



Greenway Plan for
Darby Creek Watershed
Delaware County Planning Department

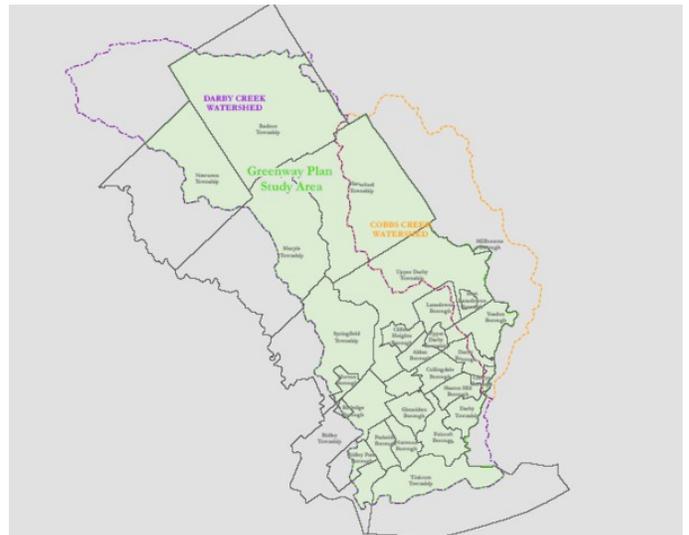
Delaware County, PA

Project Description:

The Darby Creek Watershed, including Cobbs Creek which is a major tributary, encompasses all or part of 26 municipalities in Eastern Delaware County and contains 123 linear miles of streams. The watershed drains through the federal John Heinz Wildlife Refuge and into the Delaware River. This area of the county includes highly developed first generation inner-ring suburbs which have been largely built out. Most of these communities are small boroughs located along rail and trolley lines and were developed as traditional walkable communities. While their lands have been largely developed, the many stream corridors feeding into the Darby and Cobbs creeks serve as some of the greatest assets of Delaware County.

The Darby Creek Watershed Conservation Plan conducted throughout 2000-2002 defined a “ribbon of green” vision for the Darby Creek watershed that would restore stream corridors, provide riparian buffers, increase open space and recreational opportunities, educate residents and foster inter-municipal cooperation on a watershed basis. With this as a vision and goal, the Delaware County Planning Department decided to develop a Greenway Plan for the Darby and Cobbs Creek Watershed as a prototype for the rest of the county’s greenways.

At the core of the Greenway Plan will be the “hubs and



spokes” of the watershed, with the hubs being areas for open space conservation and parkland for recreation as well as other cultural and town center destinations and the spokes being the green corridors that link the hubs. Different greenway types will be identified including road-based greenways, transit-oriented greenways and water trails. One segment, the Darby Creek Stream Valley Park, a segment of stream valley along the main stem of the Darby Creek in the most urbanized area,

will detail the design and site planning for a public trail alignment so there will early implementation projects coming out of the Plan.

Key partners in this project include the Darby Creek Valley Association, several County agencies, all of the municipalities along the Darby and Cobbs Creeks, Brandywine Valley Conference and Visitors Bureau, Heritage Commission of Delaware County, Delaware County Conservation District, and

the federal John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum.

The Delaware County Planning Department has conducted extensive analyses, held many public meetings and has developed a well-supported plan for the watershed with funding from a \$75,000 DCNR Keystone planning grant.

“Delaware County recognizes that greenways vary greatly in scale, ownership and function across our various watersheds and landscapes. Our vision is to look at greenways as creating connections between people and different destinations areas and open and natural lands, such as parks, woods, schools and downtowns as well as scenic areas, woodland resources and wildlife passages. The intent of this plan is to help initiate the many individual projects that will lead to overall development of the Darby Creek Greenway.”

*John Pickett, Director,
Delaware County Planning Department*

Amount of funds awarded, year and matching sources:

- 2005: \$75,000 Keystone funding
- Matching funds: Delaware County (\$75,000)
- In-kind: Agency Representatives and experts, hours of participation (\$5,000)