



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
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2021 Lehigh Valley Greenways Action Plan

Goal #1 Promote Awareness and Outreach of Greenways Partnership

- Engage new and diverse groups that are forming because of the pandemic to join the partnership
- Host Local Leaders at a Municipal/Partners Breakfast
- Grow the Green Retail Program and utilize money in 2022 mini grant round
- Engage Lehigh Valley citizens where “they are at” to promote parks and trails by attending neighborhood community and cultural events
- Add a job and internship board to the Greenways website

Goal #2 Land Protection – Preserve 400 natural acres and 100 agricultural acres

- Work with municipalities on open space planning, building on the good success from 2020
 - Initiate conversations with two municipalities on open space program (one/county)
 - Reevaluate conservation program priorities with existing municipalities
- Promote adoption of more Municipal Open Space Referendums. Goal = 1 referendum
- Work with Lehigh and Northampton Counties to support dedicated natural area funding
- Form a Land Protection Committee to identify additional funding sources and promote benefits of open space to general public

Goal #3 Environmental Restoration – Restore 10 acres and 1 mile of stream

- Implement at least 4 of the 2021 priority buffer projects (minimum 5 acres and at least 2 high visibility projects at schools/parks/trails with an outreach/education component) –
- Implement at least 3 instream restoration projects (include water quality monitoring on at least 2 projects to demonstrate success)
- Provide on-the-ground help, funding, and success stories for the purpose of sharing environmental restoration BMPs for MS4

- Identify and share any best practices currently being used by townships for warehouse development.
- Increase knowledge and use of the partnership-wide Riparian Buffer Analysis Tool, and use to identify high priority projects, with focus on municipalities
- Revise partnership outreach efforts to Lehigh Valley residents on environmental restoration BMPs due to COVID impacts; use LVG to promote efforts to all residents if applicable, not just “landowners”
- Increase no-mow and native wildflower meadow areas including educational signage.

Goal #4 Trails and Bicycle/Pedestrian Connections –Build and plan regional trail system as THE LINK Trail Network

- Implement the marketing/communications plan and lead the coalition
- Add more information to THE LINK website to improve accessibility for all users
- Complete a suite of maps to help share information with the public and plan future projects
- To better advocate and promote trails collectively in the region, host collective sign workshop for LVG and LINK partners; establish regional signage best practices and guidelines; and coordinate a meeting to establish a regional trail counter/metric workgroup
- Trail Projects/Gaps:
 - Start Construction Phase: D&L Trail - Catasauqua to Hanover Township; D&L Trail – Northampton to North Catasauqua; Jordan Creek Greenway – Allentown
 - Complete Engineering Phase: Jordan Creek Greenway – Covered Bridge Park
 - Complete Acquisition Phase: Two Rivers Trailway – Plainfield
 - Fund Design Phase: Jordan Creek Greenway – Jordan Road
 - Complete Acquisition Plan: Bushkill Township Trail – Route 512 to Appalachian Trail; South Bethlehem Greenway to Saucon Rail Trail

Goal #5 Education & Engagement – Involve a more inclusive audience in the outdoors and environmental education by closing gaps

- Use education providers to move forward in their 2020 gap analysis to engage all school districts/schools in Lehigh Valley
 - Strive for 6 multi partnership environmental projects, coordinating based on data
 - Create a database of school contacts to share across partnership
 - Create an “Education Night/ Winter Meet and Greet” to let teachers know that the partnership is a resource
- Engage at least two colleges/universities (at least one per county) through mini grants, internship programs, advisory councils or other active partnership –
- Offer focused environmental educational programming for municipal public work employees
- Promote trail etiquette through education and marketing and publicize how trail users can access their local trailhead or park from their neighborhoods