

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape SUCCESS STORY

By: Lehigh County Conservation District
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Seasonal Wild Walks in Lehigh County (Awarded 2024)

SUMMARY

The Lehigh County Conservation District carried out seasonal “Wild Walks” for Cedar View Apartment residents, Veterans, and students attending home schools in Lehigh County. These free, outdoor educational programs were offered to adults and youth of all abilities and backgrounds, allowing them to experience the natural world in a hands-on manner.

Community members learned about local birds, Pennsylvania wildlife and trees, stream ecosystems, rain gardens, entomology, and best management practices while utilizing backpacks full of nature supplies and educational tools.



CHALLENGE

Today, we find that youth are less connected to nature than ever before, and interviews have shown that attitudes children express towards various aspects of the natural environment, such as trees, birds, and local wildlife, included more expressions of fear and dislike than appreciation, caring, or enjoyment.

“Wild Walks” allowed conservation professionals to spread the message about the importance of natural resource protection, while promoting hands-on learning in an outdoor setting.

It also addressed barriers to recreation participation faced by adults with disabilities and provided Veterans an opportunity for health and healing.

The program provided significant benefits to youth and adults through positive, appropriate experiences with nature, while highlighting green spaces and trail networks in Lehigh County.

FUNDING

Grant Award:
\$2,500

Match:
\$3,393.49

Total Project Cost:
\$5,893.49

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

The Lehigh County Conservation District received support from Cedar View Apartments, Office of Veterans Affairs, and several home school teachers. Without the support from these local community members/organizations, Wild Walks would have not been possible.



SOLUTION

Wild Walks provided people of all ages and abilities the chance to get outdoors throughout the changing seasons and use their senses for a complete learning experience in nature. Physical activity included in the program, in addition to nature-related learning instilled appreciation and understanding of the importance of protecting local trail networks and green spaces, while allowing community members to use the necessary tools to achieve quality recreation participation.

RESULTS

The Lehigh County Conservation District purchased hands-on environmental education tools that were outfitted in backpacks for adults and youth to use during Wild Walks. Staff from the Lehigh County Conservation District and conservation professionals carried out experiences for Cedar View Apartment residents, Veterans, and students/teachers in home schools throughout the fall, winter, and spring months, educating approximately 60 youth and 55 adults.



Contact



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