



## Vision of the

### Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape:

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:**

- 1: **Land Conservation & Restoration** - Conserve critical landscapes, restore degraded habitats including stream corridors, and promote best management practices
- 2: **Outdoor Recreation & Trail Connections** - Connect people to greenway and trail opportunities to promote healthy living, recreation, and the region's green assets
- 3: **Community Revitalization** – Support community revitalization through green infrastructure that enhances the quality of life
- 4: **Local Education & Outreach** – Promote understanding of our natural environment and its benefits to our communities

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### **2020 Lehigh Valley Greenways Action Plan**

Note: LVG mini grants close 3/6/2020; requests often help advance our annual work plan.

#### **Promote Awareness of Greenways Partnership**

- Host LVG Festival in September in South Whitehall Twp, Lehigh County
- Implement Green Retail Program and utilize money in 2021 mini grant round
- Engage new college, agriculture and health partners for LVG meetings and projects

#### **Land Protection – preserve 300 more natural acres and 500 more agricultural acres**

- Work with municipalities on open space planning
  - Update EIT (earned income tax) case study document from 2009
  - Reevaluate conservation program priorities with existing municipalities
  - Initiate conversations with two municipalities on open space program (one/county)
- Establish funding committee to look at land protection funding
  - Meet quarterly with Lehigh County to discuss bond initiative
  - Identify additional funding sources
- Create specific strategy for Kittatinny Ridge protection using internal and public meetings
  - Hold meeting with conservancies, ridge municipalities, and leadership from LVG, Kittatinny Ridge and Pocono Forests and Waters for priorities and funding strategy
  - Increase public engagement through a landowner meeting to educate about the importance of and options for private land protection
- Initiate two “tweener” easement projects combining agricultural and conservation with focus on properties along future trail alignments
- Initiate protection strategy for at least three Natural Heritage Areas
- Promote adoption of Municipal Open Space Referendums. Goal = 1 referendum

#### **Environmental Restoration – restore 25 acres and 2 miles of stream during 2020**

- Implement at least 10 of the 2020 priority buffer projects (minimum 10 acres and at least 2 high visibility projects at schools/parks/trails with an outreach/education component)

- Implement at least 4 instream restoration projects (include water quality monitoring on at least 2 projects to demonstrate success)
- Develop a LVG strategy to engage with county MS4 round tables for the purpose of sharing environmental restoration BMPs for MS4
- Identify existing model environmental restoration BMPs for warehouse development and share through website, fact sheets, and talks
- Partnership-wide utilization of the Riparian Buffer Analysis Tool to develop, implement and track new buffer restoration projects
- Continue partnership outreach efforts to Lehigh Valley residents on environmental restoration BMPs through landowner workshops and mailings

### **Trails and Bicycle/Pedestrian Connections – Collectively build and plan regional trail system as THE LINK Trail Network**

- Tasks specific to THE LINK Trails Coalition:
  - Recruit 20+ member organizations and hold a kickoff meeting.
  - Secure funding (admin, materials, capital) to oversee the marketing, lead the coalition and close high priority gaps.
  - Create a mechanism to collect all gap information from stakeholders including accessibility assessments for bicycle/pedestrian network
    - Output an inventory and a new “Top 10 LV Trail Gaps” prioritized list
  - Highlight accessible trails with more detailed trail conditions (surface type, width, grade, distances between benches, etc) on THE LINK Find a Trail page
    - Secure funding and contract the LV Center for Independent Living to assess trails and write reports
- Secure a signed agreement of sale with Norfolk Southern to move to design/engineering phase for D&L Trail to Ironton Rail-Trail connection (LV Gap #3)
- Implement Walk/RollLV with two public on-street events (one/county) and two early implementation or temporary demonstration projects
- Two more municipal official maps adopted to document outdoor recreation and conservation priorities through mini grant funding and/or LVG partner support
- Complete engineering/permitting phase for Two Rivers Trailway from Jacobsburg to Filetown Rd (Gap 9A1) and D&L Trail from Catasauqua to Hanover Twp

### **Education & Engagement – involve a more inclusive audience in the outdoors and environmental education**

- Study and identify systemic barriers to participating in outdoor recreation and environmental careers and develop action plan to address barriers
- Create consortium of LV environmental education providers to create action plan to engage all school districts/schools in Lehigh Valley and increase environmental education programming in cities
- Engage three universities (one/city) through mini grants for small scale academic research projects
- Increase programming at local (city, municipal, county) parks with 10 new events
- Add a job and internship board to the Greenways website