

Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation Landscape

2014 Top Accomplishments



ABOUT THE RIVERLANDS



The Susquehanna Riverlands features three major lakes created by hydroelectric dams, three nationally recognized recreation trails (Susquehanna River Trail, Kelly's Run Pinnacle Trail, and the Mason-Dixon Trail), as well as the 14 mile North West River Trail, and the Turkey Hill Section of the Enola Low Grade Rail Trail in Manor Township, a National Natural Landmark (Ferncliff Nature Preserve), Native American archaeological sites, an Audubon Society designated important bird area (Conejohela flats), more than 2,000 acres of protected publicly accessible land, and 29 municipalities in Lancaster in York counties.

PURPOSE

To improve public access to the river, preserve environmentally sensitive areas and the forested river landscape, improve water quality, provide additional recreational opportunities, and revitalize the Rivertown communities of Marietta, Columbia, and Wrightsville.

LAND PROTECTION

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Approval Granted for PPL lands

The Lancaster County Conservancy permanently protected 195 acres of natural lands including the well known Shenk's Ferry Wildflower Preserve in Lancaster County and lands adjacent to DCNR's Urey Overlook and Otter Creek in York County. This was part of phase 2B of a multi-phase land transfer project with PPL.

CONSTRUCTION

North West Lancaster County River Trail

North West Lancaster County River Trail will one day soon stretch 14 miles, connecting the communities of Falmouth, Marietta and Columbia Borough. In 2014, significant structures on the trail were built that made connections to completed sections of trail.

Shocks Mill Bridge Underpass ***North West River Trail***



The Shocks Mill Underpass structure was built alongside a trestle of the Shock's Mill Railroad Bridge and offers users a spectacular view of the River. The bridge connects the completed section of trail from Falmouth to East Donegal Township and from East Donegal Township to Marietta Borough.

In Marietta, the Chiques Creek Bridge was completed and now provides a connection from the Marietta section of trail to Chiques Rock County Park owned section of trail in West Hempfield Township.

Chiques Creek Bridge ***North West River Trail***



Turkey Hill Trail ACCESS

Access to the new section of the Turkey Hill Trail extension begins at the Enola Low Grade trail at Fry's Run and traverses the ridgeline south for 2.25 miles to the Safe Harbor Nature Preserve.

Zimmerman Center for Heritage and Riverfront Enhancement Project

Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area's Zimmerman Center complex was officially opened in September 2014. Key project features include a water trail landing with floating dock and canoe/kayak launch, waterfront pavilion and boardwalk, pedestrian pathways and parking improvements.

Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area's Riverfront Enhancement Project



Columbia Borough Park and Trail Services Building

Columbia Borough's Trail Services Building located in its Riverfront Park was opened in December 2014. It features a welcome center, meeting room, bathrooms and a covered deck overlooking the Susquehanna. Columbia's Riverfront Park is the southern trail head of the North West River Trail.

Trail Services Building Columbia Borough



PARTNERSHIP Susquehanna Riverlands Organizational Structure

The Leadership Team was expanded at the end of 2014 to include representatives from Indian Steps Museum, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, PA Downtown Center and Rivertownes PA USA. They join a committee with representatives from the York County Planning Commission, Lancaster County Planning Commission, Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area, National Park Service, Lancaster County Conservancy, Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority, and DCNR. The Leadership Team meets quarterly to review the work of sub-committees and advance the goals laid out in the action plan.

Municipal Outreach

Staff from the Lancaster County Conservancy and DCNR presented information about the Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation Landscape to Wrightsville and Marietta Borough's municipal meetings. A Susquehanna Riverland Conservation Landscape brochure and power point was developed and utilized at these presentations. This municipal outreach will continue in 2015.

Tourism Development

The Tourism Development group met several times to strategize how to market the Susquehanna Riverlands. The group engaged the Lancaster and York County Convention and Visitor Bureaus and the Susquehanna Valley Chamber of Commerce along with for profit private partners to help guide the development of a strategic outreach plan that will be implemented in 2015.

SUSQUEHANNA RIVERLANDS MINI-GRANT PROGRAM: 2014 Grant Awards

Borough of Columbia – Develop strategy for best uses for the newly completed Trail Services building at the Columbia River Park.

Donegal Intermediate School – Students will work with local artists to design and install a tile mosaic at East Donegal Township's Riverfront Park.

Hellam Township - The installation of a demonstration rain garden, rain barrels, and native plant gardens for managing stormwater run-off.

Lancaster Creative Factory – Will work with students, artists, and volunteers to create a set of artistic, functional and permanent benches for users of the North West River Trail.

Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority - Develop a unified and comprehensive interpretive signage system along the Northwest River Trail.

York County Park Foundation Charitable Trust - Creation of signs and QR codes for hand held devices that will be directed to a website which will introduce the visitor to the Susquehanna Riverlands region.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Lori Yeich, Recreation and Conservation Manager, PA DCNR
(717) 705-5956
lyeich@pa.gov

Fritz Schroeder, Project Coordinator
Lancaster County Conservancy
(717) 392-7891 x 207
Fschroeder@lancasterconservancy.org



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