

Lessons Learned from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Conservation Landscape Initiatives

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“The Conservation Landscape Initiative approach challenges DCNR to position the conservation of our natural resources as the linchpin to sustainable communities and economies. It is extraordinarily complex work that requires that DCNR not only lead, but collaborate in powerful new ways with our partners inside and outside of state government. It calls on us – the heirs of Goddard and Pinchot – to bring new energy and vision to conservation in the 21st century, a time of unparalleled threats to our natural resources and to sustainable economic growth across this state. If not now, when? If not us, who? It is vital that we embrace this new role for our agency and this new practice of conservation.”

John Quigley, Acting Secretary, DCNR

1. Introduction: Purpose of the Study

Starting in 2004 and continuing to the present, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) created an integrated approach to the management, conservation and development of important “landscapes” throughout Pennsylvania. These Conservation Landscape Initiatives (CLIs), as they came to be called, created partnerships with communities, other state agencies, local governments, philanthropies, and nonprofits to develop and advance work toward landscape-specific goals. As of 2009, the Department has established seven CLIs: the Pennsylvania Wilds, Lehigh Valley Greenways, Laurel Highlands, Schuylkill Highlands, Poconos Forests and Waters, Lower Susquehanna, and South Mountain.

In January 2009, OMG Center for Collaborative Learning began to document and assess the CLI approach. The purpose of this effort is to improve and inform future implementation of the CLI work in the Commonwealth and to share this knowledge with others contemplating similar efforts. This report summarizes the key features, accomplishments, and lessons from this work.

As the CLIs are in different stages of development, we focused attention on the two most mature: the Pennsylvania Wilds and Lehigh Valley Greenways Initiatives. Due to limited resources, we took a more graduated approach to the other CLIs, developing profiles on the Schuylkill Highlands and the Laurel Highlands. Our interviews with the leaders of the remaining three CLIs focused on their perspective on the CLI approach overall. A description of the case study design is in Appendix A.

Over the past five years, the Department has gained considerable experience and insight into the development and management of CLIs based on what may be considered a combination of false starts and some mistakes as well as a number of extraordinary successes. There is much to learn from the work, as it provides a strong example of government leadership and agency transformation as well as substantial practical lessons on the nitty-gritty details of collaborative processes and the toil of implementing inter-bureau, interagency, intergovernmental, and inter-sector change.

The CLIs are bound to have lasting impacts on the regions themselves. We have documented substantial and tangible progress toward meeting goals. Perhaps most important, significant efforts were made to ensure the long-term stewardship of both the public lands and the character of the communities involved. Local governments and citizens in the CLIs have become interested in investing in stewardship more deeply. In the Lehigh Valley, for example, municipal Environmental Advisory Committees (EACs), which are small groups of appointed citizens, advise the municipal planning commission, park and recreation board, and elected officials on the protection and management of natural resources. Among state agencies, the initiative helped open the door for aligning strategies and greater leveraging of state resources in the CLIs.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the most pertinent of these issues and to discuss them largely in terms of strategic lessons. For more detailed information, we refer the

reader to the intensive case studies on the Pennsylvania Wilds and Lehigh Valley Greenways, and the profiles on Schuylkill Highlands and Laurel Highlands.

Key Evaluation Questions

Several major questions guided this work:

1. What was the major motivation of the Department to undertake the CLI approach: How did it evolve and why?
2. How did the CLIs come about? What were the major drivers, motivators to participate in CLIs from various perspectives?
3. Who are the key partners in the CLIs? How has the CLI work influenced partner organizations and communities? State government agencies? Local governments? Nonprofits? Other organizations and businesses?
4. What have been the major accomplishments of the CLIs thus far? And how did these come about?
5. What have been the major challenges and limitations thus far? How have DCNR and others worked to overcome these challenges?
6. What are the lessons to be learned for the Department, philanthropies, and other partners? What effective practices have the potential to be exported elsewhere?

The Organization of this Paper

This paper provides an overview to the approach and highlights the distinguishing features of the CLIs, the major accomplishments and shortfalls, and the major lessons emanating from the work. It is organized as follows:

- Background on the Conservation Landscape Initiatives
- The Seven CLIs
- Major Characteristics of the CLIs
- Lessons Learned
- Conclusions

2. Background on the Conservation Landscape Initiatives

A Change in Leadership and Strategic Perspective

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is a relatively small agency within the context of the Commonwealth, charged with managing the state's parks and forests, and administering a broad range of grant programs related to rivers, trails, greenways, local recreation, and regional heritage. It also provides information on the Commonwealth's geologic resources. While DCNR itself is new, its bureaus have a notable history of leadership that includes some of the greats in American land conservation and management. One of the most legendary is Maurice K. Goddard, who became the head of what was known as the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and

Waters (later the Department of Environmental Resources) in 1955 and remained until his retirement in 1974. Working for six governors, Goddard set the pace for bipartisan leadership in the area of land and water conservation.

In March 2003, Michael DiBerardinis was appointed by the newly inaugurated Governor Edward G. Rendell to serve as the second secretary of DCNR. At the time, DCNR might have been considered more of an amalgamation of bureaus rather than a cohesive organization. In 1995, DCNR was created from a reorganization of bureaus formerly part of other state agencies.¹ Once together in DCNR, the various bureaus did not work together to any great extent. For example, the bureaus of State Parks and Forestry remained highly independent units even though their lands often intertwined. In addition, the bureaus did not have much engagement with county or local government officials, with the exception of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. All were described as “silos,” in one way or another.

Secretary DiBerardinis and other members of DCNR’s leadership aimed to change this. No longer would business as usual be acceptable. An intensive planning process based on dozens of meetings with communities and constituents informed a new strategy for the Department, *Shaping a Sustainable Pennsylvania: DCNR’s Blueprint for Action*, with the following goals:

- Improve stewardship and management of state parks and forests
- Promote statewide land conservation
- Build and maintain sustainable and attractive communities
- Create outdoor connections for citizens and visitors

Fifteen recommendations, attached as Appendix B, constituted the core of the new strategy, increasing the agency’s efforts in ecosystem and resource management, economic development, land acquisition based on conservation or community connection goals, expansion of outdoor recreation, and empowerment of county governments to conserve land. Over time, the plan evolved and recommendations filtered into priorities, which then solidified into an approach with a number of distinctive features:

- The importance of helping communities feel connected with natural resources
- Encouragement of more active conservation stewardship throughout the state through a range of efforts
- Leveraging resources of other agencies and funders through partnerships toward mutually beneficial goals
- Improvement in the infrastructure, communications, outreach, and programming of Parks and Forestry

¹ During Governor Ridge’s administration (1995-2001), the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) was spilt into two departments: the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and DCNR. The Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, formerly part of the Department of Community Affairs, was incorporated into DCNR.

Perhaps the most important message taken from this process was the advice to the Department to find ways to work more closely with communities and constituents, and to do it in a way that focuses DCNR's resources on addressing the challenges of Pennsylvania's varied regions and landscapes—including the economic challenges in the communities adjacent to the natural resources—in an integrated fashion. This message would inform all of its work, including the development of new legislative initiatives and a range of practices to reach to out to urban as well as rural communities.² However, none were more directly influenced by this process than what emerged as an effort to bring the Department together as an integrated whole to work with communities on issues surrounding large and important landscapes in the Commonwealth.

As the primary stewards of public lands within the Commonwealth, DCNR leaders aimed to expand the public constituency for this work. They worked to invigorate the Department with a “new conservation ethic,” built on a century of conservation efforts in the state led by notable Pennsylvanians such as Gifford Pinchot³ and Goddard. This ethic would drive the Department to:

- Engage Pennsylvania citizens in its efforts to advance conservation and good stewardship
- Work on the ground in partnership with local communities and nonprofit organizations to articulate and advance a conservation agenda
- Create high-quality experiences in parks and forests so that visitors feel an increased commitment to conserve the natural resources

A highly participatory planning process:

DCNR executive staff traveled throughout the state in 2003 and met with over 2,000 citizens convened in groups to seek their input into planning for the agency's future.

The team visited 20 state parks, seven forest districts, and several heritage areas. They held more than ten formal stakeholder meetings and numerous informal meetings. Then they convened 13 meetings with county and local officials and interest groups to discuss priorities as they took shape.

Writing teams at the Department developed discussion papers addressing the priorities.

These papers included: conservation science and biodiversity; economic development in counties, cities, and towns; tourism and forest products; environmental education and stewardship; greenways and trails; land conservation; management of our lands; outdoor recreation; and private forestlands stewardship.

One hundred-forty stakeholders and staff participated in daylong planning sessions to share insight on the white papers and explore their overlapping strategies and goals.

These papers and the subsequent group review formed the basis of the action plan.

² These efforts include such notable work as an urban greening effort known as TreeVitalize; iConserve, a web based outreach and information tool; and policies focused on climate change, which are not part of this study.

³ Gifford Pinchot was the first Chief of the United States Forest Service (1905–1910) and the Governor of [Pennsylvania](#) (1923–1927, 1931–1935).

An approach began to take shape through a number of efforts that would encourage staff to work across bureaus. Hierarchy would be de-emphasized such that any staff person could step forward to assume more responsibility and entrepreneurship would be rewarded. This approach encouraged staff to reach out to the public to engage them, understand their needs, and partner with them to develop new enterprises, new programs, and a deeper degree of customer orientation. From the secretary's perspective, working with and actively engaging the public directly and through nonprofits and local governments on issues concerning the natural resources constituted much of what he considered to be "stewardship." Over time this "practice," as the secretary was inclined to call it, took shape in what are now known as Conservation Landscape Initiatives (CLIs).

3. The Seven CLIs

The strategy behind the CLIs is best described as highly emergent. Leadership crafted the approach in a classic "learning by doing" method,⁴ taking what they learned from one experience to the next. The earliest of the efforts, Lehigh Valley Greenways (LVG), provided much of the basic footprint of how to work with communities in partnership toward conservation goals. The Pennsylvania Wilds, a multi-agency Initiative of the governor, occurred in tandem with LVG and provided many of the tactical lessons to inform this emerging practice. Over time, the practice shaped up into a set of principles and approaches described as "ingredients."

DCNR'S INGREDIENTS FOR CLIs

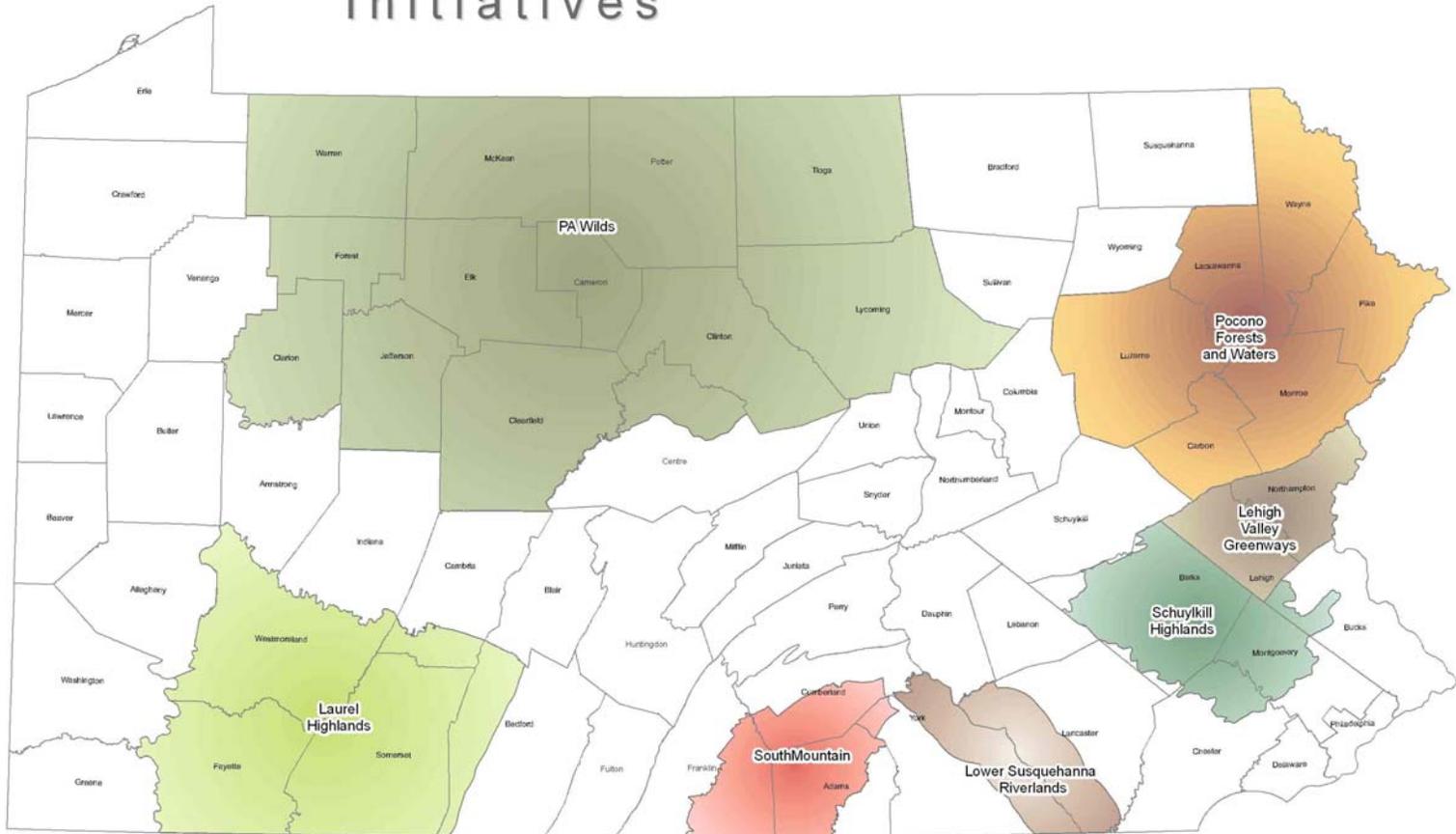
*"Driven by the **values of conservation, sustainability and community revitalization**, some of the ingredients that make a community or region ready to consider this kind of strategic collaborative approach include:*

- **Presence of DCNR-owned lands** – large blocks of state parks and forests provide the foundation for the landscape and a staffing presence that can help guide the initiative
- **Sense of Place** - regions with a sense of place and identity - many cases based on shared landscape not political boundaries
- **Readiness** - made more ready by opportunity or threats -- changes in the economic base, depopulation, or sprawl
- **Engagement** - Civic engagement process that brings people of the region together to identify common values and concerns.
- **Strategic Investments** – State agencies with regional and statewide partners provide high-level leadership, financial support and technical assistance to build better communities, to conserve identified values and to invest in "sustainable" economic development. Partnerships with state agencies and other statewide organizations are necessary to frame and incentivize the process."

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cli/index.aspx> Accessed October 6, 2009

⁴ Term coined by well-regarded corporate strategist Henry Mintzberg, author of "The Death of Corporate Strategy," *Harvard Business Review*, 1995. Henry Mintzberg, Joseph Lampel, and Bruce Ahlstrand. 1998. *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour through the Wilds of Strategic Management*. Prentice-Hall.

Conservation Landscape Initiatives



Updated: October 15, 2009



Legend

Laurel Highlands	Lower Susquehanna	Schuylkill Highlands Greenway
PA Wilds	Pocono Forests and Waters	South Mountain
Lehigh Valley Greenways		

The following are brief descriptions of each of the seven CLIs, intended to offer a snapshot of the area and the major challenges. A more detailed description is found in Appendix C and in the case studies.

The Pennsylvania Wilds was initiated by Governor Edward Rendell at the outset of his administration in 2003. The Initiative encompasses 12 counties with significant state land holdings: in total, there are over 2 million acres of public lands, including 29 state parks, eight state forest regions, 50 state game lands, and the Allegheny National Forest. It is one of the most rural and sparsely populated regions of Pennsylvania, containing only 4.1 percent of the state's population (slightly more than 1 million people).⁵ The nearly 2.1 million acres constitute almost a quarter of Pennsylvania's land area and the region is larger than nine U.S. states. These land holdings are comparable in scale and potential to national parks such as Yellowstone and the Great Smoky Mountains and are within a day's drive of 50 million people, yet the Pennsylvania Wilds still remain relatively unknown to those outside the immediate region. It is also one of the poorest areas of the Commonwealth.

The goals of the Initiative, established by a Governor's Task Force, aim to ensure stewardship of the public lands and character of the region's communities; support and grow private businesses such as accommodations, services, and locally made products; promote the renewal of the region's communities and appropriate community planning; and invest in public infrastructure to enhance the visitor experience in the Pennsylvania Wilds.

"Stewardship" came to mean many different things as the work in the Pennsylvania Wilds unfolded. For the internal constituency of DCNR, it meant having stronger connections to the public by increasing direct staff contact with the communities in the region and the visiting public. Ideas about strengthening stewardship are found in the thinking that advanced plans for more varied and higher-quality opportunities for visitors to engage with the natural resources. Also, increasing economic opportunity by linking business development to the natural resources features clearly throughout the work, based on the assumption that those who gain financially from the land will also advocate for its conservation.

Implementing this in an area as large as the Pennsylvania Wilds has been challenging. The region has little nonprofit infrastructure to draw on and is traditionally opposed to regionalism and government involvement in local decision-making. The leaders of the Pennsylvania Wilds directed much of their time and effort to building trust and communication with local leadership, while undertaking major infrastructure improvements in parks and forests. The work depended also on developing relationships with multiple state agencies, including the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and the Pennsylvania Game Commission—all sitting on a Governor's Task Force to oversee the effort. However, the Initiative was led by one agency, DCNR.

⁵ US Census, 2007 population estimates.

Much of the work undertaken centered on improving the infrastructure of the parks and forests in both large and small ways. Approximately \$120 million has been invested in the Pennsylvania Wilds for the purpose of infrastructure improvements to state parks and forests to advance the recreational goals of the Initiative. Several of the major infrastructure improvements made in the Pennsylvania Wilds include, but are not limited to:

- The development of the Elk Scenic Drive. The goal of the scenic drive was to disperse elk-viewing along a 127-mile corridor passing through Clinton, Clearfield, Centre, and Elk counties. It is comprised of two state scenic byways, routes 144 and 120, and passes through three state forests and three state game lands. The drive alleviates pressure in individual communities such as Benezette and spreads tourism's potential burdens and benefits to other communities and facilities.
- In Cherry Springs State Park thousands of amateur astronomers have noted that the park sits under the darkest sky east of the Mississippi. In response, DCNR has installed observation domes, low-impact lighting, and interpretive signage and updated park infrastructure to enhance dark-sky viewing opportunities. In 2006, the park installed a Night Sky Amphitheater with seating and telescope piers.
- Groundbreaking for a Nature Inn at Bald Eagle State Park took place in October 2008. This eco-friendly inn is the first of its kind in Pennsylvania and is slated to open in the spring of 2010. The inn will support the overarching goals of the Pennsylvania Wilds by providing a high-quality recreation experience designed to encourage stewardship among visitors, while bringing economic benefit to the area in a way that preserves the natural resources.
- Construction began on the Pennsylvania Wilds Elk Country Visitor Center at Winslow Hill in May 2009 and the grand opening is slated for the summer of 2010. The 8,400 square-foot eco-friendly building will be a premier elk watching and conservation education facility; will house interpretive programs; anchor wildlife trails and viewing blinds; and provide year-round restroom and parking facilities for visitors. Annual attendance is expected to reach 160,000 visitors per year by 2016.
- DCNR has invested heavily in the Clarion River Corridor with grants for new visitor amenities like restrooms near river access points, better signage and maps, additional fishing access, and improvements to boat launches.

Local governments, who were largely resistant to the Initiative at first, have become champions for the work, particularly around land use planning. The main organizational vehicle for promoting community planning and design activities associated with the Initiative is the Pennsylvania Wilds Planning Team. The 12-county partnership was formalized in 2005 through an intergovernmental cooperative agreement, the largest such agreement in the Pennsylvania in terms of geographic extent and the most significant example of regional cooperation in this area's history.

Importantly, tourism has increased significantly in the region during this time period in comparison to other areas of the state.⁶

- **Visits and visit length:** Overnight leisure travel increased 5.3 percent from 2003 to 2007 and overnight trip length increased from 1.97 days in 2003 to 2.36 days in 2007.
- **Visitor spending:** From 2002 to 2006, visitor spending within the Pennsylvania Wilds region resulted in a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of +6.3 percent versus +4.9 percent for Pennsylvania overall.
- **Tourism employment and earnings:** From 2002 to 2007, tourism employment in the Pennsylvania Wilds exceeded tourism employment in Pennsylvania overall (+0.5 percent versus -2.2 percent). Tourism earnings in the Pennsylvania Wilds exceeded tourism earnings in Pennsylvania overall (+5.4 percent versus -2.8 percent).
- **Tourism-related tax revenues:** From 2005 to 2008, state sales tax revenue growth for tourism categories in the Pennsylvania Wilds increased 2.7 percent versus an increase of 0.6 percent for Pennsylvania overall.

The Lehigh Valley Greenways Initiative was another early landscape-level project, dating back to 2004. Together with the Pennsylvania Wilds, it has helped define the CLI approach. The third largest metropolitan area in the state, the Lehigh Valley consists of Lehigh and Northampton counties and the cities of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton. It also contains some significant natural resources, such as the Minsi Lake Corridor, with ecologically important wetlands, and a part of the Kittatinny Ridge, which serves as a major flyway for migratory raptors and includes a section of the Appalachian Trail. Due to its proximity to New York City and northern New Jersey, the Lehigh Valley is among the fastest growing parts of the Pennsylvania. Unlike most other CLI regions, it includes little state land; there are no state forests and only two state parks. However, one of those parks, Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center, has been a leader in innovative community engagement and has served as a model for other parks throughout the state.

Building on a strong foundation of prior conservation planning and activity, DCNR's priorities in the region include helping communities deal with growth pressure, protecting important ecological areas, and using greenway and trail linkages to connect communities (including the urban communities) to the natural environment and opportunities for outdoor recreation. Partners in the Initiative have formed a Steering Committee, which includes several of Pennsylvania's leading land conservancies, a strong regional planning commission, and the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, which administers a mini-grant program and serves as the local lead for the CLI. These strong partnerships within the conservation community will continue to foster a more coordinated approach to conservation. An increased commitment to conservation and sound land use among local government is also likely to persist, especially in light of the fact that LVG has cultivated local advocates in the form of a growing network Environmental Advisory Committees (EACs). Nine new EACs have been formed and three model natural resources ordinances were developed. In addition, LVG has hosted successful

⁶ Data from Pennsylvania Wilds Program Evaluation Report by Econsult Corporation. Submitted to DCNR on July 31, 2009.

conferences and trainings that have drawn hundreds of people from the region. And, of course, the Initiative is producing tangible amenities in the form of trails, greenways, tree-lined neighborhoods, and preserved open space that will benefit Lehigh Valley communities for many years to come.

Schuylkill Highlands is centered at the intersection of the Pennsylvania Highlands and the Schuylkill River Watershed, encompassing large portions of Berks, Chester, and Montgomery counties and parts of Lebanon, Lancaster, Bucks, and Lehigh counties. DCNR-operated French Creek State Park and Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site are within the region. This CLI is one of the most populous of the conservation landscapes. Reading is the largest city and there are over 15 boroughs that are important anchors in the landscape, hosting a variety of businesses and industries, as well as cultural and historical assets. DCNR's main goal in creating the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative was to increase the region's commitment to stewardship of its resources in the face of significant growth pressures. DCNR saw the Schuylkill Highlands as providing an extraordinary opportunity to link the cities and their surrounding communities to the outdoors and the recreational opportunities available in this rich landscape. It has a robust network of nonprofit environmental and conservation agencies working to preserve and enhance the landscape. Initial meetings included local land trusts and a small number of other key partners. An enlarged Steering Committee was created in 2008 and the newly constituted committee met for the first time in the spring of 2009. However, members prefer to meet in project-based workgroups around action items. This CLI is illustrative of the challenges faced in forging partnerships and an agenda across multiple municipalities and nonprofit organizations.

The Laurel Highlands has long served as a recreation destination for residents of Pittsburgh and Ohio. The area is located one hour east of Pittsburgh in southeastern Pennsylvania and is defined by three Allegheny Plateau ridges: the Chestnut, Laurel and Allegheny Ridges, and portions of several watersheds, including that of the Youghiogheny, Stonycreek and Conemaugh Rivers. In addition to its natural resources, numerous historical and cultural sites are also located within the Laurel Highlands. The region contains Pennsylvania's only Appalachian mixed mesophytic forest, one of the most biologically diverse temperate forest regions on earth. DCNR has a strong presence in the Laurel Highlands, with significant assets and lands including seven state parks—Laurel Hill, Linn Run, Laurel Mountain, Laurel Summit, Kooser, Laurel Ridge and Ohionyle—as well as Forbes State Forest. The convergence of these defining features along with the opportunity to improve both the quality of life and economic conditions of the region's communities—some of the poorest in Pennsylvania—made a strong case for the Department to focus its work by creating a Conservation Landscape Initiative in the fall of 2005. Laurel Highlands is recognized as an intact area and has been described as a legacy tourism region much like the Poconos. Early and direct involvement of DCNR leadership was critical in gaining support from key stakeholder organizations in the region. Since its inception, the CLI stakeholders have expanded from a small “investors’ group,” now the Steering Committee, to a group of 50 to 60 organizations and people, including funders, governmental agencies, community organizations, and others, known as the Laurel Highlands Team. As part of this group, the Richard King Mellon

Foundation has made major grants to support land acquisition. Although there are a number of smaller projects, Laurel Highlands currently has four priority efforts:

- Developing a joint master plan for the Ohiopyle State Park and the Borough of Ohiopyle
- Creating trail connections to communities, particularly in the Great Allegheny Passage
- Developing the overall Laurel Ridge interpretive plan
- Developing and enhancing recreational assets along the riverfront and developing trails connecting the Quemahoning Reservoir to Johnstown

Largely, the Laurel Highlands CLI is perceived as a success story and has strong support from partners who anticipate greater success as the work progresses.

Poconos Forests and Waters covers a six-county area in northeastern Pennsylvania. The region contains two distinct environmental and cultural sub-landscapes. The first includes the cities, geology, and cultural history organized around the Northern Anthracite coal field—Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and Hazleton, and the watersheds of the Lehigh, Susquehanna, and Lackawanna rivers. Despite increased revitalization efforts over the past two decades, these cities remain economically challenged after the collapse of the local mining and industrial sectors in the 1950s. The second distinct region is tied closely to the Delaware River, and includes Pike and Monroe counties. This region has a tradition of tourism in the riverside communities. In recent years, both of these regions have seen increased development pressure. Suburban sprawl is moving outward from Interstates 80 and 84, which are feeder highways to the New York City metropolitan area. In addition, the Poconos has long been known as a destination for outdoor recreation such as skiing, hiking, and camping, and there is growing concern that recreation has developed haphazardly. The Poconos CLI was organized in response to this development pressure. The goal of the CLI is primarily twofold; increasing land acquisition, preservation, and management; and connecting the existing distressed communities to recreational assets and leveraging these connections for community and economic development. DCNR is a large landholder in the region, with approximately 55,000 acres of state parks and 111,000 acres of state forests. DCNR has supported the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), as its local external partner to engage local partners such as land trusts, county and local governments, and nonprofits, offering grants between \$3,000-\$25,000 to organizations for projects focusing on land conservation and conservation and recreation planning. The CLI convened a conference of over 100 people in October 2009 to align priority projects and goals for the region.

South Mountain Partnership focuses on a narrow mountain range in Adams, Franklin, Cumberland, and York counties that constitutes the northernmost prong of the Blue Ridge. The boundaries of the CLI include South Mountain itself as well as neighboring townships and boroughs on either side of the ridge, including Gettysburg, Chambersburg, and Shippensburg. The region includes the 85,000-acre Michaux State Forest, four state parks, and a section of the Appalachian Trail. South Mountain is a natural greenway connecting Pennsylvania to the southern Appalachians and a major flyway for migratory birds. Productive agricultural valleys flank the ridge. Of special note is the fruit belt of western Adams County, a scenic area of rolling orchards and farms. Located just north of

the Maryland border, not far from the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area, the South Mountain area is still largely rural but faces intense development pressure. Goals of the CLI include preserving priority conservation lands; sustaining working farms and forests; helping local governments protect natural and cultural resources through better land use planning and management; enhancing recreational opportunities; and protecting, preserving, and interpreting the region's heritage. Key partners, including several conservancies, county planning commissions, and various state and federal agencies, have organized into the South Mountain Partnership. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy houses the local lead for the CLI and administers a newly created mini-grant program.

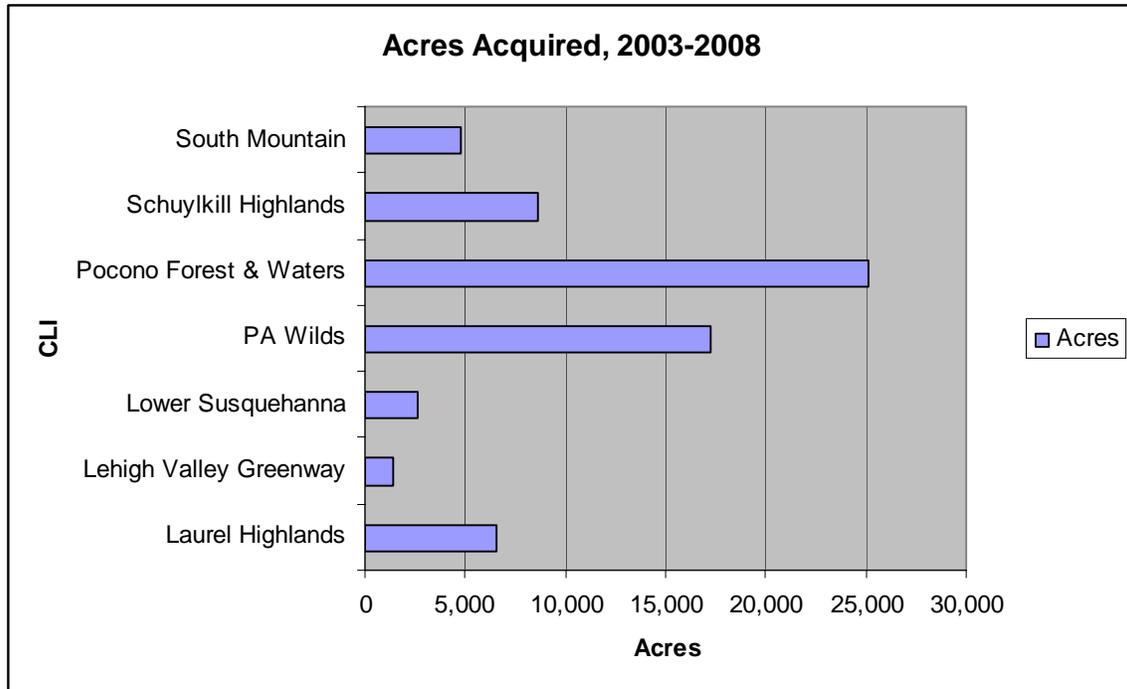
The Lower Susquehanna Riverlands CLI encompasses a 40-mile stretch of the Susquehanna River and communities along its east and west shores in Lancaster and York counties. Much of the land adjacent to and within the river—including steeply sloping hills and glens, river islands, and frequently flooded “flats” that provide important bird habitats—are in the hands of three electric utility companies and have been subject to regulation by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Following regulatory changes in the 1990s, the utilities signaled their intention to divest themselves of unnecessary landholdings, raising the possibility that high-value lands—which traditionally have been managed for conservation and public access—would pass into private ownership. The main purpose of this CLI is to ensure continued protection of these lands, including environmentally sensitive areas, and to preserve and enhance public access and recreational opportunities. An additional goal is to help revitalize the three “river towns” of Columbia, Marietta, and Wrightsville. Several grants have been made to support riverfront park and trail development in and around these towns. The CLI is still at an early stage of development, and most of the effort to date has involved negotiations aimed at protecting and preserving public access to more than 3,000 acres of land currently held by PPL Corporation, one of the utility companies. Important partners include Lancaster and York counties, the Lancaster County Conservancy (a private land trust), the Conservation Fund, and the Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area.

Accomplishments in the Landscapes

Assessment of the effectiveness of this approach is based not only on the accomplishments in changing departmental processes, but also on the accomplishments achieved on the ground in the CLIs. In each region where a Conservation Landscape Initiative has been implemented, changes have been realized in small and large matters. These changes are detailed in this paper and in more detail in the case studies on the Pennsylvania Wilds and Lehigh Valley Greenways Initiative.

In the CLIs, land has been preserved, trails built, and active stewardship started, built, and to some extent institutionalized. While this list is far from exhaustive, some notable achievements include:

Land acquisition: DCNR was able to acquire over 66,000 acres of land in the CLIs between 2003 and 2008.



Each parcel acquired has a particular story and contributed important value based on the context of the effort. In Ohiopyle State Park in the Laurel Highlands, land acquisitions created connections to other lands and increased the recreational capacity of the park. For example, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) purchased and transferred to DCNR a 1,300-acre parcel of land that connects previously acquired WPC lands to Ohiopyle State Park. The new parcel includes a fishing pond, a rope course, and multiple trails and cabins that will be available to the public.

Infrastructure improvements: Infrastructure investments were made to improve the visitor experience through improved and expanded recreational opportunities. Over \$120 million was invested by DCNR in the Pennsylvania Wilds alone. Other investment examples include:

- In the Laurel Highlands, DCNR invested \$500,000 for the Stonycreek Whitewater Park, a 300-yard long whitewater kayaking course.
- In the Lower Susquehanna, a \$500,000 grant was made for the development of a riverfront park.
- In the Lehigh Valley, a fall 2009 groundbreaking is expected for three environmental education centers, including the Trexler Nature Preserve Building, Lehigh Gap Nature Center, and Jacobsburg Resource Conservation Center.

Connecting communities to the outdoors: In concert with the acquisition of key parcels of land and infrastructure improvements on existing DCNR lands, the Department sought to enhance the outdoor experience and bring it to the doorstep of communities—urban, suburban, and rural. In the Lehigh Valley alone, over 16 miles of trails have been built, including key trail connectors to communities adjacent to DCNR lands, such as trail connectors from the Pine Creek Trail to the towns of Jersey Shore and Wellsboro in the

Pennsylvania Wilds. Much of the early implementation work in the Laurel Highlands focused on expanding and linking trails to communities along the Great Allegheny Passage, a 150-mile multiuse rail trail between Cumberland, Maryland, and Pittsburgh. In the Lehigh Valley, which is more urbanized than other CLIs, Allentown is studying the feasibility of a trail network system around the city. And Easton is constructing a three-mile trail along Bushkill Creek, which will be part of the Two Rivers Area trail system. Another important vehicle for connecting Lehigh Valley's urban communities to the outdoors has been the TreeVitalize program, which has resulted in the planting of more than 1,000 trees in area communities, including all three cities as well as many townships and boroughs.

Local government engagement: Conserved land, trails, and trees are all tangible outcomes of the CLIs and direct results of DCNR funding. Another set of outcomes is less tangible and less direct, but no less significant—influencing local governments. Because municipalities control land use in Pennsylvania, changes in local government policies could yield more important landscape-scale impacts than land acquisition, especially in regions where most of the land is in private ownership.

Citizen involvement: As each CLI has gained momentum and recognition, citizens have become more interested in engaging in the work. In some CLIs, they have already organized to do so and in others, there is early interest in learning more about how to become involved. In the Lehigh Valley, municipal EACs, which are small groups of appointed citizens, advise the municipal planning commission, park and recreation board, and elected officials on the protection and management of natural resources. DCNR has provided support to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council to help communities establish these bodies. Nine municipalities have adopted new EACs since LVG was established, and another three have recently passed EAC ordinances and are in the process creating EACs.

In November 2007, the Pennsylvania Wilds Planning Team in concert with the Conservation Fund, conducted a workshop entitled “Balancing Commerce and Nature for Sustainable Community Development.” Meredith Hill, Director of the Pennsylvania Wilds, and members of the Planning Team encouraged community leaders to partake in the workshop as teams organized around issues of specific concern to their areas and created “vision to action” plans to guide collaboration among diverse interests in their communities.⁷ Seven of the twelve counties in the Pennsylvania Wilds were represented. Hill believes the workshop led to increased buy-in among communities on the idea of sustainable tourism and using natural resource assets as a rallying point for community revitalization. The teams continue to work actively within the region.

DCNR hosted the Laurel Highlands Summit in April 2009, a two-day event that focused on the potential of the natural and recreational resources in the landscape to be a real catalyst for economic development. The Summit had over 160 attendees and was

⁷ Participating teams included: Upper Clarion River Recreation and Revitalization Team, Food Matrix Agri-Tourism Initiative, McKean County Route 6 Development Team, Team Clearfield Northwest, Sylvan Heritage Council, Tuna Valley Trails Association Team, and the Greater Renovo Vision to Action Team.

extremely well received by communities, partner organizations, and other state agencies. The Summit raised the visibility and the value of the CLI work in the region among those who were previously unaware of the work, particularly in the business community.

External relationships and leveraged investments: The CLI initiatives helped open the door for DCNR to forge deeper collaborations with other state agencies and relationships are much improved overall. Agencies are more frequently aligning strategies with DCNR and have been influenced by the CLI approach. The improved relations have led to greater leveraging of state resources in the CLIs. Said one DCED official involved in the Pennsylvania Wilds:

“I’ve been in state government a long time, and I’ve never seen any region that’s gotten this much attention. The coordination of different agencies—DEP, Fish and Boat, DCNR—it’s amazing.”

Below are some examples of the ways in which agencies are collaborating and investing in the CLIs. See Appendix E for additional examples.

PennDOT: PennDOT has made substantial investments in trail building throughout the CLIs through its Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative and has modified its approach to road and bridge design in some cases. After objections from communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds to over-scaled bridges replacing old ones, PennDOT agreed to replace bridges with their original alignment and scale, preserving the character and charm. In the Schuylkill Highlands, several bridges washed away during Hurricane Agnes in 1972 creating a natural barrier preventing suburban sprawl from crossing the creek and a linear recreational asset as well as protecting natural resources. As a result of working with DCNR under the Schuylkill Highlands CLI, PennDOT officially decommissioned a section of Route 82 in 2008, preserving this barrier. PennDOT is also providing funding to improve the Route 381 Corridor through Ohiopyle Borough. This project will enhance the community’s capacity to walk and bike by improving crosswalks, creating bike lanes, and employing traffic calming techniques to make Route 381 safer and more welcoming for everyone. The changes will provide connections between the falls area of the state park and the Borough of Ohiopyle.

DCED: DCED is DCNR’s closest partner in the Pennsylvania Wilds and has made substantial financial investments in this CLI. For example, DCED is funding a Small Business Ombudsman position for two years to provide more outreach to businesses in the region. It has also jointly funded planning initiatives such as a grant to the Pine Creek Council of Governments to undertake a planning study to identify key tourism infrastructure challenges and solutions, and to complete a Pine Creek Valley Design Guide modeled after the Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship. DCED is joining the efforts in other CLIs as well. For example, it is funding feasibility studies and site

planning in Lower Susquehanna and providing support to small businesses in the Laurel Highlands.

DEP: DEP has been a major partner in the Pennsylvania Wilds along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, a 160-mile stretch that drains the mountainous region of the Allegheny Plateau, meeting the North Branch near Northumberland, Pennsylvania. Although the West Branch has tremendous recreation opportunities, a history of coal mining and agriculture in the region has left it heavily polluted with acid mine drainage and other pollutants. DCNR is partnering with DEP and local organizations for a focused environmental cleanup effort to remedy acid mine drainage and runoff into the watershed. As chair of the West Branch River Task Force, the Department of Environmental Protection has taken the lead on coordinating cleanup efforts. The Lower Susquehanna CLI has also been successful in leveraging DEP funds: DEP has committed \$325,000 to the Columbia Borough Riverfront Park Renovation Development project as matching funds to a DCNR Keystone Grant.

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission: DCNR and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission have aligned their common interests in recreation and river access along the Clarion River, Pine Creek, and the West Branch of the Susquehanna in the Pennsylvania Wilds, and the Youghiogheny River in the Laurel Highlands. This alignment has led to collaboration on projects where Fish and Boat provides the access design and technical assistance and DCNR funds the construction of the access. Specifically along the Clarion, a tour of the corridor spawned a commitment from the two agencies to work together and leverage their respective resources for improved access along the river. Like DEP, Fish and Boat has provided matching funds in the Lower Susquehanna CLI, committing \$250,000 to the Columbia Borough Riverfront Park Renovation Development project.

Pennsylvania Game Commission: DCNR and the Game Commission have engaged in land swaps that benefit the goals of the Pennsylvania Wilds. In the Laurel Highlands, the Game Commission is cooperating with DCNR and others on the Laurel Ridge Trail Plan. Aligning the interests between DCNR and the Game Commission has been challenging and DCNR has made a recent staff appointment to work on building better alliances with the Commission.

DCNR has also been successful in leveraging investment from federal agencies, local governments, and funders through the CLIs.

Local Governments: The Columbia Borough Riverfront Park Renovation Development project in Lower Susquehanna has leveraged funding from Columbia Borough (\$80,000) and Lancaster County (\$450,000) in addition to state funding from multiple agencies. Also in Lower Susquehanna, the Wrightsville Borough Riverfront Master Site Plan project has received funding from York County and the Conoy Township Lancaster County Burkett Riverfront

Property Acquisition has leveraged funds from the Lancaster County Solid Waste Authority.

Federal Government: In the Pennsylvania Wilds, DCNR and the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) have long partnered on trail projects and are closely engaged in joint work along the Clarion River through the Clarion River Municipal Partnership (CRMP). One example is the archaeological field school and study program for high school students conducted by the CRMP along with partners at the ANF, Clarion University, Elk County, and DCNR. In the Schuylkill Highlands, the National Park Service has provided grant funding to Hopewell Furnace National Historic Park as a result of DCNR funding support in the landscape, and Birdsboro Waters has received \$800,000 from the U.S. Forest Service.

Foundations: Individuals from several major foundations were the earliest thought partners with DCNR leadership in crafting the goals of several CLIs and in developing the overall approach. Additionally, foundations such as the Richard King Mellon Foundation, William Penn Foundation, the Heinz Endowments, and smaller community foundations have funded numerous projects in individual CLIs, as well as this evaluation. The Richard King Mellon Foundation has funded dozens of strategic land conservation projects in Laurel Highlands and Pennsylvania Wilds. It also provided major support to the Joint Master Plan and Implementation Strategy between the Borough of Ohiopyle, Ohiopyle State Park, and other partners. The William Penn Foundation has long been a funder of conservation projects in the Schuylkill Highlands, predating the CLI, and continues to support conservation work in the region, providing matching funds to CLI-related projects. The Heinz Endowments has funded projects in the Laurel Highlands.

4. Major Characteristics of the CLIs

Common Characteristics of the Individual CLIs

The CLIs represent proactive and focused approaches to a landscape that combine coordination of DCNR's internal bureaus with engagement of a broad range of external partners. The Pennsylvania Wilds and the Lehigh Valley Greenways were the first among what ultimately became seven CLIs established throughout the state. The leadership of DCNR believed that focused attention on large natural landscapes with significant conservation value could galvanize local governments, individuals, and businesses around common goals and could be used to expand stewardship in each region. The Department also sought to improve the park and forest experience as well in these areas to encourage visitors to learn, be engaged, and walk away more dedicated to conservation goals. Several key characteristics, which emerged with each rendition of a CLI, define the approach and the work:

Partnerships: From the start, an important feature of each CLI has been the centrality of forging solid collaboration and partnerships with relevant decision-makers within the landscape. A leadership group representing key partners would lead each CLI. The composition of groups varied considerably, although it would be fair to say that all now include representatives of government and nonprofits as well as the key operational bureaus of DCNR—State Parks, Forestry, and Recreation and Conservation. Outside funders that are working in the region participate as well. Each CLI varied in terms of when both internal and external partners were brought into the process.

Structure: A leadership group or steering committee is convened in each landscape to assume responsibility for defining the boundaries of the landscape and developing plans to drive strategic investments and guide other actions to reach the goals. The Pennsylvania Wilds structure differs, as a task force is led by DCNR out of the governor’s office and its membership reflects the major agencies involved as well as some of the some of the nonprofits in the area. As the area is so large, full local representation is not part of this Initiative. Rather an “Intergovernmental Planning Committee,” consisting of representation from each of the 12 county planning offices located in the Pennsylvania Wilds, provides guidance.

Involvement of local government: In each CLI, local government plays an important role, although how and when local officials are brought into the process has varied. Most of the relevant local governmental actors are included, however, at some point. DCNR staff have worked intensively with a range of government and quasi-governmental organizations to ensure involvement. Because of the size of the Pennsylvania Wilds, there are more communities to work with and gauging their differing levels of “readiness” to engage productively in landscape planning is part of determining when and how to get them involved.

Role of nonprofits: Nonprofit partners are essential to the success of most of the CLIs. The strength of the role and relationship usually depends on the capacity of the nonprofits working in the region. Important nonprofit partners have included land conservancies, heritage organizations, watershed associations, environmental organizations, and recreation groups. In six of the seven CLIs, DCNR-funded staff in nonprofit organizations share joint responsibility for convening, leading the work, fostering the agenda, and organizing participation.⁸ The nonprofit community has played important roles in such areas as greenway, trail, and watershed planning; land acquisition; trail development; watershed restoration; conservation education; the development of design guidelines; and consultation with local governments. In Lehigh Valley, the Schuylkill Highlands, and the Laurel Highlands, very specific partnerships were developed to build operational capacity on the ground for the work of the CLI. Working with nonprofit

⁸ Organizations in Lehigh Valley Greenways, Poconos Forests and Waters, Laurel Highlands, South Mountain, and Schuylkill Highlands have received DCNR funding to support an external lead position. Lower Susquehanna does not have an external lead as of the writing of this report. Pennsylvania Wilds has no external lead to help manage the day-to-day operations of the CLI. However a local Small Business Ombudsman was funded by DCED and Federal Appalachian Regional Commission grant money, and a Community Outreach Specialist was funded to support the work of the Planning Team through a 50/50 cost share grant from DCED and DCNR.

partners has vastly extended DCNR's reach and influence, supplementing the Department's staff and adding capacity in areas where there are few DCNR personnel.

Use of grant and DCNR infrastructure support: Grantmaking to support conservation and recreation has long been a core function of DCNR, but the CLI approach has entailed a shift toward a more strategic grantmaking approach in the targeted landscapes. Goals established with input from the partners are used to guide grants for such purposes as development of park infrastructure and facilities, land preservation, trails and greenways, watershed restoration, and assistance to help local governments improve their conservation and growth management policies. Three CLIs—Lehigh Valley Greenways, South Mountain, and Poconos Forests and Waters—include locally administered mini-grant programs that help the Department direct support to smaller organizations and municipalities with limited capacity to manage larger grants or meet the matching dollar requirements associated with most DCNR grants.

Additionally, the Bureaus of State Parks and Forestry have made infrastructure investments in the CLIs a priority, allocating 61% of the relevant budgets (averaged over a two-year period) to efforts within the CLIs.

Focus of goals and how they were established: Goals for all CLIs generally include priorities placed on land/resource conservation, community revitalization, and connecting the public to the outdoors, often through recreation. Several CLIs also specifically reference economic development and infrastructure improvements on DCNR lands in their goals. In all cases, the goals were tailored to the unique characteristics of the region and designed to build upon efforts that were already underway. See Appendix D for a table of CLI goals and themes. The work in each CLI was defined in conjunction with a set of early partners convened by DCNR staff. These initial partners were usually seen as important to DCNR's mission. In the Laurel Highlands, co-investors were sought early on, therefore local foundations had an early and instrumental role in setting direction. The agenda for the Pennsylvania Wilds was set into motion by the existence of a prior plan sponsored by a heritage organization in the region. It is fair to say that DCNR, although mission driven, was very open to an agenda co-developed with local partners.

Varied Characteristics: How Place Conditions the Approach

All of the CLIs, by definition, are place-based, although the place in question varies in size, population density, and amount of DCNR land holdings. These and other features greatly affect the goals of the work and the strategies, structures, and processes involved in the development and growth of a CLI. Drawing largely from the two intensive cases (this is not meant to be an exhaustive list), highlights include:

DCNR's land holdings: While the Pennsylvania Wilds is an obvious focus area for DCNR because of its large amount of state parks (29) and forestland, both the Lehigh Valley and the Lower Susquehanna Riverlands include only two state parks and no forests. Other CLIs fall between these extremes. But DCNR's influence in a region is not limited to land ownership. One factor that made the Lehigh Valley a promising location for a CLI

was the fact that the Department had already established a major foothold in the region through its support for rivers conservation, greenway development, and conservation planning.

Population growth and development pressure: Several CLIs—including the Lehigh Valley, the Schuylkill Highlands, Poconos Forests and Waters, and South Mountain—are in areas that are experiencing rapid sprawl that consumes open space, threatens natural resources, and erodes the quality of life. In the Pennsylvania Wilds, on the other hand, the main threat is not growth, but lack thereof. The population is sparse—in some places declining—and the economy is weak. While land preservation and growth management are important goals in rapidly growing regions, economic development is the dominant concern in the Pennsylvania Wilds.

Different capacities in planning and land use management: In the Lehigh Valley, where a main priority is helping communities deal with growth pressure, most local governments have some capacity in planning and zoning. They also have access to expert technical assistance provided by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, county conservation districts, and private conservancies, all of which are partnering with DCNR to help with local governments strengthen resource protection through land use planning and regulation. In the Laurel Highlands, Ohiopyle State Park, the Borough, and other partners funded by the Richard K. Mellon Foundation are now engaged in joint master planning and implementation, which some expect will serve as a model for state park/community joint planning in other communities and states. Similar capacities exist in the Schuylkill Highlands and, to some extent, in most other CLIs. In the Pennsylvania Wilds, however, where land use planning and regulation is weak and where many communities have little tolerance for regulation of private land, DCNR has taken a softer approach. Rather than focusing on land use planning and regulation, DCNR has encouraged context-appropriate development through the use of voluntary design guidelines and efforts to support building community capacity in line with the Initiative's goals.

Disposition toward regional efforts: The Lehigh Valley has a well-established regional identity, a regional planning commission, and a history of efforts to encourage regional cooperation. This is not to say that further steps toward regionalization are without challenges. As is the case elsewhere in Pennsylvania, local governments remain strongly independent and protective of their autonomy. Even the nonprofit community has been somewhat fragmented by territoriality and competition, though the CLI has fostered greater cooperation within the nonprofit conservation community. Nevertheless, the Lehigh Valley has a foundation of regional cooperation that can be built upon. The Pennsylvania Wilds, by comparison, is a large, decentralized region that lacks its own identity. In fact, the term “Pennsylvania Wilds” is a recent coinage developed as part of the tourism marketing effort. Work in this region has required great dedication to building a common understanding and a shared vision for the region and “putting out fires.” With little social capital to reinforce the work, agreements could easily falter when and if any government party behaves in a manner that could be interpreted as contradicting the hard-earned agreements that have been established.

Nonprofit capacity: The presence and capacity of nonprofits varies greatly across the CLIs. In some settings, the nonprofit community played important early roles in carrying out much of the organization of the effort. In the Lehigh Valley and Laurel Highlands, very specific partnerships were developed to build operational capacity on the ground for the work of the CLIs. But the presence of strong nonprofits does not always guarantee an easy road to success. Nonprofits also bring their own agenda and perspectives on how to define a landscape and understand its needs. Adjusting these perspectives to those of others brought into the planning process can be challenging. In other settings, like the Pennsylvania Wilds, less capacity was readily available, with virtually no presence of nonprofit sector organizations to analyze decisions, build community capacity, or advocate for good policy or practice.

Factors of readiness: Other factors were recognized as constituting good conditions or indicators of the readiness of a region to work in this kind of focused partnership. Prior history with efforts at regional planning certainly advanced the agenda. Prior or current relationships between and among staff from the various constituent groups could greatly facilitate joining the effort and ultimately progress made. So too, a critical mass of prior or current work could stimulate action. Staff looked for early innovations, prior planning, capacity, foundation support, early successes with joint action, as well as readiness within DCNR's own ranks—such as local availability of stand-out staff working with an important resource.

5. Lessons Learned

Defining the boundaries: Common features of the land were neither regularly nor uniformly appreciated by those living within the confines of each CLI.

Defining the boundaries of the CLI gave significant pause to each endeavor. The importance of this question cannot be overemphasized as it sets the table for the work—shaping the agenda, engaging feelings of ownership, and ultimately serving to define who is in and who is out.

Physical features, important to the effort from DCNR's perspective, were not necessarily recognized by participants as equally important or a defining feature of where they live, govern, or work. Often landscapes cut across regional and cultural identities, which were seen as competing with efforts to define the landscape for the initiative. For DCNR, the physical features are central. In the Pennsylvania Wilds, the vast DCNR land holdings set much of the agenda. But as the Department moved to create more and better connections to communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds and in other CLIs, it encountered a more complex set of interests and different perspectives on what otherwise might have seemed a relatively straightforward question of landscape definition.

Different interests create forces for different definitions:

- As DCNR looked to manage its land and create connections to communities, it encountered the interests of local governments and deeply felt divides on the issue of regionalism.
- So too, nonprofits divvy up the work and the politics. New definitions of a place run into pre-existing boundaries related not just to the landscape as such, but also to issues of turf—political and organizational.
- Definitions need to attend to those who live in formulated “regions/landscapes” that might not correspond to resident mind-sets.

Nonetheless, the defining parameters of a landscape matter in many and important ways. If building stewardship is to be part of the goals of managing a landscape, then the definition of the landscape must make some *prima facie* sense to those involved. This was not always the case. For example, the Pennsylvania Wilds’ parameters were largely defined by casting a large enough net over the geography to encompass most of the major holdings of public lands, regardless of the linkages among subsets of the land or ideas about historical identity or shared culture. This became problematic as the regional “brand” was formed and marketed by government tourism experts.

The local public was as often offended or mystified by the coinage of the term “Pennsylvania Wilds” with an Elk stamped on the logo as they were curious or engaged. This is not to say that the Pennsylvania Wilds brand is wrong; we learned that it clearly reflects some portion of the region but not nearly the whole. The name Pennsylvania Wilds was chosen as a concise, easily remembered tag that emphasizes the region’s vast natural landscapes and its opportunities for nature-based and outdoor tourism. The bull elk logo image was chosen as an iconic symbol of the region. The marketing effort for the Pennsylvania Wilds, however, received mixed reviews from community leaders in the region. Some express dissatisfaction with the brand, arguing that the term “wilds” connotes “uncivilized” and fails to do justice to the region’s cultural heritage; others found it simply inappropriate to their vision of the character of their community.

The issue of defining boundaries encountered concerns and initial opposition in the Lehigh Valley as well. At first, the focus was exclusively on the Two Rivers Area Greenway Plan and the Bushkill Creek area, encompassing 17 municipalities in central Northampton County, including the city of Easton. However, the DCNR work team felt this geography was too narrow to constitute a meaningful region, and the secretary wanted the boundaries to be drawn broadly enough to include the cities of Allentown and Bethlehem. Despite resistance from some members of the external work team who felt that engaging both counties and all three cities would make the process too complex, the decision was made to include all of Northampton and Lehigh counties.

Fortunately, prior DCNR activities in the broader Lehigh Valley region had laid a firm foundation for an expanded initiative. Various watershed and greenways plans set priorities for land protection and watershed restoration. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission’s (LVPC) Regional Comprehensive Plan, completed in 2005, included a natural resources element; and LVPC was in the process of completing a greenways plan for the entire Lehigh Valley (with DCNR). These two regional plans provided a basis for

defining the sub-landscapes, which extend across both counties and include most of the region's sensitive resource areas as well as provide ample linkages to all three urban areas.

The issue of defining boundaries became a relatively long-term issue within the Schuylkill Highlands, where partners were slow in coming to terms with a definition—finding it difficult to argue against or buy-in to a definition offered by DCNR. For some, there was the feeling that there were no natural, geographical, or political boundaries that would organically define the CLI in the way DCNR presented it. A number of the partners at the table did not identify with major portions of the landscape as they were individually engaged with different and sometimes competing priorities within their own regions of interest. One of the first tasks to help the partners come together on this was a tour arranged for the secretary and all the partners to get a better feel for the landscape and “to bring the maps to life.” One observer suggests that the value of the tour had as much if not more to do with building more cohesiveness in the group as it had with defining boundaries.

Landscape definition also has important implications for size and scale of effort and, with that, the kind of organizational structures that will work. Efforts to structure the work in the Pennsylvania Wilds has been difficult. It is challenging to coordinate all of the moving parts; the needs within the area vary, as does the local capacity to both articulate and meet these needs. All of the normal factors that surface in new partnerships and new relationships are magnified within an effort as large as that of the Pennsylvania Wilds.

Conservation efforts will always run into tradeoffs and opposition and in a large landscape setting, many dissenting factions will claim the landscape as theirs. The work is inherently a balancing act, juggling complicated sets of goals that must be managed for progress to occur. The politics of working with all those laying claim to a significant interest in the Pennsylvania Wilds—including hunters, ATV and snowmobile enthusiasts, residents who are against development, residents who hope to exploit the effort for personal gain, and those residents who resent government influence of any kind—will require leaders and staff suited to the process of hearing and working with opposing points of view.

Partnerships: Working in large landscapes moved the Department to forge stronger partnerships with local organizations—including conservancies, watershed organizations, other nonprofits, county and local governments, county conservation districts, and regional planning organizations—and to appreciate more deeply the nature of their concerns and the issues that divide them.

The Department's values in large part gave stimulus to partnering with communities as a core part of its strategy to build meaningful stewardship throughout the Commonwealth and as a central means toward building more and deeper commitment to sustaining the

state's resources. While issues varied across the CLIs, the inevitability of needing to build multiple types of constituent buy-in was predicable. Different constituents brought different concerns and assets to the process.

- ***With urban constituencies:*** Deeper and more meaningful engagement with cities and urban populations were needed, moving DCNR beyond its traditional focus on parks, forests, and natural resources in rural areas to include support for trail, greenway, and forestry programs in urban communities as well as environmental educational opportunities for urban youth. One important tool in this endeavor is TreeVitalize, a public-private partnership to help restore tree cover, educate citizens about planting trees, and build capacity among local governments to understand, protect, and restore their urban trees. TreeVitalize has been used to great effect in the Lehigh Valley Greenways.
- ***With nonprofits:*** While nonprofits could be territorial and competitive, they could also be facilitative of the CLIs. This work is more difficult where there is limited capacity or resources for community planning and few nonprofit partners to analyze decisions, build community capacity, or advocate for good policy or practice.
- ***With local governments:*** The Department had to develop new approaches to working with municipalities—with the aim of influencing how municipalities make decisions regarding land use and conservation—and do so in ways compatible with Pennsylvania's tradition of autonomous local governments. Counties have been important partners, facilitating discussions on regional agendas and funding mechanisms that create incentives for work toward regional goals. For example:

From the Schuylkill Highlands: The landscape process helped county leaders think more regionally and focus not only on their land use goals for their specific portion of the Route 100 corridor, but also on how the adjoining counties' plans would impact them.

From Lehigh Valley Greenways: County governments are involved through county departments of community and economic development (DCEDs), which distribute TreeVitalize money to local municipalities and take the lead on a number of local educational programs. In addition, the region's bi-county planning commission has been an important partner, helping set priorities for the CLI through conservation planning and providing technical assistance to municipalities. DCNR also works directly with municipalities—including the cities of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton—providing money for land acquisition, trail and greenway development, tree planting, and other purposes. In addition, DCNR has supported the formation of EACs, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council in municipalities throughout the Lehigh Valley.

From the Pennsylvania Wilds: DCNR's intensive community engagement approach in the Clarion River Corridor initially met with skepticism from

communities who for years endured planning efforts by outside entities and with which they felt very little buy-in. Secretary DiBerardinis met with local county commissioners and offered DCNR's resources to the communities in their own planning and implementation efforts under the form of the Clarion River Recreation Assessment Project. Working closely in the effort with Meredith Hill, Pennsylvania Wilds Director, was Denny Puko from DCED's Center for Local Government Services, who played a large role in helping communities along the corridor organize. Eric Patton, a Millstone Township, Elk County supervisor, after strong early resistance, became a local advocate in communicating the potential benefit of the Pennsylvania Wilds to the communities. Despite early resistance to state government involvement, the high level of cooperation found in the Clarion River Corridor paved the way for the creation of the Clarion River Municipal Partnership (CRMP) under the leadership of Eric Patton. Established in 2007, the CRMP is an intergovernmental cooperation agreement⁹ among ten municipalities of the Clarion River Corridor. This agreement was particularly significant given a history of anti-government sentiment in this part of the state.

Another critical challenge was the timing of when local governments were invited to the table. DCNR's early conversations around the CLIs were often with land conservancies and trusts, and with local funders. Local governments typically were not at the table during these initial meetings. The delay may be explained in part by DCNR's hope that the early partners would "take ownership" for the process, including determining who should be part of the leadership group. There are multiple points of view from partners on how and when local governments should be involved in the initiative. But the pivotal role that local governments play in land use decisions cannot be overlooked, and it is clear that they are interested in playing a significant role in the CLIs as evidenced by strong participation in the Pennsylvania Wilds, Lehigh Valley Greenways, and other CLIs.

Flexible approaches: Achieving success requires greater flexibility toward administrative rules and strategies than what is usually the case for a state agency; the need for flexibility appeared in multiple forms.

Developing flexible administrative devices to respond to local challenges.

The CLIs have entailed a more strategic and ground up approach to DCNR's work, involving the identification of specific goals for each landscape and strategies to accomplish those goals. In some cases, DCNR has found that its existing rules and procedures have stood in the way of goal achievement.

⁹ Article XI, Section 5 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, 53 Pa.C.S. §§ 11001 et seq., provides "A municipality may . . . cooperate or agree in the exercise of any function, power or responsibility with, or delegate or transfer any function, power or responsibility to, one or more other governmental units including other municipalities or districts, the Federal government, any other state or its governmental units, or any newly created governmental unit."

A case in point is land preservation in the Lehigh Valley. In targeting specific sub-landscapes, DCNR has encouraged conservancies to take a proactive approach to land preservation in those areas. That means identifying high-value resources, contacting and negotiating with landowners, and conducting land appraisals to determine the value of easements. Such activities can cost thousands of dollars in staff time and contracted work, and until recently, DCNR would only fund actual acquisition costs. In response to this challenge, several conservancies and other local partners developed a proposal for covering pre-purchase land protection costs. DCNR has agreed to the proposal, and conservancies can now receive funding to cover up-front land protection costs. Conservancy representatives say this up-front funding has been extremely helpful and has allowed them to invest more in essential pre-purchase work in targeted areas.

Using persuasion and education to influence the land use policies of local governments.

Pennsylvania law places most of the power to plan, zone, and regulate land use in the hands of local governments, and state agencies have little direct authority to regulate the use of private land. A challenge facing CLIs is the fact that local governments are able to manage land use on their own, with little regard to the policies of their neighbors or the region as a whole. This undermines the sort of regional thinking on which landscape-scale conservation strategies depend. Lacking command and control authority over local land use policies, DCNR has instead relied on persuasion and education to influence local governments and encourage them to take steps to advance the CLI visions.

The main vehicle for influencing municipal decision-makers is grant support for organizations that provide education and technical assistance to local governments. In the Lehigh Valley, for example, DCNR has supported the regional planning commission to develop model ordinances and conduct workshops for local officials. It has also provided grants to nonprofit organizations to help local governments adopt conservation-oriented ordinances and establish EACs.

Likewise in the Pennsylvania Wilds, small grants to build capacity for municipal planning have translated into more multi-municipal engagement. In doing so, the CLI is encouraging a new mind-set among local officials—more appreciation for conservation and the advantages it can bring to communities, and a greater willingness to form partnerships with other communities and organizations beyond their borders.

In such efforts, education is a key tool. DCNR has provided major educational opportunities with national experts, creating the space and time for new thinking to enter into local dialogues. A particularly successful example was Lehigh County DCED's coordination of a training event on "Better Models for Development" conducted by Ed McMahon of the Urban Land Institute, a noted expert in conservation-oriented development. Over 250 individuals attended. A similar workshop was offered to local teams within the Pennsylvania Wilds. In a November 2007 workshop, "Balancing Commerce and Nature for Sustainable Community Development," community leaders were encouraged to develop teams and participate in the workshop organized around specific regional issues. This event was singularly cited by many as one of the most

important moments in building more local willingness to engage in regional efforts that could realize benefits across municipal borders. The teams continue to work actively within the region.

The establishment of an “external lead” may be instrumental to implementing this kind of approach as well as central to the longer-term sustainability of the endeavor.

A key factor of success for several CLIs was the addition of a local co-lead situated within a partner agency. In five of the CLIs, DCNR has funded a staff position in a local external lead agency to serve as co-lead alongside a DCNR staff person, who may be local or may be based in Harrisburg. The Pennsylvania Wilds follows a different format and has recently added two grant-funded positions that support specific aspects of the work; however, there is no local external person to help with the management of the CLI. Lower Susquehanna currently does not have an external lead. This model of co-leads grew out of the Lehigh Valley Greenways and its success with the addition of a local lead partner.

From Lehigh Valley Greenways: Although Diane Kripas provided strong internal leadership for DCNR and made frequent trips to the region from Harrisburg, it soon became clear that there was also a need for a coordinator based in the region who could work closely with external partners. The Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L), a nonprofit organization that manages a federal- and state-designated heritage area, was chosen to host this position because it was perceived as a neutral and well-respected entity.

Partners in the Schuylkill Highlands in part credit the addition of a locally based external lead with advancing the cohesion of the CLI, which had been stalled until that position was filled. Although the first external partner (in the Lehigh Valley) was brought on board primarily out of expediency, the experience in the CLIs shows that the external leads may be a key component in building the capacity to institutionalizing and sustaining the work on a local level. Their presence creates a critical balance of ownership between state and local entities. External leads have local knowledge and ties that can bridge relationships between DCNR and local stakeholders. They can raise funds from varied sources. They also serve as additional human capital to move the work forward locally and create a local “home” for the initiative.

Much of the success of the CLIs stems from the hands-on and value-based role adopted by DCNR leadership in launching and guiding these efforts.

Time and again, partners across the CLIs stated that having DCNR leadership at the table early lent legitimacy to the effort and was a main factor in their decision to participate in the CLI. The commitment of the leadership to be physically present at meetings, spend time in each landscape, and solicit input from potential partners generated trust and signaled to the local leaders that this effort was not “business as usual” but rather a new way for DCNR to engage communities.

Although the Laurel Highlands was not necessarily a priority investment area for some of the funding organizations DCNR approached, they responded to the secretary's enthusiasm and request for partnership. The CLI has changed the way these funders approach the region. In the words of one funder:

"It probably increased our interest in investments in that area. There's greater potential for Laurel Highlands as a test case or demonstration location for figuring out a regional economic development strategy."

Forging these partnerships meant creating real alliances and trust between the Department and participants. The contribution made by the hands-on role of leadership cannot be overemphasized.

In the Pennsylvania Wilds, DCNR Secretary DiBerardinis was widely credited with driving the agenda. People from all walks of life took note of his energy and personal commitment. Being on a first-name basis with the secretary meant that community leaders were able to deal directly with him, forming relations of trust and mutual understanding.

"Secretary DiBerardinis was here for every important meeting. Anytime he was here, we all made a concerted effort to be there. It was exciting to see him excited."

– Focus Group member

"In regards to Secretary DiBerardinis, he learned to 'get it.' When he started, he thought there should be lodges here to bring people from Philadelphia a— Poconos-type thing. It was a credit to him to be able to listen and change."

– Focus Group member

Similarly, much of the progress made in the Lehigh Valley can be attributed to personal attention from high-level DCNR personnel, including the secretary. A recurring theme in our interviews was improved access to DCNR decision-makers; and many commented on their frequent visits to the region, enabling local leaders to meet with them face-to-face and form personal relationships. Such interactions have helped nonprofits understand DCNR's priorities and constraints, and tailor their grant requests accordingly. Conversely, they have helped DCNR staff at various levels better understand the regions, individual projects, and on-the-ground challenges faced by grantees. As one partner commented:

"Through the CLI, a number of us feel much more connected with different layers in DCNR. For example, there have been periodic events when Secretary DiBerardinis has come to hear what we're doing. It's been a wonderful opportunity."

The CLIs motivate other high-level DCNR personnel to engage deeply and personally with communities throughout the Commonwealth. Their efforts have contributed to the CLIs being seen as much more than just another state program run by a faceless

bureaucracy. It is a different kind of state program—one led by people they know, who are passionate about their work and willing to listen and respond to local concerns.

While not without ongoing challenges, DCNR's work in the CLIs exemplified a learning approach to strategy development.

A robust process has emerged within the Department to support learning across each of the CLIs. Approximately one year into this work, an internal process took hold encouraging the exchange of practices important to the success of each CLI. Monthly meetings of internal staff were convened with the secretary to examine issues, opportunities, and threats. Soon after, quarterly meetings with external partners were instituted across the CLIs. From these meetings many of the strongest practices emerged, such as the mini-grant process, the convening of high-level “summits” to coalesce attention within a landscape, and varied ways to solve the many communications problems that would naturally arise in such an endeavor.

So too, DCNR has learned about and continues to refine how it balances the needs and authority of a central office with those of a decentralized, cross-bureau effort that includes outside partners. This is extremely challenging, but important strides have been and continue to be made.

6. Conclusions

The CLI approach has had important and tangible impacts both to the workings of the Department and to the regions. The approach taken by the Department to the management of large landscapes promises to yield numerous results for the communities involved. The CLI approach has bipartisan roots, building on successful initiatives from past administrations and is an example of state government at its best. The CLIs have gone far in defining stewardship in important ways and to putting Pennsylvania on the forefront of a 21st century approach to conservation. The impact of the CLIs is likely to be seen both in protecting resources and in building the kind of social capital that can ensure the durability of these concrete conservation effects. In short, this approach works.

A big vision about what government can do: Making good on what people want and what government can deliver.

At the heart of all the work is a dedication to building a set of deep values based on service—to community and toward aims of greater public commitment to and active stewardship of the natural resources.

Much of this work depends on the willingness of public officials to engage the public seriously. While more public involvement has meant that public officials spend more time communicating about the goals and ideas behind the efforts, it has also meant that public officials have listened more carefully to the concerns and interests of those living in the regions. Through these conversations, struggles, and efforts, there is evidence of

greater trust and more tangible stewardship shared across the interests separating segments in many of the communities in the regions.

Work in these landscapes has generated a return to some of the core values motivating the public employees involved. Time and again, with consistent passion, the vision for change was articulated and illustrated and served as a basis for discussion, group interaction, and plans—all to create an increasingly shared internal vision of the potential behind the CLIs for the people, communities, and Department staff.

Out the outset of this study, executive staff articulated the benefit of the work in a clear vision of what “good government” could do. They also described their own transformation as they rethought their roles and renewed their commitment to their work. Countless times staff referenced that their experience with the Pennsylvania Wilds reminded them of why they worked for the Department in the first place. As one leader in the Department stated:

“It made us want to take up the mantle of being ‘the leader’ in conservation. It forced me to stretch myself to reach into new realms and feel my way into a new leadership role.”

We heard similar expressions of dedication from those working in other CLIs as well.

It is quite clear that much of what has “stuck” in this work are those efforts bolstered by leadership attention and physical presence. It is difficult to argue with the conclusion that trust and relationships matter in important ways when we heard time and again in interviews with residents that the single greatest benefit of the work in the Pennsylvania Wilds was that “someone saw value in us.” These sentiments are not of the kind of cynical comments heard at the start of the Initiative; rather they give rise to hope that the new forms of engagement have had and will continue to have an effect in the Pennsylvania Wilds.

From the Pennsylvania Wilds: It was not just leadership that mattered. A number of solid investments and efforts to provide the organizational space for otherwise disparate community constituencies made a difference as well. The Planning Team in the Pennsylvania Wilds made important strides in implementing joint municipal governance—previously unheard of in the region. This effort was replicated in the area of the Clarion River Corridor as well and in the communities along the Pine Creek Gorge. This work was supported by government grants, and the need for the support was identified by government workers.

The outcomes of these efforts have not always aligned with the desires of those leading and staffing the Initiative. But impressively, these public stewards have respected the decisions made by the communities taking up their role as stewards in their own right, even if the decisions they make seem to run counter to some of the goals of the Pennsylvania Wilds. In the long run, the give and take and the

mutual respect built will likely translate into the kind of social and community capital that the Initiative can bank on in the future.

Institutionalizing the practice will take commitment and thoughtful follow through.

Since our research was conducted at a time when the Commonwealth was facing a severe budget shortfall, and shortly after Secretary DiBerardinis had announced his resignation, many of the people we spoke with were understandably concerned about the future prospects of the CLIs and their long-term sustainability. Most partners were confident that the CLIs would continue for the duration of the Rendell Administration, thanks to the strong commitment of senior DCNR management. Nearly all acknowledged, however, that the long-term prospects for the CLIs were uncertain, especially in the context of a sharply reduced state budget.

It bears emphasis, however, that much of what constitutes the CLI approach does not depend on money. To be sure, funding for grants and dedicated CLI personnel will be cut back in a reduced budget climate. But most of the innovations discussed earlier—the focus on partnership building, high-level DCNR attention, working across silos, more community engagement, interagency cooperation, increased flexibility, new ways of engaging with cities and other local governments—have more to do with how DCNR operates than with the size of its budget. The new ways of working spearheaded by the CLIs are disseminating throughout the Department and changing the way Pennsylvanians view DCNR. Despite some continued resistance to these approaches, they are taking hold as more managers embrace them and recalcitrant staff accustomed to old ways of working are replaced by new employees. Whether or not the CLIs survive in the long term and in their current form, their influence on DCNR has already been substantial.

Appendix A. Study Design

The team employed a multiple case study design to examine DCNR's CLI approach through the lens of the Department's goals:

- 1) Improve stewardship and management of state parks and forests;
- 2) Promote statewide land conservation;
- 3) Build and maintain sustainable and attractive communities; and
- 4) Create outdoor connections for citizens and visitors.

The purpose of the overall study was to improve and inform future implementation of the CLI work in the Commonwealth and to share this knowledge with others contemplating similar efforts to improve, manage, and sustain large landscapes.

Data Collection Methods

The study utilized a mixed-methods approach to data collection, utilizing interviews, focus groups, direct observation, document review, and quantitative analysis of administrative data.

- **Interviews and focus groups:** Through purposive sampling, the team conducted extensive semi-structured interviews and focus groups with nearly every major constituency involved in the Pennsylvania Wilds and Lehigh Valley Greenways, including but not limited to DCNR staff, staff from other state agencies, local elected officials, residents, business people, county planners, and nonprofit staff. In the less intensive cases, the team conducted interviews with key partners and DCNR staff. In the remaining three CLIs, the co-leads were interviewed. During the course of data collection, the team interviewed over 125 individuals across the seven CLIs.
- **Direct observation:** Team members observed DCNR departmental meetings as well as meetings in several CLIs. These CLI meetings allowed the team to observe the geographic features of some of the CLIs firsthand. In addition, DCNR staff gave the team multiple tours of the Pennsylvania Wilds, highlighting important natural features and providing the physical context for data collected during the interviews.
- **Document review:** Data collection across the CLIs included review of a large number of reports, meeting minutes, planning documents, memos, newsletters, promotional materials, and other documents as well as DCNR and partner organization websites. These materials provided background information on the history, mission, and organizational structure of each CLI. They also served to raise questions for the interviews and focus groups.
- **Analysis of administrative data:** Quantitative data analysis was conducted on DCNR grant and expenditure data for each CLI. The team also analyzed data on DCNR staffing levels for the Pennsylvania Wilds region over time.

Appendix B. Recommendations from Shaping a Sustainable Pennsylvania: DCNR's Blueprint for Action

Goal 1: Improve Stewardship and Management of State Parks and Forests

Recommendation 1

Manage our lands based on the conservation of healthy ecosystems.

Recommendation 2

Support economic development through the sound management of natural resources.

Recommendation 3

Improve the agency's ability to make resource management decisions.

Recommendation 4

Continue to acquire lands that: protect and enhance existing state parks and forests, large forested watersheds and riparian corridors; conserve biologically important areas; and/or create connections with other public lands, open spaces, and outdoor recreation and education opportunities.

Recommendation 5

Expand outdoor recreation and outdoor learning opportunities on state park and forest lands.

Goal 2: Promote Statewide Land Conservation

Recommendation 6

Help communities manage growth and reduce the loss of open space.

Recommendation 7

Provide information and educational programs to help protect important ecological lands, wildlife habitat, geologic features, and recreational lands.

Recommendation 8

Provide educational, technical, and financial assistance to protect and sustain privately owned working forests.

Recommendation 9

Work with private landowners and others to encourage responsible stewardship on lands with significant conservation value.

Goal 3: Build and Maintain Sustainable and Attractive Communities

Recommendation 10

Empower county governments and regional planning entities to conserve natural and heritage resources and promote recreational activities through cooperative planning.

Recommendation 11

Make reinvestment in our established communities a priority by targeting DCNR programs and leveraging other state and federal agency program activity.

Recommendation 12

Advance projects and planning that demonstrate sustainable growth and green infrastructure network development and conservation.

Goal 4: Create Outdoor Connections for Citizens and Visitors

Recommendation 13

Increase citizens' and visitors' ability to experience the outdoors.

Recommendation 14

Increase citizens' awareness and knowledge of natural resources and create inspiring experiences in the outdoors to inform their decisions on important conservation issues.

Recommendation 15

Bring our stewardship expertise and educational programs to urban and suburban communities.

Appendix C. CLI Data Sheets

Laurel Highlands

Vision: By 2015, the unique character of the Laurel Highlands is protected and the region and its communities are recognized as world-class heritage/recreation destinations as well as wonderful places to live, work, and play.

Overall Goals of Laurel Highlands

- Revitalize core communities and expand local and regional economies through sustainable resource use and development.
- Conserve, restore, and improve ecological (aquatic and terrestrial), cultural, historic, and recreational resources of the region to sustain economic growth.
- Build capacity and constituency in the region to implement and maintain the revitalization of communities and sustainability of the ecological, cultural, historic, and recreational resources in the region.

Counties: Somerset, Fayette, Westmoreland, parts of Cambria and Bedford counties

DCNR Assets: Seven state parks and state forest and game lands totaling over 100,000 acres. Key features include the 20,500-acre Ohiopyle State Park and the 70-mile Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail. Excellent whitewater, hiking, and biking resources throughout the region.

Partners:

Federal and State Government Partners: PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection, PA Dept. of Transportation, PA Historical & Museum Commission, PA State Fish and Boat Commission, PA State Game Commission

County or Regional Government Partners: Conemaugh, Connellsville, Donegal, Downtown West Newton, Johnstown, Ohiopyle

Non-Government Partners: Allegheny Trail Alliance, Cambria Somerset Authority, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Fay-Penn Economic Development Council, Heinz Endowments, Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor, Mountain Watershed Inc., National Road Heritage Corridor, PA Environmental Council, Regional Trail Corporation, Richard King Mellon Foundation, Stonycreek-Quemahoning Initiative, Student Conservation Association Inc., Trail Town Program/The Progress Fund, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Youghioghney River Trail Council

DCNR Investments: Through C2P2, from 2003-2008, 41 grants totaling \$4,043,000

Major Investment Areas: Four sub-landscapes are Laurel Ridge, Chestnut Ridge, the Great Allegheny Passage, and the Stonycreek-Quemahoning corridor. Major activities have included joint plan/implementation strategy between Ohiopyle Borough and Ohiopyle State Park, protection and utilization of the Youghioghney River through the

Water Trail, and coordinated efforts to protect and expand recreational opportunities along the Laurel Ridge.

Recent Activities: The Laurel Ridge interpretive plan will be presented for public feedback in November 2009. Ohiopyle Borough has completed a bidding process for the installation of green infrastructure, including pervious pavement, rain barrels and downspout installation, and demonstration streets. A water trail guide and map for the Youghiogheny River Water Trail was published in the summer of 2009.

Lehigh Valley Greenways

Vision: By 2015, greenways and trails connect natural and cultural resources across the Lehigh Valley linking urban areas to outdoor experiences, protecting watersheds, and retaining the character of the landscape, the region's heritage, and the community. *To conserve, connect, and conserve the green.*

Overall Goals of Lehigh Valley Greenways

- **Land Conservation & Restoration:** Conserve and connect at least 25 percent of the natural areas with high conservation value to preserve the Lehigh Valley's remaining unprotected significant natural areas and watersheds.
- **Outdoor Recreation & Trail Connections:** Create greenways and trail connections that connect people and outdoor recreation experiences in core communities to valued natural, recreational, and cultural resources.
- **Community Revitalization:** Revitalize core communities of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton by integrating green infrastructure into riverfront development, greenways and trails, and neighborhood revitalization projects.
- **Local Education & Outreach:** Increase the understanding and use of smart growth land use practices to create more livable and sustainable communities and protect the quality of life.

Counties: Lehigh and Northampton

DCNR Assets: Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center (EEC), a 1,168-acre park in central Northampton County, and Delaware Canal State Park, a 60-mile linear park following a former tow-path along the Delaware River. No state forest land.

Partners:

Federal and State Government Partners: PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection, PA Dept. of Transportation, PA Dept. of Agriculture, PA State Fish and Boat Commission, PA State Game Commission

County or Regional Government Partners: Lehigh County, Northampton County

Local Governmental Partners: Allentown City, Bethlehem City, Easton City, Allen Township, Bushkill Township, Fountain Hill Borough, Freemansburg Borough, Lower Saucon Township, Moore Township, Palmer Township, Pen Argyl Borough, Salisbury Township, South Whitehall Township

Non-Government Partners: Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Inc., Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, Martins Jacoby Watershed Association, Nazareth Area Council of Governments, Heritage Conservancy, Natural Lands Trust Inc., The Nature Conservancy, Wildlands Conservancy Inc.

DCNR Investments: From 2003-2008, C2P2 has funded 52 grants totaling \$10.58 million to meet the strategic objectives of the CLI. Since this funding requires a one-to-one match, an additional \$10 million, at least, has been leveraged.

Major Investment Areas: Considerable progress has been made toward development of the Two Rivers Area Trail, designated as LVG's number one signature project. The recently completed Two Rivers Area Greenway Trail Implementation Study lays out a plan for a major spine trail nearly 18 miles in length running from the Delaware River in Easton to the Appalachian Trail. Another 9-mile trail between Stockertown and the Appalachian Trail will create a "loop" trail connecting to the main spine. Infrastructure investment has focused on the design and construction (anticipated 2010) of three education centers, one each at Jacobsburg, the Trexler Nature Preserve, and the Lehigh Gap Nature Center.

Recent Activities: In August 2009, a block grant of \$230,000 was distributed to seven local grantees, including funds to Easton and Bethlehem for an urban forestry program, funds to townships for trail work and land use planning, funds to the Lehigh County Conservation District for watershed planning, and funds to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for coordinated land use planning.

Lower Susquehanna

Vision: The short-term vision is to conserve and protect the greenway corridor of riverlands along the Susquehanna River in Lancaster and York counties through a public/private partnership that maximizes public/nonprofit ownership, open space conservation, recreational use, and heritage development of the utility company lands consistent with the utilities' management requirements and restrictions on these lands. The long-term vision is to use the land-based and water trail greenway corridor as the nucleus and foundation on which to build an economic development, community sustainability, and conservation stewardship strategy for the corridor and the two counties. (Source: Lower Susquehanna River Greenway work plan)

Goals and Purpose

- The importance of conserving these shore-lands and islands is to improve public access to the river, preserve environmentally sensitive areas, preserve the forested river landscape, improve water quality, provide additional land- and water-based recreational opportunities, and generally protect and promote a greenway corridor along both sides of the river. (Critical Dialogue Landscape Narrative-The Lower Susquehanna Riverlands Greenway DRAFT)
- To put into public ownership or control as much of the Susquehanna riverlands in Lancaster and York counties as possible. The current focus is the four utility company lands in the Lower Susquehanna. (Lower Susquehanna Greenway Work Plan)
- To develop a major DCNR presence in the form of a state park or local and state partnership with these lands. (Lower Susquehanna Greenway work plan)

Counties: Lancaster, York

DCNR Assets: Two state parks: Sam Lewis and Susquehannock

Partners: Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area, The Conservation Fund (TCF), Safe Harbor Water Power Company, Constellation Energy, PPL Corporation, Lancaster and York County Planning Commissions, Lancaster York Heritage Region, Lancaster County Conservancy, Farm and Natural Lands Trust of York County, The Susquehanna River Basin Commission and York County Parks Department, Columbia Township, Conoy Township, East Donegal Township.

Organizations identified as potential partners: Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Lancaster Farmland Trust, Trout Unlimited, PA Game Commission, PA Fish & Boat Commission, William Penn Foundation, Lenfast Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, and Natural Lands Trust

DCNR Investments: Ten grants totaling \$4.55 million through C2P2

Major Investment Areas: Sub-landscapes are PPL Lands (3,500 acres), Safe Harbor Lands (1,600 acres), Exelon Lands (5,700 acres), First Energy Lands

PA Wilds

Vision: The vision of the Pennsylvania Wilds is to be well-known throughout the country as a region that offers authentic recreational experiences, interesting towns, hospitable hosts, and other heritage and cultural attractions in one of the most remote and beautiful settings in the Northeast.

Overall Goals of PA Wilds

- Ensure stewardship of the public lands and character of the region's communities
- Support and grow private businesses such as accommodations, services, and locally made products
- Promote the renewal of the region's communities and appropriate community planning
- Invest in public infrastructure to enhance the visitor experience.

Counties: Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga, Warren, *Two parks considered part of the Pennsylvania Wilds are located in northern Centre County.

DCNR Assets: Twenty-nine state parks (over 27,600 acres), 8 state forests (over 1.3 million acres), 50 state game lands (over 300,000 acres). Including the Allegheny National Forest, public land holdings over 2 million acres. Vast recreational resources including but not limited to 1,800 overnight public camping sites, 1,500 miles of hiking trails, 1,800 miles of snowmobile trails, 16,000 miles of flowing water including 213 stocked trout streams, and the largest free roaming elk herd on the east coast.

Partners:

Federal and State Government Partners: National Park Service, PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection, PA Dept. of Transportation, PA Historical & Museum Commission, PA State Fish and Boat Commission, PA State Game Commission

County or Regional Government Partners: Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga, Warren counties; North Central PA Regional Planning and Development Commission; Northwest PA Regional Planning and Development Commission; Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission; SEDA-Council of Governments; Pine Creek Council of Governments; Clarion River Municipal Partnership

Tourism Organizations: Allegheny National Forest Vacation Bureau (McKean County), Clearfield County Recreation and Tourism Authority, Clinton County Economic Partnership, Lycoming County Visitors Bureau, Northwest Pennsylvania's Great Outdoors Visitors Bureau (Represents Elk, Clarion, Forest,

Cameron, and Jefferson counties), Potter County Visitors Association, Tioga County Visitors Bureau, Warren County Visitors Bureau

Non-Government Partners: Lumber Heritage Region, Western Clinton Sportsmen Association, Route 6 Heritage Corridor, Pennsylvania Wilds Tourism Marketing Corporation, PA Wilds Artisan Development Network, Appalachian Regional Commission

Academic Partners: Pennsylvania State University

DCNR Investments: From 2002-2009, approximately \$120 million of state funding for DCNR State Parks and Forest Districts in the Pennsylvania Wilds and \$13.6 million from 2003-2009 through DCNR Community Conservation and Partnerships Grant Program.

Major Investment Areas: Major investments areas have focused on three foci:

- Forging a strategy linked closely to community development
 - Clarion River Corridor and Allegheny National Forest: Ridgway to the Allegheny National Forest
 - Elk Country Visitors Center
 - Cherry Springs State Park/ Lyman Run State Park
 - Pine Creek Valley
- Making major infrastructure investments to greatly enhance tourism
 - Bald Eagle State Park – Birding Portal
 - Gateway Welcome Center on I-80 at S.B. Elliott State Park
 - Sinnemahoning State Park – Wildlife Watching
 - Kinzua Bridge State Park
- Reclamation of a environmental and recreational resource
 - West Branch Susquehanna

Recent Activities: PA Wilds Resource Center website launched in the spring of 2009. Construction of the \$12 million Elk Country Visitor Center is underway and construction is expected to be completed in 2010. Expected completion of the Gateway Welcome Center at S.B. Elliott is 2010.

Pocono Forests and Waters

Vision: The Pocono Forests & Waters Conservation Landscape will conserve the natural environment and enhance the quality of life by sustaining vital natural resources.

Overall Goals of the Pocono Forest and Waters Conservation Landscape

1. Identify and conserve important landscape areas for acquisition and easements to increase the public and private land base under conservation.
2. Facilitate local government decision-making to conserve land and revitalize communities.
3. Engage the business sector to leverage financial resources and political will to enhance and conserve natural and recreational resources.
4. Improve community awareness of and engagement in conservation and restoration of local natural resources.
5. Increase cooperation among various state and local governmental agencies and private entities with an interest in conserving natural resources and sustainable development.

Counties: Pike, Monroe, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Wayne, and Carbon counties

DCNR Assets: 54,536 acres of state parks, 85,239 acres of state forests (with 2,754 acres designated as Wild Area and 7,947 designated as Natural Area)

Partners:

Lead External Partner: Pennsylvania Environmental Council

Land Trusts: Northeast Conservation Partners, Delaware Highlands Conservancy, Lackawanna Valley Conservancy, Natural Lands Trust Inc., North Branch Land Trust, Pocono Heritage Land Trust, The Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlands Conservancy Inc.

Local Organizations: Brodhead Watershed Association, Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Inc., Dunmore School District, Greater Hazleton Area Civic Partnership, Lacawac Sanctuary Foundation Inc., Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority, Lehigh Canal Recreation Commission, Monroe County Conservation District, Pocono Area Recreation Commission, Pocono Environmental Education Center, Susquehanna Warrior Trail Council, The Eagle Institute, Wildlife Information Center Inc., Young Men's Christian Association of Wilkes-Barre

Municipalities: Barrett, Butler, Chestnuthill, Clarks Summit, Coolbaugh, Delaware, East Stroudsburg, Eldred, Exeter, Jackson, Kidder, Lehman, Middle Smithfield, Milford, Paradise, Pocono, Polk, Rice, Smithfield, Stroud, Stroudsburg, Thornhurst, Tunkhannock, Wilkes-Barre

Other: Penn State Extension, National Park Service, PA Game Commission, Pocono Lake Preserve, Pocono Mountains Convention & Visitors Bureau, Upper Delaware Council, Pinchot Institute

DCNR Investments: Since 2002, grants totaling \$29.85 million

Major Investment Areas: Work in the CLI is organized around four sub-landscapes: Delaware Highlands, Lehigh River, Upper Delaware, and Susquehanna. Within these sub-landscapes, the priority areas are: Lehigh Gorge/Delaware and Lehigh Corridor, Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Upper Lehigh/Roaring Brook watersheds, Middle Delaware River, Promised Land State Park/Delaware State Forest, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority Corridor, Lackawanna State Park, Lackawanna State Forest in the area of Harvey's Creek/Ricketts Glen.

Recent Activities: PEC is administering the Conservation Assistance Program (CAP), a reimbursement funding program that will distribute a \$100,000 block grant into smaller grants between \$3,000-\$25,000 to municipalities and nonprofit organizations. The goal is to advance conservation and conservation and recreation planning in the targeted priority areas.

Schuylkill Highlands

Vision: We are forging a variety of partnerships to preserve, restore, and enhance natural, historic, cultural, and recreational resources, while encouraging sustainable practices and compatible economic development to create healthy and vibrant communities.

Overall Goals of Schuylkill Highlands

- Protect at least 50% of remaining underdeveloped land
- Implement land use practices in all municipalities
- Connect residents and visitors to the outdoors in order to create vibrant communities
- Engage residents in both public processes and private initiatives

Counties: Berks, Bucks, Chester, Lebanon, Lancaster, Lehigh and Montgomery counties

DCNR Assets: French Creek State Park, Marsh Creek State Park, Evansburg State Park, Nolde Forest

Partners:

Federal and State Government Partners: PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development, PA Dept. of Transportation, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, National Park Service, Schuylkill River Heritage Area, Valley Forge National Park



County or Regional Government Partners: Berks County Planning Commission, Chester County Open Space Preservation Program, Montgomery County Planning Commission, St. Peters Village, North Coventry Open Space, North Coventry Township Parks and Recreation Commission, North Coventry Township, Birdsboro Water MSP Borough of Birdsboro, Borough of Pottstown Department of Economic Development, Montgomery County Dept. of Econ. Development

Non-Government Partners: Appalachian Mountain Club, Audubon Pennsylvania, Berks County Conservancy, Montgomery County Lands Trust, Natural Lands Trust, Pennsylvania Highlands Coalition, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, William Penn Foundation, Horse-Shoe Trail Association, Hay Creek Watershed Association, Stell Environmental Enterprises, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County, Pennsylvania Downtown Center, Redevelopment Authority of Berks County, Greater Reading Convention & Visitors Bureau, Tri-County Area Chamber of Commerce, Berks Economic Partnership, Greater Philadelphia Tourism & Marketing Corp., Chester County Economic Development Council, Montgomery County Development Corporation, Northern Federation Regional Planning Commission

DCNR Investments: Through C2P2, 30 grants from 2003-2008 totaling \$10.25 million.

Major Investment Areas: Focus has been on developing trail connections between the Schuylkill River Trail and French Creek State Park, land conservation, and economic development planning.

Recent Activities: A \$722,000 grant was made to Natural Lands Trust, which leveraged a 1-1 match to acquire the Yelenoc Property that will connect French Creek State Park not only to the Schuylkill River Trail, but also to four National Historic Parks and gateway towns. The NLT, in partnership with DCNR, is currently seeking proposals for a consultant/team to complete an economic development plan for the “Middle Schuylkill River,” Valley Forge to Reading.

South Mountain

Vision: To sustain the South Mountain Region's quality of life, which is critically reliant on its natural, cultural, and economic assets.

Overall Goals of South Mountain

- Advance land acquisition and protection in the South Mountain area
- Improve the effectiveness of land use planning and regulation in the South Mountain area
- Enhance education, communication, and information sharing and the public recognition, concern, and interest in protecting the South Mountain area

Counties: Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, and York

DCNR Assets: 85,000-acre Michaux State Forest; Caledonia, Pine Grove Furnace, Monte Alto state parks; and King's Gap Environmental Center

Partners:

Federal and State Government Partners: Capitol Resource Conservation and Development, National Park Service, PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection, PA Dept. of Transportation, PA Historic & Museum Commission, PA State Fish and Boat Commission, PA State Game Commission

County or Regional Government Partners: Adams County Conservation District, Adams County Dept. of Environmental Services, Adams County Planning Office, Cumberland County Planning Dept., Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau, Franklin County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Franklin County Planning Commission, Gettysburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, York County Planning Commission

Non-Government Partners: Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Appalachian Mountain Club, Audubon of Pennsylvania, Central Pennsylvania Conservancy, Civil War Preservation Trust, Farm and Natural Lands Trust of York County, Land Conservancy of Adams County, National Wild Turkey Federation (PA chapter), The Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Academic Partners: The Pennsylvania State University, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Shippensburg University

DCNR Investments: Through C2P2, 29 grants totaling \$6.21 million

Major Investment Areas: Whiskey Springs, Antietam Creek Watershed, and East Mountain Faces

Recent Activities: 2009-2011 strategic plan is in place, which outlines 5 priority foci: further development of partnerships, outreach and communication, asset inventory and prioritization, organization of a South Mountain Summit, and a Balancing Nature and Commerce Workshop

Appendix D. CLI Goals and Themes

	Stewardship	Economic Development	Community revitalization	Infrastructure improvement	Land/resource conservation	Community/Land Use Planning	Sustainable resource use	Capacity building	Recreation
CLI Goals									
PA Wilds									
Ensure stewardship of the public lands and character of the region's communities	x								
Support and grow private businesses such as accommodations, services and locally-made products		x							
Promote the renewal of the region's communities and appropriate community planning			x			x			
Invest in public infrastructure to enhance the visitor experience in the Pennsylvania Wilds				x					x
Laurel Highlands									
Revitalize core communities and expand local and regional economies through sustainable resource use and development		x	x				x		
Conserve, restore, and improve ecological (aquatic and terrestrial), cultural, historic, and recreational resources of the region to sustain economic growth		x			x				x
Build capacity and constituency in the region to implement and maintain the revitalization of communities and sustainability of the ecological, cultural, historic, and recreational resources of the region			x				x	x	x
Poconos Forests and Waters									
Identify and conserve important landscape areas for acquisition and easements to increase the public and private land base under conservation					x				
Facilitate local government decision-making to conserve land and revitalize communities			x		x			x	
Engage the business sector to leverage financial resources and political will to enhance and conserve natural and recreational resources	x				x				
Improve community awareness of and engagement in conservation and restoration of local natural resources	x				x				
Increase cooperation among various state and local governmental agencies and private entities with an interest in conserving natural resources and sustainable development					x		x	x	
Lower Susquehanna									
Improve public access to the river				x					x
Preserve environmentally sensitive areas					x				
Preserve the forested river landscape					x				

Improve water quality					x				
Provide additional land- and water-based recreational opportunities									x
Revitalize the Rivertown communities of Marietta, Columbia, and Wrightsville			x						
South Mountain									
Advance land acquisition and protection in the South Mountain area					x				
Improve the effectiveness of land use planning and regulation in the South Mountain area						x		x	
Enhance education, communication, and information sharing and the public recognition, concern, and interest in protecting the South Mountain area	x				x				
Lehigh Valley Greenways									
Conserve and connect at least 25 percent of the natural areas with high conservation value to preserve the Lehigh Valley's remaining unprotected significant natural areas and watersheds				x	x				
Create greenways and trail connections that connect people and outdoor recreation experiences in core communities to valued natural, recreational, and cultural resources				x			x		x
Revitalize core communities of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton by integrating green infrastructure into riverfront development, greenways and trails, and neighborhood revitalization projects			x	x		x			
Increase the understanding and use of smart growth land use practices to create more livable and sustainable communities and protect the quality of life	x		x			x	x		
Schuylkill Highlands									
Protect what is special to this area by saving a significant amount of remaining land in this landscape					x				
Connect residents and visitors to the outdoors									
Implement sustainable land use practices in local municipalities in the landscape	x						x		

Appendix E. Leveraged Resources in the CLIs

Laurel Highlands:

Ohioypyle Projects:

- \$1.9 Million from PA DOT for Rte. 381 PCTI Project
- \$1.3 Million from PENNVEST via ARRA funding for Green Infrastructure Project
- \$10K DCED to update zoning ordinance
- \$21K raised by community for playground
- \$7.8K in-kind donation of Pashek Associates for playground design
- \$250K Mellon Foundation for Joint Master Plan-Implementation Strategy
- \$60K from Mellon Foundation to update Act 537 plan
- \$10K (requested) from Community Foundation of Fayette County to match Act 537 plan update
- \$20K from Community Foundation of Fayette County's Growth Fund for planning for hotel
- painting of the church -- donated by a parishoner's family
- DCED and Trail Town Program facilitated funding for owners of Firefly Grill to purchase Falls Market

Other Laurel Highlands Projects

- CDBG Funding for Yough River Park in Connellsville \$344,793 in CDBG dollars will match from DCNR funding of \$200,000
- \$20K from Community Foundation of Fayette County's Growth Fund for plans for train stations in Connellsville
- \$2.5K National Park Service in support for Yough River Water Trail
- Turnpike Commission cooperation with development of gateway and park-and-ride in Donegal
- PennDOT agreeing to add bike lane to Crawford Avenue Bridge in Connellsville
- PA Fish & Boat Commission technical and logistical assistance for Yough River Water Trail
- PA Game Commission cooperation with Laurel Ridge Trail Plan
- National Park Service support for Interpretive Plan and Path of the Flood Trail (would be helping with this trail without the LH CLI)

Lower Susquehanna

- Columbia Borough Riverfront Park Renovation Development Project: Leverage Funds: \$80K Columbia Borough, \$450K Lancaster County for design, DEP \$325K, PA Fish and Boat \$250K—match DCNR \$650K Keystone Grant
Scope: Development of Riverfront Park, Columbia Borough, Lancaster County.
Work to include construction of a boat launch, canoe and kayak access, parking,

pedestrian walkways; installation of utilities, rain gardens, site amenities; ADA access, landscaping, signage; and other related site improvements.

- Wrightsville Borough Riverfront Master Site Plan Project: Leverage funds \$19,600 DCED grant and York County
Scope: Riverfront Park Feasibility Study and Master Site Plan. Riverfront property owned and or leased by various entities (PA FBC; Safe Harbor; Water Authority). Project is part of the Borough's Comprehensive plan currently being funded by DCED.
- Conoy Township Lancaster County Burkett Riverfront Property Acquisition adjacent to the North West River Trail along Susquehanna River (future parking or other trail related support activities) \$55,000 DCNR Grant Leverage matching funds \$ from Lancaster County Solid Waste Authority
Scope: Payment toward the acquisition of approximately 12 acres adjacent to North West River Trail and along the Susquehanna River for open space and passive recreation.
- Conoy Township—North West River Trail (pending) \$250,000 2009 application from DCNR. Leverage funding coming from Lancaster Solid Waste Authority and East Donegal Township for “In-Kind Matching funds” for using their equipment. The requested project funds will be used to develop the Conoy Township portion of the Northwest River Trail, with a segment of trail construction in East Donegal Township. The proposed development includes constructing a 10-foot wide, ADA accessible, multi-use, paved trail from Bainbridge to Conoy Creek (4,705ft) and from Shock's Mill to East Donegal Township River Park (7,630ft).

Pennsylvania Wilds

- CLI work on PA Wilds has served to engage and energize other organizations like the ANF in a shared vision (e.g., along the Clarion River) that would not have happened before.
- The Fish and Boat Commission and DCNR have aligned our common interests in recreation and river access and this has led to collaboration on projects along the Clarion River, Pine Creek, and West Branch of the Susquehanna. Fish and Boat provide the access design and provide technical assistance and DCNR funds the construction of the access. Specifically along the Clarion, a tour of the corridor with Secretary DiBerardinis and then PFBC Executive Director Doug Austen spawned a commitment to work together and leverage our respective resources for improved access along the river.
- Pennsylvania Wilds has also brought DEP Watershed Planning staff to the table to work with watershed planning issues in the Pine Creek.
- Pennsylvania Wilds and need for more outreach to businesses brought DCED business assistance program staff to the table enough to have them invest in Ta Brant's Small Business Ombudsman position for two years.

- We have been able to leverage PennDOT’s PCTI program for priority trail projects—and without Pennsylvania Wilds as a driving force, it would not have been as high a priority on their agendas. Specific project—Pine Creek Trail extension through the town of Jersey Shore.

Pocono Forests and Waters:

A) Blue Ridge PH II (1,523 Ac)

Monroe County	\$2,000,000
PA DCNR	\$1,350,000
Private, Nonprofit, & Local funding (pending)	\$1,425,000

B) Theta I (7,000 Ac)

Luzerne County	\$4,000,000
PA DCNR	\$1,000,000
Total	\$5,000,000

C) Theta II (3,000 Ac)

Private Foundations	\$850,000
PA DCNR	\$1,444,000
Luzerne County	\$200,000
Total	\$1,644,850

D) Theta III (5,000 Ac)

PA DCNR	\$1,200,000
Lackawanna County	\$4,000,000
The Nature Conservancy	\$200,000
Total	\$5,400,000

E) POLATNICK (708 ACRES)

Pike County Scenic Rural Character Program: \$1,304,392

DCNR: \$1,690,000

Private Foundations: \$500,000

Schuylkill Highlands:

- Birdsboro Waters—1,844 acres, \$5.3 M total land value, \$2.2 M total costs, DCNR-\$1.1M, Forest Legacy Funds-\$800,000, William Penn Foundation-\$300,000.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hopewell Big Woods (HBW)—\$50,000 for Bog Turtle Habitat identification and research as a result of DCNR’s program funding support.

- Oley Hills Land Protection of Jones, Morning and Kriebel Properties—\$400,000 Federal Highlands Funds, DCNR \$350,000.
- National Park Service—RTCA grant to SH CLI for assistance for new trail, Schuylkill River Trail to Boars Back Trail, \$20,000.
- National Park Service—Centennial Grant support to Hopewell Furnace National Historic Park as a result of DCNR initial conservation funded HBW Program support in landscape.
- DCED—\$29,000 LUTAP grant to North Coventry Township which is providing a match to the DCNR C2P2 award to Natural Lands Trust for a Compatible Economic Development Study of the Middle Schuylkill area and Gateway Towns to the Hopewell Big Woods.
- ARRA funds went to Chester County for the Chester Valley Trail, but this is not in the CLI. Still, shows the County’s priority for urging “active” modes of transportation.
- DEP is funding TreeVitalize Watersheds @ \$250,000/yr. This isn’t a CLI per se, but clearly would not have happened without DCNR’s initiation of TreeVitalize and making the connection of storm-water management and open space/riparian areas/rivers conservation.