

Vision of the

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape:

Lehigh Valley communities are linked to greenways, trails, and outdoor experiences resulting in stronger local economies and improved public health, green infrastructure and natural resources



Goals:

- 1: **Land Conservation & Restoration** - Conserve critical landscapes, restore degraded habitats including stream corridors, and promote best management practices
- 2: **Outdoor Recreation & Trail Connections** - Connect people to greenway and trail opportunities to promote healthy living, recreation, and the region's green assets
- 3: **Community Revitalization** – Support community revitalization through green infrastructure that enhances the quality of life
- 4: **Local Education & Outreach** – Promote understanding of our natural environment and its benefits to our communities

2019 Lehigh Valley Greenways Action Plan

Note: An application round will be administered for 2019 Lehigh Valley Greenways mini grants 3/22 – 5/3/2019. Mini grant requests often help advance our annual work plan.

Promote Awareness of Greenways Partnership – 15% increase in LVG website events

- Host LVG legislative event and a LVG Festival
- Provide “toolkit” for partners to promote LVG: elevator speech, tabletop sign, logo widget
- Generate 15% increase (total 160+) in partner events posted on the online calendar.
- Create a short informational video about Lehigh Valley Greenways.
- Provide 4 articles for municipalities to use in newsletters and to promote on the website.
- Implement Green Retail Program and utilize money in 2020 minigrant round if enough money was earned.
- Engage new college, agriculture and health partners.

Land Protection – preserve 500 more natural acres and 800 more agricultural acres

- Promote municipal adoption of official maps through mini grant funding and support adoption of 2 Municipal Open Space Referendums.
- Advocate for open space funding in both counties following actions outlined in each of the county Liveable Landscapes Plans.
- Addition of 2 new Preserves.
- Implement Lehigh River Watershed Plan property ranking by conserving 5 of the high-ranking properties in the conservation landscape.

Environmental Restoration – restore 100 acres and 3 miles of stream during 2018-2019

- Hold quarterly meetings of Riparian Buffer Task Force to improve coordination and track metrics.
- Implement at least 12 of the 2019 priority buffer projects.
- Facilitate Nazareth Area HS riparian buffer project on Shoeneck Creek including Watershed Education workshop.

- Complete the Lehigh Valley Buffer Analysis and use the results to develop and implement new buffer restoration projects.
- Hold a training on Buffer Analysis for LVG partners.
- Support Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference.
- Remove two dams in the Lehigh Valley to continue the restoration of free-flowing, healthy streams.

Trails and Bicycle/Pedestrian Connections – Collectively build and plan regional trail system as THE LINK Trail Network

- Close Lehigh Valley Trail Gap #8 Karl Stirner Arts Trail to Palmer Township Bike Path, Gap 9A1 from Jacobsburg to Filetown Rd, and a portion of Gap #2C Jordan Greenway (0.8 miles).
- Support the creation and implementation of Lehigh Valley Walk/Roll Plan.
- Tasks for THE LINK Trail Coalition:
 - Finalize Steering Committee and governance documents.
 - Recruit 20+ member organizations and hold a kickoff meeting and brand training.
 - Complete THE LINK website and pdf map to replace the landing page.
 - Have an exhibit at 10+ large public events to educate about THE LINK.
 - Establish “prioritization pipeline” for tracking trail projects throughout the region.
 - Secure funding (admin, materials, capital) to oversee the marketing, lead the coalition and close high priority gaps.

Education & Engagement – involve a more inclusive audience in the outdoors and environmental education

- Offer inclusiveness training for partnership.
- Develop Pennsylvania Outdoor Corp presence and opportunities with in partnership.
- Continue collaborative work between Color of Nature and Community Bike Works to foster a continuum of environmental awareness to career opportunities.
- Bring increased programming to local parks.
- Add a job and internship board to the Greenways website.
- Engage/recruit local Colleges/Students to present research and research findings done on partnership properties at LVG partnership meeting.
- Continue to utilize Return on Environment for data and public presentations.