



Vision of the Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape:

By 2020, Lehigh Valley communities are linked to greenways, trails, and outdoor experiences resulting in stronger local economies and improved public health, green infrastructure and natural resources

Goals:

Goal 1: **Land Conservation & Restoration** - Conserve critical landscapes, restore degraded habitats including stream corridors, and promote best management practices

Goal 2: **Outdoor Recreation & Trail Connections** - Connect people to greenway and trail opportunities to promote healthy living, recreation, and the region's green assets

Goal 3: **Community Revitalization** – Support community revitalization through green infrastructure that enhances the quality of life

Goal 4: **Local Education & Outreach** – Promote understanding of our natural environment and its benefits to our communities

2016 Partnership Work Plan

1. Promote Awareness – Develop and implement a comprehensive communication & promotion strategy

- Develop a statement of need and seek funding for a comprehensive communications & promotion strategy
- Coordinate planning with a steering committee and hold 2016 Eastern PA Greenways & Trails Summit in Bethlehem including a trail building workshop for municipal workers
- Hold 2nd Annual Lehigh Valley Greenways Festival at Jacobsburg EE Center in conjunction with Senator Scavello's event and National Hunting & Fishing Day (September 24)
- Develop and publish annual report to showcase accomplishments and present at Eastern PA Greenways & Trails Summit and Greenways Festival
- Launch new Lehigh Valley Greenways website to promote success stories and partner programs
- Provide assistance and information to Discover Lehigh Valley for the Lehigh Valley Trail Network microsite
- All partners add events to Discover Lehigh Valley calendar of events for promotion of open space & trails
- Reactivate education committee to expand collective work and involve more schools/colleges in projects
- Partners with LVPC, develop three op-ed and blog articles to support Lehigh County Open Space Plan Update
- Create strategy and messaging for Return on Environment billboard campaign and seek funding
- Recruit one elected member from each county council/commission to join the partnership
- Create a public policy committee to advocate, reach out to legislators/counties/municipalities, and alert partners to key meetings
- Conduct a 2016 mini grant round and hold grant award press event

2. Fund, Plan, Acquire and Steward to Provide Natural System Services and Outdoor Opportunities

- Identified partners serve on steering committee for Lehigh Valley Comprehensive Plan Update and Lehigh County Open Space Plan Update

- Focus land protection on remaining Natural Heritage Inventory sites, outreach to landowners along the Kittatinny Ridge, and expanding existing nature preserves
- Engage the community and schools in 10 environmental restoration projects

3. Create a Connected Network of Trails across the Lehigh Valley

- Meet with federal legislators to discuss Norfolk Southern issues at Gap #3 (D&L to Ironton Rail Trail) and Gap #7 (South Bethlehem Greenway to Saucon Rail Trail)
- Meet with PennDOT to present and resolve issues
- Hold four meetings of Lehigh Valley Trail Council (subset of Lehigh Valley Greenways and D&L Trail Alliance)
 - reassess Top 10 Gaps and create ranked list of individual actions by priority for all gaps
 - create criteria for Lehigh Valley Trail Network and measurement tool for built and future trails
 - hold workshop about gaining bike friendly status for businesses/schools/cities
 - increase trail directional signage
- Close Trail Gap #4: Nor-Bath to D&L – 0.7 miles
- Close A and B of Gap #5: D&L Environmental Obstructions (Northampton and N. Catasauqua)

4. Provide Water Resources Management Education and Integration

- Promote watershed education to schools and communities through Master Watershed Steward and Conservation District large scale partner projects
- Advance removal of additional dams from Lehigh Valley waterways including Monocacy Creek Trout Unlimited's mini-grant funded project
- Support integrated water resources management planning (IWRMP) through new policy development
- Hold a partnership meeting focused on water quality (IWRMP, dam removal, riparian buffer ordinances)

5. Engage Healthcare Providers

- Meet with Community Health Assessment Coalition and develop a plan for collaboration
- Record current partner programs, research and metrics
- Develop steering committee to plan Outdoor Summit 2017 focused on diversity and health

Top Trail Priority – Allentown Trails

- Develop a strategy of actions and timeline to move Gap #1, 2 and 6 forward
- Partners participate in steering committee to develop 2017 Master Plan for Allentown Lehigh Canal Park
- Hold a D&L Trail Tender event followed by a Tail on the Trail event involving partners in Allentown Canal Park

Top Water Priority – Lehigh River

- Celebrate and promote Wildlands Conservancy's 20th anniversary of Lehigh River Sojourn
- Partners work with Wildlands Conservancy to identify projects for Lehigh River Watershed Conservation Management Action Plan update and promote the new plan
- Install two locations of joint Lehigh River Water Trail and D&L Trail signage and promote new locations