

## Who will carry out the Plan's recommendations?

The organizations and agencies responsible for implementation of strategic actions take on the task of bringing projects to fruition, strengthened by solid partnerships and a shared vision. The implementing organizations and agencies include:

- Lycoming County Commissioners
- Lycoming County Planning and Community Development
- Lycoming County Planning Commission
- Lycoming County Conservation District
- Lycoming County Recreation Commission
- Lycoming County Visitors Bureau
- Lycoming County Recreation Authority
- Susquehanna Greenway Partnership
- Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce
- Williamsport Lycoming Arts Council
- PA Wilds Taskforce
- School Districts
- Host Communities
- Sports Leagues
- PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- PA Fish and Boat Commission
- PA Game Commission
- Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy
- Trout Unlimited
- Watershed Associations



### If you want to help:

- Identify the implementation organization or agency for the project of interest.
- Contact the implementation organization or agency and volunteer your assistance.

A full list of implementation actions (summarized above) can be seen in the Appendix of the Recreation, Parks, and Open Space/Greenways Plan. You can view the entire plan in PDF format online at [www.lyco.org](http://www.lyco.org), under Planning and Community Development Department.

Once the Plan has been adopted by Lycoming County and approved by DCNR, the responsible organizations and agencies can apply for grant funds, secure other funding, and start implementation.

# LYCOMING COUNTY RECREATION, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE/GREENWAY PLAN

## Executive Summary



This project was financed by a grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Bureau of Recreation and Conservation; a grant from the PA Department of Community & Economic Development, and funds from the County of Lycoming.

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## Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to facilitate the development and enhancement of recreation facilities, parks, open space and greenways in Lycoming County. The plan presents a wide spectrum of visions, goals and implementation strategies that can be used by the County and local municipalities in decision making. Additionally this plan complements, augments, and is a functional element of the Comprehensive Plan for Lycoming County.

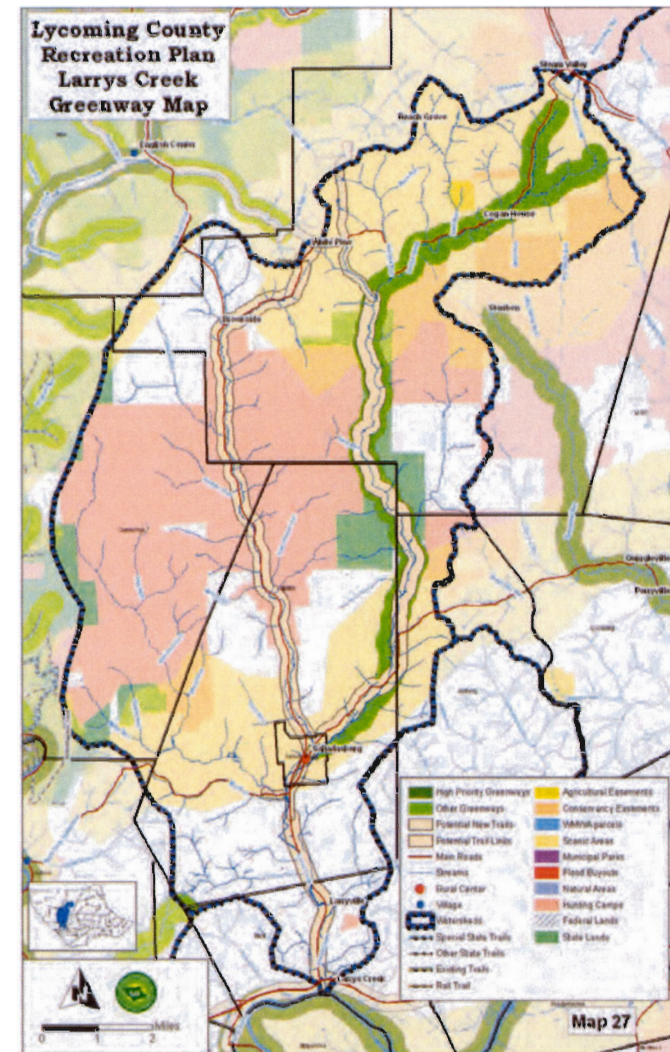
The Lycoming County Planning Commission formed an Advisory Committee and employed the services of a consultant. The Advisory Committee was comprised of recreation officials, natural resource user groups, municipal officials, school district representatives, and others who have an interest in recreation, parks and open space. An extensive direct mail public survey was conducted, eleven focus groups were convened, a field survey was conducted of recreation facilities, and questionnaires were mailed to numerous recreation providers. (Ch 1-3)

The Planning Commission with input from the Advisory Committee, first sought to discern the opportunities and issues in the County:

- An extensive natural resource base of clean streams, working forests and farms, and vast areas of State Forest, Game Lands, hunting clubs, and private open space that contribute greatly to our quality of life.
- A strong hunting, fishing, and outdoor sports tradition.
- An opportunity through the PA Wilds Initiative to increase tourism, develop needed infrastructure and services with State support, and provide economic benefits, particularly for gateway communities such as Jersey Shore. A concern is to avoid exceeding the physical, biological and social carrying capacity of the resource.
- Continuing expansion of school district recreation facilities and programs for students and the public.
- Limited financial resources for recreation, parks and open space/greenways, coupled with aging sewer and water infrastructure, and increasing demand for public services.
- An extensive network of neighborhood and regional scale parks, many of which need safety improvements and additional facilities.
- Lack of professional technical recreation planning and project development assistance.
- An active and expanding YMCA with branches in the western, central, and eastern portions of the County.
- Fragmented and inconsistent land use ordinances which promote land consumptive development in rural resource areas.
- Active and effective land conservation organizations, e.g. the Northcentral PA Conservancy.
- The Pine Creek Trail, a premier recreation facility, that could spur development of a Susquehanna River trail system.
- Strong public support and interest in trails but no regional trail development entity in Lycoming County.
- Strong leadership from County and municipal officials, and strong support from the Chamber of Commerce for recreation improvements and increased tourism.
- Public support for maintaining and enhancing recreation programs, facilities and open space protection.

## Early Implementation Greenway/Trail Project

The priority implementation project is development of the Susquehanna River Recreational Greenway/Trail, which includes connection to the Pine Creek Trail at Jersey Shore and extension to Williamsport, connection at Montoursville and extension to Muncy and Hughesville, and extension from Eastern Lycoming County to Union County and beyond. Greenway maps were prepared for each watershed in the County. A detailed Greenway demonstration map was prepared for the Hepburnville to Trout Run Greenway and is contained within the Map Book for this Plan.





# Lycoming County Greenway

## What is a Greenway?

**A greenway is a corridor of open space. Greenways vary greatly in scale, from narrow ribbons of green that run through urban, suburban, and rural areas to wider corridors that incorporate diverse natural, cultural and scenic features. They can incorporate both public and private property, and can be land or water-based. They may follow old railways, canals, or ridge tops, or they may follow stream corridors, shorelines, or wetlands, and include water trails for non-motorized craft.**

**Some greenways are recreational corridors or scenic byways that may accommodate motorized and non-motorized vehicles. Others function almost exclusively for environmental protection and are not designed for human passage.**

**Greenways differ in their location and function, but overall, a greenway will protect natural, cultural, and scenic resources, provide recreational benefits, enhance natural beauty and quality of life in neighborhoods and communities, and stimulate economic development opportunities.**

The Commission then created Visions and recommended goals and implementation strategies.

## Goals of the Lycoming County Recreation, Parks, and Open Space/Greenways Plan (Chapter 1)

- Provide a basis for allocating local & state resources to meet recreational needs of residents, businesses & tourists.
- Promote regional cooperation for provision of recreational facilities. The Plan is a priority of the Greater Williamsport Area Alliance.
- Promote sustainable economic development, including tourism.
- Provide statistical data & other documentation to support grant applications & acquire funding.
- Identify opportunities for greenways, open space & floodplain preservation.
- Identify opportunities for public access points & linkages between trail systems & County population centers.
- Assist elected officials in making decisions and wisely spending limited tax dollars.
- Identify key issues and raise awareness of current issues and opportunities.
- Prioritize projects and assist municipalities in obtaining a fair share of grant funds for recreation and parks.
- Evaluate community recreation facilities, services and programs and provide framework for measuring success in serving community needs.
- Establish organizational structure, build teamwork, and gain buy-in to implement priority projects.
- Establish a blueprint for maintaining, improving and adding to recreation facilities, services and programs so that everyone is working together in the same direction.

## Recommended Actions

Goals and objectives were developed to achieve each vision, and a strategy was designed to accomplish the goals and objectives. Methods, tools and references, partners, and potential funding sources were identified for each strategy. Specific actions and projects are provided for the strategies. Detailed information on each implementation action, to include agency or organization responsible for implementation, estimate of probable cost where known, and priority are included in the Appendix I of the Plan.





## Priority Implementation Actions by Lycoming County (Chapter 4)

The County participates in and supports various recreational events by providing specialized equipment and staff assistance. The County also supports local programs by making pre-release prisoners and staff available for construction of playgrounds and other recreational facilities. Lycoming County Planning & Community Development provides limited recreation assistance, including grant writing. The County Transportation Planner has primary responsibility for trail system planning. The Lycoming County Recreation Authority manages the White Deer golf courses.

In order to improve the efficiency of County support of recreation and to achieve the visions and goals, the following strategies are recommended:

- Expand the provision of recreation programming and project development assistance to municipalities through grant-funded County or multi-municipal staff position(s), contracted services with the YMCA or other organizations, or other means.
- Consider establishing a Lycoming County Recreation Commission to promote development of recreation facilities and programs.
- Create and sustain a Lycoming County Recreation Council of area recreation providers to foster working partnerships between state agencies, local governments, and private business.
- Consider establishing a greenway and trail entity to manage a County trail system, or partner with a regional or multi-county trail organization(s).
- Continue to upgrade programs and facilities at the White Deer Golf Complex.



## Recreation Providers, Facilities and Services (Chapter 5)

There are many state and local organizations, agencies and businesses that provide recreation facilities and services within Lycoming County. The following strategies are recommended for recreation providers:

- Establish a County-wide network of recreation commissions, committees, and authorities in order to facilitate inter-municipal partnerships and regional programs and facilities.
- Develop a broad funding strategy to upgrade, maintain, and add recreation services and facilities.
- Apply "Active Communities by Design" philosophies to promote healthier lifestyles.
- Ensure that every playground is safe and meets current industry standards.



## Recreation Activities (Chapter 6)

Recreation activities addressed in the Plan include arts and entertainment, water related activities, winter recreation, youth sports, and youth and adult activities. The following strategies are recommended:

- Promote a centralized and coordinated approach to arts and entertainment.
- Improve arts and entertainment facilities.
- Market water related activities to attract tourists for an increased duration visit.
- Construct additional public facilities for water related activities.
- Market winter recreation opportunities to increase tourism.
- Support private construction of an indoor multi-purpose arena in the Williamsport area.
- Develop winter recreation areas in each community.
- Maximize the use of private and public recreation facilities to meet the needs of youth sports and recreation.
- Develop programs to help families participate in organized sports activities.
- Provide outstanding athletic facilities for team and individual sports.
- Provide increased opportunities for extreme sports type activities.
- Provide improved recreation activities for all age groups.



## Open Space, Trails and Greenways (Chapters 7 & 8)

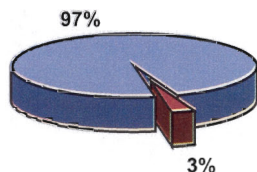
The Open Space, Trails and Greenways element of this Plan provides a concept to conserve natural resources and open space, while at the same time providing public access to recreation opportunities and maintaining the region as a destination attraction to revitalize local economies. The following strategies are recommended for Open Space, Trails and Greenways:

- Develop a comprehensive pedestrian plan that supports recreation.
- Maintain and improve existing trails.
- Market outdoor recreation opportunities to increase tourism.
- Develop new trails and trail links.
- Promote development according to land stewardship and sustainable community principles.
- Protect the scenic beauty and rural legacy of our County through open space planning and utilization of the PA Wilds Design Guide.
- Actively involve health providers in greenway development.
- Pursue alternative transportation options that promote resource conservation.
- Improve water quality.
- Adopt a conservation greenway plan for protection of resources and biodiversity.
- Strengthen natural resource conservation measures.

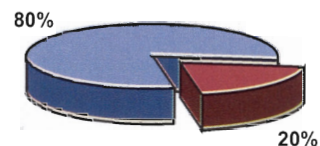




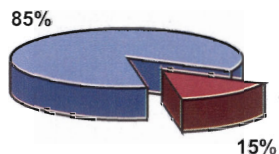
Is it Important to Protect Natural Plant Buffers Along Stream Corridors?



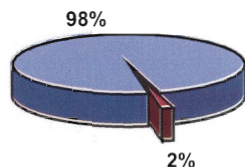
Should Outdoor Recreation Opportunities for Tourism be Expanded and Enhanced?



Is it Important to Keep Forestland Available for Timber Production?

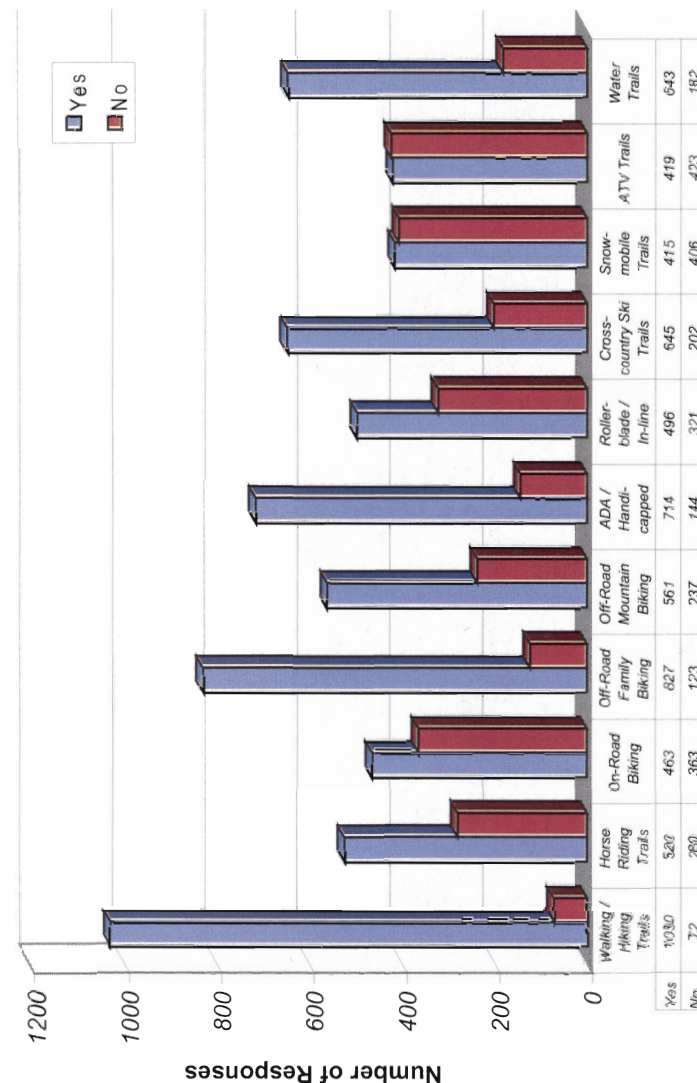


Is it Important to Maintain Forestland for Ecological and Recreation Purposes?



## Lycoming County Recreation Survey

Do You Support Development of More of the Following Trail Types?





## Trail Network Concept Plan

