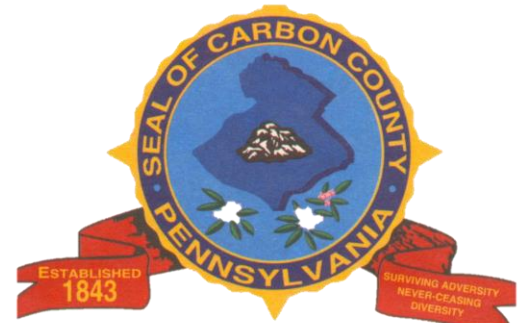


Planning Nuts and Bolts

Growing a Stronger Carbon County



PennState Extension





Wildlands Conservancy

Planning Nuts and Bolts

Session 2, October 29, 2020

Municipal Resources and Funding Opportunities

Presenters:

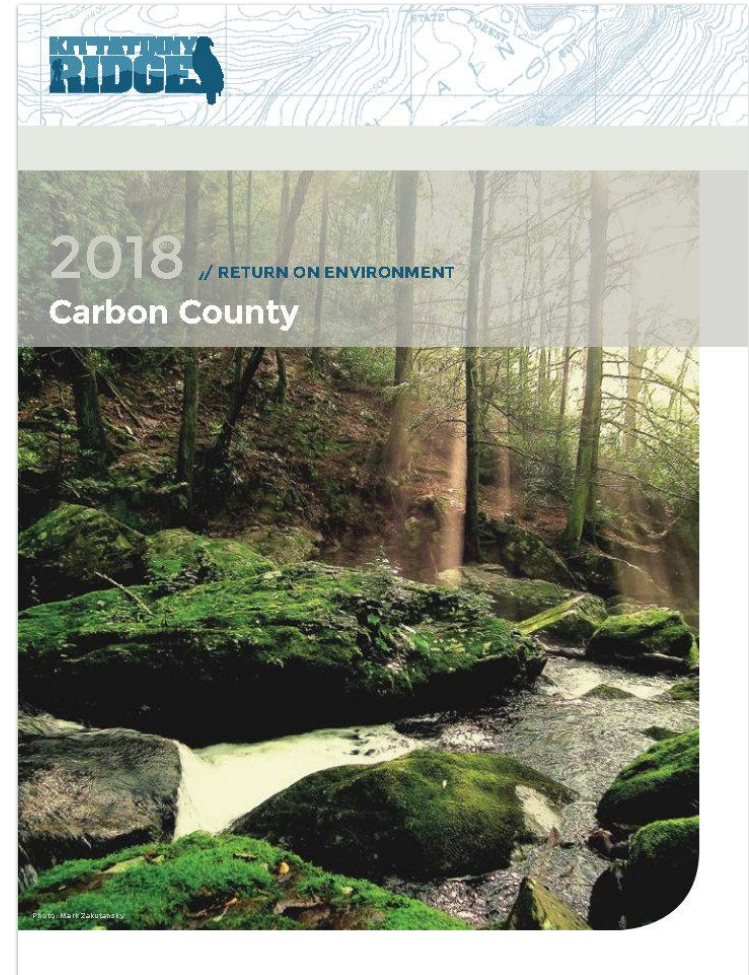
Dennis DeMara, Conservation Outreach Coordinator

Christopher Strohler, Senior Conservation Planner

Session 1 Recap

What did we learn?

- **What is planning?**
 - Professional practice and an academic study
 - Broad view of how the pieces of your community fit together like a puzzle
- **Why is planning important?**
 - Provides a big picture of **WHAT** you want and **HOW** to focus your resources
 - \$\$\$
- **Planning law and practice/tools available**
- **Carbon County Office of Planning & Development**
 - Role of County Planning Commission
 - County Comprehensive Plan
 - Complimentary Plans
- **Carbon County Return on Environment**



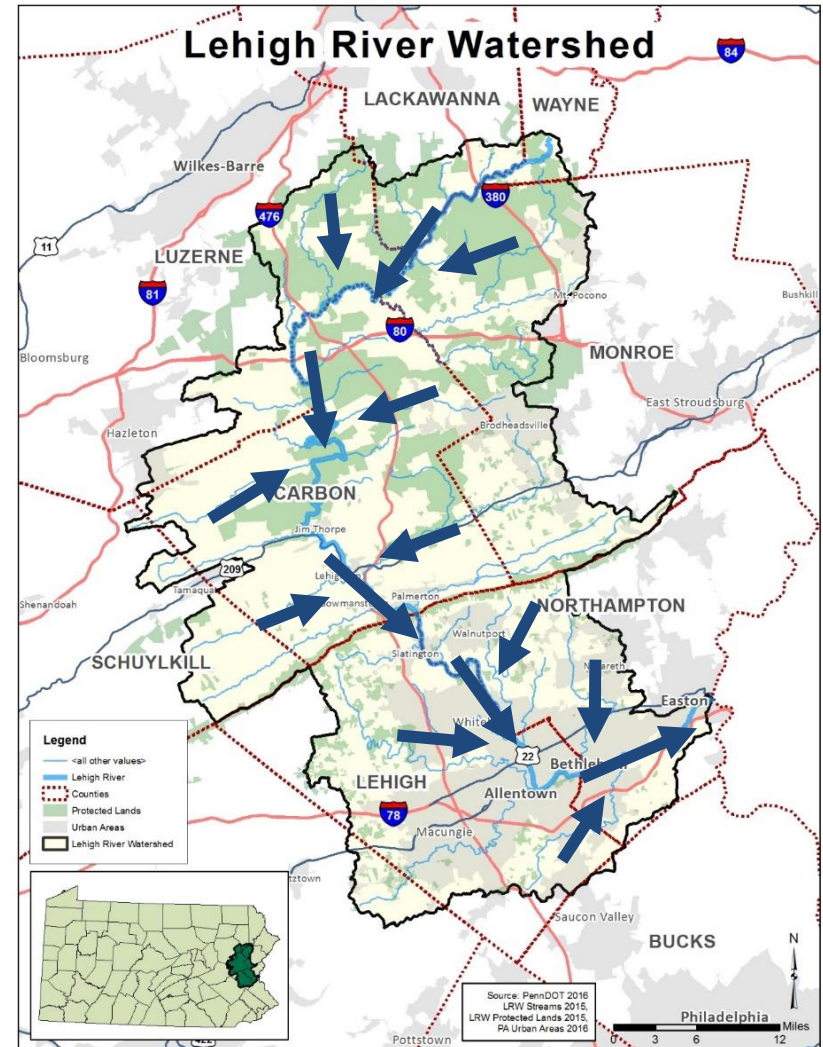
Lehigh River Watershed

What is a watershed?

- A geographic area of land across which water and the material it contains, flows to a single common outlet – a stream, lake, or river

Lehigh River Watershed

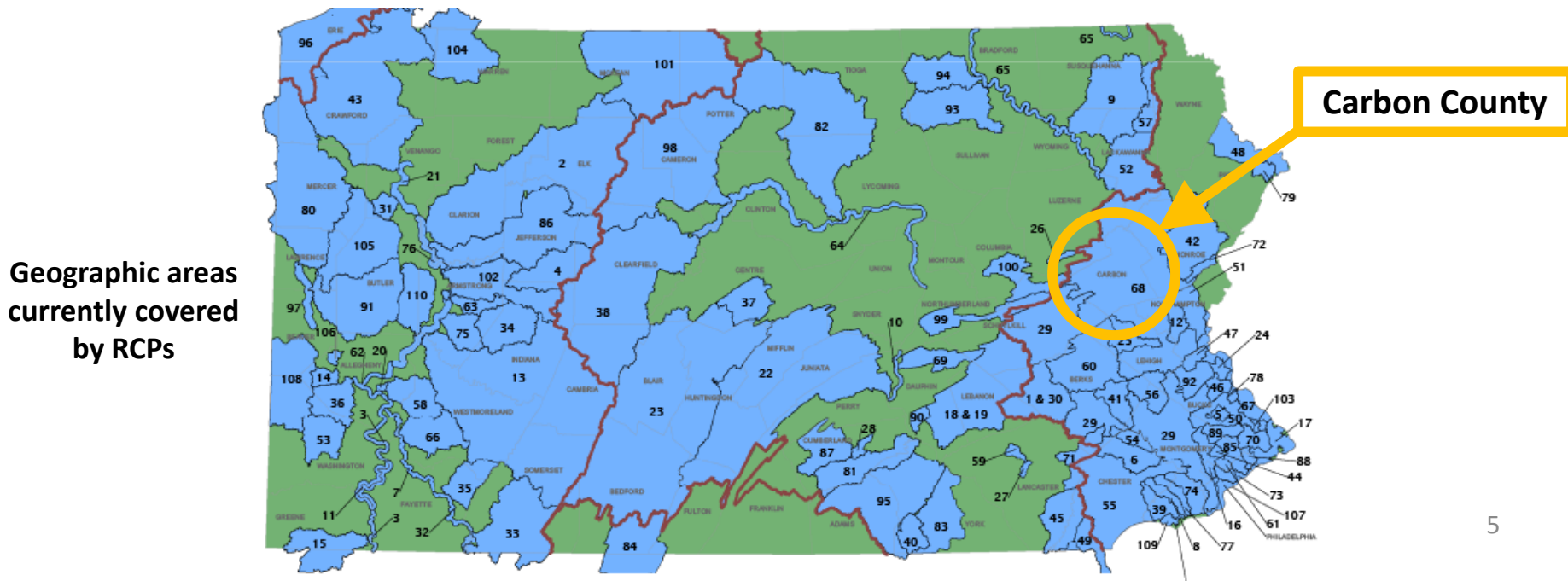
- 1,300 sq. miles
- Over 2,000 miles of stream
- Diverse geology, habitat, and history
- 10 Counties, 108 Municipalities – Carbon County at the center



Rivers Conservation Program – PA DCNR

Rivers Conservation Plan (RCP)

- Large scale planning on a watershed level
- All nature is interconnected – everything runs downstream
- Manage and protect natural resources, while planning for man-made impacts
 - Land
 - Water
 - Wildlife
 - Outdoor Recreation
- Outline clear recommendations for municipal projects – proactive not reactive
- Rivers Registry – list of completed RCPs throughout PA, priority for funding



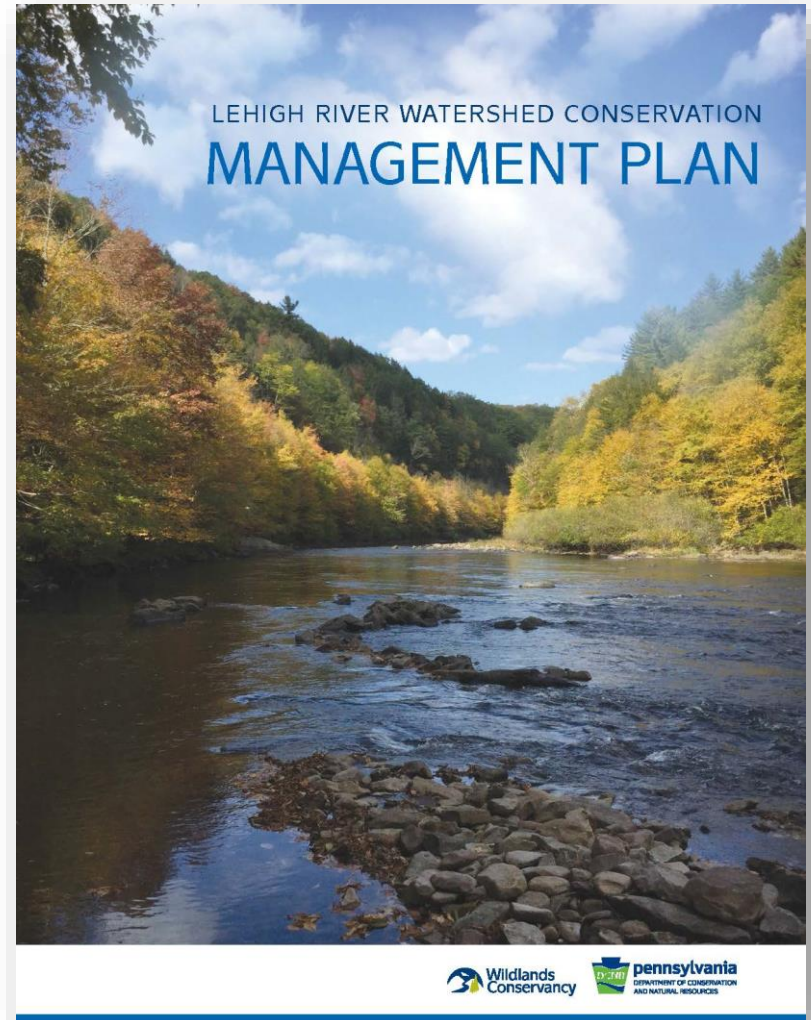
Lehigh River Watershed Conservation Management Plan

Original Plan

- Completed by Wildlands and partners in 2003
- Historical, cultural, environmental state of the watershed
- Guiding document for natural resource preservation

2018 Update

- Provide direction for the next 10 years
- Reflect on challenges/accomplishments
- Ask, how did we do?



Have we made a difference?

Since 2003

- Over 75,000 acres permanently protected
- 40 dams have been removed from streams in the watershed
- Over 70 miles of trails have been constructed
- Over a dozen Environmental Advisory Councils were created
- Return on Environment Studies have been completed in Carbon, Lehigh, and Northampton Counties
- Strong planning has lead to a multi-million dollar investment from the William Penn Foundation for the Delaware River Watershed Initiative – Upper Lehigh Watershed is one of eight clusters targeted for investment to improve and maintain water quality



**Drone image of dam removal at the headwaters of the Lehigh River.
500-acre Klondike Property
protected in 2018**

Greenway Planning

What is a greenway?

- A linear corridor of land connecting people and places, usually following a natural feature (stream, valley, ridgeline, etc.)

Benefits

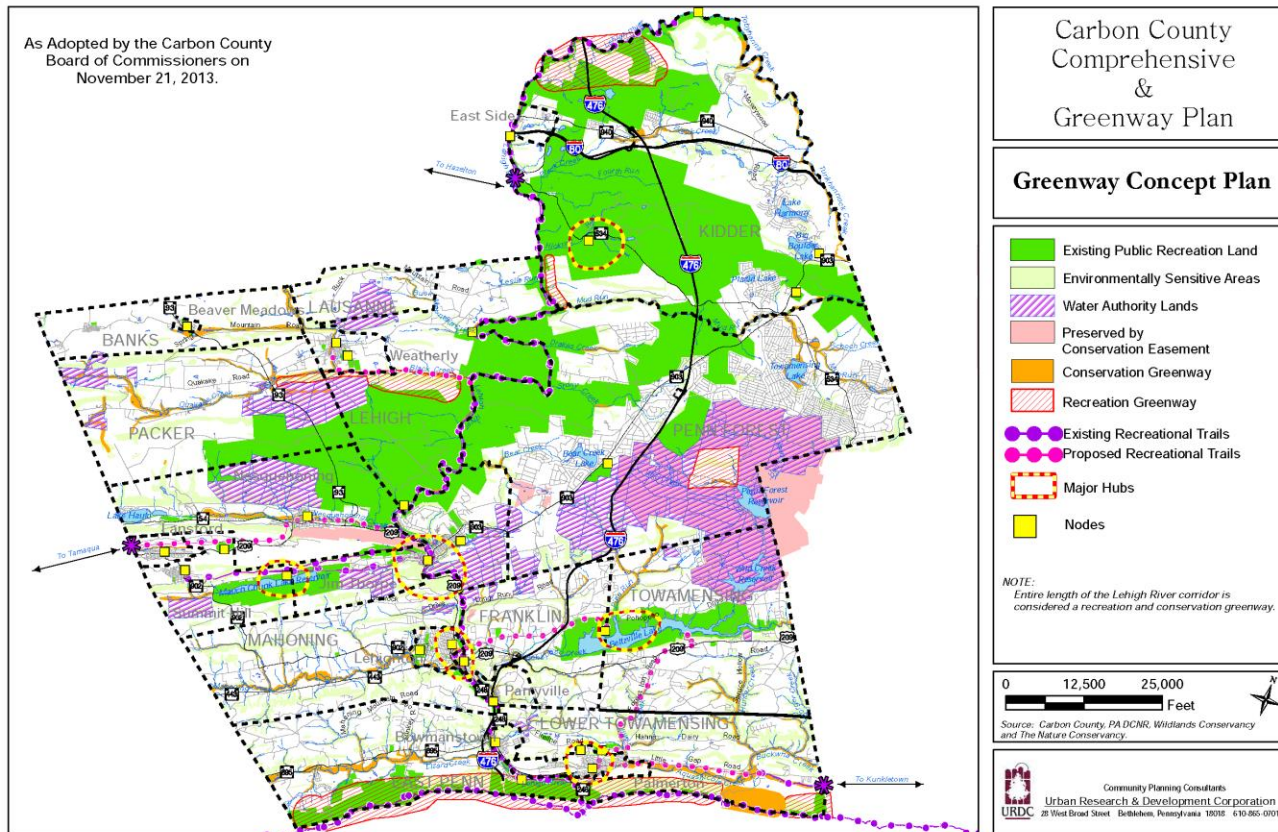
- Landscape level approach to connectivity
- Connect people, communities, and natural systems
- Preserve wildlife corridors, prevent forest fragmentation
- Natural resource conservation, recreation, economic development



Carbon County Comprehensive & Greenway Plan

Why Plan Together?

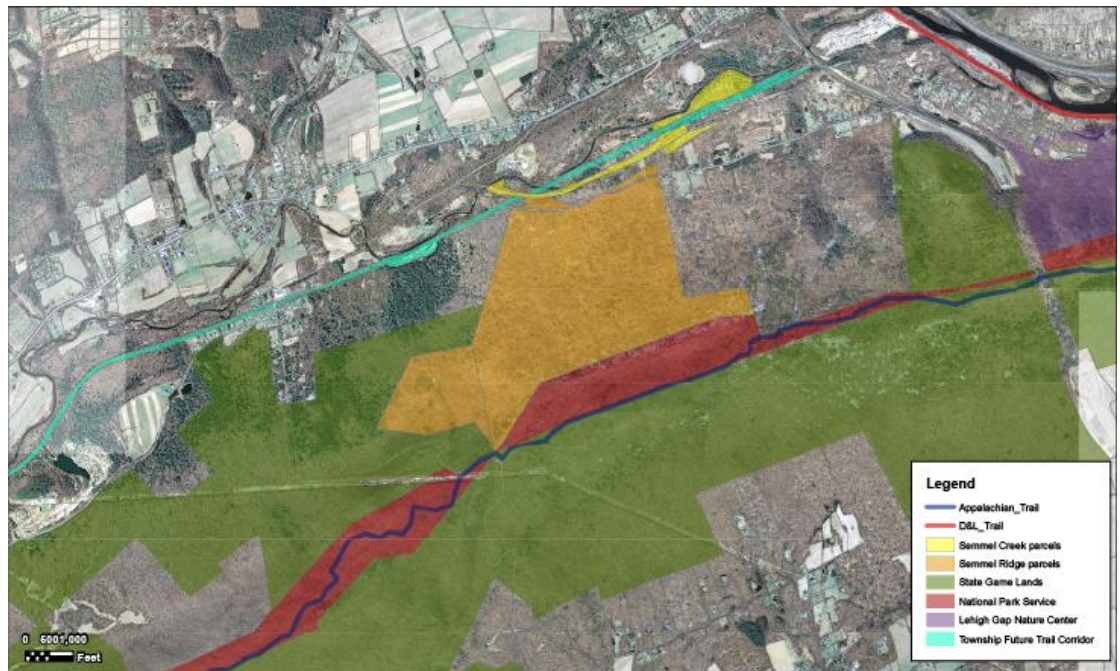
- Ensures policies and principles are inter-related
- Assess and project growth with connectivity and conservation of natural systems
- Retain the quality that attracts people to live, work, and visit Carbon County



Greenway Plan - Implementation

Lizard Creek Greenway

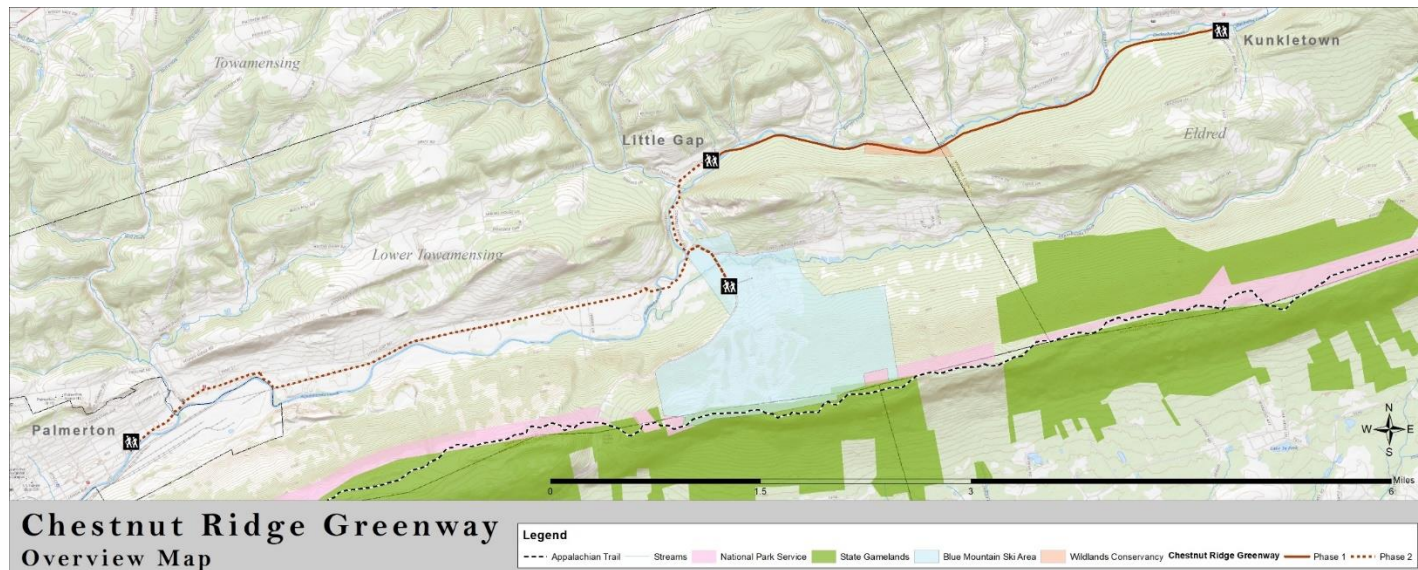
- Identified as a priority “Conservation Greenway” in the County Plan
- Local interest in a trail, need for more high level planning
- Key first steps:
 - Land acquisition
 - Identify obstacles
 - Regional expanse
 - Funding needs



Greenway Plan - Implementation

Chestnut Ridge Greenway

- Identified as another priority “Conservation Greenway” and opportunity for a trail
- Started over 30 years ago with Wildlands purchase of abandoned railbed
- Need for more coordinated planning to be successful
- Trail Feasibility Study – develop the vision, assemble the partners, plan for action
 - Tourism/Economic Development – Directing resources and efforts where needed
 - Placemaking – Reshaping small communities with existing assets
 - Community Engagement – public involvement, being good neighbors, multi-municipal approach
 - Dealing with unanswered questions and challenges



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