



Update to the Monroe County **Open Space, Greenway & Recreation Plan**

DRAFT
July, 2013





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1

INTRODUCTION

To understand the 2013 Monroe County Open Space and Recreation Plan “Update,” the original Monroe County Open Space and Recreation Plan of 2001 must be acknowledged as a “state of the art” visionary conservation and recreation strategy in Pennsylvania for the time it was created.

The 2001 plan satisfied its obligations under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) as an element of the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan – and more importantly – it fostered an interactive planning process to articulate the deep community conservation ethic that was adopted with broad support.

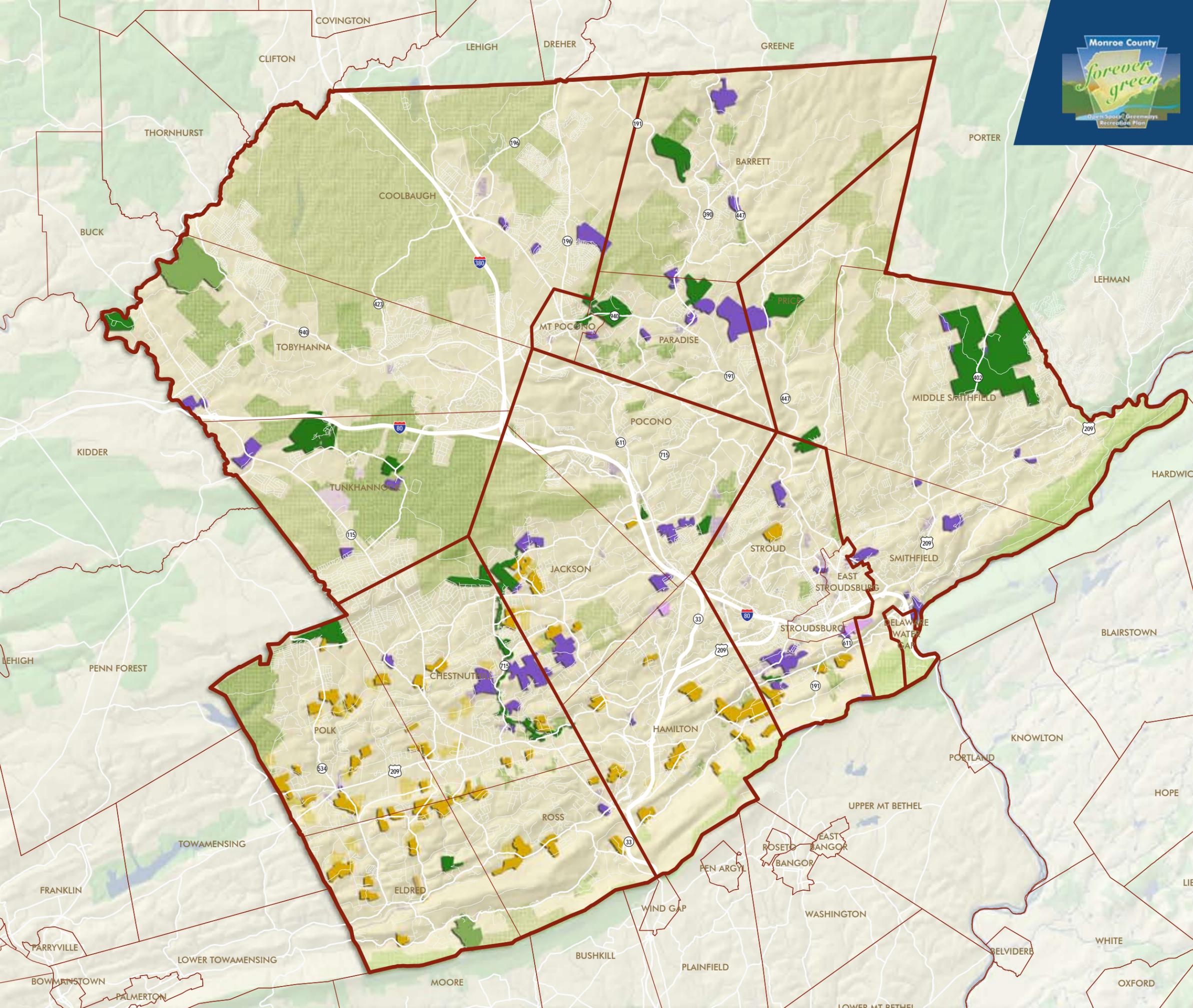
Monroe County then put its money where its heart is.

An investment of \$36M comprised of \$25M passed by voters and \$11M by County Commissioners secured an additional \$78M investment by other partners in Monroe County’s “green infrastructure.” Monroe County understood its opportunities and aggressively took responsibility to achieve them.

In the twelve years since 2001, by nearly every measure, Monroe County has wildly surpassed its original open space and recreation goals.



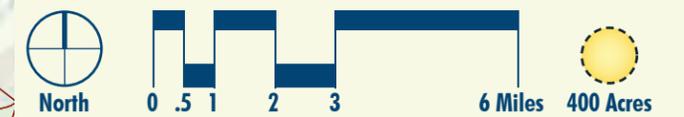
Update to the Monroe County Open Space, Greenways & Recreation Plan



- Open Space and Recreation Planning Regions
- Municipal Boundaries
- Interstates
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- State-Owned Lands
- County-Owned Lands
- Municipal-Owned Lands
- Semi-Private Lands
- Conservation Easements
- Agricultural Easements
- Conserved Lands Purchased Prior to 2002

Acreage Tally:
19,974 Acres of Conserved Lands Since 2002

3 Conserved Lands Since 2002
Draft



Consider the following achievements:

Funding Invested

\$114M totalling:

- \$36M by Monroe County
- \$78M leveraged from others

Acres Preserved

20,000 acres of:

- Agricultural Easements
- Conservancies
- Public Parks
- Natural Open Spaces

Recreation Commissions Established

- Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission
- Hamilton, Jackson, Pocono Park and Open Space Commission
- West End Park & Open Space Commission
- Pocono Area Recreation Commission

Regional Parks Improved

- Smithfield Township Minisink Park
- Paradise Township “Roof”
- Coolbaugh Township Park and Recreation Area
- East Stroudsburg Dansbury Park
- Pocono Township Mountain View Park
- Chestnuthill Township Park
- West End Regional Park
- HJP Regional Park

Trails Developed

- Levee Loop Trail
- Cherry Creek Trails
- Trails at Blakeslee

Plans / Studies Completed

- (refer to list in appendices)

Partnerships Established

- DCNR
- PennDOT
- DCED
- PMVB
- PMEDC

Technical Capabilities Improved

- GIS Library
- Data Collection

2013 CONTEXT

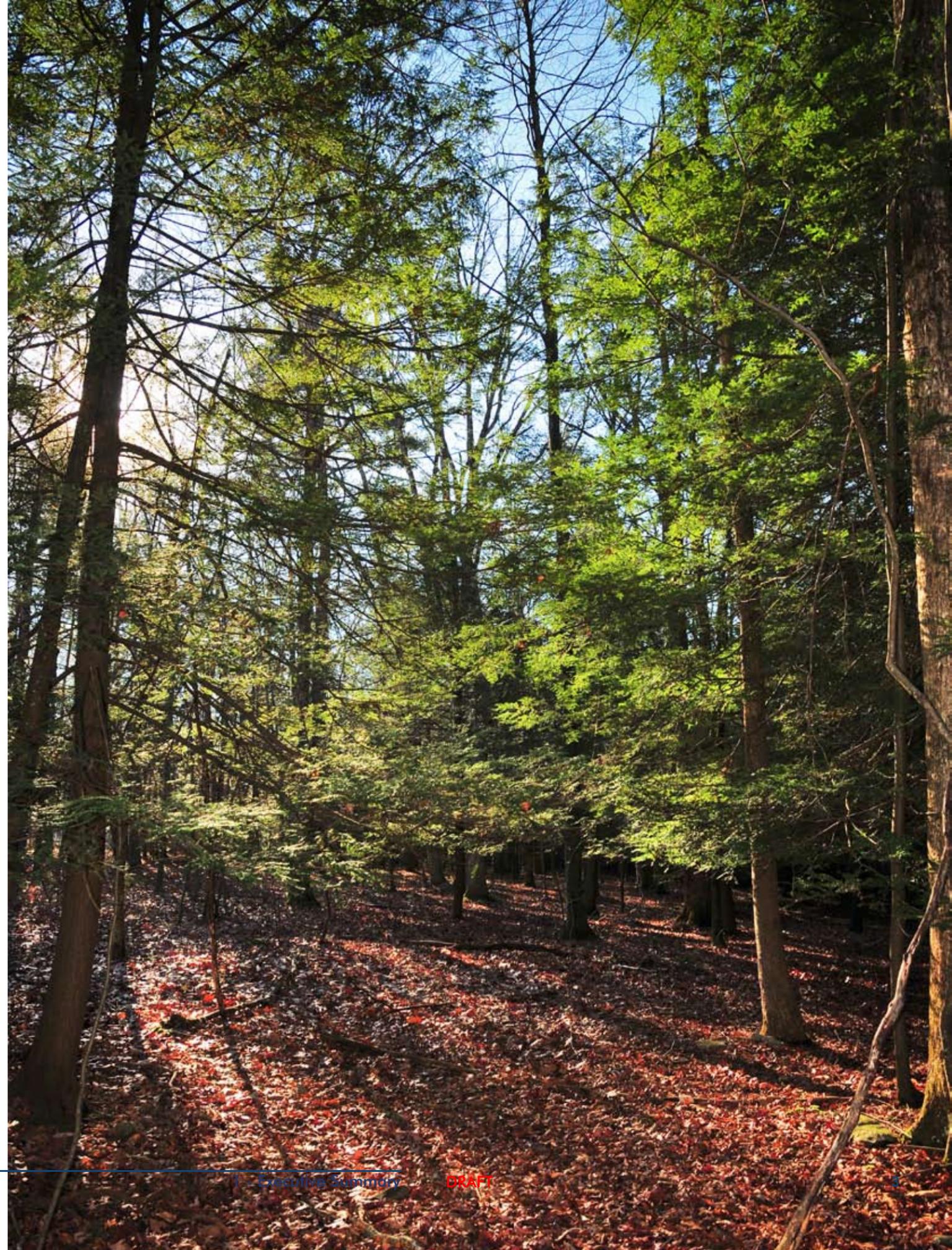
Since 2001, the vital importance of Monroe County’s natural environment to the state of Pennsylvania and the eastern United States is now universally recognized and issues have become even more complex. In 2013, Monroe County faces a new question:

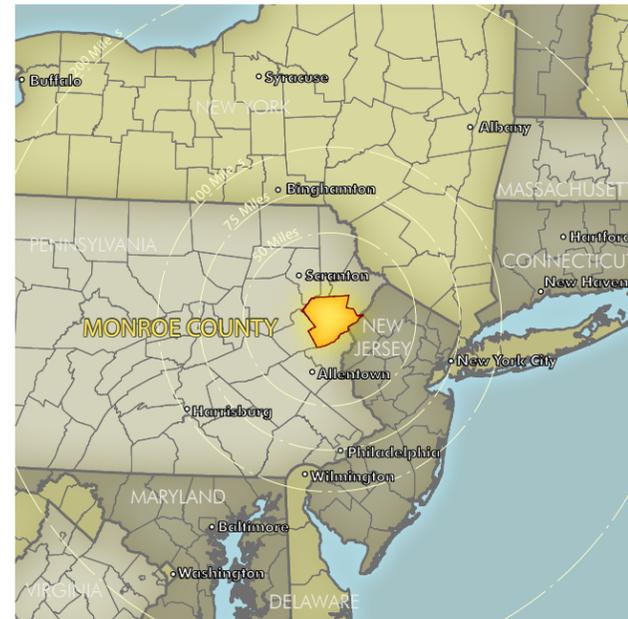
How do we continue our environmental stewardship in a dramatically different economic landscape ?

This question can also be phrased:

Can we afford not to continue our conservation legacy ?

Since the Monroe County Opens Space bond referendum of 1998, the Pocono regional economy has declined from boom to recession, similar to the US economy on the whole. During the “recovery” years since 2008,





there have been concerted efforts at the state and federal levels to eliminate regulations that protect natural resources and “zero out” funding for conservation and recreation. Americans in general have rejected those tactics and remain in favor of government responsibility to protect the environment and preserve open space and recreation as cornerstones of public infrastructure. The smart emphasis has shifted to open space and recreation as economic generators in their own rights – not simply as backdrops to other industries.

Fortunately, for Monroe, the historic Pocono industries of tourism and recreation are still thriving in the County today, and their successes have always been based on the lure of the natural environment. Wisely, the County sought to focus its 2013 Open Space and Recreation Plan update on developing strategies for future open space and recreation investments that can benefit the Monroe economy. Consider the power of the past green investments by Monroe County.

Monroe County has invested \$36M in open space and recreation assets since 2001. That “risk” of investing in real estate and recreation infrastructure has netted an additional \$78M investment by others into Monroe

County. Over the past 12-year period, that growth equates to an average 16% annual return on Monroe County’s original green investment. Investing a percentage of those funds has enabled Monroe County to preserve 20,000 acres of open space as real estate “principal” in the public “bank.”

What other industry attracts an equivalent secured return ?

The “interest” paid on the Monroe County green investment can be estimated in multiple ways, and needs to be acknowledged as real annual “dividends” to Monroe County citizens. One clear example is calculating the true value of forested open space that is conserved to protect and filter water for residents who rely on 90,000 wells in Monroe County.

How do these investments in “prevention” compare to the costs and quality of centralized replacement water supply systems ?

The values of natural amenities as assets essential to the recreation economy of the Poconos is well documented. These and other factors present the economic justifications for Monroe to continue investing in open space and recreation assets within the County – a strategy supported as strongly as ever by Monroe residents, even through the economic downturn of the past five years.

A Special Place

The Monroe County location in the center of the East Coast “megapolis” draws from the dense populations of New York City and Philadelphia and beckons people to visit the “country.” Monroe County is in the enviable position of having retained its cherished environmental culture that is seen as a healthy place, still attracts people to live and visit, and still remains a sustainable economic “product.”

Many communities are now seeking to create similar “sustainable economies” based on their natural resources, but few have the historic economic infrastructure to serve visitor and recreation markets like Monroe County. Residents understand the benefits and costs of living in place that everyone wants to visit - in terms of employment, as well as being active open space users. They also realize there are limits to growth and seek proactive conservation.

The Data Support Conservation

Multiple studies now confirm the quantifiable economic benefits of the natural environment to local communities and regions – as irreplaceable “quality of life” assets; as “green infrastructure” that performs the work to clean air, maintain water quality, temper climate, and support habitat; and as real increases to surrounding property values.

Where is the Tipping Point ?

The threshold where impacts to the natural environment begin to irreversibly decrease environmental and economic values is different for each community – but for Monroe County – where natural resources are of such high value, and the private and public investments that are based on the value of those environmental resources are so significant, it seems especially prudent culturally and economically for Monroe County to continue to invest strategically in conservation.

The Next Decade

The 2013 Open Space and Recreation Plan acknowledges that many elements of the original 2001 plan are still relevant, and builds on that original work. The 2013 public involvement process demonstrated that the Monroe County citizen support remains steadfast to

their original conservation vision and goals, including:

- Conserving natural resources as irreplaceable common wealth,
- Improving the local “quality of life” by protecting the natural environment,
- Expecting sustainable development – economically and environmentally,
- Enforcing the Pennsylvania Constitution guarantees to rights to “clean air and clean water”

OVERVIEW OF THE 2013 PLAN

The Planning process began in January 2013 and concluded in August 2013.

The report presents the information within three major sections:

1. Executive Summary
2. Inventory / Analysis

This section includes results of all data collection, field observations and the public participation program. GIS data supplied by Monroe County and other sources were used to create new mapping displays of resources, issues and opportunities for conservation. Narrative and image content was developed for the report.

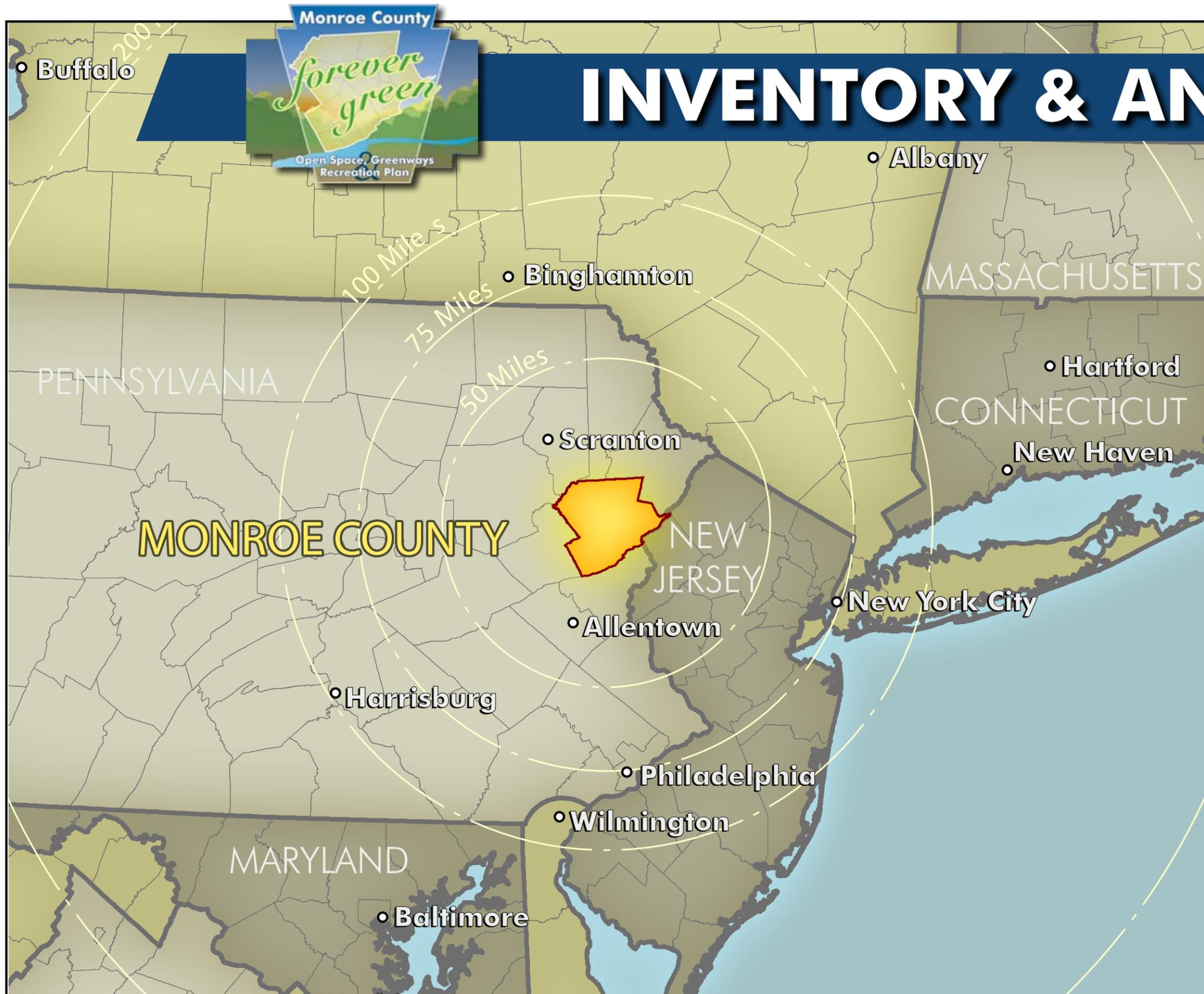
3. Action Plan

This section describes the study findings and makes broad recommendations for implementing consensus priorities.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

NOTE - recommendations will be condensed here after OSAB review





INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

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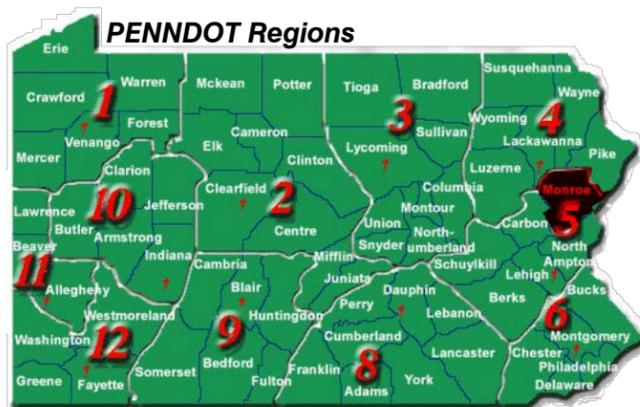
OVERVIEW

Monroe County Context

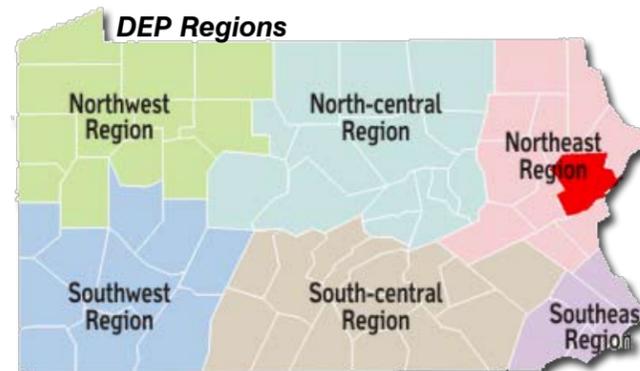
Monroe County is 617 square miles located in eastern Pennsylvania adjacent to the Delaware River and bordered by Carbon County to the west; Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties to the north-west; Wayne and Pike Counties to the north; Northampton County to the south; and Sussex and Warren Counties to the east in New Jersey. Within Monroe County are 20 municipalities, consisting of 16 townships and 4 boroughs.

The municipalities within Monroe County are organized into six open space and recreation planning regions; three comprehensive planning regions; and five school districts, each having some level of influence on the County's open space and recreation resources and utilizing funds from different sources. The eight counties surrounding Monroe County each have their own open space, greenway and comprehensive plans. These adjacent county plans for parks, greenways and trails were reviewed to identify the most immediate resources potentially accessible to Monroe residents.

Regionally, Monroe is part of several multi-county planning organizations. The County is part of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) economic development area, along with six other counties that compete for transportation "enhancements" funds. Monroe is also 1 of 11 counties in the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Northeast planning region; 1 of 6 counties in Pennsylvania's Department of Transportation (PENNDOT) District 5; 1 of 18 counties in



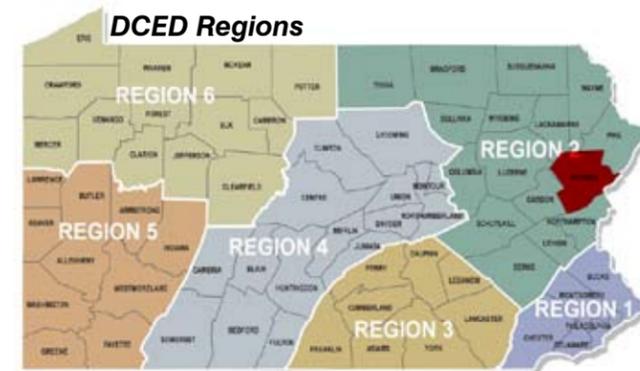
(Map Source: www.dot.state.pa.us)



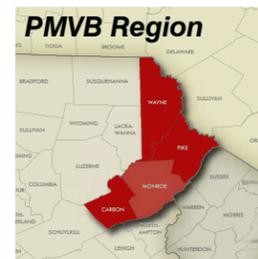
(Map Source: www.depweb.state.pa.us)



(Map Source: www.dcnr.state.pa.us)



(Map Source: www.dced.state.pa.us)



the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Eastern planning region; 1 of 16 counties in the Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) region #2; and 1 of 4 counties that comprise of the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau (PMVB), the official tourist promotion agency (TPA) for the Pocono Mountains region.

Monroe County hydrologic areas include two main watersheds, with the Lehigh River to the west and Delaware River to the east. The Lehigh River confluence with the Delaware is at Easton, Pennsylvania. Two main physiographic elements in Monroe are the Pocono Plateau / escarpment that is oriented in a northeast to southwest direction in the northern portion of the County and the Kittany Ridge of the Appalachian Mountain range which defines the County's southern border.

Consistency with the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan

The section covering open space and recreation in the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan (MCCP) demonstrates how essential open space, greenways and recreation are to conserve and improve environmental, social and economic values in this bell weather county. The Monroe County Comprehensive Plan Update of 2013 and the Monroe County Open Space Greenway and Recreation Plan of 2013 are consistent to preserving and expanding conservation areas, agricultural land easements, and parklands for returns on investments that outweigh initial expenditures. By analyzing subdivision design and watershed management the MCCP provides rationale to limit additional sprawl and billboard

placement along roadsides as a beneficial investment in the County's overall economy. Conservation efforts are now proven to protect and grow value of a region's character, watersheds and public open spaces. The Comprehensive Plan mentions that 20% of the total land and water area within Monroe County is public open space and if Act 319 tracts are included, that number climbs to 50%. This number can be easily misinterpreted to give the impression that Monroe County has abundant open space, when in reality most of these lands remain vulnerable to developmental pressures and are unprotected. The MCCP provides the rationale for how open space and recreation is connected to environmental, social and economic needs of Monroe County and why it is a wise investment to continue protecting open spaces for public uses.

Changes Since the Last Open Space and Recreation Plan of 2001

Since the 2001 Open Space Plan, Monroe County's population has grown from approximately 130,000 to 170,000 people - an average 4,000 person/year increase. In 1998 Monroe County passed a bond referendum for \$25M to finance the original Monroe County Open Space program in 2001. The County was then able to commit an additional \$11M to leverage \$78 million in non-county matching funds for open space preservation and recreation improvements. These dollars were essential to protect about 20,000 acres of parks and open space. Over 4,860 acres were preserved as farmland under the Monroe County Agricultural Land Preservation program - totaling 1/4 of all land preserved by Monroe County programs since 2001.

The original 2001 Open Space Plan initiated six recreation planning regions and supported them to prepare their own multi-municipal open space and recreation plans. These regional, multi-municipal plans helped spawn four recreation commissions, of which, three commissions have current professional staff to

manage their respective agencies.

Mark Palerino to complete: What are the new municipal / regional parks since 2001? What are other recreation accomplishments?

ANNOTATED LIST OF PREVIOUS OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLANS RELATED TO MONROE COUNTY

This section provides a brief overview of the considerable volume of plans and studies that have been completed for areas within Monroe County since the completion of the 2001 Open Space Plan to the present. The plans and studies are organized by categories based on their focus. A brief summary of each plan and its relevance to Monroe County open space and recreation resources is described below.

Open Space and Recreation Plans

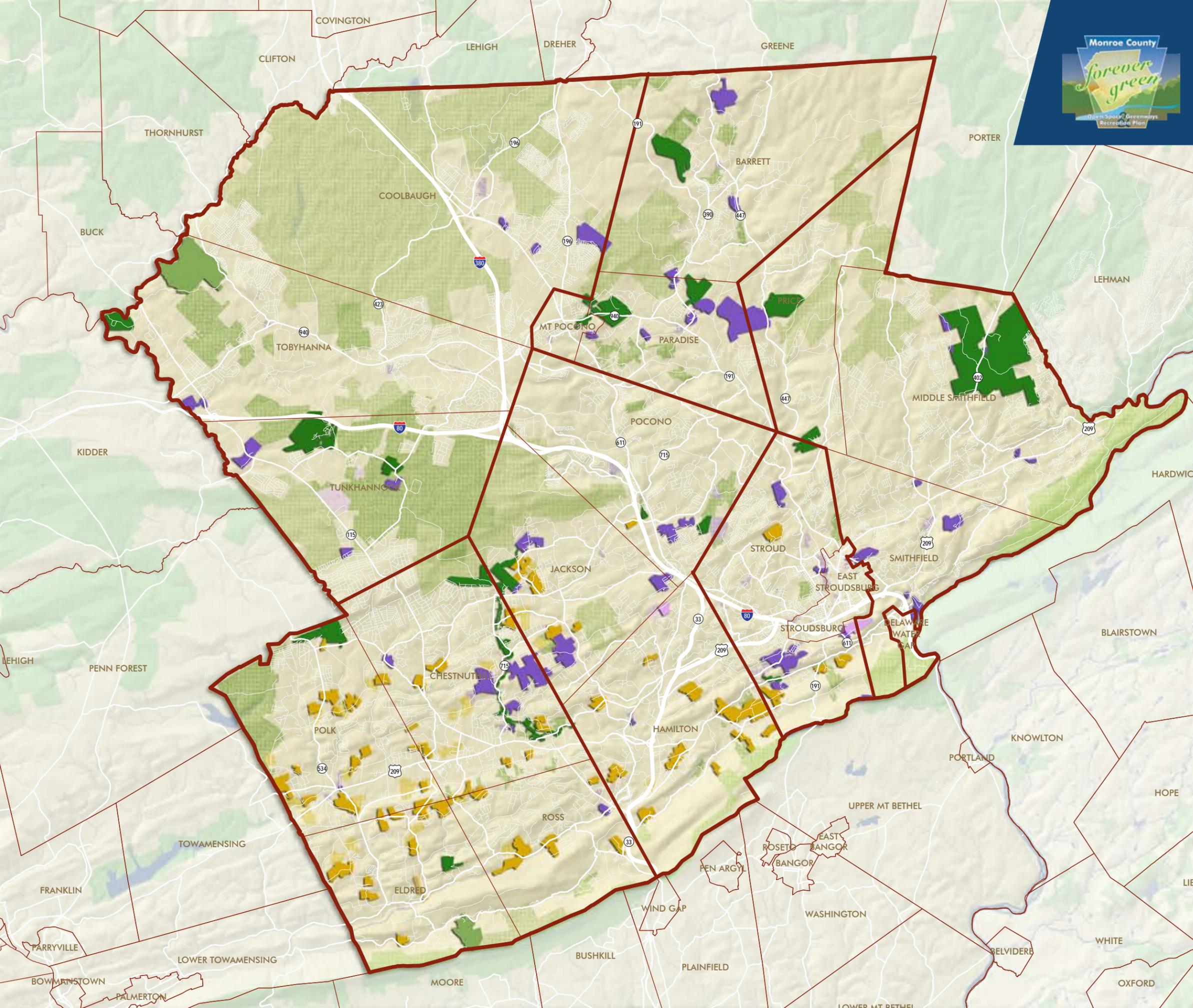
The following plans were reviewed for this report to identify previous planning accomplishments in Monroe County.

Monroe County Open Space Plan (2001) - An Action Guide to Preserving and Enhancing Monroe County's Green Infrastructure

The 2001 Open Space Plan articulated a deep consensus vision for Monroe County and demonstrated leadership in Pennsylvania by a County blessed with abundant natural resources; a thriving recreation economy; and the wisdom to create a partnership conservation strategy for future open space and parks development. Pennsylvania DCNR considers the 2001 plan as a model in the state of Pennsylvania.



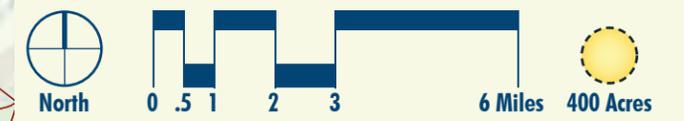
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Regional Open Space and Recreation Plans (2002-2003)

The six regions were encouraged to conduct their own planning efforts, focusing on the local scale to identify high priority acquisition areas and create a network of park and recreation initiatives throughout the County. The following six Open Space and Recreation Plans were all prepared by Regional Open Space and Recreation Committees - as the precursor organizations to the Regional Recreation Commissions that were formed after each regional plan was completed. The new multi-municipal commissions were created to serve their member townships and boroughs with strategies to preserve priority of open spaces, natural features and recreation opportunities. The plans include:

- *BMP Open Space and Recreation Plan (2002) - (Barrett Township, Mt. Pocono Borough, Paradise Township)*
- *West End Open Space and Recreation Plan (2003) - (Chestnuthill Township, Eldred Township, Polk Township, Ross Township)*
- *Top of the Mountain Region Open Space and Recreation Plan (2002) - (Coolbaugh Township, Tobyhanna Township, Tunkhannock Township)*
- *Eastern Monroe Open Space and Recreation Plan (2002) - (Delaware Water Gap Borough, Middle Smithfield Township, Price Township, Smithfield Township)*
- *HJP Open Space and Recreation Plan (2003) - (Hamilton Township, Jackson Township, Pocono Township)*
- *Stroud Area Regional Open Space and Recreation Plan (2002) - (Stroud Township, East Stroudsburg Borough, Stroudsburg Borough)*

Greenway & Trail Plans

These plans identify greenways previously identified in the 2001 Open Space Plan and other local priorities and assesses their feasibility and implementation. Collectively these plans and subsequent updates are

the basis for the Monroe County 2013 Open Space, Greenway and Recreation Plan Update.

Upper Brodhead / Paradise Creeks Greenway Plan (2010)

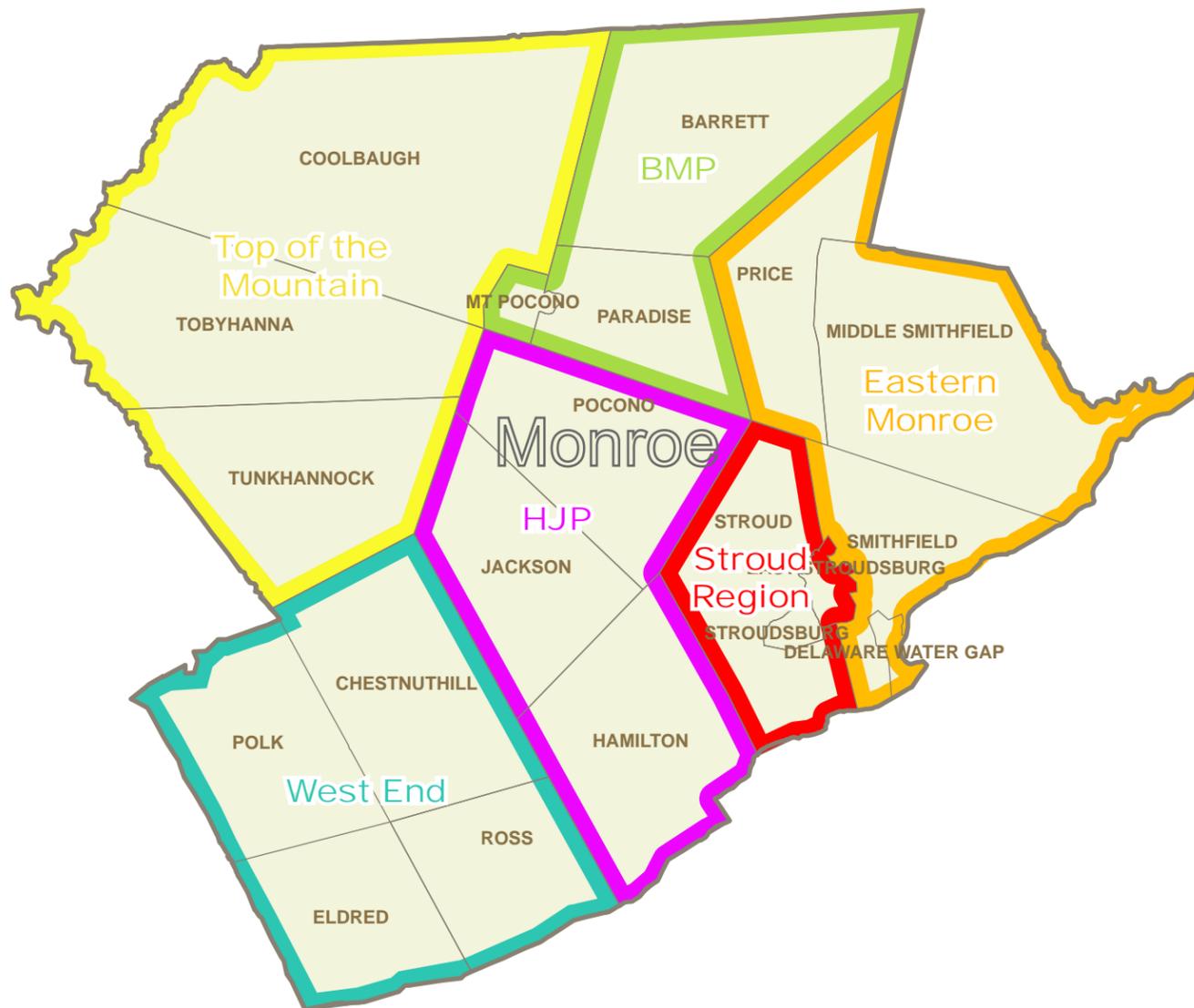
This plan identifies potential trails linkages between areas that have significant cultural and natural importance to the local townships and boroughs along the Upper Brodhead and Paradise Creeks. Three of the main goals of the plan are to protect water quality within the Brodhead Creek sub-watershed, conserve land for various uses, and connect communities to natural and cultural resources.

Brodhead, McMichael, and Pocono Creeks Greenways Plan (2002)

This plan looks at the implementation potential for a greenway adjacent to the Brodhead, McMichael and Pocono Creeks within Stroud Township, Stroudsburg, and East Stroudsburg. A total of 40 miles of proposed trail alignments are segmented into 14 projects to increase the environmental, cultural, scenic, and recreational values of the Stroud Region.

Liberty to Water Gap Trail Feasibility Study (2013)

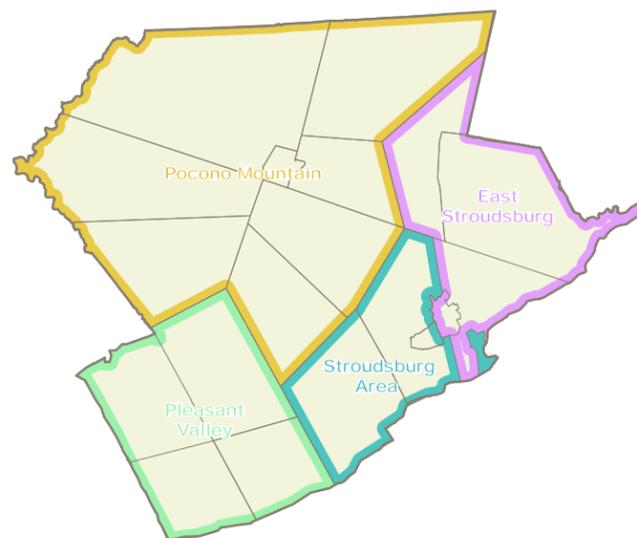
This study looks at the feasibility of connecting The Delaware Water Gap to the Hudson River Waterfront in New Jersey. Through the connection of six interlinked trails over 130 miles, this study identifies potential trail alignments, parking and access, signage and orientation, trail services, operation and maintenance, law enforcement, vegetation and snow removal, and acquisitions of right of ways. These goals are set to be accomplished by year 2024.



Monroe County Recreation Planning Regions

Three years after a county referendum passed in favor of creating a \$25M bond issue for preserving open space, Monroe County completed its 2001 Open Space and Recreation Plan to enable municipalities and other partners to make improvements that support the County vision for conservation of important open space resources.

Mark Palerino to complete : capsule comparing Monroe County OS/R plan to Recreation Commission OS/R plans and multi-municipal plans



Monroe County School Districts

Site Development Plans

These plans are smaller in scale, but important to current and previous open space and recreation projects within the County.

Terra Greens and Glen Brook Regional Parks – Master Site Development Plan (2008)

This plan explores opportunities to preserve and enhance open space and recreation within the Stroud region by expanding recreation facilities at two existing golf courses. Passive recreation needs of the community, and possible linkages from the golf courses to municipal lands are identified that would protect natural resources and discourage unofficial uses within the golf courses.

The Village of Blakeslee Master Plan, Township of Tobyhanna (2011)

This plan is a shared vision that promotes and guides the economic development and walkable connectivity for the Village of Blakeslee in Tobyhanna Township over the next twenty years. Reducing unnecessary regulations; encouraging historically accurate forms and materials; and establishing new pedestrian and vehicular connections are recommended by the plan to improve the visual character of the area as a pedestrian-scaled, livable village oriented to walking, biking and shopping.

The Borough of Delaware Water Gap Village Study (2013)

This study is envisioned as a working document to guide the Delaware Water Gap Borough, its business owners, residents, and design professions who seek to develop specific properties along Broad Street and Main Street (SR611). The plan sets guidelines for improvements such as materials, signage and lighting, to improve the village character and foster growth.

HJP Regional Park Master Plan

Hamilton, Jackson and Pocono Townships Regional Park Master Plan outlines the development of a 146-acre wooded property for both passive and active recreation. Recently, matching grants funds from DCNR and DCED have allowed construction to start and programs to be created.

West End Regional Park Master Plan (2008)

Chestnuthill, Ross, Eldred, and Polk Townships West End Regional Park Master Plan outlines the development of a 244-acre active and passive recreation site. Through seven phases of construction, this Regional Park has the potential to serve multiple user groups needs and conserve the natural environment. The plan breaks down the cost, by item, of the park, offering potential matching funding opportunities to accomplish the set goals.

Skywood Master Plan (2010)

This plans outlines the master plan of a 55-acre site located in Paradise Township and owned by multi-municipal PARC (Pocono Area Recreation Commission). This plan organizes the site into 4 general areas to be built in 3 phases. By looking at the surrounding community user groups, site resources and history this master plan develops suitable uses and the costs associated with them.

Conservation Plans

Conserving lands through private and non-public agencies is an important way for Monroe County to preserve its valuable open space for existing habitat and future generation.

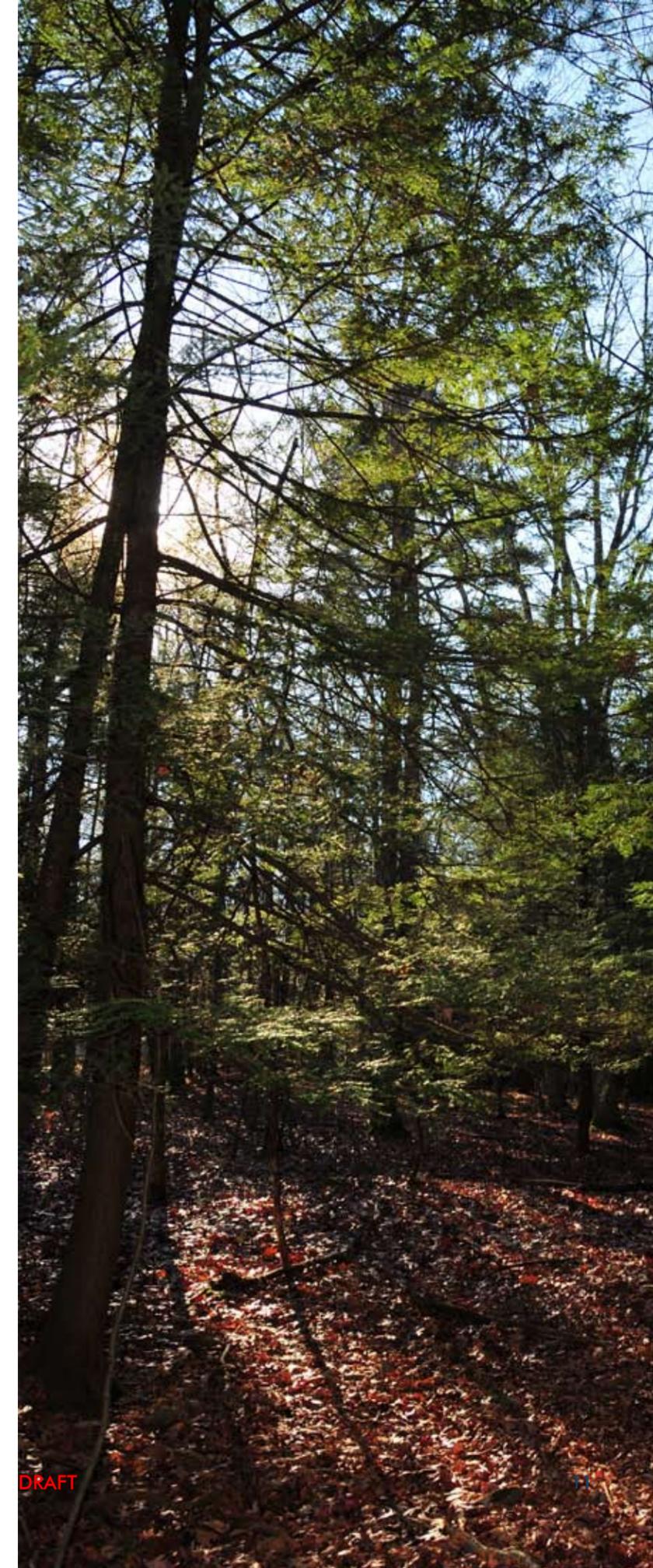
Brodhead Watershed Conservation Plan (2002)

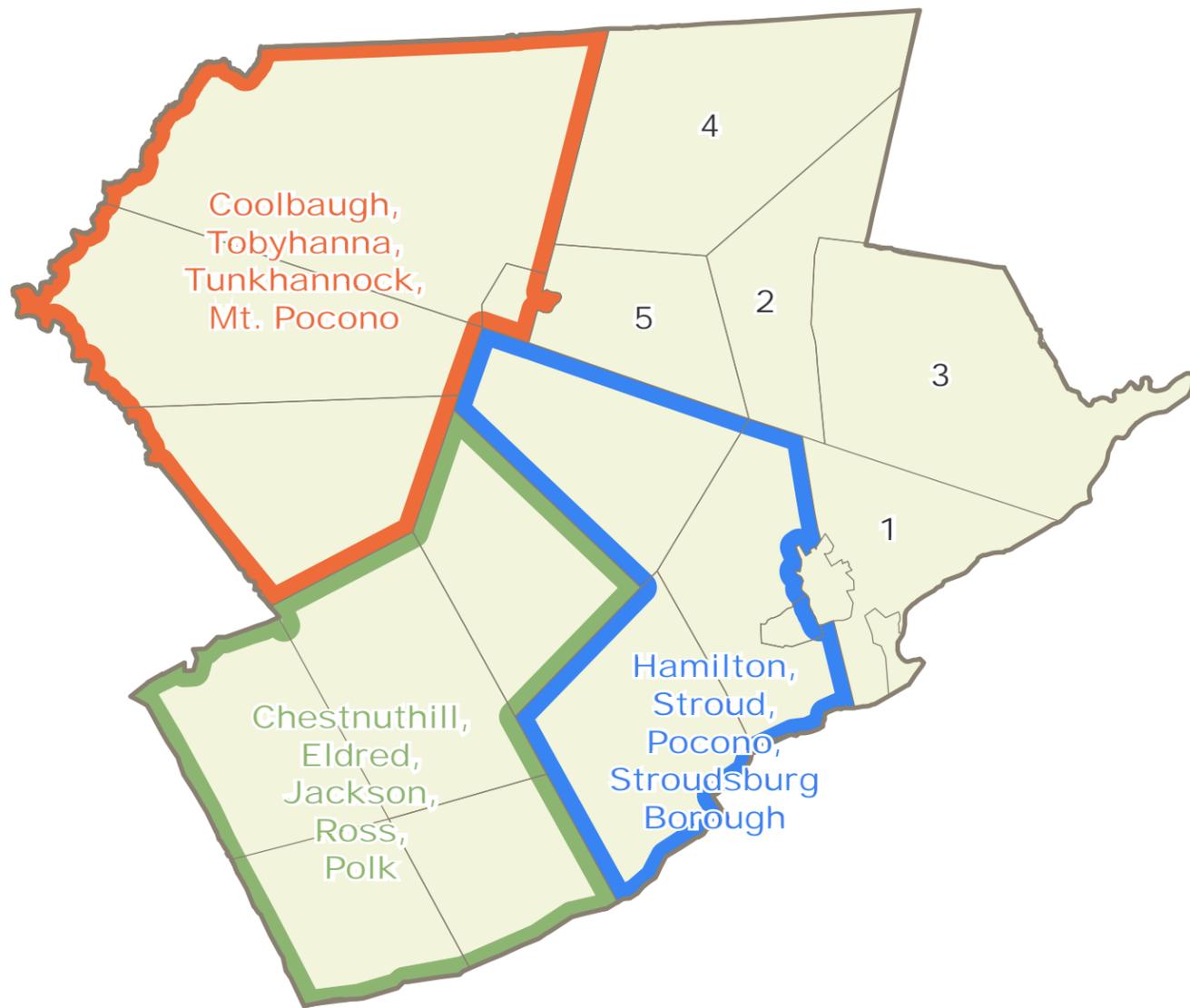
This conservation plan looks at the Brodhead Watershed, part of the Delaware Watershed that encompasses approximately half of the County. This plan is a long term

tool to be used for guiding and prioritizing conservation efforts within the 285 square-mile Brodhead Watershed. The five goals as listed in the plan are; “to maintain and improve surface and ground water quality; educate the public on issues of water quality, planning and habitat; encourage regulations outlined in the plan at all levels of government; manage, enhance and protect natural habitats; and preserved and interpret historic resources.” Through municipal implementation of the goals and management objectives outlined in this conservation plan, the watershed will provide cleaner drinking water and better recreation opportunities to its citizens while preserving natural habitats, resulting in a significant area that would sustain both people and nature for generations to come.

Cherry Creek Conservation Plan (2004)

This plan identifies and prioritizes actions to conserve the 13,314 acre watershed located within Monroe County. Through the protection or resources, improvement of water quality, creation of wildlife and recreation networks and the promotion of stewardship opportunities, the plan outlines the steps needed to preserve the character of the Cherry Creek Watershed. By implementing action items that ensure future generations have the opportunity to participate in activities such as walking, hiking and bicycling and traditions such as farming, hunting, fishing and trapping the character of the area and environment is preserved.





Monroe County Comprehensive Planning Regions

Comprehensive Plans

The open space and recreation element is one part of a municipal comprehensive plan, which provide guidance for municipal growth and zoning regulations.

Monroe County Comprehensive Plan Update (2013)

The Monroe County Comprehensive Plan Update serves

as a guiding tool and integral part of the Monroe 2020 Plan to promote growth and prosperity by balancing environmental conservation and sustainable economic development. A task force of approximately 35 members served to create this update from the original 1999 comprehensive plan. Most of the goals of the original plan remains applicable. This update improves and updates population, transportation, utilities, storm water management, GIS data and economic development data. Additional sections provide new information and guidance on Monroe County policies including water supply, energy conservation, historic preservation, and housing; all of which impact open space and recreation planning. The 2013 Monroe County Open Space Greenway and Recreation Update is intended to be developed as an element of the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan Update.

The Economic Development Implementation Plan is an element of the 2013 Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update that outlines traditional strategies to support existing businesses; attract new industry; and generally increase economic activity in Monroe County. The economic plan generally acknowledges open space, recreation, and tourism as facilitators for economic development and describes them collectively as an “important factor” without detail. The plan does mention secondary economic development benefits that open space might have as natural “effluent” treatment areas in service to traditional residential / commercial land development. Such wastewater uses of open spaces may contribute to local groundwater recharge, but may also limit other multiple uses of those lands.

Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plans

The majority of municipalities within Monroe County have completed these plans since 2005. It is important to note that the boundaries for these multi-municipal comprehensive planning regions differ from the boundaries of the open space and recreation planning

regions. Completed plans include:

- *Coolbaugh Township, Tobyhanna Township, Tunkhannock Township, Mt. Pocono Borough (2005)*
- *Hamilton Township, Stroud Township, Pocono Township, Stroudsburg Borough (2005)*
- *Chestnuthill Township, Eldred Township, Jackson Township, Ross Township (2006)*

These municipalities have their own comprehensive plans and are not part of a multi-comprehensive plan.

1. *Smithfield Township (2001)*
2. *Price Township (2002)*
3. *Middle Smithfield Township (2007)*
4. *Barrett Township (2008)*
5. *Paradise Township (2013)*

ANNOTATED LIST OF PREVIOUS PLANS FROM ADJACENT COUNTIES

This section reviews plans and studies completed for the eight counties adjacent to Monroe County since the 2001 Open Space Plan was completed to the present. The reports are organized by county and state, and provide a brief summation of each county's land size, population and county-owned open space and recreation opportunities that are easily accessible to Monroe citizens. This resource information is valuable to Monroe County, the regional commissions, municipalities and non-profit providers in considering future open space and recreation improvements that are near or adjacent to the County line.

Carbon County, Pennsylvania



Carbon County Comprehensive Plan & Greenway Plan (2012)

Carbon County is Monroe's neighbor to the west, with a population of 65,200 and land area of 381 sq mi. Similar to Monroe County there is a perception of abundant open space in Carbon due to the amount of preserved federal and state lands - including five State Game Lands, one State Forest and three State Parks (including the Lehigh Gorge, a State Park that serves as an East Coast travel destination.) Carbon County also has many nearby overlapping and adjacent open space and recreation opportunities for Monroe County residents such as the Lehigh River Water Trail, Appalachian Trail, State Game Lands No. 129, Penn Forest Reserve and Wild Creek Reservoir. Carbon County-owned open space and recreation lands are comprised of:

- Mauch Chunk Lake Park (2,300-acre park containing a 330 acre lake)
- Land along the Lehigh River (North of Jim Thorpe)
- Delaware and Lehigh Heritage Corridor Trail
- Route 209 is a historic trail travel corridor that travels through Carbon, Monroe and Pike Counties

Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania



Open Space, Greenways & Outdoor Recreation Master Plan Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties (2004)

Lackawanna County is Monroe's neighbor to the north-west with a population of 214,400 and land area of 459 sq mi. Lackawanna has many adjacent open space opportunities for Monroe County residents such as the Spruce Swamp State Forest Natural Area and State Game Lands No. 135. Lackawanna County-owned open space and recreation lands are comprised of:

- McDade Park (126 acres of recreational amenities)
- Montage Mountain (140 acre ski and recreation area)
- Covington Park (some fields for recreation)
- Merli-Sarnoski Park (850 acres of land utilized for boating, fishing, hiking, baseball, soccer, picnicking, and swimming)

Other relevant Lackawanna County plans include:

- *Lackawanna River Watershed Atlas (2008)*

Luzerne County, Pennsylvania



Open Space, Greenways & Outdoor Recreation Master Plan Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties (2004)

Luzerne County is Monroe's neighbor to the north-west with a population of 321,000 and land area of 891 sq mi. Luzerne County has many accessible outdoor opportunities for Monroe County residents such as the Spruce Swamp State Forest Natural Area, State Game Lands No. 91 and the 3,412-acre Natural Lands Trust Bear Creek Preserve. Potential greenway connections to Monroe County include the "L" Trail which borders Monroe and the conversion of the former WB&E rail road right-of-way to a rail to trail. Luzerne County-owned open space and recreation lands are comprised of:

- Moon Lake Park (648 acres of fields and forest, including a 68-acre lake)
- Seven Tubs Natural Area (532 acres including seven geologic tubs carved out of the sandstone rock formation)

Wayne County, Pennsylvania



Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Update (2010)

Wayne County is Monroe's neighbor to the north with a population of 52,822 and land area of 729 sq mi. Wayne County has State Game Lands No. 312 directly adjacent to Monroe County's Tobyhanna State Park, creating one contiguous "public open space corridor" for use by residents of both counties. In addition, similar to Monroe, Wayne does not own open space and recreation land but has federal, state, municipal and conservancy lands available for use by its residents.

Pike County, Pennsylvania



The Pike County Open Space, Greenways, and Recreation Plan (2008)

Pike County is Monroe's neighbor to the north-east with a population of 57,369 and land area of 547 sq mi. Pike also has many nearby overlapping and adjacent open space and recreation opportunities for Monroe County residents such as the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, McDade Recreational Trail, as well as state parks such as Pennel Run Natural Area, High Knob Area and Promised Land Park Bruce Lake Area that include many trails with some that may be possible greenway linkages to Monroe County. Pike County owns one 325-acre park that is adjacent to State Game Lands No. 209.

Other relevant Pike County plans include:

- *Pike County's Open Space, Greenways, and Recreation Plan Progress Report (2012)*
- *Pike Outdoors - A Public Lands Guide for Sportsmen & Outdoor Enthusiasts (2012)*
- *Pike County Comprehensive Plan (2006)*
- *Bushkill Conservation Study (2013)*

Northampton County, Pennsylvania



Northampton County Parks (2010)

Northampton County is Monroe's neighbor to the south with a population of over 297,700 and land area of 374 sq mi. Northampton County has many nearby overlapping and adjacent open space and recreation opportunities for Monroe County residents such as the Appalachian Trail, State Game Lands No. 168, Bear Swamp Park & Archery Complex, Minsi Lake Wilderness and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. With a multitude of existing and proposed north to south trails, Monroe County has many possible greenway connections into Northampton. Northampton County-owned or managed open space and recreation lands are comprised of:

- Bear Swamp Archery Complex (260-acre Regional Park)
- Louise W. Moore Park (106-acre Regional Park)
- Minsi Lake (the lake is owned by the PA fish commission in this 311-acre wilderness park.)
- Weaversville County Park (200 acre conservancy land turned County Park)
- Northampton County Recreation Trail (77-acre

linear trail)

Other smaller open space and recreation areas that are either owned or managed by Northampton County include: Frost Hollow Overlook, Fry's Run Park, Bodnarczuk scenic easement tract, Hit-Tuk Park, Archibald Johnson Conservation Area, Gertrude B. Fox County Park, McIlwain/Monocacy Meadow, Mt. Jack, Mud Run and Portland Waterfront Park.

Other relevant Northampton County plans include:

- *Lehigh Valley Greenways Plan (2007)*

Sussex County, New Jersey



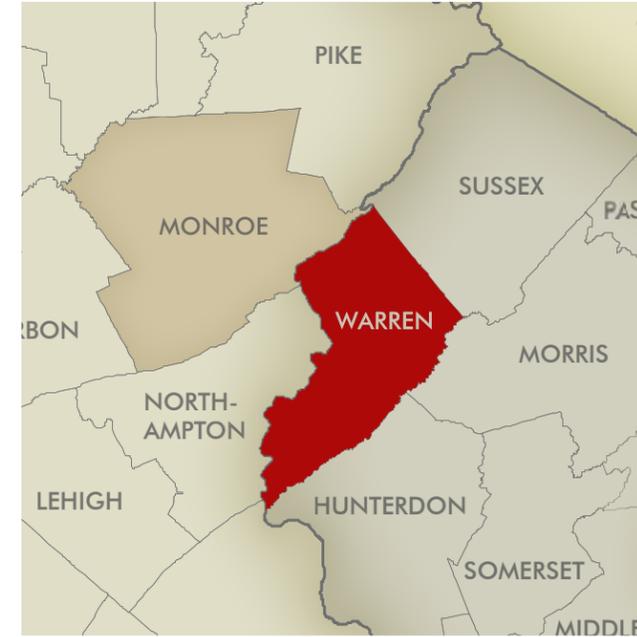
Open Space and Recreation Plan for the County of Sussex “People and Nature Together” (2003)

Sussex County, New Jersey is Monroe’s neighbor to the north-east for only a few hundred yards at the Walpack Bend in the Delaware River. The county population is 149,265 and land area is 519 sq mi. The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area includes both Sussex and Monroe Counties. Sussex owns only 1-acre of parkland, which is located in Newton’s town square.

Other relevant Sussex County plans include:

- *Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan Update (2007)*
- *Delaware River Water Trail Sign Plan (2010)*

Warren County, New Jersey

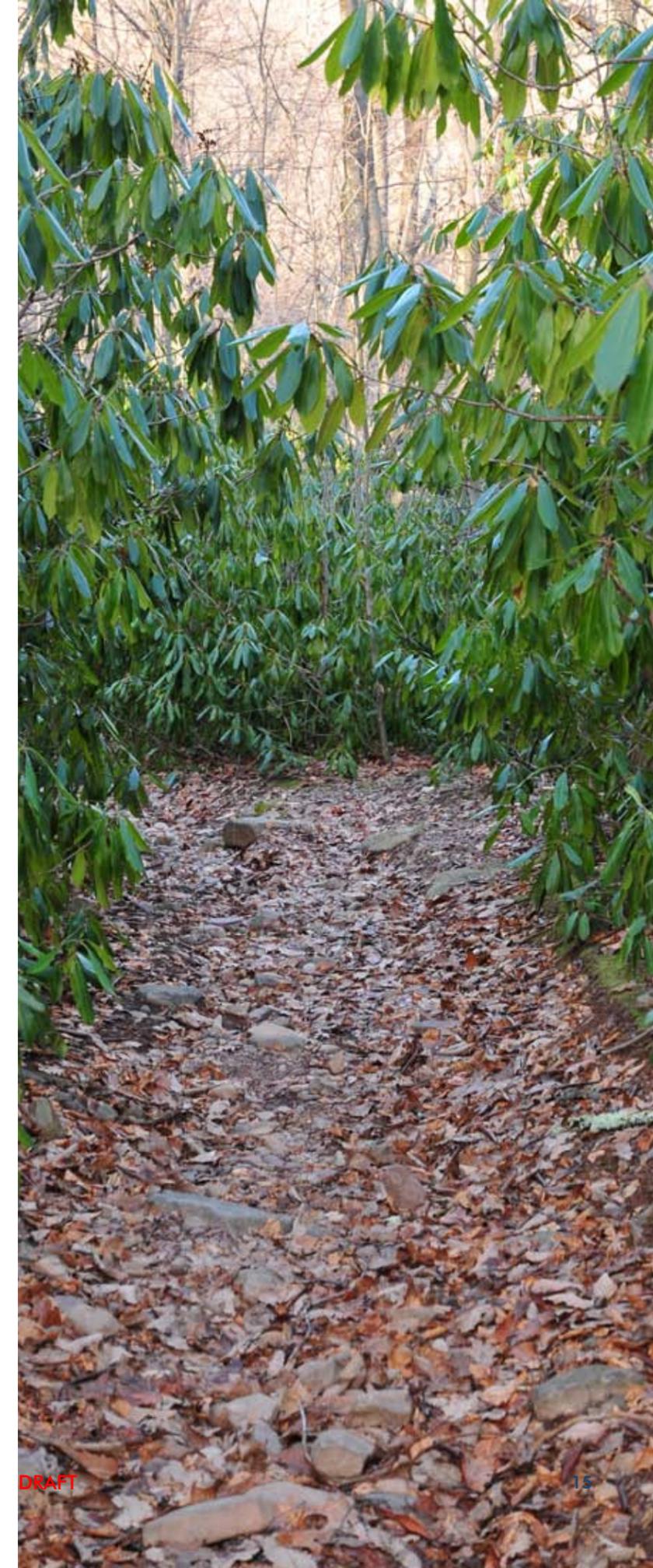


Warren County Open Space and Recreation Plan Update (2008)

With a population of 108,692 and land area of 356 sq mi. Warren County, New Jersey is Monroe’s neighbor to the east. The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area includes parts of both Warren and Monroe County. Similar to Monroe County, Warren County does not own any open space and recreation land but has federal, state, municipal and conservancy lands available for use by its residents.

Other relevant Warren County plans include:

- *Warren County Open Space Plan (1999)*



LIST OF ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT PLANS AND RESOURCES (BY DATE)

These plans and studies are relevant to Monroe County. They show how the County fits into the larger open space, greenway and recreation planning process.

Plans

- *1987 DEWA General Management Plan*
- *1999 Delaware Water Gap Final Trails Plan*
- *2000 Pocono Environmental Heritage Region assessment*
- *2001 Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action plan for Creating Connections*
- *2001 DEWA Trails Plan & General Management Plan Amendment*
- *2005 The Lehigh Valley – 2030 Lehigh and Northampton Counties*
- *2006 Delaware River Water Trail Concept Plan*
- *2006 Northerly Crossings Corridor Congestion Mitigation Study*
- *2007 Lehigh Valley Greenways Plan a Regional Greenways Plan for Lehigh and Northampton Counties*
- *2009 Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*
- *2009 DEWA Alternative Transportation Feasibility Study*
- *2010 Lehigh Valley Trails Inventory, Lehigh and Northampton Counties*
- *2012 Delaware River Basin Wild and Scenic River Values*

On-Line Planning Resources

- *Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge*
- *Pennsylvania Trails (<http://www.explorepatrails.com/>)*

MAPPING INVENTORY

Monroe County has compiled extensive mapping resources that are managed by the Monroe County Planning Commission.

This study included a review of the inventory of relevant mapping data - almost exclusively in the form of GIS data files. Sources for this data include:

- Monroe County Planning Commission
- pasda.psu.edu
- state.nj.us/dep/gis
- wave.dep.state.pa.us

GIS Data Resource Library of Existing Natural and Cultural Resources

Existing Cultural Resource Data

- Political Boundaries
- Roads
- Drives
- Trails & Greenways
- Active and Abandoned Railroads
- Active Recreation Facilities / Regional Parks
- Pennsylvania Register Sites
- Historic Areas
- Agricultural Security Areas
- Utility Easements

Existing Natural Resource Data

- Streams with Quality Designations
- Scenic Streams

- Scenic Natural Areas
- Conserved Natural Areas
- Federal Owned Lands
- State Owned Lands
- Municipal Owned Lands
- Semi-Private Owned Lands
- Conservation Easements / Owned Lands
- Agricultural Easements
- Water Bodies
- Watersheds

Proposed Cultural Resource Data

- Trails & Greenways at County and Municipal Level
- Active Recreation Facilities / Regional Parks

Proposed Natural Resource Data

- Conservation Areas
- Conservation Corridors

Inventory of Cultural and Natural Resources

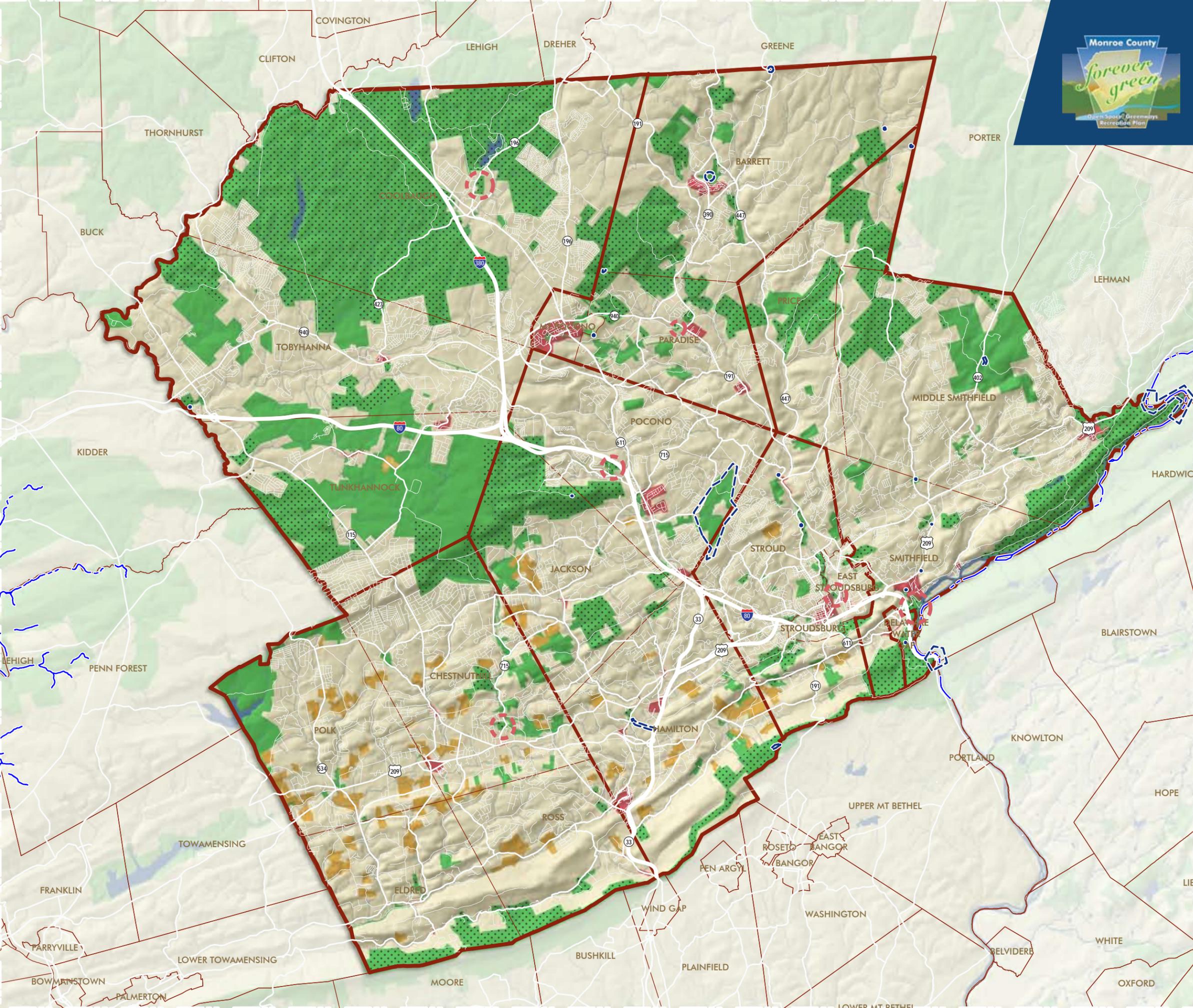
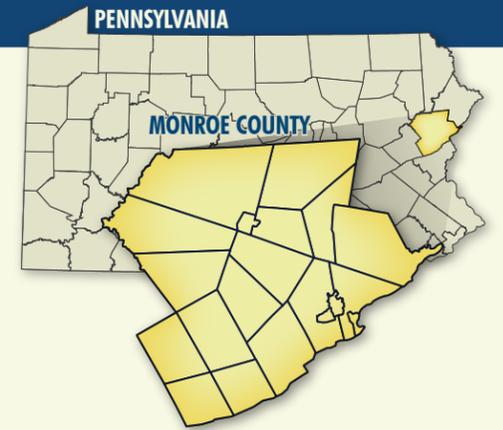
Inventory Map

An inventory map was created to illustrate existing Monroe County cultural and natural resources. Major roadways, municipal and recreation commission boundaries are added for reference and data is displayed over a graphic representation of the county topography.

GIS data was compiled from multiple sources and manipulated to display areas of interest to the public such as scenic natural areas and drives; historic register sites and areas; regional parks; existing trails and bike routes; and publicly accessible conserved natural areas.



Update to the Monroe County Open Space, Greenways & Recreation Plan



Existing Cultural Resources

- Open Space & Recreation Planning Regions
- Municipal Boundaries
- Interstates
- Highways
- Local Roads
- Scenic Drives
- Trails & Greenways
- Bike Routes
- Railroads - Abandoned
- Railroads - Active
- Regional Parks
- Pennsylvania Register Sites
- Historic Areas

Existing Natural Resources

- Streams
- Scenic Streams
- Scenic Natural Areas
- Conserved Natural Areas
- Publicly Accessible Conserved Natural Areas
- Conserved Agricultural Areas
- Water Bodies

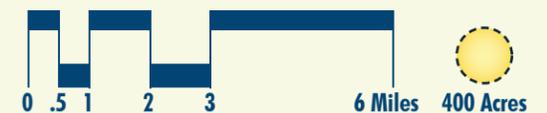
Data Sources

Existing Monroe County GIS Data, PASDA, PADEP, NJDEP

1 Natural & Cultural Resources Inventory - Draft



North





Hydrology Map

This map was created to illustrate the hydrologic systems of Monroe County at the watershed and sub-watershed level with a focus on water quality designations of streams. Streams that are petitioned and upgraded receive special protections in the State of Pennsylvania through anti-degradation regulations. The stream designations, from Pennsylvania title 25 chapter 93.3, include those that are located in Monroe County.

- EV (Exceptional Value)
- HQ (High Quality)
- HQ-CWF (High Quality-Cold Water Fishes)
- HQ-TSF (High Quality-Trout Stocking)
- HQ-WWF (High Quality-Warm Water Fishes)
- CWF (Cold Water Fishes)
- TSF (Trout Stocking)
- WWF (Warm Water Fishes)

Both High Quality and Exceptional Value designated streams receive special protection under the anti-degradation regulations, with the Exceptional Value designation receiving the maximum protection for a stream in Pennsylvania.

The importance of establishing water quality documentation, submitting upgrade petitions and monitoring water quality of streams cannot be overestimated to protect Monroe County's environmental integrity.

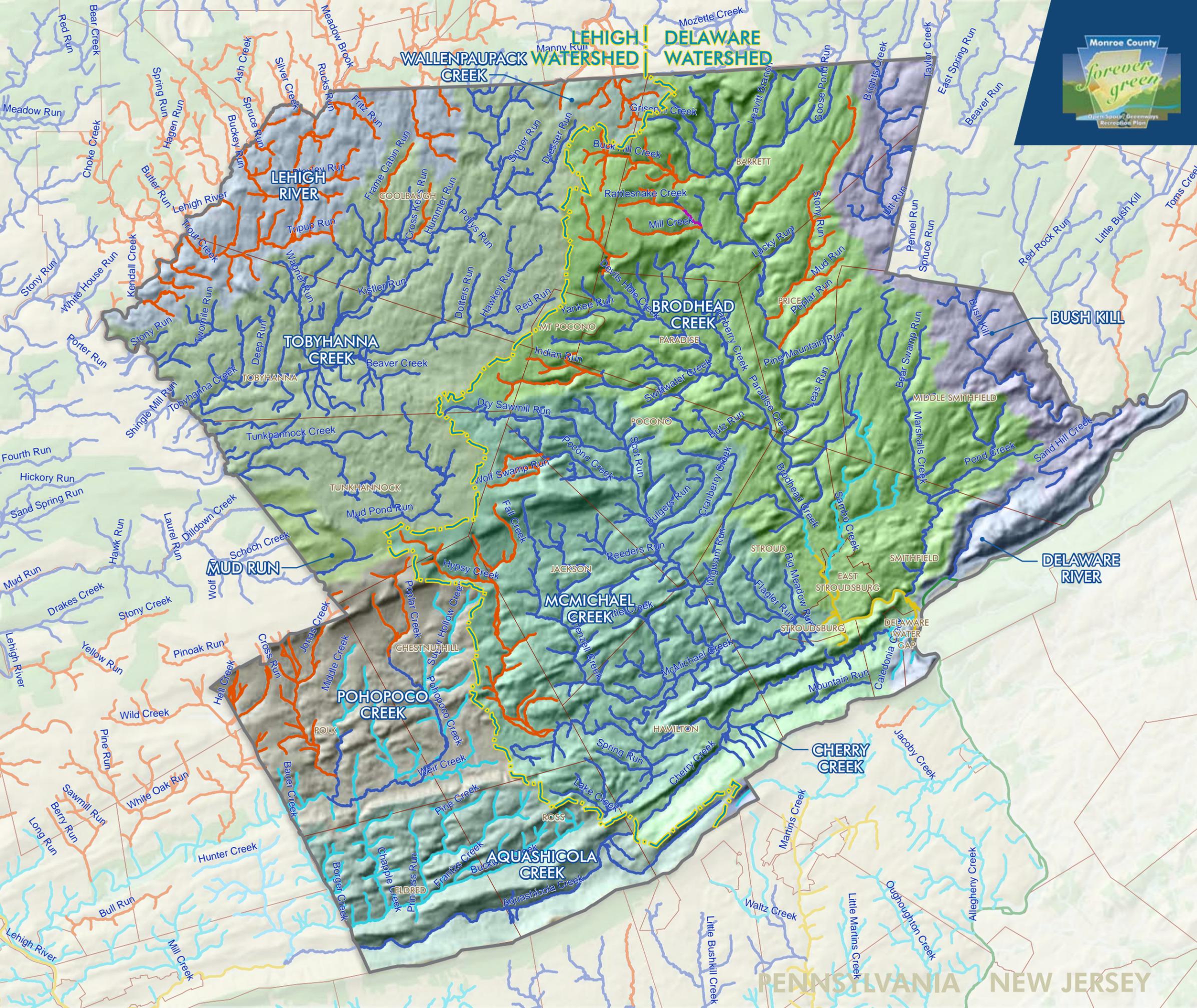
The County is divided very clearly by the geological escarpment that runs from the southwest to the northeast and divides the Lehigh and Delaware Watersheds. The Lehigh Watershed in Monroe County is primarily the formation called the Pocono Plateau, a geological complex that holds and releases groundwater to the base flow of the Lehigh River and ultimately contributes to the quantity and quality of the entire lower reach of the Delaware River.

Critical protection areas are generally located near the headwaters of the Delaware River tributaries and for much of the Plateau area that consists of perched wetlands.

More information, including step by step instructions can be found at: (<http://www.pennfuture.org/UserFiles/PDFs/PennFutureStreamHndbk09.pdf>). This packet will be included in the Appendix of this report.

“Pennsylvania has 30 times as much fresh groundwater as surface water”

DCNRs The Geology of Pennsylvania's Groundwater

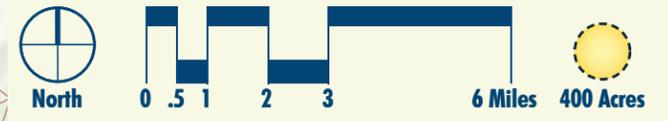


Update to the Monroe County
**Open Space, Greenways
 & Recreation Plan**



- Political Boundaries**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundaries
- Existing & Designated Streams - PA DEP**
- Maximum Protection
- EV (Exceptional Value)
- Special Protection
- HQ (High Quality)
 - HQ-CWF (High Quality-Cold Water Fishes)
 - HQ-TSF (High Quality-Trout Stocking)
- Additional Protection
- CWF (Cold Water Fishes)
 - TSF (Trout Stocking)
- Minimum Protection
- WWF (Warm Water Fishes)

2 Hydrology & Stream Designations - Draft





OPEN SPACE

Methodology

GIS data layers were acquired from Monroe County Planning Commission (MCPC), PASDA, NJDEP, the 2001 Open Space Plan and the six Monroe County Regional Open Space and Recreation Plans were analyzed to understand:

- Existing conserved open space types and their levels of protection
- Areas of interest for future preservation

Patchwork Quilt - Existing Open Space by Resource Type and Levels of Protection

Based on analysis of available GIS data, municipality data, land use regulations and legislation, these criteria were created with the intent of describing and comparing the “level of protection” that an open space parcel has - by asking non-subjective questions. The three criteria to determine the level or protection of an open space parcel were characterized as follows:

- Is the resource protected from mining and/or logging?
- Is the resource protected from future sale and/or development?
- Does the resource have exceptional cultural and/or natural value?

The levels of protection determined by these criteria are ranked into 3 tiers with 1 point given for a yes answer, 0 points given for a no answer and ½ point given for any type that you could answer both yes and no.

Tier 1-consists of parcel types that answered yes to all 3 criteria and represent a high level of protection. Tier 2-consists of parcel types that meet at least 2 out of 3 criteria points and represent a moderate level of protection.

Tier 3-consists of parcel types that meet less than 2

criteria points and represent a low level of protection

Tier 1 Resource Types (high level of protection)

- National Wildlife Refuges
- National Recreation Areas
- National Scenic Trails
- National Wild and Scenic Rivers
- State Parks
- County-Owned Open Spaces
- Municipal Owned Open Spaces
- Municipal Services Lands
- Cemeteries (Public)

Tier 2 Resource Types (medium level of protection)

- State Forests
- Conservation Easements
- Agricultural Easements
- Development Restricted Parcels
- Water Authority Lands

Tier 3 Resource Type Examples (low level of protection)

- State Game Lands
- Agricultural Security Areas
- Municipal-Owned Undeveloped Lands
- Utility Easements
- Private-Owned Open Spaces
- Act 319 Lands



AREAS OF INTEREST FOR PRESERVATION

Available GIS data from the 2002-2003 Regional Recreation Commission Plans; the 2001 Open Space Plan and conservancy data were used to identify valuable and vulnerable lands. This map was created to display “Areas of Interest for Preservation.” These areas consist of:

Existing and proposed

- Greenways
- Corridors for Conservation
- Areas for Conservation
- Regional / Municipal Parks

The Areas of Interest for Preservation map can be used as a tool by the County, its regional commission partners, municipalities and conservancy partners to further identify lands to be considered as priorities for habitat conservation and or recreational use. In the future, a weighted overlay analysis, similar to the one suggested in the 2001 Open Space Plan, can be completed in GIS by MCPC to identify the most appropriate parcels under consideration for conservation. Suggested weighted overlay criteria for future natural land preservation decisions include:

1. Locations within urbanizing areas (GIS data)
2. Locations within the lowest quartile of municipalities that are most deficient in publicly available open space. (Matrix: Levels of Recreation and Open Space Service – by Municipal Population)
3. Locations contiguous to Tier 1 or Tier 2 protected resources (Patchwork Quilt - Existing Open Space by Resource Type and Levels of Protection Map)
4. Property contains/ or is adjacent to a significant water body on the Pocono Plateau escarpment (ex. headwaters of subwatersheds.) (GIS data / Map: Hydrology)

5. Property contains an important historic or cultural resource (GIS data)
6. Property is within a “high ranking” natural area of interest (GIS data)

These criteria should be reviewed periodically and revised as needed by the Monroe County Open Space Advisory Board.

The Areas of Interest for Preservation map can be also be used as a tool to further identify agricultural lands that are important to conserve. In the future, an analysis should be completed in GIS by MCPC to identify the most appropriate parcels to preserve. The suggested criteria to consider for future agricultural land preservation decisions are:

1. Parcels within Monroe County’s agricultural security area. (GIS data)
2. Parcels adjacent to an existing agricultural easement and or conservation easement (GIS data)
3. Property is larger then 10 acres (GIS data)
4. Parcel adjacent to a proposed greenway Map: Greenways)

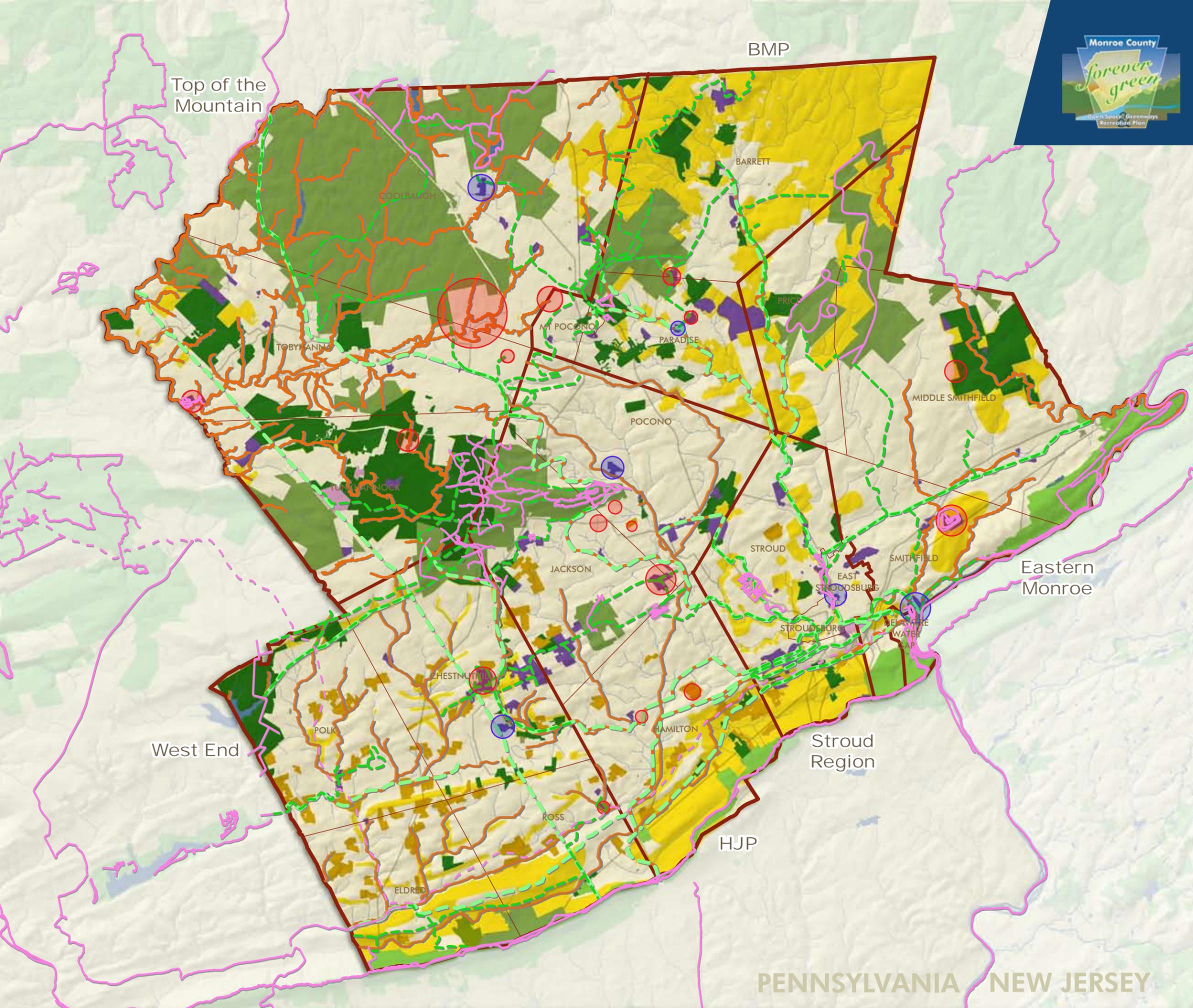
The importance of the Monroe Agricultural Preservation program and its future continuation should be recognized as a priority for Monroe citizens within the County’s land preservation goals. Farmland is recognized by the general public as an active land use, essential cultural activity, and beneficial as a benign and sustainable economic development sector.

By adding criteria 4 - parcels adjacent to a proposed greenway have the potential in the future to become a link in a larger greenway system. By defining within the easement agreement the potential to create a recreation trail corridor through the property, the agricultural easement program can preserve farmland and create the possibility for a low-impact recreation facility.

Mark Palerino to Complete: areas for preservation indicated by the recreation commissions (2013).



Update to the Monroe County Open Space, Greenways & Recreation Plan



Existing Resources

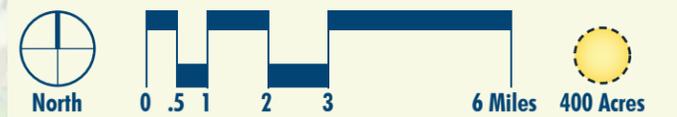
- Open Space & Recreation Planning Regions
- Municipal Boundaries
- Greenway & Trails
- Bike Routes
- Streams
- Regional Parks
- Federal Owned Lands
- State Owned Lands
- County Owned Lands
- Municipal Owned Lands
- Semi-Private Owned Lands
- Conservation Easements / Owned Lands
- Agricultural Easements

Identified Areas of Interest*

- County OS/R Greenways
- Municipal & Regional OS/R Greenways
- Conservation Corridors
- Regional Parks
- Conservation Areas

*Identified By:
The 2001 Monroe County Open Space Plan
The (6) six Open Space and Recreation Planning Regions 2002 plans
Conservancies at the public meeting held in May of 2013.

5 Greenways & Open Space Conservation Draft





IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC CONSERVATION PLANNING BY MONROE COUNTY AND ITS PARTNERS

Monroe County has responsibility to protect resources for the benefit of its citizens and their heirs. Within that mandate, the County can serve multiple functions including:

Planner

Monroe County and its conservation partners are creating a comprehensive strategy for how open space and recreation investments can be integrated into all aspects of living, working and visiting Monroe County.

Coordinator

Monroe County can identify, target and support initiatives where public-private partnerships can achieve mutual benefits.

Catalyst

Monroe County can direct internal funds and support funding requests to other partners toward strategic projects.

Steward/Developer

The County retains the right to own and maintain open space and recreation resources.

Partnership Opportunities

Regional Recreation Commissions

Mark Palerino to complete: HJP, SROSC WEPOSC, PARC capabilities and achievements

Development Agencies

- Pocono Mountains Industrial Development Authority
- Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

- Other?

Capabilities and achievements

- Environmental protection
- Recreation resource development
- Support for funding partnerships
- Marketing regional resources
- Visitor support services

Conservancies

- Natural Lands Trust
- Pocono Heritage Land Trust
- The Nature Conservancy
- Wildlands Conservancy
- Other?

Capabilities and achievements

- Protect natural and agricultural lands
- Upgrade stream designations

Hiking / Outdoor Clubs

- Pocono Outdoor Club
- Friends of Big Pocono
- Informal Mountain Biking Clubs
- Meetup.com groups

Capabilities and achievements

- Trail and open space maintenance
- Project leadership





TRAILS & GREENWAYS

Available GIS data from the 2002-2003 Regional Recreation Commission Plans; the 2001 Monroe Open Space Plan and recreation commission and conservancy data were used to identify potential greenways and trails county-wide. A map was created to compile and display all trail and greenway data available from all partners in one file.

Analysis of Existing Trail Networks

Monroe County currently has trail networks on federal, state, county and municipal-owned land. The only walkable greenways in Monroe County that extend beyond the County line are the 2,200 mile Appalachian Trail and the McDade Trail - extending into Pike County.

The Delaware River Water Trail runs through Monroe. The Delaware and Lehigh Canal Heritage Corridor exists to the west in Carbon County. The 355-mile Bicycle PA Route "V" runs through Monroe from the state line of New Jersey and across Pennsylvania to the state line of Ohio.

Other potential connections outside of the county include the Route "L" Trail in Lackawanna County and previously identified Lackawanna and Luzerne County Rail Trails, Plainfield Township Trail and the Paulinskill Valley Trail which is part of six interlinked trails from the Delaware Water Gap to Liberty State Park

In the Monroe County Citizen Internet Survey of 2013 (detailed in the Public Involvement section of this Plan), citizens of various age groups were surveyed to understand their opinions and preferences on open space and recreation within Monroe County. One question in the survey asked what activities they most participated in. Each age group surveyed, from children under 10 to seniors over 65, ranked trail based activities as their favorite in the same order, with walking or jogging ranked above all other types of activities.

Potential / Missing Linkages

Monroe County currently has five "urbanizing" areas, but only two of those areas have more than one trail system within or adjacent to its boundary. This indicates that three out of five urbanizing areas in Monroe County have a significant lack of trails nearby. None of the urbanizing centers are linked to one another by greenways or trails. Linking urbanizing areas to each other and local destinations increases opportunities for Monroe County residents to access trails, improve their health, have options to driving, and contribute to their local civic and economic viability. Of the County's six regional parks, only two have trails that connect to destinations outside their boundaries.

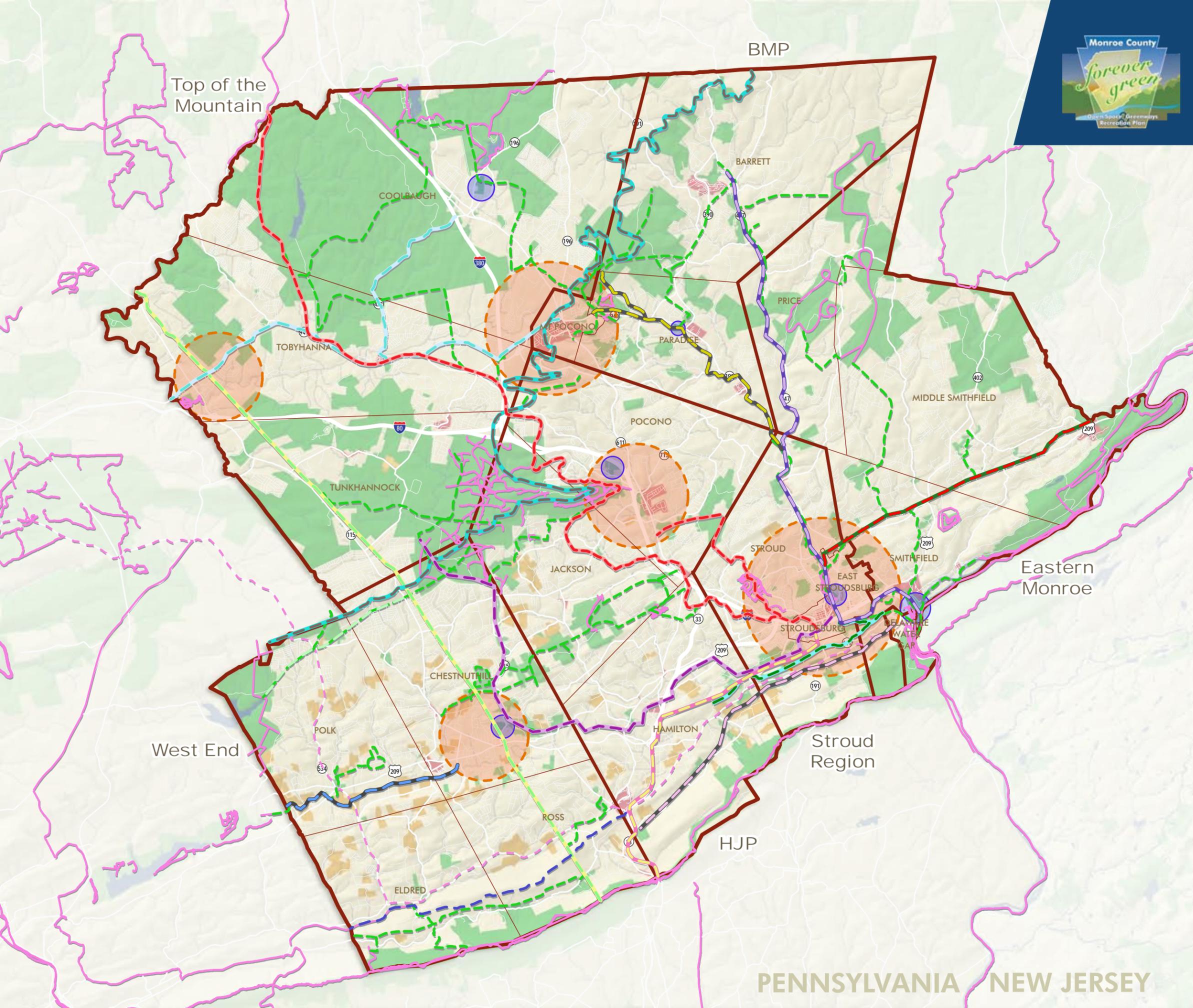
65% of residents in Monroe responded in the 2013 Internet Survey for this report that there are not enough trail and greenway facilities within Monroe County. Supporters envision that Monroe can help create a trail network that would strengthen visitorship to the County and help local businesses. Monroe County has rail-to-trail conversion opportunities such as the former WB&E railroad corridor with the potential to serve walking, jogging, hiking and biking for a broad cross section of the local population.

Partnership Opportunities

- Trail Clubs
- DCNR online: Monroe can show "paper trails" to create future collaboration.
- PA trails.org: All Monroe trails should be identified

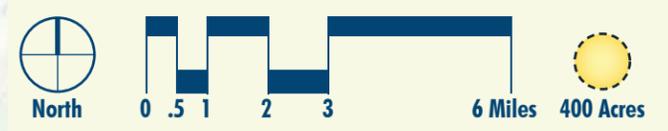


Update to the Monroe County Open Space, Greenways & Recreation Plan

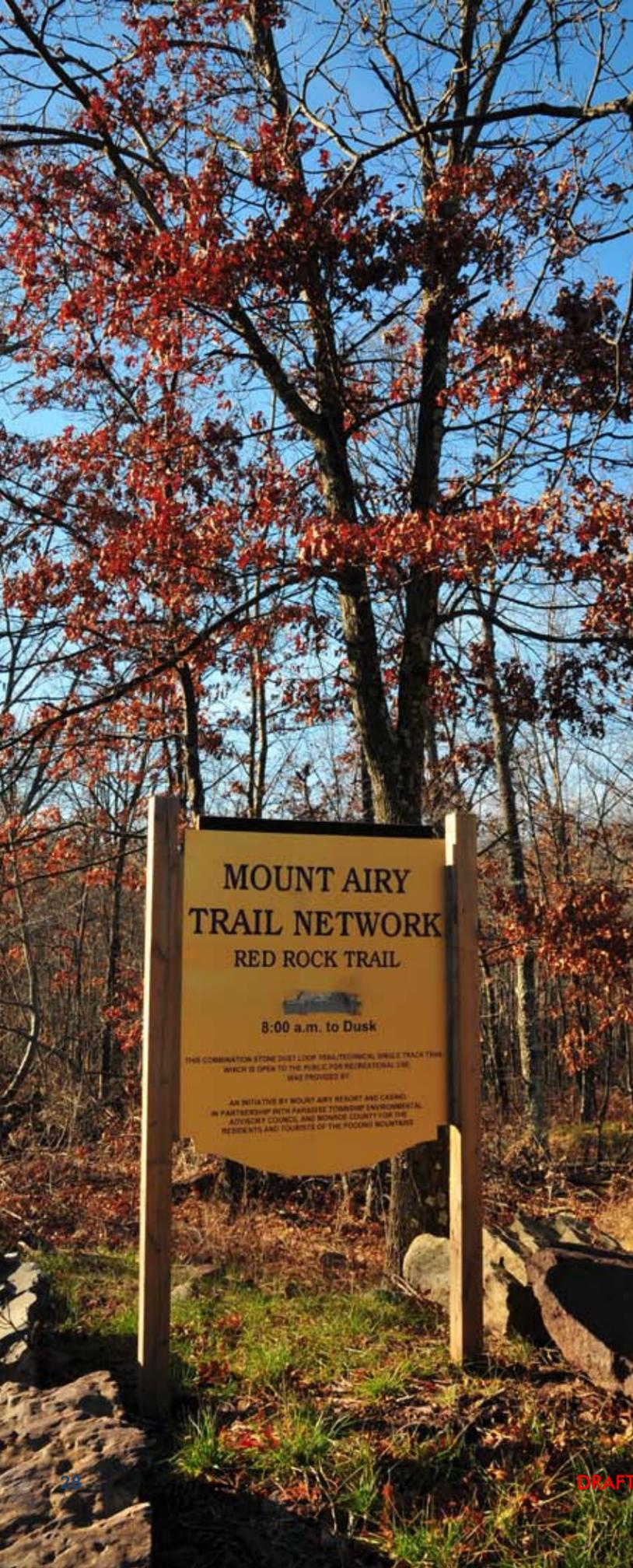


- Existing**
- Open Space & Recreation Planning Regions
 - Municipal Boundaries
 - Greenway & Trails
 - Bike Routes
 - Streams
 - Regional Parks
 - Historic Areas
 - Conserved Natural Areas
 - Conserved Agricultural Areas
 - Water Bodies
 - Urbanizing Areas
- Proposed**
- Chestnut Ridge
 - Cherry Valley
 - Delaware Valley RR
 - Delaware Valley Extension
 - Paradise Creek Corridor
 - Pohopoco / Weir Creek Corridor
 - Upper & Lower Brodhead
 - McMichael Creek Corridor
 - WB&E RR Grade
 - Escarpment Trail
 - Godfrey Ridge Extension
 - Proposed Bike Routes
 - Transcontinental Pipeline
 - Penn Forest Pipeline

6 Greenways, Trails & Bike Routes Draft



PENNSYLVANIA NEW JERSEY



RECREATION RESOURCES

In 1983, the standard for open space and recreation was defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). This standard identified the amount of recreation needed, by population, at a national average. The standard was later considered arbitrary and discarded in 1995 in favor of a standard called “Level of Service” (LOS), that allowed communities and municipalities to quantify the minimum acceptable amount of parkland to accommodate the recreation facilities desired by their populations. No usable recreation standards have since been recommended at the federal level by the NRPA or at the state level through the Pennsylvania 2009-2013 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The NRPA is currently attempting to create more credible recreation standards using its GIS based analytical program PRORAGIS to compare counties in its database. The more counties that participate, the more accurate the data becomes.

Until this becomes a reality, it is suggested that the Level of Open Space and Recreation Service per Municipal Population Matrix and the Monroe County Citizen Internet Survey of 2013 be the metrics to estimate Monroe County recreation needs. The Matrix quantifies which municipalities and/or recreation regions have a lower level of service than the County average. The Survey may be consulted to understand what types are in greatest demand. The Survey data identifies important information regarding the “most participated in activities,” the “most poorly provided for activities” and the “most requested field types.” By utilizing these two tools, or metrics, the appropriate activities indicated by Monroe citizens in the survey can be targeted within the appropriate municipality and or recreation region.

Level of Service by Municipal Population Matrix

The open space and recreation plans developed by the

recreation commissions in 2001-2002 were reviewed and data pertaining to recreation and open space resources were compiled into a master matrix document to compare Monroe Counties resources owned by the federal, state, county, municipal, semi public, school district and conservancies - organized by municipality. The document can be used as a decision making guide for Monroe County partners to prioritize future open space and recreation improvements by understanding the total and average amount of public access is available by resource type:

1. Recreation Element Types
2. Site Activities
3. Support Facilities
4. Trails

Recreation Element Types

Types of recreation element are defined as a facility/ built element within public open space primarily for recreation. Element types are tallied by individual items. In cases where an open space parcel overlaps two municipalities, both municipalities can include those recreation elements in their inventories. Types of recreation elements within Monroe County include:

- Field: Baseball
- Field: Softball / Little League Baseball
- Field: Soccer / Football / Lacrosse
- Field: Field Hockey
- Field: Multi-Use
- Field: Practice
- Court: Outdoor Basketball
- Court: Tennis
- Court: Outdoor Volleyball
- Track
- Playground
- Pond / Lake
- Swimming Pool / Spray Park

- Gymnasium

Site Activities

Access opportunities to site activities are defined as access to a type of activity that occurs on public open space. Access opportunities are tallied by type per open space parcel. For example, if an open space parcel has multiple locations serving the same type of activity (e.g. hunting) those activities are counted as one individual access opportunity within that open space parcel. In the case where an open space parcel overlaps two municipalities, both municipalities can include those site activities. Types of access opportunities to site activities within Monroe County include:

- Camp Sites
- Skiing
- Boating / Canoeing / Kayaking / Rafting
- Hunting
- Education: Environmental
- Education: Historical
- Dog Park
- Picnic Area with BBQ's

Support Facilities

Public access opportunities to support facilities are defined as access to a built element within public open space that supports its usability. Access opportunities are tallied by type per open space parcel. In the case where an open space parcel overlaps two municipalities, both municipalities can include those support facilities. Types of support facilities within Monroe County include:

- Open Pavilion / Gazebo
- Enclosed Structure for Public Use
- Security & Field Lighting
- Restrooms
- Stage

Municipality	Open Space Total		Recreation Element Types #3		Access Opportunity to Site Activities #3		Access Opportunity to Support Facilities #3		Miles of Trails #3	
	Open Space	Acre Per Person	Recreation	Average Number of Types Per 1000 Residents	Recreation	Average Number of Access Opportunities Per 1000 Residents	Recreation	Average Number of Access Opportunities Per 1000 Residents	Recreation	Average Mile of Trail Per 1000 Residents
The Barrett Township, Mt. Pocono Borough, Paradise Township Open Space and Recreation Plan (2002)										
Barrett Township	4,384	1.04	7	1.66	3	0.71	7	1.66	0	0.00
Mt. Pocono Borough	18	0.01	2	0.63	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Paradise Township	723	0.23	42.5	13.34	3	0.94	10	3.14	3	0.94
Total	5,125	0.48	51.5	4.87	6	0.57	17	1.61	3	0.28
West End Open Space and Recreation Plan - Chestnuthill Township, Eldred Township, Polk Township, Ross Township (2003)										
Eldred Township	1,458	0.50	8	2.75	2	0.69	6	2.06	18	6.19
Polk Township	316	0.04	20.5	2.60	3	0.38	13	1.65	13	1.65
Chestnuthill Township	1,795	0.10	24	1.40	3	0.17	8	0.47	6	0.35
Ross Township	1,056	0.18	3	0.51	1	0.17	5	0.84	12	2.02
Total	4,625	0.14	55.5	1.64	9	0.27	32	0.94	49	1.45
Top of the Mountain Region – Coolbaugh Township, Tobyhanna Township, Tunkhannock Township Open space and Recreation Plan (2002)										
Coolbaugh Township	33,762	1.64	22	1.07	13	0.63	16	0.78	18	0.88
Tobyhanna Township	5,025	0.59	27	3.16	4	0.47	9	1.05	3	0.35
Tunkhannock Township	5,168	0.76	5	0.74	1	0.15	3	0.44	18	2.65
Total	43,955	1.22	54	1.50	18	0.50	28	0.78	39	1.09
Eastern Monroe Open Space and Recreation Plan - Delaware Water Gap Borough, Middle Smithfield Township, Price Township, Smithfield Township (2002)										
Delaware Water Gap Borough	1,243	1.67	6	8.04	6	8.04	5	6.70	10	13.40
Middle Smithfield Township	4,205	0.26	13	0.81	8	0.50	9	0.56	24	1.50
Price Township	3,623	1.01	0	0.00	6	1.68	2	0.56	12	3.36
Smithfield Township	1,399	0.19	20	2.72	8	1.09	12	1.63	14	1.90
Total	10,470	0.38	39	1.41	28	1.01	28	1.01	60	2.17
HJP Open Space and Recreation Plan - Hamilton Township, Jackson Township, Pocono Township (2003)										
Hamilton Township	1,355	0.15	9	0.99	1	0.11	6	0.66	15	1.65
Jackson Township	5,173	0.74	5	0.71	1	0.14	5	0.71	0	0.00
Pocono Township	1,544	0.14	17	1.54	4	0.36	7	0.63	27	2.44
Total	8,072	0.30	31	1.14	6	0.22	18	0.66	42	1.55
Stroud Area Regional Open Space and Recreation Plan - Stroud Township, East Stroudsburg Borough, Stroudsburg Borough (2002)										
Stroud Township	496	0.03	32.5	1.69	4	0.21	0	0.00	9	0.47
East Stroudsburg Borough	88	0.01	42	4.27	3	0.30	5	0.51	2	0.20
Stroudsburg Borough	76	0.01	26.5	4.76	4	0.72	4	0.72	1	0.18
Total	660	0.02	101	2.92	11	0.32	9	0.26	12	0.35
Monroe County	72,907	0.43	332	1.95	78	0.46	132	0.78	205	1.21
	# 1	Quantities Taken From Recreation Commission Plans								
	# 2	Quantities Taken From Monroe County Open Space GIS Data								
	# 3	Existing Resources as of 2003 (this will be updated)								
=		Surplus Above Monroe County Average								
=		Deficit Below Monroe County Average								
=		Monroe County Average								

- Stadium Seating / Benches
- Concession Stand
- Boat Ramp
- Parking
- Drinking Fountains

Trails

Trails are quantified by the mile for each type of trail. In the case where a trail crosses over into two municipalities, that trail length is split at the municipal line. Types of trails within Monroe County include:

- Trails: Walking & Jogging
- Trails: Hiking
- Trails: Road Biking
- Trails: Mountain Biking
- Trails: Horseback Riding
- Trails: Athletic Par Course

Level of Open Space and Recreation Service Per Municipal Population Matrix

Recreation Analysis

Mark Palerino to assist: analysis of recreation

Partnership Opportunities

Public Schools

The potential exists to negotiate use agreements with public schools in and around Monroe County to increase the level of access to recreation amenities such as gyms and play fields within the county. It is suggested that the County might be a catalyst to bring schools districts together with recreation commissions to create a county-wide framework for cooperation, rather than each commission - district negotiated separately.

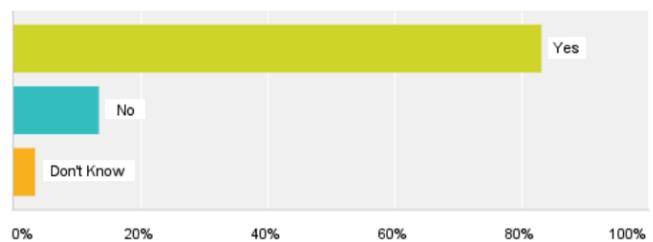


Municipality	2010 Population	Survey Monkey Respondents	% of Respondents per 1000 residents
Barrett Township	4,225	30	7.1
Mt. Pocono Borough	3,170	11	3.5
Paradise Township	3,186	30	9.4
Total	10,581	71	6.7
Eldred Township	2,910	6	2.1
Polk Township	7,874	20	2.5
Chestnuthill Township	17,156	58	3.4
Ross Township	5,940	17	2.9
Total	33,880	101	3.0
Coolbaugh Township	20,564	19	0.9
Tobyhanna Township	8,554	39	4.6
Tunkhannock Township	6,789	17	2.5
Total	35,907	75	2.1
Delaware Water Gap Borough	746	8	10.7
Middle Smithfield Township	15,997	30	1.9
Price Township	3,573	14	3.9
Smithfield Township	7,357	40	5.4
Total	27,673	92	3.3
Hamilton Township	9,083	47	5.2
Jackson Township	7,033	41	5.8
Pocono Township	11,065	49	4.4
Total	27,181	137	5.0
Stroud Township	19,213	76	4.0
East Stroudsburg Borough	9,840	20	2.0
Stroudsburg Borough	5,567	21	3.8
Total	34,620	117	3.4
Monroe County	169,842	593	3.5
=	Surplus Above Monroe County Average		
=	Deficit Below Monroe County Average		
=	Monroe County Average		

Percent of online survey respondents by municipal population

Q7 Do you think that more public parks, natural areas, open space areas and recreation facilities should be preserved or established in Monroe County?

Answered: 625 Skipped: 128



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The master planning process created many opportunities for public input. All items presented to the Open Space and Recreation Board and the public were posted on the County project website for public review.

Committee Meetings

The study term was approximately nine months. The Monroe County Open Space and Recreation Board (OSAB) served as the project committee to guide this plan.

Purpose and Authority of the OSAB

The OSAB includes representatives from local environmental advocacy groups, recreation commission leaders and interested citizens. Nine meetings were held with the Committee over the course of this study. Minutes from these meetings are included in the Appendix of this report.

Workshops

Two workshops were held during the study process. The first workshop in January 2013 at the Monroe County Conservation District Environmental Education Center introduced the project and solicit information from the four active recreation commissions:

- Hamilton Jackson Pocono Recreation Commission (HJP)
- Stroud Region Open Space Commission (SROSC)
- West End Open Space Commission (WEPOSC)
- Park and Recreation Commission (PARC)

The second workshop occurred in May 2013 at the same location to solicit the opinions of local conservancy groups regarding open space priorities for conservation

through easements and greenways.

Public Meetings

Two public meetings were held during the study process. The first meeting in January 2013 at the Monroe County Conservation District's Environmental Education Center introduced the public to the project and solicited opinions on open space and recreation. Minutes from these meetings are included in the Appendix of this report.

The second meeting was held in May 2013 at the same location to review results from the public internet survey and the preliminary recommendations of this Plan. Input from participants was recorded in the meeting minutes.

Citizen Internet Survey of 2013

Residents of Monroe County were able to participate by logging onto <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KKFKDRR> to take a preference survey. Internet survey responses were collected through the entire project term and complete survey data is included in the Appendix of this report. The Internet survey was designed to provide guidance for this study, as well as for future open space and recreation decisions within Monroe County. The results were not considered "statistically valid" but provided insights about the behavior, interests, and priorities of County residents regarding parks, open space and recreation. A review of the results follows.

Survey Respondent Demographics

Approximately 750 respondents across Monroe County participated in the study. Delaware Water Gap Borough and Paradise Township had the greatest participation by population ratio in the County. Coolbaugh Township had the least participation by population. Similar to municipal participation, some age groups participated more than others, with a majority of respondents between the ages of 35 to 64, and a minority between ages of under 18 to 34. The age response breakdown was:

- 30% are between the ages of 45 to 54
- 24% are between the ages of 54 to 64
- 22% are between the ages of 35 to 44
- 13% are 65 or older
- 6% are between the ages of 25 to 34
- 2% are between the ages of 18 to 24
- 2% are under 18

Almost 87% of all responses report their household uses parks, natural areas, open space areas or recreation facilities in Monroe County. The household breakdown reveals:

- 36% are from 2-person households
- 24% are from 4-person households
- 19% are from 3-person households

Among various outdoor open space areas and recreation facilities, reported usage was highest for municipal parks and open space (80%), then state parks, gamelands, and forests (76%), followed by the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (63%).

Respondents reported on average, participating in walking and jogging in 2012-2013 more than any other activity, among the various outdoor activities available in parks, natural areas, open space areas or recreation facilities. Walking and jogging was ranked as the highest participation activity for adults (87%) and for seniors (17%). It was ranked second for children 10 to 18 (29%) and for children under 10 (19%).

The second most favored activity by all age groups is hiking, a close second behind walking and jogging. Festivals and special events, environmental education sites and programs, are the next highest ranked activities.

Respondents reported that children under 10 years of age participated heavily in activities relating to playground equipment (68%), and were very involved in team sports (36%) similar to children 10 to 18 years

in age. Older children participated in swimming (45%), festivals and special events (28%), and environmental education sites and programs (28%).

Adults accounted for over 75% of respondents in this survey and chose to participate in hiking (88%), festivals and special events (86%), and environmental education sites and programs (76%). This age group also preferred picnicking (89%) and dog walking (88%).

Seniors 65 and older follow the overall trend in Monroe County by choosing activities such as environmental education sites and programs (19%) followed by festivals and special events (16%), and hiking (13%).

The lowest participation for all age groups was in horseback riding, geocaching, hunting and individual sports.

Recreation Activities Participation and Satisfaction

A majority (68%) of Monroe County residents surveyed reported that their household recreation needs are being met. Of these, they considered the “best” provided for” activities as skiing and winter sports, followed by hiking, fishing and picnicking. “Reasonably well provided for” activities were considered festivals and special events, followed by walking and jogging, environmental education sites/programs, picnicking and then hiking. These reasonably well provided for activities correspond with what residents of Monroe County see as their most participated in activities.

Respondents who needs are not being met, “the most poorly provided for” activities include road biking, swimming, mountain biking, festivals and special events, adult sports leagues and horseback riding. Of the respondents who felt Monroe County needed more playing fields, the types most requested were soccer, followed by baseball, and softball. In addition to fields,

65% believe there are not enough trail and greenway facilities within Monroe County.

Open Space and Recreation Program Priorities

A majority (83%) of Monroe County respondents think that more public parks, natural areas, open space areas and recreation facilities should be preserved or established in Monroe County. Over 81% of respondents feel that public parks, natural areas, open space areas and recreation facilities are important to the quality of life in Monroe County.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (92%) believe that the visitor recreation economy is important or very important for Monroe County and 90% also believe that there are economic benefits in drawing recreation visitors to the area. A majority (73%) of respondents are willing to pay additional taxes, ranging from \$10 to \$100 more per year to support public parks, natural areas, open space areas and recreation facilities within Monroe County, for use by Monroe County residents. 20% of respondents oppose a tax increase and 6% say they “don’t know” if they support such a tax increase.

Regional Commissions and Municipal Meetings

Mark Palerino to complete: Each Recreation Commission meeting synopsis.

Four recreation commissions in addition to individual townships were contacted by Mark Palerino, Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP). Discussions included updates to their planning regions 2002-2003 open space and recreation plans. Input was solicited to understand what changes can advance the missions of the regional commissions moving forward into year 2020.

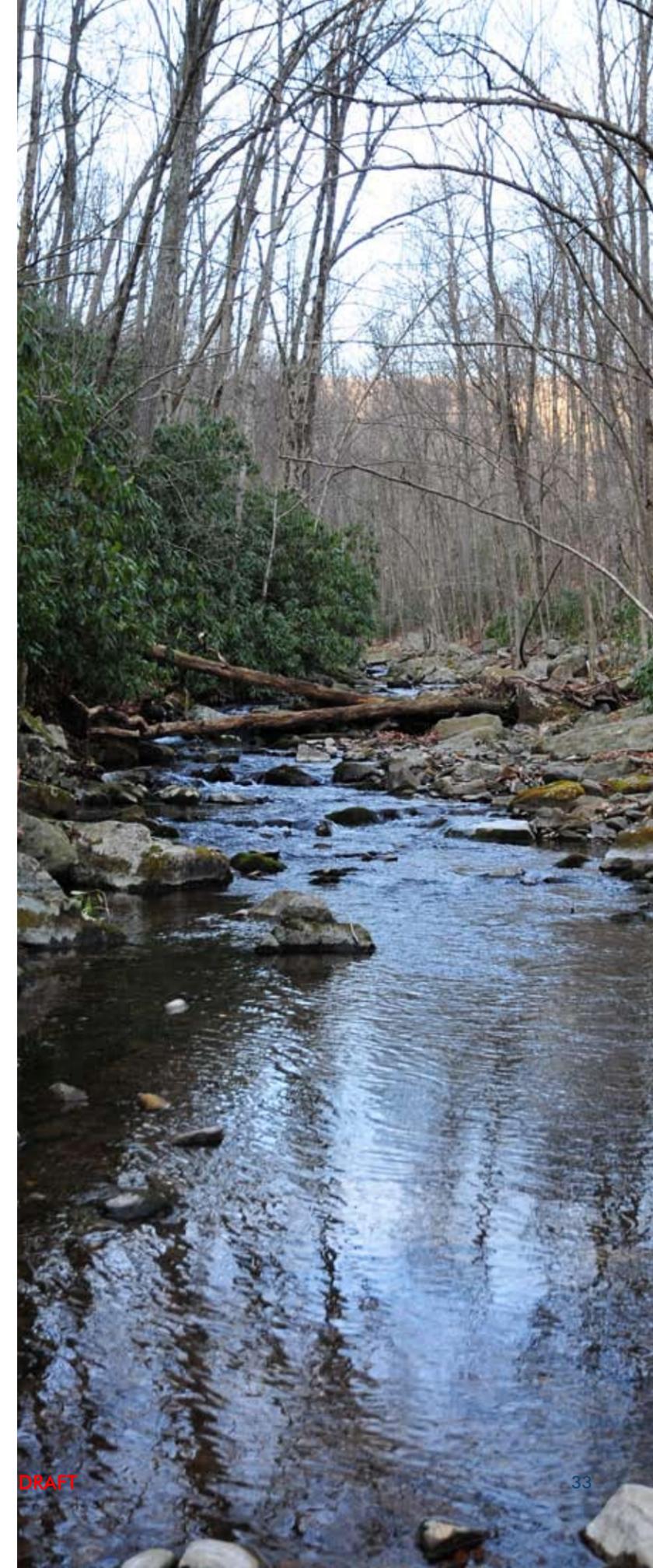
Site Visits

Areas visited by the study team include:

- PA Bicycle Route V
- Eldred
- Chestnut ridge trail
- State Game lands No. 168
- Cherry Valley
- Minisink Greenway
- Delaware Water Gap
- Pine Mountain Run
- Sky Top
- Dixon R. Miller Recreation Area
- State Game lands No. 129
- Long Pond Preserve
- Tannerville Cranberry Bog
- Mt Airy Red Rock Bike Trail
- State Game Land 221 (Devils Elbow)
- Kurmes Preserve
- State Game Land 127

Presentation to County Commissioners

A presentation will be made to the County commissioners during the course of this study.



“Monroe County is estimated to be responsible for 60% of all tourism spending within the Pocono Mountains Region”

2011 Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism in Pennsylvania

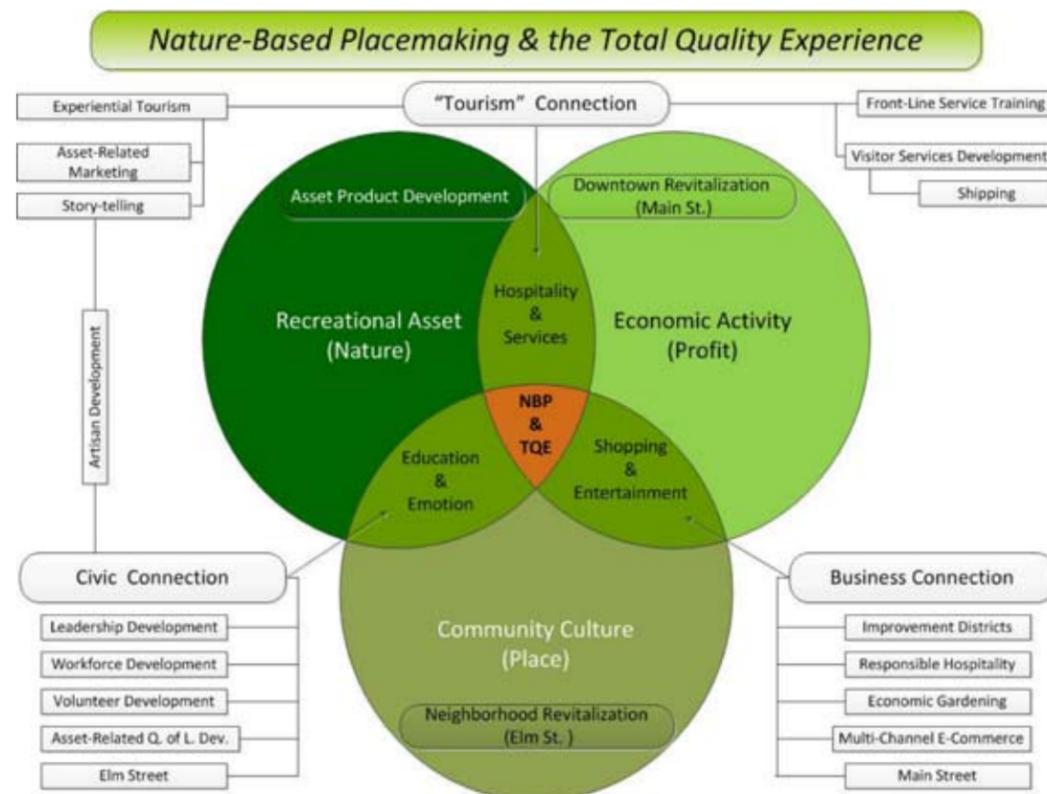
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Models

The following studies are models for understanding how open space and recreation are essential to the immediate and long-term economic health of Monroe County.

Nature Based Placemaking

Nature Based Placemaking (NBP) is a model developed by the Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) that illustrates how nature, community and economy are interrelated. This model was developed specifically for Pennsylvania and is a practical conceptual template



for planning specific locations in Monroe County. NBP confirms the following approaches to develop its model:

- DCNR Conservation Landscape Initiatives - (PA)
- Main Street Four-Point Approach® - (PA)
- Elm Street Five-Point Approach - (PA)
- Civic Tourism
- Ecological Economics
- Triple Bottom Line Theory

By combining these theories and approaches, the PDC model illustrates how sustainable development can promote nature, community and the economy.

Economic Studies and Reports

Local Economy (2013)

This study by author John Rogers for the Audubon Society seeks to quantify the values of natural landscapes along the Kittatinny Ridge that runs along the length of the southern border of Monroe County. This study was under development concurrently with the 2013 Open Space and Recreation Plan. Following a recent study titled *State of Kittatinny Ridge* by Audubon Pennsylvania and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, this study focuses on how protected natural landscapes are powerful economic development tools in at least two ways.

First, natural landscapes serve as green infrastructure that provide important economic services that are generally ignored, including: flood protection, water supply, pollination, pest control, soil formation, erosion control, reduced stormwater, greenhouse gas reduction, carbon storage/sequestration, and habitat. The second and slightly more recognized tool is the generation of economic activities that are based on the natural environment of a place like Monroe County.

The Outdoor Recreation Economy (2012)

This study developed by the Outdoor Industry Association calculates recreation spending at the national level to be a \$646 B/year industry. This business sector is an overlooked economic giant within the United States, supporting 6.1 million direct jobs. This total includes \$126 B in product sales and \$520 B in trips and travel. Most importantly, US recreation spending grew 5 percent between 2005 and 2011 while most sectors contracted.

The Poconos Visitor Report (2012)

This study by Longwoods International looks at the Pocono Mountains Region (Monroe, Carbon, Pike and Wayne Counties) and breaks tourist populations into two types: overnight users and day users. Overnight users to Monroe are estimated to spend approximately \$1.3 B in five categories: transportation (8%), recreation (13%), food and beverage (21%), shopping / retail (14%), and lodging (44%).

Day users are estimated to spend approximately \$936 M in four categories: transportation (15%), recreation (32%), food and beverage (31%), shopping / retail (22%).

Recreation spending for overnight (\$174M/year) and day users (\$301 M/year) in the Pocono Mountains Region is a \$475 M/year industry.

According to the the 2011 Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism in Pennsylvania report, Monroe County is estimated to be responsible for 60% of all tourism spending within the Pocono Mountains Region.

60% percent (Monroe County) of \$475M/year (Pocono Mountains Region), equates to a \$285M/year tourist/recreation industry.

This \$285M/year figure represents only the tourism industry spending in Monroe County. To calculate the local recreation expenditures, a ratio was taken from the *Economic Significance and Impact of Pennsylvania State Parks study* was used. This ratio defines spending

percentages as 62% for tourists and 38% for local residents.

This calculation estimates Monroe County's tourism spending as a \$285M/year (62%) industry. Adding local population expenditures of \$175M/year (38%) to the tourism spending equals a total recreation economy of \$460 M/year.

The Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism in Pennsylvania (2011)

This study by Tourism Economics divides Pennsylvania into 11 tourism regions - with Monroe County part of a 4-county sub-region called the Pocono Mountains region that also includes Carbon, Pike and Wayne Counties. The Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau is the official state Tourist Promotion Agency (TPA) for the region. The Pocono Mountains region generates 7.7% of annual visitor spending in Pennsylvania, which totals to \$2.5 B per year with Monroe County alone generating \$1.5 B, or 60% of the total visitor spending in the 4-county Pocono Mountains region.

The Monroe County \$1.5B/year travel and tourism industry data is split into five categories:

- Transportation (30%),
- Recreation (21%),
- Food and beverage (20%),
- Shopping / retail (18%),
- Lodging (12%).

These categories are based on consumer survey data and calculate that recreation spending alone in Monroe County is a \$315M/year industry.

To calculate the local recreation expenditures, a ratio from the *Economic Significance and Impact of Pennsylvania State Parks study* was used. This ratio defines recreation spending percentages as 62% for tourists and 38% for local residents.

This calculation estimates Monroe County's tourism spending as a \$315M/year (62%) industry. Adding local population expenditures of \$200M/year (38%) to the tourism spending equals a total recreation economy of \$515 M/year.

What is the Natural Landscape Worth to the The Economic Value of Protected Open Space in Southeastern Pennsylvania (2011)

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and the GreenSpace Alliance (GSA) studied five counties in southeastern Pennsylvania (Chester, Delaware, Philadelphia, Montgomery, Bucks) to quantify the economic values of protected open spaces such as parks, farms and natural areas. Economic benefits identified include direct benefits such as increased property values and economic activity, as well as indirect values such as ecosystem services and health benefits. Monroe County or the Pocono Mountains region could complete a similar study to quantify the value of its open space.

The Economic Significance and Impact of Pennsylvania State Parks (2010)

This study prepared by the Pennsylvania State University Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management analyzes the amount of revenue each state park within Pennsylvania receives annually by day users and overnight users. Three types of day users are identified in the study:

- Local day users (who live within 50 miles of the park and make up 56% of visitation and 38% of total day spending);
- Non-local day users who live more than 50 miles from the park and make up 28 % of visitation and 38% of total day spending);
- Non Pennsylvania resident day users (who live more than 50 miles from the park and make

up only 16% of visitation and 24% of total day spending).

Focusing down to Monroe County, residents make up approximately 38% of all recreation spending within its 3 state parks: Gouldboro, Tobyhanna and Big Pocono. This percentage can be used to understand the tourist breakdown of (62%) vs. local resident (38%) recreation spending within Monroe County, and correlates to other studies.

Economics of Greenway and Trail Systems

Greenway and trails systems are documented to provide both direct and indirect benefits to local communities by connecting residents and tourists to businesses. One popular example is the Great Allegheny Passage rail-to-trail system that runs between Pittsburgh, PA and Washington, DC with an estimated 800,000 trips annually, and estimated at over \$40M in direct annual spending (Forbes Magazine). *The Great Allegheny Passage Economic Impact Study* completed in 2008 by Campos found that there is a favorable perceived economic impact concerning the trail with over 60% of total local business respondents reporting that their sales had increased at least somewhat as a direct result of the trail.

Greenway and trails also can be catalysts for corporate business collaborations as demonstrated by the Medical Mile Trail in Little Rock, Arkansas. This trail was funded and supported by the National Park Service Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, the Heart Clinic Arkansas, and the Little Rock Parks and Recreation. The fund-raising effort exceeded the original \$350,000 goal in three months and ultimately rose to \$2.1 M with a health theme to raise awareness of trails as catalysts for exercise, smoking cessation and better nutrition.

Recreation spending in Monroe County totals between \$460M and \$515M per year, with local residents contributing a minimum of \$175 M per year (40%)



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Monroe County has many opportunities for private partnerships to accomplish its open space and recreation goals. Potential partnerships are organized by types that are each divided into four sections: partners; common objectives; investment targets; and pilot projects. Types include:

- Travel / Tourism / Hospitality
- Recreation Providers
- Health Care
- Developers – Residential / Community
- Developers – Commercial
- Banking
- Manufacturing
- Utilities / Energy
- Agriculture
- Field Sports
- Competitive Sports
- Service Organizations

Travel / Tourism / Hospitality

Partners

- PMVB members
- Camelback
- Mount Airy trail network
- Non-PMVB providers
- Outfitters

Common Objectives

- Environmental protection
- Recreation resource development
- Support for funding partnerships
- Marketing regional resources
- Visitor support services

Investment Targets

- Link private and public resources physically
- Advocate greenway and trail development

- Marketing greenway and trails
- Support tourism and recreational development

Pilot Projects

- WB&E Rail-Trail development (East Stroudsburg to Tobyhanna / State Gamelands)
- Minisink Greenway Trail Link development (PennDOT Welcome Center to McDade Trail)
- Trail Linkage development (Skytop to State Gamelands)
- Appalachian Trail Gateway (at Delaware Water Gap)
- Monroe / Pike Gateway (at Bushkill Village, McDade Trail Bridge over Bushkill Creek)

Recreation Providers

Partners

- Other private recreation providers
- Open space public and recreation partners.

Common Objectives

- Development of recreation resources
- Support funding partnerships
- Market regional resources
- Visitor support services.

Investment Targets

- Families
- Targeted age group categories

Pilot Projects

- Large scale recreational projects
- Development of land and water trails
- Unique visitor experiences not obtainable in public sector such as: wilderness guides, outward-bound type experiences, zip-lines, skiing, paint-ball, water parks, Pocono Raceway, golf courses, river liveries hotels restaurants

Health Care

Partners

- Pocono Medical Center

- Geisinger Health System
- Service providers

Common Objectives

- Health, wellness and prevention
- Exercise
- Senior and youth access
- Education

Investment Targets

- Development of walkways and trail connections to neighborhood population centers
- Access to healthy local foods

Pilot Projects

- Glen to Glen Trail development
- Trail bridge from ES Boro to Glen Park
- Making preserved land available for sustainable commercial agricultural enterprises

Developers – Residential / Community

Partners

- TBD

Common Objectives

- Conservation zoning
- Open space preservation
- Water quality
- Transportation improvements
- Local access to recreation and nature
- Quality of life improvements
- School quality

Investment Targets

- Infill development within existing villages
- Urban revitalization
- Brownfield development

Pilot Projects

- Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg area
- Foreclosed bank properties
- Resort areas

Banks

Potential Partners

- ESSA
- FNCB

Common Objectives

- Financing conservation developments
- Public service
- Quality of life

Investment Targets

- Foreclosed bank properties
- Infill village properties
- Conservation development proposals

Pilot Projects

- Godfrey Ridge Conservation
- Areas with issues getting foreclosures back on the market
- Creating lending programs specifically tailored to Pocono related industries
- Micro-loan programs for small entrepreneur enterprises such as recreation and farming

Manufacturing

Potential Partners

- Sanofi Pasteur
- Vigon International
- Others?

Common Objectives

- Environmental protection (air, water, land)
- Public health
- Access to public amenities for employees and regional residents
- Education
- Quality of life

Investment Targets

- Walkways
- Trails

- Green public infrastructure

Pilot Projects

- Route 611 corridor pedestrian and bike mobility improvements

Education

Potential Partners

- ESU
- NCCC
- School districts

Common Objectives

- Environmental education
- Greenway and trails
- Urban open space

Investment Targets

- Linkages around campus
- Student internships
- Sponsor public forums

Pilot Projects

- WB&E Rail-Trail development
- Glen Park trail linkage

Utilities / Energy

Potential Partners

- PP&L
- Met Ed
- UGI
- Gas pipeline mining generation
- Transmission companies
- Sponsorships
- Transmission line owners

Common Objectives

- Environmental protection, environmental education, sustainable energy, quality of life improvements

Investment Targets

- Trail development / linkages, signage

Pilot Projects

- Make transmission ROWs available for trail uses
- Sponsor mountain bike event on network of utility ROWs ("Pocono Power MB Race")

Agriculture

Potential Partners

- Small farms
- Timber industry
- Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture
- Conservancies

Common Objectives

- Renewable resource industries
- Habitat protection
- Species preservation

Investment Targets

- Community Supported Agriculture
- Subsidizing land availability for small farmers

Pilot Projects

- Commercial farming leases on public and preserved land

Field Sports

Potential Partners

- Outfitters
- Sporting goods stores
- Hunters
- Fisherman

Common Objectives

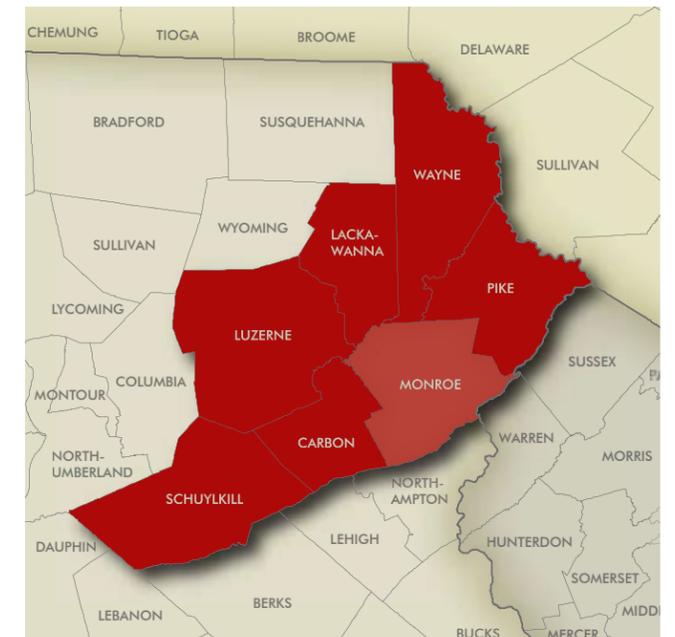
- Sustaining renewable resources
- Environmental education

Investment Targets

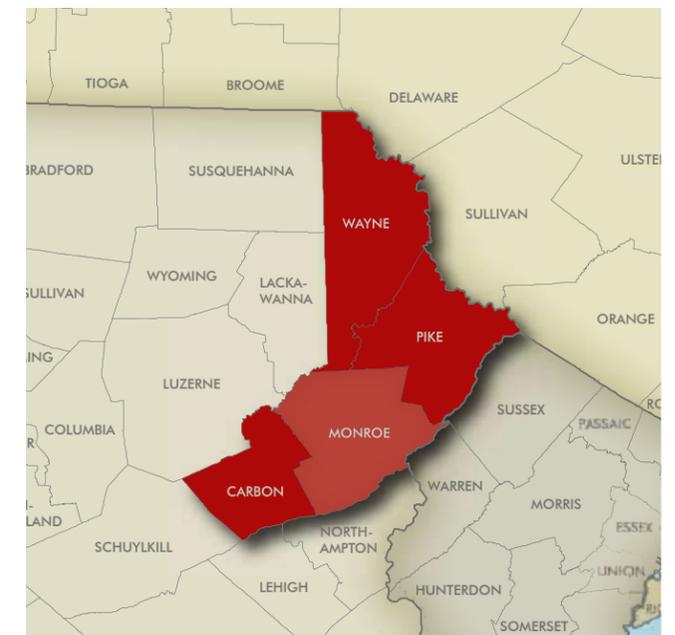
- Improve access to hunting and fishing areas

Pilot Projects

- TBD



NEPA Region



PMVB Region



Competitive Sports

Potential Partners

- Sports clubs

Common Objectives

- Provide high quality sports facilities, attract tournaments to Monroe County

Investment Targets

- Swimming complex
- Soccer fields complex
- Tennis complex

Pilot Projects

- TBD

Service Organizations

Potential Partners

- YMCA
- Red Cross
- United Way
- Fire departments
- Bushkill Outreach
- Conservancies
- Private Pocono camps and clubs

Common Objectives

- Public health and services
- Quality of life

Investment Targets

- Parks
- Community centers
- Linkages to recreation – via walking, bicycling and transit
- Facilities to serve emergency purposes

Pilot Projects

- TBD

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS (BY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT)

Monroe County has demonstrated over the past 12 years that it has the intent and creativity to enter into productive partnerships with government and non-profit agencies at all levels to accomplish its conservation and recreation goals.

There are high expectations in the Monroe community that these County successes will continue. Monroe County's history of financial commitment to its "forever green" initiative is a model statewide. The policy established by Monroe County to invest its "green" funds is to serve as a catalyst, rather than a primary open space owner or recreation provider.

Monroe County and its partners have made this strategy work with remarkable success and have generated expectations that the County will continue a similar investment plan for the next decade.

Over the past 12 years, Monroe County, invested \$25 M in an open space bond fund plus \$11 M additional funds to leverage over \$78 million in non-county funds from federal, state, regional and local partners.

Federal Partnerships

State and federal elected officials have historically included "earmark" items into legislation for worthy projects in their districts. A conversation between county and municipal officials and legislators about an important consensus project is the way to begin this process. This type of funding should be targeted toward capital improvement projects. A review of potential public-sector partners includes:

National Park Service (NPS) / Department of the Interior (DOI)

Common Objectives

DEWA is a major federal recreation resource in Monroe County.

Investment Targets

- Recreation services/partnerships
- Habitat partnerships
- Cultural partnerships

Pilot Projects

Several projects related to Monroe County have been identified in previous studies, including:

- McDade Trail / Bridge over the Bushkill Creek
- Bushkill Village cultural landscape conservation
- Minisink Trail linkage – McDade Trail to Delaware Water Gap

Potential Funding Sources

- Federal Highway Administration
- Powerline Impact Mitigation funds
- DCNR funds

Department of Defense (DoD)

Common Objectives

- Potential conservation, recreation and community development partnerships at Tobyhanna Depot

Investment Targets

- Recreation services
- Habitat protection and restoration,

Pilot Projects

- TBD

Potential Funding Sources

- DoD “growing” initiatives
- Other?

Federal Grants

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) provides federal funds under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). MAP-21 is the successor to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation

Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

In Pennsylvania, the Department of Transportation (PennDOT) administers several MAP-21 bicycle and pedestrian related programs, including TAP funds. Typically, a non-federal match is required to be 20% of the grant award. A strategy preferred by PennDOT is to require the local partner to prepare construction documents and obtain necessary environmental clearances, property control documents and utility relocations plans as the local match for these “pre-construction” tasks - so that the project is ready for construction using the TAP funding. The costs to prepare these documents can be the non-federal match to the MAP-21 funds, and does not necessarily need to be exactly 20% if all needed documentation can be completed for less. For more information: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/summaryinfo.cfm>

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides federal funds under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). MAP-21 is the successor to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Funds are allocated to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The RTP is an assistance program of the FHWA funded by the federal fuel tax. In Pennsylvania, the RTP is administered by the PA DNCR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation in consultation with the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Advisory Board, which is composed of both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users.

Match requirements for Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Grants are 80% grant money, up to a maximum of \$100,000, and 20% project applicant money. “Soft match” (credit for donations of funds, materials, services, or new right-of-way) is permitted from any

project sponsor, whether a private organization or public agency.

Eligible applicants include federal and state agencies, local governments and private organizations. Funding may be used for the development of urban trail linkages near homes and work-places; maintenance of existing recreational trails; development of trail-side and trail-head facilities; provision of features that facilitate the access and use of trails by persons with disabilities; acquisition of easements for trails, or for trail corridors identified in a state trail plan; acquisition of fee simple title to property from a willing seller; and construction of new trails on state, county, municipal, or private lands. For more information: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreails/>

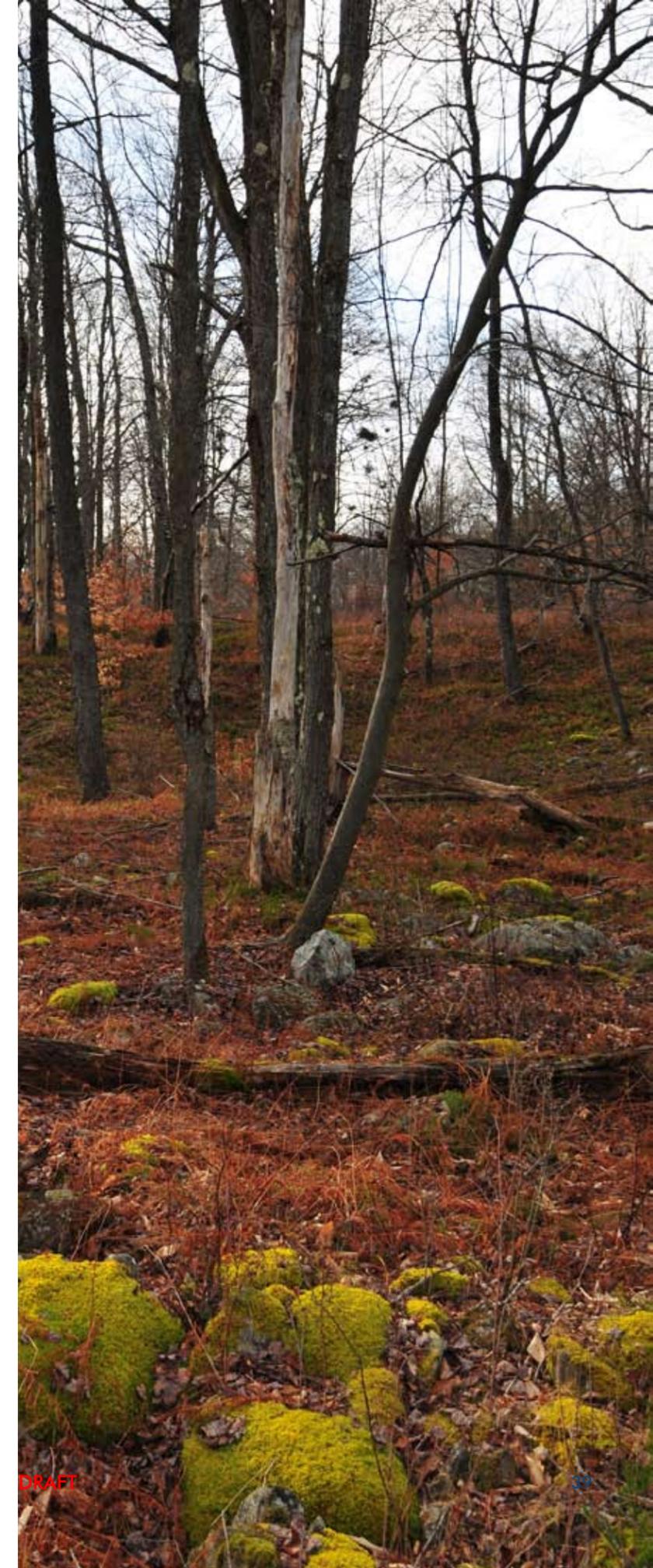
US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The US Environmental Protection Agency awards grants of \$50,000 or less through its regional offices, and grants up to \$100,000 through its Washington, DC headquarters.

Grant programs that require matching funds present an opportunity for the Township to engage in targeted fundraising efforts and to partner with other organizations.

Foundations and institutions represent another potential source of funding for education-related site improvements and programming. Grants are available to support student field trips, provide teacher training in science, and provide other educational opportunities. Education tied to research can increase the pool of potential funds. The science community and research institutions are the logical starting points for soliciting foundation funds.

State Partnerships





Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Common Objectives

DCNR manages three state parks in Monroe County: Big Pocono State Park, Gouldsboro State Park and Tobyhanna State Park that together comprise of over 8,500 acres. It also manages seven State Forest parcels that together comprise of over 10,000 acres within Monroe County. DCNR is currently engaged in a lease-management partnership with Camelback Ski Area for Big Pocono State Park where the private recreation provider helps maintain the park.

DCNR has worked directly with Monroe to help establish the County's multi-municipal recreation commissions. DCNR has partnered with Monroe to provide "block grant" type state funding for the County to award to preferred local projects. DCNR also funds the Pocono Forests and Waters Program – which is open to eligible applicants/projects in Monroe County. DCNR can actively endorse Monroe County preferred funding applications to other agencies such as PennDOT, DCED and other partners.

Investment Targets

- Trail connections
- Land conservation
- Recreation improvement

Pilot Projects

- Develop the WB&E RR ROW as a cross-county Rail-Trail
- Complete McDade Trail in Monroe County
- Build McDade Trail Bridge over Bushkill Creek
- Partner with DEWA, Middle Smtihfield and Lehman Township and Pike Co to conserve Bushkill Village as a major public recreation hub,
- Create trail link between McDade Trail to Delaware Water Gap (Minisink park)

Potential Funding Sources

The Pennsylvania DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) provides funding for

communities and nonprofit organizations to acquire, plan and implement open space, conservation and recreation resources, including trails. DCNR accepts grant applications annually—usually in April. The newest eligibility criteria is that projects will receive additional consideration for using "green" technology or practices. State funds can be used for discrete projects or as a match to federal funds. DCNR requires a 50–50 match (cash or in kind services) to its grant awards. For more information: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/indexgrantsinstruct.aspx>

Pocono Forest and Waters Conservation Landscape Initiative

Monroe County and its preservation and recreation partners are eligible applicants under this DCNR program that focuses on helping to fund projects that link conservation, recreation, and heritage with appropriate economic development activities, regional marketing and education initiatives.

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

Common Objectives

For Monroe County and its municipalities, civic, recreation, conservation and some transportation improvements are eligible through DCED from Gaming Commission revenues generated at Mount Airy Casino.

Investment Targets

- Pedestrian bridges
- Trails
- Walkways/sidewalks
- Signage
- Bushkill Village Conservation improvements
- Recreation facility improvements

Pilot Projects

- Develop the WB&E RR ROW as a cross-county Rail-Trail

- Complete McDade Trail in Monroe County
- Build McDade Trail Bridge over Bushkill Creek
- Partner with DEWA, Middle Smtihfield and Lehman Township and Pike Co to conserve Bushkill Village as a major public recreation hub
- Create trail link between McDade Trail to Delaware Water Gap (Minisink park)

Potential Funding Program

The DCED Community Revitalization Fund is a state program that supports local initiatives to the stability of communities and enhance local economies. This agency has an open application period throughout the year, but applications should be submitted as early as possible in the fiscal year after June 30. The grant program covers a wide range of eligible uses including acquisition of land, buildings, and right-of-ways; trail, civic, and recreation projects; programs and developments that build capacity of the local community and relevant local organizations to better serve the needs of the community, and other reasonable and necessary expenses related to community-based activities. Active support of the district state senator and state representative is critical in a successful grant application. For more information: <http://www.newpa.com/find-and-apply-for-funding/funding-and-program-finder/funding-detail/index.aspx?proglid=228>

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)

Common Objectives

- Transportation improvements

Investment Targets

- Pedestrian and bicycle improvement to roadways
- Trail and greenway improvements
- Air quality improvements

Pilot Projects

- WB&E Trail development,
- Minisink Greenway link to McDade trail,
- Replace River Road Bridge over the Brodhead

- Creek (Smithfield Township) PennDOT owner
- Bushkill Village visitor improvements,
- Route 611 sidewalk improvements

Potential Funding Sources

- PennDOT administers the MAP21 program that funds Transportation Alternative projects such as trails and greenways.

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Grants

The Growing Greener II Program

The Growing Greener II Program is an environmental grant program established under the Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection Act. Funds are distributed among four state agencies: the Department of Agriculture to administer farmland preservation projects; the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for state park renovations and improvements; the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority for water and sewer system upgrades; and the Department of Environmental Protection for watershed restoration and protection, abandoned mine reclamation; and abandoned oil and gas well plugging projects.

Grants are available to a variety of eligible applicants, including counties, municipalities, county conservation districts, watershed organizations, and other organizations involved in the restoration and protection of Pennsylvania’s environment. These grants support local projects to clean up “non-point” sources of pollution throughout Pennsylvania.

Growing Greener projects examples include local watershed protection and restoration projects, such as riparian buffer planting and stream bank restoration. It may also be possible to coordinate Growing Greener grants with other grants for trail construction. For more information: <http://www.depweb.state.pa.us/growinggreener/site/default.asp>

The Pennsylvania Environmental Education Grants Program

The Pennsylvania Environmental Education Grants Program funds schools, nonprofit groups and county conservation districts to develop new, or expand current environmental education programming. Projects range from creative, hands-on lessons for students and teacher training programs, to ecological education for community residents. Educational resources, including exhibits, educational signage, and demonstration projects, also qualify for funding.

PENNVEST

PENNVEST oversees the administration and finance of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) for the state of Pennsylvania. The CWSRF program provides funding to projects throughout Pennsylvania for the construction and maintenance of wastewater treatment facilities, storm water management projects, nonpoint source pollution controls, and watershed and estuary management. The program offers low interest loans with flexible terms to assist a variety of borrowers that include local governments, municipalities, and privately owned entities and to establish partnerships to leverage other funding sources.

For more information:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/funding_programs/9322

Regional

Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)

Common Objectives

- Water quality and supply
- Water protection and regulation

Investment Targets

- Pocono Plateau groundwater protection

Pilot Projects

- TBD

Potential Funding Sources

- TBD

Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA)

Common Objectives

- Quality of life
- Education
- Economic development improvements

Pilot Projects

- WB&E Trail development
- Minisink Greenway link to McDade trail
- Replace River Road Bridge over the Brodhead Creek (Smithfield)
- Route 611 sidewalk improvements

Potential Funding Sources

- Business loans
- Administers grant application process for PennDOT
- Trails as economic development
- Sustainable Tourism Initiative

Pocono Mountainss Visitors Bureau (PMVB)

Common Objectives

- Environmental well-being
- Economic development improvements

Investment Targets

- TBD

Pilot Projects

- Wayfinding / interpretive signage

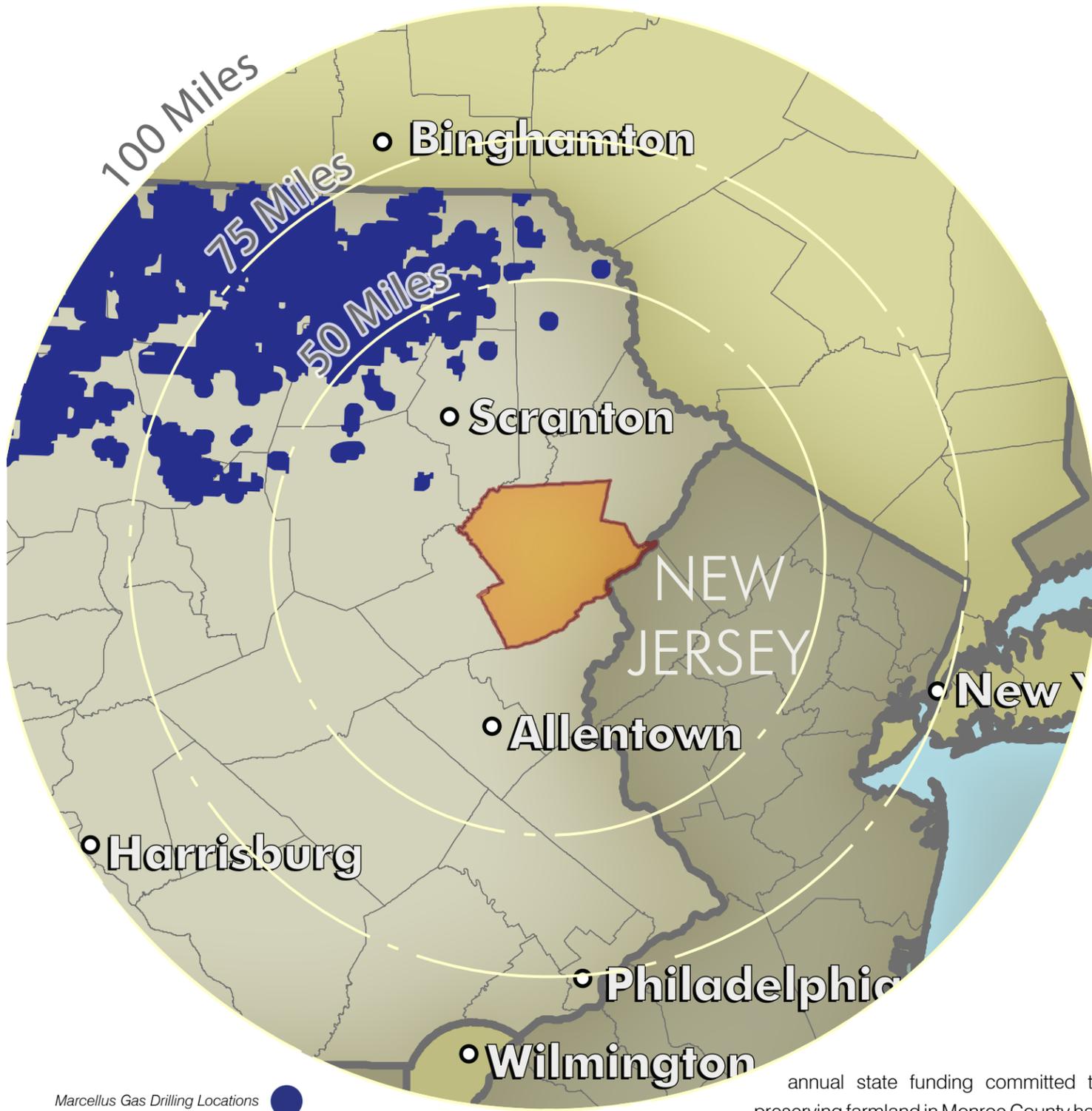
Potential Funding Sources

- Monroe County Hotel Tax

Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Funding

(information to be added here regarding state funding toward Monroe farmland preservation) Since 1998,





Marcellus Gas Drilling Locations
Map Source: (www.npr.org)

annual state funding committed to preserving farmland in Monroe County has been at least 200% to 300% greater than the County's own annual investment in agricultural lands.

Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC)
Common Objectives

- Transportation improvements within bridge jurisdictions

Investment Targets

- Transportation-related improvements within bridge "host" municipalities through its dedicated Compact Authorized Investment funds
- Bus facilities and route improvements with MC transit authority

Pilot Projects

(if CAI is reauthorized)

- Delaware Water Gap Village improvements
- River trail signage on bridges

Potential Funding Sources

- Reauthorize Compact Authorized Investment program

County

Monroe County Open Space Funds

\$36 million in County funds has been raised since 1998 (\$25 million bond and \$11 million in supplemental funds), and invested in recreation improvements and acquisition of open space in Monroe County since 2001. These county funds have leveraged an additional \$78 million through the investment by allied funding partners.

The initial pool of County funds has been fully invested and a second bond issue to fund open space, recreation and economic development has been under consideration by Monroe Commissioners.

Another possibility for Open Space funding would be through Monroe County's hotel tax. This tax currently charges 3% on the cost of hotel room rentals and could be a potential avenue for funding open space and recreation initiatives in the County.

Economic Development Corporation

Municipalities

Multi-Municipal Recreation Planning Regions

The 20 municipalities within Monroe County are organized into six open space and recreation planning regions, four of which have active planning commissions:

- Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission
- Hamilton, Jackson, Pocono Park and Open Space Commission
- West End Park & Open Space Commission
- Pocono Area Recreation Commission

The planning regions that do not have active commissions include:

- Eastern Monroe Open Space and Recreation Planning Region
- Top of the Mountain Open Space and Recreation Planning Region

These regions and commissions have identified many local open space and recreation priorities such as conservation areas and corridors, greenways and regional parks and have the power to be the drivers behind projects within their planning region, connecting funding to potential projects.

MARCELLUS SHALE GAS DRILLING

Marcellus Shale is regulated within the state of Pennsylvania, providing tax dollars in the form of "impact fees" to the Commonwealth. The process of extraction that is used to generate these "fees" for Pennsylvania also has proven its potential to harm the environment and water quality by polluting aquifers. Gas drilling in Monroe holds the potential to directly affect clean water needed for recreation, wildlife and most importantly for almost 90,000 Monroe residents who get their water

from wells.

Monroe County's Pocono Plateau formation is a reservoir that contributes to the base flow of the Delaware River and is vital to human and ecosystem health for the entire watershed. Monroe County is currently not "on the map" for gas drilling targets in Pennsylvania, but needs to have a clear policy to be prepared for potential gas drilling impacts that are affecting counties across Pennsylvania.

Potential Funding Sources

The ACT 13 Marcellus Legacy Fund Programs

The Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) is responsible for allocating funds through the ACT 13 Marcellus Legacy Fund Programs. These programs fund projects that restore streams effected by abandoned mine drainage; restore and protect streams impaired by polluted runoff; document baseline water quality data; plan, repair, acquire, develop and rehabilitate greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks and beautification projects; plug abandoned wells; and mitigate flood areas.

Of the ACT 13 Marcellus Legacy Fund Programs offers a Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program that is applicable to Monroe open space and recreation initiatives. This grant program requires a 50% match. Funds can be applied for, even though Monroe County is approximately 50 miles from the nearest Marcellus Shale drilling well. The County has received and should continue to receive an annual allocation directly from the PUC from the Act 13 Impact Fees for Greenways and Recreation. For more information: <http://www.newpa.com/find-and-apply-for-funding/commonwealth-financing-authority>

PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Advertising

Monroe has an abundance of cultural and scenic resources that highlight the character of the County. The Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau is the primary marketer for promoting Monroe County "green" and recreation assets through advertising, specific events through web links, web cams, and e-mail blasts.

Existing Signage Systems

Multiple signage systems are in use in Monroe County. During the course of the 2013 open space planning, Monroe County was assessing its options to develop a system to identify and visually "unify" signage for open space and recreation resources funded by the County program. Existing systems include:

- Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation;
- Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau;
- National Park Service;
- PennDOT.

A signage system has also been developed for the Delaware River Water Trail including directional, identification and interpretive signs.

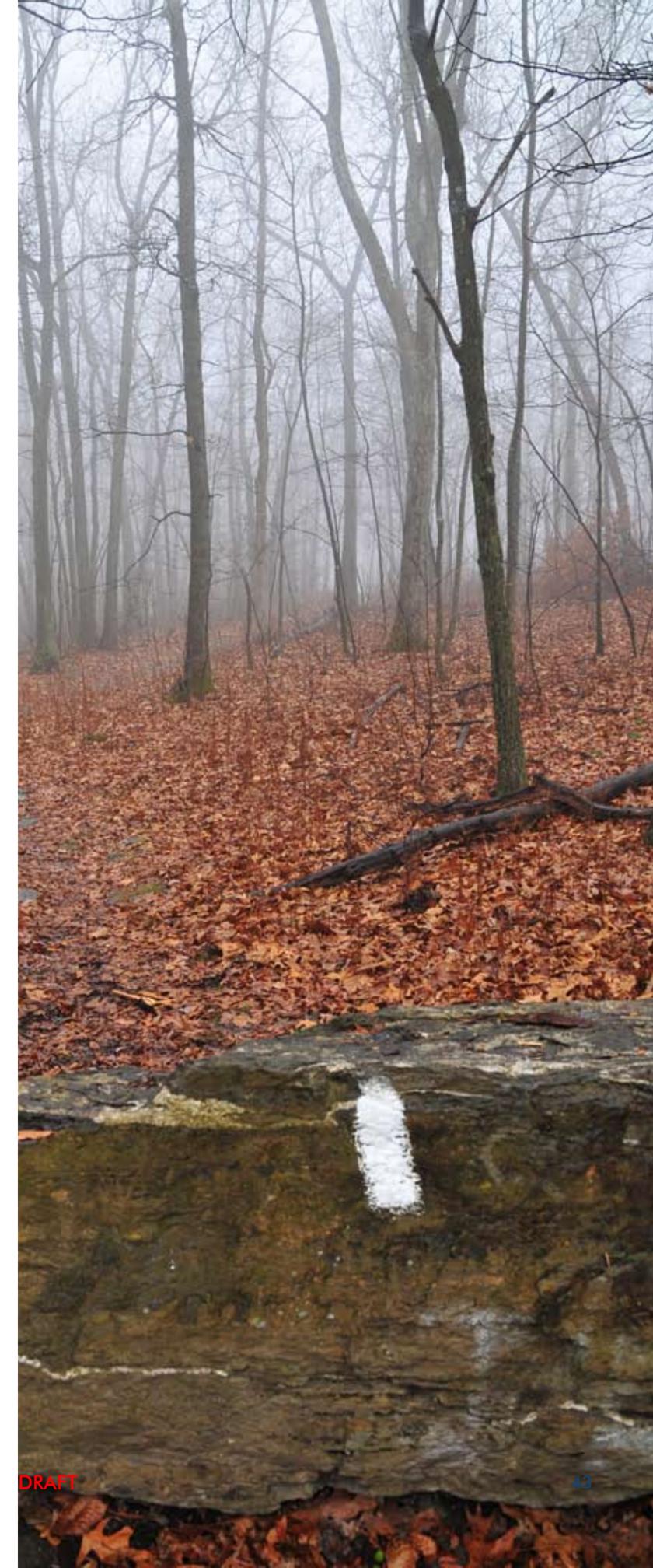
Mapping

- NPS-DEWA
- PMVB?
- Other?

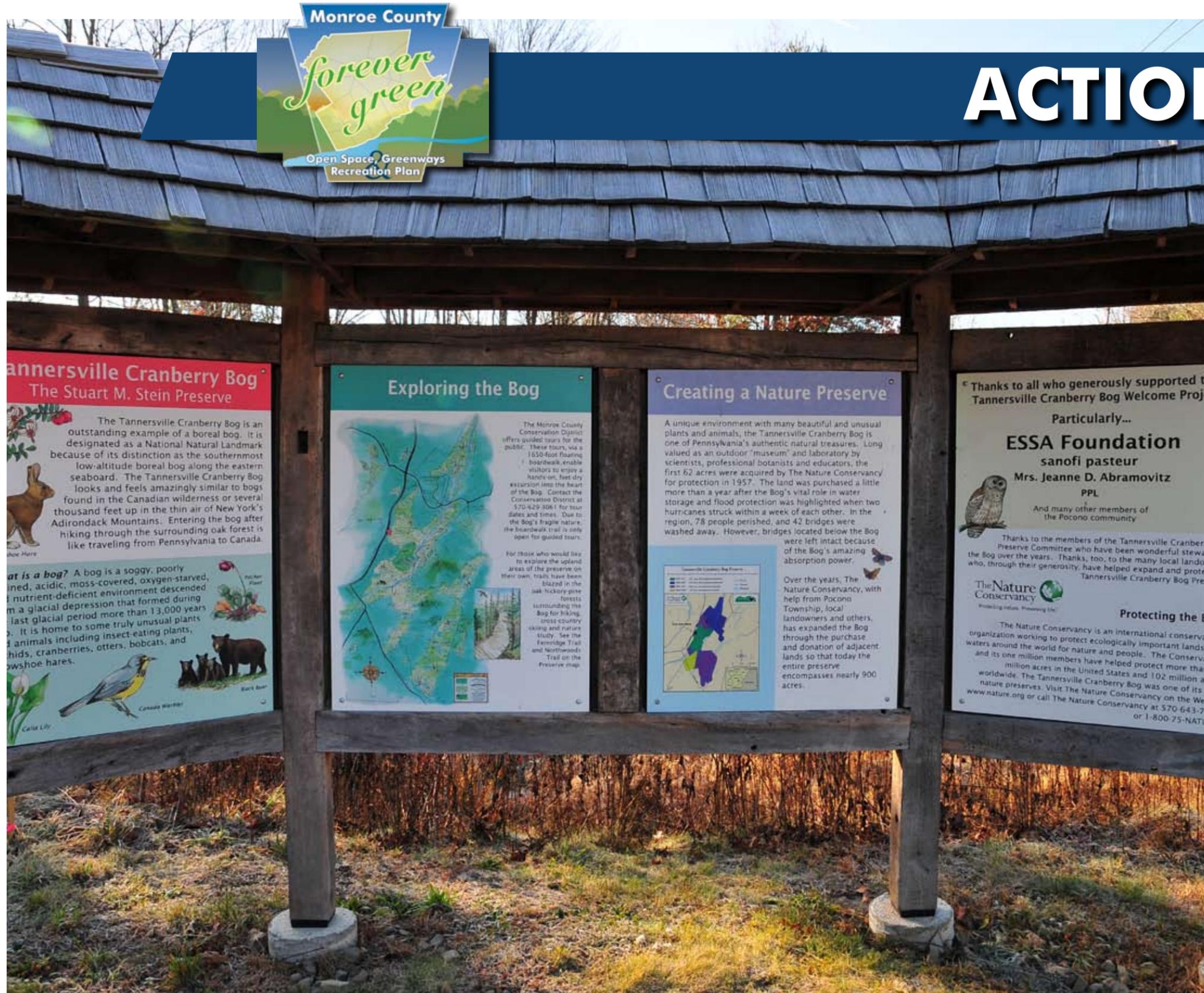
Development

The Pocono Mountainss Economic Development Corporation (PMEDC) publicizes the Monroe county

"quality of life" assets to market to potential business considering relocation to Monroe County. PMEDC works with all clients to ensure that new development proposals meet green targets.



ACTION PLAN 3



EVALUATION OF THE 2001 PLAN GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The original Monroe County plan presented a rational strategy that was championed by a broad coalition, who together achieved successes beyond the original goals.

Consider:

Acres Protected

The Monroe County goal in 2001 was to “preserve” a total 4,000 acres by 2020. In fact, 20,000 acres were preserved by 2013 – a total 5 times greater than the original goal and 7 years ahead of the original 20-year horizon.

Funding Achievements

In 1998 Monroe County passed a bond referendum for \$25M to finance the original Monroe County Open Space and recreation funding program. The County then contributed an additional \$11M for a total of \$36M which leveraged an additional \$78M in non-county matching funds for open space preservation and recreation improvements. Between 2001 and 2013 a total of \$114M was invested in Monroe County open space and recreation resources.



Open Space Advisory Board

This dedicated volunteer citizen board meets monthly more than a decade after its creation to advise Monroe County Commissioners on recreation and open space issues.

Recreation Regions

Six recreation regions were envisioned and formed for Monroe County. Four regional commissions actively operate in 2013.

Existing Resources

A clear recommendation from the public and regional recreation commissions was to focus County resources toward improvements to lands that are already in public ownership or protected.

Improved recreation facilities and trails were considered priority actions for the County to support.

Preservation of additional open space for recreation and conservation was not opposed, but future acquisitions should be assessed critically according to specific criteria - such as if physical linkages can be created between properties, or if acquisition of the parcel is critical to protect high value water, soil, forest or habitat resources that are at-risk.

Recreation Industry

The former “honeymoon” tourism industry of the Pocono Mountains has re-branded itself to capitalize on the regional beauty and promote nature-based, outdoor recreation attractions of Monroe County and the region – both public and private

Water Quality

By 2013, over 848 stream miles are under some form of protection in Monroe County, largely as a result of citizen volunteers who advocate, monitor, and work tirelessly to secure stream quality designations from the Commonwealth. The 2013 Plan identifies the importance of protecting Monroe county’s water resources and encourages additional stream monitoring and water quality designation upgrades.

Development Pressures

As of 2013, the severe economic downturn that began in 2008, has not reversed in the Pocono Mountains region – essentially halting the development boom that originally catalyzed citizen actions to create the first Monroe County Open Space Plan in 2001. The slack market has prompted observers to remark that if there was ever a time to acquire open space in Monroe County, it’s now.

Strategic Partnerships

The Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau and Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation are dedicated partners in Monroe County recreation and open space efforts and both work closely with the Monroe County Planning Commission to advance strategic initiatives such as undertaking the WB&E Rail-Trail Feasibility Study to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of creating a multi-use regional trail corridor – across the length of Monroe County.

Leadership

Monroe County has been widely commended for its leadership by DCNR as the Pennsylvania agency who has partnered with the County to fund both Open Space and Recreation plans, as well as providing technical support to create the regional recreation commissions.

PRIORITIES

The essential County goals set forth in 2001 have changed little in the Monroe community consciousness. Twelve years later, public support remains as strong as ever, with priorities shifted slightly to refocus future conservation and recreation efforts. This evolution is understandable and strategic.

Conserving Open Space and Habitat

Acquisition of environmentally critical parcels that were available for sale at a reasonable price was a major priority of the Monroe County conservation program in first decade of the 21st Century. This strategy was difficult because the county program was starting from scratch and any property to be acquired needed to have a willing seller who would negotiate a sale or conservation easement. The result of “starting up” the program was a collection of protected parcels were that were important individually, and offered a general county-wide geographic distribution, but most were not physically linked to each other.

In 2013, the Monroe community expressed a general consensus that important lands should still be acquired, but a strong emphasis should be placed on acquiring parcels that are contiguous to protected parcels – as a means to buffer and increase the environmental value of existing protected lands, and extend protected “corridors” both for humans and other species. An important criterion in the 2013 plan for assessing future “areas of interest for preservation” is a parcel’s contiguity with other conserved parcels.

Farmland Preservation

Prime agricultural lands are often the most attractive properties for housing and commercial development.

Continuing to invest through the Monroe County Agricultural Land Preservation is the funding tool to ensure that a percentage of the County's irreplaceable farmland resources are preserved for the culture, the environmental sustainability, and the economic benefits as the Pocono region continues to develop.

Connecting Greenways and Trails

Over the past 12 years, Monroe County and its regional and municipal partners have made significant progress in planning and constructing trails and greenways at the municipal and multi-municipal level. In 2013, the Monroe community recognizes these hard-earned achievements and seeks the County to rank trail improvements that extend and connect these relatively short trail individual trail segments as higher priority projects.

Creating greenways to protect stream and wildlife corridors is often easier than establishing human trail linkages across the formidable natural and infrastructure barriers in Monroe County. Areas of higher density populations, like the greater Stroudsburg region are priorities for local trail investments – especially where a regional recreation commission like the Stroud Regional Open Space and Recreation Commission has achieved remarkable results in developing trails.

Multi-use, rail-to-trail conversions are considered the most valuable trails – because they serve the most broad resident and visitor populations, and offer greater potential for spin-off economic development. The 2001 Plan identified the former WB&E RR right-of-way as a potential 40+ mile trail corridor that would begin near Stroudsburg and if fully developed would allow riders to reach Lackawanna County first then Luzerne County. Monroe County has yet to conduct an assessment of the practical feasibility and potential economic value of converting the historic transportation route to a trans-county trail to serve both local users and the regional recreation industry. The Monroe County emphasis on economic development in 2013 makes the WB&E corridor

“feasibility study” the highest priority collaboration for all recreation and economic partners in 2014. All partners – DCNR, MCEDC, PMEDC, PMVB, conservation and recreation clubs and the general public understand this urgency and have expressed support for the study as a county “economic” and “quality of life” opportunity in the form of a recreation trail.

Protecting Water Resources

Monroe County is divided along the line of the Pocono Plateau “escarpment” that separates between the Delaware and Lehigh River watersheds. Both are critically important, but need different approaches to management and protection.

Great work has been accomplished to increase the level of stream quality designations on the western side of the county where multiple small streams run directly into the Lehigh. Other Monroe County streams can be considered similarly for upgraded designations.

Also at risk is the vast Pocono Plateau groundwater reserve that serves the local population on wells, but also serves as a reservoir and year-round source of base flow to the Delaware River surface water system. Impacts to quantity or quality of the Pocono Plateau water supply will affect the entire downstream waterway. Clearly the threat of pollution is a potential problem, but the short-cutting of water from wells to stream-discharge by water treatment plants does not recharge the aquifer.

The headwaters of the streams that run down the escarpment to the Delaware were considered especially important to protect as water sources. Protection of tree canopy is highly critical to maintaining high water quality, especially in the steep mountain reaches.

Conservancy partners are considered to be highly knowledgeable about identifying parcels for protection that are critical to maintain canopy cover and water quality.

Supporting Recreation Commissions to Improve Recreation Facilities and Services

The multi-municipal recreation regions and commissions are the backbone of the Monroe County recreation system since 2001 and need to be supported in the next decade. The Monroe model for serving as catalyst, technical advisor, and funding partner to municipal partners has given local governments the capability of securing funding to match state DCNR funds for regional park and open space initiatives.

Monroe County can revisit its Hotel Tax legislation to consider ways this perpetual income stream can contribute annually to operations of the regional commissions who serve as the front line representing the county recreation partnerships to residents and the visiting public.

There is every reason for the County to continue its policy and expand its support to enable the regional recreation commissions to remain as the primary recreation providers in service to County residents. Strong support for the existing commissions is the best incentive to encourage inactive commissions or unaffiliated municipalities to reactivate or join with adjacent commissions.

Recognizing the Economic Value of Natural Lands

Monroe County of all the northeastern Pennsylvania counties is a prime laboratory to advance the science of valuing open space. Monroe has all the important factors – including significant remaining green areas; proximity to growth areas; critical environmental resources; heavy visitor demand, a thriving environmentally-based economy, and an alert local population.

If there was a region in Pennsylvania to specifically study the economic impact of open space, Monroe should be high on the list. This type of study could be jointly funded by DCNR and DCED – to link environmental





quality to sustainable economies.

Continuing the Legacy of Monroe County Funding for Open Space and Recreation

The 2013 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update will inform future discussions on a second open space bond referendum by Monroe County to continue funding priority conservation and recreation projects with its municipal partners.

The record of the first bond-funded program – by all metrics – is an unequalled success. The first seven years of the program were during period of rapid land development growth and increasing prices for land goods and services. Since the crash of 2008, the visitor and recreation economy has rebounded faster than most other regional industries.

Monroe environmental attractions bring dollars into the region, and the strength of the Monroe County visitor and recreation economy is documented by state statistics for the PMVB region. Monroe County accounts for 60% of all PMVB region travel/tourism income.

Other state statistics show that Monroe County residents themselves account for approximately 40% of all outdoor recreation spending inside the County.

If visitors are lured to travel to Monroe and spend money based on the attractive environment, and local residents spend significant percentages of their own incomes on outdoor recreation in their own county, why would Monroe County not continue to strategically invest in open space and recreation initiatives that satisfy their constituents and generate imported income?

The 2013 internet citizen survey results showed that 72% of Monroe County respondents are willing to pay between \$10 and \$100 per year in tax increases

to continue funding Monroe County open space and recreation programs.

FUNDING PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

This list includes funding partners and programs to consider as tools for continuing Monroe County open space and funding initiatives.

Monroe County

- OS/R Bond is sue
- Capital Budget
- County Hotel Tax
- Direct Act 13 funds



State

- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
- Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission (PUC) - Act 13 (Marcellus Shale) funds

Grants

- The Pennsylvania Environmental Education Grants Program
- PENNVEST
- The ACT 13 Marcellus Legacy Fund Programs

Regional

- Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
- Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA)
- Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau (PMVB)
- Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC)

Federal

- National Park Service (NPS) / Department of the Interior (DOI)
- Department of Defense (DoD)

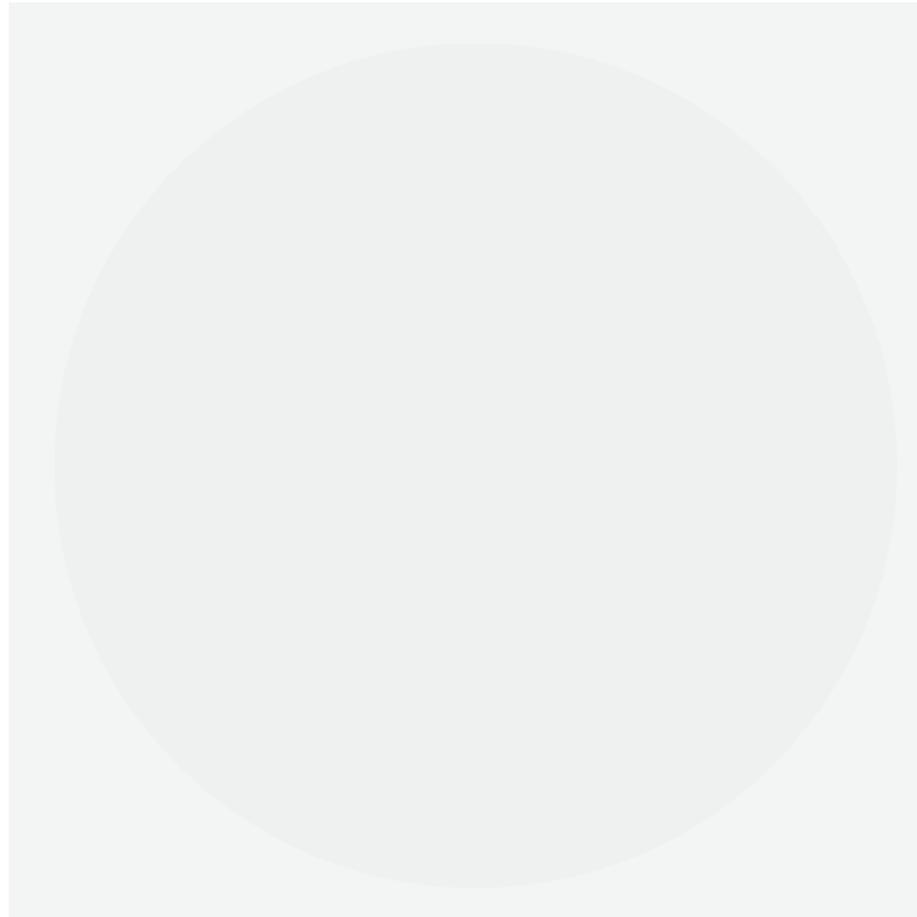
Grants

- The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

(This section to be supplemented)



APPENDIX 4



APPENDIX LIST

Plans / Studies Completed

Meeting Minutes and PowerPoints

Monroe County Citizen Internet Survey of 2013

Stream Redesignation Handbook

