

# 3. TRAILS & GREENWAYS

## Trail Network

In order for Greene County to undertake the development of a trail system, questions will need to be answered, such as who will be using the trail, where is it feasible to construct the trail, and what building materials and amenities are needed to suit the intended audience. Beyond merely choosing to construct a trail, knowing what type of trail is appropriate for the desired, or available, location and specific user demands or needs is essential.

Trails are targeted for specific audiences, such as walkers, bicyclists, joggers, mountain bicyclists, motorized vehicle (ATV / dirt bike) users, equestrians, etc. Each of these trail users require special design considerations during trail construction to accommodate the intended use or uses and also comply with ADA accessibility standards. Other factors that affect the feasibility and ultimate success of trails are topography, space requirements, noise, conflicting uses and site restraints.

The National Recreation and Park Association places pathways under six classifications: park trail, connector trail, on-street bikeway, all-terrain bike trail, cross-country ski trail and equestrian trail. Two other types of trails relevant for Greene County are water trails and off-highway vehicle trails. These classifications are defined and trails within the County are identified and described according to the classification category or categories to which they belong.

*Figure 3-1: Current & Proposed Trail Network* shows the existing and proposed trails, along with trailheads, that are located within Greene County.

## **Park Trails**

Park Trails are multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks, and natural resource areas (Mertes & Hall, 1996). These trails focus on recreational value and harmony with the natural environment. Park Trails located in Greene County include the Greene River Trail, the Warrior Trail, the Catawba Path, and the trail system located in Ryerson Station State Park.

### **Greene River Trail**

*Owner: Greene County Department of Recreation*  
*Steward: Greene County Department of Recreation*  
*Current Length: 5.1 miles*  
*Trailheads: Yes—2*  
*Type: non-motorized multi-use*

The Greene River Trail is a rail trail that runs adjacent to the Upper Monongahela Water Trail greenway providing a tranquil view of the river for its users. The trail is owned and maintained by the Greene County Department of Recreation. The trail was designed to accommodate those individuals interested in walking, jogging, and bicycling. A twelve-foot wide right-of-way with fencing along most of the periphery provide a variety of trail users and adjacent property owners with a sense of safety and security. The trail has a smooth crushed gravel surface that is very well maintained by the parks crew. The Department of Recreation continuously monitors the trail for areas of erosion, downed or hanging trees, over-grown weeds, debris, and trash along the trail.

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As of 2008, the Greene River Trail extends 5.1 miles along the abandoned Nemaquin Mine railroad bed, beginning near PA Route 88 and Ten Mile Creek in Jefferson Township and ending near the old Crucible Ferry in Cumberland Township. Trailheads are located at the beginning of the trail at the Greene Cove Yacht Club and in Rices Landing Borough.



Greene River Trail in Rices Landing Borough (Mackin, 2003)

The Department of Recreation owns the Crucible Site and has plans to develop a riverfront County park, which will double as a trailhead.

**Greene River Trail Extension (under construction)**

*Proposed Length: 2.8 miles*  
*Proposed Trailheads: Yes—1*

The Greene County Commissioners and Department of Recreation are currently in the stage of hiring a new construction firm to complete the next 2.8 miles of the Greene River Trail. This extension is expected to be

completed by the end of 2009 and will extend the total length of the trail to approximately eight (8) miles.

**Greene River Trail Proposed Extension / Alternative**

*Proposed Length: approximately 8 miles*  
*Proposed Trailheads: Yes—4*

Subsequent phases to extend the Greene River Trail past Crucible are in the planning stages. Current plans include following the abandoned railroad bed from the Village of Crucible south to the Village of Nemaquin. The railroad ends at Nemaquin, where there are two potential routes. The preferred route is to extend the trail through the Hatfield-Ferry Power Plant site, although an alternative route exists west of the site along the ridgetop. Once through the power plant, the trail is planned to follow the north ten foot shoulder of State Route 21 across the new Masontown Bridge into Fayette County. The trail will be allowed to occupy State Route 21 right-of-way through a PennDOT-issued highway occupancy permit. Proposed trailheads include one at the Village of Nemaquin and another at the Hatfield-Ferry Power Plant site.

The northern portion of the Greene County River Trail is planned to be extended north from Greene Cove along Ten Mile Creek to State Route 88. The trail will then follow State Route 88 across a new proposed bridge over Ten Mile Creek into East Bethlehem Township, Washington County. Once in Washington County, the trail is proposed to loop under the new bridge and follow State Route 2039 approximately one-half mile to a trailhead at Ten Mile Creek Park, a Washington County Park.

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#### Warrior Trail

*Owner: Private Property*

*Steward: Warrior Trail Association*

*Length: 45 miles*

*Trailheads: No*

*Type: Hiking*

The 45-mile Warrior Trail follows along a ridgetop in an east-west direction across Greene County from Greensboro on the Monongahela River to the border with Marshall County, West Virginia approximately five to six miles north of the Mason Dixon Line. The trail extends an additional 22 miles farther to the western terminus on the Ohio River in Flint Ridge, near the town of Zanesville. The trail is recognized as one the Major Greenway Corridors in Pennsylvania by DCNR.

The trail is located entirely on private property and marked with yellow paint blazes. Milepost markers are also located along the trail, as depicted in the photo to the right. The trail is partially maintained by the Warrior Trail Association and trail users hike at their own risk. The Warrior Trail Association was founded in 1965 by W. Bentram Waychoff, of Waynesburg. The organization is “dedicated to the maintenance of the Warrior Trail and the history of Greene County.” Trail amenities include three Adirondack-style shelters that are located along the trail near miles 11 <sup>1/2</sup>, 24, and 35 <sup>1/2</sup> ([www.greenepa.net/community/WarriorTrail](http://www.greenepa.net/community/WarriorTrail)).

The portion of the trail that is maintained by the Warrior Trail Association is in excellent condition. However, other sections of the trail are poorly maintained and more

difficult to travel. Although the trail is marked with yellow paint blazes, there are many areas where these blazes are very difficult to see. While the Warrior Trail will continue to provide a primitive hiking experience, portions should be cleared and marked to promote trail safety.

The trail is unique for several reasons. It is estimated that the trail has been in use for over 5,000 years, first used by Native Americans to obtain supplies of flint from the Flint Ridge area in Ohio. Evidence of the path includes old maps, historical accounts, and a two to three foot deep rut near Nettle Hill that was worn into the soil from the many years of usage. The trail has been the site of much interest and was first studied in the 1930’s by Waynesburg College professors and others who have conducted numerous archaeological digs along the trail. The trail does not cross a single body of water for its entire length in the County.



**Warrior Trail Mile Marker  
(Mackin, 2004)**

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## Catawba Path

*Owner: Private Property*

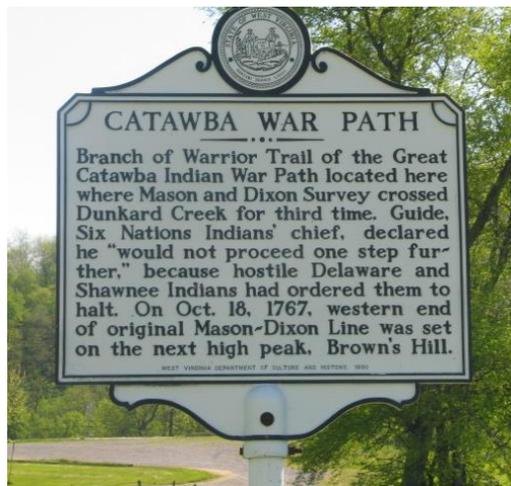
*Steward: None*

*Length: 17 miles*

*Trailheads: No*

*Type: Hiking*

The Catawba Path runs in a north-south direction from New York through Pennsylvania to Morgantown, WV. The path then continues on to the Carolinas, Kentucky and Tennessee. Within Greene County, the Catawba Path is approximately 17 miles long. The Catawba Trail within Greene County is located entirely on private property and is not marked or defined. Outside of the Mason Dixon Park, there is no clear path or maintained trail in the County. Within the park, the trail's surface is grass and for hiking only.



**Catawba War Path Sign in Mason Dixon Park, West Virginia (Mackin, 2004)**

At the southern most portion of the Catawba Trail in Mason Dixon Park there is a monument located in the center of the trail indicating the Mason Dixon line that was dedicated in 1883 between Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Just north of the monument is an Adirondack shelter with a grill made of stone. Those hiking the trail can spend a comfortable night in the shelter protected from the elements.



**Adirondack Shelter on Catawba Trail (Mackin, 2004)**

## Ryerson Station State Park Trail System

Ryerson Station Park has 11 miles of hiking / cross-country skiing trails throughout the park that are open year round. The trails include:

- \* Pine Box Trail
- \* Polly Hollow Trail
- \* Three Mitten Trail

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- \* Iron Bridge Trail
- \* Sawdust Trail
- \* Bluebird Trail
- \* Lazear Trail
- \* Orchard Trail
- \* Tiffany Ridge Trail
- \* Fox Feather Self-Guided Trail.

The trails allow for park exploration on foot during spring, summer, fall and on cross-country skis in the winter. The trails traverse many habitats, like mature forests, wet valley bottoms, evergreen plantations and fields in ecological succession.

### Connector Trails

Connector Trails are multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community. The focus of connector trails is as much on transportation as it is on recreation.

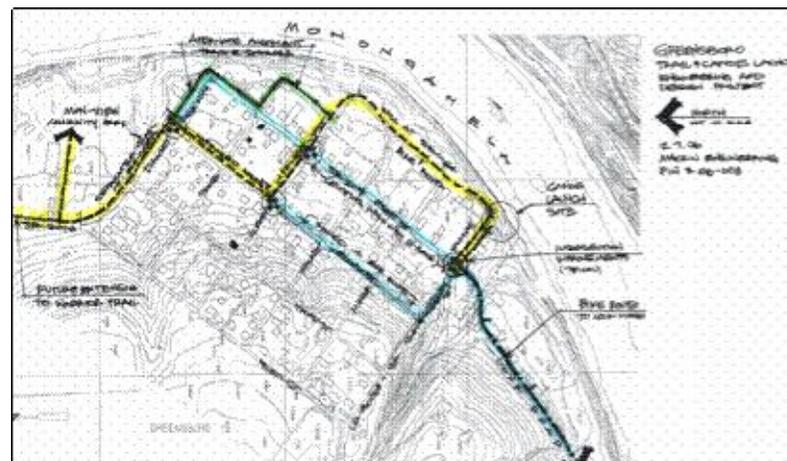
As discussed earlier, the Greene River Trail meets the criteria for a Park Trail, but also meets the criteria of a Connector Trail. There currently are no other connector trails located within the County. As the County continues to extend the Greene River Trail, locations such as Crucible and Dilworth Mines, Jessop Boat Club, the village of Nemaocolin, Sheepskin Trail in Fayette County, and Ten Mile Creek County Park in Washington County will be connected to Rices Landing Borough. Likewise, the Catawba Trail connects Rices Landing Borough to State Game Lands 223 and the Kirby interchange of Interstate 79.

It is worth noting that trails that connect to population centers such as Waynesburg, Carmichaels, and Greensboro are lacking in the County. As this is currently the County’s biggest need in regard to trails, two Connector Trails, the Greensboro Trail and Canoe Launch and Ten Mile Trail, are being discussed in addition to extensions to the Greene River Trail.

### Proposed Greensboro Trail and Canoe Launch

The Greensboro Trail and Canoe Launch project consists of a trail extending approximately one-mile north along the Monongahela River, from former Lock No.#7, along Water Street, to Second Street, to Diamond Street, extending along the road shoulder to Mon-View Park. Greensboro Borough received a \$500,000 trail grant and is under contract with a firm to perform the necessary engineering and design work. The trail will be designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.

The key components of the project include providing for a safe and economical trail design, including providing for



Proposed Greensboro Trail and Canoe Launch

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adequate and safe road crossings, trail access facilities and improved road shoulders, drainage, and providing for a non-motorized boat-canoe launch facility in the vicinity of the former Ferry Boat Landing site at State Route 2014 (County Street). The proposed trail provides a possible connection to the Warrior Trail and potential trailhead at the Village of Glassworks, just north of Greensboro.

### Proposed Central Waynesburg Trail

The proposed Central Waynesburg Trail project is in its infancy but the proposal is to develop a hiking and biking trail along Ten Mile Creek from the Waynesburg College fields at East View to Evergreene Technology Park. The trail would connect Central Greene High School, the Greene County Fairgrounds, the Greene County Airport, the Greene County Historical Museum, the proposed Wal-Mart development site, and other recreation and community sites.

A project committee has been established to examine the potential of this trail. The next step is to acquire funding to conduct a feasibility study, which would determine a preferred alignment; operations, maintenance and security; legal feasibility; opinions of probable cost; and a prioritized implementation schedule.

### On-Street Bikeways

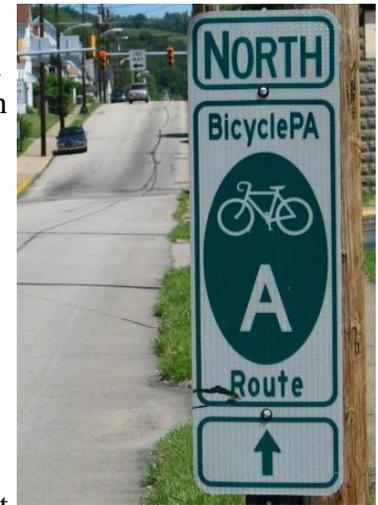
On-Street Bikeways are paved segments of roadways that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic. The bicycle community in Greene County has been crucial to the designation of six County bicycle routes, including Waynesburg Workout Ride, The Road to Prosperity, the Crucible Cruise, The Ryerson Roundabout,

The Brave Ride, and Mount Morris to the Monongahela. These routes are in addition to the state designated BicyclePA Route A. However, none of these routes have features that safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic or add to the safety of bicyclists. Identifying bicycle routes in the County was an important first step, but the County should acquire funding to make improvements to these bike routes, including signage. The locations of the bikeways in Greene County are mapped on *Figure 3-1: Trails and Bikeways*.

### BicyclePA Route A

PA Route 19 doubles as BicyclePA Route A and traverses Greene County in a north-south direction through Waynesburg. BicyclePA Route A is one of seven officially designated bicycle routes located in Pennsylvania.

The bikeway is approximately 199 miles, beginning in Greene County at the Pennsylvania / West Virginia border and ending at Lake Erie in Erie County, PA. Of the 199 total miles, about 26 are located within Greene County.



Bicycle PA Route A (Mackin, 2003)

The northern half is generally flat while the southern half is gently rolling to hilly. In Erie, the Route A connects to Route Z and the Seaway Trail, which travel in an east to

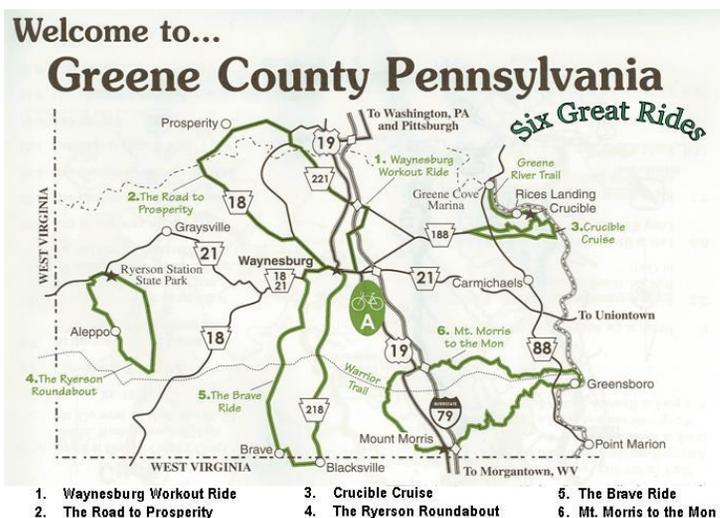
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west direction into Ohio and New York. ([www.bikepa.com](http://www.bikepa.com)).”

In the spring of 2008, the Greene County Tourism Promotion Agency updated the Bicycle PA maps for Greene County. BicyclePA Route A is showcased in greater detail for the new edition.

### Greene County Bicycle Paths

The Greene County Tourist Promotion Agency publishes a bicycling map for the County that depicts six bicycle rides located along public roadways. Each route provides access to areas of beautiful scenery. The names of the six routes, length, and degree of difficulty are as follows:



1. Waynesburg Workout Ride - 11 miles; Somewhat easy
2. The Road to Prosperity - 35 miles; Moderate difficulty
3. Crucible Cruise - 12.6 miles; Moderate difficulty
4. The Ryerson Roundabout - 19 miles; Moderate difficulty
5. The Brave Ride - 34 miles; Moderate difficulty
6. Mt. Morris to the Mon - 37.5 miles; Challenging

### All-Terrain Bike Trails

All-Terrain Bike Trails are off-road trails for all-terrain (mountain) bikes. Although there are no trails exclusively for this purpose, mountain bikers, like other bicyclists, can use the Greene River Trail.

### Cross-Country Ski Trails

Cross-Country Ski Trail are trails developed for traditional and skate-style cross-country skiing. Examples in Greene County include the trails in Ryerson Station State Park. As noted on pages 3-4 and 3-5 in the Park Trails section, Ryerson has 11 miles of hiking / cross-country skiing trails that are open year round.

### Equestrian Trails

Equestrian Trails are trails developed for horseback riding. As of 2006, no public equestrian trails have been designated in Greene County.

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## Water Trails

Water Trails are boat routes suitable for canoes, kayaks and small motorized watercraft (Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, 2006). The Natural Infrastructure Project of Southwestern Pennsylvania identifies the Monongahela River, Ten Mile Creek, Whiteley Creek and Dunkard Creek as streams or rivers suitable for these types of uses (SPC, 2005). As of 2006, the Upper Monongahela Water Trail is the only officially designated water trail in the County.

### Upper Monongahela Water Trail

The Upper Monongahela Water Trail is recognized as one of the Major Greenway Corridors in Pennsylvania by DCNR. The trail is a project of the Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce Vision 2020 and the Upper Monongahela Water Trail Special Interest Group. Spanning a 65-mile section of the Monongahela River, the trail begins in Fairmont, West Virginia and travels north to Ten Mile Creek just north of Rices Landing in Greene County, Pennsylvania. The trail may be accessed in Pennsylvania from numerous sites on both the Greene County and Fayette County sides of the river.

Besides the beautiful scenery and good fishing, there are many historical places to visit and several areas that offer overnight accommodations. Some of the attractions in Greene County along the trail include

- \* Two Rivers Marina and Campground
- \* Greensboro, 1781
  - ◇ Historic pottery town
  - ◇ Bed & Breakfast Inn

- ◇ Mon View Park
- ◇ Glassworks, 1805 - Site of the first glassworking plant west of the Monongahela River
- \* Rices Landing, 1792
  - ◇ Camping allowed at Pumpkin Run Park
  - ◇ Public riverfront
  - ◇ Boat ramp on Pumpkin Run
  - ◇ Access to hiking on the Catawba Trail
  - ◇ Historic tours of:
    - ◇ W.A. Young Foundry and Machine Shop
    - ◇ 100-year-old two cell jail
    - ◇ Lock 6 Museum
- \* Ten Mile Creek
  - ◇ Wide tributary host of numerous marinas, docks, ramps and parks
- \* Greene River Trail



Rices Landing Boat Docks (Mackin, 2006)

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## Off-Highway Vehicle Trails

Off-Highway Vehicle Trails are trails developed for motorized vehicles. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) defines off-highway vehicles (OHV) as “any motorized vehicle not eligible to be registered for highway use and designed for or capable of cross country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain. This term does not include motorboats, golf carts, aircraft, automobiles, construction machines, trucks or home utility machines; military, fire, emergency and law enforcement vehicles; implements of husbandry; multipurpose agricultural vehicles; vehicles used by Commonwealth agencies; or off-road vehicles not generally used for outdoor recreation.” (<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/sfrmp/glossary.htm>)

## Snowmobile Trails

In addition to the eleven miles of hiking and cross-country skiing trails, Ryerson Station State Park also allows snowmobiling. The park contains a six-mile snowmobile trail which is open for use with registered snowmobiles from the day following the close of deer season in December until April 1, weather permitting.

## ATV Trails

As evidenced by the increase in ATV vehicle registrations, the popularity of ATV’s has been steadily growing. According to information released by the ATV Safety Institute (<http://www.atvsafety.org>) there are approximately 15 million people in the United States who

ride ATVs. Over 70 percent of these riders do so as a recreational activity. The ATV Safety Institute has documented the average user to be a 40+ year old male who is married, occupied in a professional or managerial occupation, and earns over \$60,000 annually. Such information indicates that ATV riders are well-equipped to support their recreational demands. Additionally, this data suggests that facilities designed for ATV riders will generate revenue sources for the hosting municipality and surrounding businesses.

Currently, there are no public ATV trails located within Greene County. There is however one privately owned ATV park located in Greene County, the Mason Dixon Riders Association Park.

## Mason Dixon Riders Association Park

The Mason Dixon Riders Association Park is a privately owned 150-acre facility located in south-central Greene County. The Mason Dixon Riders Association is a private association with a membership fee of \$25 / year. The park is very rural and primitive with ATV, motorbike, and mountain bike trails. There are three to five miles of novice trails, 24 miles of aggressive trails and a practice motorcross track. The association has plans to construct 10 to 12 miles of perimeter trails by the end of the year for all skill levels and is trying to buy 165 acres from Consol to expand the park. They have also applied to DCNR for a grant to complete a master site plan. The park is identified on *Figure 3-1: Current & Proposed Trail Network*.

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#### **Greene County ATV Feasibility Study (Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc., 2004)**

The purpose of the Greene County ATV Feasibility Study was to investigate the development of an All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) park located at a pre-selected site in southeastern Greene County. Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. (Parsons Brinckerhoff) was retained to complete the study, which was completed in December of 2004. The study area encompassed 540 acres located one mile north of Greensboro Borough. The site assessment determined that the physical site could accommodate an ATV facility. However, the study documented that public opinion was primarily against the development of a motorized recreational facility in the Greensboro area.

The study noted that many public issues would need to be addressed before an ATV site could be developed at Greensboro or elsewhere in Greene County. Essentially, the study concluded that success would be elusive unless the County could validate the site selection and sufficiently garner adequate public support for the development of an ATV facility. Specifically, Greene County officials must develop a vision that promotes such a facility and then implement a comprehensive public education component. The study related the public's sense of confusion over the need for such a facility and suggested that the County define the community need for an ATV park (recreational versus economic or both) prior to additional action. The study determined that the financial benefits of an ATV facility are derived from corresponding activities as users avail

themselves to other community amenities (restaurants, shops, etc.). The study found that rider fees generally do not provide sufficient revenue for even basic maintenance, much less insurance costs.

A further discussion of ATV trails, their suitability and the potential to develop these types of facilities in Greene County can be found in *Chapter 4: Recreational Opportunities*.

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## Greenways

In 2001, DCNR released *Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections*. The plan is a result of Governor Ridge's Executive Order 1998-3, charging DCNR, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the Department of Transportation (PennDOT), with assistance from the Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission, to develop an action plan to advance the Pennsylvania greenways partnership program. The Action Plan is a guide to assist all forms of government in developing a statewide interconnected greenway system that resembles the interstate highway system in Pennsylvania. The definition of a greenway, as used in the Action Plan, is as follows:

"A greenway is a corridor of open space. Greenways vary greatly in scale, from narrow ribbons of green that run through urban, suburban, and rural areas to wider corridors that incorporate diverse natural, cultural and scenic features. They can incorporate both public and private property, and can be land- or water-based. They may follow old railways, canals, or ridge tops, or they may follow stream corridors, shorelines, or wetlands, and include water trails for nonmotorized craft. Some greenways are recreational corridors or scenic byways that may accommodate motorized and non-motorized vehicles. Others function almost exclusively for environmental protection and are not designed for human passage. Greenways differ in their location and function, but overall, a greenway will protect natural, cultural, and scenic resources, provide recreational benefits, enhance natural beauty and quality of life in neighborhoods and communities, and stimulate economic development opportunities."

*-Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections*

Greenways offer many benefits which make them valuable assets for communities. Some of these benefits include:

- \* *enhance the sense of place in a community or region;*
- \* *accentuate scenic beauty;*
- \* *protect water resources by buffering non-point sources of pollution;*
- \* *provide opportunities to protect and manage wildlife, forests and ecological systems;*
- \* *provide recreation opportunities for families and individuals of all ages and abilities;*
- \* *provide alternatives to automotive transportation, reducing traffic congestion;*
- \* *contribute to the economic climate; and*
- \* *foster health and wellness.*

One of the initiatives that the Action Plan promotes is the development of county greenways plans in all 67 counties by 2007. Greene County has met this goal by including a focus on trails and greenways in this plan. According to the *21st Century Environment Commission Report*, "land use will be Pennsylvania's most critical issue in the new millennium. By preserving open space in suburban and developing rural areas, greenways are becoming a key land use strategy throughout the state." Although Greene County is mainly rural (69% according to the US 2000 Census), it is important that the County institute a plan for the preservation of natural resource areas, farmland, and open space.

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## Defining a Greenways Network

Pennsylvania has developed a “hub and spokes” approach to a greenways network. The hubs of the network range from destination areas, such as communities or shopping centers, to natural areas, like parks or lakes. The spokes are the actual greenways, which will connect the various natural, historic, cultural and recreational areas.

- \* Natural Areas: These include large blocks of publicly owned open space such as national and state parks, forests, game lands, and conservation areas that serve to protect important ecological landscapes and natural features, reserve scenic vistas, provide habitat for wildlife, protect water resources and provide recreational opportunities. Regional and local parks, preserves and ecological sites may also serve as hubs.
- \* Cultural, Historic and Recreational Sites: Cultural, historic, and recreational sites that protect and interpret Pennsylvania’s heritage may be incorporated into the greenways network as destinations or “hubs.”
- \* Urban and Suburban Areas: On a statewide or regional level, cities and towns can serve as origins or destinations within the greenways network. Within urban and suburban areas, opportunities abound to connect neighborhoods, schools, work places, recreation facilities, natural areas and parks through greenways. A greenways network also can incorporate former industrial sites, or brownfields, and spur the creation of new green space.

Common spokes of a greenways network can include:

- \* Greenways that are ecologically or conservation oriented, such as riparian buffers.
- \* Greenways that provide non-motorized public access and that connect neighborhoods with destinations, and provide recreation and physical fitness opportunities close to home.
- \* Greenways that have a strong interpretative element showcasing historic or cultural events.
- \* Greenways that are water trails and serve recreational users.
- \* Greenways that accommodate motorized recreational vehicles such as snowmobiles or ATVs.

## Current Greenway Network

The current greenway network within Greene County is depicted in *Figure 3-2: Current Greenway Network*. The network consists of parks, state game lands, existing trails, bikeways, and other protected lands.

The protected natural resources include state, local and county parks, and state game lands. No national parks or national or state forests are located in Greene County. The state owns a combined 14,688 acres of park/game lands, while the County owns approximately 350 acres of park land. Municipal park land accounts for another 330+ acres. In all, there are over 15,300 acres of protected natural resource areas.

The Warrior Trail, the Catawba Trail, the Greene River Trail, and the Upper Monongahela Water Trail comprise the major spokes of the network. Both the Warrior Trail and the Upper Monongahela Water Trail are recognized by DCNR as Major Greenway Corridors in Pennsylvania. The

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trails combine for over 130 miles of linear greenways.

Also shown on *Figure 3-2* are lands enrolled under Act 319, commonly known as the Clean & Green program. The act provides for land devoted to agricultural use, agricultural reserve use or forest reserve use to be assessed at the value it has for that use rather than at fair market value. The intent of the act is to encourage the keeping of land in one of these uses. Enrolled land shall remain under preferential assessment for as long as it continues to meet the minimum qualifications for preferential assessment. Land that is in agricultural use, agricultural reserve or forest reserve shall remain under preferential assessment even if its use changes to either of the other two land use categories. This land is not protected indefinitely, as the landowner can choose to remove his/her land from the program at any time. However, any land enrolled as agricultural reserve use is required to allow the land to be open to the public for outdoor recreation or the enjoyment of scenic or natural beauty without charge or fee, on a nondiscriminatory basis. Enrolled land that is in agricultural use or forest reserve is excluded from this requirement. The County has over 133,000 acres of land enrolled in the Clean & Green Program, although it is unknown what percentage of land is enrolled under the agricultural reserve use.

### **Expanding the Greenway Network**

The County should strive to connect and increase accessibility to their protected resources as they continue to designate new greenways. The Warrior Trail provides an east-west corridor and the Upper Monongahela Water Trail and the Greene River Trail provide a north-south corridor to neighboring counties. The focus for the future should be on connecting hubs and spokes within the County.

Greene County has a solid core from which to build, although connectivity between hubs and spokes needs to be addressed. The next sections focus on natural resources such as data from the Natural Heritage Inventory, water resources, terrestrial features and agricultural resources. This is followed by sections on manmade features such as transportation, utilities, infrastructure and major historical or cultural destinations. These resources are then mapped using an ecological index assignment to show greenways of high ecological importance in Greene County.

### **Resource-Based Evaluation Method**

The methodology used in proposing extensions to the greenways network for Greene County involved creating an inventory of existing greenways, protected natural resources and developed areas. Developed areas were defined from land cover data as those areas whose primary land cover was not agriculture, forest, water, or strip mines. Developed areas are important because they represent population centers that may serve as hubs in the greenways network. An inventory of available natural and manmade resource data was created to identify opportunities or obstacles to extending the greenways network. Once existing data were collected and analyzed, an ecological

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index assignment was created to prioritize the natural and manmade resources based on County and steering committee recommendations. A composite greenways suitability map was created from the ecological index and used to propose greenway extensions. Finally, the recommendations that were received from the County, steering committee and public were compiled and used to prioritize proposed greenways.

#### Natural Heritage Inventory

As stated in Chapter 1, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy completed the Natural Heritage Inventory for Greene County in June 2005. A County Natural Heritage Inventory is “designed to identify and map important biotic (living) and ecological resources.” This information is provided to help decision makers plan development with the preservation of these environmentally important sites in mind. Biotic/ecological resources include:

- ♦ Lands that support native species biodiversity;
- ♦ Populations of species and their habitats facing imperilment at a state and/or global level;
- ♦ Natural communities that are exceptionally undisturbed and/or unique within the state;
- ♦ Areas important for wildlife habitat, open space, education, scientific study and recreation; and
- ♦ Potential habitats for species of special concern.

*(source: Greene County Natural Heritage Inventory)*

Two types of Natural Heritage Areas are designated in the NHI. A Biological Diversity Area (BDA) is defined as “an area containing plants or animals of special

concern at state or federal levels, exemplary natural communities, or exceptional native diversity. BDAs include both the immediate habitat and surrounding lands important in the support of these special elements” (Greene County NHI, 2005). BDAs are given attributes according to their sensitivity to human activities and their significance. Sensitivity is separated into two categories, “core” and “supporting natural landscape” areas. “Core areas delineate essential habitat that cannot absorb significant levels of activity without substantial impact to the elements of concern. Supporting Natural Landscape include areas that maintain vital ecological processes or secondary habitat that may be able to accommodate some types of low-impact activities” (Greene County NHI, 2005). BDAs are also categorized according to their significance for protecting biological diversity and ecological integrity in the region. Significance ranks are ‘Exceptional’, ‘High’, ‘Notable’, and ‘County’, in order of importance. According to the Greene County NHI, sites of exceptional significance merit quick, strong and complete protection.

The other type of Natural Heritage Areas is Landscape Conservation Areas (LCA). An LCA is defined as “a large contiguous area that is important because of its size, open space, habitats, and/or inclusion of one or more BDAs” (Greene County NHI, 2005). Although an LCA includes a variety of land uses, it typically has not been heavily disturbed and thus retains much of its natural character. LCAs are given attributes according to their type and significance. LCAs can be either Forest Block LCAs, which are the most feasible places for the development of large, contiguous forest ecosystems, or

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Watershed LCAs, which are watersheds that support important aquatic resources. LCAs are also categorized according to their significance for protecting biological diversity and ecological integrity in the region the same way BDAs are, with significance ranks of ‘Exceptional’, ‘High’, ‘Notable’, and ‘County’, in order of importance. The contiguous nature of LCAs is essential to its character and importance, so care must be taken that fragmentation is minimized during development.

Two other designations for conservation of biodiversity are Important Bird Areas (IBA) and Important Mammal Areas (IMA). The only IBA in the study area corresponds with State Game Land 302 on the northwestern corner of the County, on the boundary with Washington County. No IMAs are designated in Greene County.

The significance of the BDAs and LCAs is shown in *Figure 3-3 NHI - Significance*. Forest Block LCAs are all only of ‘County’ significance, because “within Greene County, there are no large blocks of contiguous natural landscape remaining, and no topographic features such as ridgelines which strongly define the landscape.” Therefore, protecting these areas from becoming further fragmented should be prioritized in the Greenways Plan. Areas of primarily forest cover are shown in *Figure 1-10 Forest Resources*. In addition, most of the ‘exceptional’ BDAs and LCAs are located along Ten Mile Creek and Dunkard Creek, making these two critical areas in need of protection.

Another ‘exceptional’ LCA is the Enlow Fork LCA, which corresponds with the Enlow Valley IBA and State Game Lands 302. The NHI states that this LCA has the potential to become one of the larger contiguous forested areas in Greene County, because most of the non-forested land uses are in agriculture, opening the possibility of reforestation in strategic areas.

The NHI lists seven general recommendations for protecting Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) within Greene County:

1. Consider conservation initiatives for NHAs on private land;
2. Prepare management plans that address species of special concern and natural communities;
3. Protect bodies of water;
4. Provide for buffers around NHAs;
5. Reduce fragmentation of surrounding landscape;
6. Encourage the formation of grassroots organizations; and
7. Manage for invasive species.

#### Water Resources

Water resources in Greene County are shown in *Figure 1-5: Hydrology*. The Monongahela River, which forms the eastern county boundary with Fayette County, is Greene County’s largest and most important water resource. The river provides transportation, opportunities for tourism, recreation such as boating, kayaking and fishing, and is a drinking water source. As discussed earlier, the Upper Monongahela Water Trail, designated a major greenway corridor in Pennsylvania, includes the Greene County portion of the river.

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NWI wetlands and 100-year floodplains are protected to a certain extent through state regulations. Wetlands improve water quality, help prevent flooding, and create biodiversity by providing habitat for diverse species. Floodplains are areas that have a certain probability of flooding over a given time frame and restricting development allows flood waters a place to flow without the risk of damage to development.

*Figure 1-6: Water Quality* delineates major watershed boundaries and high quality subwatersheds. The high quality subwatersheds are Brown's Creek Watershed and the portion of South Fork Ten Mile Creek west of Brown's Creek. Both of these are located west of Waynesburg and eventually drain to Ten Mile Creek and then to the Monongahela River. Protecting these areas should be made a priority, because of the scarcity of high quality subwatersheds in Greene County.

Water resources are important to consider in a greenways plan. Stream corridors make great places for trails and should be considered for use as spokes in the greenway system. Greenways also can be used to protect riparian buffers along stream banks and protect aquatic habitats. Riparian buffers around water bodies and upstream watersheds protect water from pollution sources such as storm water runoff along transportation corridors, abandoned mine drainage, "wildcat" sewers, and livestock.

Important water resources in Greene County that should be considered for greenways are identified on *Figure 3-4: Potential Greenway Corridors*. These resources include

streams classified as high quality warm water fisheries, cold water fisheries, trout stocked fisheries, and whitewater streams.

The majority of the streams in Greene County are designated as warm water fisheries. High quality warm water fisheries are located at Brown's Creek, Upper Ten Mile Creek and Pursley Creek. Best management practices should be used to maintain the high water quality of these streams.

Trout stocked fisheries are located at the upper end of Whiteley Creek; North Fork, Dunkard Fork of Wheeling Creek; and South Fork, Dunkard Fork of Wheeling Creek. Making these streams more accessible could increase recreational use. Only one stream, Little Shannon Run, is designated as a cold water fishery. The scarcity of this habitat in the County makes it more ecologically valuable for preservation.

The lower end of Dunkard Creek has been designated as an being impacted by abandoned mine drainage (AMD). Best management practices, in addition to the protection available from being designated a greenway, should be used to improve the water quality of Dunkard Creek. This area may be better suited for preservation instead of for recreation until water quality is improved.

Whitewater streams, designated as those that can be used as a recreation source for kayaking and boating, include Ten Mile Creek, Dunkard Creek, Whiteley Creek, and the Monongahela River.

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Therefore, in addition to the Monongahela River which has already been designated, the following waterways have been identified as suitable areas that should be protected as greenway corridors:

- ◆ Ten Mile Creek
- ◆ South Fork Ten Mile Creek
- ◆ Dunkard Creek
- ◆ Whiteley Creek
- ◆ Browns Creek
- ◆ Enlow Fork, Wheeling Creek
- ◆ North Fork and South Fork, Wheeling Creek
- ◆ Little Whiteley Creek
- ◆ Muddy Creek
- ◆ Pennsylvania Fork, Fish Creek
- ◆ Little Shannon Run

#### Terrestrial Resources

Terrestrial resources of importance to greenways planning include elevation, steep slopes and ridge tops. *Figure 1-7 Elevation* identifies areas of low and high elevation relative to major watershed boundaries. Areas of highest elevation, particularly in southwestern Greene County, may provide scenic views that the County would like to protect. In addition, the map provides a visual representation of stream corridors within major watershed boundaries. The most western part of the County drains to the Ohio River, while the eastern part drains first to the Monongahela River. Development seems to take place less densely at higher elevations, likely due to either steep slopes, the inability to provide municipal water or sewerage service to higher elevations, or some combination of these factors.

Because of the varying topography, steep slopes are very prevalent in Greene County, as shown in *Figure 1-8 Steep Slopes*. Steep slopes, defined as areas with slope greater than 25 percent, are usually the last areas to be developed, because of high erosion and the cost of grading. However, these areas can provide habitat for animals, and vegetation on steep slopes provides a natural filter for rainwater before it enters streams and provides stability. Protecting these areas can reduce landslides and soil erosion, which can pollute streams with sediment. Areas with steep slopes are not suitable for trail development, so protection of these areas is likely to have a preservation focus.

*Figure 3-4 Potential Greenway Corridors* shows ridge tops and streams in Greene County. Ridge tops are defined using watershed boundaries with 1000-foot buffers, and make ideal locations for trails, because they do not cross water sources. A local example of a trail that follows a ridge top is the Warrior Trail. In addition to providing trails for recreation, protecting ridge tops protects scenic viewsheds, helping to maintain rural character after development. Streams, as discussed earlier, make ideal candidates for greenway corridors, because they can either provide riparian buffers to protect stream quality or provide ideal locations for trails because of their level grade.

#### Agricultural Resources

Agricultural conservation easements are an important greenways tool, as the easement means that the land must be available for agricultural use in perpetuity. At this time, there are no agricultural conservation easements located in Greene County. Therefore, no agricultural lands are shown on *Figure 3-4: Potential Greenway Corridors*.

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However, there are agricultural security areas (ASA) located in the County, located in Washington Township, as shown in *Figure 1-9 Agricultural Resources*. Farms enrolled in ASA provide the opportunity to sell conservation easements to the County Agricultural Land Preservation Board. Additional lands may be added to an existing ASA on a voluntary basis at any time, however lands may be removed only during the seven-year review process.

Also shown on *Figure 1-9 Agricultural Resources* are prime agricultural soils, which are concentrated near stream beds, particularly Ten Mile Creek, Dunkard Creek, Whiteley Creek, Dunkard Fork Wheeling Creek, Enlow Fork Wheeling Creek, Pennsylvania Fork Fish Creek, Ruff Creek, Pursley Creek, Browns Creek, Muddy Creek and the Monongahela River. The presence of prime agricultural soils is one of the criteria used in determining eligibility for agricultural conservation easements.

Another criterion used in determining eligibility for agricultural conservation easements is the presence of active farming. According to the land cover data provided by SPC, agricultural areas account for approximately 41 percent of the land in the County. Because such a large amount of land is farmed, the County should target specific areas for agricultural conservation easements that will also serve other conservation or preservation purposes.

#### **Manmade Resources**

Manmade resources, such as transportation and utility corridors, historic and cultural hubs, and future growth areas, need to be accounted for in a greenways planning process. Transportation and utility corridors, such as the interstates, state roads, abandoned rail lines, proposed trails, and power transmission lines shown in *Figure 3-4 Potential Greenway Corridors*, pose both opportunities and obstacles to a greenways network. These corridors offer an opportunity for greenway expansion, because a corridor already exists and is likely under ownership by one entity. However, the obstacle posed to the greenways network is fragmentation of ecologically sensitive areas. These corridors often take the least expensive path, which often includes near streams, over ridge tops, or through ecologically sensitive areas, like forest or watershed landscape conservation areas (LCAs), without any consideration of the effects of fragmenting these areas. Incorporating these corridors into the greenways system may be the best way to mitigate their adverse environmental impacts.

#### **Potential Hubs**

When identifying “hubs” for a greenways network, there are many potential aspects to consider. Developed areas should be considered as hubs, as depicted from land cover data supplied by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission. These areas are classified by having their principle use as residential, industrial, transportation, etc. and not being a forest, water body, agricultural area, wetland or strip mine. These data differ from parcel-level land use data in that parcels designated with a residential, commercial or industrial land use, for example, may also

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include forested or agricultural areas. The developed areas include the Boroughs of Waynesburg, Carmichaels, Clarksville, Jefferson, Greensboro, Rices Landing, as well as numerous villages throughout the County.

The other important manmade resource to include in greenways planning are potential growth areas. These areas include land adjacent to developed areas, served by water or sewer infrastructure, or in close proximity to I-79 interchanges. These areas can serve as hubs in the greenway system, or may be in conflict with greenway priorities, such as protecting BDAs and LCAs near Ten Mile Creek. Interchange 7 off I-79 should be developed with primarily conservation and recreational uses and therefore, should be a priority to include in the greenways network.

Other manmade resources that have been identified in Greene County as potential “hubs” for the County’s greenways network that are depicted in *Figure 3-5 Potential Hubs* include:

- √ Historical Sites
- √ Schools
- √ Parks (State, County, Local)
- √ State Game Lands
- √ Greene County Airport
- √ Trailheads
- √ Marinas
- √ Recreation Opportunities

In addition to manmade resources, potential hubs should also include “green” hubs. These hubs may include biological diversity areas (BDA), landscape conservation areas (LCA), important bird areas (BDA), and high quality watersheds. It is important to keep in mind that hubs may not center around human activity, but rather habitat. Interpretive areas could be developed at some of these locations to educate visitors about their ecological significance. These areas are also identified on *Figure 3-5 Potential Hubs*

Viewsheds also can serve as green hubs. There are numerous throughout the County, although two in particular have been identified as being significant:

- √ Along PA Route 21 east of Wind Ridge in Richhill Township
- √ Along Hoy Hill Road northeast of Oak Forest in Center Township

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#### Ecological Index Assignment

In order to determine the importance of potential greenways, the natural and manmade resources were prioritized using an ecological index assignment. The ecological index values were related to the Vision, Goals, and Objectives of Greene County.

A high ecological value was assigned to resources that protect critical habitat areas, high-quality water bodies, or drinking-water supplies, including the following: areas identified in the Natural Heritage Inventory, including biological diversity areas, landscape conservation areas and important bird areas; high quality fisheries and subwatersheds; cold water fisheries; and wetlands.

A medium ecological value was assigned to resources that presented a recreational greenway opportunity, prime farmland, or protected other water bodies not designated as being high ecological value, including the following: trailheads; trout stocked fisheries; whitewater streams; major ridgetops; future sites designated as recreation opportunities; prime agricultural soils; floodplains; riparian buffers of warm water fisheries; and acid mine drainage fisheries.

A low ecological value was assigned to linear features that could be converted into greenways, including the following: inactive rail line, pipeline and power transmission line right-of-ways; minor ridgetops; and steep slopes greater than 25 percent.

In addition, developed areas and protected resources were included. Developed areas include urbanized land cover

data, I-79 interchanges, the airport, roads, active rail lines, schools, and towns and villages. These areas being already developed, are likely to have minimal ecological value. However, these resources should be evaluated when making recommendations for the opportunity to include them as hubs in the greenway network. In addition, road corridors can be incorporated into the greenways network if fragmentation is lessened by providing a minimum of 1000-foot wide crossings and a plan is developed to manage roadside communities containing species of special concern, although creating new communities is not encouraged.

Protected resources make up the existing greenway system and include trails, bicycle routes, parks and game lands. Similar to the developed areas, these areas should be evaluated for the opportunity to provide connectivity to and between protected resources.

*Figure 3-6 Ecological Index Assignment* shows the ecological priorities for natural and manmade resources in Greene County. Five high priority areas stand out: the Ten Mile Creek valley between Waynesburg and Rices Landing; the Dunkard Creek valley near Mount Morris; the Whiteley Creek Valley near State Game Lands 223; the major watershed in the northwestern part of the County that includes Ryerson Station State Park and Enlow Fork Important Bird Area; and the area running from Upper Dunkard Creek to Upper Ten Mile Creek to the boundary with Washington County.

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## Open Space

Ownership of land is the only method of ensuring the future conservation of land. To achieve a county sponsored open space plan, Greene County should create a land conservation fund to set money aside for open space acquisition. A land conservation fund designates a percentage of the general fund budget to be placed in a separate account that is to be used for acquiring land for open space preservation. The County Commissioners can determine the percentage of the budget to dedicate based on budgetary constraints, which can be as little as a quarter or half a percent. The fund can be established and the money can grow over several years or until an opportunity becomes available to purchase land.

## **Land Use Controls**

Other methods to conserve open space are available to local municipalities through the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The MPC authorizes comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and subdivision and land development ordinances (SALDO). A comprehensive plan is a document that sets the standard for policy decisions regarding changes to the physical environment. A zoning ordinance consists of text and a map that define districts to place reasonable limitations on the use and development of private land to protect the public interest. A SALDO provides standards for the subdivision and improvement of land.

Municipalities who wish to enact land use controls should contact the Greene County Department of Economic Development to receive assistance with grant applications and other technical assistance.

## **Municipalities with a Comprehensive Plan**

- ◆ Rices Landing Borough – Adopted: 1997
- ◆ Whiteley Township – Adopted: June 13, 2000
- ◆ Jefferson Morgan Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan (Clarksville Borough, Jefferson Borough, Jefferson Township, Morgan Township) - Adopted: November 2005

Greene County adopted a countywide comprehensive plan update on August 14, 2008.

## **Municipalities with a Zoning Ordinance**

- ◆ Cumberland Township – Enacted: July 11, 1994
- ◆ Franklin Township – Enacted: May 13, 1991
- ◆ Rices Landing Borough – Enacted: November 8, 2001
- ◆ Washington Township – Enacted: January 4, 2000, Amended December 11, 2000
- ◆ Whiteley Township – Enacted: September 9, 2003
- ◆ Jefferson Morgan Multi-Municipal Zoning Ordinance (Clarksville Borough, Jefferson Borough, Jefferson Township, Morgan Township) – Enacted 2008

There is no countywide zoning ordinance. Zoning is completely at the discretion of individual municipalities.

## **Municipalities with a Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance**

- ◆ Franklin Township – Enacted: June 1997
- ◆ Rices Landing Borough – Enacted: April 19, 2004
- ◆ Washington Township – Enacted: December 11, 2000

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Greene County has enacted a countywide SALDO, which is enforced in all municipalities that do not enact a SALDO locally. Therefore, all municipalities except for Franklin, Rices Landing, and Washington must adhere to the requirements in the County's SALDO.

Greene County should educate the municipalities on the benefits of land use planning and land use controls. There are a variety of methods that can be included in the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinances to encourage the preservation of open space. These techniques can include, but are not limited to the following:

#### *Clustering*

Clustering is a zoning method that assists a community in preserving common open space while continuing to encourage desired development. Residential lots are located in groups by reducing the lot area and the building setback requirements while still adhering to the overall permitted density requirements or allowing a modest density incentive. The remaining area of the development is then available to be incorporated as open space. Clustering provides the municipality with attractive housing developments while allowing for the preservation of open space and environmentally sensitive areas (Governor's Center for Local Government Services, 2003).

#### *Conservation Zoning*

Conservation zoning is an improvement on cluster zoning in that it requires open space to be set aside first and the development then happens around the preserved open

space. Conservation zoning standards would require the adoption of similar standards in the subdivision and land development ordinance (Governor's Center for Local Government Services, 2003).

#### *Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)*

TDRs allow a land owner to sell the development rights of his / her land. This means that the seller of the rights will not develop their land, and the buyer will be allowed to increase their development densities in another portion of the municipality that is more suitable for development. In other words, the development rights are separated from the land and sold from an area that is to be protected to an area where development can be accommodated and is desirable. TDRs can cross municipal boundaries if the municipalities are participating in a joint zoning ordinance or if there is a written agreement between the affected municipalities (Governor's Center for Local Government Services, 2003).

#### *Mandatory Dedication and Fee-in-Lieu of Dedication*

Section 503 of the MPC provides a municipality the authority to require a developer to dedicate land to the public that is suitable for intended park and recreation purposes. The municipality may accept from the developer the following:

- ◆ Payment of fees in lieu of dedication of land,
- ◆ The construction of recreational facilities,
- ◆ Private reservation of land, or
- ◆ Any combination of the above

An ordinance must be in effect that contains the standards for determining land to be dedicated or the amount of the fee in lieu. The requirements and standards should be in accord with an adopted recreation plan and funds should be

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utilized within three years or refunded with interest.

## Other Techniques for Conserving Open Space

In addition to the techniques offered by the MPC, there are other programs available to local landowners that can assist with the conservation of open space and agricultural lands.

### The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a voluntary conservation program which rewards producers and landowners for installing conservation practices on their land, and offers up to 100% cost share reimbursement for installation, annual rental payments, and cash incentives.

Any producer or landowner can enroll in CREP, which is available for eligible marginal cropland, pastureland, and land along non-forested streams ([www.creppa.org](http://www.creppa.org)). The benefits of enrolling in CREP include:

- ◆ Protects streams, lakes and wetlands
- ◆ Provides wildlife habitat for biodiversity
- ◆ Covers the cost of streambank fencing, stream crossings, and stock tanks
- ◆ Pays for planting native trees, shrubs and grasses
- ◆ Reduces wear and tear on farm equipment, through enrollment of wet or steep "problem acre"
- ◆ Protects animals from diseases that can be transmitted by waterborne bacteria, such as mastitis, Johne's disease, BVD and foot rot

- ◆ Saves landowners time and earns money

### The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PALTA)

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association is an organization whose mission is to "protect Pennsylvania's special places and landscapes for today and for generations to come." To increase the quality and pace of land conservation, PALTA helps conservation practitioners improve their effectiveness, builds public understanding, and advocates for better governmental policy ([www.conserveland.org](http://www.conserveland.org)). The goals of PALTA include:

1. Strengthen the effectiveness of land conservation efforts
2. Improve governmental policy impacting land and water conservation
3. Raise public awareness of land conservation tools, benefits, needs and opportunities, while fostering positive relationships between land conservation organizations and others
4. Build a stronger, more effective organization

There are currently no land trusts in Greene County, although there are four that have conserved land in Washington County (Allegheny Land Trust, Chartiers Nature Conservancy, Independence Marsh Foundation, Montour Trail Council) and one in Fayette County (Regional Trail Corporation).