

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape SUCCESS STORY

By: Lehigh County
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Signage and Stream Restoration at Trexler Nature Preserve (2016)

SUMMARY

Lehigh County partnered with Wildlands Conservancy to improve educational signage and messaging, and implement best management practices at the 1,108-acre Trexler Nature Preserve. Wildlands and the County have partnered for years to improve natural resources and recreational opportunities at the Preserve. However, the Preserve signage did nothing to inform visitors about the improved ecology and recreation. The County and Wildlands worked to create consistent educational signage for Preserve kiosks, install wildlife crossing signage, and implement agricultural best management practices.



CHALLENGE

There were three major challenges to address within the Lehigh County-owned Trexler Nature Preserve: 1) The 22 kiosks throughout the Preserve displayed inconsistent, deteriorating signage; 2) Many reptiles, amphibians, and other wildlife were being killed while crossing roads in the Preserve; and 3) Unfettered access to the stream in the bison pen was contributing to water quality degradation. The kiosks displayed only faded photos of the Preserve and lacked information about trails and natural features. In several areas, a road divides wildlife from habitat or a water source, which caused increased fatalities at crossing points. A small tributary to the Jordan Creek, which was running through the bison pen, had become degraded from a lack of agricultural best management practices. The streambanks were trampled and eroded, while E. coli levels downstream and at the ford on Jordan Creek were above recommended recreation levels.

FUNDING

Grant Award:
\$7,459.46

Match:
\$14,082.20

Total Project Cost:
\$21,541.66

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

Lehigh County partnered with Wildlands Conservancy on the planning, design, and implementation of this project.

Key partners in the installation of agricultural BMPS: Lehigh County Conservation District, Lehigh Valley Zoo

Lehigh County
Pennsylvania


Wildlands Conservancy

 **pennsylvania**
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES
www.dcnr.state.pa.us



SOLUTION

This project focused on three main objectives to address the challenges within the Preserve. The first was to develop educational signage to display in the kiosks throughout the Preserve. This would replace weathered signage and provide consistent messaging for visitors. The second solution was to display wildlife crossing signage at key areas of the Preserve. This would reduce mortality of reptiles, amphibians, and other small animals during road crossings. The third solution was to install agricultural best management practices along a tributary to the Jordan Creek that runs through the bison pen. This would involve moving fencing to keep the bison out of the stream, establishing an alternative water source, planting a riparian buffer along the tributary, and installing signage to educate visitors about the importance of best management practices.

RESULTS

Lehigh County worked with Wildlands Conservancy on the three main objectives of this project:

1. We developed consistent kiosk signage that displays recreational opportunities, and information about the Preserve and environmental stewardship efforts. These 22 professionally printed signs display the updated trail network with wayfinding notation, the history of the Preserve, rules and safety information, and information about stewardship efforts on the Preserve.
2. We purchased and installed five wildlife crossing signs along key crossing areas of the Preserve. These signs will encourage visitors to slow down and watch for small animals.
3. Lehigh County and Wildlands worked with the Lehigh County Conservation District and the Lehigh Valley Zoo to install agricultural best management practices at the bison pen. This included fencing the bison out of a tributary to Jordan Creek to protect approximately 600 feet of stream, establishing this stream section as a naturalized no-mow area, planting 20 native trees to restore the degraded stream corridor, and installing educational signage.

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