

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape SUCCESS STORY

By: Lehigh Valley Planning
Commission, 610-264-4544,
www.lvpc.org

Lehigh Valley Return on Environment Promotion and Outreach 2015

SUMMARY

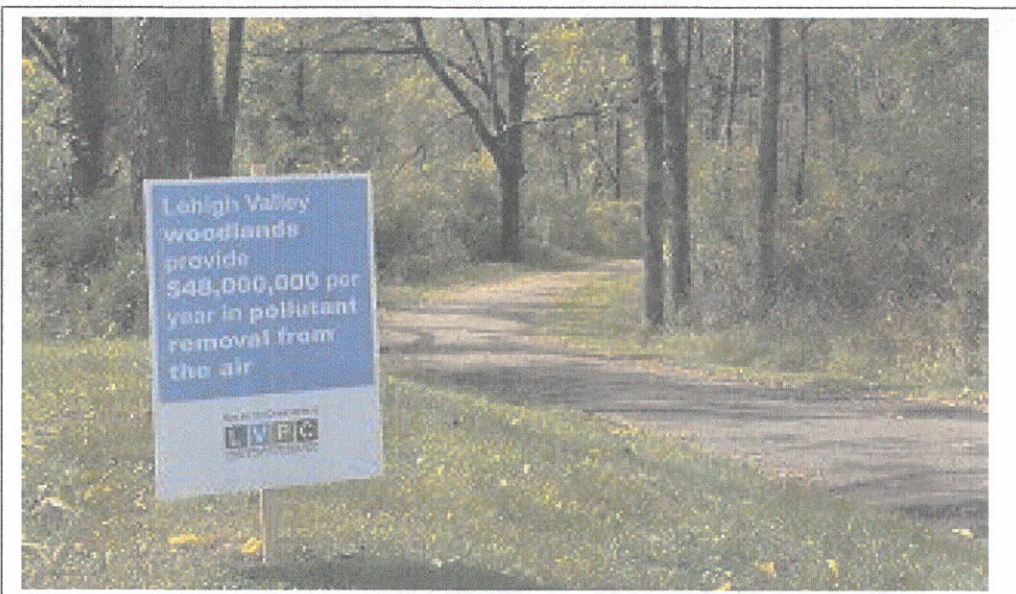
This project is to promote and provide outreach for the *Lehigh Valley Return on Environment* study (LVPC 2014) completed as part of funding provided under the HUD Sustainable Communities grant program. The LVPC partnered with Wildlands Conservancy to create the study that defines the economic value of open space for four components: natural system services, air quality, outdoor recreation, and property value. This represents the first time these benefits have been quantified for the Lehigh Valley and provides an opportunity to discuss open space value beyond the general aesthetic or quality of life factors.

FUNDING

Grant Award:
\$2,500.00

Match:
\$3,906.00

Total Project Cost:
\$6,406.00



CHALLENGE

The *Lehigh Valley Return on Environment* study (LVPC 2014) provides a thorough description of the study methodologies and results. The 80 page document is useful for those needing the full details of the open space valuation process, but a shorter, simpler version is needed to quickly communicate the information more broadly. The municipalities in the Lehigh Valley need to be able to access the information quickly to inform decisions they make daily on land use in their communities. By creating a summary document, factsheets, and performing outreach and education, LVPC would be informing communities about the value of open space that could be used to: inform land use policy and decisions, provide information for open space purchase or easement investment decisions, reinforce landscape approaches for habitat connectivity and protection, inform strategies to reduce flooding and protect water quality and water supply, and inform strategies for economic development.



SOLUTION

LVPC's project created a public relations-friendly summary of the report as a messaging tool for outreach and education. The outreach was provided to municipalities, the general public, and others. The different forms of outreach included: presentations, yard signs, factsheet poster and handout, along with full copies of the study as needed. The factsheets and presentations were used at several different regional and statewide events, conferences and meetings. Each presentation was tailored to the audience. The different types of audiences included: conservationists, legislators, planners, businesses, social organizations, and the general public.

RESULTS

The information was well received at the local and state level, and positive comments from individual audience members demonstrates the success of the project. The project was presented over 7 times (5 additional presentations prior to this grant contract). The LVPC team also participated in 3 different events with signage and factsheets. Each time the information was very well received with overly positive feedback and inquires about the full report. The broad impact of the information makes it very appealing to many different sectors. Overall the project reached over 1600 people statewide.

Contact

Claire Sadler, Conservation Coordinator

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage
Corridor

2750 Hugh Moore Park Road
Easton, PA 18042

610-923-3548 ext. 226

Claire@delawareandlehigh.org

www.delawareandlehigh.org

www.lehighvalleygreenways.org

Diane Kripas, Division Chief

PA DCNR Bureau of Recreation and
Conservation

717-772-1282

dkripas@pa.gov

www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cli

