very poor condition. The Playground Safety Audit details each deficiency. All will need to be replaced very soon. Additionally, the Pine Lodge Road needs resurfaced and Tom's Run Road needs seal coated.

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
PINE RIDGE PARK - 635 acres							
Pavilion #1							
<i>Area A</i>							
shelter #1	1	good	20' x 28'	N	yes	ue	outlets; 1 grill
picnic grove #1	1	good	--	N	yes	w	grill; 2 tables
picnic grove #2	1	good	--	N	yes	--	grill; 3 tables
picnic grove #3	1	good	--	N	yes	--	grill; 2 tables
pedestrian bridge	2	good	--	N	--	--	--
<i>Area B</i>							
pedestrian bridge	1	good	--	N	--	--	--
grills	5	good	--	--	--	--	--
Tom's Run Playground	--	fair	--	N	not nearby	--	see playground audit
shelter	1	good	20' x 44'	N	--	ue, w	restrooms; 4 tables; 1 grill; outlets
volleyball court	1	good	--	N	--	--	grass
Pavilion #2 (Tom's Run Pavilion)							
shelter	1	good	80' x 30'	N	" "	ue, w	14 tables; lights
grills	4	good	--	--	--	--	--
playground	1	good	--	N	" "	--	for 2-5 year olds see playground audit
restrooms	1	good	--	Y	yes-paved	ue, w	--
Pavilion #3							
pedestrian bridge	1	good	--	N	--	--	--
shelter	1	good	17' x 27'	N	yes	--	3 tables; 1 grill
kiosk	1	good	--	N	--	--	--
Picnic Groves	5	good	--	N	--	--	--
Pine Lodge	1	good	--	N	yes	ue, w	kitchen; restrooms; activity rooms; observation deck; two stone fireplaces



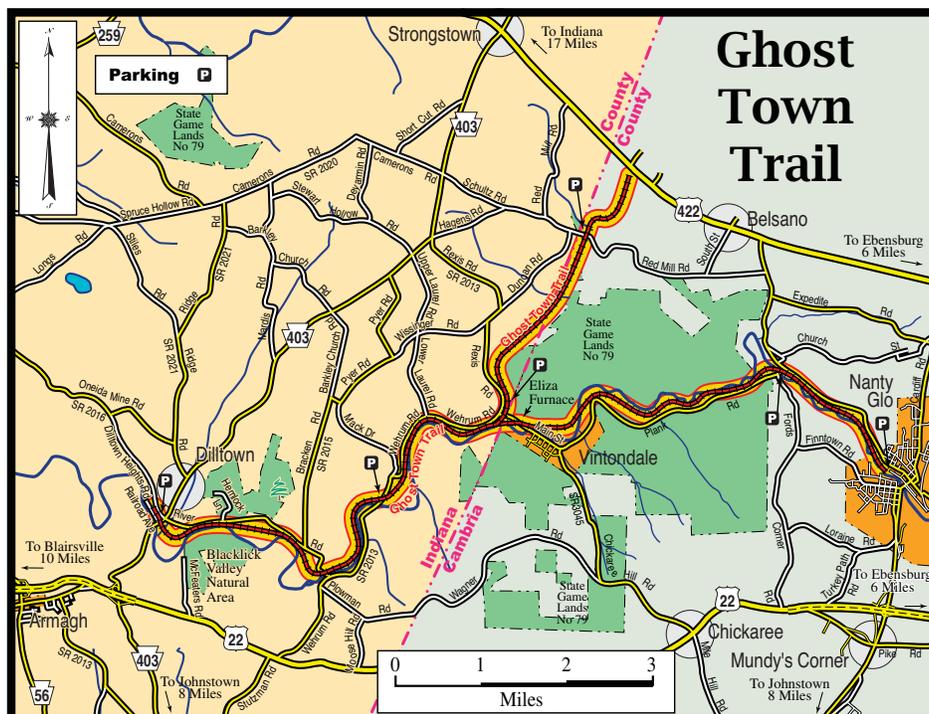
Ghost Town Trail (connector trail)

The Ghost Town Trail totals 36 miles in Indiana and Cambria Counties, Pennsylvania. It is designated by the U.S. National Park Service as a National Recreation Trail. In 1991, Kovalchick Salvage Company donated twelve miles of the former Blacklick and Ebensburg Railroad to Indiana County Parks and Trails. The railroad corridor is now a popular rails-to-trails project known as the Ghost Town Trail. In 1993, the Cambria and Indiana Railroad donated an additional four miles of railroad corridor.

Historical markers along the trail provide interpretive information about the Blacklick Valley's history. Eliza Furnace, one of Pennsylvania's best preserved iron furnaces, is located along the trail.

The trail offers hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing in the Blacklick Creek Valley. The trail is open year-round. There are three access areas in Indiana County (Dilltown, Wehrum, Rexis). Each access area provides parking and nearby restroom facilities.

Plans are in place to add a pre-fabricated, unisex restroom and laminated beam shelter along the trail, as well as to rehabilitate the bridge near Dilltown. A master plan for the trail calls for extending it westward from Dilltown to Saylor Park in Blacklick Township, where it will connect to the Hoodlebug Trail.



Hoodlebug Trail (connector trail)

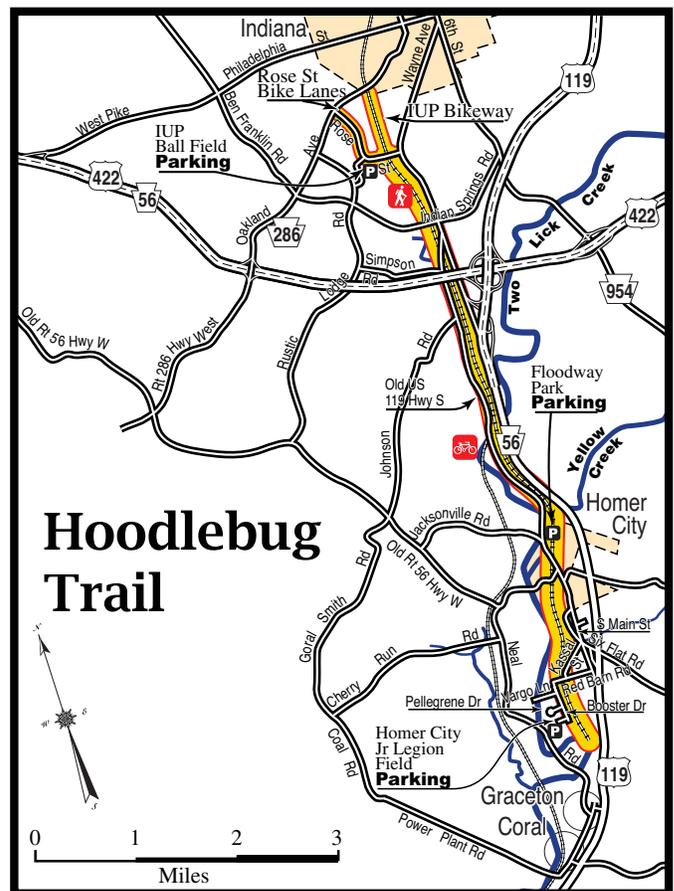
The Hoodlebug Trail is a ten-mile recreation and commuter trail located in the central portion of Indiana County. The trail passes through residential, commercial, and natural areas, providing access to many local residents and employees of several schools, industries, and small businesses.

The trail follows the abandoned Indiana Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad between the Homer City area and Indiana Borough. Hoodlebug was the local nickname for the self-propelled passenger coach that ran on the line until 1940. The corridor was also part of the Catawba Path, a Native American trail that extended from the Carolinas to upstate New York.

The Trail is open year-round for non-motorized activities, including bicycling, hiking, and cross-country skiing.

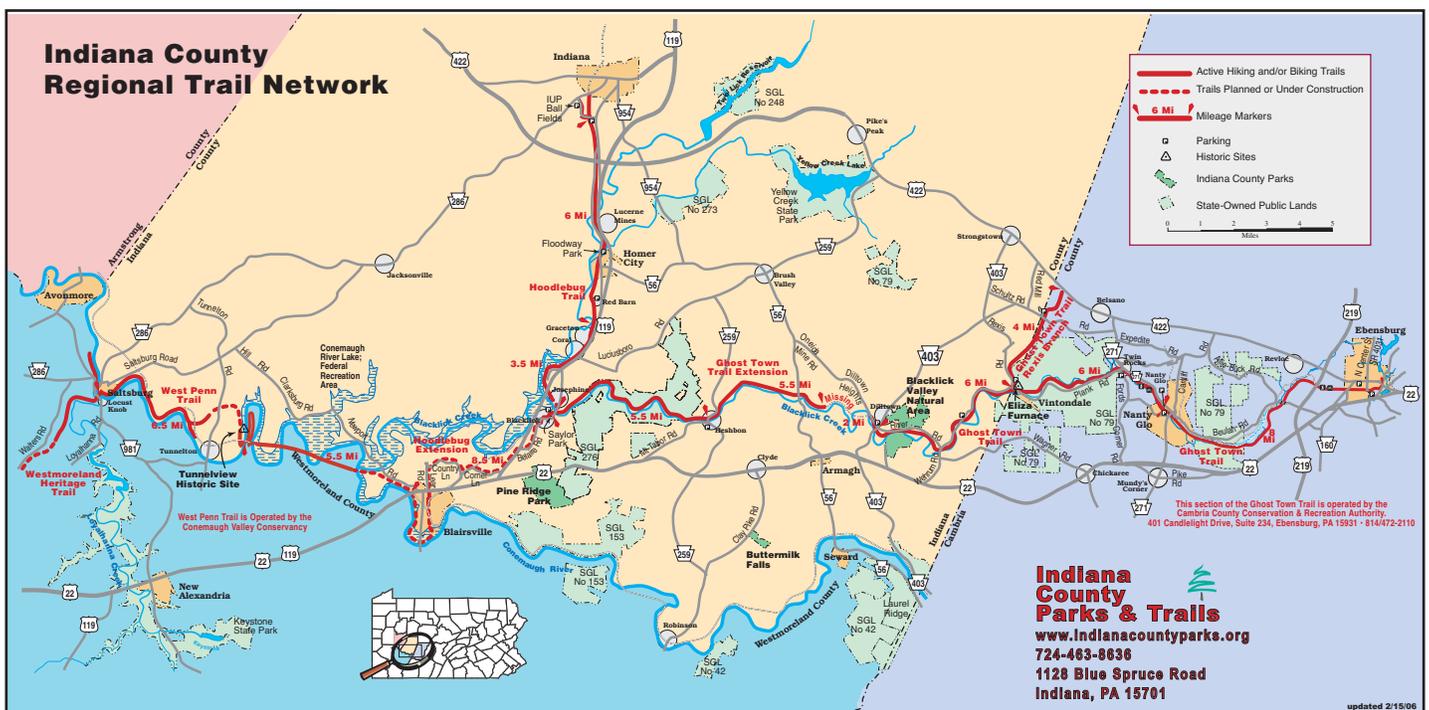
Plans are in place to extend the trail to Saylor Park in Burrell Township, where it will connect to the Ghost Town Trail, and then to Blairsville to connect to the West Penn Trail.

The trail master plan calls for the addition of a restroom facility and the completion of missing links along the Trail.



Indiana County Regional Trail System

The Hoodlebug and Ghost Town Trails are part of the Indiana County Regional Trail System. The Ghost Town Trail extends sixteen miles beyond the Indiana County border to Ebensburg in Cambria County. The Hoodlebug Trail will connect to the West Penn Trail as it traverses through both Indiana and Westmoreland Counties.



Memorial Park

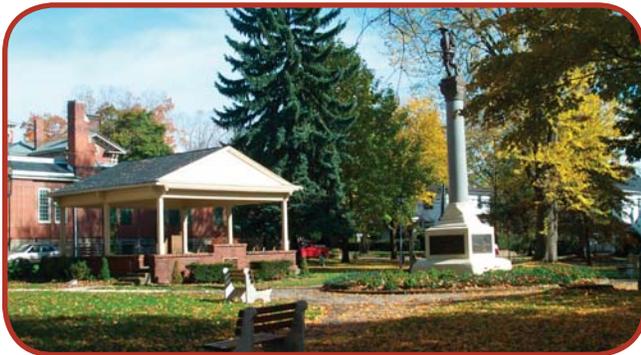
(special use / historic-oriented park)

The two-acre Memorial Park is the smallest of Indiana County's parks and is one of the most historic sites in the County. The park is located in Indiana Borough. Originally surveyed in 1774, the site was once a church cemetery. During the Civil War, the site served as a hiding place for travelers of the underground railroad.

The park's doughboy statue was erected in 1923 by a group of citizens led by Alex Stewart, father of actor James Stewart.

Memorial Park offers a shady retreat within Indiana Borough. A bandstand in the park is used for summer concerts and an annual Memorial Day program.

Memorial Park is in need of sidewalk repairs, lighting improvements, landscaping and tree work.



*During the Civil War, this site served
as a hiding place for travelers of the
underground railroad.*

Buttermilk Falls Natural Area

(natural resource area / resource-oriented park)

This Natural Area includes a 45-foot waterfall and scenic woodland. The site's 48 acres were donated to Indiana County Parks and Trails in 1995 by the Keystone-Conemaugh Group. The site was set aside to protect both typical and unique plant and animal communities and to protect outstanding examples of natural beauty.

Development at Buttermilk Falls is limited. The site currently includes a parking area, falls overlook viewing area, and a hiking trail. Buttermilk Falls is located in a remote part of the County.

In order to preserve and protect the falls and surrounding area, and the persons who visit it, trails should be improved to provide better visual access to the falls. Protective barriers should be installed to discourage visitors from wandering too close to the steep slopes near the falls. Comfort facilities such as a pavilion and restroom would enhance the quality of user visits. All facilities should meet ADA guidelines.



*This site was set aside to protect unique
plant and animal communities.*

Hemlock Lake

(natural resource area / resource-oriented park)

The park is located in northeastern Indiana County in Banks Township, ten miles south of Punxsutawney. Hemlock Lake Dam is 650 feet long and forty feet high at its highest point. The dam creates a 60-acre lake, which is 33 feet deep at its deepest point. The lake is stocked with fish.

Indiana County leases the site from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission as a public recreation area under a forty-year lease agreement that began in 1972.

The lake includes two boat launches. There are also areas for picnicking, nature study, photography, hunting, hiking, and fishing. Two pavilions are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The lease for Hemlock Lake will expire in 2012. County residents have become accustomed to using it as

a County Park. While Hemlock Lake serves the entire County, it is of particular importance to residents in the northeast section of the County. It serves as their primary regional and County Park. Commissioners should plan for the renewal of the lease.

The road within the park needs to be rehabilitated and a pedestrian bridge is to be constructed in the spillway trail area.



FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
HEMLOCK LAKE PARK - 205 acres (60 acre lake)							
East Side							
shelter	1	good	20' x 36'	N	yes - gravel	ue	outlets; 6 tables; 1 grill
restrooms	1	good	2 stalls	N	“ “	ue	--
picnic grove	1	good	--	N	“ “	--	5 tables
boat launch	1	good	--	--	“ “	--	--
fishing area	--	good	--	N	“ “	--	shelter table; 1 grill
West Side							
restrooms	1	good	--	N	yes	ue	--
boat launch	1	good	--	--	“ “	--	--
shelter	1	good	10' x 20'	N	“ “	--	--

This 60-acre lake is stocked for fishing.

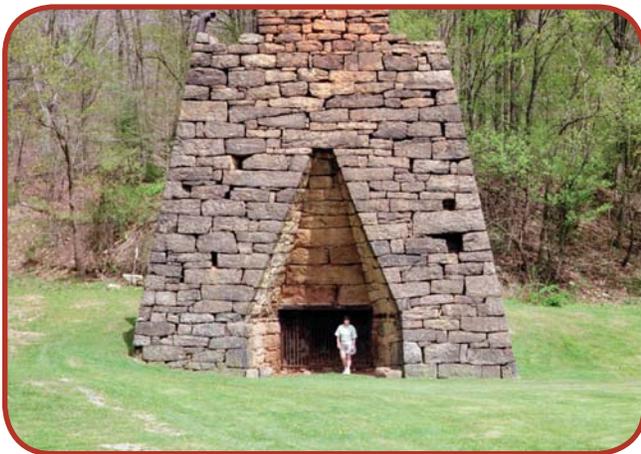
Eliza Furnace Historic Site (special use / historic-oriented park)

The Eliza Furnace is a National Register site regarded as one of Pennsylvania's best preserved iron furnaces. It is one of only a few iron furnaces remaining in the United States which still retains its original heat exchanger piping. The Furnace was constructed in 1845 and 1846.

This two-acre site is leased to Indiana County by the Cambria County Historical Society.

The Furnace is located at the midpoint of the Ghost Towns Trail. Eliza Station is nearby, which has a restroom, picnic area, and water fountain.

Interpretive signage should be developed and displayed at the site.



Tunnelview Historic Site (special use / historic-oriented park)

This 16-acre site is adjacent to the Conemaugh Dam in southwestern Indiana County. It contains significant remnants of transportation history.

A 900-foot portion of the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal is visible at the site. A tunnel ran through Bow Ridge and the canal continued over a stone arch aqueduct over the river. This was the only site on the canal with an aqueduct and a tunnel next to one another. The canal operated until 1852. The tunnel was sealed off in 1952 as part of the Conemaugh flood control project.

By 1864, the Pennsylvania Railroad constructed a new tunnel and stone arch bridge. In 1907, the rail line was realigned and a stone arch bridge was constructed. This bridge still stands. It withstood the Johnstown Flood.

In 1952, the Pennsylvania Railroad realigned the rail line again and constructed the high level iron bridge standing today. A fourth tunnel was constructed through Bow Ridge in 1989 to deliver water to a nearby hydroelectric power station.

A pavilion, restroom, interpretive exhibits and a canoe launch are available at Tunnelview. There are also many recreational facilities at the nearby Conemaugh River Lake. The Conemaugh Valley Conservancy has made significant trail improvements at the site.



The Eliza Furnace is a National Register Site regarded as one of Pennsylvania's best preserved iron furnaces.

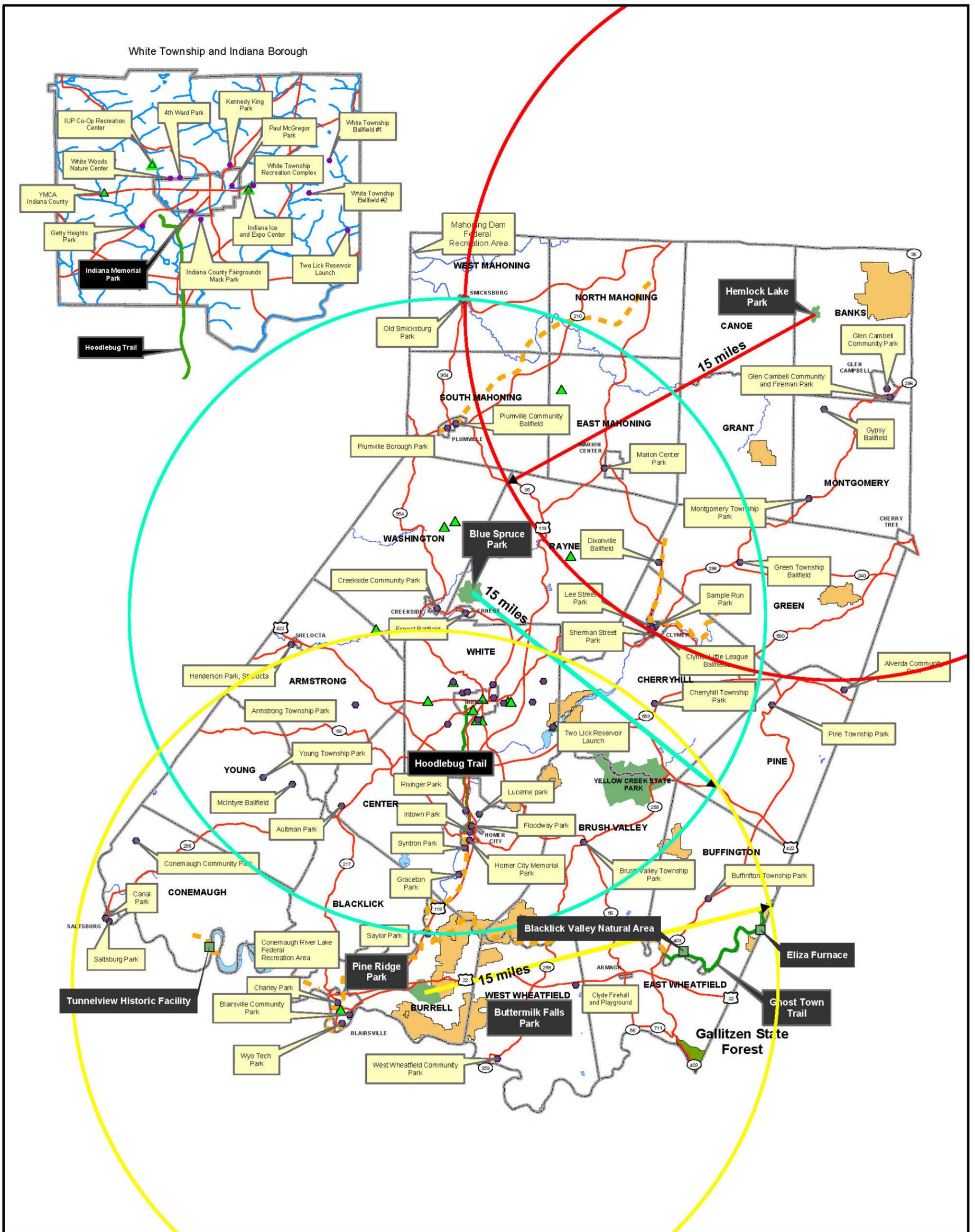
Buena Vista Historic Site (special use/historic oriented park)

Built in 1847, Buena Vista is named for the Mexican War battle fought in February of the year. The thirty-foot high furnace used local iron ore, limestone, and charcoal to produce approximately 400 tons of pig iron per year.

In 2005, the Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County entered into a 99-year lease with the County for this 5.16 acre site. There are currently no facilities at the site, but visitors are permitted to view the furnace ruins. Plans have not yet been developed for improvements at the site. The site is located along the Blacklick Creek in Brush Valley Township, adjacent to the Ghost Town Trail.

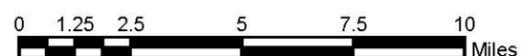
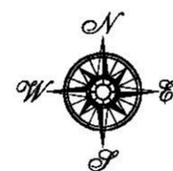
COUNTY PARKS SPATIAL ANALYSIS

To help evaluate the level of service provided by Indiana County Parks and Trails, a Spatial Analysis was completed. There are no NRPA service area standards for county parks, so this analysis was based on input from the recreation survey completed as part of the public input process of this plan. Question number nine of the survey asked residents how far they are willing to travel to visit an Indiana County park. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they are willing to travel sixteen to thirty minutes and twenty-seven percent are willing to travel thirty to forty-five minutes. As an average, this travel time was estimated as a travel distance in miles. This travel distance was used to map service areas for each of the county parks that provides a variety of recreational opportunities. On the Spatial Analysis Map, fifteen-mile service areas are indicated for Hemlock Lake, Blue Spruce, and Pine Ridge Parks. These three parks are well distributed throughout the County, and their fifteen-mile service areas cover almost all of the County, supporting a conclusion that the number and distribution of Indiana County Parks and Trails are adequate.



Legend

- ▲ Other Recreation Facilities
- Municipal Parks
- County Park's Trails
- - - Proposed Trails
- Municipal Boundaries
- State and County Parks
- Gameland



Indiana County, Pennsylvania

Spatial Analysis

Information used to create this map was obtained from the following:
 Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
 Indiana County Data Processing Department
 Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

ADMINISTRATION

This section addresses the administration of the Indiana County Parks and Trails. Administrative processes are generally not visible to the public but play a significant role in creating and managing how parks are provided to County residents. Included in the administration are discussion and analysis of the legal structure under which the department operates, general operations, intergovernmental cooperation, planning, personnel, maintenance, safety, and risk management.

Legal Structure

The Indiana County Board of Commissioners is ultimately responsible for the County Parks. The Commissioners oversee the Indiana County Parks and Trails Department, which has the general responsibility for management and operation of the County Park System.

Park Board

On July 7, 1967 the Indiana County Commissioners passed a Resolution creating the Park and Recreation Commission of Indiana County. The Board is to be comprised of five (5) members appointed by the County Commissioners to serve rotating terms that expire annually in each of five consecutive years. Through the Resolution, the Board is given the power to, “provide, conduct, and maintain public recreation areas, facilities and centers subject to all the responsibilities of the Recreation Enabling Legislation (of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.)

Additionally, the Resolution requires that the Board:

- appoint from its membership, Chairman and other such officers as it may deem necessary.
- make rules governing the operation and conduct of the recreational facilities operated by the Commission.
- maintain, operate, and supervise the public parks, playfields, and all outdoor and indoor recreation

- areas and facilities owned or controlled by the County of Indiana.
- make full and complete reports to the Commissioners.
- operate under a fiscal year that is the same as the County’s.

The Resolution authorizes the Commission to:

- adopt by-laws, rules and regulations covering its procedures not inconsistent with State laws.
- accept grants, gifts, bequests, or donations of services, equipment, real estate.
- appoint an executive director or superintendent.

The County agrees to appropriate an annual budget to the Commission that is managed and disbursed through the County finance. According to the introduction of the Resolution, the County is permitted by law to levy and collect up to 2 mils of tax for the purposes of financing recreation.

Based on a comparison of Indiana County’s Resolution with County Code, published by the Local Government Commission in 2000, the following inconsistencies were identified.

- The Recreation Board is permitted to have between five (5) and nine (9) members.
- The Board is now required to elect both a chair and a secretary.
- There is no longer a 2 mil limit on taxes levied for recreational purposes.

Additionally, it should be pointed out that the County Code includes enabling legislation for County recreation in several areas not included in Indiana County’s Resolution. These include provisions for acquisition of real property, joint action with local municipalities, indebtedness, collection of damages, and park police. The fact that they are not included in the Resolution does not preclude the County from taking action based on this legislation.

Over the years since its inception, the Parks and Recreation Commission of Indiana County has evolved into an organization that is somewhat different than the way it was created. In 2004, the Commission functions as an advisory board rather than as the operating commission for which it was originally created. The Commission's bylaws, adopted in 1996, are inconsistent with the Resolution that creates the Commission, and in some cases, with current enabling legislation.

The Advisory Board is the vehicle for general public input into County Park operations. The Board meets about eight times per year. The membership, appointed by the Commissioners, is comprised of persons who have specific interests in the Parks. While there is good representation on the Board, there is not a good cross section of the population represented. Historically, persons have been appointed to the Board for as long as they are willing to serve. Consideration should be given to selecting a broader representation of the County's residents. This should include persons representing a broad age range and an appropriate geographic distribution from throughout the County. Limiting the number of terms a person can serve will help to encourage new ideas and enthusiasm on the Board.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Indiana County works very closely with local municipalities providing planning and technical assistance, and assistance with grant writing for parks and recreation. This coordination comes primarily through the Indiana County Office of Planning and Development.

Indiana County Parks and Trails also cooperates with local municipalities by allowing use of County Park facilities, planning trails and trail connections, and by serving parts of the County where few local parks exist.

Additionally, there are written agreements between the County and other governmental organizations for the provision of parks and services relevant to the County.

The following identifies two of these agreements.

An agreement exists between Indiana County and the Pennsylvania Fish Commission for the maintenance and operation of Hemlock Lake County Park. The property is owned by the Fish Commission. The County has an agreement with the Commission to maintain and operate the property surrounding the lake through the year 2012. This agreement has allowed for a County Park to be located in the northeastern section of the County, where there are few parks available to County residents.

Mission

Indiana County Parks and Trails operate under the following recently adopted Mission Statement. Based on our analysis of the parks, and on comments received through public input, we believe the statement is adequate and appropriate.

- to provide a park system that is responsive and directed by the needs of the people of Indiana County
- to preserve, protect and enhance county park lands to improve the health of our people and the environmental health of our county;
- to advance our local economy in a sustainable manner
- to invite and encourage individuals, families, schools, businesses and organizations to become partners in our efforts to invigorate and sustain the County's natural resources for future generations.

General Operations

Indiana County Parks and Trails are maintained and operated by the County's parks department. The Parks and Recreation Commission of Indiana County, which was established in 1967 to manage the County parks now serves in an advisory capacity to their maintenance, operation, and expansion.

The Advisory Board is the vehicle for general public input into County Park operations.

Day-to-day operations are managed by the Park Director, Project Coordinator and two park supervisors.

Basic functions of the Indiana County Parks and Trails include:

- maintenance, upkeep, and security of existing parks
- development of facilities within existing parks
- planning, acquisition, and development of new trails, parks, and facilities
- scheduling park facilities
- coordinating programming with outside organizations
- managing and operating the Christmas Festival of Lights
- creating partnerships that can help in enhancing and carrying out the functions of the Indiana County Parks and Trails

Programs are operated throughout the park by cooperating organizations.

Parks and Recreation Planning

There is no formal system of planning for the parks. As greater demands have been placed on County facilities, County officials have begun to recognize the need for a more formal planning system. This Plan will lay the groundwork for future planning efforts.

Three Tier Goal Setting System

One example of a formal system of goal setting would include a three-tier plan. The first tier would be the adoption of a written vision statement for the department. Within that vision, the department should adopt a series of both long and short-range goals (tier two) and then create annual or biannual goals (tier three) to be accomplished within those parameters.

THREE TIER PLANNING DIAGRAM



Each level becomes more clearly defined. The vision statement is intended to be very broad-based and forward-looking. Annual goals are developed to accomplish the implementation strategies of this plan, while the long and short-range goals are created to fulfill the agency's vision. All goals should be clearly defined and measurable. It is necessary to continually evaluate and update goals on an annual basis, and to revise long-range goals periodically.

Adoption of this Plan provides a vision statement, along with goals and implementation strategies. Using the above stated system, the department would need to annually prioritize and adopt the strategies and goals of the plan, thus moving toward the fulfillment of the vision statement.

Marketing

One of the greatest deficiencies identified by the public was the lack of information about County Parks, and a significant confusion about what the County owns and operates, as opposed to that which is operated by others. Indiana County Parks and Trails uses its website as its primary venue of marketing. The website provides a comprehensive description of the Indiana County Parks and Trails.

The website describes the County Park system, its operation, and administration. A brief description of its purpose and mission are also included.

The site includes a listing of all County Parks with a description of facilities and services available at each. A map and written directions are included for each County Park. The site also describes plans and progress for individual park and trail development projects.

The website provides a detailed picture of the Indiana County Parks and Trails.

Brochures are available at the County Park office and in each park describing each of the parks as well.

Despite these marketing attempts, the general public still feels they do not know enough about the parks and their available facilities and programs. This seems to indicate that additional marketing efforts are needed to inform the public about the parks.

Opportunities for Public Involvement

The existing Recreation Advisory Board is perhaps the strongest vehicle for public participation. The Recreation Advisory Board is intended to serve as the conduit to bring input from the public to the County Commissioners. However, County residents are always welcome to express their views at County Commissioner meetings as well.

The Recreation Advisory Board should utilize their role as representative of the residents to serve as an advocate for parks and recreation with the County Commissioners. Other possibilities the Recreation Advisory Board may employ include park and program evaluation forms, public input sessions at the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meetings, public meetings to discuss plans and goals of the Board, and/or questionnaires.

Other agencies in the County (e.g. Indiana Area, Homer Center, Blairsville) also have parks and recreation boards which provide opportunities for public involvement. The County should share ideas on public input techniques with these agencies and collaborate on input efforts, where appropriate.

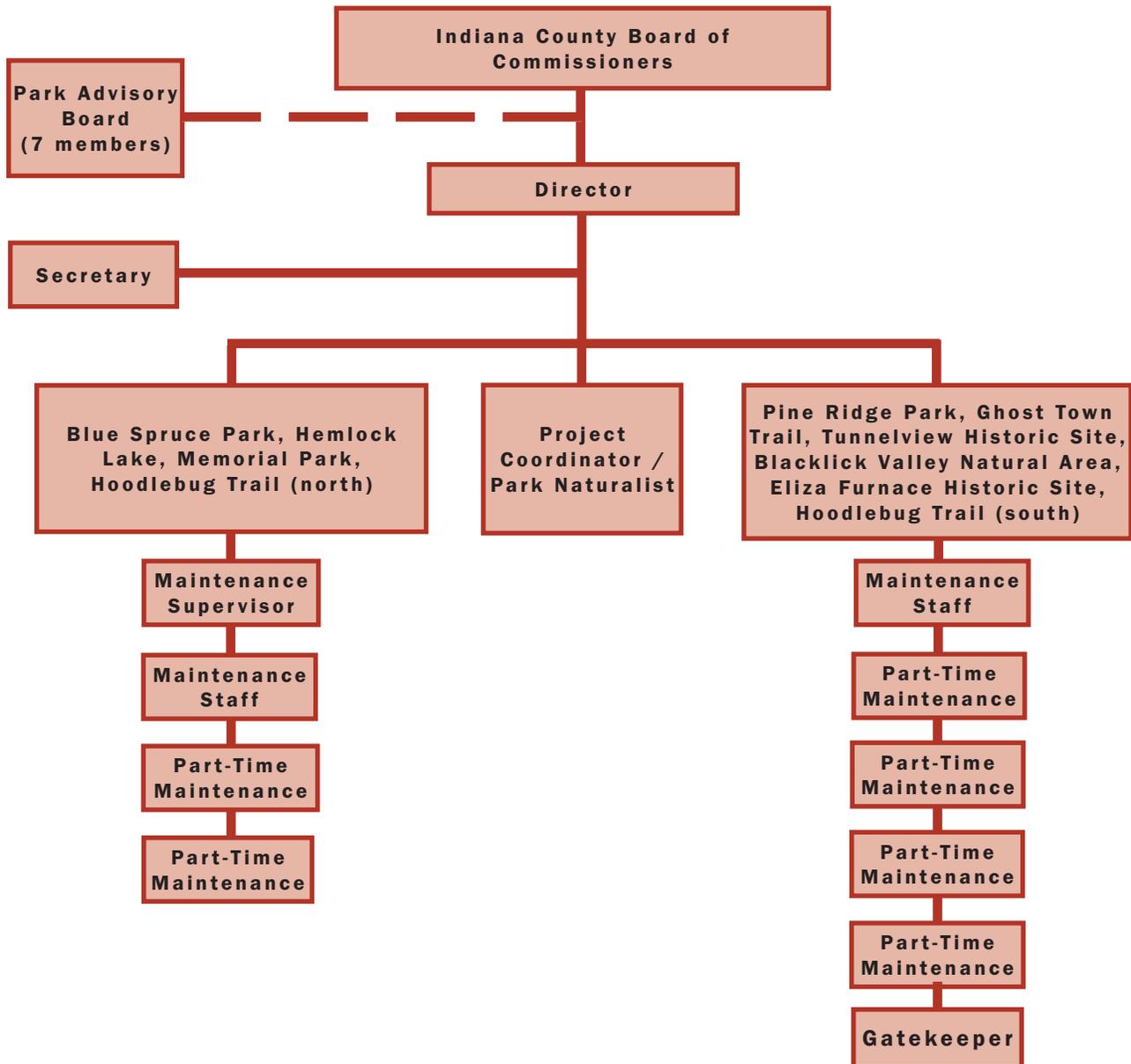
Personnel

Indiana County Parks and Trails full-time staff includes the Park Director, Project Coordinator/Park Naturalist (currently vacant), Secretary, two Maintenance Supervisors, and three Maintenance Staff. Additionally, the County employs several part-time and seasonal staff that includes maintenance workers and a Gatekeeper at Buttermilk Falls Park. The Park Director reports to the Indiana County Board of Commissioners. Other staff report to the Park Director.

The full-time maintenance and clerical staff are unionized through the AFSCME. The collective bargaining agreement between the County and the Union governs most personnel issues for them. The non-union supervisory staff fall under the County's personnel policy.

The following organizational chart shows the relationship among all staff.

INDIANA COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Maintenance

The Indiana County Parks and Trails are all very well maintained. Numerous comments were received through the public input that the parks crew does an excellent job. The consultant analysis supports that observation.

The Parks Director administers the maintenance functions of the 2428 acres of Indiana County Parks and Trails. For the purposes of maintenance, the County is divided into two sections. The northern section includes Memorial, Blue Spruce, and Hemlock Lake Parks. The southern section includes Pine Ridge Park, Eliza Furnace, Ghost Town and Hoodlebug Trails, Blacklick Valley and Buttermilk Falls Natural Areas, and Tunnelview Historic Site. A supervisor and two laborers are assigned to the maintenance of northern section. A supervisor and one laborer are assigned to maintenance of the southern section. As many as six seasonal staff are hired for summer maintenance.

As the parks have grown to include additional facilities and new trails, the staffing and maintenance funding has generally remained the same. The current staff of five is now finding it very difficult to keep up with routine and long-term maintenance. The level of care required to maintain first-rate facilities and the continual adding of new facilities is stretching maintenance staff beyond their capabilities.

Included in the 2428 acres of parkland are approximately twenty-two miles of multi-use trails, two lakes, three waterfront areas, three boat/canoe launches, three lodges, twelve picnic pavilions, twenty-one parking areas, eleven restroom facilities, five playgrounds, five sports fields and courts, fifteen picnic groves, and three historic and natural sites. These types of facilities are considered by the American Park and Recreation Society to be high-level maintenance facilities.

The following are typical examples of high-level maintenance activities:

- Turf care - cutting grass every 5 working days
- Litter control - litter pick up and removal 2-3 times per week
- Restroom maintenance - maintained every 1-2 days
- Picnic pavilions - cleaned and maintained 2-3 times per week
- Playgrounds -safety inspections and maintenance 1-2 times per week
- Multi-use trails - cutting grass every 5 working days, weekly trail inspection and maintenance

In addition to the regular maintenance tasks conducted in the parks, the staff does most of the construction of small facilities, such as restrooms and pavilions, within the parks. They also build, maintain, set up, and remove all items associated with the Blue Spruce Christmas Lights Festival (15% of staff time).

In the past several years, the parks have added 20 miles of trails and 650 acres of land to the park system. No additional staff has been added for maintenance of these facilities.

Because the parks are spread throughout the County, significant travel time is incurred in accessing the parks. A person traveling to all of the County Parks would travel about 180 miles.

Based on the typical activities for maintenance of the kinds of facilities within the system, the construction work completed by the maintenance crew, the lights festival, the new trails, and travel distances, the Indiana County Parks and Trails maintenance staff should consist of:

- Two supervisors (same as current)
- Four to five maintenance laborers (adds 1-2 new laborers)
- Two seasonal trail maintenance staff (new staff in addition to the typical seasonal help)
- A trail manager who would supervise and manage construction, expansion, and improvements to the regional trail system (new position)
- Six seasonal staff (same as current)

Maintenance Equipment

The park maintenance department has the equipment necessary for proper maintenance of their facilities. However, much of the equipment is old and wearing out. The five trucks used by the parks range in age from ten to nineteen years old. Most other equipment is of the same age.

The inventory indicates the following equipment is available to the parks department - four pick-up trucks, a dump truck, a flail mower, two Gravely mowers with sulkies, two tractors, four Hustler riding mowers, a Toro Grounds Master, push mowers, a Rota tiller, stone rake, log splitter, air blowers, welder, air compressor, string trimmers, chainsaws, salt spreaders and snow plows, fertilizer spreaders, brush hog, radial arm saw, kerosene heaters, generator, hedge trimmers, shop vacuum, and other miscellaneous equipment.

It is essential for park maintenance equipment to be operating properly at all times. Proper equipment that is well maintained can save a tremendous amount of time and effort. Equipment that is old and outdated often creates additional work and creates down time for workers.

Security

The responsibility for security of all County Parks lies with the County Parks Department and the County Sheriff's Office.

The Parks Department manages the daily operations of the parks that includes the oversight of all activities and operations. This provides them the best insights concerning security issues.

The County Sheriff's Department is responsible for patrols to enforce the laws and regulations of the parks.

The County Sheriffs patrol the parks occasionally but are not available frequently enough to maintain adequate

protection. The Parks Department recently installed security cameras in one park to assist in controlling illegal activity. Park maintenance and administrative staff monitor the parks during times at which they are working there. Certain areas of individual parks have been secured by locks or fences. Residents have been asked to help with security by reporting vandalism and other illegal activities to either the Park or Sheriff's office.

Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of both departments, security problems continue to exist. A more comprehensive plan needs to be implemented to assure better security in the parks. Through the public input portion of this study, residents have expressed concern about the lack of security within County parks. Several indicated that they have chosen not to use certain parks because of their perceived concern about security.

Safety and Risk Management

The safety audit of playground equipment shows numerous deficiencies in playground maintenance and addresses many safety issues. Playground facilities exhibit safety hazards ranging from low level hazards to very serious ones. These playground hazards are identified in the Safety Audit section of this report. Safety hazard reparations should be dealt with immediately.

Although Indiana County has a countywide risk management plan, it is not aggressively managed. The area of Risk Management needs to be addressed within the County Parks.

The Department should work with the County to develop such a plan. This would provide the County a proactive process to address safety issues and provide necessary documentation for problem areas.

The risk management plan should include documented safety inspections. By implementing a risk management

program, municipalities can prepare a defense against claims or lawsuits.

To prepare a successful risk management plan, one must consider five factors:

1. Develop a plan of action by identifying hazards, prioritizing them, and determining costs to correct those hazards. This plan should include routine playground safety audits. The higher the playground use, the more frequently a playground should be reviewed for safety hazards.
2. Address known problems by correcting hazards.
3. Take all action necessary to prevent accidents from occurring in the first place.
4. Implement proactive steps by providing adequate training, acting immediately on complaints, and repairing equipment only with parts provided by the equipment manufacturer.
5. Document all activities including written inspection reports and corrective actions.

FINANCING

Finances impact nearly every area of parks and recreation. They affect staffing, maintenance, programming, park development, and facilities. In order to understand the current state of the parks and recreation system and to lay plans for the future, it is essential to understand the financing. Financing levels and sources indicate existing priorities within the parks and recreation system. They also indicate how parks and recreation rank with other County services. The analysis of all financial aspects of the community that impact parks and recreation provide an indicator as to how the municipality can proceed in meeting its other priorities.

The major source of revenue for the Indiana County Parks and Trails is tax dollars provided through the County's General Fund. This accounts for ninety-three percent (93%) of the revenue. The remaining seven percent (7%) comes from pavilion and lodge rentals, gas well royalties and a number of miscellaneous sources. The County also receives significant grant funding for capital improvements. In recent years, these grants have been used primarily for the development of the regional trail system. Some donations have also been collected to match the grant funds. The total amount of grants and matching donations collected as of October 2003 was \$2,781,400 for regional trails.

The County also maintains two accounts separate from the General fund for the County Parks. One fund collects all the receipts from royalties on gas wells located in Blue Spruce Park. Recently this has amounted to approximately \$19,000 annually. These funds are typically used as the local match for grant funds and for capital improvements.

The second separate fund collects revenues produced by the annual Festival of Lights. The County Parks have operated this program since 1999, when they took it over from the Tourist Promotion Bureau. The program produces about \$23,000 annually in gate receipts and an additional \$2,500 from sales in the seasonal gift shop. These monies are used to offset the costs of the program.

With the exception of donations for individual park projects, there was little change in revenue from 1998 to 2002. Small increases in pavilion and lodge rental fees have increased revenues slightly in those categories. Donations have been collected for several specific projects including work at Memorial Park and on the Ghost Town Trail.

The County Commissioners have indicated a desire for the park to identify potential sources of new revenue and to increase revenues from existing sources. With the kinds of facilities and programs the County provides, it

INDIANA COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS REVENUE								
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Average	5-Year Inc/Dec	% Change
General Parks-Gas royalties, vending	\$2,731	\$3,163	\$2,677	\$407	\$354	\$1,866	-\$2,377	-87.04%
Blue Spruce Park-Rentals, donations	\$18,430	\$16,931	\$24,339	\$18,365	\$19,540	\$19,521	\$1,110	6.02%
Pine Ridge Rentals	\$7,210	\$6,650	\$7,051	\$7,870	\$8,705	\$7,497	\$1,495	20.74%
Ghost Town-Rentals, maint. agreement	\$2,000	\$5,555	\$3,546	\$0	\$5,460	\$3,312	\$3,460	173.00%
Blacklick Natural Area-Rental	\$1,305	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$326	-\$1,305	-100.00%
Hoodlebug Trail-Donations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,191	\$438	\$2,191	0.00%
Memorial-Donations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,698	\$1,340	\$6,698	0.00%
Total Revenue	\$31,676	\$32,299	\$37,613	\$26,642	\$42,948	\$34,301	\$11,272	35.59%

is unlikely that sources of significant additional funding are available for general purposes. However, it is likely that the Parks could continue to raise local contributions for projects and further park development.

Currently, the largest source of revenue produced by the parks is through rental of facilities and royalties from gas wells. There is a plan to raise rental fees for the 2004 season. The increase in fees, however, will not provide a significant increase in total revenue.

Having sections of the County Parks timbered could produce additional revenue. Some of this has been done as a result of gypsy moth damage. This does not provide an income stream every year, but a program could be structured to timber sections of parks on a cyclical basis to provide revenues on an ongoing basis.

The rural character of the County is important to its residents. The rural County Parks have contributed to this character. Therefore, for nearly forty years, it has been the philosophy of the County to provide such facilities as a service to County residents. The belief has been that such facilities enhance the quality of life in the County and maintain the kind of natural features that County residents desire. This quality of life encourages existing residents to remain in the County and attracts new businesses and residents to move to Indiana County.

A detailed financial analysis helps to understand the history of revenue and expenses, evaluate trends and determine significant changes. The following pages include several charts detailing a variety of historical financial data for the Indiana County Parks and Trails.

These charts include:

- Indiana County Parks and Trails five-year revenue history
- Indiana County Parks and Trails five-year expense history
- Indiana County Parks and Trails five-year capital expense history
- Indiana County Parks and Trails grants revenue

- Detailed funding commitments for the regional trail system
- Two chart comparing Indiana County Parks and Trails wages with those of similar Counties
- Comparison of Indiana County's expenditure on Parks to that of other similar Counties

Based on these charts, we offer the following observations.

- The majority of funds available to the County Parks is provided by tax dollars.
- The County spent \$443,819 on County Park operation in 2002 (2.3% of total County expenditures).
- Average annual expenditures for County Parks operations from 1998 to 2002 were \$458,100.
- On average, the County recoups \$34,300 per year from park related revenue. This amounts to 7.5% of the average operating expenses.
- The overall park operating budget has increased by an average of 3% per year from 1998 to 2002.
- The Parks budget process provides an appropriate tracking and reporting system for both revenues and expenses.
- Wages have increased by 2.48% per year. Fringe benefits increased by 27.5%.
- Individual parks receive annual funding according to their needs. This is evidenced by the fluctuation in expenditures for Blue Spruce Park. It has received monies for various projects in appropriate years stretching the budget from a low of \$44,460 in 1998 to a high of \$137,064 in 1999, with an average of \$80,649.
- Wages for the Park Director, Maintenance Supervisor, and Project Coordinator are significantly below the median for similar PA Counties.
- Expenditures for conferences and education increased by 910%. This was to provide appropriate training for the Project Coordinator in new projects the County was undertaking.
- Indiana County is below the average in per capita expenditures for County Parks. In 2000, the average per capita expenditure among Counties

INDIANA COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS EXPENDITURES								
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Average	5-Year Inc/Dec	% Change
General Parks								
Wages and Salaries	\$199,236	\$203,131	\$219,684	\$221,262	\$223,988	\$222,625	\$24,752	12.42%
Fringe Benefits, etc.	\$74,755	\$73,883	\$80,989	\$85,902	\$95,345	\$90,624	\$20,590	27.54%
Supplies	\$3,668	\$3,710	\$3,818	\$4,342	\$2,191	\$3,267	-\$1,477	-40.27%
Professional Services	\$14	\$0	\$0	\$90	\$0	\$45	-\$14	-100.00%
Communication	\$2,786	\$4,377	\$3,544	\$3,468	\$3,529	\$3,499	\$743	26.67%
Vehicle Lease	\$439	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$439	-100.00%
Advertising	\$3,432	\$3,157	\$2,158	\$1,384	\$2,741	\$2,063	-\$691	-20.13%
Utilities	\$2,512	\$706	\$734	\$960	\$818	\$889	-\$1,694	-67.44%
Repair and Maint. Service	\$741	\$725	\$435	\$1,098	\$596	\$847	-\$145	-19.57%
Dues, Subscriptions, Memberships	\$554	\$360	\$357	\$873	\$364	\$619	-\$190	-34.30%
Security	\$360	\$540	\$480	\$4,420	\$480	\$2,450	\$120	33.33%
Conference and Education	\$170	\$921	\$1,664	\$876	\$1,718	\$1,297	\$1,548	910.59%
Equipment Lease	\$400	\$1,834	\$1,131	\$0	\$2,705	\$1,353	\$2,305	576.25%
Individual Parks								
Blue Spruce	\$44,460	\$137,064	\$52,390	\$94,353	\$66,944	\$80,649	\$22,484	50.57%
Hemlock lake	\$396	\$1,610	\$2,098	\$1,497	\$761	\$1,129	\$365	92.17%
Pine Ridge	\$14,864	\$21,853	\$36,644	\$41,091	\$23,675	\$32,383	\$8,811	59.28%
Memorial Park	\$1,395	\$1,036	\$11,495	\$1,328	\$7,430	\$4,379	\$6,035	432.62%
Ghost Town Trail	\$15,804	\$6,135	\$4,133	\$4,565	\$5,175	\$4,870	-\$10,629	-67.26%
Tunnelview Historic Site	\$0	\$0	\$66	\$366	\$500	\$433	\$500	100.00%
Buttermilk Falls	\$0	\$0	\$512	\$672	\$416	\$544	\$416	100.00%
Blacklick Valley Natural Area	\$70	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$70	-100.00%
Hoodlebug Trail	\$1,033	\$35	\$62,079	\$3,834	\$4,443	\$4,139	\$3,410	330.11%
Total Expense	\$367,089	\$461,077	\$484,411	\$472,381	\$443,819	\$458,100	\$76,730	20.90%
Net Income vs. Expense	-\$335,413	-\$428,778	-\$446,798	-\$445,739	-\$400,871	-\$423,799	-\$65,458	
<i>Per Capita Expenditure</i>	<i>\$3.75</i>	<i>\$4.79</i>	<i>\$4.99</i>	<i>\$4.98</i>	<i>\$4.48</i>	<i>\$4.74</i>		

Indiana County Parks and Trails 2002 Wages		
	Annual	Hourly
Park Director	\$38,377	
Project Coordinator	\$21,165	
Maintenance Supervisors (2)*	\$24,060	\$11.79
Maintenance Staff (3)*	\$19,471	\$9.54
Secretary	\$20,446	\$10.02
Part-time/Seasonal Maintenance Staff		\$5.15

*Average employee wages

A Comparison of Indiana County 2002 Staff Wages with those of Similar Counties		
	Indiana County	Median Wage
Park Director	\$38,377	\$44,167
Program/Project Supervisor	\$21,165	\$33,750
Assistant Parks Director	N/A	\$35,000
Park Maintenance Supervisor	\$24,060	\$32,500

Indiana County Parks and Trails Regional Trail Funding Summary (As of October 2003)		
Ghost Town Trail		
Kovalchick Salvage Company	Land Donation	\$150,000
C&I Railroad	Land Donation	\$17,500
SW PA Heritage Commission	Master Plan	\$25,000
PennDOT ISTE A Grant #1	Trail Construction	\$550,000
SW PA Heritage Commission	Trail Construction	\$191,500
Penn's Corner RC&D	Trail Construction	\$10,000
Ghost Town Trail - Red Mill Bridge		
PennDOT ISTE A Grant #2	Red Mill Bridge	\$517,600
SW PA Heritage Commission	Red Mill Bridge	\$51,800
PA DCNR	Red Mill Bridge	\$50,000
Ghost Town Trail - Misc. Projects		
PA Conservation Corps	Various trail projects	\$208,000
PA DCNR	Eliza Station	\$48,000
PA RTC Blazing Trails	Trail Shelters	\$6,000
Ghost Town Trail Total		\$1,825,400
Hoodlebug Trail		
PA DCNR	Land Acquisition	\$70,000
Senate Coal Company	Land Donation	\$70,000
PA DCNR	Master Plan	\$25,000
PennDOT TEA-21	Old 119 Underpass	\$300,000
PA DCNR	Old 119 Underpass	\$93,000
PA Conservation Corps	Trail Construction	\$50,000
PA DCNR	Trail Construction	\$48,000
In-Kind and Cash Donations	Trail Construction	\$300,000
Hoodlebug Trail Total		\$956,000
Grand Total		\$2,781,400

with populations between 41,000 and 138,000 was \$5.37 while Indiana County' per capita expenditure is \$4.99. Indiana County's 2002 per capita expenditure dropped to \$4.74.

- Indiana County spends \$188 per acre to maintain the approximately 2,380 acres of County Parks.
- Significant funding has been invested in the County's regional trail system. This is consistent with the desires of County residents who, through the public input process, ranked trails as the number one recreational need in the County.
- The County has received in excess of \$1,000,000 in grant funding for park and trail development since 1998.
- Less than \$100,000 was invested in capital improvements to existing County Parks between 1998 and 2002.

Capital Budget

Indiana County does not use a standard capital improvements plan. There is no projection of estimates, on a countywide basis, of what capital expenses will be needed from year to year. Capital items are presented to the County Commissioners each year for consideration and compared against available funding and projects from other departments. The Park Director keeps a current listing of capital needs including both

equipment and facilities. He uses this list to present needs each year to the Commissioners.

The Capital Improvements Chart provided earlier in this Plan shows a list of capital expenses incurred between 1998 and 2002. The greatest majority of those expenses was for the development of the regional trail system and does not address equipment deficiencies or needs for facility improvements in other County Parks.

A long-range capital plan for the parks is needed to address the condition of many of the maintenance equipment that is currently being used. Much equipment is worn and outdated. Additionally, there is a great need for replacement or repairs to a number of major facilities throughout the parks. These include the hazardous play equipment at Blue Spruce and Pine Ridge Parks, the dam at Blue Spruce, and roads at Hemlock Lake and Pine Ridge Park. There are also a number of additional improvements that are needed at all of the parks. When considered as a whole the financial burden of such development and replacement is overly burdensome. Under a capital improvements plan, the entire list of development, repairs and replacement is spread out and prioritized over a period of years. While the annual allocation may still be somewhat burdensome, it becomes much more realistic.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	5-year Total
Parks - General	\$18,276	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$18,276
Blue Spruce Park	\$31,002	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$750	\$31,752
Ghost Town Trail	\$85,869	\$407,179	\$24,429	\$733	\$-	\$518,210
Hoodlebug Trail	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$232,974	\$7,354	\$240,328
Total Capital Expenditures	\$135,147	\$407,179	\$24,429	\$233,707	\$8,104	\$808,566

GRANT REVENUE						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	5-year Total
Ghost Town Trail	\$79,992	\$387,166	\$45,443	\$29,256	\$-	\$541,857
Hoodlebug trail	\$-	\$19,812	\$27,842	\$209,816	\$102,246	\$359,716
PA Conservation Corps	\$-	\$4,975	\$-	\$20,929	\$11,279	\$37,183
Tunnelview Historic Site	\$5,210	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$5,210
Total Grant Money Received	\$85,202	\$411,953	\$73,285	\$260,001	\$113,525	\$943,966

A proposed capital budget is included in the implementation section of this plan addressing development, improvement and repairs to facilities. Additionally, the County should evaluate all of its existing equipment and develop a capital budget for future purchases.

Comparison to Counties of Similar Size and Nature in Pennsylvania

The following charts show how Indiana County compares with counties with populations between 41,765 and 138,687 that operate county parks departments. The data for these comparisons comes from two primary sources - the 2002 Budget and Salary Survey (Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society, 2002), PA Department of Community and Economic Development Local Government Reporting Website. While an effort was made to compare Counties that are of similar size and nature to Indiana County, there are significant differences among all county parks departments. Record keeping and tracking procedures can vary greatly. Therefore, while this data provides information for comparison, additional analysis should be conducted prior to using it as a tool to justify significant changes.

Observations

Indiana County -

- Ranks below average in per capita spending for parks and recreation
- Expenditures on parks and recreation was second from the bottom in 2000
- Has significantly more parkland than most similar counties
- Has ten County Parks compared to the next closest with just two parks
- Is similar to other counties in that it provides primarily facilities rather than programming

Comparison to Counties of Similar Size and Nature in Pennsylvania				
<i>2002 Parks and Recreation Comparisons</i>				
<i>Counties with Populations under 150,000</i>				
County	2000 Population	Operating Budget	Per Capita Operations	Capital Budget
Carbon County	58,802	\$418,000	\$7.11	\$0
Clarion County	41,765	\$125,800	\$3.01	\$11,200
Armstrong County	79,000	\$594,000	\$7.52	\$46,600
Indiana County	89,605	\$446,798	\$4.99	\$60,000
Monroe County	138,687	\$588,600	\$4.24	\$0
Average	81,572	\$434,640	5.37	\$23,560

Source: Pennsylvania Recreation And Parks Association 2002 Budget and Salary Survey and the PA State Data Center

Facilities Provided						
County	Community Center	Nature Center	Outdoor Swimming Pool	Skate Park	Indoor Ice Skating Rink	Trails
Carbon County	N	Y	N	N	N	N
Clarion County	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
Armstrong County	N	N	Y	N	Y	N
Indiana County	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Monroe County	N	N	N	N	N	N

County	FT Staff	PT Staff	# of Parks	Park Acreage	Primary Function
Carbon County	7	0	2	2,800	Parks
Clarion County	2	5	1	50	Parks
Armstrong County	7	5	2	25	Recreation Complex
Indiana County	8	6	10	2,380	Parks and Trails
Monroe County	6	0	1	11	Recreation Programming
Average	7	4	4	805	

Section B: Regional and Local Parks and Recreation

REGIONAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE INDIANA COUNTY

There are several regional recreation areas outside of Indiana County that are used by County residents. Specifically, the following state parks and state forests provide a variety of recreational and open space opportunities.

Keystone State Park

Keystone State Park is a multi-use park that offers year-round recreational opportunities. The 1,200-acre park is in Derry Township, Westmoreland County. The park includes a 78-acre lake.

Recreational opportunities include:

- camping
- boating
- ice fishing
- ice skating
- sledding
- cross-country skiing
- bicycling
- hunting
- swimming
- hiking
- picnicking
- wildlife observation
- fishing
- environmental education/interpretation

Forbes State Forest

The Forbes State Forest contains over twenty separate tracts of State Forest land in Fayette, Somerset, and Westmoreland Counties. Most of the Forbes State Forest lays along Laurel Ridge. The Forest totals over 50,000 acres in size. The forest includes six State Parks and three State Forest Picnic Areas.

In addition to the developed facilities, there are a number of undeveloped points of interest within the Forest.

Significant natural areas include:

- Roaring Run Natural Area;
- Mt. Davis Natural Area;
- Spruce Flats Wildlife Management Area

Gallitzin State Forest

The Gallitzin State Forest consists of two separate areas of state forest land located in northern Bedford, Indiana, and northern Somerset Counties. The total area of forest land is 15,336 acres.

Prince Gallitzin State Park

The 6,249-acre Prince Gallitzin State Park is in the scenic Allegheny Plateau Region of Pennsylvania. The main attractions to the park are the 1,600-acre lake and the large campground.

Recreational opportunities include:

- boating
- hunting
- picnicking
- fishing
- horseback riding
- swimming
- hiking
- cross-country skiing
- snowmobiling
- iceboating
- environmental education
- wildlife watching
- biking
- camping

Cloe Lake

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission lake is 25 acres. The lake sits within 150 acres of Commission property in Jefferson County, near Punxatawney, and offers fishing and boating for residents throughout the region.

Punxatawney Borough Facilities

Community Park

- pavilion
- horseshoe courts (2)
- tennis courts (2)
- 100' x 100' multi-use field
- playground
- swimming pool
- walking trail
- community center

Mahoning Shadow Trail

(Jefferson County Rails to Trails)

REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES WITHIN INDIANA COUNTY

Yellow Creek State Park

Yellow Creek State Park is located in southeastern Indiana County. It is over 3,000 acres and includes a 720-acre lake.

The Park includes three hiking trails totaling five miles. Laurel Run Trail is a 0.5-mile loop which starts at the park office. This easy hike is especially beautiful in the spring when wildflowers abound. Ridgetop Trail is a challenging 2-mile trail. It begins in the beach/day-use area and winds through a variety of habitats. Damsite Trail is a 2.5-mile trail that offers a view of the Yellow Creek dam.

The Lake's 800-foot beach is open from late-May to mid-September, 8 a.m. to sunset. Lifeguards are on

duty from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day, unless otherwise posted. A large, modern bathhouse, lifeguard/first aid building and a snack bar are in the beach area.

There are picnic tables and parking for over 4,000 people available near the beach. Three modern restrooms are provided in the picnic area. Pets are permitted in the day use area and must be controlled and attended at all times and on a leash or otherwise safely restrained. There are two smaller picnic areas. One is on the north shore near the North Boat Launch and the other is near the park office.

Five cottages are located along the lakeshore near McFeather's Cove. Each cottage sleeps five people in single bunks and double/single bunks. The cottages have wooden floors, windows, porch, picnic table, fire ring, and electric lights and outlets. Restrooms are nearby.

The Lake has boat launching ramps at the north shore, the south shore, at the beach/day-use area and a small launch in Grampap's Cove. A boat rental in the beach/day use area offers motorboats, canoes, rowboats, paddleboats, pontoon boats and small sailboats. Overnight mooring of boats is permitted in the park by special permit only.

Most of Yellow Creek State Park is open to hunting, trapping and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are deer, pheasant, rabbit, squirrel, bear, turkey and waterfowl.

Many types of fish abound in Yellow Creek Lake. These include smallmouth and largemouth bass, walleye, muskellunge, northern pike, tiger muskellunge, yellow perch, bluegill and catfish. There is an accessible fishing pier on the north shore. Laurel Run, Yellow Creek and Little Yellow Creek are stocked with brown and brook trout and provide excellent trout fishing as well. An area along the breast of Dragonfly Pond is usable by many people with disabilities, and is also for children 12 years and younger. Access ramps and benches are provided.

Areas are available throughout the Park for many winter activities as well. These include snowmobiling, sledding and tobogganing, ice skating, ice boating, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing.

An environmental education and interpretation program is offered to the public from April 1st to October 31st each year.

Conemaugh Dam Federal Recreation Area

The park is owned and managed by the Army Corp of Engineers. It is known for the rich cultural remains found throughout the park. Primary sites of historical interest include traces of The Pennsylvania Mainland Canal and sections of the 1864 and 1907 railroads.

Public boating is limited on the lake due to lack of accessibility. Recreational opportunities include fishing, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, picnicking, horseshoes, basketball, and site seeing. The West Penn Trail travels through the Park as travels along the Conemaugh River.

Mahoning Dam Federal Recreation Area

Mahoning Creek Lake is operated by the US Army Corps of Engineers. It is located in Armstrong County between Mahoning and New Bethlehem. Boating, fishing, hiking, camping, picnicking, and hunting are just a few of the recreational opportunities available at this site. The recreation area includes a playground, boat launch, picnic area, and restrooms.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission leases 1280 acres of project lands in Indiana County for wildlife management and public hunting. Hunting and trapping are permitted in all areas of the project except developed recreation areas and posted areas.

State Gamelands

There are hundreds of acres of state gamelands in Indiana County, which provide opportunities for residents to hunt and hike.

The gamelands numbers are:

- #174
- #262
- #185
- #248
- #273
- #276
- #153

REGIONAL TRAILS

West Penn Trail

Located along the former Pennsylvania Main Line Canal and Portage Railroad, the trail travels from Saltsburg to Westinghouse Trail Head near Blairsville. The twelve mile trail operated by the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy. I provides an important link to the Pennsylvania Main Line Greenway system.

Baker Trail

This 141-mile trail travels from Freeport to the Allegheny National Forest where it connects to the North Country Trail. It traverses farmland and woodland through Crooked Creek Park, the Mahoning Creek Reservoir area, Cook Forest State Park, and the Allegheny National Forest. A section of the trail passes through Indiana county in Armstrong, Washington, South Mahoning and West Mahoning Townships.

LOCAL RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

(community parks)

Facility Condition Evaluations

All local facilities are evaluated to determine their general condition. The following is a general description of each classification.

Good: Equipment given this ranking was installed or upgraded during the last 1-3 years. The equipment shows no signs of significant disrepair and no immediately visible safety hazards.

Fair: Equipment given this ranking appears to be several years old. The equipment shows some signs of aging and may present minor safety concerns.

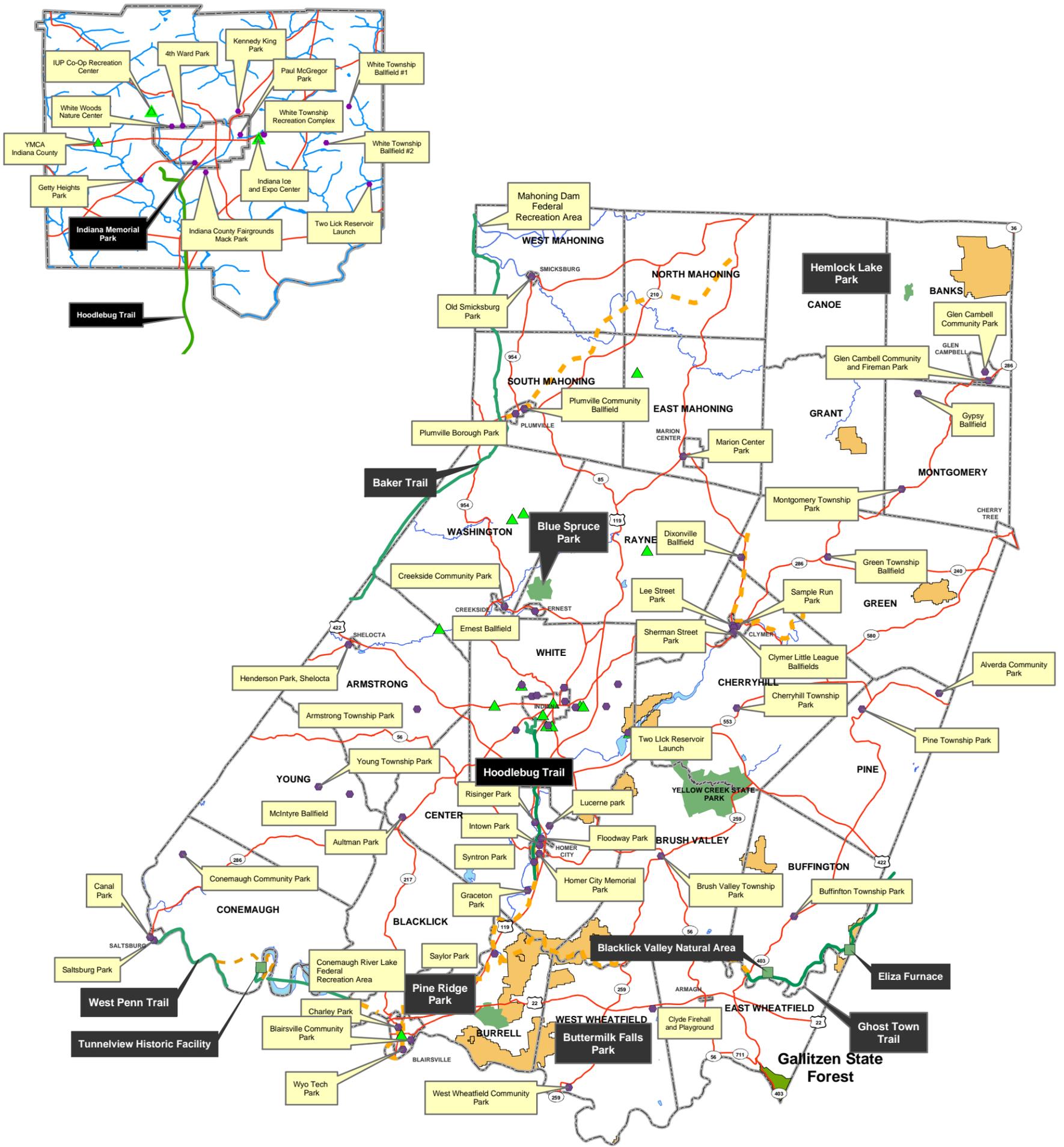
Poor: Equipment given this ranking is in extreme disrepair and is in need of immediate upgrading or replacement.

Throughout Indiana County, residents enjoy many local recreation and open space opportunities in or near their communities. Forty-seven municipally-owned local parks, four community centers, and four “other” recreation facilities throughout the County were inventoried. As part of the inventory, all municipalities were asked to provide information about their local parks. This information was to include park names and sizes, a list of available facilities, general condition of facilities, size, ADA compliance, availability of parking, and available utility services. Items in the following inventory charts may be incomplete if the municipality did not provide all the requested information. Most communities were unable to provide accurate information about the acreage of individual parks. Because of the incomplete data, park acreages are not included in the inventory charts, and analysis was not conducted concerning park acreage.

This inventory is a comprehensive listing of recreational opportunities throughout the County. It will aid both the County and individual communities in assessing the current level of service and in providing information for grant writing.

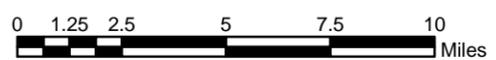
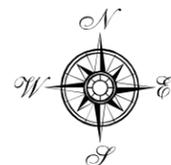


White Township and Indiana Borough



Legend

- ▲ Other Recreation Facilities
- Municipal Parks
- Existing Trails
- - - Proposed Trails
- Municipal Boundaries
- State and County Parks
- Gameland



Indiana County, Pennsylvania
Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan
Recreation Facilities Inventory

Information used to create this map was obtained from the following:
 Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
 Indiana County Data Processing Department
 Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

LOCAL MUNICIPAL PARKS INVENTORY

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
Shelocta Henderson Park							
baseball field	1	poor	200'	N	grass	none	--
basketball court	1.5	fair	50' x 42'	N	" "	" "	no court striping
2-bay swing	1	poor	4 seats	N	" "	" "	--
shelter	1	fair	30' x 20'	N	none nearby	none	1 table; 2 grills
parking lot	1	fair	15 spots	N	grass	--	--
Creekside Community Park							
shelter	1	fair	40' x 20'	N	5 spaces	electric (oh)	outlets; lights; 3 tables
slide	1	poor	--	N	--	--	--
1 bay swing	1	poor	3 seats	N	--	--	--
misc. play equip	--	poor	--	N	--	--	--
basketball court	1	fair	57' x 30'	N	--	--	missing hoop
benches	3	fair	--	N	--	--	--
Plumville Borough Park (2 sites)							
ballfield	1	fair	285'	N	8 spaces	electric (oh)	portable toilet
playground	1	poor			--	--	needs new equipment
basketball court	1	poor			--	--	
Marion Center Park							
gazebo	1	good	--	N	--	--	--
shelter	1	fair	35' x 40'	N	--	electric (oh)	7 tables
community building	1	fair	40' x 100'	N	--	water/sewer	restroom/kitchen
playground equipment	--	poor	--	N	--	--	--
ballfield #1	1	good	285'	N	--	electric (oh)	dugouts/concession
ballfield #2	1	poor	235'	N	--	--	dugouts
parking lots	3	fair	--	N	--	--	gravel
Clymer Ballfields							
ballfield #1	1	good	150'	N	--	electric (oh)	bleachers
ballfield #2	1	good	195'	N	--	" "	bleachers
concession stand	1	good	37' x 16'	N	--	" "	restrooms
gravel parking lots	2	fair		N	--	" "	
Clymer Sherman Street Park							
playground equipment	--	fair			on-street	--	--
shelter	1	good	70' x 42'	N	" "	--	lights; 12 tables
ballfield	1	fair	300'	N	--	--	dugouts
grills	2	fair	--	N	--	--	--
sandbox	1	fair	4' x 8'	N	--	--	--
restrooms	--	fair	--	N	--	water/sewer	--

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
Clymer Sample Run Playground							
shelter	1	good	25 x 25'	N	none	none	2 grills; 2 tables
volleyball court	1	poor	--	N	" "	" "	--
basketball	1	good	75 x 50	N	" "	" "	--
playground	--	poor	--	N	" "	" "	--
Clymer Lee Street Park							
basketball court	1						
playground	1						
picnic area	1						
Homer City Floodway Park							
baskeball court	1	fair	--	N	--	--	--
softball field #1	1	fair	250'	N	--	none	no dugouts
playground	1	good		Y	--	" "	needs surfacing
softball field #2	1	good	283'	Y	--	" "	no dugouts
shelter	1	good	32' x 55'	Y	--	electric (u)	outlets; lights
exercise/walking trail	--	fair	--	N	--	--	--
restrooms	1	fair	2 stalls	Y	--	water/sewer	--
parking lot	1	fair	20 spaces	Y	--	--	paved
Homer City Memorial Park							
outdoor swimming pool	1						
Homer City Intown Park							
basketball court	1	fair					
tennis court	1						
playground	1						
open play field	1						
Armstrong Township Park							
ballfields	2	fair	265'	N	grass	electric (o)	--
shelter #1	1	good	26' x 13'	N	" "	--	5 tables; 1 grill
shelter #2	1	good	25' x 15'	N	" "	--	no tables; 1 grill
misc. play equipment	--	fair	--	N	" "	--	no safety surfacing
Young Township Park							
shelter #1	1	fair	15' x 15'	N	none	--	no floor
shelter #2	1	poor	15' x 15'	N	" "	--	used for maintenance
shelter #3	1	fair	40' x 33'	N	" "	w / s / oe	rest rooms
swings	1	poor	2 bay	N	" "	--	no safety surfacing
camping	1	good	6 sites	N	" "	--	elec. and water hook-ups
shelter #4	1	poor	15' x 15'	N	" "	--	grill; no floor
shelter #5	1	good	25' x 30'	N	" "	water	10 tables / grill
ballfield	1	fair	175'	N	" "	electric (o)	lighting

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
Conemaugh Township Park							
outdoor swimming pool	1	fair	??	N	grass	oe, w, s	bath house
shelter	1	fair	25' x 50'	N	“ “	--	no floor; 7 tables
concession stand/ restrooms	1	good		Y	gravel	e, w	includes small meeting room, storage and restrooms
baseball field	1	good	high school	N	gravel	--	
softball field	1	good	high school	N	gravel	--	
volleyball courts	3	fair		N			
horseshoe courts	4	good					
basketball court	1	good		Y	gravel	e	new
Saltsburg River's Edge Park							
trail	1	good	1400'	N	yes	--	recycled running track
benches	--	good	--	N	yes	--	--
boat put-in	1	good	--	N	no	--	--
shelter	1	good	10' x 10'	N	yes	--	--
interpretive signs	--	good	--	--	--	--	--
canal path	1	good	1000'	Y	yes	--	historic
Saltsburg Park							
shelter	1	good	13' x 13'	Y	gravel	w, ue	2 tables
water fountain	1	good	--	Y	--	--	--
basketball	1	good	40' x 60'	Y	--	--	--
playground	1	good	--	--	--	--	--
Blairsville Community Park							
playground #1	1	good	--	N	yes	--	playground for 2-5
playground #2	1	good	--	N	yes	--	playground for 5-12
misc. play equipment	--	fair	--	N	yes	--	--
sand box	1	fair	--	N	yes	--	--
shelter	1	good	30' x 70'	N	--	--	lights; outlets
swings	2	good	3 bay	N	far	--	--
walk/running track	1	good	1183'	Y	yes	--	--
sand volleyball	1	fair	80' x 40'	N	yes	--	no net; weeds
Blairsville Little League Fields							
field #1	1	good	275'	N	yes -grass	--	--
field #2	1	good	191'	N	“ “	--	lighted
batting cages	1	good	--	N	“ “	--	--
field #3	1	fair	377'	N	“ “	--	--

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
Blairsville Wyotech Park							
field #1	1	good	375'	N	on access road	--	--
field #2	1	good	220'	N	" "	--	--
field #3	1	poor	--	N	" "	--	appears to be unused
Burrell Township Saylor Park							
play equipment	--	poor	--	N	yes	--	old; no surfacing
shelter #1	1	fair	30' x 20'	Y	yes	--	2 tables; 2 grills
shelter #2	1	good	58' x 26'	N	few	--	6 tables; 1 grill
gazebo	2	good	10' x 10'	N	yes	--	--
ballfield #1	1	fair	290'	N	yes	--	--
ballfield #2	1	fair	270'	N	yes	--	--
tennis court	1	poor	60' x 125'	N	yes	--	--
walking trail	1	good	??	Y	yes	--	--
rest rooms	1	good	--	N	yes	--	--
Burrell Township Blacklick Park							
basketball court	1	--	--	N	yes	--	--
pavilion	1	fair	--	Y	yes	--	--
rest rooms	1	good	--	N	yes	--	--
play equipment	1	fair	--	N	yes	--	--
ballfields	2	good	--	N	yes	--	--
Buffington Township Park							
pavilion #1	1	fair	32' x 32'	N	yes	--	no floor; 10 tables
rest rooms / maint. building	1	fair	--	N	" "	w, ue	--
ballfield	1	fair	--	N	" "	--	no infield
swings	2	poor	--	N	" "	--	--
pavilion #2	1	fair	16' x 16'	N	" "	electric (u)	no floor; grill
pavilion #3	1	fair	30' x 15'	N	" "	electric (u)	no floor; 15x15' L-shaped
volleyball net	1	fair	--	N	" "	--	grass
Brush Valley Park							
pavilion	1	good	??	N	yes	--	--
trail	1	good	2,500'	N	" "	--	gravel
ballfield	1	fair	--	N	" "	--	no infield
playground	1	fair	--	N	" "	--	needs safety surfacing
volleyball	1	fair	--	N	" "	--	needs sand
restrooms/concession stand	1	good	27' x 24'	N	" "	ue, w	--

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
Cherryhill Township Park							
misc. play equipment	--	fair	--	N	yes	--	--
pavilion	1	good	40' x 20'	N	yes	--	gravel floor; 2 grills
basketball court	1	fair	40' x 60'	N	yes	--	--
West Wheatfield Township Community Playground							
play equipment	--	good	--	N	grass	--	--
basketball court	1	fair	--	N	grass	--	unusable
walking trail	1	fair	--	N	grass	--	needs paved
West Wheatfield Clyde Firehall Playground							
Playground	1						
Center Township Syntron Park							
softball field	1						
Center Township Aultman Park							
tennis court		poor	60' x 40'	N	no	--	no net, cracked surface, partial fencing
playground		fair					
pavilion	1	good	30' x 20'	N	no	--	concrete pad, no tables
basketball court	1	good	--	N	no	--	--
Center Township Risinger Park							
basketball court	1	fair	60' x 40'	N	no	water	cracked surface
baseball field	1	fair	105'	N	on-street	--	no fence on left
playground	1	fair	--	N	on-street	--	wood equipment
water fountain	1	good	--	N	--	water	--
Center Township Coral/Graceton Park							
tennis court	1	poor	44' x 44'	N		--	no fencing on 2 sides
basketball court	1	poor	44' x 44'	N		--	
baseball field	1	fair	400' cf	N		--	fence needs repairs
pavilion	1	fair	--	N	minimal	--	no conc. floor, no tables
walking trail	1						
water fountain	1	fair	--	N		--	vandalized
Center Township Lucerne Park							
playground	1	fair	--	N	minimal	--	--
basketball court	1	fair	60' x 40'	N	no	--	surface needs repairs
White Township Recreation Complex							
basketball courts	2	good	75' x 44'	Y	--	--	--
restroom/concession stand #1	1	good	24 x 55'	Y		w, ue, t	--
parking lot #1	1	good	--	Y	110 spaces	--	6 ADA

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
S&T Bank Baseball Field	1	good	335'	Y	--	w, ue	fencing, dugouts, bleachers
Kiwanis Baseball Field	1	good	300'	Y	--	w, ue	fencing, dugouts, bleachers
Keystone Rehab. Baseball Field	1	good	340'	Y	--	w, ue	fencing, dugouts, bleachers, stadium seating
Charlie Hogan Baseball Field	1	good	284'	Y	--	w, ue	fencing, dugouts, bleachers
tennis courts	5	good		Y	--	--	--
soccer fields	2	good	280' x 65'	N	--	--	--
playground	1	good		--	--	--	--
restroom/concession stand #2	1	--	40' x 20'	Y	--	w, ue	--
parking lot #2	1	--		--	80 spaces	--	--
pavilion	1	--	25' x 40'	--	24 spaces	w, ue	charcoal grill
restrooms	1	--	20' x 20'	--	--	w, ue	--
trail	1	--	aprox. 1 mile	--	--	--	--
White Township - 4th Ward Playground							
basketball court	1	fair	20' x 35'	N	4 spaces	--	--
small playground	1	poor	--	--	--	--	unsafe
picnic tables	3	good	--	--	--	--	--
benches	6	good	--	--	--	--	--
White Township Getty Heights Park							
picnic pavilion	1	good	30' x 40'	Y	18	w, e	inadequate parking
softball field	1	fair	205'	N	shared		
sand volleyball courts	2	fair	60' x 70'		shared		
disc golf course	1	good		N	shared		
playground	1	fair		N	shared		doesn't meet safety standards
parking lot	1	good		Y	shared		inadequate
rest rooms	2	good	20' x 20'	Y	shared		
White Township Kennedy-King Park							
softball field	1	fair	175'	N	10		
basketball court	1	fair	50' x 85'	N	shared	e	lights
tennis courts	4	fair		N	shared	e	large cracks, peeling surface
playground	1	fair		N	shared		does not meet current safety standards
shelter	1	good	20' x 30'	N	shared		graffitti

FACILITY	NO.	COND.	SIZE	ADA	PARKING	UTILITIES	COMMENTS
Indiana Borough Paul McGregor Park							
multi-purpose field	1	good	350' x 160'	N	on-street		
playground	1	poor		N			does not meet current safety standards
restroom	1	good		N		w, e	
Glen Campbell Community Park							
pavilion	1	good	24' x 16'	N	grass	--	cement floor, grills, tables
volley ball court	1	poor	--	N	grass	--	no net, pole missing
playground	1	fair	--	N	grass	--	needs safety surfacing
Glen Campbell Firemen's Park							
shelter	1	fair	--	N	grass	e	--
pavilion	1	poor	47' x 17'	N	grass	e	blacktop floor, no tables
Montgomery Township Park							
baseball field	1	good	200'	N	grass	--	--
shelter	1	good	24' x 16'	N	grass	--	--
parking lot	1	good	--	N	shell	--	--
playground	1	fair	--	N	wood chips	--	--
Pine Township Park							
basketball court	1						
volleyball court	1						
playground	1						
picnic area	1						
Old Smicksburg Park							
walking trail	1						
historic site	1						

Local Parks with Ballfields Only

- Plumville Community Ballfield
- Montgomery Township Gypsy Ballfield
- Green Township Ballfield
- Green Township Dixon Ballfield
- Ernest Ballfield
- Young Township McIntyre Ballfield
- Rossiter Ballfield

Other Recreation Facilities

Two Lick Reservoir (privately owned)

- boat launch/lake use - for a fee

Indiana Ice and Expo Center (privately owned)

- ice rink - 2
- lockers/showers - 2
- common area - 1
- pro-shop - 1
- snack bar/kitchen - 1
- arcade - 1

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

- variety of recreational opportunities open to public on a limited basis (ballfield, trails, pavilion)

Indiana County YMCA

- fitness center - 1
- gymnasium - 1
- swimming pool - 1
- aerobics room - 1
- meeting/class rooms -
- picnic pavilion - 1
- ballfields - 3
- walking track - 1

Mack Park

(operated by the Mack Foundation)

- swimming pool
- pavilion
- large playground

Whites Woods (natural area)

- hiking trails

Indiana County Fair Association Fairgrounds

- ballfields
- track

Community Centers

- Blairsville Borough Community Center
- Cherryhill Township Community Center
- Montgomery Township Community Center
- Marion Center Community Center

ANALYSIS OF LOCAL PARKS

The map on page 71 suggests a good distribution of local parks throughout the County. In an effort to analyze this distribution more thoroughly and compare the parks with the population distribution, the County is broken into four Tiers as follows.

Northern Tier – West Mahoning, North Mahoning, East Mahoning, South Mahoning, Grant, Canoe, Banks and Montgomery Townships; Smicksburg, Plumville, Marion Center, Cherry Tree, and Glen Campbell Boroughs.

Urban Tier – White Township and Indiana Borough.
Central Tier – Washington, Rayne, Green, Pine, Cherryhill, Armstrong, Center, Brush Valley, and Buffington Townships; Shelocta, Homer City, Creekside, Ernst, and Clymer Boroughs.

Southern Tier – Young, Conemaugh, Blacklick, Burrell, West Wheatfield, and East Wheatfield Townships; Saltsburg, Blairsville, Armagh Boroughs.

The Northern Tier has 13% of the County population and 16% of the County's local parks. The percentage of parks is slightly higher than the Tier's percentage of population. Because the population is sparsely spread across the region, it is appropriate to have a higher percentage of parks. A community park in the Borough of Punxsutawney, Jefferson County, is also close to

many residents in the Northern Tier. The Central Tier has 32% of the County's population and 42% of the local parks. This is higher than might be expected but many of the parks are very small. The Urban Tier has 32% of the County's population and 20% of the local parks. The parks in the Urban Tier tend to be the larger local parks in the County. There are also several other recreational facilities such as the YMCA, Indiana Ice and Expo Center, and Indiana University facilities that also provide recreational opportunities in this Tier. The Southern Tier has 22% of the County's population and 22% of the local parks.

Many of the local parks throughout Indiana County are in need of upgrades and repairs. In nineteen of the forty-seven parks, more than half of the facilities are ranked in fair or poor condition. These classifications indicate that there are safety concerns at these parks. Twenty-two of the playgrounds are ranked as either fair or poor. This ranking would mean that they do not meet current playground safety standards. Only one of the local parks meets the standards for the Americans with Disabilities Act. Based on this analysis, a significant effort needs to be undertaken to bring the parks into compliance with current safety and ADA standards.

There are three outdoor swimming pools in the County. The Conemaugh Township Swimming Pool is located in the southwest corner of the County. It was completely rehabilitated in 2004/2005 and is in very good condition. The Mack Park Swimming Pool is located in the center of the County in the Borough of Indiana. It is in good condition and is well-maintained. The County's third swimming pool is located in Homer City's Memorial Park.

The Borough of Punxsutawney, Jefferson County swimming pool is located about three miles north of the Indiana County border and provides swimming for some Indiana County residents. The pool is in fair condition.

Currently there are several communities that are involved with each other in providing recreational facilities and service on a multi-municipal basis. White Township and Indiana Borough have created the Indiana Area Recreation Commission that provides maintenance of several local parks as well as recreational programming for its residents. Homer Center Recreation and Parks provide services for the entire Homer-Center School District.

The PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) promotes multi-municipal cooperation as it offers a higher priority in its grant programs for such operations. DCNR encourages communities to begin with multi-municipal planning efforts to determine specific parks and recreation needs. This is often accomplished through Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plans for several municipalities in the same area or master site plans for individual parks. Once the planning is complete, a higher grant priority is given to the participating communities to improve and expand their facilities according to the recommendations of the plan. The Indiana County Office of Planning and Development could work with local communities to encourage planning and development of park projects on a multi-municipal level. This will provide a better opportunity for these municipalities to receive grant funding from the State.

In the 2006-2007 DCNR Grants Program, communities of fewer than 5,000 residents can receive up to \$20,000 in grant funds with no local match required. For projects of \$21,000 to \$60,000, these communities would be required to pay 20% as a local match. According to the 2000 Census Data, all municipalities in Indiana County, except Indiana Borough and White Township, have fewer than 5,000 residents. Each municipality should take full advantage of this funding source to begin local park improvements.

For larger development projects, DCNR requires a local match of 50% of the project cost. The local match can include both cash and non-cash contributions.

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The Indiana County Parks and Trails Department focuses strictly on providing recreational facilities. All recreational programming offered within the County parks is provided by cooperating organizations.

The primary provider of recreational programming within the County Parks is “Friends of the Parks”. Friends of the Parks is a volunteer, non-profit organization that provides environmental education programs for Indiana County Parks and Trails and Yellow Creek State Park. They have been in operation since 1984.

In 2004, twenty six programs were offered in four County Parks - Blacklick Valley Natural Area, Ghost Town Trail, Blue Spruce, and Pine Ridge Parks. In previous years, programs have been offered at Hemlock Lake and Memorial Park as well. Additionally, fourteen programs are offered at Yellow Creek State Park.

Programs offered in 2004 are typical to the slate of programs offered in recent years. Attendance at Friends for the Parks programs has averaged about 1500 in recent years. This is up dramatically from the average of 500 just ten years ago.

The following is the 2004 program schedule.

- Indiana County Parks and Trails Programs
- Full Moon Ski - Blacklick Valley Natural Area
- Poems: Nature and Love - Blue Spruce Lodge
- The Beauty of the American Southwest - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Birding Our National Wildlife Refuges - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Maple Sugaring - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Fly-Tying for Trout Fishing - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Wildlife of the Galapagos - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Wildlife Rehabilitation - Blue Spruce Lakeside Center
- Customs and Foods of Modern-Day Native Americans - Blue Spruce Lodge



- Morel Hunting in Western PA - Pine Lodge
- Watershed Restoration - Blue Spruce Lodge
- History of Indiana County - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Mother's Day Wildflower Walk and Tea - Blue Spruce Lodge
- How Shocking! - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Geocaching - Blue Spruce Lakeside Center
- Herbs: Their Uses from Antiquity to Today - Blue Spruce Lakeside Center
- Autumn Stars - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Wonderful Walking Sticks - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Pennsylvania's Black Bears - PA Game Commission - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Fall "Weed" Walk - Ghost Town Trail, Rexis Access Area
- Georgian Bay: The Sixth Great Lake? - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Animal Communication with Sound - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Hiking in Peru - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Elk of Pennsylvania - Blue Spruce Lodge
- Undersea Journey - Blue Spruce Lodge
- The Wonder of Mt. Rainier's Wonderland Trail - Blue Spruce Lodge

Yellow Creek State Park Programs

- Pennsylvania's Jewels: Facing Today's Challenges - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Hide Tanning at Home - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Spinner Baits and Plastics for Bass and Pike - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Wild Turkeys Are Here to Stay - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Butterfly Gardening - Stake Church at Yellow Creek State Park
- Venomous Snakes of PA - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- A College Student's European Sojourn - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Creek Critters - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- I Spy a Pennsylvania Tree - Yellow Creek Nature Center

- Be a Purple Martin "Landlord" - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Wetlands at Work - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Birds of Prey - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Night Hike - Yellow Creek Nature Center
- Owl Prowl - Yellow Creek Nature Center

Other Recreational Programming

Numerous other agencies and local municipalities provide a variety of recreational programs for residents of Indiana County. The public recreation providers chart on the following page identifies many of those agencies, the types of programming they offer, and their primary service areas. These organizations play a vital role in providing local recreation throughout the County.

Indiana Ice and Expo Center

The Indiana Ice and Expo Center is located adjacent to the White Township Recreation Complex. It was built by a group of private investors in 1995 to provide ice activities to Indiana and the surrounding area. The facility was operated as a private business for a number of years. The Center consisted of two sheets of ice, a lobby area, locker rooms, pro-shop, meeting rooms and office space.

In 2006, White Township purchased the Center to operate it as a municipal facility. The Township believes it can make better use of the facility by diversifying its recreational opportunities. While they intend to continue providing ice skating, they will also offer much more. The Township intends to convert one sheet of Ice into a recreation center with a multi-purpose floor and gymnasium. The facility will become more of a community center providing indoor tennis, soccer, basketball, volleyball and other sports. Additionally, it will be used for large community events and trade shows, and will be available for rent to both public and private groups, organizations and individuals. Its location next to the Township's outdoor sports complex will allow for indoor/outdoor events as well.

White Township hopes to expand its community recreational programming by either coordinating with the Indiana Area Recreation Commission or by providing programming on its own. As a municipal facility, the Center adds a new dimension to public recreational opportunities.

Public Recreation Providers in Indiana County

AGENCY OR MUNICIPALITY	PROGRAMS PROVIDED	LOCATION	AREAS SERVED
Indiana County YMCA	Swimming lessons, leagues and recreational. Youth sports and camps. Exercise, fitness and aerobics. Summer day camps. Adult basketball, softball and volleyball leagues. Preschool programs. Special events.	Indiana	Primarily Indiana County
Indiana University of PA	All types of recreational activities for IUP students. Some availability to community residents.	Indiana	IUP students and Indiana area.
Indiana Ice and Expo Center	Ice Skating for all ages. Figure skating, hockey, and free style. Learn to skate, youth programs, Jr. and Varsity High school programs, adult recreational, open skates, amateur league. Roller hockey, birthday parties, and rentals.	Indiana	Regional
Indiana Area Recreation	Youth, teen and adult sports, nature, swimming and art. Soccer, basketball, t-ball, volleyball, karate, flag football, cheerleading, baton, dance, etc. Sports camps, instruction, and leagues. Summer day camps. Much more.	Indiana	Indiana area
White Township Parks and Recreation	Summer recreational program.	White Township	White Township and surrounding communities.
Homer Center Recreation and Parks	Summer and after school recreation	Homer City	Homer-Center School District
Blairsville Recreation Department	Summer and after school recreation	Blairsville	Blairsville Borough
Conservation and Environmental Groups	Numerous Conservation and environmental organizations provide development, preservation and education activities.	Throughout the County	Indiana County
Sportsman and Outdoor Recreation Organizations	Dozens of sportsman, hunting, fishing, shooting, biking, and birding clubs can be found in Indiana County.	Throughout the County	Indiana County
Youth Sports Organizations	Baseball, soccer, football, softball, hockey, and others.	Throughout the County	Some are for local communities or school districts. Others are countywide.
Community Centers	Local community and recreational activities.	Blacklick Township, Blairsville Borough, Cherryhill Township, Montgomery Township and Marion Center Borough.	Local communities.
School Districts	Most school districts play a significant role in providing local recreation. These include after school and summer programs.	Throughout the County	Local communities.

Analysis of Recreational Programming

The public input received as part of this study indicated that local recreation efforts are not meeting the needs of the residents. In particular, residents of the northern sections of the county felt as though they are underserved. Our analysis of where recreational programming is available supports this.

The rural nature of the County and its widely dispersed population make it very difficult to address local recreation needs. It also needs to be recognized that many parts of the county are of lower income levels. The County as a whole is one of the poorest in the Commonwealth. Therefore individual payment for programs may be problematic.

The Indiana County Office of Planning and Development has provided strong support to assist communities in development of local parks, but funding of recreational programs is not readily available. Perhaps the most viable agencies to meet community recreational needs would be the local school districts. They tend to have a variety of recreational facilities that could be made available to community residents for after school and evening programs. These could include indoor and outdoor sports, arts and crafts, after school recreational activities, special events, and others.

Additionally, it would be appropriate for the YMCA to consider efforts to either bring programming to individual communities or provide transportation for residents to the on-site YMCA programs.

OPEN SPACE, GREENWAYS, AND TRAILS

Open space, greenways, and trails are an important part of a comprehensive county parks, recreation, and open space system.

There are local, state, and county agencies and organizations involved in open space conservation efforts. These groups and their efforts should be inventoried and a coordinated system developed. For inventory information on natural resources in the County, refer to the County's Comprehensive Plan. This information will provide the basis for future recommendations regarding designation and conservation of greenways and open space. The Comprehensive Plan also indicates areas that may face development pressure in the future and should be the focus of conservation efforts.

Similarly, there is a need for a comprehensive inventory of trail opportunities and organizational efforts throughout the County.

WHAT IS A GREENWAY?

1. A linear open space established either along a natural corridor, such as a riverfront, stream valley, or ridgeline, or overland along a railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use, a canal, a scenic road, or other route.
2. Any natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage.
3. An open space connector linking parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and with populated areas.
4. Locally, certain strip or linear parks designated as a parkway or greenbelt.

PENNSYLVANIA GREENWAYS

An action Plan for Creating Connections

Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Transportation, and the Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission developed an Action Plan for greenways in Pennsylvania. The primary goal identified by that Plan is that by the year 2020, Pennsylvania should have a system of greenways connecting all parts of the state.

Pennsylvania's greenways network is comprised of "hubs and spokes." The "hubs" are large areas of publicly owned space, cultural, historic, and recreation sites, and urban and suburban areas. The "spokes" are the greenways. They connect natural areas to the places people reside.

PENNSYLVANIA'S GREENWAY VISION

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

County "Greenway Plans"

Each county is encouraged to apply greenways as a land use strategy, and to map existing and proposed greenway hubs and spokes in a "greenway plan." These plans can include identification of open space and can link the mapping of greenway hubs and spokes with conservation, community planning and revitalization, and other comprehensive planning efforts. This information can be integrated and shared statewide through a Greenways Geographic Information System.

Recommendation

Greenway Plans - Greenprints for Growth: Promote the development of "greenway plans" by county and local governments as an integral part of their comprehensive planning and implementation efforts, encouraging them to link greenway concerns with programs that address sound land use, community revitalization, recreational needs and open space protection.

- 2007: All 67 counties complete and adopt Greenway Plans.

Greenway Plan Components should include:

- Inventory of existing and planned greenway spokes (connecting corridors such as natural corridors along rivers, hiking and biking trails, water trails, etc.).
- Identification of land uses that may be considered greenway "hubs" such as natural areas (parks, forests, game lands, wildlife refuges, bodies of water, wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, scenic view sheds, and prime agricultural lands), cultural, historical and recreational sites, and urban and suburban areas (communities, neighborhoods, schools, senior centers and housing, etc.).
- Identification and prioritization of potential greenways that could provide recreation, protect natural resources and cultural resources, and make

connections - people to facilities, people to natural areas, and wildlife to natural areas.

- Identification of the top five natural resource areas that need to be protected through a greenway, such as streams and their buffers, 100-year floodplains and habitats of threatened or endangered species.
- Identification of the top five historical and cultural resources that need an enhanced connection or need to be protected through a greenway.
- Inventory of scenic resources or view sheds for connection to or protection through a greenway.
- Identification of opportunities for incorporating greenways into proposed development projects and redevelopment of brownfield sites.

This greenways identification and planning initiative should be fully coordinated and integrated with the land use planning efforts of the Governor's Center for Local Government Services and should achieve the following objectives:

- Extensive public involvement during the development of the "greenway plans."
- Identification and mapping of greenway hubs and spokes should be accomplished in a format compatible with the Greenways GIS initiative, should be incorporated into the statewide GIS database and should be easily accessible to all greenways partners.
- Coordinate with local and regional planning initiatives including comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and recreation/open space plans.
- Coordination with the planning initiatives of surrounding counties and regional planning organizations.

- Greenway plans should be updated every ten years and should supplement the statewide GIS repository.

The proposed Indiana County Greenway and Trails Plan is the basis of the county network.

OPEN SPACE

The Indiana County Comprehensive Plan, along with the County Greenways and Trail Plan, will address issues Open Space and Greenway issues specific to Indiana County. A partial inventory of open space, including parks, trails, and state game lands, is identified earlier in this chapter. Additional inventory and analysis is provided in the Indiana County Comprehensive Plan.

The following describes a number of strategies that should be considered as a means to protect additional open space throughout the County.

Open Space and Natural Areas Acquisition

This practice is based on the acquisition of land by a municipality or any governmental agency for the purpose of preservation of open space and natural areas. The purchase can be of fee simple title or conservation easements, and is usually done by a governmental or public agency or a non-profit land trust organization. Land acquisition can be made at every level of government.

Benefits:

Acquisition of fee simple title or a conservation easement on land provides a more permanent long-term protection of open space and natural areas than through other methods such as zoning or subdivision requirements. Acquisition provides a means to enable non-profit groups, in partnership with communities, to protect open space and natural areas at minimal or no cost and little administrative burden to local governments.

Implementation:

Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has sources of funding to help communities and non-profit groups implement acquisition of open space and natural area projects.

Forest Land Conservation Easements

Conservation easements on working forests are a market-driven tool used to preserve open space, like those used to protect working farmland. Easements can be used to protect forests for present and future economic benefit, with subsequent attendant benefits such as wildlife habitat, watershed protection, outdoor recreation, and soil conservation.

Benefits:

As open space diminishes while development advances, economically valuable forest land is lost. Timber is one of the top five sectors in Pennsylvania's economy, and its continued availability is dependent upon the existence and preservation of open space and forests. The benefits are economic, as well as environmental. Site benefits of easements include lower property taxes for landowners.

Implementation:

Some non-profit organizations, such as conservancies and land trusts, provide financial support for purchasing easements from landowners; they also accept tax deductible donations of easements from landowners. The U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Initiative provides funding to state governments to help purchase easements on private forestland.

Agricultural Protection Zoning

Agricultural protection zoning ordinances designate areas where farming is the primary land use and discourage other land uses in those areas.

Benefits:

Agricultural protection zoning stabilizes the agricultural land base by keeping large tracts of land relatively free of non-farm development. This can reduce the likelihood

of conflicts between farmers and their non-farming neighbors. Maintaining a critical mass of agricultural land can ensure that there will be enough farmland to support local agricultural services.

Implementation:

Agricultural protection zoning can be economically viable by using such tools as Transfer of Development Rights and Purchase of Development Rights.

Transfer/Purchase of Development Rights

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's) is a zoning tool that allows conservation and development to co-exist within a municipality. Growth is directed to preferred locations through the sale and purchase of development rights. Development rights are established for a given piece of land, and can be separated from the title of that property. The sale of TDR's leaves the rural landowner in possession of title to the land and the right to use the property as a farm, open space, or for some related purpose. However, it removes the owner's right to develop the property for other purposes. The Transfer of Development Rights allows the purchaser of the development rights to then develop another parcel more intensively than would otherwise be permitted. Purchase of Development Rights (PDR's) operates in a similar manner. However, with PDR's, an entity (either alone or jointly) buys the right to develop land from the landowner. The landowner retains the use of the land, and receives tax benefits. The municipality can pass a bond issue to buy the rights and "bank" them. A developer may purchase the development rights from the municipality when he wishes to develop an area with high density. The municipal bond financing, which was entered into to purchase the rights, is paid off over the years by the purchase of development rights as development occurs.

Benefits:

The value of each development right is controlled by the open market, not the municipality. TDR's

are an equitable option for preserving open space and agricultural lands by compensating the owner of preserved land, while guiding growth of development through the allowance of increased density where existing infrastructure can support it. PDR's give immediate return to the landowner. It compensates the landowners for reduction in development potential, and facilitates the goals of the development district concept. PDR's also streamline the time line for development since private sales and negotiations for development rights are not necessary to go forward with high density development. It allows the municipality to guide growth since it owns all the development rights. In Pennsylvania, TDR programs can only be used to transfer development rights within a single municipality or among municipalities with a joint ordinance. It is up to each municipality implementing TDR to set up a mechanism to accomplish this transfer.

Agricultural Security Areas

A landowner or group of landowners whose parcels together comprise at least 250 acres may apply to their local government

Benefits:

Agricultural Security Area Designation encourages the preservation of agricultural land. Security Areas give a landowner protection from local ordinances that restrict farm practices, unless those ordinances have a direct relationship to public health or safety. These areas also protect an area from nuisance ordinances. Additionally, the designation limits land condemnation procedures - eminent domain by the Commonwealth and local agencies - unless approval is gained from the Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board. The designation also qualifies the land (if it is an area of 500 acres or more) for purchase of conservation easements under the Pennsylvania statewide program. An attractive feature of the ASA designation is that it is not a permanent designation, and this may be suitable for some communities and landowners.

Implementation:

The process to designate an ASA must be initiated by a landowner or group of landowners.

Agricultural Conservation Easements

Conservation easements permanently protect farms from development. Landowners voluntarily sell conservation easements to a government entity or private conservation organization or land trust. The agency or organization usually pays them the difference between the value of the land for agricultural use, and the value of the land for its "highest and best use" which is generally residential or commercial development.

Benefits:

Conservation easements permanently preserve land for agricultural use. Purchase of easements by municipalities on their own can be done more selectively and expeditiously as they do not have to conform to the county or state guidelines.

Implementation:

County Agricultural Land Preservation Boards have primary responsibility for developing application procedures. They also establish priority for easement purchases based on a numerical ranking system. The ranking system is modeled upon state regulations that require consideration of soil quality, conservation practices, development pressures in the County, and the location of other permanently preserved farmland and open space.

Agricultural Tax Incentives

Differential assessment laws direct local governments to assess agricultural land at its value for agriculture, instead of at its full market value, which is generally higher. Differential assessment laws are enacted in the state and implemented at the local level.

Benefits:

These programs afford protection to farmers to continue operating an agricultural operation in the face of

development, thus helping to ensure the economic viability of agriculture. These tax laws align agricultural property taxes with what it actually costs local governments to provide services to the land.

Implementation:

Landowners must apply to the County Assessment Office.

Conservation Techniques

(summarized from Land Use in Pennsylvania: Practices and Tools, An Inventory)

Open Space Zoning/Conservation Design

The purpose of this technique is to preserve a larger amount of land for conservation uses, while still allowing full-density development. In contrast to cluster zoning, where the emphasis is more often placed on providing active recreation areas, open space zoning is more suited for protecting farmland, woodland habitat, historic sites, and scenic views. Subdivisions are required to dedicate a significant portion of their unconstrained land to permanent open space uses. The open space is typically owned and managed (according to an approved management plan) by a homeowners association. Other possible owners include land trusts, the local municipality, or individuals with large “conservancy lots”, which are a form of non-common open space.

Benefits:

This technique preserves large open spaces while allowing full-density development. When done, the open space in each new subdivision will ultimately join together to form interconnected systems of conservation lands.

Implementation:

This technique can be implemented through a municipality’s zoning ordinance. The number of dwellings permitted is based on the net acreage of buildable land and the underlying density in the zoning

district. Easements are then placed on the open space to ensure that it will not be further subdivided or developed.

Overlay Zoning Districts

An overlay zoning district applies regulations to, and are in addition to, and supersede the requirements of the underlying zoning district(s). Such a district may recognize unique features, either natural or man-made, requiring special attention, or may facilitate development of a special character.

Benefits:

Overlay zoning allows regulations to be tailored to specific conditions. Administration is the same as any zoning district.

Implementation:

In general, the provisions of a zoning district must apply uniformly to each class of uses or structures within each district. However, Section 605 of the Municipal Planning Code authorizes additional classifications, potentially through the use of overlay zoning, for:

- making transitional provisions at, and near, the boundaries of districts
- regulating non-conforming uses and structures
- regulating, restricting, or prohibiting uses and structures at, along, or near:
 - major thoroughfares, their intersections and interchanges, transportation arteries, and rail or transit terminals
 - natural or artificial bodies of water, boat docks and related facilities
 - places of relatively steep slope or grade, or areas of hazardous geological or topographic features
 - public buildings and public grounds
 - aircraft, helicopter, rocket, and spacecraft facilities
 - places having unique historical, architectural, or patriotic interest or value
 - floodplain areas, agricultural areas, sanitary

landfills, and other places having a special character or use affecting and affected by their surroundings

- encouraging innovations and the promotion of flexibility, economy and ingenuity in development, including subdivisions and land developments; and for the purpose of authorizing increases in the permissible density of population or intensity of a particular use based upon expressed standards and criteria set forth in the zoning ordinance
- regulating transferable development rights on a voluntary basis

Riparian Buffers

Riparian buffers are areas of vegetation along waterways that protect water quality and stabilize stream channels. Vegetated areas along streams are of significant ecological importance because they:

- slow flood waters and reduce the volume of water through root absorption
- improve water quality by filtering runoff and promoting sediment deposition
- allow water storage in plant roots and provide pathways to ground water layers
- provide canopy cover, which shades and cools streams, thus improving habitat conditions for in-stream organisms, while providing relief from the extreme heat for terrestrial animals
- provide habitat for a variety of birds and small mammals, while acting as corridors to similar habitat, providing food, shelter, and nesting sites
- provide great opportunities for recreational activities such as fishing, hiking, bird watching, picnicking, and camping
- Stream bank habitat restoration can include three techniques: structural (i.e. installing stone riprap to reduce erosion); vegetative (i.e. planting vegetation to absorb water, filter pollutants, and reduce erosion); and bioengineering, which combines both structural and vegetative approaches (i.e. bundles of

willow cuttings tied together and inserted in stream bank trenches).

Stream bed and stream bank improvements can improve the ecological health of the riparian zone, but they cannot compensate for land abuses affecting the stream. Land use management techniques may include the installation of fencing to keep livestock out of the creeks or the installation of storm water management structures.

Chapter 2



Chapter 2 Public Participation

What does the Study Committee do?

- Act as a sounding board for ideas as the Plan is developed.
- Assist in the development of the recreation questionnaire.
- Provide feedback as existing recreational facilities and programs are inventoried.
- Assist with developing recommendations for the future.
- Review and comment on the draft report.

STUDY COMMITTEE

From the beginning of the planning process, through to the final recommendations, the Study Committee played an important role in the development of this Plan. Detailed minutes from each of the meetings can be found in the Appendix.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Valuable input from the general public was gathered through regional public meetings held throughout the County. The Consultant gave an overview of the Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space planning process and held a brainstorming session to provide residents with an opportunity to voice their opinions and identify key issues.

KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

Twenty-eight key person interviews were conducted, with individuals identified by the Study Committee as people who could provide valuable input regarding parks and recreation issues.

RECREATION SURVEY

In July, 2003, 3,000 recreation surveys were mailed to a random selection of Indiana County households. Three hundred and sixty-one (361) completed surveys were received and tabulated by the consultant for a response rate of twelve percent (12%).

OTHER PUBLIC INPUT

As part of this study, the consultants also reviewed public input gathered as part of the Indiana County Comprehensive Plan and the “Indiana County Speaks Up!” survey, conducted in the summer of 2002, by the Children’s Advisory Commission.

Public input was a key component to the development of the County’s Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan.

PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

Public Meetings

- Create an advisory council to work with local municipalities
- Tie in recreation with tourism / economic development
 - Use a portion of the funds generated by hotel tax for recreation
 - Driving tour – scenic view, historic sites
- Increase public awareness of the County Parks System
 - Better wayfinding signs
 - Web site
 - Maps locating parks
 - Tie in employer/employee benefits of recreational opportunities
- Promote open space conservation
- Increase budget for park maintenance
- Regionalize recreational services for funding and technical assistance
 - County parks staff provide technical assistance to local recreation association and governments
- County park opportunities:
 - Lime Kiln
 - Identify “special places” throughout the county – areas for protection, preservation
 - 3,000 acres north of Conemaugh lake
 - Provide access to the Army Corps property for fishing, hiking, and boating
 - Place for environmental education (like McKeever)
- Trails:
 - Provide interpretive signs along trails
 - Provide more benches along trails
 - Need horse trails
 - Integrate trails with schools
 - Develop trail along Conemaugh river
- Offer more special events
 - Train staff in holding special events
 - Open air concerts
 - Arts festival

- Facilities:
 - Provide camping
 - Outdoor amphitheater

Recreation Survey

- Desired recreational facilities:
 - Sledding area
 - Rental cabins
 - Skateboarding/rollerblading areas
 - Downhill skiing and snowboarding areas
 - Bike, hiking, walking, and jogging trails
 - Rifle/handgun ranges
- Increase public awareness of recreation areas and opportunities
- Maintain existing park and recreation areas
- Acquire additional land and water areas for recreation
- Provide programs and special events at county parks
- Expand and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities for tourism

Key Person Interviews

- Increase awareness
- Northern part of the county has no recreational opportunities
- Not enough bike trails and connections to existing parks
- Need a place to rent bikes (esp. on Hoodlebug trail)
- Need more biking/hiking trails
- Integrate trail system with county parks
- County should provide more recreational programming
- County should cooperative with municipalities to share facilities, avoid duplication of services, and increase communication

STUDY COMMITTEE BRAINSTORMING

	<u>issue</u>	<u>votes</u>
1	FUTURE FUNDING OF COUNTY PARKS FOR MAINTENANCE, ALSO FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT	27
2	CONTINENTAL REMEDIATION OF STREAMS: RIVERS FOR FISHING, BOATING, WATER ACTIVITIES - SUPPORT WATERSHED GROUPS	15
3	CREATE A PARKS ENDOWMENT OR FOUNDATIONS, SEPARATE FROM GOVERNMENT	13
4	FIND A WAY TO UTILIZE IUP STUDENTS TO VOLUNTEER FOR LOCAL/COUNTY PROGRAMS	11
5	NEED AN ALTERNATIVE REC PROGRAM/OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH SKATING, MOUNTAIN BIKING, BMX, ETC.	10
6	ASSIST LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES TO EVALUATE LOCAL LAND USE TO CONSIDER WHAT BEST SUITS LOCAL PARKS	9
7	UTILIZATION OF PRIVATE OPEN SPACE FOR REC PURPOSES. LOTS OF PRIVATE OPEN SPACE, THERE IS LITTLE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE	9
8	CREATE A MEANS OF COOPERATION/COMMUNICATION AMONG ALL GROUPS INVOLVED IN PARKS AND RECREATION	8
9	DEVELOP POTENTIAL COUNTY-WIDE TRAILS IDENTIFIED IN REGIONAL TRAIL PLAN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NPS	8
10	REGIONAL APPROACH TO ATTRACTING PEOPLE TO AND DEVELOPING LOCAL GEOGRAPHY - TOURISM, HOMES, KEEPING OUR YOUTH.	7
11	IDENTIFY, PRESERVE, AND DEVELOP ALL ABANDONED RAIL AND TROLLEY LINE CORRIDORS IN THE COUNTY	7
12	DEVELOP TRAILS AND PARKS IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE COUNTY	5
13	CREATE WILDLIFE PROTECTED AREAS AND CORRIDORS TRAVELING EAST-WEST AND NORTH-SOUTH	5
14	DEVELOP A SKATE PARK	5
15	POST SECONDARY SCHOOL TO BE LOCATED IN SOUTHERN PART OF COUNTY WILL NEED REC	5
16	SAFE SIDEWALKS IN TOWN	5
17	MAINTAINING DEVELOPMENT	5
18	WEST PENN TRAIL	5
19	EXPAND POSSIBLE METHODS TO PRESERVE LANDS IN NEW/CREATIVE WAYS - CONSERVATION EASEMENTS, ETC.	5

STUDY COMMITTEE BRAINSTORMING, CONT.

	<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>votes</u>
20	SWIMMING AND WATER PARKS	4
21	CREATE A PUBLIC LAND GREEN BUFFER AROUND THE ENTIRE GHOST TOWN SYSTEM	4
22	LOOK AT THE ZONING ORDINANCE THAT RESTRICTS BUFFER ZONE AROUND COUNTY PARKS - IS IT STILL EFFECTIVE TO ACCOMPLISH ITS PURPOSE	4
23	UTILIZE A SPECIFIC PERCENT OF THE HOTEL TAX TO PUBLICIZE DEMANDS OF THIS PLAN	4
24	CREATE A DEER PERMIT HUNTING PROGRAM IN EXISTING PARKS	4
25	LACK OF COMMUNITY CENTERS AND INDOOR REC FACILITIES	3
26	ACCESSIBILITY TO PARKS BY FOOT, BIKE, ETC.	2
27	INCREASED AWARENESS BY MAJOR EMPLOYERS TO ACCOMMODATE EMPLOYEE'S REC NEEDS - BIKE RACK, SHOWERS, LOCKERS, ETC.	2
28	REGIONAL PICTURE - OTHER COUNTIES, STATE GROUPS, CROSSING COUNTY LINES, ETC.	1
29	INCREASE NUMBER OF SPORTS FIELDS AVAILABLE IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES.	1
30	MAINTAIN AND DEVELOP PUBLIC ACCESS TO STREAMS	0
31	NATIONAL HIKING TRAIL AT CONEMAUGH (NOT RAIL TRAIL)	0
32	IDENTIFY PRIVATE TRACTS OF OPEN SPACE	0
33	ACCESSIBILITY/PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO PARKS	0
34	TRANSPORTATION	0
35	IDENTIFY AND INVENTORY ON GIS FACILITIES	0
36	CREATE/DEVELOP COMMUNITY ARTS, THEATER, MUSIC, ETC.	0
37	CREATE AND PUBLICIZE ROAD BIKE ROUTES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY	0
38	INCREASE THE VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES AT COUNTY PARKS	0
39	UNMANAGED RECREATION - MAKE AVAILABLE	0
40	STRENGTHEN SUPPORT OF CONEMAUGH DAM	0
41	UPDATING AND BEAUTIFYING CURRENT PARKS AND REC CENTERS.	0

STUDY COMMITTEE BRAINSTORMING, CONT.

	<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>votes</u>
42	CONSIDER OTHER REC ACTIVITIES BEFORE ELIMINATING/ZONING SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS OUT	0
43	INFO PRODUCED FROM THIS PLAN NEEDS TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH SPC.	0
44	CONSIDER USER FEES	0
45	STAFFING	0
46	COORDINATE COUNTY-WIDE ROAD WIDENING FOR BIKE LANES, STATE/LOCAL	0
47	EXPAND YELLOW CREEK SP BY PURCHASING LAND ALONG 422 FOR ROAD FRONTAGE	0
48	ENFORCEMENT OF BEST PRACTICES STANDARDS	0



**PUBLIC MEETING #1 BRAINSTORMING
- JUNE 11, 2003**

	<u>issue</u>	<u>votes</u>
1	NEED FOR AN ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR COUNTY PARKS - CAN WORK WITH MUNICIPALITIES	13
2	NEED FOR PARK LAND FOR ATV'S - GOING WHERE THEY SHOULDN'T BE, CAUSING EROSION AND OTHER DAMAGE	12
3	CONSIDER PARTNERSHIPS WITH PRIVATE LANDOWNERS - HIKING TRAILS?, SHELTERS?, STREAM ACCESS?	12
4	TOURISM IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - MUST HAVE CHAMBER/ECON. DEVELOPMENT PEOPLE REALIZE - COUNTY HOTEL TAX TO GO TO TRAILS = TOURISM	11
5	COUNTY CONTRIBUTE TO BLAIRSVILLE HEALTH AND FITNESS CENTER - \$ AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE	10
6	DEVELOP DRIVING TOUR - SCENIC VIEWS, HISTORIC SITES - BROCHURE	10
7	COUNTY COMPLEX IS SOUTHERN INDIANA COUNTY - POOL WITH PHYSICAL THERAPY - SCHOOLS, REHAB, AND THERAPY USE	9
8	ACCESS TO ARMY CORP PROPERTY - FOR FISHING, HIKING, MOUNTAIN CLIMBING, BOATING	8
9	NEED TO ADVERTISE ABOUT PARKS - GET PEOPLE TO PARKS - BETTER SIGNS, WORKING WEB SITE, MARKETING, MAPS LOCATING PARKS	8
10	MORE BENCHES ALONG TRAILS	8
11	BETTER ACCESS FOR NON-DRIVERS TO PARKS	7
12	SOUND LAND USE POLICIES = PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE	7
13	BETTER USE OF IUP INTERNS FOR PARK ADMINISTRATION (ESP. MUNICIPAL PARKS)	6
14	PUT MORE MONEY INTO COUNTY MAINTENANCE BUDGET	6
15	REGIONALIZE RECREATION SERVICES FOR FUNDING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	6
16	OPPORTUNITY - LIME KILN - 259 TO ROBINSON - "GERMANY" ONE ROOM SCHOOL - OLD CHURCH - 150 YEAR OLD SECOND CHURCH - PARK?, WALKING TRAIL?	5
17	COUNTY PARKS STAFF PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL PARKS - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	5
18	VANDAL-PROOF CLEAN RESTROOMS FOR WOMEN	5
19	PROVIDE MORE INTERPRETIVE SIGNS ON TRAILS - GOOD VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY	5

**PUBLIC MEETING #1 BRAINSTORMING
- JUNE 11, 2003 CONT.**

	<u>issue</u>	<u>votes</u>
20	PLAN FOR BUTTERFLY AREA?, HUMMING BIRD HABITATS? - GOOD ATTRACTIONS FOR PARK USERS	4
21	NEED HORSE TRAILS	3
22	PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF PARK BUDGETS/FUNDING ISSUES	3
23	NEED FACILITIES TO ATTRACT TEENS/YOUNG ADULTS, FOR TRAIL-OBSTACLE COURSE, CLIMBING WALL, SKATE PARKS - SHOW CONNECTION BETWEEN GOOD PARKS AND JOBS	3
24	NEED TO TRAIN PARK STAFF IN HOLDING SPECIAL EVENTS, PARK MAINTENANCE, ACCESS TO FUNDING, PLAYGROUND SAFETY	2
25	SOLICIT CORPORATE SPONSORS - BUILD FACILITIES, BENCHES	2
26	BUTTERMILK FALLS - ATTRACTION, ESPECIALLY THIS TIME OF YEAR - NEED LARGER SIGN	2
27	ACTIVE RECREATIONAL LIFESTYLE PROMOTED. EMPLOYERS ACCOMMODATE BIKE, WALKING COMMUTERS	1
28	GET PENNDOT JERSEY BARRIERS LOWERED - BLOCKS SCENIC VIEWS FROM CAR	1
29	MORE SUPPORT FOR PARK ACTIVITIES FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	1
30	OPPORTUNITY - NATIONAL ARMORY - NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, TOURISM CENTER - TRAILS NEARBY	1
31	NEED TO PROVIDE FOR RV CAMPING - TOURISM, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	1
32	COMBINE HISTORY WITH PARKS - ARCHEOLOGICAL DIGS - DISPLAYS AT PARK OFFICE	1
33	COUNTY TRAIL ORGANIZATION - SPONSORED/IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER TRAIL ORGANIZATIONS	1
34	OTHER WAYS TO USE PARKS - LIKE OPEN AIR CONCERTS, ONE DAY ARTS FESTIVAL	-
35	ALIGNMENT OF TRAIL UNDER 119 - AVOID UNDERPASS, STAY ON ONE SIDE OF HIGHWAY	-
36	INTEGRATE TRAILS WITH SCHOOLS	-
37	PENNDOT NEEDS TO USE TRAFFIC CALMING - CONTACT SENSITIVE DESIGN	-
38	ASSET - 3 COUNTY PARKS - STATE PARKS	-
39	NEED ACCESSIBLE PARKING FOR DISABLED	-
40	HIKING TRAIL ALONG CONEMAUGH RIVER AT ROBINSON IS NEEDED	-

**PUBLIC MEETING #2 BRAINSTORMING
- JUNE 17, 2003**

	<u>issue</u>	<u>votes</u>
1	CONCERN WITH HOW TO FUND ALL THESE GOOD IDEAS	13
2	ACCESS TO WATER FOR LITTLE KIDS, LIKE TOM'S RUN	11
3	IDENTIFY "SPECIAL PLACES" THROUGHOUT COUNTY - EASEMENTS/ACQUISITION TO PRESERVE - PRIORITIZE FOR PROTECTION	10
4	CONTINUATION AND SUPPORT FOR LOCAL PLANNING, ADDRESS "SPECIAL PLACES" - SOUND LAND USE PLANNING	9
5	MORE ART/CULTURE - OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATER FOR PLAYS/CONCERTS	9
6	PARK AREA SO DOGS CAN RUN FREE	9
7	FUNDING FOR MAINTENANCE OF TRAILS NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED	8
8	EXCELLENT FRIENDS OF PARK PROGRAMS "POUNDING FLOWERS" - FREE PROGRAMS	7
9	TOURING MAPS OF EXTRAORDINARY VIEWS, SCENIC ROADS	6
10	LARGE TRACTS OF UNINTERRUPTED LAND - WILDLIFE HABITAT - BIODIVERSITY - CONSERVATION ETHIC - EDUCATION/SPEAKERS/BUREAU/ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS	6
11	CONSIDER CONSERVATION EASEMENTS, OTHER PRESERVATION TOOLS	6
12	NEED PROGRAMS FOR PRE-TEENS AND TEENS	5
13	ENCOURAGE SIDEWALKS AND BIKE LANES WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT AND ROADS - AND EXISTING COMMUNITIES	5
14	OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE 3,000+ ACRES NORTH OF CONEMAUGH LAKE	5
15	INDIANA COUNTY HAS EFFICIENT AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF; GROUNDS ARE WELL MAINTAINED	5
16	ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES - INEXPENSIVE GROUP ACTIVITIES (SOCIAL INTERACTION)	5
17	"OUT MY BACK DOOR" ACCESS TO TRAILS, GREENWAYS, AND OPEN SPACE FOR NON-MOTORIZED USE - CONNECT IUP, SHOPPING, HOUSING	5
18	SHARE COUNTY PARK AND PLANNING EXPERTISE WITH LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS	4
19	NEED GREAT PLACES TO FISH - STOCKED	4
20	PROMOTE EMPLOYERS TO MAKE RECREATING EASIER FOR EMPLOYEES - ADVOCATE RECREATION FOR JOB ACCEPTANCE AND RETENTION - INCLUDE PARKS NEAR TRAILS	3

**PUBLIC MEETING #2 BRAINSTORMING
- JUNE 17, 2003, CONT.**

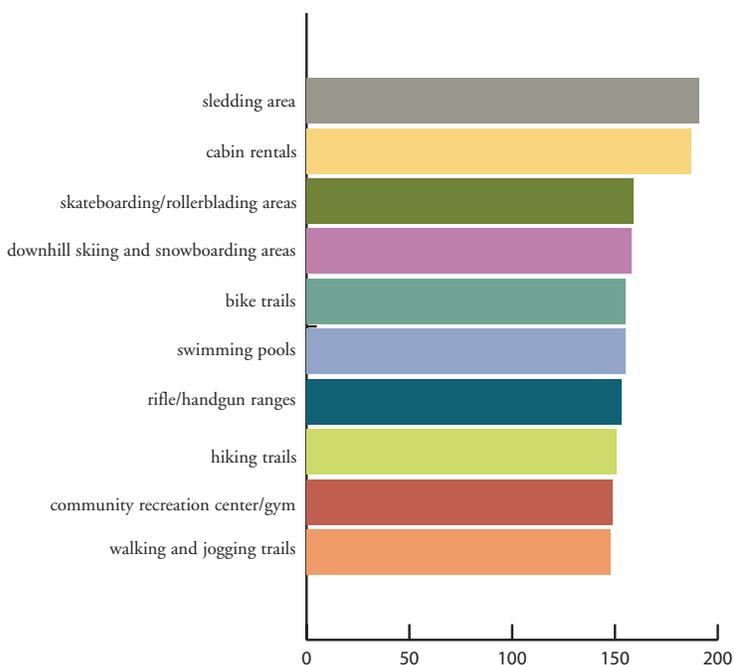
	<u>issue</u>	<u>votes</u>
21	IUP COLLEGE LODGE - NEXT TO WHITE'S WOODS, NEED TO PRESERVE! OLD FARM, SKI AREA	3
22	ARMY CORPS PROPERTY IS UNDER-UTILIZED. THEY NEED TO BE MORE INVOLVED AS RECREATION PROVIDER/HIKING AND MOUNTAIN BIKING	3
23	PLANNING FOR GROWTH - INCLUDE PARKS	3
24	EASI - ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE FOR SENIOR INVOLVEMENT - NEED TO START A CONSERVANCY; FUND-SET-UP TROUT UNLIMITED	2
25	IDENTIFY AND MAINTAIN "BUFFERS" AROUND PARKS	1
26	DIFFERENT KINDS OF PARKS - VOLLEYBALL, OTHER ACTIVITIES	1
27	YELLOW K - IMPORTANT BIRD AREA - WORKING TO MAKE CREEK STATE PARK AN IMPORTANT MAMMAL AREA	-
28	PROVIDE A MCKEEVER-LIKE PLACE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL AGES	-
29	"HEARTS AND PARKS" - PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES OPPORTUNITY - NATIONAL PROGRAM SPONSORED BY CDC	-
30	CONSIDER TRAIL AND PARK USERS PAY FOR USE; NEED MECHANISM TO DONATE MONEY DIRECTLY TO PARKS	-
31	PROVIDE SAFE PLACES IN PARKS	-
32	LACK OF LEVEL, PROGRAMMABLE SPACE-MARCHING BAND FOR EXAMPLE	-
33	NEED FOR QUALITY ADULT SOFTBALL FIELDS	-
34	SKATE PARK/BMX COURSE	-
35	BOATING - MORE AWARENESS OF EXISTING AREAS - MORE OPPORTUNITIES IN COUNTY	-
36	TRAPPING - LOST TO DEVELOPMENT - HISTORIC ACTIVITY	-
37	CONTINUE/ENHANCE/REACH OUT TO YOU IN REGION	-
38	HELP PEOPLE BECOME AWARE OF EVENTS - WORD OF MOUTH, SIGNS	-
39	ATV/DIRT BIKE USE - CONTROVERSIAL - TRAIL USE ADDRESSED - IS A FORM OF RECREATION	-
40	COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT - FOCUS ON PUBLIC LANDS AS WELL AS PRIVATE PROPERTIES	-

RECREATION SURVEY

In July, 2003, 3,000 recreation surveys were mailed to a random selection of Indiana County households. Three hundred and sixty-one (361) completed surveys were received and tabulated by the consultant for a response rate of twelve percent (12%).

Q-1. From the following list, please check the box representing your opinion on the number of recreational facilities needed in the County. Skip the facility if you have no opinion.

The ten facilities with the highest weighted averages are listed below.



Q-2. Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 indicates strongly agree and 5 indicates strongly disagree.

The weighted averages of the responses to each statement are identified below. The responses are listed according to their ranking from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). The largest number of respondents indicated that they are in the highest level of agreement with statement #8.

PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS NEAR WHERE I LIVE ARE WELL MAINTAINED. **3.5**

PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS NEAR WHERE I LIVE ARE ADEQUATELY POLICED. **3**

THERE ARE ENOUGH PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS CLOSE TO WHERE I LIVE. **3**

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO RECREATION AREAS NEAR WHERE I LIVE MEETS MY NEEDS. **3**

BOROUGH AND TOWNSHIPS IN MY AREA SHOULD BE PROVIDING MORE PARKS. **2.8**

INDIANA COUNTY SHOULD BE PROVIDING MORE PARKS. **2.8**

PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS AND PROGRAMS NEAR WHERE I LIVE ARE ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DISABILITIES. **2.75**

THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS NEAR WHERE I LIVE IS GOOD. **2.6**

PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS NEAR WHERE I LIVE ARE OPEN AT TIMES CONVENIENT FOR ME. **2.6**

MORE SHOULD BE DONE TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF RECREATION AREAS AND OPPORTUNITIES. **2.4**

The survey response rate was 12%.

Q-3. Do you feel that parks enhance your quality of life?

NOT AT ALL 7%
SOMEWHAT 44%
SIGNIFICANTLY 49%

Q-4. From the following list of priorities for funding, please rank them in order of importance 1 through 5. 1 is the most important.

The weighted averages of the responses to each statement are identified below. The responses are listed according to their ranking from most important (1) to least important (5). The largest number of respondents (51%) identified #2 as a highest priority.

PROVIDE MORE PROGRAMMING AT LOCAL PARKS.
3.4

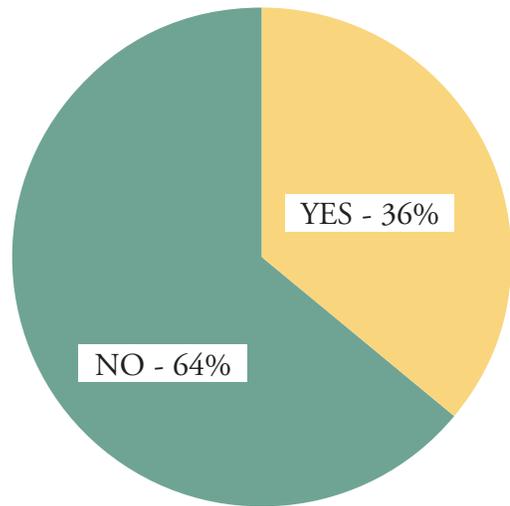
ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL LAND AND WATER AREAS FOR DEVELOPED RECREATION.
3.2

DISTRIBUTE INFORMATION ON RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.
2.9

PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS AT COUNTY PARKS.
2.8

MAINTAIN EXISTING PARK AND RECREATION AREAS.
1.8

Q-5. Can you easily find information on recreational activities, parks, and sports leagues?

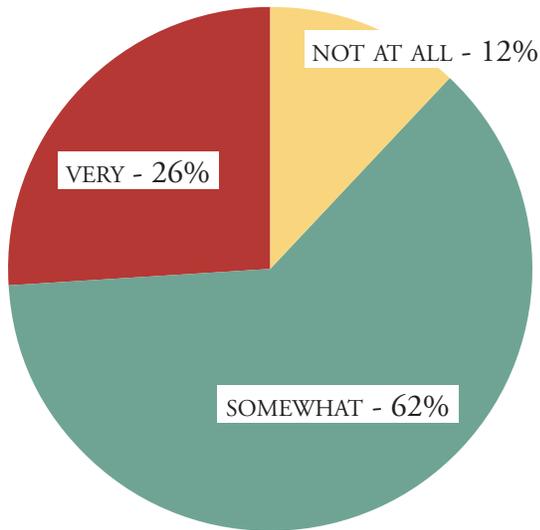


Q-6. How many visits do you make to each Indiana County park during a year?

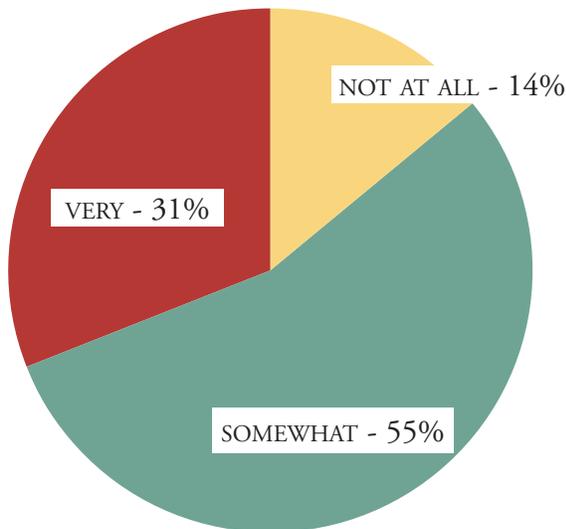
	<u>never</u>	<u>1-5</u>	<u>6-12</u>	<u>12+</u>
1. BLUE SPRUCE	39	231	51	23
2. PINE RIDGE	232	83	5	8
3. HEMLOCK LAKE	264	44	6	3
4. MEMORIAL PARK	156	137	23	9
5. GHOST TOWN TRAIL	182	129	10	10
6. BLACKLICK VALLEY	289	26	4	0
7. ELIZA FURNACE	255	57	4	3
8. HOODLEBUG TRAIL	158	116	26	29
9. BUTTERMILK FALLS	241	79	4	1
10. TUNNELVIEW	279	35	6	2

64% of respondents cannot easily find information on recreational opportunities.

Q-7. How important are the Indiana County Parks and Trails to your household?



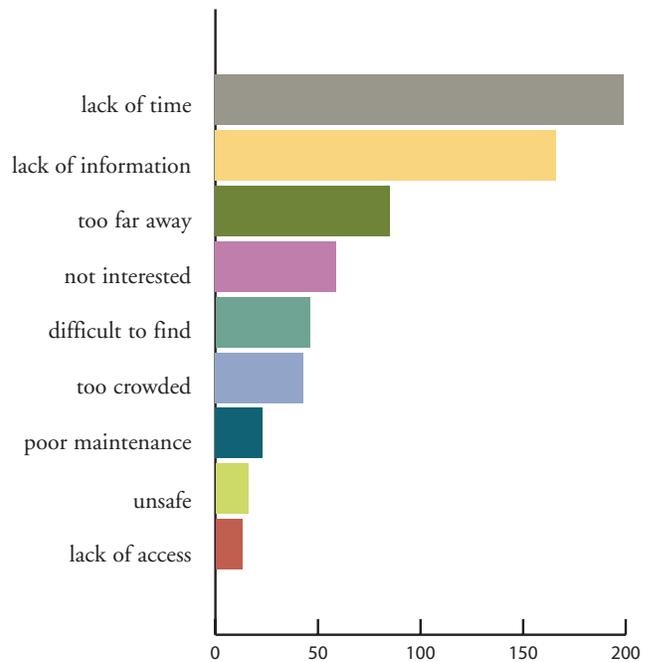
Q-8. How important are greenways, open space, and trails to your household?



Q-9. How far are you willing to travel to visit an Indiana County Park?

- 1. 0 TO 15 MINUTES **16%**
- 2. 16 TO 30 MINUTES **57%**
- 3. 30 TO 45 MINUTES **27%**

Q-10. What factors prevent members of your family from using Indiana County park facilities? Circle all that apply.

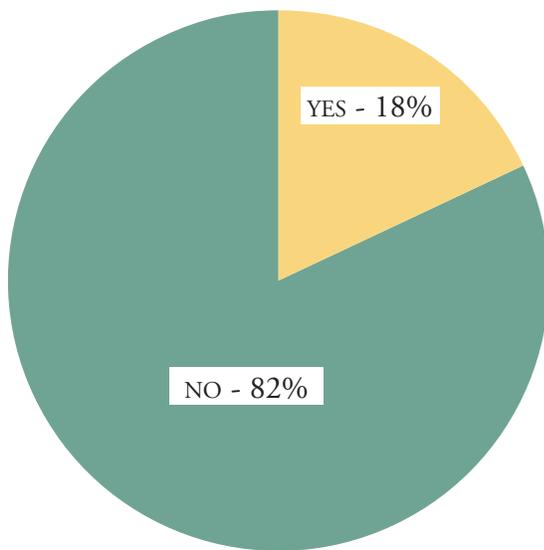


88% of respondents think the Indiana County Parks and Trails are somewhat or very important.

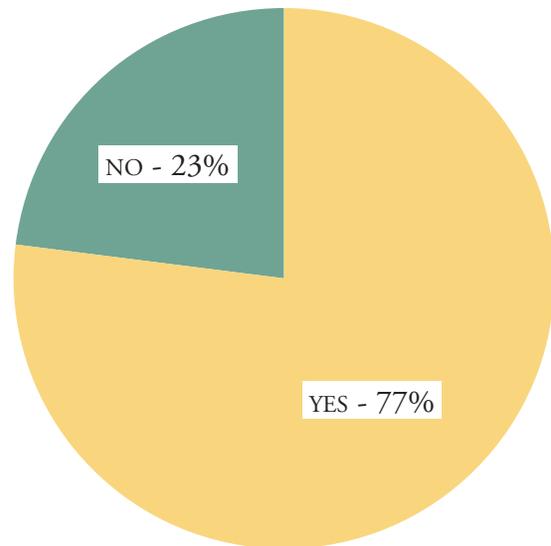
Q-11. If a non-profit Indiana County Parks and Trails foundation was created for the purpose of acquisition of additional park land, how much would your household be willing to contribute each year?

1. \$10/YEAR - 26%
2. \$20/YEAR - 18.5%
3. \$50/YEAR - 9%
4. \$100/YEAR - 1%
5. \$500/YEAR - .6%
6. NONE - 44%

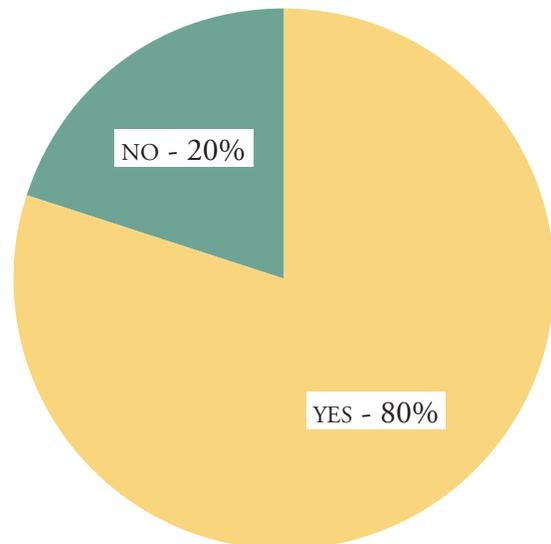
Q-12. Should Indiana County consider charging a user or entrance fee to County Parks to make more funds available for park maintenance and operations?



Q-13. Should outdoor recreational opportunities for tourism be expanded and enhanced?



Q-14. Do you consider your community a safe place to walk and ride a bike?



56% of respondents would contribute to an Indiana County Parks and Trails Foundation.

Q -15. Please circle the number of people in your household in each age group.

The ages of the population represented by the survey respondents closely reflects the ages of the County’s total population.

	<u>survey</u>	<u>2000 census</u>
0-9	10%	10.7%
10-14	6%	6.2%
15-19	9%	9.3%
20-34	15.5%	22.3%
35-64	47.5%	36.7%
65+	12%	14.9%

Q-16. What is your zip code?

15618 (Avonmore / Edmon)	.28%
15681 (Saltsburg)	2.77%
15701 (Indiana)	44.88%
15713 (Aultman / Homer City)	.28%
15717 (Blairsville)	11.63%
15724 (Cherry Tree)	1.66%
15725 (Clarksburg)	2.22%
15728 (Clymer)	5.54%
15729 (Commodore)	.83%
15732 (Creekside)	1.39%
15742 (Glen Campbell)	1.39%
15747 (Home)	2.77%
15748 (Homer City/Graceton/Waterton)	8.59%
15759 (Marion Center)	3.32%
15765 (Penn Run)	1.94%
15771 (Rochester Mills)	.83%
15772 (Rossitor)	1.66%
15774 (Shelocta)	2.77%
15777 (Starford)	.28%
15920 (Armagh)	.55%
15949 (Robinson)	.55%
15957 (Strongstown)	.83%
16256 (Smicksburg)	1.11%

17. Feel free to provide additional comments regarding Indiana County’s parks and recreation opportunities, including your likes and dislikes, using the space below.

A copy of the recorded comments were provided to the County, separate from this document.

KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

Throughout the development of this plan, the Consultant conducted twenty-eight Key Person Interviews. The interviewees were identified by the Study Committee as individuals who could provide valuable input regarding parks and recreation issues in Indiana County. This survey technique was used as an additional way to understand and document the needs of area residents. The following is a summary of responses from the twenty-eight people interviewed.

1. What are the strengths of the Indiana County Parks and Trails System?

- Distributed well throughout County and very accessible 15
- Size adequate for County's needs 4
- Diverse activities and options 12
- Programs 5
- Friends of Park program is excellent and highly recommended 3
- Varied outdoor programs 2
- Do an excellent job in light of their limited resources
- Trail system 5
- Ghost Town Trail is a great family trail 2
- Has developed lots of interest
- High quality administration/director and progressive 9
- Ed Patterson 4
- And his assistant
- Availability 5
- Used extensively
- Provides an outlet for IUP's students
- Excellent care and maintenance of what exists 5
- Christmas lighting is beautiful 3
- Parks are beautiful 3
- Good facilities 2
- There's a park for big kids and one for little kids too
- Good and clear vision of what needs done 2
- Unique cross section of parks
- Boating

- Hemlock Lake's wilderness
- Blue Spruce's wilderness and developed options
- Fishing
- Swimming
- Hiking
- Walking
- Excellent website
- Master gardeners program
- Innovative
- Environmentally well handled; Pine Ridge does a great job of utilizing naturally occurring materials
- Peaceful and serene
- Widely used
- Officials that are sent for training; training program is excellent
- Excellent community participation in programs
- Progressing (acquisition of new land)
- Good security
- Excellent overall
- Good commission support
- Wide variety of ground
- Ordinances protecting parks and rec. are upheld
- Dog friendly
- Inexpensive
- Not crowded
- Serves a wide scope of ages
- There is good County support and good boards
- Zoning board keeps them nice
- Don't know; there aren't any in the Northern part of the County to have strengths

2. What are the weaknesses of the Indiana County Parks System?

- None 6
- Funding (not enough) 6
 - Maintenance workers underpaid
 - Subject to political whims
 - Need more to maintain good upkeep
- Need more awareness of what exists 3
 - Not advertised well enough
- Not enough bike trails and connections to existing parks 2
- Vandalism 2

“The Ghost Town Trail is a great family trail.”

- Northern part of County has no recreational opportunities 2
 - Mediocre facilities options
 - No facilities for extreme sports
 - No bus routes to take people to parks
 - Get rid of geese
 - No pool
 - Need a place to rent bikes
 - Especially on Hoodlebug Trail and Indiana
 - Field use is overpriced for intramural activities
 - IUP has ceased to use facilities for this reason
 - Understaffed, though they still do an excellent job
 - Need more wiggly bridges in parks
 - Too many cultural objects; gas wells and timbering ruins the landscape
 - That I'm not real familiar with what exists
 - Ghost Town Trail stream could be cleaned up
 - The attempt to link Rails to Trails doesn't include Yellow Creek State Park and it should
 - Severely lacking in wintertime activities
 - Need quiet winter sports; cross country skiing, ice skating, etc.
 - Too limiting in some areas; prohibition of alcohol, fires, swimming, fishing, etc. prevents from using parks; perhaps if there was a large group event, there could be an additional fee for alcohol allowance; there ought be restrictions of course, but there are too many as they are now
3. Are there specific facilities the County should consider adding to the County Park System?
- More bike/hiking trails 7
 - Need better and increased networking and interconnecting 2
 - Horse trails 2
 - No 5
 - Just Ghost Town Trail finished
 - More fields 4
 - Soccer
 - Public swimming facility 3
 - Existing pool too crowded
 - Restrooms 3
4. What do you feel is the most urgent need facing parks & recreation in Indiana County?
- All ages multi-purpose facility 2
 - Use Louisville, CO as a model
 - Need parks in Northern part of County 2
 - Need parks along the creek
 - Better parking
 - Skate park
 - Ice skating area/rink
 - Bus routes to parks
 - Indoor facilities; field houses, gyms
 - Cross country ski rental
 - Little children's wading pools (see Europe)
 - Depends on what becomes available resource-wise; as long as there's money to support it, can't have too much
 - Some picnic shelters/pavilions at Hemlock Lake
 - Anything that's put in needs protected from vandalism
 - Need better and more trail markings/guides and educational markings as well
 - Rails to Trails system is still operating independently of County Parks System; need integrated and connected into each other
 - Outdoor basketball courts
 - Large rustic amphitheater for plays, concerts, etc. (clam shell-like stage)
 - Bandstand
 - Assess the different quadrants of the county; determine if availability is appropriate to each; add if necessary
 - Ewings Mill along 422; it's the oldest working water turn and needs work and revitalization
 - Dog park

“More biking and hiking trails are needed.”

- Protect from further development 2
 - Protect from any more well drilling or timbering 2
 - Need resource extraction prevention
 - Preservation of more open space
 - Extension of bike trails in/to Northwood and Indiana borough
 - Many people don't know who to call to reserve facilities/find out about what's available, etc.; needs to be a core person. A bit unapproachable now
 - Public restroom facilities in the Borough
 - Maintain what exists
 - Increase funding for increased need
 - Could use more staffing
 - More courts
 - More fields
 - Rails to Trails system finished; development security
 - Funding commitment
 - Getting people out there
 - Need to link all the parks by bike trails (need to tie system together)
 - Strong leadership
 - Acquisition of additional land
 - Parks and recreation are under utilized; public doesn't know enough about them
 - Parks and recreation in Northern part of County
5. Are there any locations in the County that could benefit from additional County parks and/or recreation services? If so, where and what?
- No 7
 - Northern part of County 7
 - Mahoning Creek needs parks, canoes, fly fishing, etc.
 - Specifically Northwest; Smicksburg 2
 - Smicksburg has become a very popular area; could benefit from a County park
 - Don't know 6
 - Northwood and Indiana extension of bike trails: the railroad would be ideal for this
 - Tool Lake; environmental open space preservation
- East Pike Road bike trail and recreation area; expand
 - Any place
 - Saltsburg area
 - Basketball courts at Mac. Park and Getty Heights
 - Pine Ridge- horse trails
 - Place for ATVs
 - Hardened trails and regulate hours
 - Maintain what exists; especially the new trail
 - Blue Spruce needs more playgrounds
 - Maybe down towards Brush Valley
 - Assess different quadrants of the county; determine if availability is appropriate to each; add if necessary
6. Should the County provide more recreational programming? What kinds of programs? (Festivals, camps, interest groups...)
- Yes 15
 - Cultural programs expanded 2
 - Summer concerts
 - Look into what's needed and promote it if there's an interest 2
 - In Northern part of County 2
 - There are no Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts or anything else for that matter
 - Anything for kids
 - Passive parks need more in nature programming
 - Advertise better what exists
 - Conservancy initiative; preserve areas
 - Environmental day camps
 - More activity-based recreational opportunities for the casual user
 - As long as there's enough money to back it
 - Nature and family oriented
 - Elderly programming
 - Dog space
 - Rock climbing class
 - Children's programs of minimal expense
 - More arts and crafts
 - Cross country skiing clinics
 - Fly fishing clinics

“The northern part of the County could benefit from additional County parks and/or recreation services.”

- Orienteering
 - Mini triathlon
 - Adventure racing
 - Paddling
 - Orienteering
 - Mountain biking
 - Organized bike rides
 - More organized activities; people won't get active unless its organized
 - Need to mobilize resources
- No 10
 - Friends of Park program covers all programming needs 2
 - Leave this to the municipalities or at the most work together 2
 - No place to put more athletic events; overbooked
 - Need to harness more volunteerism for this
 - The County ought to facilitate opportunities for people to provide programming 3
 - Need to mobilize existing resources
 - County can't afford to do programs, but volunteers could if there was a way to
 - Don't know
7. How can Indiana County develop stronger public support for parks and recreation services?
- Continue advertising in local media 12
 - Newspapers 6
 - Maybe do some big articles featuring the parks and what's available
 - Radio 3
 - Newsletter 2
 - Emails
 - People need to know what's available 4
 - Provide new families moving in to area with a packet on parks and rec. in Indiana County along with historical opportunities; Smicksburg, IUP, etc.; put them together rather than everything staying independent of each other (perhaps Chamber of Commerce could help with this to cut down on costs for County parks and rec. budget)
- Need more advertising and more elaborate than newspaper blurbs
 - Continue existing website 2
 - Word of mouth 2
 - Flyers 2
 - Organize a committee/volunteers to put together festivals highlighting each park throughout usable times of year; highlight what makes park unique and make each park the center of attention in its own individual festival
 - Continue what they're doing in the trails (attracts a different user base)
 - More publicity needed for overall opportunities; need a joint effort and not just publicity of independent parks, especially for White's Woods, White Twp., and Indiana Borough
 - Well marked signs
 - Don't know
 - Open discussion and long range planning in educating public
 - Continue this process and in addition ask kids at schools for feedback (do survey of them)
 - Organized outreach program to get people to parks
 - There's strong support now; the system is well thought of
 - Rails to Trails if hitting a broader range of people; need to continue on that track and better integrate this system into parks
 - Keep them clean and interesting
 - Keep them as close to nature as possible
 - Change people's attitudes; there's more to life than TV and Bingo
 - Provide pamphlets on business bulletin boards for employees; this avoids a solicitation problem
 - Have a direct deposit option from paychecks for donations (like United Way does)
 - Present slide presentations for service clubs
 - Let people know what a great and extensive job that is being done with such limited resources
 - Has to start with county commissioners
 - Meet with people to get something going in Northern part of County

“More publicity is needed for recreational opportunities.”

8. Do you have an opinion on the current parks and recreation management and administration?
- It is excellent 10
 - They are underpaid for the quality of work that they do 5
 - Ed Patterson does miracles with the funding he's given 4
 - Patterson just doesn't get enough accolades from "those in charge"
 - Very good 7
 - Especially in light of their limited resources 2
 - Pretty good 3
 - Except that they need to have more volunteers adopt-a-park for clean up
 - Competent director
 - Just need more money for maintenance
 - Limited knowledge, but what I know is positive 3
 - High quality
 - Progressive in changes in facilities
 - Positive; easy to deal with
 - Tough to break in bureaucracy
 - No - no involvement with Northern part of County
9. From your experience(s), do you feel the County parks are well maintained?
- Yes 27
 - Except that there's too much mulch in the playgrounds; get splinters and it gets in your sandals
 - But I don't really know as there's nothing in the North
 - No
 - Vandalism is a major problem
10. What kind of relationship should exist between Indiana County and:
- Municipalities that have parks & recreation departments?
 - Cooperative 9
 - * Share facilities 4
 - * Coordination and bring public schools into the equation; all these areas are taxpayers' money areas - integrate them to make seamless whole
 - * Share programs 2
 - * Share maintenance 2
 - * Share equipment
 - * Working relationship 2
 - Prevent duplication of services 6
 - Increased communication 4
 - Needs to be strong and valuable 3
 - * Not sure how to do this
 - Need to stay separate but munic. could go to County for information, consultation, ideas, and technical support 3
 - Joint council of administrators 2
 - * County-wide committee to coordinate recreation at state, county, and local levels; "umbrella group"
 - Leadership role ought to be the County's
 - None; if municipality wants something, that's their business and responsibility 2
 - * Avoid bureaucracy
 - County parks can't take place of municipal parks but they need to work together even in spite of their different priorities 2
 - Don't know 2
 - Hold regional meetings to give people access to the meetings in N. part of County
 - Municipalities ought to pay fee for County parks
 - Look for economic resources
 - Develop programs
 - Integrate parks and recreation
 - County parks don't need fields, etc. if municipalities do
 - Cohesiveness
 - Mutually beneficial
 - Friendly relationship
 - County could help publicize parks
 - Joint security concerns
 - Need fewer independent commissions
 - Currently not able to maintain a professional staff; this needs to change

“Current parks and recreation management and administration is excellent.”

- Everyone just needs to work together
- None
- The key is that the park system is optimized; not who's in control of it
- If it's sensible for the County to maintain munic. parks (efficiency, fundraising, expertise, knowledge, etc.) then do it
- Don't have people in there that say one thing and do another
- Complementary rather than competitive
- Need to stay autonomous
- Municipalities with parks, but no departments?
 - County could/should assist in developing parks 3
 - County ought to play a major role
 - * If it has the money
 - Need a key individual to promote municipality's opportunities - full-time or very committed part-time 2
 - * Needs connected to County recreation and maybe township
 - None; if municipality wants something, that's their responsibility 2
 - County should take lead and offer services 2
 - * But not necessarily finance it
 - Notify County/keep in touch 2
 - Township supervisors need to reach out and need to have committees with an active role in parks and recreation
 - County could develop a security plan
 - How do they function?
 - Municipality ought to promote County parks and rec.
 - Talk and discover feasibility
 - County could act as department and let municipality know what exists
 - If the municipality doesn't want it, then the County could explore it
 - Different priorities, still need to work together
 - Complementary rather than competitive
 - Cooperative; need to be part of unified whole
 - Everyone just needs to work together
- All could use each others
- The key is that the park system is optimized; not who's in control
- If it's sensible for the County to maintain munic. parks (efficiency, fundraising, expertise, knowledge, etc.) then do it
- Don't know 2
- Municipalities with no parks in their jurisdiction?
 - County could/should assist in developing parks/work together 7
 - * County should play a major role
 - * Need green space; if there's a need then the County should fill that need
 - * But not necessarily finance it
 - Don't know 4
 - * Depends on money
 - Need to recognize that some can't have parks 2
 - None 2
 - * If munic. wants something, that's their business and responsibility
 - Municipality's responsibility, but needs to keep the County informed
 - Until municipality wants a park, they're "out of the loop"; munic. needs to take initiative
 - Township supervisors need to reach out and need to have committees/boards with active interest and involvement with parks and recreation
 - Municipality ought to promote County parks
 - Don't have any like that and County already has enough parks
 - County could act as department and provide for any outstanding needs
 - If the municipality doesn't want it, then the County could explore it
 - There shouldn't be a huge wall between users and controllers of parks; should collaborate more
 - There are enough County parks in centralized locations that municipalities probably don't need any more
 - Cooperative; need to be part of a unified whole

- Inexcusable
- Everyone just needs to work together
- If the County puts in the park, the munic. won't take care of it
- County could keep munic. informed as to what's going on
- Key is that the park system is optimized; not who's in control
- If it's sensible for the County to maintain munic. parks (efficiency, fundraising, expertise, knowledge, etc.) then do it

11. Additional comments.

- Build with idea of attracting and keeping people in community
- County really needs to provide more money for those people/positions already in place
- Safer areas to bike; never can have too many trails; this is problem mostly in White Township
- Rails to Trails group; need coordination with parks
- Need to protect environmentally pristine areas
 - * Need to do a biodiversity study and first discover what we have
- Need to recognize IUP's relationship to parks and recreation; need awareness and influence/role that IUP's staff and students play
- Allegheny arboretum needs better links to community; present plan to community to create awareness of how it will fit into long range plan; Jerry Pickering gave permission to give/use his name and contact in this process
- Great program for what they have
- Prefer more undeveloped land than developed land
- Strong supporter and hold the Indiana County parks and rec. in the highest regard
- There is a budget crisis however; don't have adequate resources
- Really need professionals to assess needs and act accordingly as to what needs done to fulfill those needs
- There are 2 dump sites that are going to be

- available for public ownership down the road; County needs to have a broader vision and needs to move to make that ownership happen
- Yellow Creek and other parks are under utilized and many people don't know they exist; they all really need promoted and we need to somehow figure out how to get the word out
- There is a definite disparity between what County parks and rec. employees get paid and what County courthouse employees get paid; parks and rec. people work more hours and for less money; this needs looked at and amended
- IUP's relationship to area parks and rec. needs looked at; why aren't more students utilizing the great programs available? IUP's recreational opportunities have died from lack of interest
- The state is too restrictive with grants; legislators need to make this a bigger priority; Marion County doesn't qualify for grants and it should
- There is nothing in the Northern part of the County; Township supervisors keep the roads clear but do little else. They need to form committees and be a lot more active in these areas

Chapter 3



Chapter 3

Vision and Goals for the Future Recommendations and Implementation

Successful long-range planning begins with a Vision or “picture” of how recreation, parks, and open space in Indiana County should appear sometime in the future. The Goals will provide specific guidance for the implementation of the recommended actions.

By developing a methodology that works in simple, clear steps, an agency can understand and communicate to staff and the general public where it wants to go (the Vision and Goals) and exactly how it can get there (recommendations). This is especially important when seeking support for a new program, special event or facility. People will be more inclined to support a project if it is an important part of the overall Vision for the future.

How do residents of Indiana County see parks and recreation in their community years from now? To arrive at the Vision and Goals for the County, the consultant analyzed the results of the public participation process, including study committee and focus group meetings, public input sessions, key person interviews, and the results of the citizen survey. During the course of this analysis, the consultant looked for ideas consistently mentioned throughout the public process. These elements were then used to form the Vision and Goals.

Included in each section of this chapter is a goal for the future of recreation and parks in Indiana County. The goals are broad in nature and are based upon community issues raised through the planning process. The goal statements reflect themes that were identified through the public input process and collectively comprise the Vision for the Future. These goals also provide the organizational structure for the implementation of the recommendations and direction for the future of recreation and parks in the County.

V I S I O N A N D G O A L S F O R T H E F U T U R E

Vision

Parks, recreation, and open space provide significant benefits to the County's high quality of life. Indiana County is dedicated to maintaining and improving the parks, recreation, and open space its citizens use and enjoy.

Goals

The County will work to **strengthen cooperation** among local communities, the county, state and federal governments, non-profit organizations, private landowners, businesses and other groups and individuals, in order to implement the strategies of this plan.

Provide and maintain a **comprehensive park and recreation system** throughout the County that will include local, county, state, and federal park properties.

Develop an **extensive countywide trail system** to include non-motorized, bicycling, hiking, and walking trails that run along side roads and streams and through the county's business districts, parks, neighborhoods and open spaces.

Support the efforts of local, regional, and state partners, both public and private, to implement an **interconnected system of greenways and open spaces that protect the natural environment**.

Provide the resources necessary to **maintain the Indiana County Parks and Trails system** as the foundation of the county system, providing regional parks and recreational opportunities for persons of all ages, interests, and abilities.

Aggressively pursue a **variety of funding opportunities** for additions, improvements and acquisitions to the county parks.

Capitalize on **opportunities for recreational and nature based tourism**.

Advance the county economy in a sustainable manner.

Promote active, healthy lifestyles for all Indiana County residents.



These recommendations will provide guidance to the decision-makers of Indiana County and those parties responsible for the implementation of recommendations. Successful implementation of this Plan will depend upon the fiscal and political climate in any given year. Therefore, it is essential that the County monitor, review, and prioritize the strategies on an annual basis prior to the budgeting process.

Each recommendation was assigned a ranking of High, Medium, or Low. This prioritization was developed with input from the Study Committee and County staff and officials. A high (H) ranking suggests that the strategy be implemented in the first one to two years following the adoption of this Plan. Medium (M) ranking strategies are to be implemented in the third to sixth year and Low (L) ranking strategies are to be implemented in the seventh to tenth year.

Cost estimates are also included for each strategy. It will be important for the County to be up-to-date on future funding sources. Detailed cost estimates should be developed as a particular recommendation is selected for implementation.

STRENGTHEN COOPERATION

GOAL

The County will work to strengthen cooperation among local communities; the county, state, and federal governments; non-profit organizations; private landowners; businesses; and other groups and individuals, in order to implement the strategies of this plan.

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
1	Post this Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan on the County Parks website.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
2	Develop a publicity plan to encourage cooperation among agencies and municipalities for parks, recreation, and open space.	H	ICOPD	\$500	Indiana County	
3	Provide a page on the County Parks website discussing how organizations can cooperate in implementing the strategies for this plan.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$500	Indiana County	
4	Provide training and education opportunities for organizations and agencies to better understand how they can cooperate with others in improving parks, recreation, and open space in the County.	M	ICOPD and Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$500	Indiana County	

COMPREHENSIVE PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM

County Park Planning Goals

(from General Management Guidelines for the Administration of the Indiana County Parks and Trails System)

GOAL

Provide and maintain a comprehensive park and recreation system throughout the County that will include local, county, state, and federal park properties.

Planning for future development and operation of the park system is an important management responsibility. To aid in future planning efforts, a series of general guidelines have been established. They are:

- Physical features, development, and visitor use should be limited to only that necessary to accomplish management goals of the park.
- Acceptable development or rehabilitation of a park will be undertaken only to the extent that it aids in the preservation and enjoyment of the park; and offers environmentally acceptable access, including reasonable access for the physically and mentally challenged.
- The location and design of new facilities and development should be done in a manner which is guided by the environmental conditions of the resource area.
- All design, materials, facilities, and equipment needed in the operation of parks must consider the long-term operation and maintenance costs.
- In all programs, functions, and actions, the county park system should provide a wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities in an economically efficient manner.

County Park Criteria

(from General Management Guidelines for the Administration of the Indiana County Parks and Trails System)

Regardless of the classification of the resource area, as many of the following criteria as possible should apply to all county parks. County parks should:

- be complete areas with logical boundaries;
- have natural, historical, or recreational features of county-wide significance;
- be of sufficient size to allow adequate or reasonable use and contain a sufficient buffer from unwanted encroachment;
- contain features that are outstanding, unique or distinctive within the county;
- provide for, or be made to provide for, as many forms of outdoor recreation as reasonable;
- be of a scale or magnitude worthy for inclusion in the county park system.

Acquisition and Development

(from General Management Guidelines for the Administration of the Indiana County Parks and Trails System)

The acquisition of parkland is vital to the County park system and should continue in appropriate amounts to meet the needs of the future. Land and waters for parks and recreation uses should be acquired fee simple when possible, however, the county reserves the right to enter into lease agreements, easements or other appropriate conditions for properties that have significant park and recreational value.

Condemnation of private property for park and recreation purposes will be used only if other methods of property acquisition are unsuccessful and only as a last resort.

Indiana County Parks and Trails welcomes the gift of land, water, and structures for park and recreation purposes, provided such donations meet the criteria for county parks. Such gifts or donations should not contain provisions which would limit their use for the park and recreation purposes by the general public.

County Role in Local Parks and Recreation

The County's role in local parks and recreation should be primarily through the Indiana County Office of Planning and Development (ICOPD) in providing planning and technical assistance. The ICOPD should work with individual municipalities, as well as groups of municipalities, to provide information, administrative and technical assistance. They should strive to keep local municipalities aware of current standards for parks and recreation and available state and federal grant programs.

ICOPD should encourage local municipalities to undertake local planning efforts and, when possible, multi-municipal planning.

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
1	Utilize the ICOPD to provide information, administrative, and technical support to local municipalities in their efforts to upgrade their recreational facilities. This may include meeting with local recreation boards or elected officials, assistance in evaluation of facilities and recreational needs, encouraging cooperation with other municipalities or school districts, or assistance in planning efforts.	H	ICOPD	\$0	N/A	
2	Support organizations and local governments in their efforts to identify potential funding sources (provide technical assistance, fill out applications, identify grant sources, provide letters of support, and partner as co-applicants).	H	ICOPD	\$0	N/A	
3	Improve local park facilities that are shown as being in fair or poor condition in the inventory charts on pages 75-81.	H	Local municipalities	Varies by facility	DCNR Grant and local municipal funds	
4	Undertake a County-wide project to conduct Playground Safety Audits at all local playgrounds.	H	IOCPD	\$20,000	DCNR and Indiana County	
5	Bring all local playgrounds into compliance with current playground safety standards. The Playground Safety Audits will identify needed improvements.	H	Local municipalities	Varies by facility	DCNR Grant and local municipal funds	
6	Encourage the development of multi-municipal parks and recreation planning. Small rural municipalities should develop multi-municipal plans that include a specific section dealing with local parks and recreation. More populated areas such as the Indiana Borough/White Township area, Center Township/Homer City area, and Blairsville area should consider development of Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plans. Master Site Plans may need to be developed for individual parks.	H	IOCPD	\$15,000 - \$50,000 each	N/A	

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
7	Local municipalities should utilize the DCNR Small Communities Grant Program to improve playgrounds and undertake park improvements.	H	Local municipalities	Varies by facility	DCNR and local municipal funds	
8	Implement the Blairsville Waterfront Greenway Master Site Plan	H	Local municipalities	See the Master Site Plan	DCNR and local municipal funds	
9	Assist local communities in identifying opportunities for the development of a regional skate park.	M	ICOPD	\$0	N/A	
10	Assist in the implementation of the Old Smicksburg Park Master Plan by identifying grant sources, assist with grant writing and providing technical assistance.	M				
11	Strengthen cooperation with the Army Corps on Engineers to increase awareness of an access to recreation opportunities at Mahoning Dam, such as hiking, fishing, and hunting. This will fulfill the deficiency of County parks in the northeast corner of the County.	I	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
12	Create a website to serve as a clearinghouse of information on recreation opportunities throughout the County. Visitors to the site will be able to find information on the are parks including hours of operation, available facilities, activity schedules, programming, and contact, reservation, and registration information.	I	Indiana County IT Department	\$0	N/A	
13	Adopt and ordinance barring ATV use in County Parks to prevent environmental degradation.	I	ICOPD	\$0	N/A	
14	Revise the County Parks General Guidelines concerning Acquisition to reflect its current position of being selective about the locations and types of land it is willing to acquire.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	

GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

As a rural county with many natural areas, Indiana County has unique opportunities for the development of a successful greenway and open space system. County government, from a vantage point which permits a county-wide outlook, is uniquely positioned to update documentation of conservation efforts, highlight achievements, and identify key areas in need of protection.

In developing a County greenway and open space system, key components include: riparian buffers, woodlands, forested areas, agricultural lands, and other areas of natural significance.

Waterways are often important parts of a greenway and open space system. When planning the extent of greenway corridors that include waterways, it is important not to limit protected areas to narrow strips of vegetation paralleling the stream. Because they are intended for conservation, greenway corridors should not only include the stream valley, but also sensitive natural features associated with the stream. The size of the riparian buffer needed to protect stream quality should be carefully considered. Buffer areas help to control sedimentation, reduce pollution associated with runoff, affect air and water temperatures, provide habitat for wildlife supported by the stream, and enhance the quality of recreational experiences. The importance of adequate riparian buffers as an essential factor in water and habitat quality cannot be over-stressed.

When implementing greenway development, feasibility studies will be needed to more closely determine the boundaries of natural areas in need of protection and the appropriate use for each area.

GOAL

Support the efforts of local, regional, and state partners, both public and private, to implement an interconnected system of greenways and open spaces that protect the natural environment.

Develop an extensive countywide trail system to include non-motorized bicycling, hiking, and walking trails that run along side roads and streams and through the County's business districts, parks, neighborhoods, and open spaces.

POTENTIAL GREENWAYS IN INDIANA COUNTY

There are several greenway opportunities within Indiana County. Greenways could conserve natural areas, provide recreational opportunities, and link key community resources. The County's natural features are important assets that help define the County's rural character. Identification of riparian corridors and natural areas for protection will ensure these important resources are protected as future development may occur. Within key greenway connections, recreational trails may link important destinations such as county parks, historical sites, and local recreation facilities. The designation of a greenway corridor encourages a systematic approach to natural resource conservation, historic preservation, and development of a county-wide trail system.

As previously explained in the summary of the Pennsylvania Greenways Plan, Indiana County should undertake the development of a County Greenways Plan. This plan will look at greenway opportunities throughout the County. As a starting point, the following potential greenways should be explored in greater detail.

Little Mahoning Greenway

The Little Mahoning Greenway will create a east-west corridor running through the northern section of the County. The potential greenway follows the Mahoning and Little Mahoning Creeks and runs through seven townships. The potential greenway also includes the State Gamelands in Grant and Banks Townships and Hemlock Lake County Park.

Hubs

- State Gamelands #174
- State Gamelands #262
- Hemlock Lake County Park

Plumville Greenway

The Plumville Greenway connects Plumville to the Mahoning Greenway in South Mahoning Township.

Hubs

- Plumville recreation facilities
- Plumville to McCormick Trail (proposed)

Crooked Creek Greenway

The Crooked Creek Greenway is in the west-central portion of the County. The potential greenway runs from the town of Shelocta at the County's western edge to Blue Spruce County Park. The historic Thomas Covered Bridge is along the way.

Hubs

- Shelocta recreation facility
- Creekside recreation facility
- Blue Spruce County Park
- Thomas Covered Bridge
- Ernest Recreation Facility (planned)

Two Lick Greenway

The Two Lick Greenway runs from the Hoodlebug Greenway through the Two Lick Reservoir to the town of Clymer.

Hubs

- Two Lick Reservoir
- State Gamelands #248
- Clymer recreation facilities

Hoodlebug Greenway

The Hoodlebug Greenway runs through the south-central portion of the County between the Conemaugh River at Blairsville and Indiana Borough. This Potential Greenway follows the Hoodlebug Trail for much of its route.

Hubs

- Hoodlebug Trail
- Indiana Borough recreation facilities
- Homer City recreation facilities
- Indiana County Mack Park
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Blairsville Borough Recreation Facilities
- Burrell Township
- Pine Ridge County Park
- Center Township Recreation Facilities
- Gamelands #153
- Gamelands #276

Yellow Creek Greenway

The Yellow Creek Greenway would link the Hoodlebug Greenway with Yellow Creek State Park.

Hubs

- Yellow Creek State Park
- State Gamelands #273

Conemaugh River Greenway

The Conemaugh River Greenway follows the River along the County's southern border. This Greenway is a portion of the proposed Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway and also includes a feeder from Aultman Run.

The West Penn Trail serves as the beginning of this greenway. It is a twelve-mile trail from Saltsburgh to the Westinghouse Plant near Blairsville.

Hubs

- Saltsburg recreation facilities
- Tunnelview Historic Site
- Historic Blairsville
- State Gamelands #153
- Buttermilk Falls County Park

Black Lick Greenway

The Black Lick Greenway runs through the southeastern corner of the County from the Hoodlebug Greenway to the Eliza Furnace Historic Site near the County's eastern border, following the Ghost Town Trail.

Hubs

- Pine Ridge County Park
- Ghost Town Trail
- Eliza Furnace Historic Site
- Black Lick Valley Natural Area
- State Gamelands #79

Susquehanna Greenway

This greenway begins at Cherry Tree and travels through Clearfield, Centre, Clinton, Lycoming, Union, Northumberland, Columbia, Luzerne, Wyoming, and Bradford Counties. It also includes the West and North Branches of the Susquehanna Water Trail.

Hub

- Cherry Tree Borough

Greenways and Trails Plan

A key step following adoption of this County Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan is to complete a Greenways and Trails Plan to make specific recommendations for future designation of greenway corridors and development of recreational and commuter trail connections. Some of the elements this plan should address include:

- identify county-wide trail connections and opportunities for open space conservation;
- identify trail routes that link key destinations (including schools and parks) throughout the County;
- provide guidelines for the development of countywide trails and greenways projects;
- update the existing Indiana County ordinance that create protective buffers around the County Parks;
- develop a plan for the voluntary protection of private properties surrounding the County Parks;
- identify opportunities to connect with regional trail systems that extend beyond County borders;
- plan for interpretive signs along trails;
- provide benches along trails;
- identify opportunities for equestrian trails;
- evaluate the possibility of a trail along the Conemaugh River;
- evaluate where undeveloped property abuts county parks and identify areas where acquisition of open land for open space buffers would be appropriate;
- ensure ease of access for trail users to the Hoodlebug and Ghost Town Trails; and

- clearly define Indiana County's role in the acquisition, development, and maintenance of future trail projects.

Indiana County Natural Areas Inventory (NAI)

Indiana County should conduct a Pennsylvania Natural Areas Inventory to gather information on unique natural resources, which will guide the designation of greenway corridors.

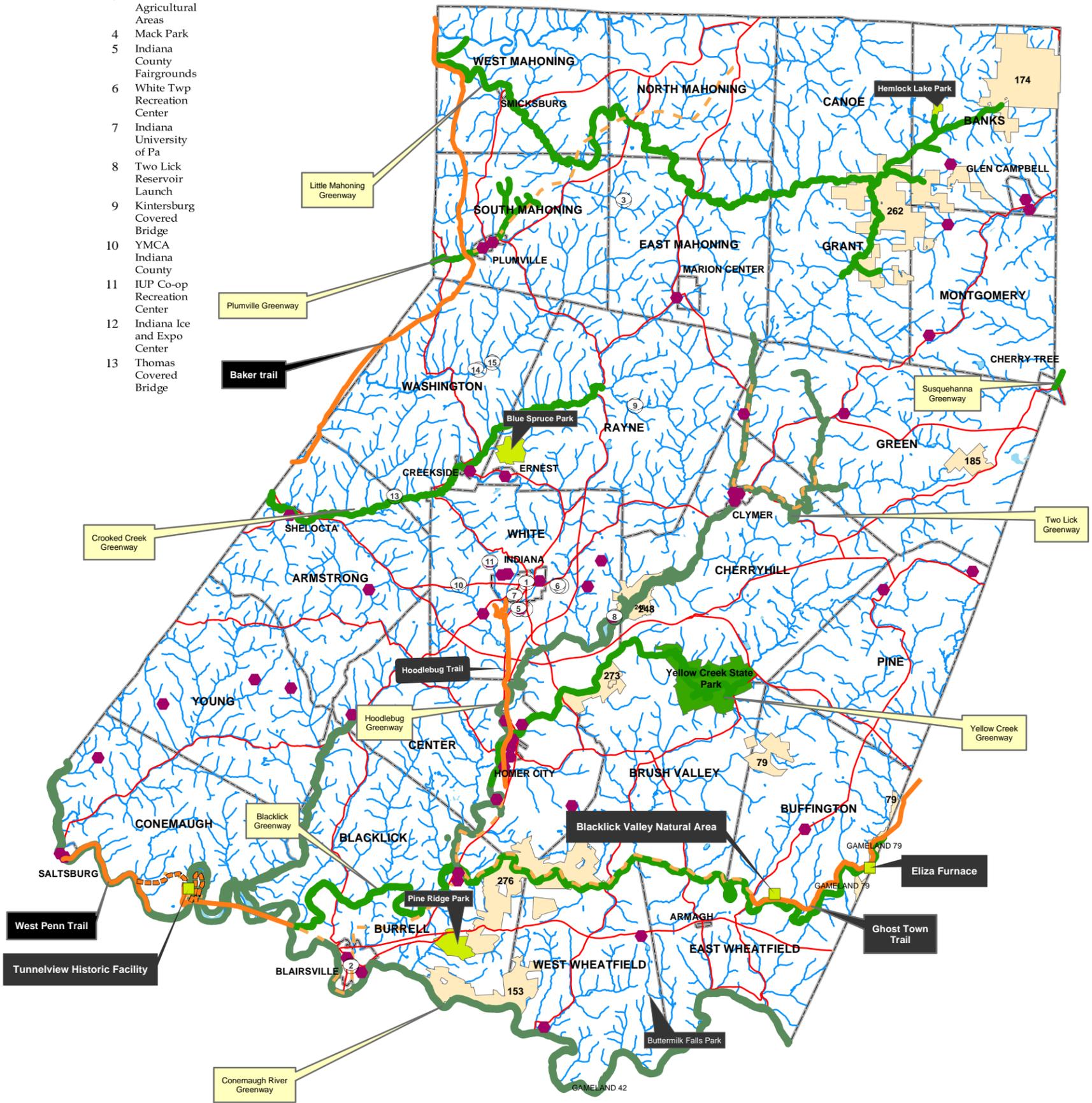
NAI is a partnership between the Bureau of Forestry, the Nature Conservancy, and the Western PA Conservancy to conduct inventories and to collect data to describe the Commonwealth's rare and most significant ecological features. These inventories include plant and animal species of special concern, rare and exemplary natural communities and outstanding geologic features. Site-specific information describing these features is stored in an integrated data management system created from map, manual, and computer files. The goal of NAI is to build, maintain, and provide accurate and accessible ecological information needed for conservation, development planning and natural resource management.

The County Inventory Program is an extension of the PNDI efforts. The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and the Pennsylvania Science Office of The Nature Conservancy are working toward completing inventories for all of Pennsylvania's counties by 2006. The information collected through the inventory is used by county planners to help guide development away from environmentally sensitive areas, while economic development groups and developers can use the inventories to look ahead, anticipate potential conflicts and plan accordingly, saving time and money. The inventories can also help land trusts, park and greenway planners, and watershed associations select land to consider for nature preserves.

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
1	Conduct a county-wide Natural Areas Inventory	H	ICOPD	\$0	DCNR	
2	Complete a County Trails and Greenways Plan to identify county-wide trail connections and opportunities for open space conservation.	H	ICOPD and Indiana County	\$40,000	County and DCNR	
3	Finalize and approve the county's Bicycle Pedestrian Plan that was developed by the ICOPD.	H	ICOPD and County Commissioners	\$1,000	Indiana County	
4	Provide coordination assistance to local recreation and open space organizations in their efforts to implement county-wide trail and open space projects.	H	ICOPD and Indiana County	\$0	N/A	
5	In addition to trails for exercise and recreation, provide and promote trails as an alternative form of transportation (e.g. by linking key destination, providing trail heads).	M	Interagency Cooperation	unknown at this time	County and DCNR	
6	Pursue opportunities for the development or designation of bicycle lanes along roadways as they are constructed or repaired	M	Interagency Cooperation	\$0	N/A	

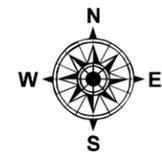
Key Destinations

ID	DESCR	ID	DESCR
1	Historic Downtown Indiana	14	Trusal Covered Bridge
2	Historic Blairsville	15	Harmon Bridge
3	Scenic Agricultural Areas		
4	Mack Park		
5	Indiana County Fairgrounds		
6	White Twp Recreation Center		
7	Indiana University of Pa		
8	Two Lick Reservoir Launch		
9	Kintersburg Covered Bridge		
10	YMCA Indiana County		
11	IUP Co-op Recreation Center		
12	Indiana Ice and Expo Center		
13	Thomas Covered Bridge		



Legend

- ⊙ Key Destinations
- Municipal Parks
- Proposed Trails
- Existing Trails
- County Parks
- State Park
- Gamelands
- Municipal Boundaries



Indiana County, Pennsylvania
 Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan
 Greenways and Trails Plan

Information used to create this map was obtained from the following: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
 Indiana County Data Processing Department
 Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania

MAINTAIN THE INDIANA COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS SYSTEM

GOAL

Provide the resources necessary to maintain the Indiana County Parks and Trails system as the foundation of the county system, providing regional parks and recreation opportunities for persons of all ages, interests, and abilities.

Recommendations for the completion of master plans for County Parks are included in this plan. The list below represents desired park features identified through the public process for this Comprehensive Recreation Plan. Accommodation of these facilities within the County Parks should be considered as the park master plans are completed.

- camping;
- outdoor amphitheater;
- sledding area;
- rental cabins;
- skateboarding, rollerblading areas;
- downhill skiing and snowboarding areas;
- biking, hiking, walking, and jogging trails; and
- rifle/handgun ranges.

Proposed Administrative Plan For Indiana County Parks and Trails

Roles and Responsibilities of Local and County Agencies

County Commissioners

- Adopt the Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan as the basis for building a strong parks and recreation program within the County.
- Maintain ultimate responsibility for all County Park operations.
- Supervise the County Parks Department in providing and maintaining countywide parks and trails.
- Establish a reasonable budget for parks and trails.
- Provide for and fund a long-range capital plan for County Parks.
- Appoint the County Parks Advisory Board.
- Maintain the vision for parks and recreation that the County residents have established through this plan.

County Parks Department

- Report to the County Commissioners.
- Administer, manage and maintain all County Parks and related facilities.
- Promote County recreation facilities and parks.
- Provide a county park system adequate to meet the leisure needs of Indiana County's population.
- Maintain facilities and areas in a high level of excellence.
- Cooperate with other agencies throughout the County who will provide recreational programming in the County parks.
- Maintain reasonable fees for the use of all County Recreational facilities and services.
- Provide efficient modern recreational facilities that are well maintained.
- Ensure that every individual in Indiana County has access to the County Park facilities.
- Constantly seek funding for new Park facilities.
- Provide local agencies and organizations with implementation assistance for countywide trail and greenway projects.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

- Reports to the County Parks Director and the County Commissioners

The Board must focus on achieving the mission and vision set for parks and recreation in the County, as adopted by County Commissioners. Details of operating the parks and recreation programs remain the responsibility of the park staff. Once County Commissioners adopt this Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan, it shall become the County's vision for parks and recreation for the future.

The Board should:

1. Play a lead role in keeping the County's vision current and focused. However, it remains the role of County Commissioners to adopt such changes as they see fit.

2. Serve in an advisory role to the County Parks Department and the County Commissioners. County Commissioners shall give specific rights and/or responsibilities in which the Board may not need to make recommendations back to County Commissioners.
3. Review and comment on County-wide trail and greenway projects identified by local municipalities, agencies or organizations as to how they fit within the recommendations of the County Parks, trails and greenway plans.
4. Be structured so that a variety of interests that are consistent with the County Parks philosophy are represented on the Board. It should geographically represent the County.
5. Include a County Commissioner as a liaison.
6. Advise County Commissioners on budgetary and policy matters that pertain to parks and recreation.
7. Serve as a county advocate for parks and recreation.
8. Monitor park facilities and make recommendations to County Commissioners for maintenance and/or improvements.
9. Assist in the publicity of the County Parks.
10. Review grant applications.
11. Encourage community groups to fill program deficiencies in the County.

Indiana County Office of Planning and Development

Coordinate with local communities to support development of local parks and recreation opportunities. Provide communities with information on grant sources; facilitate DCNR grant workshops; review and where appropriate, provide letters of support for local recreation development projects. Provide technical assistance in grant writing.

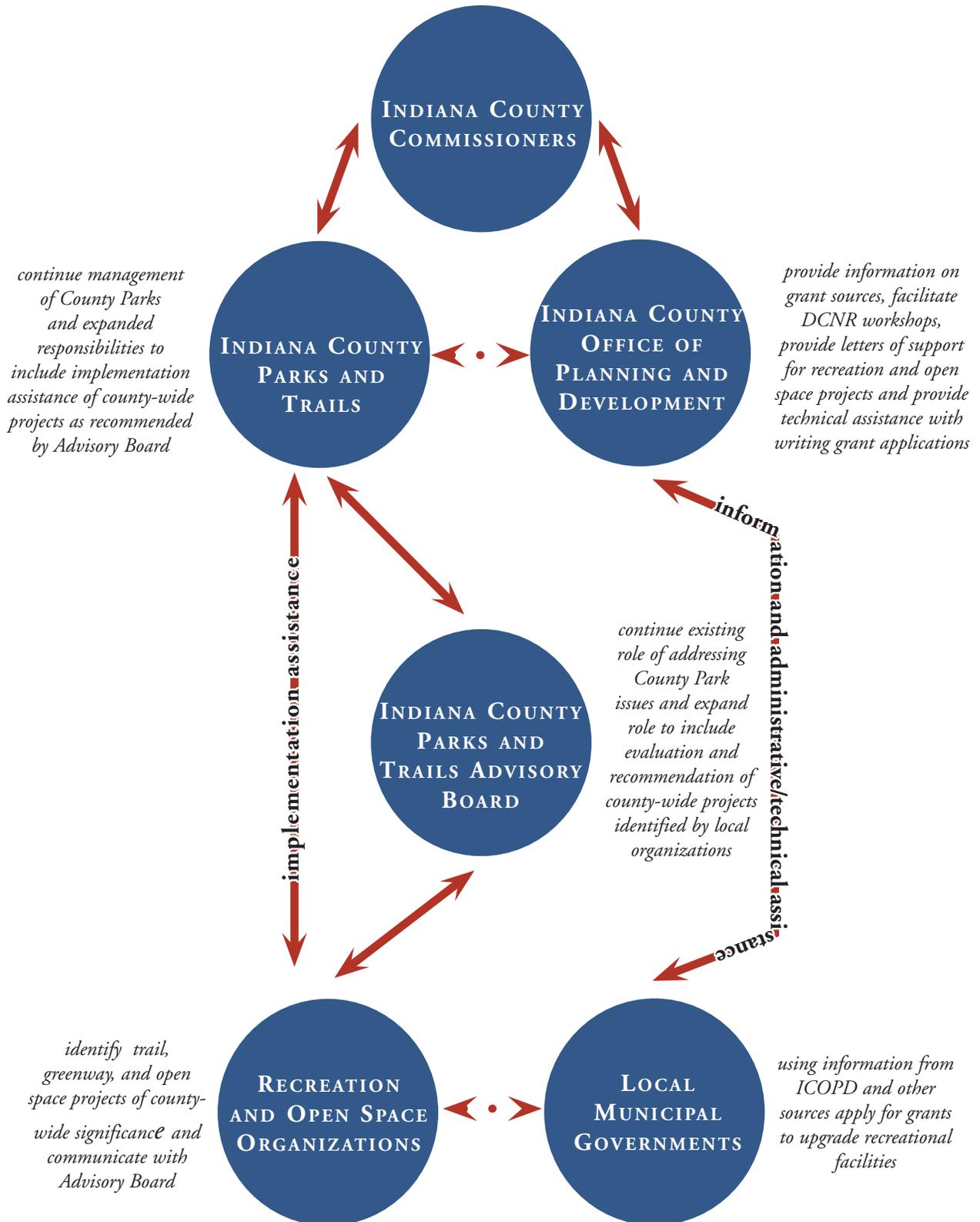
Local and Countywide recreation, trail and open space agencies and organizations

Identify trail, greenway and open space projects of countywide significance and communicate with the Indiana County Parks and Trails concerning these projects.

Local Municipal Governments

Work through the Indiana County Office of Planning and Development to receive educational and technical support for local recreation and park projects.

RECOMMENDED INDIANA COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
1	Continue to work with Friends of the Parks and other groups to provide environmental education programming in County Parks	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
2	Develop a Master Site Development Plan for Hemlock Lake Park to manage future development.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails		Indiana County and DCNR	
3	Increase Indiana County Parks and Trails budget to account for maintenance or the Hoodlebug and Ghost Town Trails.	H	County Commissioners		Indiana County	
4	Create a Trail Manager position (year-round) and a two-person seasonal crew within the ICP to manage, improve, and maintain County-owned trails.	H	County Commissioners	\$35,000	Indiana County	
5	County Parks Department to assure proper maintenance of all facilities	H	County Commissioners	\$40,000	Indiana County	
6	Upgrade the County Parks Department's Project Director's position to Assistant Parks Director. Responsibilities will include serving as liaison to the Parks Advisory Board for trail and greenway development, managing volunteers, fundraising, and project management and implementation.	H	County Commissioners	\$10,000	Indiana County	
7	Revise the Resolution that creates and gives authority to the Indiana County Parks and Trails Advisory Board to reflect current enabling legislation and the existing status of the Board.	H	County Commissioners	\$0	N/A	
8	Institute term limits for members of the Indiana County Parks and Trails Advisory Board.	H	County Commissioners	\$0	N/A	
9	Facilitate an annual meeting of all local trail, greenway, recreation, and open space organizations within the County to identify potential project and opportunities for collaboration	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails Advisory Board	\$500	Indiana County	

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
10	Improve security in all County Parks. Post emergency phone numbers and 911; update and enforce park rules; have the County Sheriff's Department conduct regular patrols in each park; request local and state law enforcement agencies to assist in enforcement; utilize security cameras where appropriate.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails and Indiana County Sheriff	\$30,000	Indiana County	
11	Develop a plan to address all issues with Americans with Disabilities Act within the County Parks	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	unknown at this time	N/A	
12	Develop and appropriately fund a capital improvement plan to address deferred maintenance and needed improvements in all County Parks. See the proposed capital budget on the following pages.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails and County Commissioners	see Capital Budget Proposal	Indiana County	
13	Develop and appropriately fund a capital plan to address maintenance equipment needs for the Parks.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails and County Commissioners	see Capital Budget Proposal	Indiana County	
14	Develop and implement a risk management plan for the Indiana County Parks and Trails. See the description on the following pages.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails and County Commissioners	\$0	N/A	
15	Provide an annual tour of the County Parks for the County Commissioners to keep them informed of issues related to County Parks.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
16	Review the recommendations in the Master Plan for the Ghost Town Trail and implement those that have yet to be completed, placing particular emphasis on increasing awareness of the trail.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails			
17	Develop a publicity campaign for the County parks. Promote the County Parks website; distribute park brochures; provide informational programs to service, social and business groups; place public service ads on local radio and television.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$3,000	Indiana County	

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
18	Develop a Master Site Development Plan for Blue Spruce Park to manage future development and/or acquisition. The cost could be reduced by as much as 30% by conducting the master site plans for Pine Ridge and Blue Spruce Parks together.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$40,000	Indiana County and DCNR	
19	Develop a Master Site Development Plan for Pine Ridge Park to manage future development and/or acquisition. The cost could be reduced by as much as 30% by conducting the master site plans for Pine Ridge and Blue Spruce Parks together.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$40,000	Indiana County and DCNR	
20	Design and install a standardized wayfinding system directing visitors to County-owned parks. Include directional signs within the parks as part of the same system.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$50,000	Indiana County and DCNR	
21	Develop a volunteer program to encourage assistance in the County Parks.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
22	Develop a means of better utilizing IUP students, faculty and staff to assist with a variety of projects in the parks.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
23	Encourage the local municipality to improve the road leading to Blue Spruce Park.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
24	Implement the Long Term Actions as recommended by the Blacklick Valley Natural Area Resource Management Plan and Inventory. In particular, begin interpretive and educational programming to enable visitors to understand and appreciate the natural features of the site and their relation to the Blacklick Creek Valley.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails			
25	Review the actions recommended by the Master Plan for the Eliza Furnace and implement the appropriate recommendations.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails			
26	Renew the lease between Indiana County and the PA Fish Commission for the operation of Hemlock Lake as a County Park. The current lease expires in 2012.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
27	Expand the role of the Indiana County Parks and Trails Advisory Board to serve as the clearinghouse of information from local recreation and open space organizations and to recommend county-wide recreation and open space projects.	I	County Commissioners	\$0	N/A	
28	Conduct an economic impact study of the County Parks.	I	County Commissioners	\$20,000	Indiana County	
29	Develop a timber management plan for the County Parks.	M	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$10,000	Indiana County	

The chart below compares functions of the Board that are inconsistent with enabling legislation.

Function	Current Status	What the Original County Resolution Says	What Pennsylvania Enabling Legislation Allows	Action Required
Role of the Commission/Board	Advisory Board	Policy and operating Commission	Advisory or Operating/Policy	Resolve whether the Commission/Board is to be an advisory board or a policy/operation Commission. If the Commission is to be an Advisory Board, other sections of the resolution will need to be amended to reflect the change in role.
Organization Name	Indiana County Parks and Trails Advisory Board	Parks and Recreation Commission of Indiana County	At the discretion of the County	Amend the resolution to reflect the proper name.
Membership on the Board	Seven to nine	Five	Minimum of 5 Maximum of nine	Amend the Resolution to allow between five and nine members.
Officers	No officers required	Chairperson required. Other officers as deemed necessary by the Committee	Chairperson and secretary required. Other officers as deemed necessary.	Amend the Resolution to require a Chair person and secretary and allow other officers as deemed necessary by the Commission/Board. The Commission/Board must elect the appropriate officers.

VARIETY OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

GOAL

Aggressively pursue a variety of funding opportunities for additions, improvements, and acquisitions to the County parks.

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
1	Seek ways to leverage local and grant monies with each other to make the best use of available grants.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
2	Seek out ways to use funding from the Greater Indiana Endowment.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
3	Seek out ways to use a portion of the County "Bed Tax" for tourism related activities of the County Parks Department.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$0	N/A	
4	Create a 501(c)3 park foundation through which persons can contribute to maintenance, development or acquisition of County parks.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails	\$1,500	Private Donations	

Indiana County Proposed Capital Improvements Plan

	Year 1 2004	Year 2 2005	Year 3 2006	Year 4 2007	Year 5 2008	Year 6 2009	Year 7 2010	Year 8 2011	Year 9 2012
Blacklick Valley Natural Area									
Pre-fab Uni-sex Restroom #							\$10,000		
Pavilion 20' X 28' Laminate beam shelter #							\$25,000		
Interpretive Trail with signage *							\$10,000		
Total									
Blue Spruce Park									
Cummings Dam repairs *					\$1,000,000				
Water Repairs								unknown	
Parking expansion								\$150,000	
Playground Safety Surface Replacement #	\$3,000								
Playground #1 Replacement						\$100,000			
Playground #2 Replacement				\$75,000					
Pavilion #1 repairs *			\$15,000						
New Comfort Station #				\$40,000					
Buttermilk Falls									
Accessible trail to falls							\$25,000		
Pre-fab Uni-sex Restroom #									\$10,000
Pavilion 20' X 28' Laminate beam shelter #									\$25,000
Eliza Furnace									
Interpretive signage *	\$10,000								
Ghost Town Trail									
Pre-fab Uni-sex Restroom #						\$10,000			
Pavilion 20' X 28' Laminate beam shelter #						\$25,000			
Bridge rehab at Dilltown *#					\$4,500				
Blairsville Secondary Trail Extension *	\$360,000								
Hemlock Lake									
Road Rehabilitation *		\$20,000							
Pedestrian bridge construction *#							\$10,000		
Hoodlebug Trail									
Construct missing links-FMC and Martini *	\$60,000								
Pre-fab Uni-sex Restroom (2) #	\$20,000								
Memorial Park									
Sidewalk repairs *			\$11,500						
Landscaping, lighting and tree work *			\$12,500						
Pine Ridge Park									
Playground #1 Replacement (Tom's Run)		\$75,000							
Playground #2 Replacement (Tom's Run)		\$100,000							
Playground #3 Replacement (Pine Lodge)			\$100,000						
Pine Lodge Playground Safety Surfacing	\$3,000								
Pine Lodge Road resurfacing *				\$40,000					
Tom's Run Road Sealing *				\$10,000					
Water storage tank for maintenance *			\$3,000						
Tunnelview Historic Site									
Restroom and sidewalk improvements *								\$2,000	
Total for each year	\$456,000	\$195,000	\$142,000	\$165,000	\$1,004,500	\$135,000	\$80,000	\$152,000	\$35,000
GRAND TOTAL									\$1,908,500

*pricing taken from Indiana County Parks and Trails Major Maintenance/Capital Improvements Project List

#plus installation

OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATIONAL AND NATURE BASED TOURISM

GOAL

Capitalize on opportunities for recreational and nature based tourism.

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
1	Encourage visitors to come to Indiana County to enjoy its trails by implementing a regional marketing effort with the County.	H	Interagency Cooperation	\$3,000	Indiana County	
2	Develop scenic driving tours throughout the County.	I	Interagency Cooperation	\$0	N/A	
3	Capitalize on the local history of Indiana County, its sites and events to draw visitors from outside the County.	I	Interagency Cooperation	\$0	N/A	

ACTIVE, HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

GOAL

Promote active healthy lifestyles for all Indiana County residents.

	recommendation	priority	agency	cost estimate	funding source	record of action
1	Indiana County, as well as local municipalities should become Keystone Activity Zone Partners and implement appropriate programming and initiatives to encourage active, healthy lifestyles.	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails and local municipalities	\$3,000	Indiana County Parks and Trails, local municipalities, KAZ	
2	Utilize the Keystone Activity Zone Passport to encourage elementary students visit County parks and trails during the summer months	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails and local municipalities	Unknown	N/A	
3	Partner with the PA Department of Health to implement appropriate components of the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP).	H	Indiana County Parks and Trails and local municipalities	\$0	N/A	

Keystone Activity Zone (KAZ)

The Keystone Active Zone (KAZ) Campaign is a fun-filled promotion designed to make Pennsylvanians aware of the many municipal, county, and state parks and trails available to help them get - and stay - active.

A program of PANA (Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity) in partnership with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society, the KAZ Campaign gives counties the tools to promote awareness of close-to-home parks and trails, and encourages increased physical activity to help residents lead healthier lifestyles.

In 2004, PANA recruited two pilot sites to test the implementation of the Keystone Active Zone campaign in 2005. The two counties chosen were Allegheny, an urban/suburban county; and Franklin, a more rural county. Each county has provided a unique model for implementation with barriers and strategies customized for their partnership and county assets.

Franklin County

The Franklin County partnership has been working together for several years under the leadership of the Franklin County Healthy Communities Partnership. Because the obesity epidemic has directly affected Franklin County, this has become a priority of the partnership. After developing the timeline and goals for the campaign, the partnership planned The Media Kick-off in May at the Chambersburg Municipal Park. The event brought together kids from the local elementary school and members of local AARP chapters, while highlighting park amenities and publicizing the website, the map, and the passport. Local media was present to take pictures and conduct interviews. In addition to the intergenerational celebration at the park, AARP sponsored a bus trip for its members to visit an additional two parks so they could become familiar with other places to be physically active. This event was titled

“Walk the Talk in the Park.” The KAZ passport was distributed to school age children targeted in four of the Keystone Healthy Zone (KHZ) Elementary schools in Franklin County for use with their families. A passport program also is being developed with AARP groups and senior center attendees, and will be implemented along with the KAZ campaign. Incentives for AARP chapter participation will be tied to the schools participating in the passport program so that AARP can contribute to the physical education programs at local schools. AARP members may also begin to work with local schools on other projects such as the walking school bus program as relationships develop. Both the young kids and the older kids enjoyed their day together and asked for additional opportunities to spend time together!

Pennsylvania State Health Improvement Plan

In July 2001, the Department of Health issued the State Health Improvement Plan - SHIP 2001-2005. It is to serve as a model for health planning in Pennsylvania. SHIP emphasizes the prevention of disease and disability, the coordination of resources, interagency collaboration, and improved government responsiveness to community health planning priorities. The State Health Improvement Plan's goals are as follows:

- To increase community empowerment by providing meaningful opportunity for community planning based on local needs;
- To link community-based health plans with the allocation of Commonwealth resources to the degree possible;
- To establish partnerships among local government, state, and local partners committed to sharing the risk, responsibility, and resources to foster the coordination of health resources along the spectrum of prevention, acute care, and long-term care; and
- To shift the mode of community health planning from a prescriptive model to a shared responsibility model.

