

Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation Landscape

2015 Top Accomplishments



ABOUT THE RIVERLANDS



The Susquehanna Riverlands features three major lakes created by hydroelectric dams, three nationally recognized recreation trails (Susquehanna River Trail, Kelly's Run Pinnacle Trail, and the Mason-Dixon Trail), as well as the 14 mile Northwest River Trail, and the Turkey Hill Section of the 29 mile Enola Low Grade Rail Trail. It provides opportunities to explore the rich historical and cultural history of the Lower Susquehanna Region including significant American Indian cultural landscapes, ecologically sensitive bird habitat such as the Conejohela flats and more than 2,000 acres of protected publicly accessible land, in 29 municipalities in Lancaster and York counties.

PURPOSE

To improve public access to the river, preserve environmentally sensitive areas and the forested river landscape, improve water quality, provide additional recreational opportunities, and revitalize the river communities of Marietta, Columbia, and Wrightsville.

LAND PROTECTION

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Approval Granted for PPL lands

The Lancaster County Conservancy partnered with the new owner of the PPL lands (Talen Energy) in the river hills, to work to protect an additional 500 acres of natural lands including additions to the Otter Creek Nature Preserve in York County, Pinnacle, Kelly's Run, Shenk's Ferry Wildflower Preserve, and lands that will form a new preserve at Fox Hollow adjacent to State Game Lands in Lancaster County. These lands are part of a multi-phase land transfer project with Talen Energy which will result in additional public lands in 2016.

CONSTRUCTION

Enola Low Grade Rail Trail



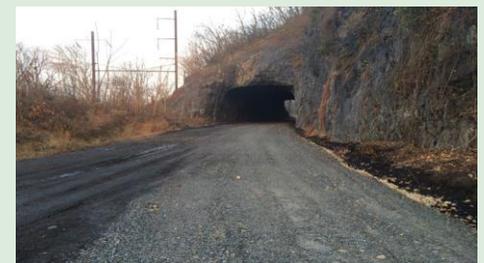
*Martic Forge Trestle Bridge
Enola Low Grade Rail Trail*

The towering 150 foot high Martic Forge trestle bridge in Conestoga Township is one of several historic bridges located on the Enola Low Grade Rail Trail. This 1,560 foot long bridge was re-decked and opened to the public. The bridge

connects a section of trail between Conestoga Township and Martic Township; creating 24 continuous miles of rail trail through Lancaster County.

North West Lancaster County Rail Trail

Partners celebrated the completion of an additional 6 miles of trails of the Northwest Lancaster County River Trail (NWL CRT). The 14 mile trail located between the village of Falmouth and Columbia Borough currently has approximately 10 miles completed.



*Point Rock Tunnel in Chickies Rock
Park Northwest River Trail*

As part of the Penn DOT led reconstruction of Route 30 a trail connection was created from the Columbia Riverfront Park under the new by-pass to Chickies Rock County Park.

The Chickies Rock County Park tunnel, also under construction, connects the park with the portion of the trail that crosses the Chiques Creek and Marietta Borough. These portions of the trail will be fully paved in the spring of 2016 providing the final connection between Columbia and Marietta.

Wayfinding and directional signage continues to be installed along route 441 directing visitors to trails heads.



Nine Interpretive panels were installed along the Corridor

Interpretive panels along the corridor highlight the unique history connecting trail users to the rich heritage of the area.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Art along the NWRT**

A mini-grant awarded to Donegal Intermediate School for an “artist in residence program” was led by the Lancaster Creative Factory. The Lancaster Creative Factory worked with over 500 students to the design, development and installation of a mosaic tile mural on the retaining wall of a NWLRT trailhead in East Donegal Township’s Riverfront Park. The mosaic tile features the cultural, historical and natural aspects of the Lower Susquehanna Region.



Mosaic Tile Mural at East Donegal Township’s Riverfront Park (Trailhead for the NWLRT)

The Susquehanna Heritage’s historic Zimmerman Center for Heritage in Wrightsville, has been designated by the National Park Service as a visitor contact station for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. It is the first designated visitor station of the

trail. It provides visitors to the region a variety of resources and information regarding recreational and historical opportunities along the Susquehanna River.

Outreach

Susquehanna Riverland Summit: The Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation Landscape annual summit was held at Columbia Crossings with over 75 municipal and community leaders in attendance to learn about the marketing and development of heritage and ecotourism in the Susquehanna Riverlands region. This is in preparation of the launching of the new “SusquehannaRiverlands.org” website and marketing campaign that will kick off in the spring of 2016.

Municipal Outreach: Staff from the Lancaster County Conservancy and DCNR presented information about the Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation Landscape to Manor, Hellam, and Chanceford Townships in 2015. They also worked with Marietta officials to develop a strategic funding plan to support their efforts with green infrastructure planning to mitigate storm water issues and rehabilitating their park system.

**PARTNERSHIP
Susquehanna Riverlands Organizational Structure**

The Leadership Team was expanded for 2016 to include representatives from Farm and Natural Lands Trust of York County, Lancaster County Housing & Redevelopment Authorities, and Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. They join existing members from the York County Planning Commission, Lancaster County Planning Commission, Susquehanna Heritage, NPS, Lancaster County Conservancy, Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority, Indian Steps Museum, PA Downtown Center and DCNR. The Leadership Team meets quarterly to review the work of sub-committees and advance the goals laid out in the action plan.

**SUSQUEHANNA RIVERLANDS
MINI-GRANT PROGRAM:
2015 Grant Awards**

Drumore Township / Donegal Trout Unlimited - Design and construct stream improvement devices, fish habitat structures, and a riparian buffer along Fishing Creek at Drumore Park.

York County Parks – Highpoint Meadow – including site assessment and inventory of the existing plants and a 1 acre demonstration project meadow.

North Bay - A Riverlands place based environmental education pilot program with approx 100 Martic Elementary school 5th and 6th grade students.

Conservation Society of York County - Trout in Bonham is a project that will develop 1000+ linear feet of Spenser Creek into a trout incubation area for trout in the classroom education. Plus stream restoration measures.

Columbia Historic and Preservation Society - Historic Mt. Bethel Cemetery Signage.

Wrightsville Borough - As part of the Riverfront Park Master Plan the borough must complete a geomorphology study of the park site and preliminary archaeological work.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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