

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape **SUCCESS STORY**

By: Joseph Geib, Special
Projects Coordinator for Upper
Saucon Township

South Mountain Preserve – Upper Saucon Gateway

SUMMARY

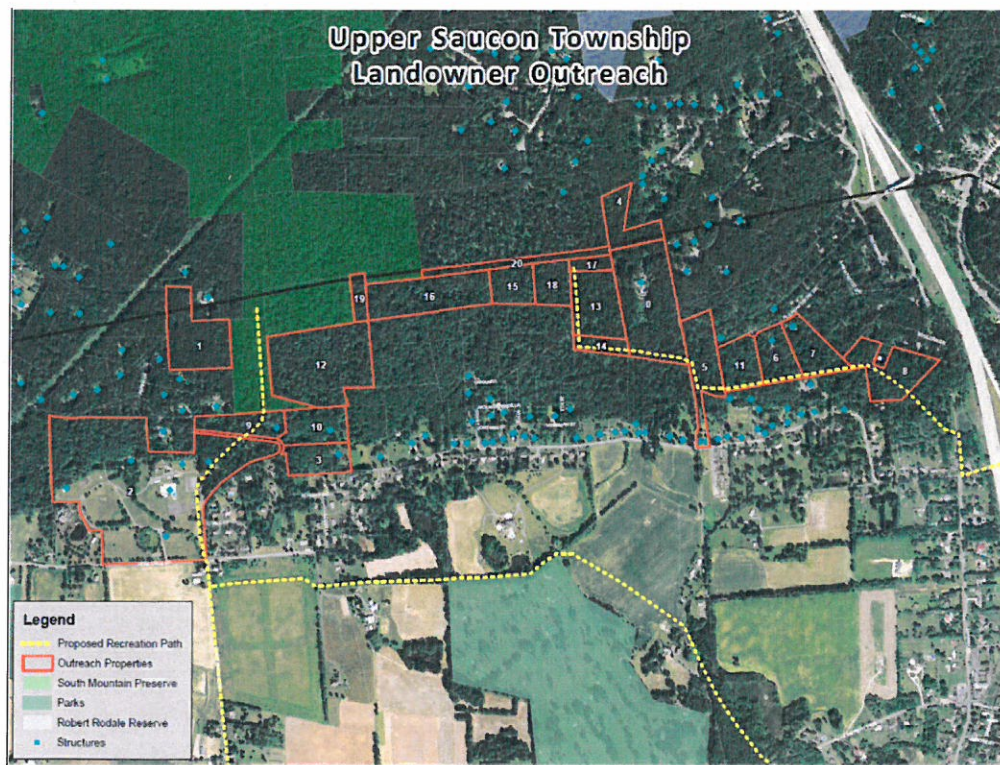
Upper Saucon Township was looking to embark on a Special Purpose Study to provide additional preserved lands to the South Mountain Preserve. These lands would provide additional recreation trails and be important link for trail access points in Upper Saucon Township. The Township has identified certain properties that, when linked together, would provide access to the South Mountain Preserve.

FUNDING

Grant Award:
\$5,000.00

Match:
\$5,000.00

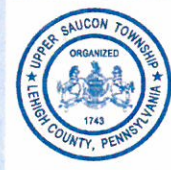
Total Project Cost:
\$10,000.00



PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

CHALLENGE

Upper Saucon Township would like utilize South Mountain to provide a recreation outlet for residents on the northwest edge of the Township, as well as for those looking for active and passive recreation in a natural, forested environment. Goals of the 2006 Upper Saucon Township Recreation and Open Space Plan call for the Township to “actively pursue and secure an extensive system of open spaces and greenways that provide for the protection of important natural features within rural landscapes” (Goal 7) and “set aside adequate parcels of open space for recreation/park development” (Goal 3). Additionally, trail access points and acquisition of South Mountain properties are clearly outlined on Upper Saucon Township’s Official Township Map – Component 3. Protecting the high conservation-value watershed lands of South Mountain by preserving large contiguous tracts of forest, providing additional access points to these lands to connect people to outdoor recreation experiences in core communities to valued natural resources are major goals of the Lehigh Valley Conservation Landscape Initiatives and Upper Saucon Township.



SOLUTION

Upper Saucon Township, along with Wildlands Conservancy - our consultant on the project – have indicated nineteen (19) parcels in Upper Saucon Township along South Mountain that could provide access points and additional acreage to the South Mountain Preserve. These parcels are in areas highlighted on the Official Upper Saucon Township Map for potential preservation and trail access. Wildlands Conservancy, at the direction of the Township, performed landowner outreach to the properties of interest. The goal of the outreach was to engage landowners about the merits of land preservation, and gauge interest in potential agreements to add acreage to the South Mountain Preserve and/or provide trail access points.

RESULTS

At the end of the process, Wildlands Conservancy was able to make successful contact with approximately half the property owners indicated on the list. Discussions with the landowners have resulted in an agreement of sale for the donation of a 4.2 acre parcel, a property walk and an appraisal of a 9.3 acre parcel, and ongoing discussions with approx. 4 other property owners for the possibility of preservation or trail access.

Upper Saucon Township has had the opportunity to gain Wildlands Conservancy as a trusted ally in its efforts to add trail access and preserved properties to the Upper Saucon Township portion of the South Mountain Preserve, and we look forward to hearing more from them about the results of ongoing discussions with property owners in the area.

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