

Implementation Strategy

The following Plan for Action presents a comprehensive strategy for implementing the Southern Alleghenies region's Greenways and open space vision. The Plan for Action consists of four parts: an overall implementation strategy, a summary of the project priorities expressed during public review meetings, a list and description of available regulatory tools and a summary of available resources for technical and funding support.

Goals for the Implementation Strategy

To achieve the vision of the Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Network Plan (the Plan) through the implementation of regional projects identified in that Plan.

The implementation strategies recommended herein consist primarily of regional coordination, county support and non-government organization participation intertwined in order to best achieve the Plan over a period of time.

Background

The true success of any plan lies in the extent to which it is implemented successfully. It has been clear from the start of this project that the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAP&DC), its member counties and the members of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) are deeply committed to seeing the proposals contained in this Plan brought to completion.

While many plans and visions end up sitting on shelves in planning offices, this cannot be allowed to happen with the Plan. Therefore, it is imperative that a realistic implementation strategy be developed as a critical part of the Plan and that a wide range of stakeholders – from municipal officials to county commissioners, from small volunteer groups through well-established non-profits and from county conservation districts through State agencies – agree with both the Plan and the strategies.

The Plan is a bold and ambitious vision for a region that is blessed with a wealth of natural resources and unique opportunities for developing, managing and/or conserving its natural and recreational infrastructure. Implementation of the Plan will add greatly to the region's future economic well being and environmental sustainability and serve as the basis for maintaining a high quality of life for its residents.

Some of the challenges specific to this Plan include the fact that it addresses the needs of six counties and proposes over a dozen regional projects and several dozen county and local projects. In addition, there is wide diversity of project types in the Plan including: open space conservation, habitat conservation, on-road biking trails, off-road biking trails, hiking trails, water trails and ATV/snowmobile areas.

These difficulties are both compounded and simplified by the fact that there is a myriad of implementing agencies and organizations including local, county and State governments as well as non-profit and volunteer groups. A Draft Implementation Chart (Table 10) begins

to serve as a management tool for understanding and tracking the projects and responsibilities set forth in the Plan.

While there are challenges to the successful implementation of the Plan, there are also a great number of opportunities presented in the Plan that, coupled with current efforts in the region, offer a bright outlook on achieving much of the Plan's vision. These include the facts that:

- Several of the regional projects identified in the Plan are already underway;
- There is a great deal of public land already under control and/or management in the area;
- Development pressures in the region are relatively localized leaving time to act on the Plan; and
- Residents and agencies in the region are committed to the vision of the Plan.

The implementation strategies set forth below draw on the strong existing organizational infrastructure that exists in the region, augments it and sets forth recommended processes and procedures for moving projects forward.

Clearly, the leading force behind the development of the Plan was and is the SAP&DC along with its member counties. As such, both SAP&DC and the individual counties play a critical role in achieving the vision that they have defined.

That being said, there are a number of partners at the State, regional and local levels that will also be called upon to step-up as this process moves forward.

Part Five – A Plan for Action

Key Issues

In light of the Plan's multitude of recommendations, there are a number of issues that are critical to understand in developing an effective implementation strategy.

Existing Project Base is Strong

Given the ongoing successes of projects in the region such as the Great Allegheny Passage, the Main Line Canal Greenway™, the Stonycreek - Quemahoning Initiative, the Link Trail, the Ghost Town Trail, the Laurel Ridge Trail and the development of the Rock Run Recreation Area, it is clear that the Plan is not starting from scratch. Rather, it provides a strategic overlay to more clearly link these projects into a workable and manageable network for the region.

Coordination is Already Strong in Certain Subareas and on Certain Projects

Many of those same projects identified above also point to the fact that project coordination is very strong in some areas and on certain projects. Some of these will be discussed in more detail.

Projects Have Different Needs

Projects in the region have a wide diversity of need and support; varying from a project like the Link Trail which identified technical assistance as its goal to a capital intensive project like the Pike 2 Bike that will need potentially millions of dollars of investment to be realized.

Projects are at Different Stages of Development

Projects also differ in terms of their current status from the Great Allegheny Passage which is completed in the region, through the Main Line Canal Greenway™, which is being implemented in stages, to the ridge top corridors identified in the Plan that are yet to be adopted as projects.

Implementation Will Take Time

Everyone involved must remember that achieving the vision of the Plan will take time, perhaps decades, and that keeping up the energy and support of the vision will take long-term

commitment, patience and a willingness to suffer setbacks as well as successes. At times, some projects will appear to surge ahead while others may be perceived as languishing.

Implementation Will Take Money

Many of the projects in the Plan will take financial commitment from a variety of sources. The unfortunate reality is that funds are tight at all levels of government. Having a common regional vision, like that in the Plan, can be a critical tool in helping to leverage funding from a variety of sources.

Public Input

Much of the discussion at the five public meetings held around the region in April 2006 focused on questions related to implementation and project needs. Answers, approaches and options varied from county to county. However, there were common themes throughout and an implementation strategy for the Plan, laid out below, has been developed based on that input as well as input from the PAC.

The lessons from those public meetings included the following:

- Implementation is critical to long-term success
- There is a great deal of effort and energy already in place
 - Link Trail
 - Great Allegheny Passage
 - Main Line Canal Greenway™
 - Stonycreek – Quemahoning Initiative
 - Pike 2 Bike Trail
- There are different levels of interest in collaboration and coordination from groups in the region
- There is great interest in technical assistance from organizations in the region
- Implementation strategies suggested include
 - No coordination
 - Coordination by county
 - Some counties interested in that role, others not
 - Coordination by type of project
 - Coordination by region
 - SAP&DC is seen in this role
 - Southern Alleghenies RC&D is seen as helping in this role

Reasons for Coordinating

The interest, need and benefit of coordination expressed by meeting participants varied along the way but was generally seen as a critical piece in achieving the vision of the Plan.

It is important to note that coordination can mean a great number of different things; from simply talking with each other to managing all projects under a single entity. It was clear from discussions at the meetings as well as from practical experience that the most effective level of coordination in the Southern Alleghenies lies somewhere between these two ends.



Figure 34: Public Meeting in Huntingdon County

One of the primary benefits of coordination among and between projects is a common knowledge base and a sharing of information, tactics and solutions. This can also help to identify additional linkages, gaps and opportunities through shared knowledge as information flows more freely and is interpreted by different organizations.

Coordination also allows the region to present a unified message of its vision, goals, objectives, strategies and needs to a full range of audiences including:

- Public
- Legislators
- Agencies
- Funders

By presenting this unified message, the audiences better understand the importance of the individual projects and are, one hopes, more willing to invest in those projects whether through volunteer time, specialized services, political support or funding.

Priority setting through coordination can also be beneficial to the region as a whole. By tracking projects, their status and need, an organization, county, region and/or agency can determine the most effective use of its investment at a given time. For instance, a trail project might become a higher priority for immediate funding because of the abandonment of a railroad corridor and a tight time frame, while another trail project may be able to forego a grant request for construction for a period of time. Given limited resources, such prioritization can help achieve greater implementation of the Plan over time.

Perhaps most importantly to achieving the vision of the Plan, coordination has the potential to greatly heighten the region's ability to leverage funds. Projects that were, at one time, disconnected are now linked and creative funding solutions can be developed to match local, State and Federal

funding sources. As an example, there are instances where trail construction has doubled as treatment of abandoned mine drainage by using a limestone base for the trail that buffers the acidic discharge as well as supporting recreational uses. In such a case, one could fashion a way in which to couple available remediation funding sources to trail construction sources to capitalize the project. Similar approaches might also be fashioned for conservation areas that will serve both recreational and habitat needs.

Potential Downsides/Difficulties to Coordination

All of this being said, there are potential downsides to coordination. In some cases, well-established groups may not want to participate due to real or perceived “loss of clout” and a feeling that they may potentially lose some of their access to funding by working with others. Additionally, independent-minded groups may wish to remain independent and “chafe” at the idea that someone else may be calling the shots.

Therefore, it is imperative in developing the proper level of coordination that the interests of all groups be taken into account so as to encourage participation.

Examples of Coordinated Efforts By Region or Area

The Stonycreek-Quemahoning Initiative brings together over a dozen projects from the Quemahoning Reservoir down the Stonycreek to Johnstown and “packages” them as a single initiative. Projects include

such seemingly diverse interests as abandoned mine drainage remediation, trail development, economic development, art history, white water paddling and municipal planning.

Through the efforts of the Initiative, a common vision of the area has been developed and, while individual projects continue to move forward on their own, concerted fundraising from State, Federal and private sources has taken place.

Because the broad themes of the Initiative are commonly adopted by over 70 supporting groups, the effort has gained the attention of legislators, policy makers, funders and the media. This level of attention is much greater than what any of the individual project sponsors would have garnered on its own.

By Corridor

While its vision of linking Pittsburgh and Washington, DC by trail is almost complete, the Allegheny Trail Alliance (“ATA”) and its member organizations have labored long and hard to achieve their goal.

The success of the ATA is steeped in commitment and coordination. Made-up of seven individual trail organizations, the ATA has thrived for a variety of reasons, including the coordination of those seven local groups and their understanding of how the efforts of each on their own section of the trail contribute to the overall vision.

While each trail group continues to focus on its section of the Great Allegheny Passage, the ATA as a group is able to look at the broader needs and implications for the overall goal and help to identify and secure funding

opportunities in the most efficient and effective manner.

By Project Type

For about ten years, the Allegheny Land Trust has been coordinating the annual requests of a number of trail groups to the Allegheny County Regional Asset District (“RAD”). This arrangement came about after the RAD realized that it was fielding multiple requests each year for trail funding and was unable without in-depth research to determine the relative merits of the requests.

The Allegheny Land Trust now annually convenes the trail groups within Allegheny County that wish to apply for RAD funding and the group as a whole determines the relative amounts that each group “deserves” from the RAD funding. A single request is then submitted to the RAD Board for consideration. Could some projects have done better over the years if they had been on their own? Perhaps. But the County’s trail network is better off because of the cooperation and priority setting undertaken by the trail groups.

Summary

The implementation strategy for the Plan is based on the following:

- SAP&DC is well-positioned to oversee the implementation of the vision
- Many resources are already hard at work in the region making aspects of the vision a reality
- Counties are committed to participating fully in achieving the vision
- There is a need for better coordination among stakeholders at all levels

- There is a need for a coordinated message about the vision and Plan
- There is a strong desire for increased technical assistance

The Plan for Action proposes the following structure for moving the Plan forward:

- SAP&DC leads the effort by transforming the PAC into the Southern Alleghenies Greenway and Open Space Task Force. The Task Force should include members of the PAC, the Planning Director from each County as well as representatives of other key partners
- The Task Force develops a work plan consistent with achieving the vision
- SAP&DC hires a DCNR Circuit Rider who reports to the Task Force to achieve its work plan

Collectively, the following organizational strategies are based both upon existing capacities in the region and reasonably achievable additions to those capacities. This approach puts the impetus on the SAP&DC to take a number of steps to begin the implementation phase.

Part Five – A Plan for Action

Stakeholders

What follows is a listing of some of the major agencies and organizations that are currently or should be in the future involved with implementing the Plan. This is not an exhaustive list and will need to be expanded and updated as implementation begins. In fact, one of the first actions will be to fully understand all of the organizations at work in the region.

SAP&DC

Since 1967, SAP&DC and the counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset have worked cooperatively to develop and implement programs for their region. SAP&DC is the sponsor of this Plan and will play the key role in facilitating implementation of the Plan.

Counties

Each of the counties involved in the Plan has available resources, knowledge and capacity that will be critical to achieving the vision of the Plan. These include their planning departments, conservation districts and economic development agencies.

Citizen Groups

The implementation of this plan hinges on the support of a local project sponsor. Local and regional citizen groups are anticipated to serve as the primary advocates for a project.

Southern Alleghenies Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D)

The purpose of the RC&D Program is to promote the conservation and use of natural resources to improve economic conditions and enhance the quality of life in Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset counties.

Southern Alleghenies Regional Tourism Confederation

A private/public advisory board of the SAP&DC made up of local/county convention and visitors bureaus, heritage preservation groups and State heritage parks.

DCNR

A major landowner in the region, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) owns and operates State Parks and Forests and works closely with local governments and nonprofits to achieve conservation and recreation goals and projects.

PennDOT

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has been a major funder of this project. PennDOT can provide funding and technical assistance for trail and other transportation-related projects.

PA Game Commission

Another major landowner within the region, the Pennsylvania Game Commission owns and operates State Gamelands

US Army Corps of Engineers

The Corps is responsible for Raystown Lake and Dam, a major recreational center in the region, as well as a number of other projects.

National Park Service

National Park Service manages the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic site, Johnstown Flood National Memorial and the Flight 93 National Memorial and has designated the Great Allegheny Passage as a National Scenic Trail.

The Allegheny Ridge Corporation

A private, non-profit corporation that develops, interprets and restores the historic, cultural and natural resources in Blair, Cambria, Somerset and Huntingdon Counties. The Corporation is the prime implementer of the Main Line Canal Greenway™ project.

The Central Pennsylvania Conservancy

The Central Pennsylvania Conservancy (CPC) is a non-profit land trust that primarily operates in Cumberland, Dauphin, Juniata, Perry, Huntingdon and Mifflin counties. The CPC strives to conserve natural resources and open space for the benefit of current and future generations through the acquisition and preservation of lands with natural, scenic, cultural and agricultural value.

Conemaugh Valley Conservancy

The Conemaugh Valley Conservancy has preserved nearly 300 acres in Cambria and Somerset Counties. Its mission is to conserve and preserve natural and cultural resources along the Conemaugh River corridor. The Conservancy is the leading force behind the Stonycreek Quemahoning Initiative.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy has conserved over 250,000 acres of land in Western Pennsylvania and focuses much of its work on

the important biological and natural habitats in the region.

Somerset County Conservancy

The Somerset County Conservancy has conserved nearly 500 acres on Somerset County to date. It could serve as a partner for future projects in the County.

Southern Alleghenies Conservancy

Southern Alleghenies Conservancy is a land trust focused primarily on the area included in the Plan and works to conserve important lands as well as to restore water quality.

Roles and Responsibilities

SAP&DC

SAP&DC will have primary responsibility for seeing that the Plan is implemented. Because it represents all of the member counties, the Commission is perfectly situated to sheppard the vision over the long-term. While greenways and open space planning are a new undertaking for the Commission, these activities fit perfectly with SAP&DC’s transportation, economic development and tourism roles.

In addition, because of its ongoing contacts with State and Federal officials and agencies, SAP&DC can continually monitor the interplay between the Plan and other projects that may be developing using PennDOT, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) or other funding streams.

Southern Alleghenies Greenways Task Force

In order to effectively manage the implementation of the Greenways Plan, it is recommended that SAP&DC form a Greenways Task Force. This Task Force will be responsible for deploying and coordinating, on behalf of the Commission, the resources and activities necessary to achieve the Plan’s vision over the long-term.

The Southern Alleghenies Greenways Task Force will be a committee of SAP&DC made up of key stakeholders committed to achieving the vision of the Plan. Members of the Task Force should include members of the PAC, key State agencies and regional organizations like the Tourism Confederation and the Southern Alleghenies Resource Conservation and Development Council. Additional members may include representatives of regional organizations, and interested citizens. The Task Force will be the

caretaker of the Plan for the region. As such, it will:

- Develop a Five Year Plan for achieving the vision;
- Interact with a broad range of stakeholders interested in development of the greenways and open space network;
- Prioritize projects and funding opportunities on a periodic basis as related to the vision’s regional-scale greenways and open space projects;
- Ensure that agencies and organizations implementing projects are receiving the needed technical assistance; and
- Report regularly to SAP&DC on its efforts.

Counties

The counties of the Southern Alleghenies have already shown leadership by implementing projects within their own jurisdictions. In addition, county commissioners, planners, conservation district staff and economic development staff are “in the field” every day working on a wide variety of projects. This knowledge and experience must be harnessed for the Plan to succeed. Therefore, as stated above, the counties, through their planning directors, should form the nucleus of the Task Force. While the planning directors already interact on a number of levels, the format of the Task Force will allow them to both focus on and collaborate specifically on the greenway and open space projects in the region.

Agencies

Several State agencies are critical to the implementation of the Plan. Chief among these is the DCNR. Not only does the DCNR manage the State Parks and State Forests in the region, it is also the agency primarily responsible for funding land conservation programs, trail development, eco-tourism and other recreation programs. Because of this, it is highly recommended that the Task Force include a member from the DCNR who can serve as an advisor of, explainer to, and advocate for the region’s efforts. In addition, the Task Force should maintain close contact with representatives of the A

Game Commission, PennDOT, DCED, and the PA Fish and Boat Commission.

Project Partners

Project partners are defined as those organizations and/or individuals that are working to implement regional projects. Because of the importance of these groups in completing those projects, it is recommended that a few partners be included on the Task Force. This will ensure that the Task Force is able to consider issues from all points of view.

DCNR Circuit Rider

Staffing of the Task Force is a primary concern in implementing the Plan. It is not clear that any organization currently has the capacity to provide the necessary staff support to the Task Force. Therefore, it is highly recommended that the SAP&DC oversees the hiring of a “Circuit Rider” to assist the Task Force and serve as its staff.

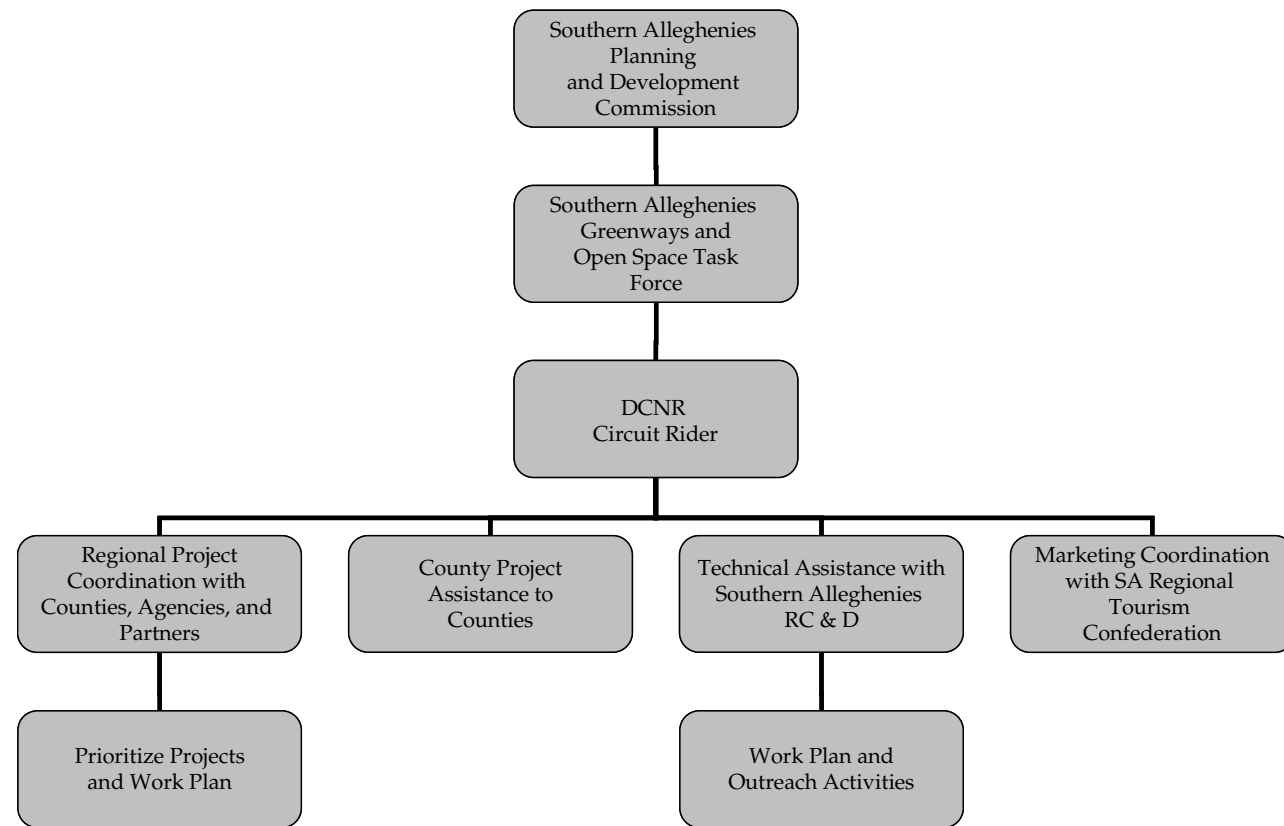
The DCNR sponsors a Circuit Rider program to help build local and multi-municipal capacity for implementing projects like the Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Network. As of 2006, DCNR has extended the Circuit Rider program to counties, it is no longer limited to municipality or non-profit organizations. Circuit Rider grants provide four-years of scaled funding to allow the hiring of a full-time employee to share services through an intergovernmental cooperative effort. Available grant funding for the Circuit Rider’s salary decreases from 100 percent the first year to 75 percent the second, 50 percent the third and 25 percent the fourth year thereby allowing the grantee to build the fiscal support necessary to sustain the position. By the fifth year the Circuit Rider shall be supported 100% by SAP&DC and its member counties. The Circuit Rider funding would be applied for by SAP&DC and the Circuit Rider would be employed by the agency and report to the Task Force. Responsibilities of the Circuit Rider would include, but not be limited to:

- Work with the Task Force to develop the full work plan for implementation of the Plan;
- Work with the Southern Alleghenies RC&D to develop a summit of all stakeholders in the Plan;
- Coordination with the primary project sponsors in the region;
- Coordination with State agencies, especially DCNR, PennDOT, DCED, and the Game Commission regarding project status and funding opportunities;
- Work with the RC&D to implement a technical assistance program for groups undertaking projects in the region; and
- Development, in coordination with the Southern Alleghenies Regional Tourism Confederation, of an outreach program to promote the greenways and open space in the region.

In addition, it is recommended that the SAP&DC pursue the development of a working partnership with the RC&D to explore the feasibility and practicality of using some of that organization’s capacities in pursuing the implementation of the Plan. These efforts should focus on the provision of technical support and grant writing expertise to local groups such as watershed organizations and trail associations, etc.

Part Five – A Plan for Action

Figure 35: Implementation Partners Organization Chart



Activities

It is critical to understand that a vision does not begin from a standing start. There are several items or actions that should be addressed prior to any planning, programming, educational or grant writing efforts by key stakeholders or the Task Force. These actions can be grouped into 3 generalized timeframes:

- Immediate Activities
- Year One Activities
- On-Going Activities

Immediate

Prior to formally organizing the Task Force, the members of the PAC should approach the regional and State representatives of the DCNR to discuss the feasibility of obtaining a DCNR-sponsored Circuit Rider. Prior to the DCNR dialogue, the PAC should evaluate the staff capacity of SAP&DC as well as each county planning/recreation department. Subsequently, the PAC should expand the general job description for the Circuit Rider position defined in this Plan, establish general operating/communication procedures and protocols for the Circuit Rider and identify potential funding streams (by county) for

capitalizing the Circuit Rider position in years 2 through 5.

After the PAC approaches DCNR, the agency will form a Peer Review Group of recreation professionals from across the Commonwealth to evaluate the region's current staff capacity as well as the anticipated staff demands most likely to be generated by the Plan recommendations. The Peer Review Group will meet with the PAC to discuss their review and to make recommendations relative to the Circuit Rider position. If the Peer Review Group feels that a Circuit Rider is needed to support the region's greenway implementation efforts, formal agreements between SAP&DC, the Counties and DCNR should then be prepared.

An additional immediate activity is the completion of the Southern Alleghenies natural Infrastructure GIS database. SAP&DC and the DCNR have had preliminary discussions to complete the compilation and mapping of a series of additional natural resource features. DCNR has tentatively pledged additional funding to capitalize this effort. These new datasets, along with the data compiled as part of the greenway planning process, should be provided to DCNR for integration into the State's GIS database. See Appendix H for a summary of the datasets to be compiled/created for the National Infrastructure effort.

Year One

The first activity of Year One should be the formal recognition of the Task Force. As previously suggested, the Task Force should include members of the PAC and should be expanded to include key implementation stakeholders related to the region's greenway

network. Formal authorization of the Task Force through resolution should clearly define membership structure, member duties, voting rights, recommendation status and other pertinent guidelines.

The second Year One activity should be the review of each project corridor and the identification of project status. There are a number of projects in the Plan. Therefore, it is critical for the Task Force to understand the status of each of these projects and to be able to support those with the best chance of completion. Because of this, it is critical that one of the Task Force's first undertakings be a review of the project prioritization contained herein. This task must fit into a broader Five-Year work plan developed by the Task Force in consultation with a range of stakeholders. Because this activity would take place before a Circuit Rider could be put in place, it is suggested that the Task Force work closely with the RC&D to develop this operating strategy. The RC&D is well-positioned to undertake such a task.

Overall, the Five-Year work plan should be aimed at implementing the projects recommended in the Plan by:

- Continuing to support the strengths of existing initiatives
- Convening a regional open space, trails and greenways "Summit" to
- Developing analyses of existing projects and their status
 - Technical assistance needs
 - Funding needs
 - Timing
 - Identify critical gaps

- Creating a clearinghouse for technical assistance through the Task Force and RC&D
- Preparing a publication or “sales pitch” for the open space, trails and greenways vision
- Convening group presentations to SAP&DC, State agencies and the regional legislative delegation to apprise them of the projects, progress and needs of the region
- Create a greenway identification signage system to inform the public of greenway locations. The signage could also provide the opportunity to convey information related to ecological importance, historic value, etc. Such signage improvements could be placed at ridgelines, stream crossings, trailheads etc.

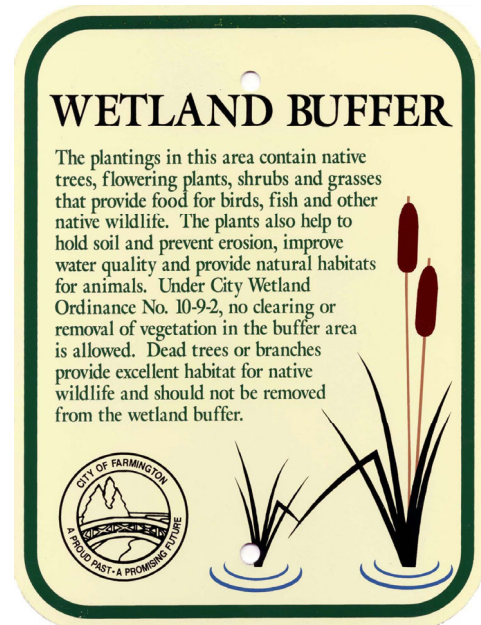


Figure 36: Example of Buffer Signage (cleanwatermn.org)



Figure 37: Example of Buffer Signage¹

On-Going

The Task Force should update the Five-Year Plan every two or three years. This update can be completed internally within the Task Force and presented to SAP&DC and each county as appropriate. The update should focus on identifying the current status of all projects (including any funding received to date) and outlining the implementation activities or efforts anticipated in the next five years.

While the vision defined by this Plan was planned and designed for a specific set of conditions, the Plan for Action has been designed to compensate for unexpected opportunities and the reality of implementation. As regional development patterns unfold and corridor conditions change, it is imperative to its long-term viability that this Plan’s vision be periodically reassessed and refined. It is recommended that the Task Force update the Regional Greenway

¹ Nikki Brand, *Addressing concerns with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy* (Keystone Builder, 2007) 14.

and Open Space Network Plan every ten years and revise the corresponding Plan for Action. The revised Plan for Action should then serve as the basis for the proceeding set of Five-Year Plans.

As part of the on-going activities, the Task Force should also organize, host and facilitate a Regional Summit for greenway planning coordination and implementation. This summit should convey the key stakeholders throughout all six counties of the SAP&DC region as well as the abutting counties (for instance Indiana and Westmoreland Counties).

Project Specific Implementation Strategies

Because of the range of project types, municipal governments and citizen support throughout the region, there is no single strategy for achieving the completion of a greenway, trail or land conservation project. These projects come in all shapes and sizes with implementation efforts to match. One benefit now experienced by the Southern Alleghenies region is the completion of the first regional greenway and open space vision in the Commonwealth.

Even within the Southern Alleghenies region there are a number of different successful implementation strategies both underway and completed. These range from:

- The Main Line Canal Greenway™ and Great Allegheny Passage that represent highly coordinated and relatively well-funded corridor projects wherein the sponsors worked diligently at the local, regional and State levels to secure support.

- The Stonycreek-Quemahoning Initiative, which represents an agglomeration of different types of relatively local projects, combined to present a stronger case for economic and recreational development building on prior and continuing environmental restoration efforts.

- The Link Trail which is volunteer-based and represents a discreet project within Pennsylvania that is planned to join with a larger, national trail.

As the work plan for implementing the vision is developed and as the individual projects move forward, it must be recognized that some projects will receive local and State governmental support, some will be pursued by non-profit organizations with or without governmental support and that some will be pursued on a truly local basis by community volunteers. While none of these approaches precludes the others, it is most likely that the work plan will identify priority projects for the region and, perhaps, individual counties.

In those corridors or project areas where there is currently no identified strategy for project implementation, it is recommended that the Task Force identify a project sponsor and work with that person, agency, or group to develop a practical strategy that includes:

- A project feasibility analysis or study;
- Cost estimates for planning, development and operations and maintenance;

Part Five – A Plan for Action

- Challenges and opportunities to completing the project;
- A funding strategy; and
- An outreach strategy to involve landowners (public or private), local and State government, SAP&DC and the public.

Examples of Greenway Implementation

As an aid to local governments or organizations contemplating the implementation of a project corridor or a portion of a corridor, two implementation scenario examples are summarized below. The scenarios represent the hypothetical examples and are provided only as a guideline for developing detailed and customized Plans of Action for specific project corridors. The scenarios outline the key actions or steps needed to initiate implementation and describe the potential collaborative discussions between the project's various stakeholders.

Scenario One

A greenway corridor has been planned along a waterway connecting two towns. No public open space currently exists in this area with the exception of community parks in each town.

Action:

- Present the greenway concept to local governments and citizens along the greenway corridor, demonstrating its value to the community.

- Identify ecological and cultural resources in the corridor which will benefit from preservation.
- Identify possible river access points for public acquisition.
- Acquire and develop river access points at intervals of approximately five miles.
- Acquire riparian easements along the river to protect river frontage from development.
- Develop a trail feasibility study to identify possible trail locations.
- Acquire land for the trail corridor.
- Build a multi-use trail between the two towns.

Scenario Two

The greenway corridor follows the top of a mountain ridge, providing a route for an existing long distance hiking trail. There are several large tracts of gamelands along the ridge, separated by large tracts of private land.

Action:

- Present the greenway concept to local governments and citizens along the greenway corridor, demonstrating its value to the community.
- Identify ecological and cultural resources in the corridor which will benefit from preservation.
- Discuss the possible acquisition of the missing links with conservancies, the trail organization and the Game Commission.
- Identify property owners with an interest in preserving open space (environmentalists, hunting camps, local government).
- Negotiate conservation easements over large tracts of land for wildlife conservation and low impact hiking trails.

Table 10: Implementation Responsibilities & Priorities

Nature of Strategy	ID	Action	Outcome(s)	Responsible Party(ies)	Timing	Funding Source(s)
Stewardship of the Plan	1	Conduct DCNR-sponsored peer review group to evaluate feasibility of utilizing a Circuit Rider	DCNR approval of Circuit Rider and formal application executed	Task Force	Immediate	SAP&DC
	2	Convene Southern Alleghenies Greenways & Open Space Task Force	Task Force by-laws and mission statement	SAP&DC	Immediate	SAP&DC
	3	Development of Work Plan to achieve Vision	Work Plan	Task Force	Complete within 3 months of convening	SAP&DC
	4	Facilitate annual Task Force meeting with surrounding counties	Coordination of implementation efforts	Task Force	Annually	SAP&DC
	5	Analyze the status of existing projects	Understanding of projects and their status, timeline, and various needs	Task Force	In synch with the Work Plan (above)	SAP&DC
	6	Develop additional Natural Infrastructure GIS map for the region	Complete development of GIS layers to Natural Infrastructure standards	SAP&DC	Immediate	DCNR & PennDOT
	7	Compile inventory of quasi-public protected lands	Develop a uniform protected/conservation lands GIS layer	SAP&DC	Immediate	DCNR & PennDOT
Involvement of Partners	8	Convene Regional Summit	Shared goals and commitment to the Vision and Plan Regional Summary of project needs Identification of critical gaps Development of on-going strategy for project coordination	Task Force & RC&D	Two months following completion of Work Plan	SAP&DC & RC&D
	9	Determine ownership of greenway elements (state, county, conservation group, etc.)	Continued stewardship of greenway plan elements	Task Force	Ongoing	Varies
	10	Coordinate bicycle and pedestrian enhancements with larger scale transportation projects	Additional recreation opportunities / corridors within the greenway network	Task Force & SAP&DC	Ongoing	SAP&DC & PennDOT
	11	Demonstrate appropriate land management techniques within publicly held (or quasi-public) lands to implement portions of the greenway network	Example for the preparation of a greenway oriented management plan	Task Force	One year following completion of work plan	DCNR, Game Commission, US Park Service, Conservation District, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
	12	Promote the incorporation of appropriate greenway network and recreation provisions in County and Municipal planning efforts	Consistent planning for the greenway network	Task Force & County Planners	Ongoing	SAP&DC

Nature of Strategy	ID	Action	Outcome(s)	Responsible Party(ies)	Timing	Funding Source(s)
Outreach	13	Develop Clearinghouse for Technical Assistance to projects	One stop shop for groups looking for assistance on project development, funding, etc Home of the Circuit Rider (below)	RC&D	Immediate	Multiple
	14	Create a Greenway specific job description and hire a Circuit Rider	Deployment of a resource person to aid regional partners in successful completion of projects	RC&D & SAP&DC	Immediate	50% DCNR 50% local match
	15	Prepare marketing materials for the Vision	A unified message to funders, agencies, legislators, media, and the public regarding the vision, its status, and progress	Task Force	Complete for the Regional Summit	In-Kind from local businesses and partners
	16	Encourage agriculture and woodland area property owners to make land available to hunters through the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Farm Game / Safety Zone Program	Incorporation of additional lands for recreational and preservation use	Task Force & County Planners	Ongoing	PA Game Commission
	17	Develop Regional "Ask" for priority projects identified in Vision and Work Plan	A clear message to legislators, funders, and agencies showing the value of their investment in the region and the commitment of local partners to working together in achieving the Vision	SAP&DC & Task Force	Following completion of Work Plan and success of the Regional Summit	Multiple
18	Create a greenway signage system to identify project corridors where some form of implementation has occurred	Erection of Greenway identification signs at stream/road crossings/bridge crossings/trail heads, etc.	Task Force, SAP&DC & RC&D	Long-Term	Multiple/Private Sponsorship	

Part Five – A Plan for Action

Project Corridor Priorities

Overview

As project corridors were determined for the region and each of the counties, the relative priority of each project was determined through a process guided by the project's PAC with input from the public. The priorities establish the projects most in need of further study, design or funding. The priorities were established based on public support, importance to the overall network, current status (amount developed, ownership, etc.), current management and the extent to which the project corridor is threatened by development or other incompatible uses.

Initial PAC Review

As project corridors were developed for the Plan, they were prioritized by the PAC. They were modified, added or eliminated as necessary based on the PAC's review of the initial list potential project corridors. For example, some project corridors were removed due to regional desires to discourage ATV usage within the greenway network and the preference to concentrate this type of recreation in designated ATV areas. Moreover, the PAC analyzed the project corridors to determine which could best serve as regional opportunities and which best serve local or county interests. A hierarchical system of regional and county-level project corridors resulted from this process. After several iterations of this process, a complete network of regional project corridors and county-level project corridors were defined.

Public Participation

Along with the initial prioritization by the PAC, public input was sought through a series of meetings held in each of the counties. This input was obtained during the individual county meetings in April, 2006. Residents were asked to rank or "vote" on the project corridors that they preferred to see implemented in the near future. Tallying the votes revealed which project corridors were the most and least desirable as well as residents' general



Figure 38: Bedford Meeting



Figure 39: Public Voting

preferences. Residents were asked to vote first on county-level project corridor priorities and secondly on regional project corridor priorities. A brief summary of these meetings follows:

Initial Priorities

The results of the individual county workshop's first exercise are described below. These results include county-level project corridors in each specific county and regional project preferences within each of the counties.

Bedford County

The Yellow Creek Trail and the Sideling Creek Valley Crossing were the two most popular project corridors in the County. Each of these project corridors are recreation oriented and received more than 20% of the total votes. The third most preferred project corridor was the Cumberland Valley Wildlife Corridor, a preservation corridor. All other county-level project corridors received less than 10% of the votes.

Of the regional projects proposed, the Five Mountains Wildlife Corridor had the strongest support within Bedford County (36% of total votes). It was closely followed by The Allegheny Crossing (30%) and the Mid-State Greenway (27%)

Cambria County

The two most preferred project corridors in Cambria County, with 19% and 16% of the total votes respectively, were the Laurel Run Trail and the Johnstown – Portage Trail. The Rock Run – Gallitzin Connector and the Blacklick Creek Wildlife Corridor followed in popularity with 9% of the total votes each. Three of these four project corridors are recreation oriented.

Within Cambria County, the regional project receiving the most total votes was the Main Line Canal Greenway™ (36%). This was followed by the Quemahoning Greenway (25%) and the Ghost Town Trail Connector (17%).

Fulton County

Fulton County's three most popular project corridors were the Link to Tuscarora Connector (60% of votes), the Little Scrub Ridge Wildlife Connector and the Southern Great Trough Creek Wildlife Corridor. Two of these three project corridors are preservation oriented. No other county-level project corridors received votes.

At the regional level, half of Fulton County residents voted for the Tuscarora Greenway. The Allegheny Crossing Greenway received the second largest number of votes (25%).

Huntingdon County

The prioritization process in Huntingdon County incorporated an additional cycle of input and refinement. In the first stage, residents of the County ranked the Raystown Extension and the Raystown Connector East as the most favored County-specific project corridors with 10% of the total votes each. Each of the following project corridors received 8% of the votes: Raystown Connector West, Central Huntingdon Wildlife Corridor, Shade Mountain Wildlife Corridor, Southern Trough Creek Wildlife Connector and the Link Trail Alternate. Only 3 of the 22 County-level project corridors identified at the time of the

April 2006 Workshop did not receive any votes.

In addition to the project corridors that were ranked by the public, residents suggested a number of additional potential corridor connections. These suggestions were recorded and evaluated by the PAC and the Huntingdon County planning staff to determine their overall feasibility. Some of the suggested corridors proved to be difficult or impractical to implement and were removed from further consideration. The remaining suggestions were viewed as practical projects and were ultimately incorporated into the Huntingdon County plan.

Of the regional projects proposed, the Main Line Canal Greenway™ received the most votes from Huntingdon County residents (28%). The Potomac to Raystown Greenway received the second most votes (17%), followed closely by the Tuscarora and Mid-State Greenways (14% each).

Somerset County

The two most preferred project corridors in Somerset County as per the April 2006 Workshop were the Memorial Trail and the Reservoir Trail with 31% and 29% of the total votes respectively. Each of these project corridors are recreation-oriented. However, the only other project corridor to receive more than 10% of the votes, the Roaring Run/Beaverdam Wildlife Trail, is preservation oriented.

Within Somerset County, the Quemahoning Greenway received the most votes (50%).

This was followed by the Great Allegheny Passage (25%).

Final Priorities

Building on the initial public prioritization of project corridors, the PAC held additional workshops to further discuss project corridor priorities. As part of prioritizing the project corridors, the PAC determined that different criteria should be used to prioritize recreation versus preservation corridors.

Recreation Corridors

The PAC discussed what criteria should be used to prioritize the recreation project corridors. Ultimately the criterion used included sponsorship, project management and designation. To rank the various project corridors, a score of one to three was determined for each of the criteria so that a project corridor could have a maximum score of nine points. The ranking and scoring was determined as follows:

- Main Line Canal Greenway™ (9 points)
- Great Allegheny Passage (9 points)
- Ghost Town Trail Connector (8 points)
- Raystown Greenway (7 points)
- Quemahoning Greenway (6 points)
- The Allegheny Crossing (3 points)

Preservation Corridors

Similar to the recreation corridors, the PAC discussed the criteria to be used to prioritize the regional preservation corridors. The criteria used were sponsorship, threat and Biological Diversity Areas. The sponsorship criterion was broken into two categories: advocate groups and public ownership. These two subgroups were given a score of one to three as were threat and Biological Diversity Areas. To reflect the importance of the threat criteria to the

preservation nature of these corridors, the score for threat was weighed as double for the final score. Consequently, each project corridor could have a maximum score of 15 points. The ranking and scoring was determined as follows:

- Laurel Hill Greenway (13 points)
- Allegheny Front Wildlife Corridor (12 points)
- Tuscarora Greenway (11 points)
- Mid-State Greenway (10 points)
- Five Mtns Wildlife Corridor (10 points)
- Potomac Greenways (10 points)

Demonstration Projects

The overall prioritization of the project corridors described above provides a basis for implementation efforts and determining next steps as the development of the greenways network progresses. Beyond this overall prioritization, the PAC selected several demonstration projects. These ‘ready-to-go’ projects have already been generally defined, have public support and are ready for a feasibility study or engineering work as a next step.

Regional Demonstration Projects

The PAC selected four regional demonstration projects: two feasibility studies and two engineering studies.

Quemahoning Greenway (Project Corridor D)

Prepare a feasibility study for the entire length of this proposed greenway including alignments, ownership and access points. Determine the range of potential costs and next steps for implementing the project.

Main Line Canal Greenway (Project Corridor B)—Lower Trail
 Prepare a feasibility study for the Lower Trail segment of the Main Line Canal Greenway. The Lower Trail is a proposed land trail located in northwestern Huntingdon County in the area of Alexandria. Determine alignments, ownership, potential access points, the range of potential costs and next steps for implementing the project.

Pike-to-Bike Trail (within Project Corridor K)
 Prepare engineering for the remaining portions of this trail to allow for its completion. Ultimately, this trail will form a key link in the Allegheny Crossing regional greenway.

Link Trail Shelters (within Project Corridor I)
 Prepare engineering for the construction of trail shelters along the Link Trail in the area of State Gamelands 71 and 81. These shelters will add to the amenities along the Link Trail within the Tuscarora Greenway.

County Demonstration Projects
 In addition to the regional demonstration projects, each of the County Planners selected the highest priority project or projects within their county.

Part Five – A Plan for Action

Bedford County

Within Bedford County, the highest priority projects are as follows:

1. Pike 2 Bike Trail (a segment of regional project corridor K—the Allegheny Crossing)
2. Potomac to Raystown Greenway (regional project corridors H and I)
3. Bedford to Old Bedford Village Trail (a segment of project corridor B-5—Dunning Creek Trail)
4. Bedford to Everett Trail (a segment of Pike 2 Bike Trail, a segment of regional project corridor K—the Allegheny Crossing)
5. Dunning Creek Trail (B-5)
6. Bob’s Creek Trail (B-2)
7. Tussey Mountain Connector (B-12)
8. Evitts Mountain South Trail (B-22)
9. Sideling Creek Valley Crossing (B-21)

The following projects would support or extend the high priority projects listed above, and are listed as a secondary priority:

10. Upon the completion of the Potomac to Raystown Greenway (regional project corridors H and I):
 - a. Yellow Creek Trail (B-9)
 - b. Rivers Bends Bypass (B-10)
11. Upon the completion of the Bedford to Old Bedford Village and Bedford to Everett trail segments:
 - a. Old Bedford Village to Manns Choice Trail (a segment of regional project corridor F—Five Mountains Wildlife Corridor to be developed as a low-impact trail)
 - b. Manns Choice to Hyndman Trail (a segment of regional project corridor F—

- Five Mountains Wildlife Corridor to be developed as a low-impact trail)
 - c. Hyndman to State Line Trail (a segment of regional project corridor F—Five Mountains Wildlife Corridor to be developed as a low-impact trail)
12. Upon the completion of the Dunning Creek and Bob’s Creek Trails:
 - a. Pavia Connector (B-1)
 - b. Mud Run Trail (B-3)
 - c. Boiling Spring Run Trail (B-4)
 - d. New Paris Connector (B-6)

Cambria County

Within Cambria County, the proposed project corridors have been ranked as follows:

1. Rock Run Connector (C-18)
2. Nanty Glo North Trail (C-7)
3. Duman Dam Connector (C-19)
4. Colver Connector (C-6)
5. Susquehanna Trail (C-1)
6. Johnstown – Portage Trail (C-14)
7. Vintondale – Susquehanna Trail (C-3)
8. Clearfield Creek Wildlife Corridor (C-5)
9. Portage South Trail (C-16)
10. Carrolltown Trail (C-2)
11. Gameland to Gameland Trail (C-4)
12. Williams Run Trail (C-8)
13. Blacklick Creek Wildlife Corridor (C-9)
14. Wildwood Springs Trail (C-10)
15. Laurel Run Trail (C-11)
16. Little Conemaugh Trail (C-12)
17. Lilly Reservoirs Wildlife Corridor (C-13)
18. Flood Memorial Wildlife Corridor (C-15)
19. Scalp Level Loop (C-17)

Fulton County

Within Fulton County, the following high-priority projects have active support from several trail or conservation groups:

1. Pike 2 Bike Trail (a segment of regional project corridor K—the Allegheny Crossing)
2. Link to Tuscarora Connector (project corridor F-5)
3. Link Trail Alternate Connector (F-2)

The remaining projects in the County have been prioritized as follows:

4. Meadow Grounds Lake Wildlife Area (F-8)
5. Little Tonoloway Wildlife Link (F-12)
6. Cove Ridge Wildlife Connector (F-13)
7. Chestnut Flat Wildlife Corridor (F-11)
8. Fort Littleton Trail South End (F-3)
9. Rays Hill Ridge Wildlife Corridor (F-4)
10. Southern Great Trough Creek Wildlife Corridor (F-1)
11. Back Run Trail (F-9)
12. Licking Creek Wildlife Corridor (F-10)
13. Little Scrub Ridge Wildlife Corridor (F-6)
14. Tonoloway Creek Wildlife Corridor (F-7)

Huntingdon County

Within Huntingdon County, the project corridors have been prioritized as follows:

1. Stone Creek Corridor (H-5)
2. Little Juniata Connector (H-1)
3. Pulpit Rocks Corridor (H-4)
4. Terrace Mountain Greenway (H-9)
5. Aughwick Creek Wildlife Corridor (H-12)
6. Rothrock Loop (H-3)
7. Shavers Creek Corridor (H-2)
8. Raystown West Corridor (H-7)

9. Broad Top Mountain Corridor (H-11)
10. Raystown East Corridor (H-8)
11. Tuscarora Mountain Wildlife Corridor (H-15)
12. Blacklog Mountain Wildlife Corridor (H-13)
13. Shade Mountain Wildlife Corridor (H-14)
14. Sidling Hill Wildlife Corridor (H-10)
15. Jack’s Mountain Wildlife Corridor (H-6)

Somerset County

Within Somerset County, the following three projects have been designated as high priority and are seen as the closest to implementation:

1. Paint Creek Trail (S-5)
2. Indian Lake Trail (S-9)
3. Blue Lick Creek Trail (S-20)

Implementation Tools

Overview

Several techniques for implementing the the Plan are described below. Although not all of these techniques may be appropriate for the Southern Alleghenies region, the full range allowable under Pennsylvania law has been described. These tools range from creating land management policies and land use controls to purchasing rights to land.

Land Management

Land management tools provide specific policies for managing valuable resources.

Land Management Plan

Land management plans establish a specific set of policies for the use of publicly owned land such as a State Park or a gameland. Management plans typically identify valuable natural, historic and heritage resources; determine compatible uses for the land; determine the administrative needs of the land, such as maintenance, security and funding requirements; and identify recommended short-term and long-term strategies/actions for the treatment and protection of identified resources. Because land management plans are commonly prepared for publicly owned land, few or no other regulatory or acquisition-related tools are necessary to ensure implementation of the plan’s policies.

Example: A State Park could implement a land management plan that identifies areas of specific importance due to existing natural resources as well as areas suitable

for development of trail/greenway facilities. The plan could include recommended actions that would result in the preservation of the natural resources and the development of the trail.

Conservation strategies on lands that are not publicly owned must be implemented using regulatory or acquisition related tools.

Regulation

Land may be protected through government regulation, which controls land use and development through legislative powers. Examples of various land use and development ordinances and components of these ordinances, which regulate community growth and protect natural resources, are as listed below:

Dedication/Density Transfers

The dedication/density transfer tool allows a developer/landowner to transfer allowable development density from one portion of his or her parcel/development to another portion. In exchange for the increase in allowable density, the landowner must dedicate the undeveloped open space portion to the municipality/county. This tool is applicable for a single parcel or contiguous parcels of land that are part of a common development plan. Use of this tool requires that a community have a zoning ordinance in place.

Example: A portion of land included within a subdivision/development could potentially provide an integral link for the municipal trail system. The municipal planning commission could grant the developer increased allowable

Table 11: Implementation Toolbox

Implementation Tool	Description	Zoning Ordinance	Subdivision Ordinance	Other Ordinance	Legal Agreement	Applications / Notes
A. Land Management						
1. Management Plan	Established set of policies for publicly-owned lands					Only applicable for lands under State/County/Municipal/NGO control
B. Regulation						
1. Dedication / Density Transfer	Transfer of allowable development density from dedicated lands to other parcels	✓			✓	Transfer of density should be coordinated with Comprehensive Plan
2. Transfer of Development Rights	Sales of development rights from one area (to be preserved) to another area (to be developed)	✓			✓	Transfer of density should be coordinated with Comprehensive Plan
3. Fee-in-Lieu	Payment in lieu of land dedication	✓		✓		Flexible spending of proceeds
4. Buffer / Transition Zones	Setback / landscape area required between varying uses	✓				Limited applicability
5. Zoning / Overlay Zones	Regulations established in addition to an underlying zoning classification	✓				Can include stream setbacks, steep slope restrictions, etc
6. Conservation Subdivision	Special development requirements that encourage open space preservation		✓			Can include stream setbacks, steep slope restrictions, etc
7. Subdivision Exaction	Provision of park or open space as a condition of subdivision development	✓				Pre-determined amount of open space dedication, usually per dwelling unit, etc.
C. Acquisition						
1. Donation	Land donated to a County/Municipality/NGO for no cost					Tax incentive for seller
2. Fee Simple Purchase	Outright purchase of property by a County/Municipality/NGO					Straightforward approach; typically purchased for fair market value although can be for less (tax incentives for seller)
3. Easements - Conservation	Permanently limits development on all or a portion of a property				✓	AKA Deed restriction/covenant, Limits impact/purchase to specific need
4. Easements - Preservation	Establishes a management program for all or a portion of a property				✓	AKA Deed restriction/covenant, Limits impact/purchase to specific need
5. Easements - Public Access	Allows access and passage through a portion of a property				✓	AKA Deed restriction/covenant, Limits impact/purchase to specific need
6. Easements - Purchase	Outright purchase of an easement for any of the uses above				✓	Straightforward approach that limits the impact / purchase to the specific need
7. Deed Restriction / Purchase of Development Rights	Land owner exchanges the right to develop property for payment				✓	Works well for agriculture / open space uses
8. Purchase / Lease Back	Outright purchase of property by a County/Municipality/NGO which is then leased back to the owner for use with restrictions				✓	Works well for agriculture / open space uses
9. Option / Right of First Refusal	Allows County / Municipality / NGO a window to hold a property before it can be sold to others				✓	Temporary
10. Condemnation	Taking of private lands by the State/County/Municipality			✓		Last resort

Part Five – A Plan for Action

density on appropriate portions of his or her site in exchange for dedicating the remaining portions of the land for preservation purposes.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

TDR allows communities to provide additional density in areas where growth is desired and discourage growth/development in areas desirable as preserved open space. The community identifies an area to be developed and an area to be preserved. The municipality's comprehensive plan is a useful guide for identifying these areas. Owners within the area to be preserved are given development credits that can be sold to land owners in the "target area" where development is encouraged. In order to sell these credits, landowners must place a permanent conservation easement on their property. The purchasing landowner within the target area to be developed may then develop at a density that is higher than previously allowed by the municipality. As with density transfers, use of this tool requires that a community have a zoning ordinance in place.

Example: A municipality contains a portion that is experiencing increased development pressures and another area with sensitive and important natural resources. The municipal comprehensive plan identifies the former as a future growth area and the latter as a preferred conservation area. The municipality could adopt a TDR policy allowing landowners in the preservation area to sell development credits to the growth area. This action optimizes the development of the growth area and the

preservation of the communities' most significant natural area.

Negotiated Dedications

In instances where parcels are deemed beneficial to the protection and preservation of greenways, a municipality/county may request that a landowner enter into negotiations for those specific parcels. Additionally, during the subdivision review process, the municipality/county may ask for the dedication of land in order to provide public open spaces. Such dedication should be proportionate to the impact the subdivision will have on the services provided by the municipality.

Example: A subdivision/development plan requires the extension of existing municipal infrastructure such as sanitary sewer lines. The municipality can request that the developer dedicate a portion of the property to the municipality in exchange for the extension of municipal infrastructure and services. The size of the dedication should be relative to the impact on existing municipal services.

Fee-in-Lieu

Fee-in-lieu can be coordinated with negotiated dedications to bolster the effectiveness of a municipality's land conservation opportunities. Using this tool, landowners have the option to make a financial contribution to the municipality/county, in an amount relative to the density at which they are developing instead of dedicating the appropriate portion of their land for preservation. The municipality/county may then utilize these funds to acquire land elsewhere (within the same

municipality/county) in order to implement land conservation projects.

Example: Applying fee-in-lieu techniques along with a form of negotiated dedication increases the options presented to developers within the municipality. The developer then has a choice of dedicating the appropriate portion of land to the municipality or paying a lump sum fee to the municipality in lieu of the dedication of land.

Buffer/Transition Zones

Buffer/transition zones are formally identified within the municipality's zoning ordinance. The situation of these zones is determined by potential interaction of incompatible land uses. Open space is then preserved along these potential interaction points in order to provide a buffer or transition between the incompatible uses.

Example: Buffer/transition zones could be used in instances where land zoned for intense uses such as highway commercial or manufacturing abut less intense properties or open spaces. The buffer/transition zone could be situated along the border of the two zones so as not to unduly make large portions of each unusable, but could be large enough to effectively screen one use from the other. The area within the buffer/transition zone could be used to situate a trail.

Zoning/Overlay Zones

Also identified within a municipality's zoning ordinance, zoning overlays allow a municipality to introduce specific controls related to land conservation, or enhance the underlying zone's existing land use regulations. Examples of these

controls include increased setbacks, reduced maximum allowable land coverage, etc.

Example: Zoning overlays could be applied along potential key trail corridors. By increasing setbacks and reducing land coverage, more open space can be provided along these key corridors than would be provided by the underlying zoning districts.

Conservation Subdivision²

Municipal and county subdivision ordinances may contain requirements related to public park sites, trails and greenways. The municipal agency then works with landowners to secure necessary right of way for trail etc.

Example: A conservation subdivision could allow an overall density bonus in exchange for clustering development and creating open space and trail facilities.

Subdivision Exaction

This tool requires, as a condition of development approval, that the developer provide public facilities or the financing for the provision of public facilities. The size of the facility or amount of financing should

² These requirements can be placed in a municipal or county subdivision and land development ordinance. "Real world" examples include Upper Salford Township, Montgomery County and Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County. For more information, refer to DCNR's publication: *Growing Greener, a Conservation Planning Workbook for Municipal Officials in Pennsylvania*.

be relative to the impact that the development will have on existing public facilities and/or the demand for additional public facilities that the development will create. The facilities, which can include open space, are then dedicated to the municipality/county.

Example: A developer could be required to build a park or reserve an area of his land for open space because the number of new residents generated by the development will cause an existing park to exceed its service capacity and/or create need for additional park facilities.

Acquisition

Property may be acquired outright as a way of protecting/creating land for open space purposes. In general, all of the following techniques can be applied in order to acquire property or rights of way for the purposes of creating greenways.

Donation/Tax Incentives

Landowners can dedicate their property to the municipality and typically realize tax benefits such as Federal and State deductions on personal income as well as the ability to avoid inheritance taxes, capital gains taxes and recurring property taxes. This tool results in the municipality/county receiving fee-simple title to a parcel of land at minimal cost.

Fee Simple Purchase

This is the outright purchase of land by the municipality/county where it receives fee-simple title to a parcel of land.

Easements

Easements can be used by the municipality/county to acquire explicit rights to certain areas of a property. Easements result in local government receiving a specific interest in a parcel while the property owner retains responsibility for all taxes associated with the property, less the value of the easement granted. Easements are generally categorized by their interest in a property.

Conservation

Typically, conservation easements are designed to protect natural resources and permanently limit the use and/or development intensity of land. These easements are generally applied to the entire property or relatively large portions of the property. Benefits to property owners who participate in a conservation easement include potential qualification for Federal income tax deductions and/or State tax credits. See Appendix D for an example of a conservation easement.

Preservation

Preservation easements can be used to protect significant built and/or natural features of a property. When applied for the purposes of protecting built assets, the easement's general intent is the preservation of a structure's historical value and integrity. Additionally, when used in concert with best management practices, these easements can protect important elements of the property's landscape. These easements can be applied to the entire property or specific portions of the property. Tax incentives for preservation easements are similar to those associated with conservation easements. See Appendix E

through G for a range of natural resource preservation-related easement examples.

Public Access

The general intent of public access easements is to provide passage and access through a property in order to link to assets/amenities on adjacent properties. These easements are typically applied to portions of a property rather than the entire property. Public access clauses may be included within conservation and preservation easements or the public access easement may be utilized individually.

Easement Purchase

Negotiations with property owners may fail to yield desired donations of land for the purposes of various easements. In these instances, a municipality/county may purchase an easement on the desired portions of the property. Because easements typically do not affect the entire property or the entire bundle of rights, the purchase price will be less than the title's value.

Deed Restriction/Purchase of Development Rights

A municipality/county can encourage protection of sensitive resources, such as prime agricultural land, by instituting a purchase of development rights program. Under such a program, the property owner would forfeit any further rights to develop his or her land in exchange for payment from the municipality/county. This type of program includes the fair market value purchase of property development rights from an owner and is typically reciprocated by the landowner including development restrictions beyond the current use within the deed to the land. The property owner continues to utilize the

property and keeps all ownership rights associated with the land in its current condition.

Purchase/Sale/Lease Back

A municipality/county can purchase land and lease it back to the original owner with additional use and development restrictions.

Option/First Right of Refusal

Owners who intend to sell their property can agree to give the municipality/county the right to decide whether they want to purchase the land before the owner sells to a private entity. When coupled with other tools, this technique can allow the municipality time to acquire funds necessary to purchase a property for greenway use.

Condemnation

Condemnation could be used in instances where property or property rights are unusually difficult to acquire. This is usually the result of unclear ownership or the unavailability of the owner. Condemnation is not always warranted as other techniques may achieve the desired result.

Implementation Resources

The following funding sources provide financial assistance for purposes ranging from planning to land acquisition and generally take the form of grants and/or loans. The programs described are categorized into Statewide, Federal and other sources, as well as by the agency that provides the funding.

Part Five – A Plan for Action

This comprehensive funding source list provides many possible venues of funding for implementation of various aspects of the Plan. Not all of the funding sources listed below are applicable to all aspects of the Plan. Applicability is dependent on which projects are being pursued to be implemented.

Pennsylvania Funding Sources

*Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)*³

The DCNR is responsible for the Statewide Greenways Action Plan developed by the Governor's Greenways Partnership Commission in 2001. This plan outlines a strategic approach for developing an interconnected system of greenways in the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides several services of grant moneys through the **Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2)** to municipal and county governments to support greenway and park planning, acquisition, design and development. In September 2006 DCNR awarded a number of regional grants through the C2P2, including a \$200,000 grant to SEDA-Council of Governments to coordinate, manage and provide outreach for the Susquehanna Greenway Strategic Plan and \$50,000 for the Lehigh County Conservation District to prepare a watershed conservation plan for the Saucon Creek watershed in Bucks,

³ <http://www.dcnr.State.pa.us/news/newsreleases/2006/0906-c2p2grants.doc> (accessed 10/1/06)

Lehigh and Northampton counties, among other grants Statewide.

In brief, the grants available include:

Heritage Park Grants are available to municipalities or nonprofit organizations for promoting public-private partnerships that preserve and enhance natural, cultural, historic and recreation resources to stimulate economic development through heritage tourism. The grants are awarded for feasibility studies, management action plans for heritage park areas, specialized studies, implementation studies, revolving loan grant funds and the hiring of heritage park managers. The heritage regions for District 9-0 include The National Road Heritage Corridor and the Lincoln Highway State Heritage Corridor. Applications are available on the DCNR website.⁴

Land Trust Grants provide funds to land trust and conservancies to acquire land for areas that face imminent loss. Land must be open to public use and priority is given to habitats for threatened species exist. Grants are awarded to non-profit land trusts, and applications are due in October.

Rails-to-Trails Grants are potential funding services for municipal and nonprofit organizations to finance the planning, acquisition, protection or re-development of bridge and pedestrian trails from abandoned railroad corridors. The applicant can submit one application per funding cycle.

⁴ <http://www.dcnr.State.pa.us/brc/heritageparks/2300-FM-RC0029.pdf> (accessed 10/1/06)

Community Grants are awarded to municipalities for recreation, park and conservation projects. The applicant can submit to one project type per funding cycle, and project types include: Circuit Riders, comprehensive recreation, park and open space plans, conservation/sound land use, feasibility studies, greenways, master site plans, county natural areas inventories and peer-to-peer technical assistance.

Rivers Conservation Grants are available to municipalities, counties, municipal and intermunicipal authorities and river support groups to conserve and enhance river resources. Conservation planning and implementation grants are available to develop or carry out projects or activities defined in an approved river conservation plan. Some eligible projects include river access investigation, water quality monitoring, river resource identification, threat identification and recommended actions.

Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Grants provide funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreation. Eligible applicants include Federal and State agencies, local governments and private organizations. Eligible projects include: maintenance, restoration, development, construction of new recreational trails and acquisition of easements or property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors. Approximately \$1 million is available in grants for this cycle, with 40% for diverse trail use, 30% for motorized recreation and 30% for non-motorized recreation.⁵

⁵ <http://www.dcnr.State.pa.us/brc/grants/rectrails.aspx> (accessed 10/2/06)

The **Technical Assistance Program** also provides consultations, workshops and publications to help assist local governments, land trusts, rail-to-trail and river conservation groups and other organizations.

In addition to providing grants and loans, the DCNR provides a handbook detailing how to Finance Municipal Recreation and Parks, including instruction for the grant application process.⁶

*Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)*⁷

DCED offers a number of grants that have a relationship to greenways, including economic development, travel and tourism, technical assistance and community development. The website offers a funding & program finder that helps locate applicable grants, loans and initiatives offered through DCED. Some of the funds available for the Plan include:

The **Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP)** provides grant funds for the preparation of community comprehensive plans and the ordinances to implement them. Multi-municipal ventures are given priority within this fund. LUPTAP funds could be

⁶ http://www.dcnr.State.pa.us/brc/Finance_Handbook.pdf (accessed 10/3/06)

⁷ <http://www.newpa.com/programFinder.aspx> (accessed 10/2/06)

used to implement greenway components of municipal comprehensive plans.

The **Community Revitalization Program** provides grant funds to support local initiatives that promote community stability and quality of life.

Floodplain Land Use Assistance Program provides grants and technical assistance to encourage the proper use of land and the management of floodplain lands within Pennsylvania.

The **State Planning Assistant Grant** provides funding to municipalities for preparation and maintenance of community development plans, policies and for plan implementation. Priority is given to projects with regional participation.

The **Small Communities Planning Assistance** grant is given to municipalities with 10,000 people or fewer, and offers a no-match funding source. This funding can be used for community conservation and neighborhood revitalization.

Community Development Block Grants provide funds and technical assistance for any type of community development, including public services, community facilities and development and planning and the amount of funding is set by formula. 70% of each community development block grant must be used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)⁸

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) offers funding specifically targeted for historic preservation and development projects. The PHMC Grants and Planning Program have a number of different grants available, including the **Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program**. These grants are available for the preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic properties and sites.

PA Fish and Boat Commission⁹

The PA Fish and Boat Commission offers grant programs to support fishing, boating and aquatic resource conservation. The commission website offers grant details and applications for a number of available programs and grants, including:

The **Boating Facility Grant Program** is available for county and municipal governments to develop access points on municipally-owned land. The Fish and Boat Commission also provides in-kind engineering services for the creation of these access points, and are used for major site improvements and not for routine maintenance or operation activities.

The **Coldwater Heritage Partnership (CHP)** provides leadership, coordination, technical assistance and funding support for the

⁸ <http://www.phmc.State.pa.us/>(accessed 10/2/06)

⁹ http://sites.State.pa.us/PA_Exec/Fish_Boat/grants.htm (accessed 10/2/06)

evaluation, conservation and protection of Pennsylvania’s coldwater streams. The CHP offers a grant program for non-profit organizations such as watershed groups, conservation districts, municipalities and local chapters of Trout Unlimited. The plans help to identify problems and locate opportunities for stream conservation.

The **State Wildlife Grant Program (SWG)** provides Federal funding for high-priority conservation projects impacting endangered threatened and at-risk species across Pennsylvania. Nearly \$2 million are available in Federal monies for these species in 2006, made available to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat and Game Commission through SWG.¹⁰

The **Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)** is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The LIP awards grants to establish or supplement programs that protect and restore wildlife habitats on private lands.

The Fish and Boat Commission also supports a **Water Trail Brochure Program**. The program encourages and promotes water trails by creating brochures that delineate water trail locations and access points for any interested water trail group. These groups must provide a map of the water trail and content for the brochure. The Fish and Boat Commission provides in-kind graphic design and printing layout expertise as well as reproduction services, which are available for a nominal fee.

¹⁰ http://sites.State.pa.us/PA_Exec/Fish_Boat/promo/grants/swg/0swg.htm (accessed 10/2/06)

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Growing Greener¹¹

The Growing Greener Program is the largest single investment of State funds in Pennsylvania history to address environmental concerns. The funds are distributed among the Department of Agriculture for farmland preservation projects; the DCNR for State Park renovations and improvements; and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority for water and sewer system upgrades. A number of Growing Greener grants have recently been awarded in the Southern Alleghenies region, including¹²:

- A \$60,000 grant for stream improvement for the Frankstown Branch of the Little Juniata Rivers in Huntingdon County in 2005
- A \$50,000 grant to the Fulton County Conservation District for implementation of stormwater management design in 2005
- A \$187,000 grant to Broad Top Township in Bedford County to treat abandoned mine drainage for the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River and Lake Raystown in 2003

The DEP also awards **Environmental Education Grants**, which are funded by the pollution fines and penalties collected in the Commonwealth each year. Non-profit

¹¹ <http://www.depweb.State.pa.us/growinggreener/site/default.asp?growinggreenerNav=|> (accessed 10/2/06)

¹² <http://www.dep.State.pa.us/grants/growgreen.asp> (accessed 10/3/06)

Part Five – A Plan for Action

conservation/education organizations and county conservation districts may apply for the grants, which usually range between \$1,000 and \$20,000.

Federal Funding Sources

The **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)**¹³ is a \$244.1 billion fund for numerous transportation programs to improve the Nation's transportation infrastructure, enhance economic growth and protect the environment. Two major provisions of the act target environmental stewardship and environmental streamlining. A total of \$370 million is provided through 2009 to develop and maintain recreational trails in the Country, among other environmental initiatives. A portion of Pennsylvania's SAFETEA-LU funds, administered through **PennDOT**, go to greenway projects with ties to transportation, historic preservation, bicycle/pedestrian improvements and/or environmental quality.

The **Transportation Enhancements, Home Town Streets and Safe Routes to School Program**¹⁴ is funded by the SAFETEA-LU ACT and administered by PennDOT. This program is a cost reimbursement program, and is available for any Federal or State agency, county or municipal government, school district or non-profit organization. Projects that fall into one or more of twelve

¹³ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/> (accessed 10/3/06)

¹⁴ <ftp://ftp.dot.State.pa.us/public/Bureaus/Cpdm/WEB/HTS%20-%20SRTS-TE-2005-06.pdf> (accessed 10/3/06)

categories, and also have a relationship to the surface transportation system are eligible for funding. The twelve eligible categories include:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles
- Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites
- Scenic or historic highway programs
- Landscaping or other scenic beautification
- Historic preservation
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation building, structures or facilities
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including conversion and use, thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails)
- Control and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Environmental mitigation of runoff pollution and provision of wildlife connectivity
- Establishment of transportation museums

Projects are selected in a collaborative process involving PennDOT and other State agencies, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs). Each MPO and RPO is responsible for ranking the projects in a priority order, and must also be included in the Commonwealth's Twelve-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and on an MPO's or RPO's TIP. Funds

from other Federal agencies may be used for the non-Federal or local match for the project. Typically, the local agency is responsible for funding the engineering of the project, and PennDOT subsequently provides the construction costs for the project. The 2005-2006 funding round is now closed, with the next funding round anticipated to begin in 2007.

The **Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank (PIB)**¹⁵ is another PennDOT-implemented program that provides low interest loans for transportation projects in Pennsylvania. Funds can be used for Hometown Streets/Safe Routes to School programs, pedestrian improvements and any other capital projects. Loan applications are considered on an ongoing basis, and applications are available on the PennDOT website.

The **Transportation, Community and System Preservation Program (TCSP)** addresses the relationships among transportation, community and system preservation plans and practices and identifies private sector-based initiatives to improve relationships. State and local governments, as well as MPOs are eligible for \$270 million in grants through 2009 as part of the SAFETEA-LU initiative.

The **Land and Water Conservation Fund**¹⁶ provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities, including trails and greenways. This fund is tied directly to the DCNR, and the State develops a selection criteria and ranking procedure for all statewide projects. The contact

¹⁵ <ftp://ftp.dot.State.pa.us/public/pdf/Final%20PIB%20Brochure.pdf> (accessed 10/3/06)

¹⁶ <http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/lwcf/> (accessed 10/3/06)

person for this fund is the Deputy Secretary of Conservation and Engineering at the DCNR.

The **Conservation Reserve Program**¹⁷, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has funds to address soil, water and related natural resource concerns in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. This program can be used to fund the maintenance of open space and non-public use greenways along water bodies and ridge lines.

The **Recreational Trails Program**¹⁸ (RTP) is an assistance program of PennDOT's FHWA that provides assistance by making funds available to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The program works closely with the National Park Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the USDA Forest Service. RTP funds have recently been used in the Southern Alleghenies Region, including a \$100,000 local grant in 2003 for the Allegheny Highlands Trail in Somerset County and a \$24,000 grant for the Cherry Trail in Somerset County for the DCNR Bureau of Forestry¹⁹.

¹⁷ <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/crpf/> (accessed 10/3/06)

¹⁸ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/> (accessed 10/3/06)

¹⁹ <http://www.funoutdoors.info/rtpfaq.html> (accessed 10/3/06)

The **Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program**²⁰ provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA joins with State, tribal or local governments to acquire conservation easements or other interests from landowners. Proposals for funding should be submitted to the Pennsylvania Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State office, and funding is available through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

The National Park Service operates the **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program**²¹, which is aimed at conserving land and water resources for communities. Eligible projects include conservation plans for protecting these resources, trail development and greenway development. RTCA funding is determined through a competitive process, and the deadline for projects set to start the next fiscal year is August 1.

The **Wetlands Reserve Program**²² is a voluntary program in which the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts and providing the opportunity to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their property. There are three program participation options: 10-

year restoration cost-share agreements, 30-year conservation easements and permanent easements. Program funding comes through the CCC, and implementation is handled by the NRCS.

The **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program**²³ provides funding for transportation projects and programs that will reduce transportation-related emissions in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas, as part of TEA-21. Eligible project types include bicycle and pedestrian facilities programs and inspection and maintenance programs, among others.

Other Funding Sources²⁴

In addition to Federal and State funding, there are a number of local initiatives that can provide funding for the Plan.

Bond referendums have been successfully placed on local ballots throughout the United States to support greenway development. Extensive information campaigns greatly enhance the success rate of referendum votes because of increased public and voter support.

Land donations from private parties, whether fee-simple or in the form of easements, supply municipalities with usable land for little to no expense and offer the landowner tax incentives.

The **Kodak American Greenways Awards Program**²⁵ provides grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout the United States. Grants are available for local, regional or statewide nonprofit organizations, and usually range between \$500 and \$1,500. Applications are due on June 1 of each calendar year.

A **sales tax** can be implemented to fund greenway acquisitions and improvements. Precedence has been set in other States, such as Georgia and Oklahoma.

Local governments can impose one-time **impact fees** to new development in a region. The money levied from impact fees can finance greenways outside of the area of new development.

Private foundations, corporations and other benefactors can be solicited to provide funding for greenways in communities. Local businesses may provide support through cash donations to specific greenway segments; donations of services to reduce cost of greenway; and donations equipment, labor and material for greenway construction and installation.

Smaller donations from individuals and businesses can be accepted in the form of trail amenities, such as benches, trash receptacles and picnic areas. Implementation requires planning and organization with design standards and costs associated with each amenity.

Charitable organizations such as land trusts or foundations can provide funds to municipalities

or non-profit organizations to acquire land and/or develop trails.

Volunteers can be solicited to help with all facets of greenway construction, including construction, maintenance and fund raising. A number of advocacy groups would be receptive to volunteering, including pedestrian and bicyclist groups, local historic societies, school groups, conservationists, church groups and civic clubs.

²⁰ <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/frpp/> (accessed 10/3/06)

²¹ <http://www.nps.gov/rtca/> (accessed 10/3/06)

²² <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/PROGRAMS/wrp/> (accessed 10/3/06)

²³ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cmaqpgs/> (accessed 10/3/06)

²⁴ <http://www.pagreenways.org/funding-local.htm> (accessed 10/3/06)

²⁵ <http://www.conservationfund.org/?article=2372> (accessed 10/3/06)

Part Five – A Plan for Action
