

# Clarion River Greenway



Connecting Our Past with a  
Vision for Our Future

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## *Executive Summary*

Located in northwestern Pennsylvania, the Clarion River stretches 100 miles from its headwaters in McKean County to its confluence with the Allegheny River in Clarion County. A little more than 51 miles of the river, approximately from Ridgway to the backwaters of Piney Dam, have been designated Scenic and Recreational under the federal Wild and Scenic program.

The Wild and Scenic portion of the river traverses four counties, flowing from Elk County, through Jefferson and Forest counties, until the designation ends in Clarion County. Through this region, the river passes through nine townships (Ridgway, Spring Creek, and Millstone townships in Elk County; Barnett and Heath townships in Jefferson County; Barnett Township in Forest County; and Farmington, Mill Creek, and Highland townships in Clarion County).

The Clarion River is a unique public resource with a rich history as a core industrial area, and a bright future that boasts some of the best recreational opportunities for the citizens of Pennsylvania and visitors to the region. Once declared the most polluted river in the state, the river's water quality has experienced a tremendous recovery.

The creation of the Clarion River Greenway is the third step in a process to plan for the region's future. Previously, a water trail map was created for the length of the river. This map is an invaluable guide for those who plan to enjoy a trip down the river. The map orients visitors with the river's access points, together with various natural, cultural, and historic destinations along the river. The second step was the creation of four access signs, modeled after the water trail map and placed along the Clarion River. The signs are located at Love's Canoe in Ridgway, on Allegheny National Forest property at the Irwin Run access, at Cook Forest State Park, and at the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Mill Creek access.

The re-emergence of the Clarion River has resulted in a growing interest in recreational opportunities along the Wild and Scenic portion of the river and has served as a catalyst for many new business opportunities. This greenway plan will develop a holistic approach to managing the greenway to conserve the natural resources that attract visitors, protect the community values of local residents, and promote sound economic development strategies that will facilitate the continuing recovery of the Wild and Scenic Clarion River.

Through this plan, the greenway corridor will be divided into five river reaches, which will connect the five activity hubs along the Wild and Scenic Clarion River. The plan will also highlight "links," which are connections between hubs and other natural, cultural, historical, and recreational destinations. Throughout the reaches, concerns expressed by local stakeholders will be discussed, and recommendations to address these issues will be outlined.

The greenway will serve as a link between all the natural, cultural, and historical resources along the Wild and Scenic Clarion River corridor. Ultimately, the Clarion River Greenway will become a valuable asset to the region as a result of extensive work by many stakeholders. In the future, the Clarion River Greenway will increase in value as a regional resource as it links with other greenways and planning efforts in the state.

The most important aspect of the greenway planning process is the implementation of this greenway plan. It is important that this effort and this opportunity not be lost because the plan is never set into motion. The greenway planning effort has been guided by a knowledgeable steering committee of local stakeholders. This core group is committed to meeting in the future to begin

*Clarion River Greenway Plan*

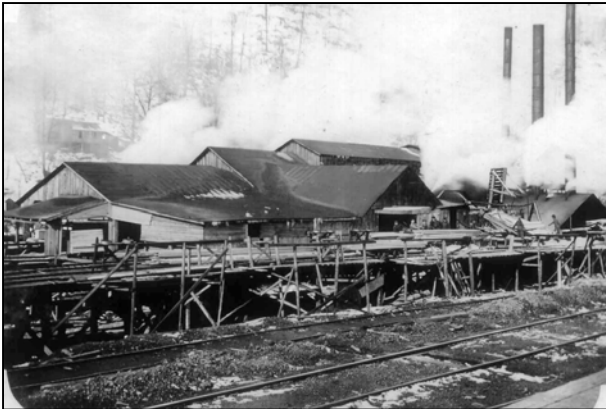
implementation of the plan's recommendations. This group, along with additional support from local stakeholders, is critical to the long-term success of the Clarion River Greenway, and to ensuring the Wild and Scenic Clarion River continues its amazing recovery.

## *The Past*

The story of the Clarion River is a story of nature's awesome resiliency. Once described as the most polluted river in Pennsylvania, today the river is recognized with a Wild and Scenic designation, the highest honor a river can receive from the federal government. Originally referred to as Stump Creek or Toby Creek, the Clarion River received its current name from surveyor David Stanard, who, in the early 1800s, wrote that the rapids in the river sounded like a clarion, a medieval brass instrument. The name stuck, and in 1817 the name was officially applied in a legislative bill (Coxe 2003).

The first residents of the Clarion River Greenway were Native Americans, who arrived in the region around 12,000 years ago (United States Forest Service 1996). At the time, the Clarion River watershed had a much colder climate, and the Native Americans hunted caribou and other large animals. The solace of the Clarion River today makes it difficult to believe that the river was once the bitter divide between the feuding Seneca and Delaware. Legend has it that when the French first arrived in the area they referred to the Clarion River as "Riviere au Fiel," meaning River of Hate (Davis 1887).

Several Native American archaeological sites are located along the Clarion River corridor. According to Penn State University's Clarion River National Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Study, there are documented accounts of Iroquois in the Clarion River region, in addition to the Delaware and Seneca (Jones et al. 1996).



*Mill in Portland Mills, along the Clarion River  
(photo courtesy of PA Lumber  
Heritage Region)*

It was not until the early 1800s that the region began to be inhabited by European settlers, and over the last two hundred years the history of the Clarion River has been a compelling story of resource exploitation, degradation, resilience, and recovery. As the young nation quickly grew during the industrial revolution, the Clarion River region contributed natural resources necessary for the country's growth. Pennsylvania's mighty lumber industry became centered on the Clarion River during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Timber cut along the Clarion River was regularly floated down the river to Pittsburgh, with some floating as far away as New Orleans. At the same time, industries such as iron and coal

mining, tanning, and chemical manufacturing could also be found along the Clarion River.

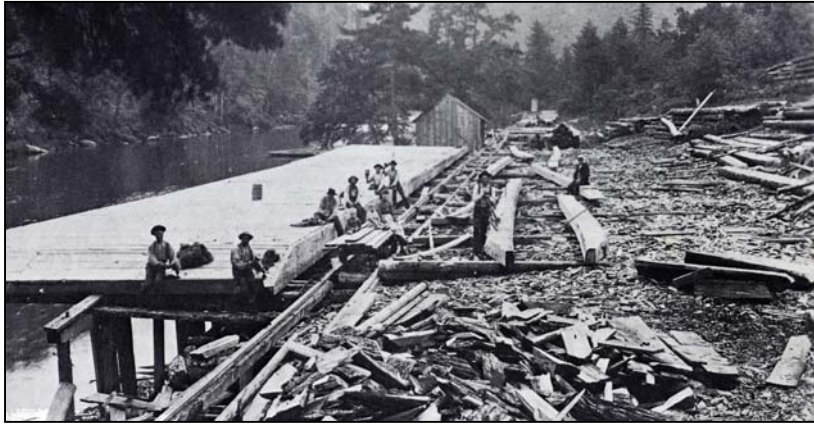
Other industries also sprouted as the region developed. In the mid-1850s, boats were built along the banks of the Clarion River. Some were used to transport pig iron, salt, and coal that originated in Centre County. Others were sold at Broken Rock in Clarion County and sold again in Pittsburgh as coal barges used for transporting coal down the Mississippi River.

The resources from around the Clarion River area made significant contributions to the expansion of the United States. However, while regions far from the Clarion River benefited from the

*Clarion River Greenway Plan*

abundance of its resources, the river itself was left with scars that would take decades to heal. During this time, the Clarion River was a sink for sediment from reckless logging jobs, acidic drainage from bituminous coal mines, and discharge from tanneries, chemical plants, and paper mills. In 1909, Dr. Arnold E. Ortman, an aquatic biologist with the Carnegie Institute, studied the health of the river. In his report, Ortman stated that the Clarion River was opaque and that he believed the river may have been the most polluted in Pennsylvania (Coxe 2003).

By 1909, the situation along the Clarion River had already begun to change. During the early



*Boat building along the Clarion River  
(photo courtesy of PA Lumber Heritage Region)*

1900s, most timber operations along the river had closed because much of the resource had been exhausted. In 1924, Piney Dam was completed near the Borough of Clarion. The dam was built as a hydroelectric facility and is still in operation today. Completion of Piney Dam was the final curtain on the original timber industry's last act. The banks of the Clarion River continued to change over the next several decades,

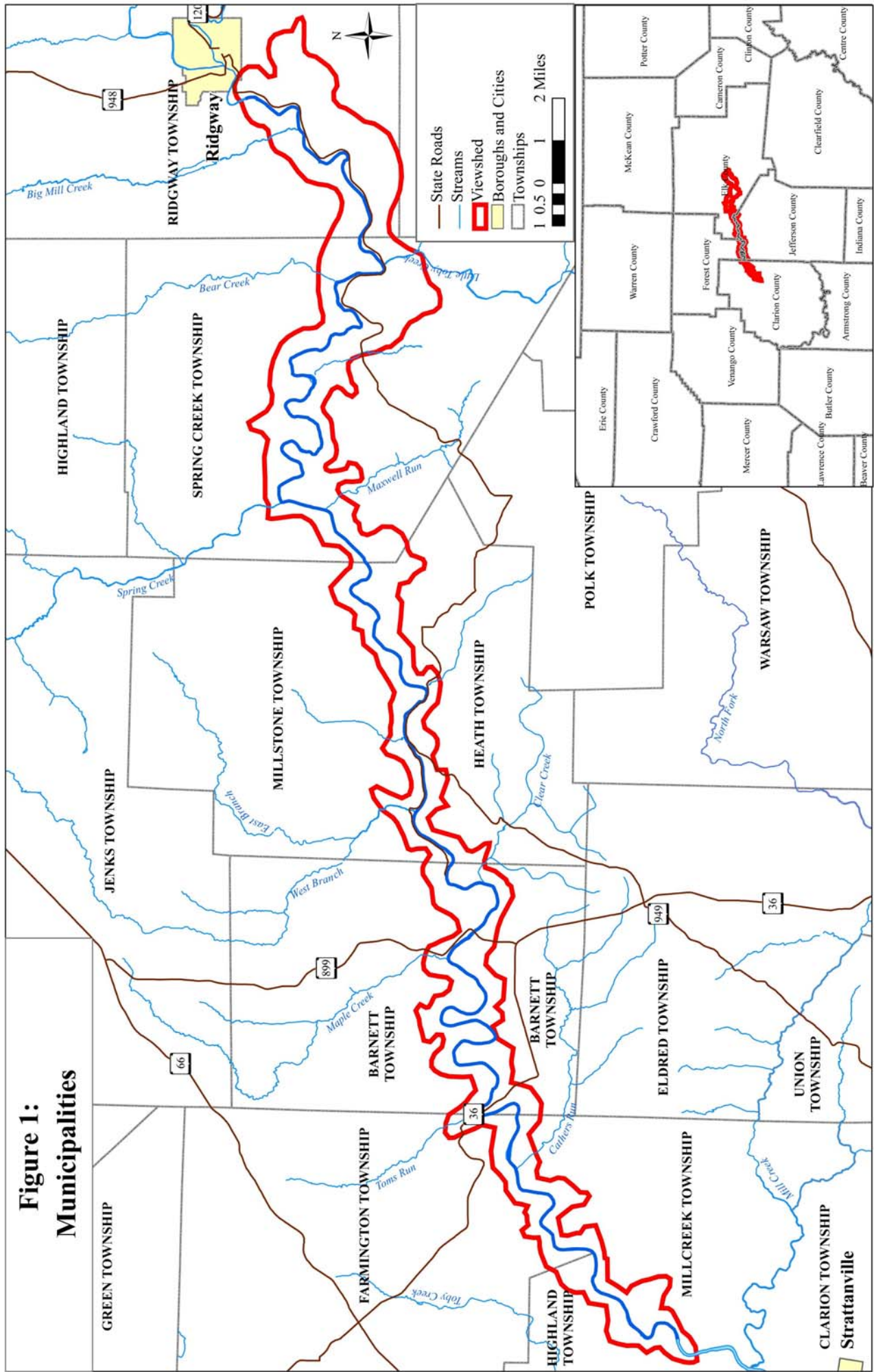
and by the 1960s all of the greenway's tanneries, chemical plants, and paper mills were gone.

Over the next several decades, the Clarion River made a remarkable recovery thanks to a changing landscape and the efforts of many public agencies and private individuals. While the river was slowly recovering from years of decline, the federal government passed the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1968. The goal of the newly formed program stated that certain rivers, "shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations" (National Park Service 2005). It was not long after the act's passage that an effort began to have the Clarion River designated. In 1971, the U.S. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation investigated 90 miles of the river. However, much to the disappointment of supporters, it was determined that the river did not meet the standards of the Wild and Scenic program.

After a few more decades of improvement, the river was designated under the program in 1996. This made the Clarion River one of only two rivers entirely within Pennsylvania that have been recognized under the Wild and Scenic Act, the other being a portion of the Allegheny River.

The rich history of the Clarion River is a critical component of the identity of the region. Pieces of this history will be woven throughout the greenway plan as we look towards the future, while keeping a sharp eye on the past.

**Figure 1:  
Municipalities**





## *The Present*

Today, the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River is a popular destination for those looking to canoe, kayak, or fish. The lands along the river are popular sites for hunting, hiking, cycling, horseback riding, and many other activities. A diverse sport fishery is thriving along the river, as tourists take advantage of the inspiring natural characteristics of the Clarion River corridor. The Clarion River Wild and Scenic designation begins at the Allegheny National Forest/State Game Lands 44 boundary, approximately 0.7 miles downstream from the Ridgway Borough limit, and continues to an unnamed tributary at the backwaters of Piney Dam, approximately 0.6 miles downstream from Blyson Run. Along this 51.7-mile route, the undeveloped river meanders through narrow valleys of hardwood forests, while wildlife, intermittent riffles, and rock outcrops provide constantly changing scenery. Under the rule, 17.1 miles of the river are designated Scenic, while 34.6 miles are designated Recreational.

As mentioned earlier, the Clarion River of today is well on its way to recovery. Water quality has shown dramatic improvement, and a rich biodiversity is returning. Recently, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy partnered with the Carnegie Museum of Natural History to survey the dragonflies and damselflies of the Clarion River. The larval stages of dragonflies and damselflies are aquatic, and their quantities are good indicators of water quality. The survey identified 52 species along the river. Several state and regionally rare species were found, including the green-faced clubtail, which was thought to be extirpated in Pennsylvania (Coxe 2004). The diversity of dragonflies and damselflies is proof of the river's recovery.

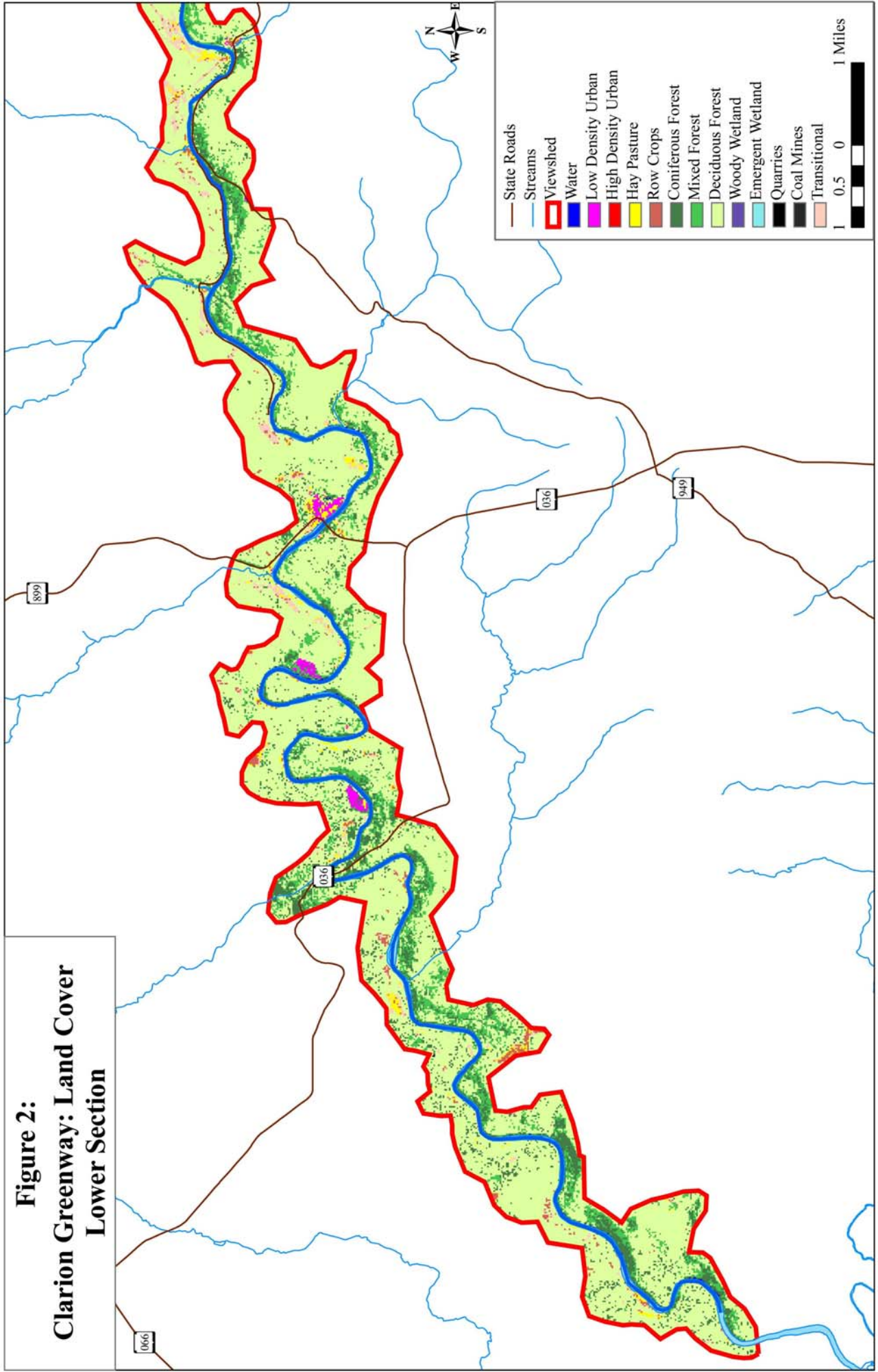


*Canoeists enjoying a relaxing day on the Clarion*

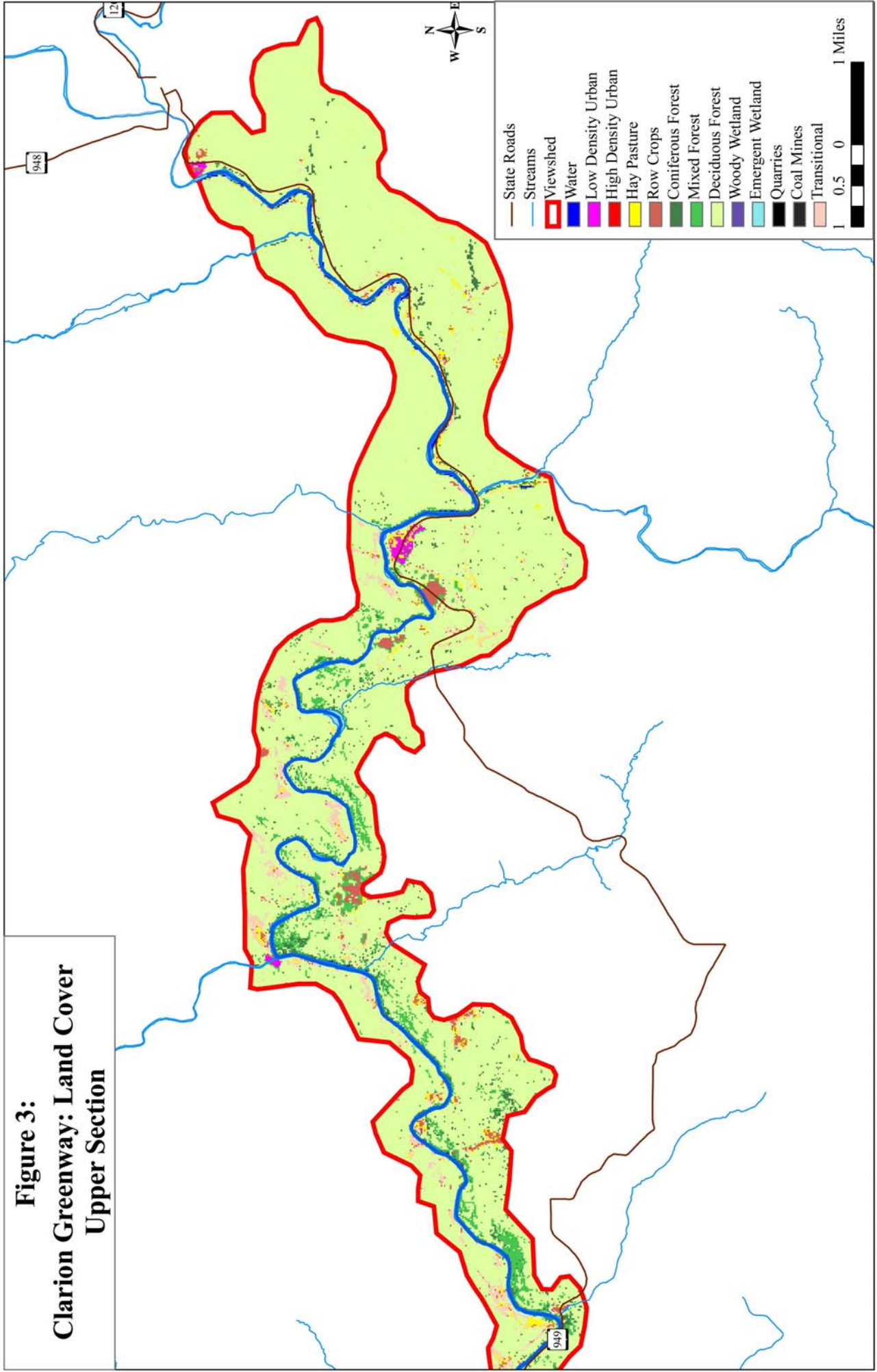
The topography along the greenway is ruggedly hilly, with steep banks along the river and a limited floodplain. The majority of the greenway landscape is blanketed by thick Pennsylvania forestland, with limited wetland areas scattered throughout. There is very limited development along the river, as only a few, small population centers are located along the greenway (Figures 2 and 3). The topography along the greenway is unlike many areas in the region, as it was not shaped by glaciers. The Clarion River is located within an unglaciated portion of the Appalachian Plateau physiographic province, which extends from Alabama to its terminus in northern Pennsylvania. This topography lends itself to enjoyable hikes along the greenway and dramatic views of the landscape from the river. The greenway is a popular spot for long drives during autumn months, to enjoy the colorful change of seasons.

The greenway also boasts a diverse collection of public lands for its visitors to enjoy. Over 50 percent of the land along the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River is currently under public ownership (Figure 4). In addition to offering recreational opportunities to residents and stakeholders, these lands also offer habitat to a multitude of species and provide a valuable buffer for the river that filters pollutants before they reach the waterway.

**Figure 2:  
Clarion Greenway: Land Cover  
Lower Section**

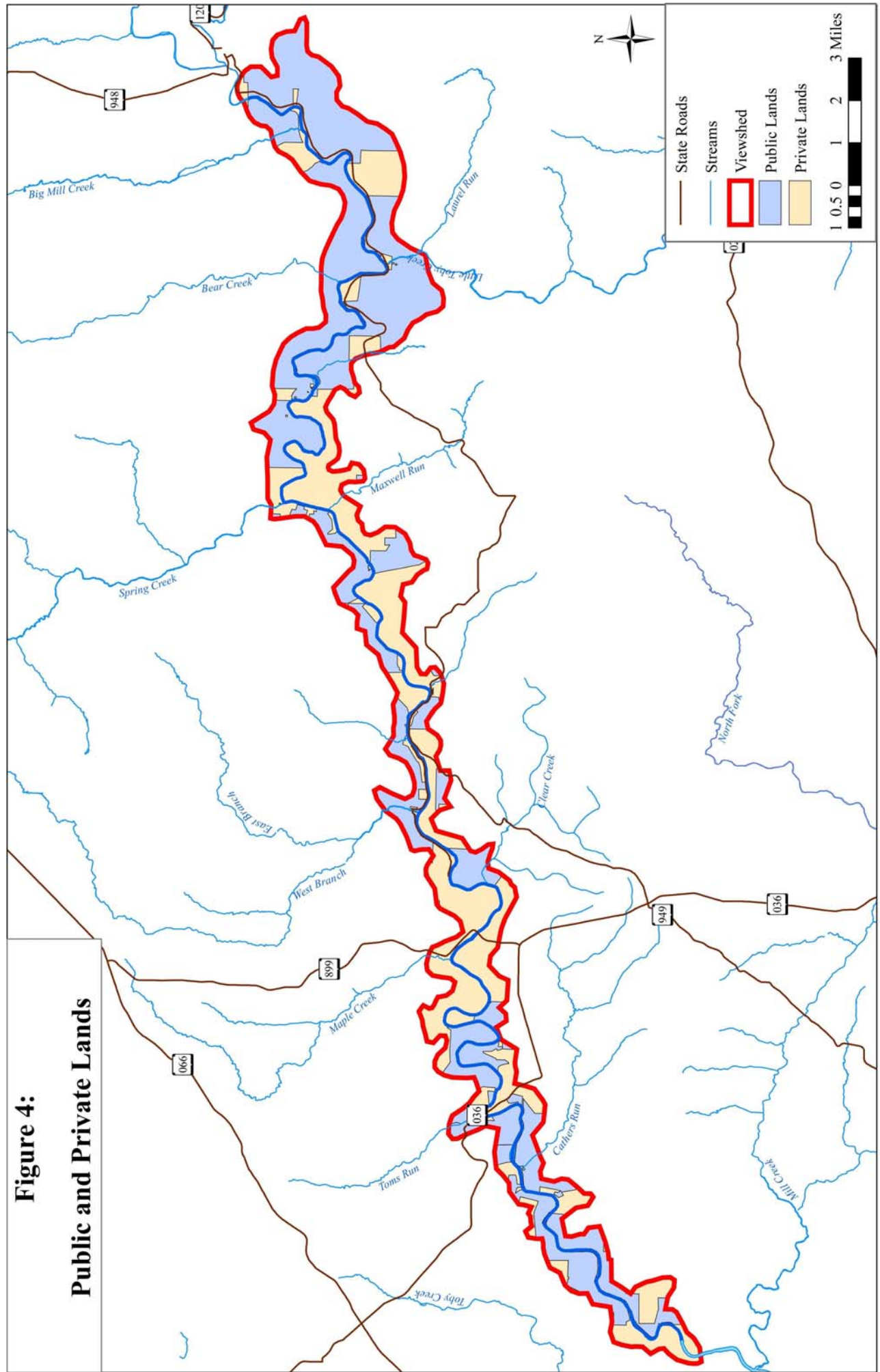


**Figure 3:  
Clarion Greenway: Land Cover  
Upper Section**





**Figure 4:**  
**Public and Private Lands**



## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

While the natural environment has seen very positive changes over the last few decades, many local residents worry about the socioeconomics of the region. Since the major industries left the banks of the Clarion River several decades ago, they have not been fully replaced. Many see the younger generations seeking employment elsewhere, and wonder about the region's future. Of the nine townships traversed by the Clarion River Greenway, seven have seen an overall population increase from 1990 to 2004. However, population estimates from 2000 through 2004 show that populations in four of the nine townships decreased, four townships saw their populations increase, and one township had no population change (United States Census Bureau 2005).

The Clarion River has become an extremely valuable asset to the region as a result of extensive work by many stakeholders. The re-emergence of the Clarion River as a healthy river has resulted in a growing interest in recreational opportunities along the Wild and Scenic portion of the river and has served as a catalyst for many new business opportunities. This greenway plan will develop a holistic approach to managing the river to conserve the natural resources that attract visitors, protect the community values of local residents, and promote sound economic development strategies that will facilitate the continued recovery of the Wild and Scenic Clarion River.

## *The Potential*

The development of a greenway along the Clarion River will generate economic, recreational, and conservation benefits for the region. The greenway creates an opportunity to plan for the region's future as more people discover this restored natural resource. Through this plan, a guide will be created to ensure the greenway is developed in a manner that protects the natural aspects of the region, ensures an enjoyable experience for visitors, and protects the interests of the greenway's residents.

One of the first questions that often arises regarding the Clarion River Greenway is, "What is a greenway?" According to the Pennsylvania Greenways Program, greenways can fit into three major categories: 1) Greenways that support human activity; 2) Greenways that support ecological or conservation purposes; or 3) Greenways that support a combination of both (PA Greenways Program 2005). The goal of the Clarion River Greenway is to fit into option three. Through this effort, the greenway will benefit the natural environment of the region, as well as visitors to, and residents of, the region. This plan will explore possibilities for strengthening the natural history of the greenway, while also promoting its cultural identity and historical features.

Greenway definitions vary, but that which best represents this project was developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for its Greenways Program. Its definition states:

*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 (PA Greenways Partnership Commission 2001).*

Developing a coordinated Clarion River Greenway Plan will provide a diverse array of benefits. A greenway can protect the area's natural resources, positively impact quality of life, and serve as an economic focal point as communities grow, develop, and diversify. Along the greenway, visitors will find opportunities to participate in many different types of recreational activities. From hunting on state game lands to fishing the Clarion River, from hiking the miles of trails within the greenway to using it as an alternate connection between communities, the Clarion River Greenway will offer something for everyone. Table 1 outlines some of the major benefits that could result from the Clarion River Greenway.



<b>Table 1: Benefits of Greenways</b>	
<b>Economic:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Can help create a diversified economy.</li> <li>➤ Can be a catalyst for economic development.</li> <li>➤ Protected greenways increase surrounding property values.</li> </ul>	
<b>Recreational:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide recreational opportunities in natural areas for families/individuals of all ages and abilities.</li> <li>➤ Provide safe opportunities for a multitude of outdoor activities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Environmental:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Protect water quality by buffering non-point sources of water pollution.</li> <li>➤ Preserve the biological diversity of plant and animal species by maintaining the connections between natural communities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Social/Community:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Enhance a sense of place in the community and/or region.</li> <li>➤ Educate visitors and residents about the cultural, historical, and natural assets of the area.</li> <li>➤ Offer potential health and physical fitness benefits through various recreational opportunities.</li> <li>➤ Trails within the greenway will provide alternative connections between communities.</li> </ul>	

From a regional perspective, the Clarion River Greenway is located in close proximity to significant population centers, cultural and historical destinations, and natural amenities. The Clarion River Greenway can be reached in five hours or less from the cities of Baltimore, Md.; Columbus and Cleveland, Ohio; Buffalo, Syracuse, and Rochester, NY; and Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Erie, and State College, Pa. The natural amenities in and around the Clarion River Greenway include Allegheny National Forest, which is the state’s only national forest, and the Wild and Scenic portions of the Allegheny River and the Clarion River, the only two Wild and Scenic rivers located entirely within the state of Pennsylvania.

The Clarion River Greenway Plan was developed to complement the PA Wilds and Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region efforts that encompass the Clarion River. These efforts are comprehensive approaches to promoting the cultural, natural, and recreational resources of the region and are drawing increased attention to the Clarion River and surrounding lands. Cooperation between the greenway and these planning efforts will result in a cost-effective and streamlined approach. The Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region is one of eleven heritage regions designated by the state to showcase the unique resources and history found throughout Pennsylvania. The Lumber Heritage Region will highlight the rich historical resources in the area and the abundance of outdoor recreation activities available to visitors and residents. In August 2005, an interpretive plan for the Lumber Heritage Region was completed. The plan developed itineraries to exhibit the region’s rich natural, cultural, and industrial history. Within these itineraries are gateway locations where visitors may begin their journey through the region, such as the greenway community of Ridgway. The Clarion River itinerary focuses on the river’s recovery and highlights the river’s “scenic, natural, historic, and recreational” qualities (Fermata et al. 2005).

*Clarion River Greenway Plan*

The PA Wilds is another effort to focus attention on the region that includes the Clarion River. The PA Wilds area covers a 12-county region in north-central Pennsylvania, and includes the Clarion River Greenway on its western boundary. The goal of the PA Wilds program is to increase tourism and other related industries throughout the region. In February 2006, a recreation plan, focusing on state parks and state forests, was completed for the PA Wilds area. In recognition of the importance of the Clarion River, Cook Forest State Park was selected as one of two model sites for the plan. The plan includes recommendations for improvements to facilities at Cook Forest State Park (Fermata 2006). The development of the Clarion River Greenway Plan included a review of efforts within the PA Wilds program to ensure consistency was maintained. Continued cooperation between the PA Wilds efforts and stakeholders along the Clarion River should continue to ensure mutual goals are met with minimized efforts.

These regional efforts to promote the area, coupled with the easy access to the Clarion River Greenway for millions of residents from surrounding states, are likely to make the Clarion River Greenway a regional focus and destination. It is important to be proactive and plan for this expected growth. Without proper planning, the influx of additional visitors could overwhelm the greenway and greatly harm the tranquility and natural resources that make the region such an attractive destination. Local and regional planning efforts, working together, will provide tremendous benefits for the Clarion River Greenway and the surrounding resources.

With major cities and attractions branching out from the Clarion River Greenway, visitors can choose from numerous routes to reach the greenway. Along these various routes, there are many “gateways,” which are areas where major routes into the greenway cross other major routes traversing the region (Table 2 and Figure 5). Gateways are important areas where information and other resources should be provided to those driving to the greenway, and those not yet aware of the greenway.

Gateways are fitting locations to advertise and promote the Clarion River Greenway and its specific attractions. Recreational items (ranging for outdoor gear to film) could be sold in and around these areas, to users of the Clarion River Greenway.

**Table 2: Major Gateways into the Clarion River Greenway**

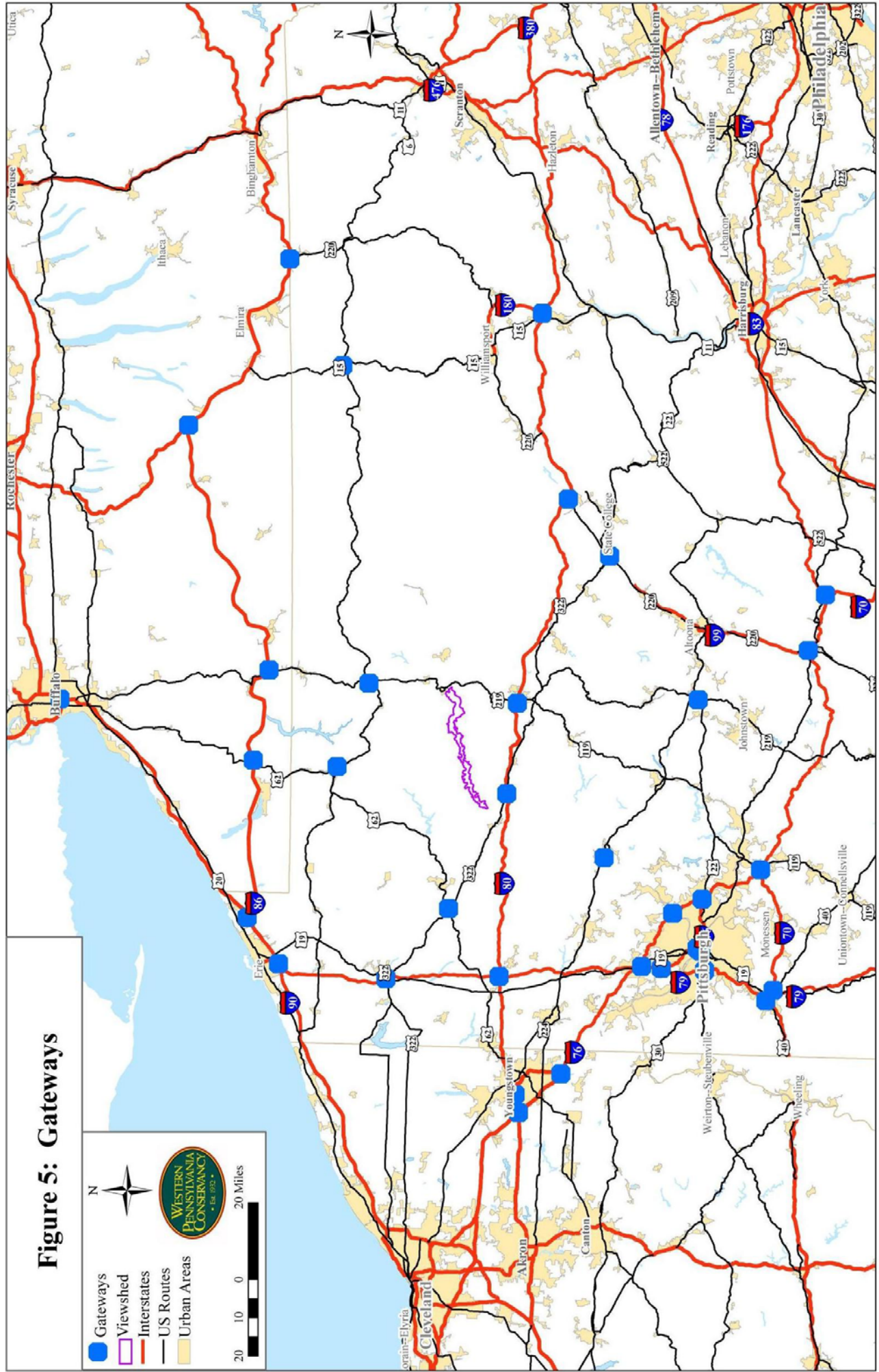
<b>Route 1</b>	<b>Route 2</b>	<b>Route 3</b>
I-80	I-180	
I-76	I-99	
I-76	I-70	
I-76	I-70	
I-70	I-79	
I-70	I-79	
I-76	I-376	US 22
I-279	I-376	
I-279	I-579	PA 28
I-279	I-99	US 22
I-279	I-79	
I-76	I-79	US 19
I-80	I-79	
I-90	I-79	
I-90	I-86	

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I-80	I-680	
I-76	I-80	
I-76	I-680	
I-390	I-86	
I-90	I-190	
I-86	US 62	
I-86	US 219	
I-76	PA 28	
US 6	US 219	
I-80	US 219	
I-80	US 322	
I-422	PA 28	
US 22	US 219	
US 322	I-220	
I-80	I-220	
US 6	US 62	
US 322	US 62	
US 15	US 6	
I-86	I-220	
I-79	US 6	

Ultimately, the Clarion River Greenway can become the centerpiece of a region that will no doubt experience change in the near future. A successful greenway will serve as an economic catalyst for new businesses that cater to the thousands of visitors who retreat to the Wild and Scenic Clarion River each year. The greenway will also serve local residents by offering a place for a short hike or an all-day hunt. In a region whose history is inextricably connected to the rich natural resources of the area, it is only fitting that the future should focus on the natural offerings of the Clarion River.

**Figure 5: Gateways**



## *Development of the Clarion River Greenway Plan*

The Clarion River Greenway Plan is the latest step in an effort to plan for the future of the Clarion River. The first step was the creation of a Clarion River Water Trail map. The water trail runs along the entire length of the Clarion River, from its headwaters in McKean County to Clarion County, where it empties into the Allegheny River. The map is an essential guide for those recreating on and along the Clarion River. River access points, area attractions, and other useful information are included on the map.

The second step was the development of informational signs placed at select access points along the water trail. The first phase of this project was completed in May 2006, when the first four signs were installed at Love's Canoe in Ridgway, the Allegheny National Forest's access point at Irwin Run, the Four Mile access point in Cook Forest State Park, and at the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's access point at Mill Creek. These signs help orient visitors and urge them to leave no trace of their visit along the river. In the future, additional signs will be installed along the water trail to improve the education of all those who recreate along the Clarion River.

Pennsylvania has developed an ambitious greenway program, and has quickly become a national leader in greenway development. The Pennsylvania Greenways Program was created in 2001 with the completion of a statewide action plan entitled "Pennsylvania's Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections." The goal of the Pennsylvania Greenways Program is to develop a statewide network of greenways. Fifty percent of the funding for this project has come from the state of Pennsylvania, and a goal of the Clarion River Greenway Plan is to coordinate with other planning efforts, ultimately connecting with other greenways to expand the benefits and opportunities associated with the Clarion River Greenway.

The Clarion River Greenway will encompass the 51.7-mile Wild and Scenic portion of the 100-mile river, from just downstream of Ridgway in Elk County to the backwaters of the Piney Dam in Clarion County. Recreational uses have been focused in this area because it contains the majority of public lands along the river. Along with its water resources, the greenway will encompass the Clarion River's viewshed. The viewshed is based upon locations visible from one or more specified points or lines along the river. The viewshed of the Clarion River Greenway was developed using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology, which mapped points every .5 miles along the river, and then used surrounding elevations to determine the greenway's viewshed. The Clarion River Greenway viewshed roughly equates to .5 miles from the water's edge, on both sides of the river.

The Clarion River Greenway Plan is to be a stakeholders' vision for the future of the river. To ensure this goal was achieved, a concerted effort was made to collect public input throughout the planning process. A key component was the development of a steering committee made up of Clarion River Greenway stakeholders. The steering committee consisted of a diverse array of individuals, ranging from local business owners to public agency officials. These individuals are members of the local community who have vast knowledge about the Clarion River's past and present, and constructive suggestions for its future. These community leaders helped assemble a strategy for collecting local public opinion about the greenway program, through interviews, surveys, and public workshops. The outreach effort sought public attitudes toward protection of natural, scenic, recreational, and cultural resources, and how the recovering river can contribute to economic development of the region.

Public comment was also solicited through a series of surveys, conversations, and public and partner meetings. Before the initial public meetings, meetings were held with representatives



*Stakeholders provide valuable input during a public meeting*

from the state and federal agencies that are active along the Clarion River. These meetings provided an early opportunity for agency staff to share their perspective on the issues that needed to be addressed through the plan. Additionally, 46 stakeholders attended a July 2003 meeting to participate in the formation of the Clarion River Water Trail.

Three public meetings were held in May 2005, in order to introduce the greenway concept to the 62 stakeholders who attended. These meetings were structured to provide a general overview of the Clarion River Greenway Plan, and to generate important plan elements through small group sessions where stakeholders were able to discuss specific issues and

concerns. A meeting participant survey was also utilized to acquire background information from the meeting participants, and to allow for additional comments regarding the development of the greenway plan. After the initial public meetings, a meeting was held with partners from the Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region and the PA Wilds effort to discuss various cooperative opportunities. The Clarion River Greenway's location in a region that is receiving increased attention provides multiple cooperative possibilities that will benefit the greenway, as well as other current and upcoming activities.

As will be discussed in greater detail in the pages ahead, in the initial stages of plan development, a business survey was created in order to understand better the local economic climate, as well as to gauge the interest of local business owners. An additional survey was developed for participants of the annual Clarion River Sojourn. The survey focused on the development of a greenway plan for the Clarion River. The survey, conducted in 2004 and 2006, determined the interest of recreational users, many of whom did not live within the Clarion River Greenway.

After a draft of the plan was completed, four public meetings were held in March 2006, to provide local stakeholders with an opportunity to review and comment on the plan. At the meetings, which were attended by 82 people, presentations were made that provided an overview of the Clarion River Greenway Plan. While the public comments varied greatly, a common theme was a desire for a clean and healthy Clarion River to serve as a centerpiece for the Clarion River Greenway.

Throughout this effort, county comprehensive plans have been utilized in order to understand the goals and concerns of the local governments and to ensure that the greenway plan is consistent with ongoing planning activities. All four counties within the greenway have recently completed updates to their comprehensive plans (Forest County, 1998; Elk County, 1999; Clarion County, 2004; Jefferson County, 2005). It is essential that the Clarion River Greenway Plan be consistent with these comprehensive plans, as they are the driving force behind planning and development efforts along the greenway. Table 3 shows a sample of the county comprehensive plan goals that are consistent with the greenway planning efforts.



<b>Table 3: County Comprehensive Plan Goals Applicable to the Clarion River Greenway Plan</b> (Clarion County Planning Commission 2004; EADS Group et al. 2005; Elk County Commissioners et al. 1999; Forest County Conservation District et al. 1999)	
<b>Elk County</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promote diverse, but controlled economic opportunities.</li> <li>➤ Encourage the expansion of existing businesses, support local industries, and encourage industry diversification.</li> <li>➤ Identify, preserve, maintain, and enhance natural resources, including prime farmlands, traditional agricultural enterprises, wetlands, and waterways.</li> <li>➤ Promote the preservation of the county's historic, archaeological, and cultural resources.</li> <li>➤ Promote the development of recreational and tourist opportunities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Clarion County</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Retain and expand existing businesses and develop new businesses owned by county residents (highest county priority).</li> <li>➤ Provide further education about the use and value of the county's natural resources from both an economic and ecological vantage.</li> <li>➤ Consider a DCNR-funded Greenway Plan and Natural Heritage Inventory.</li> <li>➤ Support continued maintenance expansion of pedestrian transportation systems, whether for recreation or utilitarian use.</li> </ul>	
<b>Jefferson County</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increase public awareness of the agricultural, industrial, and natural heritage of the county.</li> <li>➤ Incorporate the preservation of open space and natural resources into future land-use and developmental planning.</li> <li>➤ Encourage balanced development among the various land uses required to meet current and future local needs, in concert with the rural and passive open space sections of the county.</li> </ul>	
<b>Forest County</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Continue education programs to instruct all forest landowners about best management practices and sustainable forestry methods within Forest County.</li> <li>➤ Promote tourist and recreation development without adversely affecting the scenic and natural resources of the county, and without disrupting the rural lifestyle of the citizens of Forest County.</li> <li>➤ Complement and protect regional recreational facilities, whenever possible.</li> </ul>	

The efforts of township governments are also important to the success of the Clarion River Greenway. All nine local townships included in the Clarion River Greenway were contacted through this process, and the main concern raised by the township leaders was that implementation of the plan should be led by local stakeholders. The townships recognize that support for the plan will be greater if those within the community lead the efforts. This sentiment was repeated often through the planning process, and this issue is addressed in the implementation plan that is included towards the end of this greenway plan.

The Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) was also utilized in the development of this greenway plan and will serve as an important tool as implementation proceeds. The PNHP is a

## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

collaborative effort that gathers and provides information about the location and status of important ecological resources (plants, vertebrates, invertebrates, geologic features, and natural communities). The goal of the program is to provide current, reliable, and objective information to help inform environmental decisions.

The PNHP conducts county natural heritage inventories (CNHI) throughout the state. CNHI projects furnish maps identifying important natural areas and features for all municipalities in a county. This information, along with accompanying site descriptions, threats identification, and recommendations will be made available for each municipality in the greenway. At the time of this document's completion, 42 counties in the state had a CNHI completed, 20 counties had a CNHI in progress, and five counties had not yet started a CNHI, although discussions are ongoing with those counties.

Within the Clarion River Greenway, Forest, Elk, and Jefferson counties have CNHIs in progress. The state of Pennsylvania is currently in discussions with Clarion County to develop a CNHI. In order to understand the ecological aspects of the greenway, the current available information from the CNHIs was reviewed, and a brief update about the ongoing CNHIs is below.

### *Forest County*

Forest County signed an agreement with Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in August 2004 to conduct a CNHI.

### *Elk County*

The ongoing CNHI in Elk County is nearing completion. Interesting discoveries from the inventory include the rare frog orchid, which was found near the mouth of Irwin Run, and a great blue heron rookery, located within State Game Lands 44/54.

### *Jefferson County*

The Jefferson County inventory is also nearing completion. Current research has found some notable discoveries, including tawny cottongrass in an acidic wet meadow.

### Greenway Plan Design

The layout of the Clarion River Greenway centers around five reaches that connect the five activity hubs within the greenway. The hubs are the major sites along the greenway that attract visitors with various opportunities for an extended period of time. The greenway will highlight connections, called links, between these hubs and the major destinations throughout the greenway. The destinations are those sites along the greenway that have cultural, historical, scenic, or natural significance. The destinations are specific sites, whereas the hubs are general locations, such as the Allegheny National Forest. The links between the hubs and destinations show the routes most likely to be used by visitors to the greenway. Knowing where these links are located is a valuable planning tool. Identifying locations of service areas, such as gas, food, lodging, and supplies, would be beneficial. Sites where two links cross could potentially be very busy locations. Identification of these links will also be useful for future



*Example of a hub and links from the Clarion River Greenway Plan*

## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

promotion of the Clarion River Greenway. Along these major links, signage and other promotion of the greenway should be a priority.

Throughout this greenway plan are a series of recommendations. These recommendations are ideas to address issues along the greenway. They were born out of the stakeholders' vision for the Clarion River Greenway, expressed at the public meetings, and by the steering committee and other local stakeholders. These recommendations are in no way regulatory; they are only suggestions about how to handle issues that have been raised by the stakeholders.

At its heart, the Clarion River Greenway Plan will prescribe a holistic approach to managing the river to conserve the natural resources that attract visitors, protect the community values of local residents, and promote sound economic development strategies that will continue to facilitate the remarkable recovery of the Wild and Scenic Clarion River.

## Clarion River Greenway Economic Overview

As part of the greenway planning process, local businesses were surveyed about their opinions of a Clarion River Greenway and their understanding of the local economy (see Appendix D for a copy of the survey sent to local businesses). This was an important early step in acquiring a more comprehensive view of the Clarion River Greenway, beyond the natural resources and recreational opportunities of the greenway. The survey questions were intentionally broad, as the goal of this exercise was to develop a general understanding of the economic makeup of the region. Thirty-nine surveys were completed and returned to Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

To develop an overview of the greenway's economy, surveys were sent to businesses within five miles of the greenway. Although some businesses may have been missed, especially those operated out of residences and those that do not advertise or have phone book listings, efforts were made to make the list as comprehensive as possible. A small group of businesses in Ridgway and Clarion were also surveyed. While technically outside of the greenway, these boroughs have major impacts on the Clarion River Greenway.



*A dilapidated site in downtown Ridgway*

Several themes were evident in the survey responses. First, businesses along the greenway are typically small. The largest business had 25 full-time employees and a maximum of 67 part-time employees. The second-largest business had 35 full-time employees and 40 part-time employees. Sixteen of the 34 respondents to this question had no full-time employees. These businesses either employed only part-time employees, or were small businesses that were run by their owners.

Second, high-paying jobs are not prevalent in and around the greenway. At 18 of 31 businesses responding, employees were paid between minimum wage and \$8.00 per hour, and the highest salaries were between \$10.00 and \$15.00 per hour. Eight businesses that responded to the survey did not answer the question about salaries. Some of those businesses may offer higher salaries to their employees, but the majority of respondents offer \$8.00 per hour or less.



*The Pale Whale Canoe Fleet: A successful greenway-oriented business*

The following is an overview of the responses to selected questions on the survey.

### **Is your business a member of a tourist bureau?**

Twenty-seven of the 39 businesses that responded to the survey stated that they were members of at least one tourist bureau; nine

were members of more than one bureau. The two most popular bureaus were the Cook Forest Vacation Bureau (17 businesses) and the Northwest Pennsylvania Great Outdoors Visitors Bureau (14 businesses).

**What is your peak period?**

While answers to this question varied, 32 of the 39 respondents said their peak period included the summer months. Autumn was also frequently mentioned. As outdoor recreation is most popular from May to October, and public lands have their highest visitation numbers during that period, the recreation opportunities of the Clarion River Greenway may already be contributing to the local economy. Thus, promotion of the greenway should further enhance the economic benefits that greenway area businesses provide.

**What do customers ask for that your business or another local business, or the area in general, cannot provide?**

No one answer dominated this question, but several items were repeatedly mentioned. Eight respondents said equipment, such as canoes, bikes, and ATVs, was not readily available to their customers. Six stated that customers asked for printed guides that were not available. Other answers included shuttles (5), lodges (5), tours (5), and restrooms (3).

**Are your customers typically local or visiting from outside the region? Out-of-State?**

The answers to this question varied greatly: 18 respondents said their customers were from the region, 15 said their customers were local, and eight said the majority of their customers came from outside the state. These answers demonstrate a good mix of visitor origins and seems to demonstrate that the economy is balanced between locals and visitors.

**During peak season, are your customers primarily return customers / new customers? Off-season: return customers / new customers?**

Most customers to surveyed area businesses are return customers. A deeper look at responses also points to the seasonal nature of the area. During the peak season, 17 respondents said their customers are return customers, 10 said they see more new customers, and nine said they see both. During the off season, returning customers are more prevalent, as 22 respondents said they see more returning customers, while only five said they see more new customers, and eight said they see both.

**Over the past year, has your business revenue (circle one) increased / decreased?**

**Over the past 5 years, has your business revenue (circle one) increased / decreased?**

The majority of respondents to the business survey were wary about divulging any revenue numbers. Many questions were left unanswered. The questions about change in revenue over the past year and five years did receive some responses. The responses were mixed, with the majority of businesses seeing their revenue increase over both the last year and the last five years. Twenty respondents saw their revenue increase last year, while 11 saw a decrease in revenue. Over the past five years, 21 businesses have seen their revenue increase, while eight have seen a decrease.

**Comparing the current size of your business with what would be optimum, would your business expand, contract, or stay the same?**

Not surprisingly, all respondents to this question wanted to see their business either expand, or stay the same size. Fifteen of the businesses wanted to expand, while 13 wanted to remain their current size. A follow-up question asked if the desire was to expand, what was needed for this to happen? The majority, 23 responses, indicated that increases in revenue and customers were needed for expansion to be feasible. Other requirements that were listed less frequently included more advertising (8), more space (4), and a larger workforce (5). A successful Clarion River

Greenway could positively impact these plans to expand, as it would most likely bring more visitors to the region and, potentially, more customers and revenue for local businesses.

The last set of questions on the business survey asked respondents to rank various statements. The first set of three questions attempts to gauge how business owners view the Clarion River Greenway. Respondents were asked to rank their level of agreement with three statements from one to five, with one representing strongly agree, and five representing strongly disagree. The results are included in the table below:

<b>Table 4: Clarion River Greenway Business Survey Statement Rankings</b>					
<b>Rank</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>A Clarion River Greenway will help my business grow.</b>					
Responses	10	8	16	2	0
<b>A Clarion River Greenway will deter or hurt my business.</b>					
Responses	0	0	11	8	18
<b>A Clarion River Greenway will help develop high quality of life characteristics in the area.</b>					
Responses	9	13	11	4	0

The second set of four questions asked the business owners to rank the level of importance of various aspects of the Clarion River Greenway. The ranking is on a scale from one to five, this time with one representing very important and five representing not very important at all. The results are included in the table below.

<b>Table 5: Clarion River Greenway Business Survey Importance Rankings</b>					
<b>Rank</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Natural resource protection</b>					
Responses	19	13	3	1	0
<b>Improved/increased recreational or business opportunities</b>					
Responses	19	13	2	1	0
<b>Historic preservation</b>					
Responses	15	12	7	1	0
<b>Cultural interpretation</b>					
Responses	11	11	12	1	0

The results of the business survey paint a picture of a seasonal economy, that has the potential to grow as the popularity of the Clarion River Greenway increases. A healthy Clarion River Greenway should be recognized as an economic catalyst for the region, and steps should be taken to ensure the greenway remains healthy. The results of the survey also showed a lack of high-paying jobs in the region, and throughout the planning process, several stakeholders voiced concerns that the lack of higher-paying jobs drives younger generations from the area. New businesses should be aggressively pursued, perhaps through incentives, to diversify the local economy and increase options to those looking to stay in the region.

The businesses that responded to the survey generally see the greenway as a benefit to their businesses and the local economy. Some respondents were of the opinion that the greenway would neither help nor hurt their business, while only a couple of respondents thought the greenway would have a negative impact. The majority of businesses thought natural resource protection and improved recreational or business opportunities were of the utmost importance.



## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

Fewer, but still a majority of respondents, felt that historic preservation and cultural interpretation are important to the greenway.

Overall, the business survey provided a snapshot of the economy around the Clarion River Greenway. Several stakeholders, throughout the planning process, raised concerns about the need to strengthen the region's economy. To develop a clear view of the region's economy, its problems and possibilities, a comprehensive economic study should be developed. One possibility would be for this study to be undertaken by a regional college or university. This study should develop a strong picture of the economy today, and make recommendations for creating a robust, diversified economy in the future.

*Reach #1: Ridgway to Clarion Ghost Towns (Little Toby Creek)*

The Clarion River Greenway begins just below the historic town of Ridgway at the boundary of the Allegheny National Forest, north of the river, and State Game Lands 44, south of the river. The site is approximately 0.7 miles downstream of the Ridgway Borough limit. The entire length of this first reach, from Ridgway to Little Toby Creek, is approximately seven and a half miles (See Figure 6).

<b>River Miles within Reach</b>	7.5
<b>Percent of Land Publicly Owned</b>	81%
<b>Townships within Reach</b>	Ridgway
	Spring Creek
<b>Hubs within Reach</b>	Ridgway
	Clarion Ghost Towns (Little Toby Creek)

This first reach of the Clarion River Greenway is a microcosm of the greenway as a whole. It touches upon both the future of the region in the dynamic, growing community of Ridgway, and the region’s past as it traverses the ghost towns of Mill Haven, Carmen, and Croyland that offer a glimpse into the Clarion’s lumber-centric past.

The Borough of Ridgway has undertaken an aggressive downtown redevelopment plan that has received several awards. Ridgway is also recognized as a gateway community by the PA Wilds effort. The picturesque downtown serves as a scenic launching point for a trip through the Clarion River Greenway, and therefore serves as the first hub of the greenway. Many visitors to the greenway will spend their nights in the city admiring the historic Victorian homes that line the streets in the residential portion of the borough, close to Main Street, or shopping the diverse array of stores along Ridgway’s downtown streets. Ridgway provides a great location from which to begin daytrips along the Clarion River Greenway that include floats down the river, bike trips or nature hikes



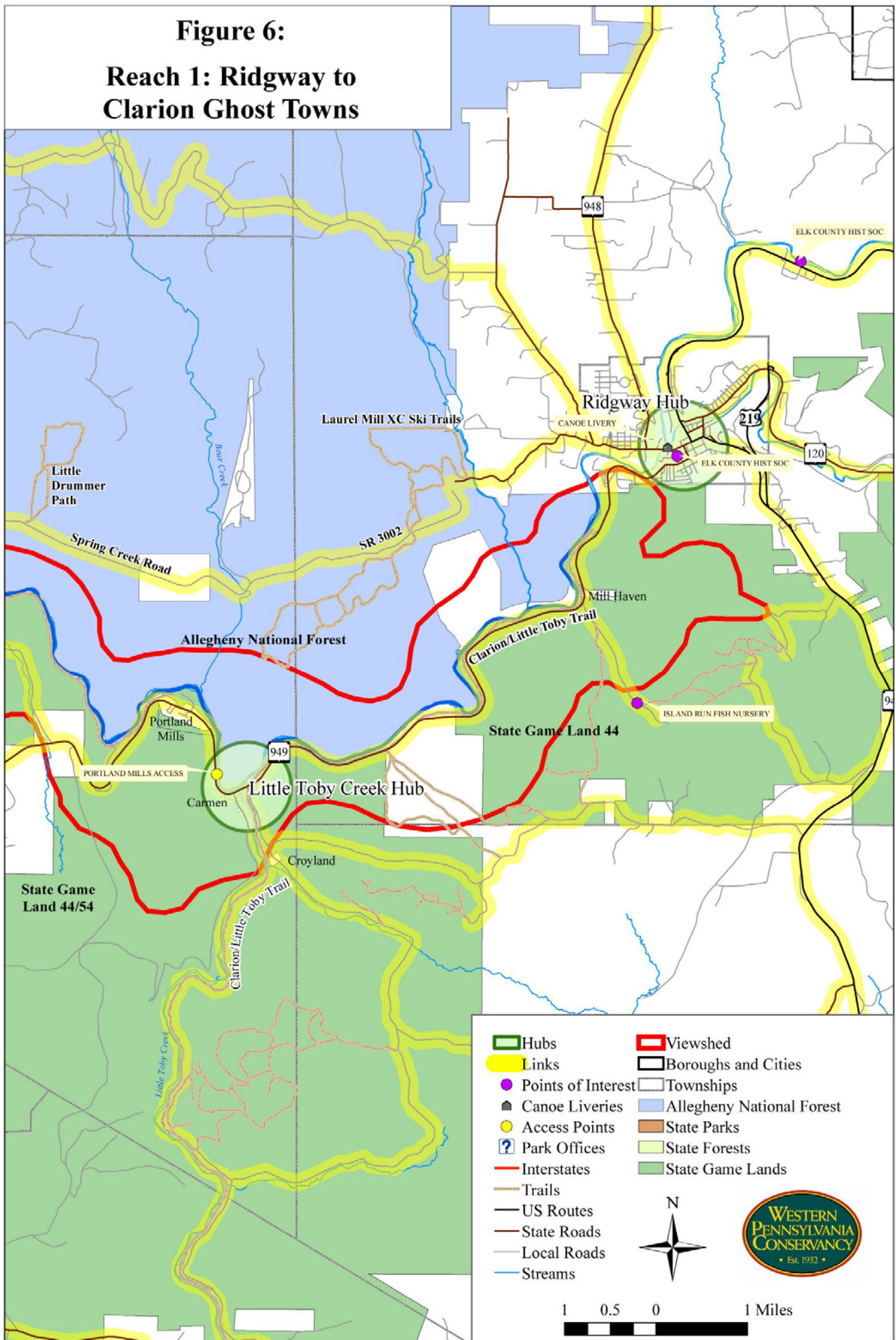
*Picturesque downtown Ridgway*

along the riverbank. Ridgway is very accessible by car, and has links to all destinations in the area. As can be seen on the map, major roadways provide access to and from Ridgway from all directions.

Ridgway was first settled in 1824 by Jacob Ridgway, a wealthy Quaker from Philadelphia who owned over 100,000 acres of land in Elk and McKean counties (Ridgway-Elk County Chamber of Commerce 2005). The location at the intersection of Elk Creek and the Clarion River provided an ideal site for a lumber operation. Unlike many logging communities, Ridgway did not disappear after the lumber operation moved on. Today, Ridgway boasts a bustling downtown that has preserves many of its historic structures, while welcoming growth and development that

**Recommendation #1:  
The Borough of Ridgway should explore opportunities to redevelop abandoned industrial sites to protect the region’s natural resources while promoting economic development.**

**Figure 6:  
Reach 1: Ridgway to  
Clarion Ghost Towns**



- Hubs
- Links
- Points of Interest
- Canoe Liveries
- Access Points
- Park Offices
- Interstates
- Trails
- US Routes
- State Roads
- Local Roads
- Streams
- Viewshed
- Boroughs and Cities
- Townships
- Allegheny National Forest
- State Parks
- State Forests
- State Game Lands



allows the area to thrive. Although, Ridgway does have some abandoned industrial sites, they should be viewed more as opportunities than as blights. Proper remediation and redevelopment of these sites can protect the region's natural resources and promote economic growth. Efforts are already underway to further restore and develop Ridgway's waterfront. The borough is working with renowned waterfront consultant Roy Mann, along with the state and the Lumber Heritage Region, to develop a plan for the approximately 1.5 miles of Ridgway that borders the Clarion River. This exciting plan will determine the best uses for the land that will both protect the natural resources and serve as an economic catalyst.

A major deterrent to canoeing or kayaking down the Wild and Scenic Clarion River is the lack of public access in Ridgway. Along the waterfront there are several locations that could be utilized

**Recommendation #2:  
Explore opportunities for the development of public access to the Clarion River in Ridgway, utilizing PFBC funds.**

to provide the public with access to the river. There is also funding available for such projects through the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's (PFBC) Boating Facilities Grant Program. There is also a lack of access to the Clarion River just above Ridgway. This area of the Clarion River is receiving immense attention for the tremendous fishing opportunities between Johnsonburg and Ridgway. An access point upstream of Ridgway will provide access for those interested in fishing, and also for those interested in beginning their greenway tour with a float through historic Ridgway. Efforts should be made to develop public access to the Clarion River within Ridgway, and between the borough and Johnsonburg, utilizing funds from the PFBC.

Throughout the greenway, as recreation associated with the Clarion River continues to increase, it is important to insure that the river is accessible to the growing number of visitors. Inadequate access will reduce the level of enjoyment of visitors to the greenway, and could also harm the resource itself. Inadequate access could lead some to access the river at more pristine areas that are not designated access areas and inadequate parking available at access sites could also lead some to park in more natural areas along the greenway. A review of the current access sites should be undertaken during the height of use, typically holiday weekends, to determine if improvements are needed to handle current and future use of the river.

**Recommendation #3:  
Undertake a review of current public access to the Clarion River to determine if improvements are needed to handle current and future use.**

Moving through the greenway and away from Ridgway, there is a sense of seclusion while passing by miles of public lands with little or no development. Unlike many rivers in western Pennsylvania, for many miles the banks of the Clarion River are devoid of development, without so much as a railroad line present. This seclusion is one of the reasons the Clarion River received the high honor of being designated under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1996.

In 1971, the U.S. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation first investigated 90 miles of the Clarion River for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic program. However, to the disappointment of supporters, it was determined that the river did not meet the standards of the Wild and Scenic program. Nevertheless, the people along the Clarion, much like the river itself, have a resilient nature, and were determined to see the designation happen.

The major problem identified by the federal government was pollution from paper mills, municipal sewage systems, and coal mines. The final report from the federal government stated, "At such time as the water quality is improved to permit suitable outdoor recreation activities which are now precluded, the Clarion should be reconsidered for possible addition to the National



System” (Palmer 1980). This gave hope to the river’s supporters, and the effort to improve water quality expanded.

After more than two decades of improvement, the push to add the Clarion River to the list of Wild and Scenic Rivers began in earnest again in the early 1990s. After several years of study, and unanimous passage by the Pennsylvania legislature and the United States Congress, President Bill Clinton signed the Clarion River designation on October 19, 1996 (National Park Service 2005b).

The Wild and Scenic designation has brought increased attention to the Clarion River. Today, canoeists and kayakers travel great distances to take a trip through the greenway on the Clarion River. The river connects all the hubs along the greenway, and the majority of the most popular destinations are along its banks. Many of the visitors are experiencing the Clarion River for the first time, and therefore are not familiar with the river. Several stakeholders indicated concern throughout the greenway planning process about the limited signage along the river. This lack of signage can inhibit new visitors to the river who are unsure of their location on the river, or where they can and cannot exit the river for a short break or an overnight camp.

**Recommendation #4:**  
Explore the possibility of installing limited, low-impact signage along the river, depicting river miles and sites where canoeists can rest, camp along the shore, or disembark.

The development of limited but visible signage addressing river miles and surrounding infrastructure would greatly improve the experience for many visitors and limit accidental trespassing on private lands. The signs should be clearly visible to paddlers and installed at a considerable height in trees or on other structures, such as bridges, to protect them from vandalism or flood damage. If any signs are proposed to be placed on private lands, those landowners must provide consent and should be involved in the process from the start.



*Bridge sign from the Fox River Water Trail (Illinois)*

A major link to this portion of the greenway is State Route 949. For several miles, SR 949 runs along the southern banks of the Clarion River, until it turns to the south near Portland Mills. The road later returns to the banks of the Clarion near Heath Station. While the road does run close to the river, it is not so heavily used that it disturbs a peaceful trip down the river. The route provides a scenic journey through heavily forested game lands, and is particularly striking during fall months when the leaves are changing. In addition to linking Ridgway, Portland Mills, and Heath Station, this road also connects to the ghost town of Carmen, the Clarion/Little Toby Trail, Clear Creek State Forest, and Clear Creek State Park.

Much of SR 949 meanders through State Game Lands 44. Since 1920, the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) has been purchasing lands for its State Game Lands system. Today the system is composed of nearly 300 tracts of land, totaling nearly 1.4 million acres. All four counties located within the Clarion River viewshed contain several thousand acres of game lands. State Game Lands 44 is the largest within the Clarion River Greenway, comprised of 24,529 acres, all in Elk County (PGC 2005).

In addition to hunting, several other uses are available on the game lands, especially State Game Lands 44, which offers one small public gun range that is open year round for use under game lands regulations. There are some designated trails that can be used for bicycling and horseback



## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

riding during certain portions of the year. As can be seen on the map of reach one, the trails within State Game Lands 44 are easily accessible from both Ridgway and points west. One activity that is not allowed on state game lands is camping, which is allowed on all the other public lands located within the Clarion River Greenway.

Along Reach #1, the majority of land north of the river is within the Allegheny National Forest. About three miles west of Ridgway, within the national forest, lies the Laurel Mill Cross Country Skiing and Hiking Trail, which is a popular destination within the national forest. The trail is about two miles north of the river at its closest point, and is easily accessible from State Route 3002, also known as Township Road 307. A more in depth discussion of the Allegheny National Forest is contained in Reach #2.

While floating the Clarion River or driving along SR 949, visitors experience a landscape that is very different from what it was more than a hundred years ago. In the 1800s, major logging operations lined this stretch of river. Pennsylvania's mighty lumber industry was centered on the Clarion River during the latter part of the 19th century. Logging, sawmills, rafting, leather tanning, and wood chemical plants all thrived. The Clarion River and its tributaries were important conduits for transporting timber to Pittsburgh. At one time, the Clarion River was filled with lumber going to market. The timber industry was also instrumental in the development of the region's extensive tanning industry, which utilized bark from hemlock trees for the tanning process.

Today the timber industry is still present within much of the greenway, although it is significantly scaled back from historic operations. In many areas along the greenway where the lumber industry once thrived, only ghost towns remain. Presently these destinations offer an interesting glimpse into the Clarion's fascinating past. While passing along the Clarion River, visitors may come across remnant foundations and other artifacts—evidence of the Clarion's rich history.



*Civilian Conservation Corps  
structure in Croyland*

Along Little Toby Creek, on the south side of the Clarion River, about 7 miles downstream from Ridgway, sits the ghost town of Croyland, and at the mouth of Little Toby Creek is the ghost town of Carmen. Croyland was developed during the logging era and was later home to a Civilian Conservation Corps camp, where some buildings still exist today. Carmen was once a meeting point for three railroads, and the town that developed around this intersection was very diverse and even boasted a large hotel. Today, evidence of Carmen's existence is barely noticeable.

Connecting Ridgway and the ghost towns is the Clarion/Little Toby Trail, another major destination for those visiting the Clarion River Greenway. The trail provides excellent hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing opportunities along the Clarion River and Little Toby Creek. No motorized traffic is allowed on the trail, which is located on the former Ridgway and Clearfield branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The branch connected Ridgway to Clearfield in Clearfield County and passed Croyland and Carmen. The branch of the railroad was built in 1885, and was in use until 1968. In 1992, the line was converted to the Clarion/Little Toby Trail (TriCounty Rails to Trails Association 2005).

The trail is perfect for short trips off of the river or day trips from Ridgway, as it offers scenic views along the Clarion River from Ridgway to the mouth of Little Toby Creek (where the ghost town of Carmen is located). From there, the trail runs along the creek until it reaches Brockway. Along the trail, visitors can observe a variety of wildlife, such as deer, wild turkeys, herons, and eagles.



Clarion/Little Toby Trail Sign in Carmen

While some former logging towns, such as Carmen and Croyland, have virtually disappeared, others have survived, although they look very different today. Just downstream of Carmen lies Portland Mills, a booming town during the logging era that included a large tannery, five sawmills, a match factory, shingle factory, and a wheel hub factory. Portland Mills is still a viable community that includes a canoe and kayak access, and remnants of its significant past are evident.

The town of Portland Mills, along with the ghost towns of Carmen and Croyland, and the Clarion/Little Toby Trail, all clustered around Little Toby Creek, form the second hub along the Clarion River Greenway, called the Clarion Ghost Towns Hub. Today, the area is only a minor hub, attracting day-trippers looking to enjoy some passive recreation or seeking out a piece of the region's hidden past. There is no infrastructure in the immediate area to support overnight visitors, as there are no hotels and the surrounding state game lands do not allow camping. There are also no gas stations or restaurants to support visitors. However, this site has much to offer, from historic features, such as the ghost towns of Carmen and Croyland, to natural and recreational features, such as the Clarion/Little Toby Trail. Proper marketing of this area, along with some added infrastructure, could make this area a popular destination along the Clarion River Greenway. The

**Recommendation #5:  
Undertake proper marketing and limited infrastructure development of the Clarion/Little Toby Creek Trail area with a goal of making the area a popular greenway destination.**

addition of some limited infrastructure, such as restaurants and historical or educational displays, could support visitors to the region, while maintaining the quiet charm of this area.

An additional improvement suggested during the planning process was to improve access to Little Toby Creek. The seasonally accessible waterway provides an opportunity for visitors and residents to flow along the trail then enter the Clarion River. A proposal by local stakeholders includes access to Little Toby Creek and a hunting and fishing area for disabled people, allowing more to enjoy the Clarion River Greenway.

**Recommendation #6:  
Explore the local stakeholder proposal for improved access to Little Toby Creek.**

The presence of ghost towns along the Clarion River highlights the issues of population growth and economic development. Various stakeholders mentioned these two issues throughout the planning process. Of the nine townships that are traversed by the Clarion River Greenway, only five saw a population increase from 2000 to 2004. Also, eight of the nine townships had a median household income below the national average in 2000 (United States Census Bureau 2005). When the major industries either greatly downsized or left the region, they were not replaced. Many local leaders are worried about the current trend because they do not see opportunities in the region that will entice the younger generations to stay in the area.

It does not appear that any one industry will develop in this area to replace former industries such as logging and tanning. A diverse economy will probably be the best long-term solution. The Clarion River Greenway will act as a catalyst for growth in the region and will be a key component of economic growth. With local tourism sources noting that visitors to the Clarion River corridor generate \$144 million in revenue annually, hubs such as Ridgway, the Allegheny

National Forest, and Cooksburg are critical to the local region. Of the \$144 million, much comes from outside of the corridor, and results in a net gain for the area. As the health and notoriety of the Clarion River continues to improve, more visitors flock to the region to take part in the vast array of nature-based opportunities. This, in turn, will stimulate secondary growth in the region to serve visitors, including lodging, food, and outdoor accessories. The economic development that results from the Clarion River Greenway could be a major step forward as the region attempts to strengthen and diversify its economy. As previously mentioned, visitors already generate \$144 million in new spending in the region each year, and it is believed that this amount could be secured, or increased, in years to come. Comprehensive promotion of the Clarion River Greenway should be undertaken in a cautious manner that promotes the greenway, while protecting the resources in the region that make the greenway an attractive destination and protecting the interests of local residents and private landowners.

**Recommendation #7:  
Carefully promote the Clarion River Greenway to stimulate economic growth in the region, while protecting the natural resources and community values of the region.**

Another way to assist local businesses that was suggested during the planning process is the development of a business association focused on the Clarion River Greenway. While tourist and vacation bureaus and chambers of commerce do include portions of the greenway, there is no business association focused solely on the greenway. The development of a business association could unite local businesses to focus on issues specific to their needs within the greenway.

**Recommendation #8:  
Explore the creation of a Clarion River Greenway Business Association as a way to organize businesses to address needs specific to the area.**

Winter recreational opportunities within the Clarion River Greenway may provide additional opportunities for promoting the region. Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobile riding are already popular uses within the greenway, but with additional promotion, the area could become a haven for winter sports enthusiasts. Increased accommodations for later season hunting and fishing could lengthen the profitable time periods for many area retailers. Nearly all local businesses surveyed said their busiest times were late spring to early fall. The seasonal nature of the region puts pressure on local businesses to make the majority of their profits in the summer months. An increase in winter uses along the greenway could be a significant benefit to the region's economy.

**Recommendation #9:  
Increase promotion of winter recreational opportunities along the Clarion River Greenway to expand local economic opportunities throughout the year.**

A key component of greenway promotion should be unique signage that educates visitors about the greenway, while not detracting from the aesthetics of the area. Signs should be installed along major roadways to inform visitors when they are entering the greenway, and signs should be utilized to direct visitors to various natural, cultural, and recreational destinations in and around

**Recommendation #10:  
Develop a cooperative  
relationship among stakeholders  
along the Clarion, the Lumber  
Heritage Region, and the PA  
Wilds effort to promote the  
region's rich timber history.**

the greenway. The signs should be installed in a cohesive manner, and all signs should have a similar, unique appearance so they stand out among other road signs.

Promotion of the Clarion River Greenway should be a collaborative effort with others working to promote the area, such as the PA Wilds program and the Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region. Both of these efforts are ramping up promotion of the natural amenities of north-

central Pennsylvania, including the Clarion River Greenway. Cooperation amongst these efforts will result in more successful promotional efforts and cost savings.

Projects, such as a proposed historical center within the greenway, could benefit from a close, working relationship among stakeholders along the Clarion River Greenway. The center would be a central repository for information about the greenway's rich history, from Native American times through the timber era and beyond. One of the many suitable locations for such a center would be near the ghost towns of Carmen and Croyland.

**Recommendation #11:  
Explore the creation of a Clarion  
River Greenway Historical  
Center. The center could serve as  
a focal point to educate visitors  
about the greenway's rich history.**

*Reach #2: Little Toby Creek to Allegheny National Forest (Irwintown)*

The second reach of the Clarion River Greenway extends from Little Toby Creek to the Allegheny National Forest hub near Irwintown (See Figure 7). This reach is approximately nine miles long. The Allegheny National Forest stretches for nearly 25 miles along the north bank of the Clarion River, starting just downstream of Ridgway and ending a few miles downstream from Millstone. For the purpose of this greenway plan, Irwintown was selected as the endpoint of this reach, because the surrounding Allegheny National Forest lands form a hub for recreational activities.

<b>River Miles within Reach</b>	9
<b>Percent of land Publicly Owned</b>	89%
<b>Townships within Reach</b>	Spring Creek
<b>Hubs within Reach</b>	Little Toby Creek
	Irwintown (Allegheny National Forest)



*A view of the forested landscape along Reach #2 of the Clarion River Greenway*

The scenery through this second reach of the Clarion River Greenway is similar to that of the initial reach. In fact, the majority of the Clarion River Greenway is dominated by legendary Pennsylvania forestland. The forests in the greenway can generally be divided between hemlock northern hardwood forests in the upper portion of the greenway, consisting of sugar maple, yellow birch, red maple, American beech, and eastern hemlock trees, and Appalachian oak forest in the lower portion of the greenway. Also found here are occasional stands of white pine and Allegheny hardwood forests, which are similar to northern hardwoods forests, but with the addition of black cherry.

The secluded nature of the Clarion River Greenway has protected a significant amount of natural habitat. However, as the number of visitors increases, pressure on the greenway’s most critical natural areas will rise as well. Visitors will continue to seek more secluded areas in an

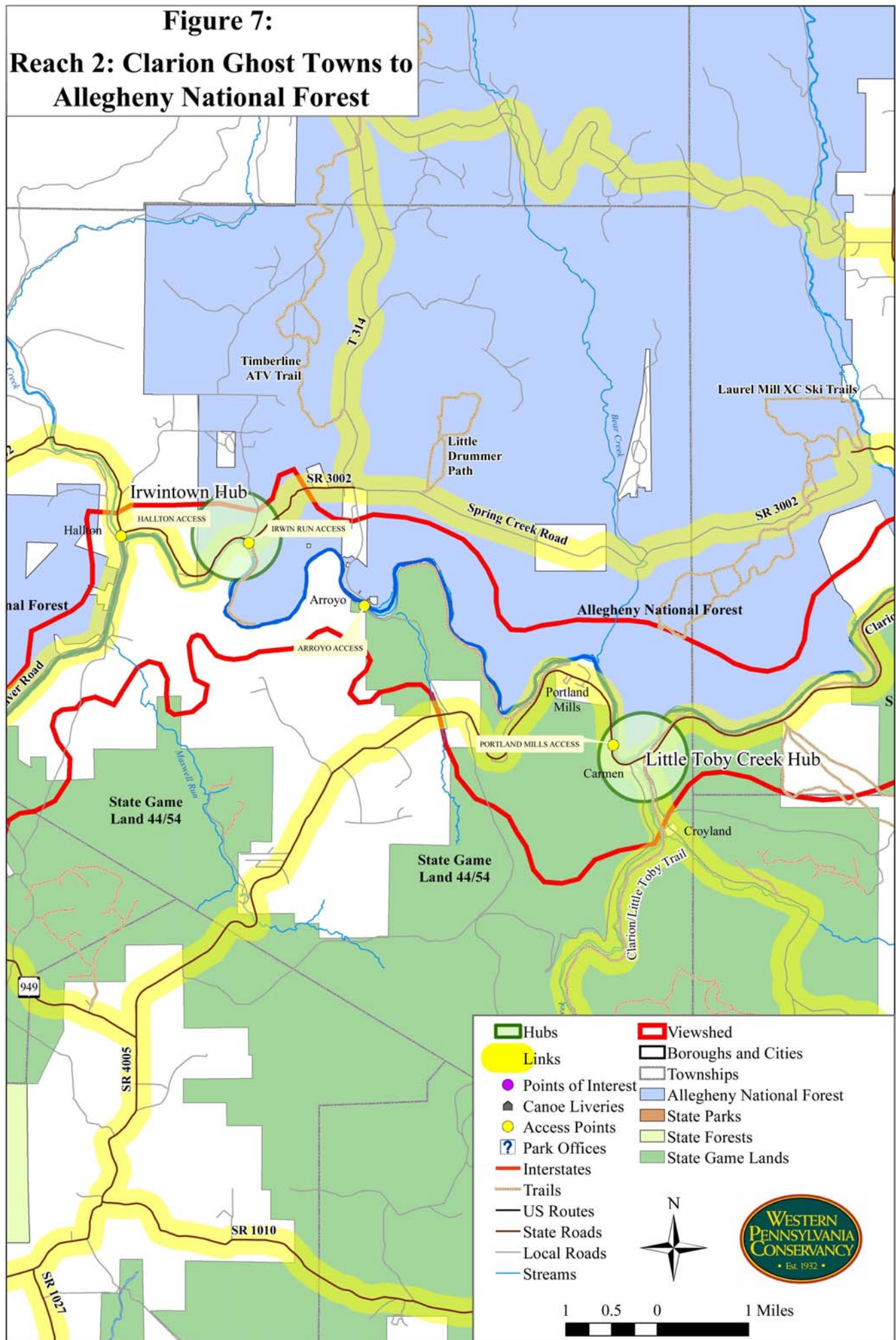
attempt to avoid growing throngs of visitors. While visitors’ opportunities to seek the more natural areas should be respected, it must be balanced with a goal of protecting the most environmentally sensitive areas within the greenway. For this balance to be reached, steps should be taken to guide recreational uses to areas most suitable for more intensive uses.

**Recommendation #12:**  
**Guide intensive recreational use activities towards areas that are most suitable to sustain them and ensure the most critical natural areas are protected.**

This particular reach of the greenway demonstrates the abundance of protected public lands along the Clarion River, as almost the entire reach is bordered on both sides by public lands. To the north lies the Allegheny National Forest, and to the south lies State Game Lands 44. The abundance of public lands has limited development through this reach. State Route 949 turns



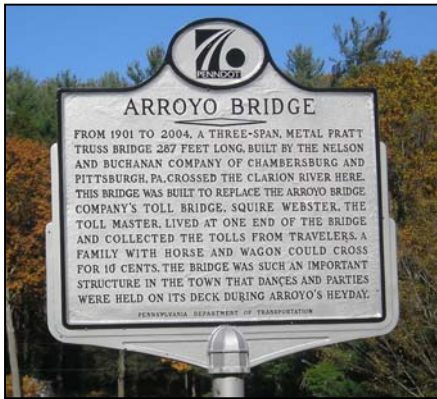
**Figure 7:  
Reach 2: Clarion Ghost Towns to  
Allegheny National Forest**



away from the river a couple of miles past Portland Mills, making this reach even more secluded than the first. The topography here is similar to the first reach, as the Clarion River continues to be bounded by steep, forested banks and a limited floodplain.

Several miles downstream from Portland Mills, visitors encounter the small former lumber town of Arroyo, and pass beneath the Arroyo Bridge. There is also an established canoe and kayak access in Arroyo for those looking to begin their Clarion River trip. While each of the greenway's former lumber towns share a similar life history of a dramatic rise and fall with the lucrative timber industry, it should not be assumed that their stories are the same. Each of these towns has its own story with unique traditions and a spirit of individualism, and it would be unfair to deny their individual character.

Arroyo's story began in the mid 1800s as the town was developing into a bustling lumber town on the south bank of the Clarion River. Beginning in 1882, residents of the town filed petitions for a bridge to be built across the Clarion River to provide quick access from Arroyo to points north of the river. However, it was determined that the bridge was not feasible at the time. Undeterred, the residents formed the Arroyo Bridge Company and built a toll bridge across the river. A few years after the bridge was built, the residents again looked for support, this time petitioning Elk County to purchase the bridge and eliminate the tolls. The issue went to the courts, which eventually agreed with the people of Arroyo, and the county purchased the bridge. In 1901, the original bridge was replaced by Elk County (P. Joseph Lehman, Inc. Consulting Engineers 2005). The bridge became an important structure to the community of Arroyo, and often dances and other social events were held on the bridge itself. Passing through Arroyo today, it is difficult to imagine these lively events of the past in this now sleepy town.



*Arroyo Bridge sign*

In 2004, it was determined that after more than a century of use, a new bridge was needed, and the Arroyo Bridge that was built in 1901, was removed and replaced by a more modern bridge that now crosses the Clarion River at Arroyo. The 1901 bridge was the last remaining turn-of-the-century thru-truss bridge on the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River. As time passes, more cultural and historic features along the Clarion River will deteriorate and, at times, require replacement. As each artifact is removed, a piece of the Clarion River's rich history is lost. The cultural and historical features of the region are critical to the region's future; therefore, protection and preservation of these symbols should be undertaken whenever possible. A first step would be to

develop a comprehensive inventory of all the cultural and historic sites along the Clarion River. This inventory will alert stakeholders in the region to the existing structures along the Clarion River, and can be used to educate residents and visitors about the greenway's history, as well as alert them to historic structures when development is imminent.

**Recommendation #13:**  
**Conduct and record an inventory of the historic and cultural sites along the Clarion River Greenway to preserve and protect the resources when feasible.**

Apart from Arroyo, most of the remaining lands along the south bank of the river, from Little Toby Creek to Irwintown, lie within State Game Lands 44. Just a few miles past Arroyo, situated north of the river where Irwin Run empties into the Clarion River, is Irwintown. Irwintown is



another lumber town turned ghost town. The lands surrounding Irwintown have evolved into a hub of activity within the Allegheny National Forest. Camping, hiking, ATV riding, fishing, and hunting are all popular activities around Irwintown. The town was most active between 1850 and the 1880s. Today, few remnants of the town are visible, and Allegheny National Forest staff maintains river access.

Interestingly, the 513,325-acre Allegheny National Forest is the only national forest in the land of Penn’s Woods. The forest was designated in 1923 by a presidential proclamation from Calvin Coolidge (U.S. Forest Service 2005). The diverse array of recreational uses attracts over a million visitors each year, and makes the forest the third hub along the Clarion River Greenway. The forest is often called “a land of many uses,” as fishing, hunting, hiking, camping, biking, ATV/snowmobile use, horseback riding, skiing, wildlife watching, boating, and canoeing/kayaking are all allowed within the national forest boundaries, with certain restrictions (See Table 6). There is also a popular access point to the Clarion River where Irwin Run empties into the Clarion River. The only bathroom facility along the river within Allegheny National Forest lands is located at the Irwin Run access point. A lack of



*A sign denoting one of the many recreational areas within the Allegheny National Forest*

**Recommendation #14:**  
Explore the possibility of constructing additional bathroom facilities along the Clarion River.

such facilities was an issue identified through the development of this greenway plan. To address this problem, national forest staff, along with other land managers along the greenway, should explore the possibility of including additional bathroom facilities along the greenway.

Tourists from around the country are drawn to the forest every year. In 2001, over 1.4 million visitors entered the national forest. Facilities within the forest include 16 campgrounds with over 600 campsites, six boat launches, six canoe/kayak access sites (including Irwin Run along the Clarion River), 11 picnic areas, and three scenic overlooks. The forest also has an extensive trail network including 201 miles of hiking trails, 53 miles of cross-country skiing trails, 18 miles of interpretative trails, 106 miles of ATV trails, and 366 miles of snowmobile trails (U.S. Forest Service 2005).

<b>Table 6: Allowable Uses within Allegheny National Forest</b>	
➤	ATV/snowmobile use is allowed on marked trails; however, a user permit is required.
➤	Fishing is allowed, in concert with Pennsylvania fishing rules and regulations.
➤	Camping is allowed except for a few areas where it is prohibited.
➤	Hunting is allowed, in concert with Pennsylvania hunting rules and regulations.
➤	Horseback riding is allowed except for a few areas where it is prohibited.

The popularity of the Allegheny National Forest requires a major link at this point to access the Clarion River Greenway. That major link is PA Route 3002, which enters at Irwintown. Route 3002 provides access to the national forest and the Clarion River Greenway from points north and points east, including Ridgway. The route connects the Irwin Run access to the Little Drummer

Historical Path and the Timberline ATV Trail (via Township Route 314), both within the Allegheny National Forest.

The Little Drummer Historical Pathway is a 4.4-mile trail located about eight miles west of Ridgway. The trail was named after the breeding ruffed grouse males (called drummers) found in the area and the multitude of historical artifacts found along the trail. The trail offers an alternative activity for those who are camping for several nights within the national forest and are looking to spend a day off the river. The trail is also a popular daytrip destination.

The trail runs through scenic natural areas, including mature conifer forests and wetlands along Cole Run, a Clarion River tributary. The trail traverses an area of the Allegheny National Forest that is bisected only by a Pennsylvania Game Commission access road built in the 1950s, so hikers can experience a distinct sense of solitude. The trail is partially located on the southernmost railroad bed of the “Bear Creek Tramroad.” This system of railroad grades was used to complete the last great lumbering operations between 1920 and 1929. Historic features include natural gas pipelines and various logging and Civilian Conservation Corps campsites.

The Timberline ATV Trail is another popular destination in the Irwintown area. The trail is actually a collection of trails that ultimately encompass 38 miles. The trail is only open a portion of the year, and is popular for ATVs in the summer and snowmobiles in the winter.

There are opportunities for expanding the trail network throughout the national forest. New trails will provide additional incentives for past visitors to return, and may draw new visitors. One possible new hiking trail would run from Arroyo to Irwintown, utilizing the abandoned Clarion River Railroad grade, and therefore, minimally impacting the natural resources of the area. A group of local volunteers has previously cleared and brushed approximately two-thirds of the distance from Arroyo to Irwintown. Allegheny National Forest staff should explore this possible trail, and if the trail does not conflict with applicable policies or harm the natural, cultural, or historic attributes of the area, the trail should be developed.

**Recommendation #15:**  
Allegheny National Forest staff should explore the viability of a new hiking trail connecting Arroyo to Irwintown.

Throughout the planning process, a significant number of comments were expressed concerning trail development. Participants suggested a need for more trails connecting to the Clarion River and more paved biking trails. Beyond the Clarion/Little Toby Creek Trail and the trails associated

**Recommendation #16:**  
Investigate the creation of additional hiking trails connecting to the river. Explore possibility of developing paved bike trails geared toward family use. Any planned addition to the trail network should be done through a very public process to ensure all stakeholder concerns are addressed.

with the greenway’s state parks, a large percentage of the river is not accessible by trail. While the majority of comments supported and requested the addition of new trails, some requested that no new trail development be approved. Due to these conflicting viewpoints, it is important that any efforts to expand the greenway’s trail network should be done publicly; and attempts should be made to avoid those specific areas where individuals would prefer no additional trails.

The diverse recreational opportunities within the Allegheny National Forest and throughout the greenway, from historical to cultural to natural escapes, provide visitors with what some are calling multi-functional greenspace opportunities. Developing these diverse opportunities will increase the number of visitors to the greenway, as it will ensure activities for people with

different interests and also make longer stays more attractive by providing visitors more activity choices.

In addition to the array of recreational activities offered within the national forest, resource extraction remains a significant activity. Oil and gas drilling are common, and according to the U.S. Forest Service, private interests own approximately 94 percent of the mineral rights within the forest. Currently, there are approximately 7,000 active oil and gas wells within the forest's boundaries (U.S. Forest Service 2005).

Lumber operations are also common within the forest, as over 90 percent of the forest is open to timbering. According to the U.S. Forest Service, from 1987 through 2004, gross receipts from Allegheny National Forest operations totaled just over \$304 million. Roughly 99 percent of the receipts were generated from timber activities. During that time period, average annual harvest was 51 million board feet. The average acreage logged annually since 1987 has been 7,407 acres (U.S. Forest Service 2005).

These operations demonstrate that while timber industry activity along the Clarion River may not be as common as it once was, it is still very much a part of the region. Throughout the greenway, timber harvesting is allowed on most private and public lands. Fortunately, modern timber practices are substantially improved from those that contributed to the degradation of the Clarion River a century ago.

Despite improvements, the lumber industry continues to stir mixed emotions among some greenway stakeholders. Stakeholder input has demonstrated that the industry is seen as both as an economic catalyst—providing many jobs in a region desperately trying to grow its economy—and as a cause for concern, as some residents fear the logging of forests will harm the natural aspects of the Clarion River Greenway, and hamper efforts to bring new tourists to the area.

**Recommendation #17:  
Greenway stakeholders  
should work closely with  
timber interests to ensure  
sustainable forestry  
practices are followed  
throughout the greenway.**

At least some of the concern appears to come from a lack of information about timber practices and timber controls in the region. For example, an apparent lack of erosion and sedimentation controls concerned one stakeholder. However, timber operations on state lands along the river are required to follow strict controls. For example, all timber operations on state game lands have individual erosion and sedimentation plans that are strictly enforced and subject to review under guidelines developed by the Department of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (Chubon 2005).

Another concern voiced was that clear-cutting of timber was allowed in visible areas, and that this practice could deter tourists. According to Pennsylvania law, clear-cutting—also known as regeneration cutting—is allowed on state lands, but a buffer around any stream is required. Minimum stream buffer width along Wild and Scenic waterways, such as the Clarion River, is 100–200 feet for any timber cutting. To ensure the health and aesthetics of the river are protected, these minimum buffers are often doubled or tripled along the Clarion River (Chubon 2005).

To ensure that these best management practices are followed throughout the greenway, stakeholders should work closely with the timber companies and landowners within the greenway to promote sustainable forestry and best management practices. Appropriate management of timber areas is beneficial to wildlife habitat and water quality along the greenway. Proper timber



practices can insure a healthy diversity of habitats to ensure rich biodiversity. This oversight from the region's stakeholders will ensure that steps are taken by timber interests to protect the greenway's natural resources.

Beyond the issue of timber harvesting, the desire for more education throughout the greenway

**Recommendation #18:  
Establish annual guided informational tours of all conservation lands within the greenway to educate stakeholders and visitors about wildlife management within the greenway. Special request tours could also be held.**

was a major theme. Regarding timber practices and management of public lands in general, an increase in education could provide significant benefits. The Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) has already undertaken some educational activities. For example, at least once a year the PGC sponsors a guided tour of the wildlife habitat and the wildlife land management programs on

State Game Lands 44. The PGC also takes various groups through the state game lands by request (Dzemyan 2006). To ensure relevant information about management techniques is reaching the public, and to promote healthy dialogue within the greenway, guided tours should be expanded to include all conservation lands. At a minimum, the tours should be held annually and at the request of local stakeholders and other interested parties. These informational tours should also be publicized widely to ensure that those interested are aware of the programs.

The planning process has demonstrated that the various public agencies within the greenway also need to increase efforts to educate visitors and residents of the region regarding the agencies themselves. Most members of the public do not distinguish among the various agencies. Each agency has a different mission and goal, and the general public rarely understands this. Efforts must be amplified on this front. More education signage should be developed at public land boundaries, explaining which agency manages the land, and outlining the agency's goals. Other media, such as informational brochures should be developed. The brochures could be a joint project among the various public agencies, detailing where each agency manages lands, and outlining their specific goals and management practices.

**Recommendation #19:  
Install more education signage at public land boundaries, explaining what agency manages the land and outlining their goals and policies; other media, such as informational brochures, should be created.**

A final issue related to the Allegheny National Forest is the need to balance the forest's many uses with the needs of the natural resources. Some stakeholders would like more of the forest protected from intensive uses, while others believe few restrictions should be placed on land within the forest boundaries. One specific recommendation was that the Allegheny National Forest develop a wilderness area along the Clarion River from Ridgway to Arroyo. The designation is authorized under the federal Wilderness Act of 1964. The designation would prohibit vehicular traffic and road building in the area, while allowing more passive uses such as hiking. Through the designation, timber cutting would be prohibited, while oil and gas exploration would be allowed, as the Allegheny National Forest does not own the subsurface rights. Vehicular traffic and road building, associated with oil and gas development would be allowed under the designation. As the Allegheny National Forest updates its forest management plan, the designation of additional wilderness should be explored. As this issue is sure to be controversial, it is essential that all stakeholders are involved in this process, to ensure all voices are heard and comments addressed.

As outlined above, the Allegheny National Forest remains a "land of many uses," as is the greenway. This continues to be a point of contention between those who wish to see the forest

## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

managed for conservation and those who want more focus on resource extraction. The concerns have been around for many years, and will likely continue far into the future. These concerns are echoed throughout the greenway as the region struggles to hold on to its past, while moving towards the future. Ultimately, it must be a goal of all stakeholders to strike a balance that protects the natural, historic, and cultural features that are the essence of the greenway, while promoting a local economy that supports the growth of the region.

*Reach #3: Allegheny National Forest (Irwintown) to Clear Creek State Park*

The third reach of the Clarion River Greenway stretches from the Irwintown hub to the Clear Creek State Park hub (See Figure 8). This reach is the longest of the greenway, spanning just over 15 river miles.

<b>River Miles within Reach</b>	15
<b>Percent of Land Publicly Owned</b>	65%
<b>Townships within Reach</b>	Spring Creek
	Millstone
	Barnett (Forest County)
	Heath
<b>Hubs within Reach</b>	Irwintown (ALLEGHENY NATIONAL FOREST)
	Clear Creek State Park

The scenic offerings of the Clarion River Greenway are exceptionally visible through this reach of the river along River Road. The picturesque road lines the north bank of the river. This greenway link offers tremendous scenic views as it extends from Irwintown to Cooksburg, connecting two major greenway hubs. Particularly when fall colors are vibrant, a drive along the road provides visitors with some of the best views of the Clarion River Greenway’s natural beauty.



*Scenic River Road on an autumn afternoon*

Promotion of this picturesque road was suggested through the planning process, and has been discussed by the Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region. Most of the roadway lacks signage to inform drivers that they are on River Road. In addition to installing more street signs along the roadway, the possibility of nominating River Road as a National Scenic Byway should be pursued. Today, 126 byways are designated in 39 states. The Seaway Trail, which runs along Lake Erie, and the Longhouse Scenic Byway, which runs through the Allegheny National Forest, north of the Clarion River Greenway are the only two byways in Pennsylvania. Scenic byways are administered under the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (National Scenic Byways Community 2005). If chosen as a scenic byway, River Road would be eligible for funds through the National Scenic Byways Discretionary Grants program to support and enhance the byway.

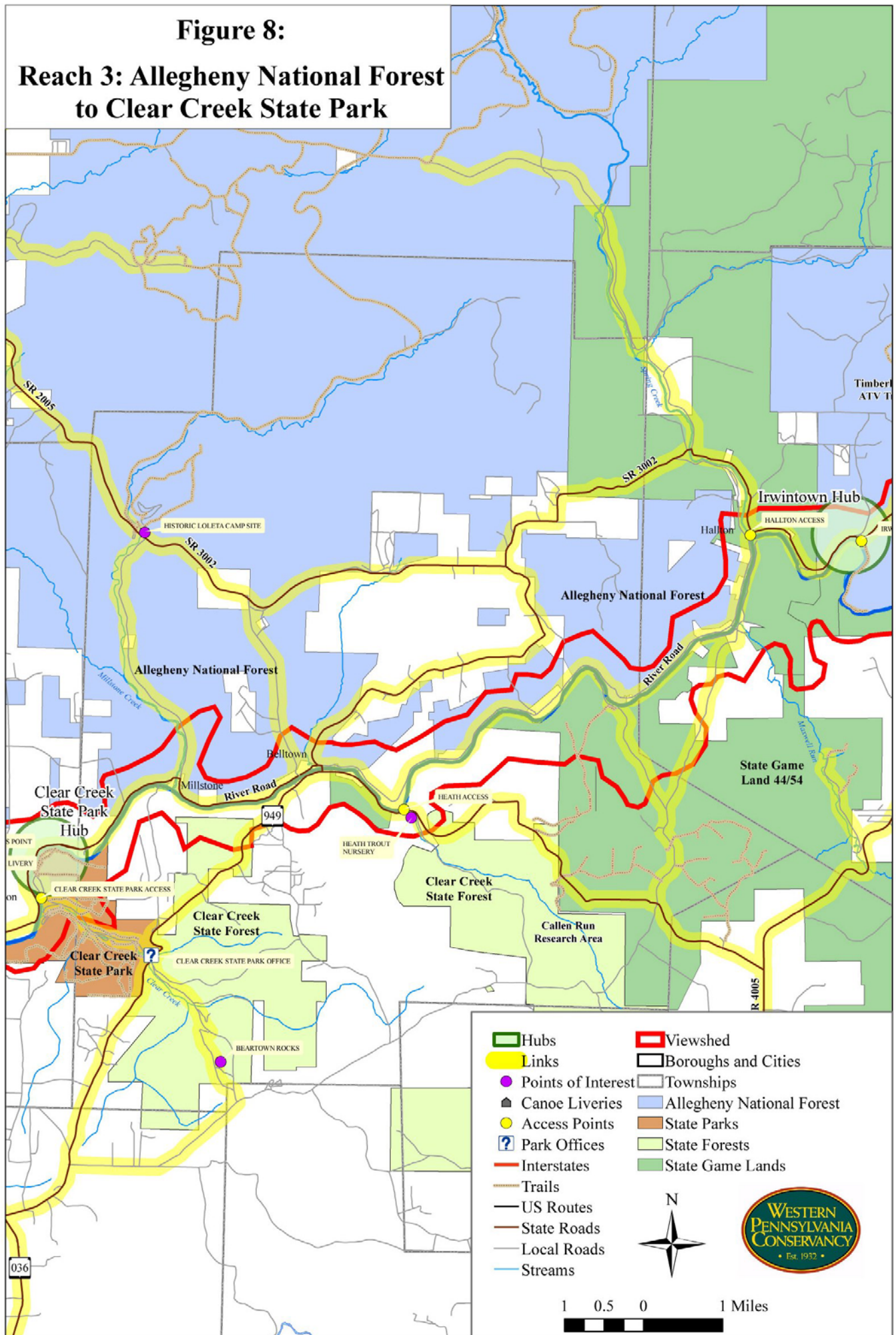
**Recommendation #20:**  
**Local stakeholders should nominate River Road for a Scenic Byway designation by the U.S. Department of Transportation. This picturesque roadway deserves the designation and would greatly benefit from the recognition.**

River Road’s unique characteristics make it suitable for the designation, and byway funds could greatly benefit the roadway and surrounding areas. This funding is critical, because at this time, the roadway suffers several problems. A lack of parking areas near several popular summer camping destinations along the roadway can make driving difficult. Drainage

and water quality improvement projects could also enhance the area surrounding the roadway.

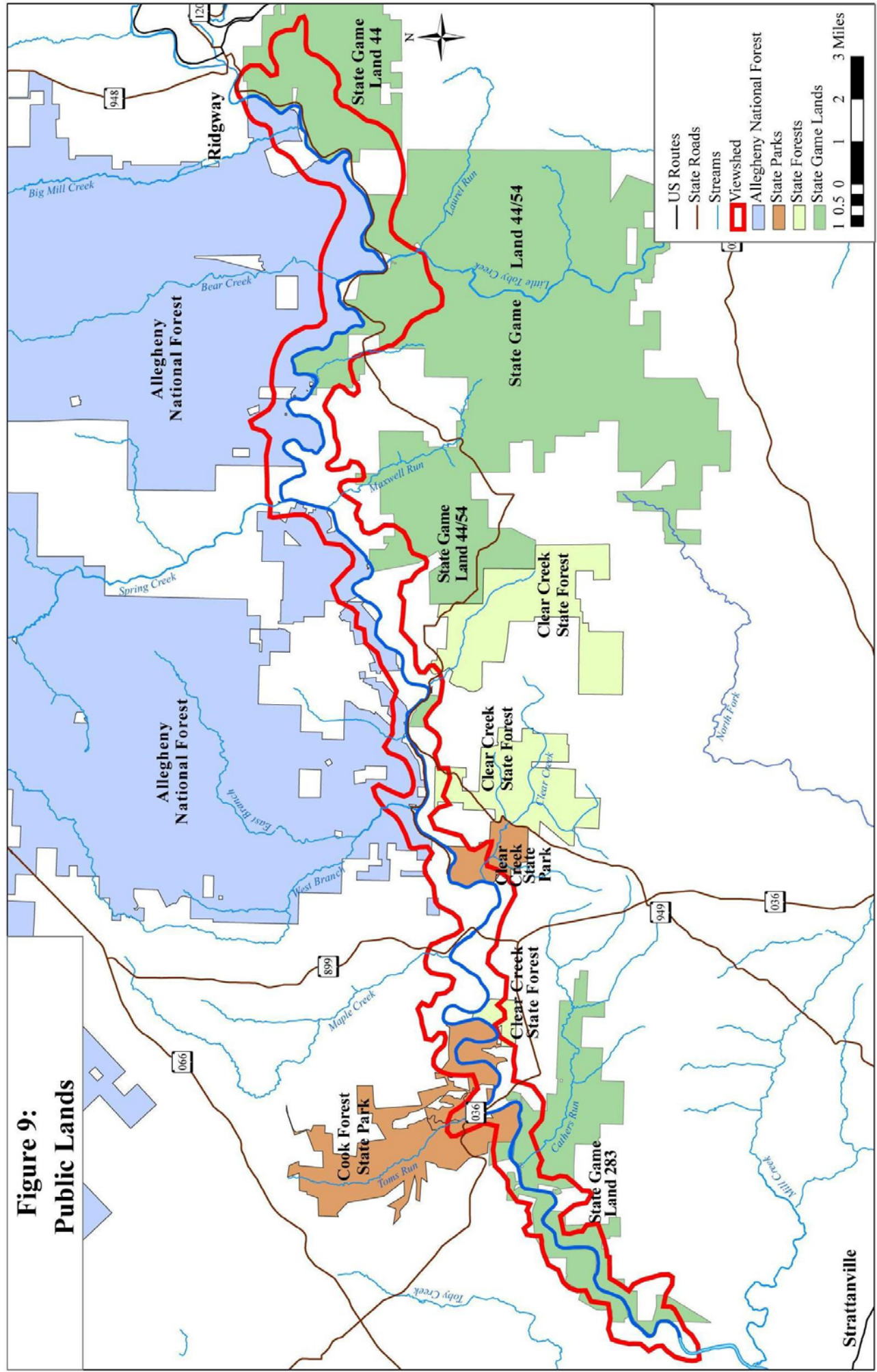
**Figure 8:**

**Reach 3: Allegheny National Forest to Clear Creek State Park**





**Figure 9:  
Public Lands**





Similar to the first two reaches, Reach #3 has extensive lands within the Allegheny National Forest north of the river, but this reach also has some of the largest stretches of private lands within the greenway (See Figure 9). The diversity of land ownership is one of the most interesting aspects of the third reach. This mix of public and private lands, while seen throughout the greenway, is most prevalent along this reach.

Beyond the division between private and public lands, public ownership along this reach can also be divided into state game lands, state forestlands, state park lands, and national forest lands. The mix of public lands throughout the greenway can be a definite benefit as it allows for multiple uses and multiple goals. However, this diversity can also make efforts to manage the greenway as a whole more difficult, since rules and regulations vary significantly between these jurisdictions.

Private lands along this reach can also be further divided into traditional private ownership and private conservation lands, such as those owned by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. The private landowners of the greenway play an essential role in the long-term success of the Clarion River and the greenway as a whole. About 45 percent of the river's shoreline is in private ownership. These landowners are often the strongest advocates for a healthy and user-friendly river, as it is their backyard. However, because of this fact, many private landowners are also wary of the potential for increased visitorship within the greenway and the impact it will have on their lands.

Visitors flock to the Clarion River every year to enjoy its remoteness and the beautiful natural scenery. A greenway that is littered with remnants of prior visitors is not a greenway that will

**Recommendation #21:  
Support current, successful efforts to encourage visitors to respect private property. Promote “leave no trash behind” programs and explore promotion of additional similar efforts.**

elicit return trips. It is critical that Clarion River Greenway users are respectful towards all lands, public and private. Degradation of land along the river will severely limit support for the greenway by landowners, and without their support, the overall success of the Clarion River Greenway will be greatly diminished. At some points along the river, endeavors are already in effect to encourage visitors to respect property rights and

leave no trash behind. At the Pale Whale Canoe Livery in Cooksburg, all renters are given a bag to bring back their trash, and many times renters also pick up trash that others have left along the greenway. This practice should be duplicated throughout the greenway. Also, overall education of visitors should be increased. Additional signs, brochures, and communication about these issues should be supported throughout the greenway.

Efforts should be made to reduce trespassing onto private property and other illegal activities that are occurring along the greenway, including public drunkenness and illegal use of off-road vehicles (ORVs). A first step would be to increase enforcement of current laws to protect the general public and the natural environment. Many times, increased enforcement means increased funding. Most agencies, at this time, do have the funding necessary to adequately combat illegal activities. To further address the issue, formation of a community watch group, with access to a quick-call number to law enforcement, could provide more oversight of the vast greenway lands.

**Recommendation #22:  
Increase enforcement of laws protecting the general public and the natural environment, and form a community watch group to curb illegal activities.**

Additional projects should be undertaken to ensure that trash is removed from the greenway and that a trip along the Clarion River remains an aesthetically pleasing experience. Recurring

**Recommendation #23**  
**Replicate recurring river cleanup events throughout the greenway, such as those held in Ridgway, to remove trash before and after the tourist season, to help promote the Clarion River Greenway.**

cleanup days along the greenway are a great way to promote the Clarion River while removing debris. Currently, a cleanup occurs twice a year out of Ridgway. The events take place in May and September, before and after the high tourist season, to maximize effectiveness. Local high school students form the majority of volunteers who receive assistance from the Allegheny National Forest and local businesses, such as Love's Canoe Rental in Ridgway. This type of effort could be

duplicated in other places along the greenway, such as Cooksburg and Clarion, to ensure the entire greenway benefits from the cleanups. Other groups, such as local fishing clubs and the scouts, could also participate. Beyond the primary benefit of cleaning the river, these efforts will promote the greenway as a recreational opportunity and foster a connection to the river in cleanup participants.

Associated with basic littering and disregard for the Clarion River Greenway is the more specific concern of illegal dumping. The scenic impact of illegal dumps is obvious, but these dumps can also severely degrade habitat and water quality.

Some local governments have taken steps to reduce and eliminate the practice. Elk County has recently hired a part-time solid waste enforcement officer. The position is responsible for working with local municipalities and volunteers of the Elk County Chapter of PA CleanWays (a nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting illegal dumping and littering) to reduce illegal dumping in the county (Elk County 2005). In Jefferson County, the Solid Waste Authority has dedicated a website to the problem of illegal dumping, and urges its citizens to report any illegal dumping. Jefferson County also has an active chapter of PA CleanWays that is working to stop illegal dumping (Jefferson County 2005). While Forest and Clarion counties do not have PA CleanWays chapters, the organization is regional in nature, so other chapters cover both counties (Orris 2005). The struggle for PA CleanWays is that they depend on local sources to fund their valuable work. Currently, the PA CleanWays effort within and around the Clarion River Greenway is not adequately funded.

Illegal dumping could have a marked, negative effect on the Clarion River Greenway. Beyond

**Recommendation #24**  
**Undertake a concerted effort by all local governments to reduce and eliminate the illegal dumping problem along the Clarion River Greenway. Coordinate public and private resources to ensure that local PA CleanWays chapters are adequately funded.**

pollution concerns, dumps deter visitors. Each county and municipality along the greenway should make a concerted effort to reduce or eliminate the illegal dumping problem in this region. Increasing staff, utilizing volunteers, creating feasible dumping alternatives, and increasing public education can help this effort. These local government efforts should be coordinated with the local PA CleanWays chapters. The organization is established in the area, and has the expertise to tackle these issues. To ensure PA CleanWays remains viable in the region, local private

and public resources should ensure the local PA CleanWays chapters are adequately funded.

The remoteness of the Clarion River Greenway also makes it difficult for visitors to realize all of the various opportunities available throughout the region. The environmental, historical, and cultural opportunities are scattered through the greenway, and many are easily missed if one is not aware of them. An effective educational tool for the Clarion River Greenway would be an interactive website. The website could inform visitors about the many activities and sites along

the greenway, and could even include a virtual tour of the greenway. This tour would give visitors visual recognition of the greenway's resources and could effectively promote the greenway while allowing future visitors to plan their upcoming trips.

**Recommendation #25**  
**Develop a website promoting the Clarion River Greenway. The site should include a virtual tour of the greenway.**

The greater occurrence of private land along this reach translates into an increase in residential development. Although Reach #3 is more populated than the first two, only limited population pockets exist. The first small town along this reach is Hallton, which is located just a few miles downstream from Irwintown. Similar to Portland Mills, a small population remains in the town, which was once the site of several large industries including a major sawmill and chemical plant. Hallton lies at the confluence of Spring Creek, which is one of Clarion River's largest tributaries during its 51.7-mile run as a Wild and Scenic River. Spring Creek lies north of the river and flows through the Allegheny National Forest and State Game Lands 28 before emptying into the Clarion River. The tributary is one of three popular waterways through this reach, and Hallton offers a canoe and kayak access point on State Game Lands 28, managed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.



*A peaceful stretch of the Clarion River*

Downstream of Hallton is another area of spectacular scenery and limited development. This stretch from Hallton to Clear Creek State Park passes through the western edges of State Game Lands 54 and the Allegheny National Forest. In this stretch, the greenway passes only the small towns and former logging communities of Heath Station, Belltown, and Millstone. For a short distance, State Route (SR) 949 returns to the south bank of the river before it once again dips south and cuts through Clear Creek State Forest. Just off of SR 949, in Heath, is a very accessible canoe and kayak access point.

Loleta, a popular destination within the national forest, lies north of Millstone along Millstone Creek about four miles from the Clarion River. The site offers ample recreational opportunities and another glimpse into the region's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) days. Loleta was one of the largest logging operations in the vicinity of the Clarion River. During the late 1800s, this was an active community of around 600 residents (U.S. Forest Service 2005).



*Loleta bathhouse, built by the CCC (courtesy PA Lumber Heritage Region)*

The town had a large sawmill, shingle mill, broom handle factory, and a rail connection to ship products out of the area. However, the area's timber was exhausted by 1913 and the industry moved on, leaving the town of Loleta deserted. In 1925, the federal government purchased the property and included it within the newly formed Allegheny National Forest. During the Great Depression, many of the deteriorated or abandoned towns along the Clarion River provided perfect work opportunities for the CCC. The CCC extensively developed the Loleta area by constructing a bathhouse, swimming area, and picnic shelter. Some evidence of the CCC's work is still visible. Today, the campground is an Allegheny National Forest recreation area with snowmobile and hiking trails that provide great access to the site (U.S. Forest Service 2005).

**Recommendation #26**  
**Develop informational tours,**  
**focusing on different aspects of the**  
**Clarion River Greenway, to educate**  
**the greenway's visitors.**

As mentioned previously, the rich history of and resources along the greenway can be difficult to find. Many more historical sites could be lost as the years pass if significant efforts are not made to pass this history on to future generations. Guided tours may be a viable option to inform visitors about the various resources available throughout the greenway. In

addition to historical aspects, natural resources and cultural locations could also be highlighted through these tours, providing another valuable tool for educating greenway visitors.

The campground at Loleta makes Millstone Creek a popular recreational spot along this reach. It is about four miles upstream from the point where Millstone Creek flows into the Clarion River. The trip down Millstone Creek is an enjoyable one as it flows almost entirely through national forest lands. However, fluctuating water levels make the entire creek passable only at certain times of the year. When water levels are high enough for a trip down Millstone Creek, some whitewater will be found, giving the journey a moderate level of difficulty.



*Loleta Sawmill (courtesy PA Lumber Heritage Region)*

Across the Clarion River from the confluence of Millstone Creek, lies Clear Creek State Forest, the only state forest along the Clarion River Greenway. While it never reaches the river, the boundary of the forest runs less than a mile from the shoreline just before Clear Creek State Park. The 10,113-acre Clear

Creek State Forest is a popular destination for a variety of visitors. The entire state forest is open to hunting fishing, hiking, backpacking, and primitive (non-motorized) camping. The area is also popular with bird watchers (Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources 2005). The 2,500-acre Callen Run Research Area, within the state forest, has been designated an Important Bird Area (IBA), and is home to numerous species including cerulean warblers, thrushes, and woodpeckers (Seneca Rocks Audubon Society 2005). IBAs are areas selected by the nongovernmental organizations, Birdlife International and the Audubon Society. According to Birdlife International (2005), IBAs are “priority areas for the conservation of globally threatened, range restricted, and congregatory birds.” A short diversion off the river into the state forest is a great opportunity to see some of the rich wildlife the Clarion River Greenway has to offer.

Motorized recreational vehicles, such as ATVs or snowmobiles, are not permitted within this state forest. Primitive camping is allowed on the majority of land, and motorized camping is permitted in designated areas with a permit from the Forest District office. All of the cabins in the state forest are leased, and are not available for use by the general public.

Just downstream of Clear Creek State Forest is Clear Creek State Park, along the southern shore of the river. Land for the park was purchased from the Frazier family, and the park was dedicated in 1934. As mentioned earlier, SR 949, which returned to the riverbank at Heath, turns south



again near this point, and forms a portion of the park's eastern boundary, providing access from Ridgway and points east. Despite being in the shadow of Allegheny National Forest and Cook Forest State Park, Clear Creek State Park remains popular among visitors and residents alike, and remains a major hub along the greenway. The park is a recreational getaway, as it offers camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, nature watching, and several miles of established snowmobile trails. Those looking to spend a few days along the river or seeking an overnight stop as they canoe or kayak down the Clarion River often utilize the park.



*A cabin at Clear Creek State Park*

**Recommendation #27**  
**Ensure that all stakeholders are involved in any future steps taken to explore the possibility of trail development and land protection between public lands within the greenway.**

The state park is named after Clear Creek, which flows through both the park and Clear Creek State Forest (PA DCNR 1995). With only 10 miles between the central portions of Clear Creek and Cook Forest state parks, a canoe trip between the two destinations has become a popular day trip. Development of a hiking trail between the two parks was discussed during the greenway planning process. Arguments were raised both for and against this trail. Those who support the trail see it as a logical step in

the evolution of the parks. Those against the trail fear its potential impacts on nearby private property and the currently undeveloped land the trail would pass through. Any actions taken regarding this trail must be cautiously planned, ensuring all stakeholders are involved in the process.

Clear Creek State Park is the only site along the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River with established campsites on the banks of the river. The park offers seven waterfront cabins, 11 campsites without electrical hookups, four campsites that provide electricity, and two waterfront yurts. Yurts are a cross between a cabin and a tent that were first used by nomadic peoples in Turkey. Camping is allowed along the waterfront in Allegheny National Forest, but there are no established sites.

Throughout the greenway planning process, the availability and location of camping opportunities has been a major issue. The apparent lack of established campsites along the river has led some to develop campsites on lands they believe to be public. However, at times these campsites are mistakenly situated on private lands. While some prefer to camp off the beaten trail, indicating the need to continue to allow camping along the river within the Allegheny National Forest; the establishment of additional campsites along the river could reduce conflicts with private property owners. All public land managers who allow camping should explore the feasibility of adding primitive campsites along the river. These sites give visitors a unique opportunity to thoroughly enjoy the beauty of the Clarion River to its highest degree.

**Recommendation #28**  
**Land managers along the greenway that allow camping should explore the feasibility of adding primitive, riverfront campsites. Also, Allegheny National Forest staff should explore the possibility of prohibiting camping in problem areas close to private lands.**



## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

There is also much confusion regarding which public lands permit camping. Four different categories of public lands can be found along the greenway, each with a different set of guiding policies regulating camping. A more thorough overview of these various camping regulations can be found in Appendix C. At this time, regulated camping is allowed on the national forest, state park, and state forest lands along the greenway. The state game lands along the greenway do not allow camping. Game lands are acquired through funds from the Game Fund, and also federal assistance funds. According to Pennsylvania law, game lands are acquired and managed only for those uses incidental to hunting, fur taking, and game and wildlife resource management. Those uses do not permit camping on site. In an attempt to increase camping opportunities along the river, the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC), who manages the game lands, could swap lands with other public land managers. Opportunities to complete such swaps should be explored and executed, when possible, to ensure adequate availability of camping sites throughout the Clarion River Greenway.

Overall, this third reach of the Clarion River Greenway covers nearly one-third of the Wild and Scenic portion of the river. Through the 15 miles of the reach, the Clarion River traverses a diverse mix of public and private lands, all of which showcase the scenic beauty of the Clarion River Greenway.

*Reach #4: Clear Creek State Park to Cook Forest State Park*

The fourth reach of the Clarion River Greenway begins at Clear Creek State Park and covers about 10 river miles as the river snakes to Cook Forest State Park (See Figure 10). As the crow flies, the distance between the hearts of Clear Creek State Park at Clarrington and Cook Forest State Park at Cooksburg, is less than four miles. However, the twists and turns of the river through this reach result in a distance of 10 river miles between the two hubs.

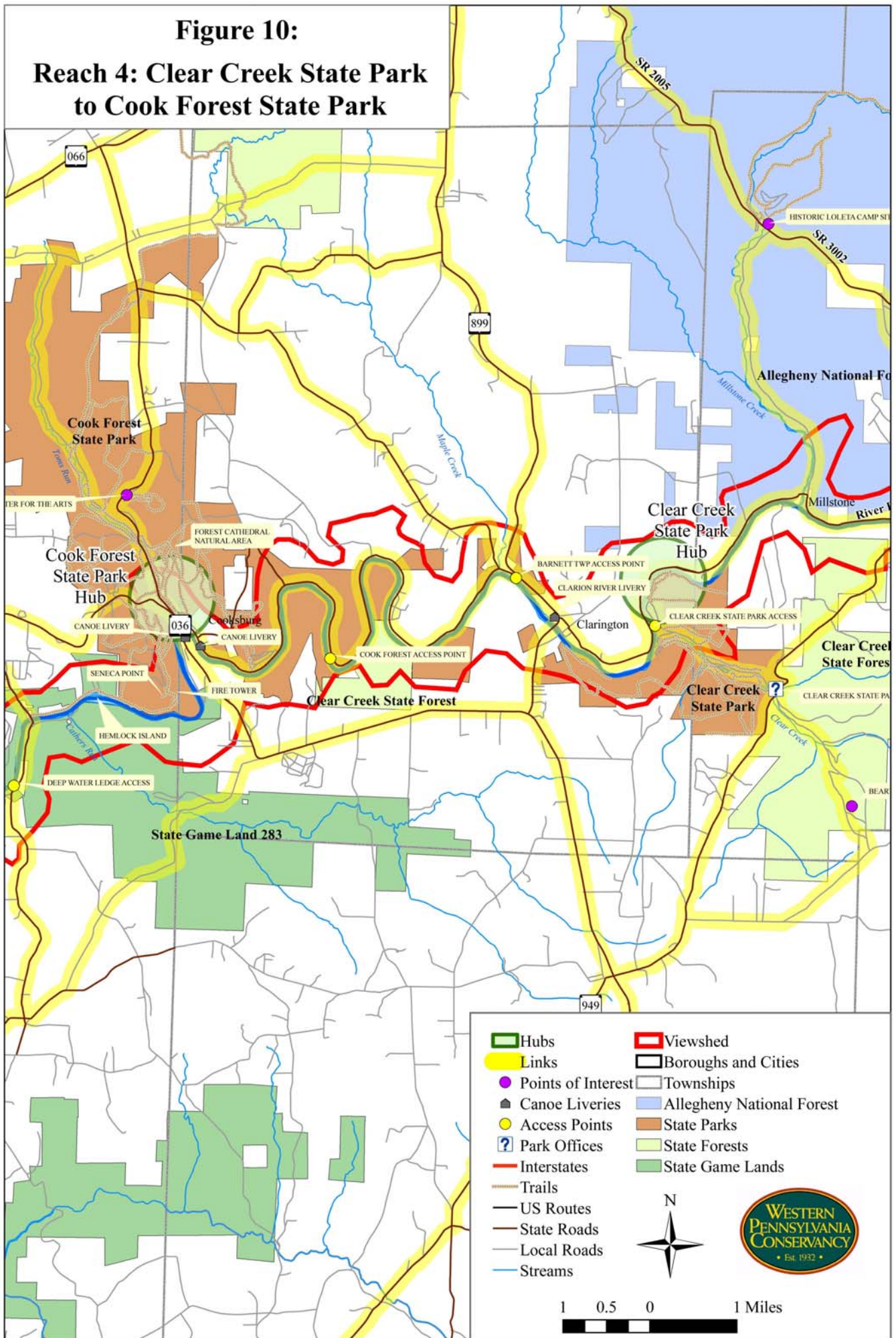
<b>River Miles within Reach</b>	10
<b>Percent of Land Publicly Owned</b>	44%
<b>Townships within Reach</b>	Barnett (Forest County)
	Heath
	Barnett (Jefferson County)
	Farmington
<b>Hubs within Reach</b>	Mill Creek
	Clear Creek State Park
	Cook Forest State Park

The location of this reach of the Clarion River Greenway makes it one of the most secluded, as it is many miles from the population centers of Ridgway upstream and Clarion downstream. This seclusion is one of the greenway’s major attractions. The rush of everyday life can be forgotten by escaping to this natural area devoid of the accoutrements of the modern world. However, this seclusion also comes with a downside; the remoteness of the area can be a hindrance in an emergency situation, as cell phones lack reception. Stakeholders in the area are concerned that emergency services may not be accessible. A quick solution to this problem would be to build a cell phone tower in the area. However, these are expensive and very few see the construction of a several-hundred-foot metal tower in a secluded natural area as a welcome addition. One option to be explored is the use of “stealth” or co-located cell phone towers. Stealth towers have been used throughout the country, and can be built to look like anything from various types of trees to flagpoles. Co-located cell phone towers are small towers attached to existing structures, such as a building or a water tower. The use of such cell phone towers could be a way to address the emergency services issue without negatively impacting the integrity of the Clarion River Greenway. This issue must be addressed cautiously to increase the safety of both the residents and visitors of the greenway, while protecting the natural aspects of the greenway.

**Recommendation #29**  
**Explore the option of installing a “stealth” or co-located cell phone tower as a way to address the need for communication along the greenway during an emergency.**

With much of the land within the reach falling under the jurisdiction of the two popular state parks, this area has become a focal point of nature-based tourism. The two state parks are accessible by three major roadway links: State Route (SR) 949 forms a portion of the eastern boundary of Clear Creek State Park, SR 899 travels north to south between the two parks, and SR 36 passes through Cook Forest State Park. Within a greenway often untouched by asphalt, the accessibility of these sites has made them some of the most popular destinations within the greenway.

**Figure 10:  
Reach 4: Clear Creek State Park  
to Cook Forest State Park**



*Clarion River Greenway Plan*

The reach also provides significant canoe and kayak access for visitors and residents. In addition to access at Clear Creek and Cook Forest state parks, Barnett Township provides an additional access between the parks. This access is located along SR 899, and is well developed with ample parking.

Interspersed among the state park lands along the reach are significant acreages of private lands including land owned by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC). WPC has been protecting lands within the Clarion River watershed since 1977, and allows the public to utilize these lands for various activities. While WPC has transferred the majority of its conservation lands to the commonwealth of Pennsylvania for permanent protection, the organization still owns approximately 500 acres along the river within all four counties that the greenway traverses. WPC also holds conservation easements (legal documents that ensure conservation by restricting some activities) on over 500 acres of land, and owns the subsurface (drilling and mining) rights to over 900 acres.

<b>Table 7: WPC Protected Lands</b>	
<b>Type of Preservation</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Fee Simple	489.89
Conservation Easement	505.14
Subsurface ownership	952.60

All WPC lands along the greenway are open to the public and are available for outdoor recreation and enjoyment, free of charge. Hunting, fishing, and camping are allowed on the properties in accordance with Pennsylvania laws and regulations, while vehicles including cars, ATVs, snowmobiles, and mountain bikes are not permitted.

Several thousand acres of land once protected by WPC have been conveyed to the state. These lands include over 6,000 acres to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, nearly 2,500 acres to the Bureau of State Parks, 124 acres to the Bureau of Forestry, and four acres to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. Through the years, 68 acres have also been transferred to the federal government to become part of the Allegheny National Forest. These lands will be permanently protected and managed in accordance with their appropriate management plan.

<b>Table 8: WPC Conveyed Lands</b>	
<b>Receiving Entity</b>	<b>Acres</b>
PA Game Commission	6,091.30
PA Bureau of State Parks	2,561.18
PA Bureau of Forestry	124.00
PA Fish and Boat Commission	4.18
Allegheny National Forest	68.30



The major hub within Reach #4 is Cook Forest State Park. The park straddles the river, but lies mostly to the north. The state park is an extremely important hub in the greenway, as it is the second-most visited state park in the commonwealth, welcoming upwards of 150,000 visitors during peak summer months. During the off-season winter months, visitorship drops to about 5,000 visitors per month. During these months, many visitors enjoy the park's cross-country skiing and snowmobile trails. Similar to Clear Creek State Park, it offers a host of recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, biking, nature watching, and ATV trails. The park is a popular bird watching destination, as it is the second Important Bird Area (IBA) of the greenway. The park offers nearly 30 miles of hiking trails, including a portion of the 141-mile Baker Trail, which begins near Freeport, northeast of Pittsburgh, and extends through Cook Forest State Park to its terminus within the Allegheny National Forest. The trail, first developed in 1950, remains a popular destination through this section of the greenway (Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy 2005).



*Baker Trail Sign at Cook Forest State Park*

Within Cook Forest State Park lies some of the most magnificent forestland found in the entire state. While the vast majority of land along the greenway has been logged at some point over the last 200 years, some old growth forests remain. One is the aptly named Forest Cathedral area in the eastern portion of Cook Forest State Park. The 550-acre area contains towering white pines and hemlock and provides visitors with striking scenery, similar to that William Penn would have experienced. In recognition of its natural value, the Forest Cathedral has been designated a National Natural Landmark. Many of the pine and hemlocks in the Forest Cathedral exceed three feet in diameter and approach 200 feet in height (PA DCNR 2001).

Tom's Run is another important site. The stream, a tributary to the Clarion River, lies entirely within the state park, nearly dividing it in half. Approximately 2.5 miles of Tom's Run is stocked with trout, so it is a popular spot for anglers. Close to its confluence with the Clarion River, is a specially designated fishing pond for the disabled and children under 12. This area is easily accessible and a very popular fishing location. The popularity and accessibility of Tom's Run make it another important tributary of the Clarion River.

The lands around Cook Forest, like much of western Pennsylvania, have experienced years of oil, gas, and coal exploration. The legacy of these activities can greatly alter the region's natural environment. Once oil and gas wells deplete the resource, they are often abandoned. In some cases, these abandoned wells become artesian discharges, which release water. Polluted mine

drainage from nearby abandoned mines is sometimes drawn up and deposited into local waterways. Plugging the abandoned wells would appear to be an immediate solution to eliminate the polluted discharges. However, a recent examination of this practice around Cook Forest State Park demonstrated that plugging one well could force the polluted water to a different discharge site, thereby polluting a new portion of the stream or increasing flow at another existing discharge. Well-plugging can be a significant aspect of stream restoration; however, hydrologic conditions should always be considered. All well-plugging efforts in and around the Clarion River Greenway should be approached cautiously, in order to ensure abandoned mine drainage (AMD) is contained where

**Recommendation #30**  
**Research hydrologic conditions associated with abandoned wells to ensure that they are understood before wells are plugged.**



it can be treated most successfully. Hydrologic conditions should always be thoroughly investigated before plugging commences.

Several abandoned mine discharges located within the Clarion River Greenway have been addressed. However, AMD remains a problem in and around the greenway. These discharges can have significant negative impacts on the natural resources of a waterbody, and can also deter. As stakeholders continue to tackle this serious issue, a timeline should be established to create an overall plan for addressing the remaining AMD problems in and around the greenway. The sooner these discharges are addressed, the healthier the Clarion River will become.

**Recommendation #31**  
**Develop a timeline for addressing the remaining AMD problems in and around the Clarion River Greenway.**

Both Cook Forest State Park and Clear Creek State Park are managed following a Resource Management Plan developed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, with input from various stakeholders. All other public lands along the greenway are also managed following site-specific and agency-specific management plans. Management of lands along the Clarion River Greenway is critical, as the river continues to recover. Today, management of public lands in the greenway is disconnected, although most land managers within the greenway have similar management goals and are facing similar management concerns, such as non-native species and illegal dumping.

Coordination among the various public managers and private landowners is highly recommended. Regarding issues such as non-native species, a comprehensive approach is needed to fully address the issue. Invasive species, such as purple loosestrife, multiflora rose, and Japanese knotweed, are found along portions of the greenway, and they never obey property lines. Japanese knotweed is of particular concern in the greenway, as the plant can quickly overrun miles of streambank if left unchecked. If a landowner develops an effective plan to eliminate non-native species on his or her property, those efforts could prove fruitless if the same species thrive on an adjacent property, and eventually move back to where it was once eradicated. A comprehensive approach, among all landowners with particular species on their site, is needed to adequately address this growing problem.



*Invasive exotic Japanese knotweed*

Problems such as illegal dumping would also benefit from a coordinated approach to control. If one property strictly enforces no dumping regulations, it could potentially push the illegal activity to a neighboring property where regulations are not as strictly enforced. Also, coordination between landowners would facilitate the sharing of information regarding successful practices dealing with issues such as illegal dumping.

Improving communication between the various landowners will help address a host of other issues as well, so this coordination is key to the success of a Clarion River Greenway. Both private and public landowners should be actively involved in this process. Because many of the land managers and landowners are already spread thin by their many different activities, this effort should not be time intensive. One approach is to create a working group of Clarion River

Greenway land managers and private landowners. This committee could meet quarterly, but also develop a network to keep managers and owners in communication through phone and email.

It is important to note that any such advisory committee would be completely non-regulatory. No individual landowner or land manager would have the authority to require specific changes in management activities on a neighboring property. The council would have the ability to discuss various land-management issues, and offer the various landowners a higher level of communication.

**Recommendation #32**  
**Form a Clarion River Greenway Land Managers Committee to encourage open communication and coordination of activities among the various land managers along the greenway.**

The formation of a Clarion River Greenway land managers and landowners committee will increase opportunities for promotion and protection of the greenway by allowing land managers and landowners to communicate their experiences and cooperate on various efforts. As interest in, and visitation to, the Clarion River Greenway

increases, coordination among the various land managers may prove essential.

*Reach #5: Cook Forest State Park to Piney Dam Backwaters*

The final reach of the Clarion River Greenway stretches about 10.5 river miles from the Cook Forest State Park hub to the backwaters of Piney Dam, the western border of the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River (See Figure 11). This end point lies about 6.5 miles upstream from Clarion Borough.

<b>River Miles within Reach</b>	10.5
<b>Percent of Land Publicly Owned</b>	67%
<b>Townships within Reach</b>	Farmington
	Mill Creek
	Highland
<b>Hubs within Reach</b>	Cook Forest State Park

From the western boundary of Cook Forest State Park to the end of the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River, the river flows almost completely through State Game Lands 283. Only a few acres of private lands are interspersed amongst the game lands. This is yet another area along the river that provides spectacular views of the surrounding natural landscapes.



*North Country Trail sign*

As was mentioned in Reach #4, the remoteness of the Clarion River Greenway can be a detriment, as well as a benefit. Within Reach #4, recommendations were made regarding emergency service contact. However, the next step is for the emergency officials to reach those in need. The seclusion of the Clarion River Greenway makes some areas of the river particularly difficult to access. Long stretches of the river go for miles without roadways along the banks. As depicted in Figure 12, roads do not come within a quarter-mile of the riverbank for significant stretches. These remote stretches are particularly abundant through Reach #5, with another substantial stretch within Reach #2.

This situation could worsen an emergency if respondents have difficulty reaching those in need. Of course, emergency officials plan for this type of event and are trained to assist in water rescue, but rescue could be hampered in these situations due to the lack of vehicular access to the river. Once again, the struggle is to balance the desirable natural solitude of the Clarion River and the safety of its visitors.

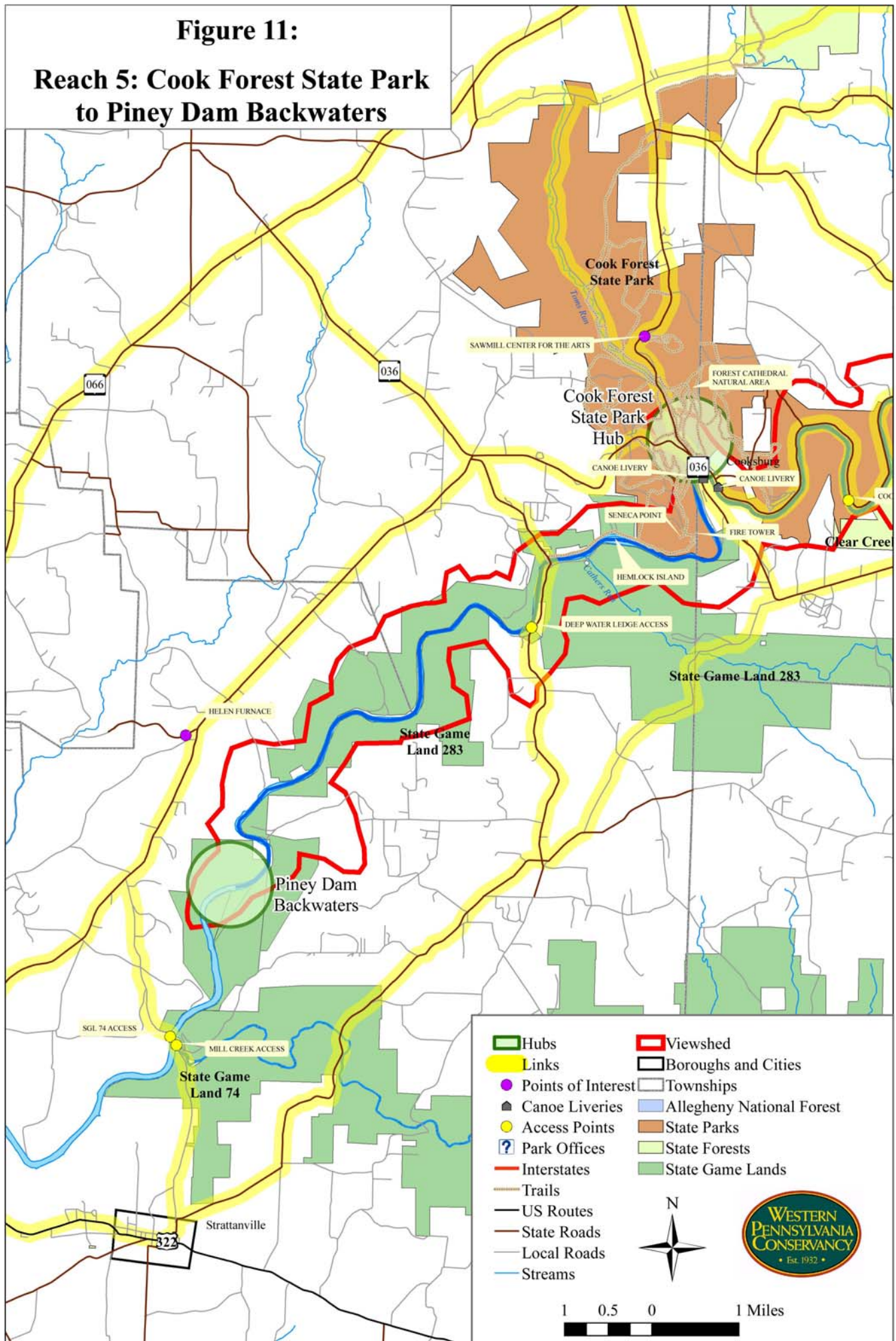
**Recommendation #34**  
**Develop a system of coordination between emergency management officials to ensure the best approaches to handling emergencies occurring along the river are utilized.**

Within State Game Lands 283 are a canoe/kayak access and several hiking trails. A portion of the North Country Trail (NCT), a popular destination within the greenway, travels through this reach of the river. The trail is very well known among hikers, and attracts people from around the country. There are currently 126 miles of the NCT in Pennsylvania, with another 174 miles in the planning stages (Street 2006). Within State Game Lands 283, a nearly continuous 475-mile segment of the trail that originates in New York comes to an end. The next portion of the



**Figure 11:**

**Reach 5: Cook Forest State Park to Piney Dam Backwaters**



NCT, from State Game Lands 283 to the Allegheny River, is a mix of roadway linkages and established and unofficial trails. Efforts are underway to develop connections to the western

**Recommendation #35**  
**Complete the portion of the North Country Trail that passes from the Clarion River Greenway to the Allegheny River. Completion will increase visitorship to the trail and the entire greenway region.**

portion of the trail that travels through Ohio and eventually extends through North Dakota (North Country Trail Association 2005). Other portions of the NCT also pass through the Clarion River Greenway including segments that join trail systems in Cook Forest and Clear Creek state parks and the Allegheny National Forest. Today,

the incompleteness of the trail and the requirement to walk along roadways to travel some segments are a major deterrent to many hikers, and constructing the needed connections would entice more hikers to visit this portion of the trail. Finishing this trail should increase visitorship to the trail and greenway.

Unique destinations await visitors through this final reach of the greenway. The first destination is the Sawmill Center for the Arts, which opened in 1974. For several years, the center operated a location just west of the Cook Forest State Park boundary, only a few miles off State Route (SR) 36, but the focus of the organization is the second location, which is actually within Cook Forest State Park. This main center is located in a restored, historic sawmill that was once an integral part of the region's timber industry. Today, the center is run by a nonprofit craft organization and attracts over 500,000 visitors each year.

Part of the mission of the center is to increase public awareness of the region's environment and history. The mission is fulfilled through displays of traditional arts and crafts, historical collections, and various classes offered during summer and fall months. The organization also runs the Verna Leith Sawmill Theater at the center where plays, musicals, and other entertainment are performed throughout the summer (Sawmill Center for the Arts 2005).

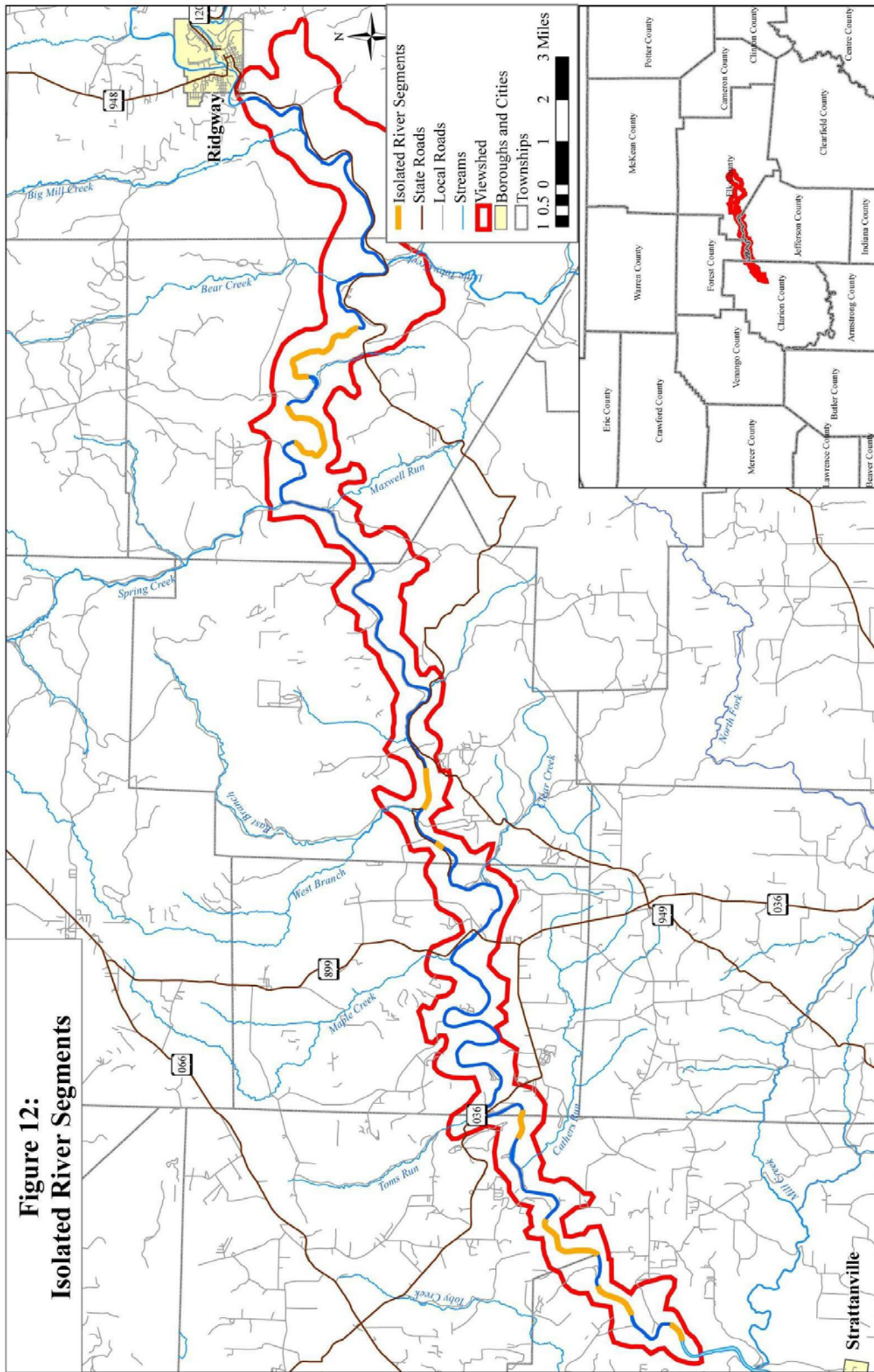
The center has become a popular destination and tremendous example of how the region's past can be utilized as an economic catalyst. Often a community's historic and cultural structures are demolished and replaced by modern buildings, erasing a part of the area's cultural history. The Sawmill Center for the Arts demonstrates the feasibility of protecting and restoring the past while promoting and benefiting the future. Efforts such as this should be replicated throughout the greenway, and local governments should explore incentives to promote economic growth while protecting the region's cultural identity.

**Recommendation #36**  
**Local governments within the greenway should develop incentives that promote economic development while protecting the region's cultural and historic resources.**

One of the most intriguing historical features along the greenway is also located a short distance from Cook Forest State Park. Just off SR 1005 is the restored, historic Helen Furnace. The iron furnace is one of several that operated in the region between 1829 and 1867. Built in 1845, the cold blast Helen Furnace was in operation until 1857. The furnace was reconstructed in 1977 and is listed by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The furnace was originally named "Highland" Furnace, but due to local accents, the name morphed to "Hieland," and finally to "Helen" Furnace. It is located in northeastern Clarion County, north of Clarion Borough.



**Figure 12:  
Isolated River Segments**



Readily accessible iron ore and timber in the lower portion of the Clarion River Greenway led to



*Historic Helen Furnace*

the construction of iron furnaces throughout region. During the 1800s, at least 30 iron furnaces operated within Clarion County, which was often referred to as “Iron County” in recognition of its many furnaces (Washlaski and Washlaski 2004). Similar to the region’s timber, iron was also sent down the Clarion and Allegheny rivers to Pittsburgh. Throughout the region, the iron industry was an important economic resource for many years. The iron furnaces typically employed 25 to 100 men. Unlike the timber industry (which still remains despite its reduction), today there are only relics of the iron industry, even in Iron County.

Despite the rich historical resources along the Clarion River, the Historic Helen Furnace is the site of one of only two historical markers administered by the

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission along the greenway. The other marker recognizes the history of Cooksburg (Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission 2005). Perhaps even more remarkable is the fact that there are no National Historic Landmarks along the greenway. Considering the rich history of the region, several sites along the Clarion River would be a perfect fit for a historical designation. During its peak industrial period, the resources from the Clarion River were critical to the growth of a fledgling United States. This history has not been given its proper recognition, and while a historical marker is only a first step in recognizing the region’s contributions, it is an important beginning. Sites such as the former logging towns of Arroyo, Portland Mills, Croyland, Carmen, and others, along with the various Civilian Conservation Corps sites throughout the region, would be excellent candidates for historical recognition. The addition of historical markers would serve to educate visitors and residents about the region’s dynamic history.

**Recommendation #37**  
Various historic sites along the greenway should receive recognition through historical markers. These markers will serve to educate visitors and residents about the region’s history.

Recreational opportunities along the Clarion River Greenway could use additional promotion and clarification. With several different public agencies managing land along the greenway, all with

**Recommendation #38**  
Develop a Clarion River Greenway Recreation Guide to educate visitors about the various recreational opportunities offered within the greenway and the surrounding area.

different goals and objectives, determining what uses are allowed on the various lands can be a daunting task. One possible solution is a short, concise brochure that focuses on the various recreational uses allowed throughout the greenway. This brochure would not only help visitors determine available activities and their locations, it would likely also reduce accidental

trespassing and violation of regulations within the greenway.

As was discussed earlier, cooperation among stakeholders is key to the long-term health and success of the Clarion River Greenway. However, cooperation among the various land managers is only the first piece of the puzzle; another is the need for the various counties and townships to also work together for the benefit of the Clarion River. The natural environment does not follow

political boundaries, but the decisions made within those political boundaries can have a profound effect on the environment of the region.

To address this issue, the four counties and 10 municipalities traversed by the greenway should explore the creation of a cooperative working group and the possibly the eventual development of a common river conservation overlay. This overlay would be an ordinance addressing common management of the greenway. The member governments could make the overlay as broad or as focused as they see fit. Through this overlay, a common strategy for protecting a critical regional resource would be developed.

Many of the communities within the greenway already have some type of management policies for lands along the Clarion River. Typically, these policies are through floodplain management ordinances. The river conservation overlay could establish buffers along the river and/or develop various zones that encourage certain uses in the zones. For example, one zone could encourage passive uses, while other zones would be for permanent structures. Again, the key to remember about a river conservation overlay is that its development is up to the municipalities involved. Also, the ordinance would be constantly evolving; therefore, municipalities would be able to create ordinances in the best interest of the river, the greenway, and the various landowners.

**Recommendation #39**  
**Establish a working group of counties and townships with land within the Clarion River Greenway to coordinate river conservation efforts.**

River conservation overlays have been developed, or are being developed in other parts of the country, such as Trussville, Alabama and Bonita Springs, Florida. A key difference between those ordinances and the one proposed for the Clarion River Greenway is that most previous ordinances were not multi-jurisdictional. This could make the development of a conservation ordinance

along the Clarion River Greenway more complex; however, in the long run, the ordinance may be more successful because, as mentioned before, the natural environment does not follow political boundaries and such an ordinance would consider the overall conditions within the greenway and the Clarion River region. One possibility would be to create a master ordinance with a broad set of goals and objectives. From the master ordinance, each individual municipality could then create a specific ordinance to address its particular needs, challenges, and opportunities.

Although it is located outside the boundaries of the Clarion River Greenway, Clarion Borough is an important population center along the river. The borough was first laid out in 1840 as the county seat for the newly formed Clarion County. Both the borough and the county were named after the river. Today, Clarion is a borough of 6,000 residents and is also home to Clarion University of Pennsylvania. Situated along the river, the borough is a launching point for various river-related activities. The river is very accessible from the borough's boat dock. The wide, slow-moving backwaters of the Piney Dam along the Borough of Clarion allow visitors to enjoy an experience different from that typically found along the faster, free-flowing portion of the Clarion River.

**Recommendation #33**  
**Establish an annual Clarion River Festival, with events held throughout the greenway, to promote and showcase all aspects of the Clarion and educate both visitors and residents about the importance of the river.**

One of the biggest events in Clarion is the annual Autumn Leaf Festival. The festival is held when the fall colors are at their peak, and it attracts thousands of visitors to the town. Festivals such as this are great tools for bringing many people into the region, educating people about the region, and instilling a desire within them to return. Another event that showcases the region is the annual Clarion River Sojourn, which is hosted by

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Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. This two-day trip down the river is a mix of education and relaxation that is developing a loyal following. A mix of these two events, a festival dedicated to the Clarion River, would be an excellent addition to the area, as it would introduce many to the wonders of the river. The festival could coincide with the annual sojourn and include events all along the river—in Ridgway, in Cooksburg, and in Clarion, for example—and could truly showcase the area. Such an event should also be used to educate visitors about all aspects of the Clarion River and the greenway.

Within State Game Lands 283, the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River calmly comes to an end, at the backwaters of Piney Dam. This quiet end is symbolic of the relaxed atmosphere along the Clarion River today. No longer is the river a chaotic scene dominated by rafters guiding timber or boats hauling iron down the Clarion to the Allegheny River. Today, those boats and rafts are replaced by canoeists, kayakers, and anglers out to experience one of Pennsylvania's great rivers.



*Issues, Opportunities, and Challenges: An Overview of the  
Clarion River Greenway Public Meetings*

**Preface**

This section of the Clarion River Greenway Plan is an overview and analysis of three public meetings that were held to collect additional stakeholder input about the proposed greenway. Elizabeth Watson of Watson Heritage Strategies facilitated the meeting. Ms. Watson also compiled this report. This report will attempt to address issues that were raised at the meetings. Many of these issues have also been addressed through the five reaches of the greenway plan. It was our sincere attempt to acknowledge and address all issues that were raised through the greenway process. Rough transcripts of the meetings are also included in this document in Appendix B.

**I. Introduction**

On May 24 and 25, 2005, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) hosted a series of three meetings, two in the evening in Ridgway and Brookville, and one in the afternoon of the 25<sup>th</sup> in Brookville. Each meeting involved an introductory gathering and then “stations” where small groups spent time discussing individual topics. The topics were: (1) business and economics; (2) cultural and historic preservation; (3) land use and ownership; (4) natural and scenic resource conservation; and (5) tourism and recreation. Moderators and recorders drawn from WPC’s staff facilitated the conversations. At the end of the meeting, when the entire audience reassembled as a single group, the facilitators provided an overview of the comments they had collected. A transcription of the recorded points is provided in Appendix B.

These conversations form the basis of the following discussion of the issues of most concern to stakeholders along the Clarion River Greenway.

**II. Analysis of Opportunities and Challenges Expressed by the Public, Together with Recommendations**

The list of concerns developed from the public meetings indicates a thoughtful and supportive body of residents whose observations provide invaluable first-hand knowledge of the river’s needs and the needs of those who enjoy it. As is typical of such observations, these are detailed reactions to specific situations—the situation is often described in terms of what solutions would work. For this discussion, these have been regrouped into a series of topics that flow from general recreation issues, to visitor behavior and the general visitor experience, to tourism business opportunities and land-use concerns.

*The Visitor Experience*

The sections below describe issues related to recreation, trail development, fishing, visitor behavior and safety, and tourism development, including interpretation and visitor education. These may all be grouped under a single heading, called here the “visitor experience.” Resource protection, discussed further below, is the other side of this coin—the two are integrally related. Both the visitor experience and resource protection require careful planning. As might be expected, given that all of us might be considered “experts” when it comes to our experience of the river and the region and its recreational possibilities, participants had a great many things to say about topics grouped here under “visitor experience.”

Recreation

In general, the public is well aware of conflicting recreational uses, recreational pressures, and recreational opportunities, although no specific discussion of fishing issues arose. (There are probably two reasons for this oversight: first, the greenway investigation does not cover the section of the river from Johnsonburg to Ridgway, where trophy fly-fishing is most often found, and second, the people participating—residents and property owners—simply were not anglers.) Some sections of the river have



too much boating use (generally from Clear Creek downstream) and others could even be said have too little (from Ridgway to Clear Creek).

In terms of organizing existing and new recreational river use, it is possible that more visitors could be accommodated, but the current lack of formal controls of the existing recreation makes it seem as though too many users are already on the river. Some observers believe that more public guided opportunities for fishing and canoeing might help to solve this problem, which has the benefit of being market-driven and non-regulatory. On the other hand, other rivers where use is strictly market-driven have sooner or later needed regulations to insure that recreational pressures did not spoil the experience or the river's resources. A thorough study of the river's recreation uses—its impacts on the river's resources, the problems experienced by recreational users, etc.—would clarify the general sense of the problems expressed in the public meetings, including many of those listed below.

### Trails

Most of the recreational use of the river is now from the river itself, both boating and fishing (from boats or the shoreline; or, as discussed below, from wading in the river). Discussion at the public meetings, however, recognized a wide number of opportunities for the development of trails along the river or within the greenway. The interest, in general, was in obtaining more recreational access to the river and more trails connecting to the river. This was generally expressed as something to be done judiciously; some participants commented explicitly on their concern that the remoteness of some parts of the river and region should be maintained. Participants suggested that a trail is not needed between Cook Forest and Clear Creek state parks and other pristine areas, but that it might be desirable to develop more trails in Allegheny National Forest to connect existing trails. Others—some evidently shoreline property owners—expressed concern about allowing land-based recreational access, for reasons of privacy or out of concern for allowing greater access for visitors exhibiting the adverse behaviors discussed below.

Specific ideas about trail needs suggested a wide range of ideas and attitudes. Some suggested no multi-use trail development, whereas others would like to see a paved bike trail. Some expressed a need for “family” or low-speed “quiet” trails. Mountain bikers, ATV users, and horseback riders have some impacts on trail use now, and some participants suggested a need for signs indicating trails for walkers or limitations to the size of groups whose use can degrade trail surfaces. There is an old railroad bed along part of the river that could be developed into a trail; there are no explicit plans to do so and property ownership of the railroad bed and other potential for access would need to be clarified before it could be determined whether this is a viable idea.

One specific trail need expressed in relation to river usage would be to establish a portage trail around Piney Dam.

### Fishing and Fishing Access<sup>1</sup>

“I truly believe there is a way to be successful in this venture while still protecting, and even enhancing the resource.” Kurt Thomas, fishing guide

There are several specific issues related to fishing on the upper waters of the river expressed by one fishing guide, Kurt Thomas, a lifelong resident who watched the return of clean water and the resulting growth of the brown trout population. The Clarion's non-stocked trophy brown trout are a remarkable recreational resource—some say the best east of the Mississippi—but this population is under heavy pressure. Fly fishing generally involves catch-and-release, but even so, trout are affected; if they are fished frequently enough, they grow wary and more resistant to the blandishments of the artificial fly. As

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<sup>1</sup> We are grateful for a written expression of concern about fishing and fishing access contributed by professional fishing guide Kurt Thomas. None of these issues was raised in a manner that resulted in any recorded comments during the public meetings.

more inexperienced or non-fly anglers are a part of this increase—trout are taken rather than released, suggesting that a larger size limit might be desirable.

The seven-mile stretch of the river between Johnsonburg and Ridgway includes two property owners who now post their properties, excluding roughly half of the river from public access (one owner uses a gun to maintain this exclusivity). Traditionally, these properties were open to fishing, but the behavior of a few visitors (see discussion below) has led these and other owners to post “no trespassing” signs. Liability is not so much the issue as it is excluding those who litter and otherwise abuse their access. “To keep the bulk of waterways free for the public to utilize,” says Thomas, “the public has a responsibility to be caretakers while they are there as well, and that is where education and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) should step in.” Perhaps there are ways that the PFBC could negotiate with these landowners over fishing rights, parking, and ways to curtail fishing abuses. Mr. Thomas, however, regards this as a two-edged sword, since the bulk of the PFBC’s constituency (and license income) comes from the non-fly-fishing public. He notes that PFBC’s increased involvement in other waters has heightened awareness among many anglers. The result has been an increase in fishing pressure, less enforcement, the loss of solitary fishing, and even, ultimately, fewer stocked fish.

Other issues to be monitored include parking. Places to park an automobile along the upper river are quite limited, and located on private property where landowners could readily decide to post their land. “I find garbage and damage [e.g., ruts gouged in soft, unpaved sites] all the time. I’m surprised every time I fish upriver, and it’s still open to park[ing],” says Thomas. In addition, potential changes in fishing methods offer possible user conflicts—instead of wading in the smaller upper river, anglers on float trips and even in a western-style drift boat are now possibilities, with potential for conflicts with wading anglers and landowners.

### Visitor Behavior and Safety

After ideas for recreation, the bulk of participants’ comments as recorded in these three public meetings focused on issues relating to visitor behavior and safety. There is clearly a problem here, which needs to be fully addressed. (Although referred to as visitors, they could easily also be referred to as recreational users—it is not clear how many users whose behaviors are described here are local residents and how many are visitors from beyond the region. This is one question that should be addressed in a study of the recreational use of the river, as it has implications for how public education programs can be developed to address some of the problems.)

Visitor behaviors named as undesirable comprise a long list<sup>2</sup>, as a significant part of the current visitor population seems unusually rowdy<sup>3</sup>:

- Drunk driving;
- Illegal ATV use;
- Speeding and traffic congestion;
- Vandalism;

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<sup>2</sup> Listed here in rough order of enforcement priorities, or behaviors, which are theoretically more “addressable” through direct enforcement. Simple enforcement presence, however, might have some benefit in reducing all such behaviors.

<sup>3</sup> Just how large a number is “significant” is hard to say, as it is difficult to speculate as to how many—or perhaps more important, what percentage of—visitors create these problems. Clearly, however, with the level of complaint on the part of participants in these public meetings, whatever the number, they are causing significant problems.

- Fire safety problems;
- Parking and trespass problems (one property owner mentioned that their driveway has been blocked on several occasions by parked vehicles);
- Trash and in-river litter;
- Inappropriate bathroom behavior;
- Obscene language; and
- Noise from guns, chainsaws, and nighttime partying.

Evidently, a part of the river's recreation is not simply the typical boating/floating/fishing, as some groups are observed to park and paddle across river just to party.

Camping problems in the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) were especially identified—alcohol use, discharge of guns (not for hunting), cutting trees, and other poor camping practices (e.g., poor bathroom practices)—were among specific issues raised in recorded discussion. In addition, popular campsites tend to enlarge themselves. The ANF does not require camping permits; reservations are available for some sites, others are first come first served, and it is possible to camp almost anywhere, with only a few restrictions around the reservoir. (This differs from Cook Forest and Clear Creek state parks, where camping is allowed only at campsites, and no dispersed camping is allowed.) Not all national forests are as permissive as ANF; possibly the ANF could be persuaded to regulate camping in an identified management area along the river or in a designated greenway area, an idea that could be studied if the scenic river corridor plan (for which the ANF is responsible) were to be undertaken. Such additional regulation would require more enforcement staff, to which any such proposal should be sensitive.

A grave concern among participants is a clear and present need for emergency services and communication. One landowner, a part-time resident, was heard to state that she routinely fields requests for help from river users, and worries about what is happening when she is not there to help with a land-based phone line, even though such intrusions are unwelcome. (Cell phones that river users might be carrying are not reliable in the river valley; even the new 911 technologies required of cell phones and local jurisdictions will not solve the problem when “signal” does not exist.) The establishment of a communications system to address emergencies along the river is expensive and requires multi-jurisdictional collaboration, best undertaken on a region-wide basis.

Canoe rental also raises safety issues. Renters have little or no support in emergencies, and are typically less knowledgeable about handling canoes and are more likely, therefore, to get into serious trouble. Some participants suggested that regulations of canoe rentals could address this issue.

Participants in the public meetings also suggested that greater indication of public versus private areas might guide visitors unfamiliar with the region—those visitors who will willingly work to avoid trespass would welcome such information. Similarly, for visitors willing to use garbage or recycling facilities<sup>4</sup> or rest areas, such visitor facilities could also alleviate some of the problems.

Enforcement of local laws to maintain order and safety is clearly desirable. Enforcement agencies in the region, however, have specific and limited responsibilities, and this (plus limited staffing) may be at the

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<sup>4</sup> The handling of garbage and recyclables in places where heavy visitation adds to the local government burden is a significant issue. Many recreational sites simply eliminate garbage cans altogether, in a “carry in, carry out” policy that has proven relatively successful in minimizing the problem of overflowing trash cans, staffing to deal with the trash, and use by local residents (who thereby avoid dumping or hauling fees). Local governments are unwilling to place garbage cans in strategic locations for the same reasons. Strategies to address littering and garbage removal must take account of the real costs involved, in staffing, tipping fees, vehicles, and other such program costs.

root of a good number of the problems now being experienced. State park and national forest rangers, state police, and local police or sheriffs each have their areas of jurisdiction; if they were to develop cross-enforcement or other collaborative policies to reduce jurisdictional issues, conflicting policies for various issues, such as camping, would also need to be addressed. Law enforcement, however, remains the best hope for dealing not only with illegal and undesirable behaviors, but also possibly with emergencies—to the extent that drinking, for example, contributes to river emergencies, it may be possible to reduce demand on communications and emergency services.

Two overall recommendations are possible here. One is to create a recreation plan to address issues identified in this document and as further developed through a study of the river's recreational use. A second is to ask agencies and governments with enforcement responsibilities to study enforcement problems and barriers to addressing them effectively. Regionally, the Clarion River has clearly reached a certain threshold where these agencies could and should recognize it out deserving additional attention, more resources, and joint initiatives. For a start, joint enforcement campaigns during critical, high-use weekends early in the season could send important signals establishing more desirable visitor behavior patterns across the board, but only if agencies are committed to follow-up to reinforce new patterns.

Participants also had the following ideas to relay to the “powers that be,” listed here without comment as to their potential effectiveness or cost; these should be considered in additional studies:

- Establish designated primitive camping areas away from residences, with good maps showing how to find them and a “sign in and out” program;
- Establish Community Watch program or a “quick-call number” for emergency help or to report illegal activities, with swift committed response;
- Establish an alert system when the river level is unsafe;
- Educate river users about boating safety;
- Establish “pack in/pack out” policy; educate recreational users about impacts of garbage on wildlife;
- Establish a “no alcohol” policy on the river (and limits to kinds of beverage containers allowed, e.g., glass); and
- Create transceivers at interpretive spots that also act as emergency call boxes.



### Tourism and Business Development

Some local businesses and individuals have developed tourism services for visitors. This is one source of income to local governments (e.g., increasing income taxes, sales taxes, property values and therefore property taxes, or accommodations taxes where they can be used to support local government services burdened by tourism). Participants in the public meetings understood that helping visitors understand that the river is part of a region and that there are recreational, educational, and tourism opportunities throughout the region would help develop tourist demand that supports development of more, and more high-quality, local businesses. This could also help to spread out tourism pressures and prevent over-focus on the river. Developing more tourism amenities and infrastructure (such as lodging, dining, unique shopping, and public camping) and encouraging business development as a response to growing tourist demand should be considered as a public investment that is devoted to addressing recreational needs on the river or in the greenway (including law enforcement and emergency services/communications as discussed above).

A problem noted by participants is that visitation in the region is currently highly seasonal, which discourages the growth of tourism businesses where owners are not prepared to survive the months when river use is discouraged by the cold or low water levels.

Tourism is typically an industry where marketing and promotion is done by either existing individual businesses (sometimes by collaborations among similar businesses) or by local governments or business associations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, which also promote only what exists. It is only in recent years that actual planning for tourism development—looking at the potential for more tourism growth and figuring out how to stimulate it, while avoiding the worst impacts of a growing tourism industry—has become an activity associated with tourism, and few local governments or industry associations are yet familiar with the practice. Such planning could include:

- Identifying and “selling” appropriate marketing messages (in this region, “promotion of the natural world and wildlife not found elsewhere—big animals such as elk” is one message suggested by participants);
- Setting goals for local visitation and local ownership of related businesses;
- Identifying (and undertaking) visitor-friendly projects, such as directional signage or the development of hiking and canoeing guides or guides about the history or natural history of the area;
- Identifying useful educational programs for recreational users (especially novices);
- “Shoulder” or winter season tourism development ideas (such as “packaging” of lodging, dining, and recreational activities; or development of winter trails, events, and guides); and
- Programs for interpreting the region’s history and environment, and educating residents and visitors.

Given the recreational pressures on the river described elsewhere, the idea of a recreational plan has already been raised in this report. Tourism planning should be an explicit part of this plan; the following is a more detailed discussion of the potential for interpretation, which also should be a part of the plan.

### Interpreting the History and Environment of the Region

Participants in the public meetings expressed concern that visitors are not generally made aware of the river’s or the region’s history (although there appears to be more effort to do this at the Ridgway end of the river, where pride in local history is strong). Long-time residents are generally knowledgeable about the history of the waterways and the land, but sources of information are scattered and access to

prehistory (Native Americans) is quite limited. Participants were quite enthusiastic and imaginative about what might be possible, all of which should be studied in the context of the recreational/tourism planning suggested earlier:

- A website for the river with an interpretive and educational message, including digital linkages to actual sites that already have their own websites;
- Create a system of outdoor interpretive signs (this is different from a system of wayfinding or directional signage, although the two systems could be planned and developed together);
- Undertake a “stories” project (collecting local oral histories);
- Develop a “research list” of sites deserving more interpretation and study; and
- Develop support for the Sawmill Center for the Arts, a nonprofit arts and crafts organization that offers live performances during the season; participants mentioned the possibility of building an outdoor amphitheater.

### ***Resource Protection***

Participants in the public meetings recognized that adequate planning to maintain the integrity of the special resources and scenic qualities of the region is highly desirable. Their concerns are divided here into the following topics: natural and scenic resources, environmental issues, historic and cultural preservation, and land management. Discussion of these topics tended to be less expert, more random in the nature of their observations. This is not to suggest less interest—indeed, where experts participated in the discussions, participants were alert and interested. Further public meetings where specific facts about resources and their current levels of protection would no doubt elicit much interest and attention, and stimulate more support for further studies, planning, and action.

#### Natural and Scenic Resources

Participants were asked to comment on natural and scenic resources together, under the logic that while natural resources are valuable in and of their own right, their management also heavily influences the maintenance of the region’s beauty. They did not, however, express many specific concerns. A scenic assessment should be among further studies as a way of studying the scenic qualities of the region.

There was some recognition that natural resource management and recreation management could be in conflict with one another, conflicts that can be reduced through explicit planning to address them.

Following are specific comments to be addressed in further studies and planning:

- Preservation of native species and forest regeneration on riverbanks are special concerns (specific comments: deer are affecting oak regeneration; “no management” is not an option—region needs active management to create early-successional vegetation and deal with such invasive species as purple loosestrife, Japanese knotweed, multiflora rose, etc.). The public perception that forests naturally regenerate to self-replicate needs changing through public education programs that would help to generate more support and volunteers for such programs;
- Deer overpopulation;
- Neglected buildings and areas create eyesores;
- Timber operations can affect scenic qualities of views from the river; forest resources should be managed in a sustainable manner (long-term) in order to support local economy; and

- Continue to protect old-growth forest areas and add to these areas (grasslands and other habitats).

### Preservation of Cultural, Historic, and Archeological Resources

Participants recognized the need for the preservation of historic and archeological sites and buildings. In fact, they specifically added “archeology” to the list (the small group station was originally named “cultural and historic”). They did not, however, express many specific concerns.

A cultural landscape assessment should be among further studies as a way of studying the resources and the need for further historic preservation programs. Cultural landscape assessment is a process that lends itself to analysis of landscapes at varying scales and ranging from highly designed landscapes to the vernacular. It is the process by which investigators come to understand how a large, vernacular cultural landscape evolved from its natural resources, history, and geographic access—not the “what” of the landscape, but the “why.” This is a much richer source of information, requiring a level of understanding of the interplay of physical resources, changes over time (wrought by economics, technology, and cultural norms), and succeeding uses by resident populations that gets lost in ordinary inventorying. It also provides a narrative that typically proves attractive to residents as they seek greater understanding of their landscape. It enables the identification of character-defining features, which in turn can allow the setting of priorities for protection and approaches to development that are tailored to the needs of that particular landscape.

Cultural landscape assessment is a process that could be blended with other approaches for assessing large landscapes—notably the process of inventorying, classifying, and ranking whole natural communities, as undertaken by the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program. Cultural landscape assessment can also be blended with the scenic assessment suggested in the preceding section.

### Environmental Concerns

Participants mentioned several ideas about issues that could be grouped into “environmental” concerns (the kinds of issues minded by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, as opposed to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources):

- Create “cleanup days” program for residents and visitors; canoe liveries could provide free canoes and trash hauling;
- Despite successes in recent years, more water quality remediation remains to be done (participants specifically mentioned that the Little Mill Creek (Elk County) drains poor-quality water into the Clarion; paper mill and other water quality problems remain (blackish color); acid mine drainage still affects Tom’s Run; and soil erosion can be seen in some tributaries entering the Clarion);
- The impact of oil and gas development (using existing subsurface rights) should be closely monitored; and
- One (unnamed) county landfill was mentioned as a problem, although no details were provided.

### Land-Use Planning and Land Ownership; the Role of the Greenway

Participants had few specifics, but were clearly concerned about the impact of land-use changes on the river. They expressed concern about housing developments, especially as the attractiveness of the region to developers increases, and noted that the lack of municipal zoning and regulations (including a perceived lack of regulation of septic systems, despite state-level regulation) is problematic. They

suggested design guidelines, zoning that guides recreation development, and the creation of designated growth areas.

A few participants expressed concern about the greenway, asking about the impact of a boundary on restricting private land. Those who discussed this, in reaction to specific questions by the moderator (Mark Killar, of Western Pennsylvania Conservancy), noted that they felt that a greenway boundary (if any) should be no more expansive than the river viewshed (what can be seen from the river).

### **III. Governance and Collaboration**

Participants in the public meetings, as they discussed various issues, recognized that various groups in the area should partner together in order to establish internal communications and collaborative initiatives. From their discussions and this reporter's understanding of the issues, several groups might be desirable to establish to support various initiatives under the general "greenway" rubric: a business owners' association, a property owners' association, and a public safety council. The Allegheny National Forest Management Plan is currently underway; discussion about the greenway, recreational management, and camping issues should be addressed in this plan.



## *Implementation of the Clarion River Greenway Plan*

The most important aspect of the greenway planning process is the implementation of the greenway plan. It is important that this effort and this opportunity not be lost because the plan was never set into motion. All too often, proactive, forward-thinking plans are created, only to collect dust on a shelf. With the completion of this plan, and information gathered in previous plans, stakeholders along the Clarion River have the information they need to ensure the river reaches its full potential. Other plans created for the Clarion River include the Clarion River Basin Assessment, completed in 2001 by the Clarion River Basin Commission, and the Clarion River Basin Study (Watershed Management Plan), created by the Clarion River Basin Commission in 1997. These two plans, in conjunction with the Clarion River Greenway Plan, provide the background data and future direction needed for the long-term protection of the Clarion River and its surrounding resources.

This section will propose guidelines for implementation of the Clarion River Greenway Plan. However, certain areas are left intentionally vague, as it is essential that those who will lead the implementation process finalize it.

### Phase I: Organizational development

The first step to implement the Clarion River Greenway is the identification of a group to take ownership over the plan for the greenway itself. While many rivers the size and importance of the Clarion River already have established watershed organizations, no such group exists for the Clarion River. The length of the Wild and Scenic portion of the river (51.7 miles) and of the entire river itself (over 100 miles) is possibly one deterrent to a local watershed group. However, to be successful, management of the river must be carried out in a holistic manner that does not focus solely on one geographic segment.

As discussed previously, the development of the Clarion River Greenway Plan was guided by a steering committee comprised of local stakeholders. The group included both private citizens and employees from public agencies. The steering committee provides an excellent starting point for the formation of a local watershed organization. Members of the steering committee are committed to continuing their work after the plan is complete. Other stakeholders, identified through the planning process, have expressed an interest in assisting in the implementation of the Clarion River Greenway Plan. Initially the group would meet informally. Eventually, it should explore the possibility of forming a non-profit organization, which would allow the group to accept public funds for implementation of the plan. Until the organization is formed, the North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission has offered to handle public funds dedicated to implementing the Clarion River Greenway. This offer will allow implementation of the plan to begin, without waiting for the new organization to form.

Initial discussions about the proposed organization envisioned a core group aided by various advisory committees that correspond with the categories of recommendations found at the end of this section. This approach will allow a core group of stakeholders with expertise in a specific area to work on implementing those related recommendations. These initial discussions also stressed the importance of outreach to local governments and county conservation districts. These two stakeholders groups are essential to the long-term success of the Clarion River Greenway Plan.

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The proposed organization could utilize all past planning documents and private and public funding to implement recommendations and develop long-term management strategies. Organizations such as Western Pennsylvania Conservancy are available, free of charge, to assist local stakeholders throughout the process of forming a group and then implementing a plan to protect the Clarion River.

### Phase II: Project Prioritization

Once the Clarion River Watershed Association is developed and operational, it will be time for the organization to start looking at the various projects before them. With over 40 recommendations from the greenway plan, a critical first step will be to prioritize the proposed projects. A list of the recommendations, organized by subject, can be found at the end of this section. Also included are suggestions for possible lead entities to implement the specific recommendations. A step of prioritization would be to develop implementation timeframes for each specific recommendation. For instance, each recommendation could be proposed for implementation in a short (1-3 years), medium (3-5 years), or long (5+ years) timeframe. This could be a basic first step that will make further prioritization easier.

A strategy should be developed that will allow the group to be effective in implementing the Clarion River Greenway Plan. The prioritization of projects should consider several factors, including available funding, time needed to complete the project, and time needed from members of the organization to track and participate in implementation.

For effective prioritization, it is essential that the organization include all interested stakeholders in this process. Stakeholder buy-in will be critical to the implementation of the plan. Therefore, it is essential that stakeholders be brought in early on, during the prioritization process. This wide-ranging involvement will ensure that the projects that are selected are those that are most widely accepted and have the best chance of success.

### Phase III: Secure Project Funding

In conjunction with prioritization of projects, possible funding sources should be identified. Availability of funding must play a role in the prioritization of projects. A multitude of funding sources are available including state, federal, and private funding for many of the projects. There is a diversity of projects within the greenway plan; not all are centered on the natural environment. It will be important for the organization to search for funding outside the traditional natural resources funding sources for some projects. Funding sources mentioned within the greenway plan may serve as a starting point during the search for funding. It would be beneficial for the organization to partner with other organizations and governments active within the region, as this cooperative effort will be more cost-effective in the long run.

### Phase IV: Project Implementation

The next phase will be the actual implementation of the projects, once they have been prioritized and funding has been secured. This is often the most exciting part of the plan, as it is when the actual on-the-ground projects get completed. However, this is often the most difficult as well. Budgeting the available funds, applying for and receiving necessary permits, and hiring contractors, when needed, are important steps in this phase. During this phase it is important that the organization contact other local conservation groups, or its local agency representatives when questions arise.

### Phase V: Marketing and Promotion of the Clarion River Greenway

An important role of the implementation group will be informing the public about the Clarion River Greenway. To be effective at this communication, a subcommittee should be formed that is

dedicated to the marketing and promotion of the greenway. This effort will most likely utilize several tools, including advertising, newsletters, brochures, a website, and signage. Several recommendations in the greenway plan address the issue of marketing and promoting the greenway; these recommendations could form a good starting point for the subcommittee. Other efforts to be explored should focus on getting the greenway recognized by those outside of the region. The committee should look towards national groups such as the American Canoe Association (ACA) for assistance in this effort. Each year the ACA names several “Recommended Water Trails” which they promote to their membership. The Clarion River Greenway and Water Trail exceed all qualifications for this designation, which would bring much additional attention to the beauty and charm of the Clarion River.

Promotion and marketing of the greenway should come after the implementation group is developed and a prioritization of projects is completed. This chronology will allow the group to develop a plan before efforts related to promotion and marketing are started. Once promotion and marketing does begin, these efforts will overlap with the previous phases of implementation. This overlap will be beneficial, as through promotion and marketing, the group will be able to educate local stakeholders and visitors to the region about current and future projects occurring within the greenway.

Ultimately, all phases of implementing the Clarion River Greenway Plan will overlap as the process moves forward and the implementation group grows. This will be positive, as the group should continue to implement projects that improve the Clarion River Greenway and benefit residents and visitors, while carefully promoting the resource that will become an effective economic catalyst.

The chart on the following pages shows all the recommendations listed within the greenway plan. Included within the chart are recommendations, associated greenway reaches, and a list of possible lead entities for implementing each recommendation.

<b><i>Economic Development Recommendations</i></b>
<b>Recommendation #1:</b> The Borough of Ridgway should explore opportunities to redevelop abandoned industrial sites to protect the region’s natural resources while promoting economic development.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> Reach #1
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Borough of Ridgway
<b>Recommendation #8:</b> Explore the creation of a Clarion River Greenway Business Association as a way to organize businesses to address needs specific to the area.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Greenway business owners
<b>Recommendation #36:</b> Local governments within the greenway should develop incentives that promote economic development while protecting the region’s cultural and historic resources.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments

<b><i>Recreation Recommendations</i></b>
<b>Recommendation #2:</b> Explore opportunities for the development of public access to the Clarion River in Ridgway, utilizing PFBC funds.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> Reach #1
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Borough of Ridgway, PFBC
<b>Recommendation #3:</b> Undertake a review of current public access to the Clarion River to determine if improvements are needed to handle current and future use.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments, ANF, PFBC, PGC, DCNR
<b>Recommendation #6:</b> Explore the local stakeholder proposal for improved access to Little Toby Creek.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> Reach #1
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local conservation groups (Tri-County Rails to Trails, Friends of Toby), PGC
<b>Recommendation #9:</b> Increase promotion of winter recreational opportunities along the Clarion River Greenway to expand local economic opportunities throughout the year.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local businesses, tourism development agencies, public land managers
<b>Recommendation #12:</b> Guide intensive recreational use activities towards areas that are most suitable to sustain them and ensure the most critical natural areas are protected.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments, public land managers
<b>Recommendation #15:</b> Allegheny National Forest staff should explore the viability of a new hiking trail connecting Arroyo to Irwintown.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> Reach #2
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> ANF
<b>Recommendation #16:</b> Investigate the creation of additional hiking trails connecting to the river. Explore possibility of developing paved bike trails geared toward family use. Any planned addition to the trail network should be done through a very public process to ensure all stakeholder concerns are addressed.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers, local governments
<b>Recommendation #27:</b> Ensure that all stakeholders are involved in any future steps taken to explore the possibility of trail development and land protection between public lands within the greenway.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers, local governments, interested stakeholders, private landowners.

<b>Recommendation #28:</b> Land managers along the greenway that allow camping should explore the feasibility of additional primitive, riverfront campsites. Also, ANF staff should explore the possibility of prohibiting camping in problem areas close to private lands.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> DCNR, ANF
<b>Recommendation #35:</b> Complete the portion of the North Country Trail that passes through the Clarion River Greenway. Completion will increase visitorship to the trail and the entire greenway region.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> Reaches #4 and #5
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> PGC, DCNR, local governments, private landowners
<b><i>Greenway Management Recommendations</i></b>
<b>Recommendation #4:</b> Explore the possibility of installing limited, low-impact signage along the river, depicting river miles and sites where canoeists can rest, camp along the shore, or disembark.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers, private landowners
<b>Recommendation #5:</b> Undertake proper marketing and limited infrastructure development of the Clarion/Little Toby Creek Trail area with a goal of making the area a popular greenway destination.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> Reach #1
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> PGC, local governments
<b>Recommendation #13:</b> Conduct and record an inventory of the historic and cultural sites along the Clarion River Greenway to preserve and protect the resources when feasible.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Interested stakeholders, local governments, public land managers
<b>Recommendation #23:</b> Replicate recurring river cleanup events throughout the greenway, such as those held in Ridgway to remove trash both before and after the season, to help promote the Clarion River Greenway.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Interested stakeholders, greenway businesses
<b>Recommendation #24:</b> Undertake a concerted effort by all local governments to reduce and eliminate the illegal dumping problem along the Clarion River Greenway. Coordinate public and private resources to ensure that local PA CleanWays chapters are adequately funded.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments, greenway businesses, PA CleanWays
<b>Recommendation #32:</b> Form a Clarion River Greenway Land Managers Committee to ensure



open communication and coordination of activities among the various land managers along the greenway.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers
<b>Recommendation #39:</b> Establish a working group of counties and townships with land within the Clarion River Greenway to cooperatively develop river-related conservation ordinances and to coordinate management of the greenway.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments
<b><i>Greenway Promotion Recommendations</i></b>
<b>Recommendation #7:</b> Carefully promote the Clarion River Greenway to stimulate economic growth in the region, while protecting the natural resources and community values of the region.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers, local governments
<b>Recommendation #10:</b> Develop a cooperative relationship among stakeholders along the Clarion River, the Lumber Heritage Region, and the PA Wilds effort to promote the region's rich timber history.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> PA Lumber Heritage Region, PA Wilds, interested stakeholders
<b>Recommendation #25:</b> Develop a website promoting the Clarion River Greenway. The site should include a virtual tour of the greenway.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Interested stakeholders
<b>Recommendation #33:</b> Establish an annual Clarion River Festival, with events held throughout the greenway, to promote and showcase all aspects of the Clarion River and educate both visitors and residents about the importance of the river.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers, local governments
<b><i>Historical Resources Recommendations</i></b>
<b>Recommendation #11:</b> Explore the creation of a Clarion River Greenway Historical Center. The center could serve as a focal point to educate visitors about the greenway's rich history.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> PA Lumber Heritage Region, local governments
<b>Recommendation #20:</b> Local stakeholders should nominate River Road for a Scenic Byway designation by the U.S. Department of Transportation. This picturesque roadway deserves the designation and would greatly benefit from the recognition.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> Reaches #3 and #4
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> PA Lumber Heritage Region, interested stakeholders

<b>Recommendation #37:</b> Various historic sites along the greenway should receive recognition through historical markers. These markers will serve to educate visitors and residents about the region’s history.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments, interested stakeholders
<b><i>Natural Resources Recommendations</i></b>
<b>Recommendation #17:</b> Greenway stakeholders should work closely with timber interests to ensure sustainable forestry practices are followed throughout the greenway.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Interested stakeholders
<b>Recommendation #30:</b> Approach the plugging of flowing gas wells cautiously to assure hydrologic conditions associated with the abandoned wells are understood before wells are plugged.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments, interested stakeholders
<b>Recommendation #31:</b> Develop a timeline for addressing the remaining AMD problems in and around the Clarion River Greenway.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments, interested stakeholders
<b><i>Education Recommendations</i></b>
<b>Recommendation #18:</b> Establish annual guided informational tours of all conservation lands within the greenway to educate stakeholders and visitors about wildlife management within the greenway. Special request tours could also be conducted.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers
<b>Recommendation #19:</b> Install more education signage at public land boundaries, explaining what agency manages the land and outlining their goals and policies; other media, such as information brochures, should be created.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers
<b>Recommendation #21:</b> Support current, successful efforts to educate visitors to respect private property. Promote “leave no trash behind” programs and explore promotion of additional similar efforts.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments, public land managers, interested stakeholders
<b>Recommendation #26:</b> Develop informational tours, focusing on different aspects of the Clarion River Greenway, to educate the greenway’s visitors.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers, interested stakeholders

<b>Recommendation #38:</b> Develop a Clarion River Greenway Recreation Guide to educate visitors about the various recreational opportunities offered within the greenway and the surrounding area.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Interested stakeholders
<b><i>Health and Safety Recommendations</i></b>
<b>Recommendation #14:</b> Explore the possibility of constructing additional bathroom facilities along the Clarion River.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Public land managers
<b>Recommendation #22:</b> Increase enforcement of laws protecting the general public and the natural environment and form a community watch group to curb illegal activities.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Interested stakeholders, local governments, public land managers
<b>Recommendation #29:</b> Explore the option of installing “stealth” or collocated cell phone towers as a way to address the need for communication along the greenway during an emergency.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments
<b>Recommendation #34:</b> Develop a system of coordination between emergency management officials to ensure the best approaches to handling emergencies occurring along the river are utilized.
<b>Reaches affected:</b> All
<b>Possible lead entities:</b> Local governments, local emergency service providers

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*Appendix A: Hubs of the Clarion River Greenway*

Name	Description
Ridgway Borough	Ridgway was first settled in 1824 by Jacob Ridgway, a wealthy Quaker from Philadelphia. The location at the intersection of Elk Creek and the Clarion River provided an ideal site for a lumber operation. Today the borough boasts a redeveloped downtown with a variety of shops and restaurants and a residential area lined with Victorian-style homes. The borough is a perfect launching point for a trip down the Clarion River, and is also where the Clarion/Little Toby Trail begins.
Little Toby Creek (Clarion Ghost Towns)	Little Toby Creek is one of the major tributaries to the Clarion River. The popular Clarion/Little Toby Trail runs along the creek after turning south away from the Clarion. The ghost town of Carmen is located at the mouth of the creek, the ghost town of Croyland is just upstream, and the former lumber town of Portland Mills is just west of the mouth of Little Toby Creek.
Allegheny National Forest (Irwintown)	The Allegheny National Forest is a 500,000+ acre national forest, formed in 1923. Referred to as “the land of many uses.” Activities in the forest include camping, hunting, hiking, canoe/kayaking, fishing, timber, and oil and gas exploration. Over 1 million visitors flock to the park each year. Much of the north bank of the Clarion River, from the beginning of the greenway until Clear Creek State Park, is within the Allegheny National Forest. Irwintown is a hub of national forest activity, as it offers camping, hunting, hiking, and ATV trails.
Clear Creek State Park	Dedicated in 1934, the 10,113-acre Clear Creek State Park is named after the creek, which bisects the park. It is a recreational getaway that offers camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, nature watching, and miles of established snowmobile trails. The park includes the 2,500-acre Callen Run Research Area, which has been named an Important Bird Area (IBA) by the Audubon Society and Birdlife International.
Cook Forest State Park	Cook Forest is one of the most popular state parks in Pennsylvania. The park offers nearly 30 miles of hiking trails, including a portion of the Baker Trail and the North Country Trail. The park is also popular for ATV riding and cross-country skiing during winter months. Other destinations within the park include the very scenic old growth Forest Cathedral area (a National Natural Landmark) and the Sawmill Center for the Arts.

*Appendix B: Clarion River Greenway  
Public Meeting Transcriptions*

At the three public meetings regarding the Clarion River Greenway Plan, the public was given the opportunity to give general comments about the proposed Clarion River Greenway. Attendees were also given the opportunity to participate in small group discussions about certain topics relevant to the Clarion River Greenway. A rough transcript of these small group discussions is below. The comments from the public meetings formed a basis for much of the greenway plan, as many of the concerns and issues that were brought up by stakeholders were discussed within the greenway plan. The first part of this appendix is an overview of the five small group discussions, followed by the transcriptions.

1. Business/Economy
  - a. Are the current number and types of businesses sufficient to meet the demands of greenway users?
  - b. What types of businesses are absent or inadequate?
  - c. Is there a need/desire for small business development/enhancement programs? (incubators, grants, training, etc.)
  - d. How can/should business owners participate in and benefit from the “Clarion River Greenway”?
2. Cultural/Historic Interpretation
  - a. Are local residents generally aware of the history of the Clarion River?
  - b. Are visitors generally made aware (through signs, pamphlets, other interpretive means) of the history of the Clarion River?
  - c. What historical sites do you think should be interpretive that are not currently?
  - d. What is the next step for cultural/historic interpretation?
3. Land Uses & Land Ownership (including greenway boundaries)
  - a. What do you think of the proposed greenway boundaries?
  - b. What, if any, issues and concerns do you have regarding current land-use policies on public lands?
  - c. What concerns do private landowners have about the greenway?
4. Natural and Scenic Resources
  - a. What are the natural and scenic resources that are of value to you?
  - b. What are the water quality issues and concerns? Plant and aquatic wildlife habitat issues and concerns?
  - c. What is the next step for conserving the natural and scenic resources within the Clarion River Greenway?
5. Recreation and Tourism
  - a. Do you think that the Clarion River Greenway area currently experiences too few, too many, or the right number of visitors?
  - b. What, if any, recreational activities and/or tourist venues are absent or inadequate for greenway users?
  - c. What is the next step for recreation and tourism in the region?

## Business/Economy

Date: 5/24/05 - session 1

Location: Ridgway

Facilitator: Hillary N. Bright

### General Comments

- Dale Lauricella, Ridgway lodging owner, access point possible on one-acre downtown site
- Concern with conflicting use - fly fishing vs. canoeing; more concern: additional trophy trout additional restrictions
- Two types of businesses needed:
  - Quality lodging
  - Quality restaurant
- Cater to tourist (attempting to get unique [businesses, not franchises])
- Areas that are lacking - plenty of areas
- Land use - long-term county/municipal levels (planning concern) - understand it's going to happen & need planning; no business in Millstone townships
- 2 major themes - landowners/business owners

### **Question 1: Are the current number and types of businesses sufficient to meet the demands of Greenway users?**

- No - lack of lodging/restaurants
- Concern w/ conflicting uses

### **Question 2: What types of businesses are absent or inadequate?**

- Unique local stores
- Lodging
- Restaurants
- Access points

### **Question 3: Is there a need/desire for small business development/enhancement programs? (incubators, grants, training, etc.)**

- Yes/no, careful development is necessary

### **Question 4: How can/should business owners participate in and benefit from the "Clarion River Greenway"?**

- Most business is based on the natural resources of the area
- Can benefit by maintaining integrity of area + additional tourism to area

Date: 5/25/05 - session 2  
Location: Brookville  
Facilitator: Carla Ruddock

**General Comments**

- There is a lack of public camping [in relation] to the demand for it
- Need for enforcement of camping regulations
- Safety of private property that has business on the property with trespassing/getting hurt/security of business materials
- Business could distribute materials (educational & recreation guides to visitors)
- There was interest in forming a Business Owners Association
- There was interest in forming a Property Owners Association
- There was interest in forming a Community Watch
- Recreation guide[book] to tell visitors where they can legally recreate (cost to purchase the guide [that is, a fee should be charged])
- Trespass fees (cost) landowners charge people to cross private property
- Make people aware where public land boundaries [are]
- MOU [memorandum of understanding] between Allegheny National Forest and state park enforcement

Date: 5/25/05 - session 3  
Location: Brookville  
Facilitator: Carla Ruddock

**Question 1: Are the current number and types of businesses sufficient to meet the demands of Greenway users?**

- Link businesses to recreation opportunities (funding needed)

**Question 2: What types of businesses are absent or inadequate?**

- Restaurants are needed
- Bed 'n Breakfast or small inns
- What is the % occupancy of cabins (what is it now)? Is there a need for more?

**Question 3: Is there a need/desire for small business development/enhancement programs? (incubators, grants, training, etc.)**

- Need for jobs to keep local students here (scholarships, incentives)
- Keep businesses small, locally owned (mom & pop stores)



**Question 4: How can/should business owners participate in and benefit from the “Clarion River Greenway”?**

- Be aware that it exists
- Interpretive guides (hiking, canoeing, etc.)
- Digital linkage (Internet) using GPS [global positioning system] points and digital picture (virtual tour)
- Transceiver - interpretive spots, also emergency call boxes
- More trails connecting to the river

## Cultural & Historic Preservation

Date: 5/24/05 - session 1

Location: Ridgway

Facilitator: Carla Ruddock

### **Question 1: Are locals generally aware of the history of the Clarion River?**

- Somewhat aware of the history of the Clarion River

### **Question 2: Are visitors generally made aware (through signs, pamphlets, other interpretive means) of the history of the Clarion River?**

- Not much yet, a little more on the upper end

### **Question 3: What historical sites do you think should be interpreted that are not currently?**

- Protect Irwin Run Dam & sewer (individual response included with chart states "protect Irwin Run" and "preservation of native plants & animals" and "education")

### **Question 4: What is the next step for cultural/historic interpretation?**

- History - logging & timbering & railroad aspects of the area. This is OUR heritage. (Individual response included with chart states "things our grandparents, great grandparents, great-great grandparents did.)

Date: 5/25/05 - session 2

Location: Brookville

Facilitator: Angela Malek

### **Question 1: Are locals generally aware of the history of the Clarion River?**

- Locals are generally aware of history
- Long-term residents familiar - but, in general, no
- A lot of people aren't interested in the history
- Owners know the history of their individual properties - esp. people who have owned them for a long time.

### **Question 2: Are visitors generally made aware (through signs, pamphlets, other interpretive means) of the history of the Clarion River?**

- Could be more information for visitors (forests - ANF & parks could offer more information).
- Education programs @ Cook Forest
- No multi-use trail
- Some specific/significant sites that should NOT be interpreted

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- Iron ore industry history

### **Question 3: What historical sites do you think should be interpreted that are not currently?**

- Irwintown - mill & town site
- Belltown - Civil War-era cemetery (raft pilots?)
- Maxwell Run - cemetery (raft pilots?)
- Mill Race @ Clear Creek State Forest

### **Question 4: What is the next step for cultural/historic interpretation?**

- Write a book about the history of the region.
- FM signal use as a way to disseminate historical/cultural information to visitors (multi-use as an emergency call box)
- Historical trail markers

Date: 5/25/05 - session 3

Location: Brookville

Facilitator: Angela Malek

### **Question 1: Are locals generally aware of the history of the Clarion River?**

- Sawmill - amphitheater - funding issues
- Long-time residents are generally knowledgeable about the history of the waterways/land
- Signs in forest, etc., explain some of the history
- History permeates the area

### **Question 2: Are visitors generally made aware (through signs, pamphlets, other interpretive means) of the history of the Clarion River?**

- Visitors aren't made aware of history
- Have to go to specific places (Cook Forest) - no designated area for historic interpretation
- Business owners could help by making brochures, etc., available to visitors
- Talking about developing interpretive kiosks
- Combined information about history & wildlife
- Visitors unaware of history because it's scattered - no central repository

### **Question 3: What historical sites do you think should be interpreted that are not currently?**

- Not currently interpreted:

## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

- Portland Mills, Hallton chemical plant, tannery, Arroyo, Whiskey Springs, Millstone, Dams, where the lumber boats went to Pittsburgh

### **Question 4: What is the next step for cultural/historic interpretation?**

- Signage! (Difference between signs on river & signs on road)
- Keep history now - what's current today, will be history tomorrow
- Local people are aware of history - many, older areas still have old foundations
- People are somewhat aware, but not in detail
- Belltown, Millstone, Olean (sp?) Crossing/Trail - need signage/explanation/pamphlets about history of these areas
- Information about Indians in the area is difficult to find
- Parks do tours - but do private landowners want to promote their sites

## Land Uses & Land Ownership

Date: 5/24/05 - session 1

Location: Ridgway

Facilitator: Mark Killar

### General Comments

- Concerned about additional people coming in and problems associated with them.
  - Enforcement of rules/laws
  - Trash
  - Vandalism
  - Trespassing
  - Lack of facilities to support amount of people using the river
  - Traffic
  - Illegal parking
  - Noise
  - Drinking
  - Profanity
  - Inappropriate bathroom behavior
- What will the boundary be – what restrictions will there be on private land?
- Enforcement agencies have specific/limited responsibilities and should coordinate their efforts to be more effective.
- Most local citizens would probably support this initiative if it helps solve present problems.
- Need to work with county planners to plan for growth in the future – perhaps create designated growth areas.
- Keep greenway focused on the river viewshed.
- Not enough active management to create the early successional vegetation and oak regenerations.

Date: 5/25/05 - session 2

Location: Brookville

Facilitator: Mark Killar

### General Comments

- Old railroad bed - development would degrade property owner values - keep undeveloped
- Concern for/about businesses which conflict with scenic values
- There is strong value in property remaining in private hands
- Long-term campsites on ANF tend to enlarge
- Development should use minimal-impact construction techniques
- Will there be new access points & increased use? How does it affect resource?



## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

- Problems associated with increased use:
  - Trash
  - Parking
  - In-river litter
  - Trespassing
  - Drunk driving
  - Obscene language
  - Congestion - canoe
  - Speeding (traffic)
- Need better signage to direct visitors
- Need better regulation of land to protect the resource and visitors' experience
- Canoe rentals could provide free canoes for cleanup days
- Lack of forest regeneration along the river
- ATV use (illegal)

## **Group II**

### **General Comments**

- National Forest camping [problems]:
  - Lack of restrictions
  - Alcohol - shooting
  - Cutting trees - poor camping practices
  - Poor bathroom practices
- Develop designated primitive camping areas away from homes – provide campers with good maps on how to find them
- Some visitors are parking and paddling across river just to party
- Illegal ATV use - no policing
- Establish a camping permit to help limit negative activities.
- There is a need for educational awareness of proper camping practices
- There is a need for more enforcement (personnel) on ANF property and elsewhere

## **Group III**

### **General Comments**

- Establish a quick call # for help to report illegal activities & agencies should have a quick, committed response to those calls.
- No new access points - keep less-developed areas protected
- Steering committee membership slanted too much to canoe business owners/interests

## Natural & Scenic Resources

Date: 5/24/05 – session 1

Location: Ridgway

Facilitator: Christy Meredith

### **Question 1: What are the natural and scenic resources important to you?**

- Rails to trails (Ridgway)
- Hunting, fishing, beauty and sinuous natural flow - Ridgway to Piney Dam (pulled wells/pipes)

### **Question 2: What are water quality issues and concerns and plant and aquatic wildlife habitat issues and concerns?**

- Oak not regenerating (deer); concerned about future; opposed to "no management" scheme (need active management to create early successional vegetation)
- Access and landscape need [to be] managed
- Concerned about number of tourists/canoers, increases to preserve natural resources/don't want to see increase (permits?)
- Little Mill Creek/Elk County - drains poor water into Clarion River - should be looked at & improved
- Invasives: purple loosestrife; Japanese knotweed, etc. - should be active management to eradicate initial colonies & eliminate existing [ones]
- Protection/management of species of concern should be compatible with recreation and other greenway uses [fear that species management will trump recreational uses]

### **Question 3: What is the next step for recreation and tourism in the region?**

- Private business should develop rustic resort outside of scenic designation [boundary]
- Better control over development on private lands in scenic areas of county
- Need more power to local people
- Learn from other efforts - what worked? What didn't?
- More law enforcement
- [Address] lack of access and communication and safety issues
- [Address] Paper mill & other water quality problems (blackish color)
- More WQ [water quality] remediation
- Increase activities to prevent the spread of Invasive sp. [species]
- More management of forest health – change negative perception [of active forest management]

Date: 5/25/05 - session 2

Location: Brookville

Facilitator: Christy Meredith

**Question 1: What are the natural and scenic resources important to you?**

- Erosion of tributaries entering Clarion
- Purity of River itself

**Question 2: What are water quality issues and concerns and plant and aquatic wildlife issues and concerns?**

- Pollution - garbage and trash left by visitors (on private land)
- Bathroom facilities needed (especially forest)
- Drinking (trash, noise, etc.)
- Neglected buildings & areas create eyesore
- Inform [visitors] about chemical & biological controls - spraying
- No new trails and access areas! (depending on location - need to be well designed/marked)
- Lack of regeneration of forest vegetation
- Forest resources should be managed in a sustainable manner (long-term) - support local economy
- Limited clearcutting in visible areas
- Garbage effects on wildlife  
    Pack in/pack out – education
- Invasive species - Japanese knotweed
- Canoe rentals - at sign-in areas, permits? (for camping & canoeing) "No alcohol"/no disposable containers
- Deer overpopulation

**Question 3: What is the next step for recreation and tourism in the region?**

- Communication - river accidents/safety/coding system  
    Private phones (public dealing w/ accidents)
- Alert system when [the river level is] unsafe
- Enforcement - Personnel/resources (garbage dumping, illegal activity)
- Private landowners should aid in enforcement & enforcing
- Guns, chainsaws, fire safety, other questionable activity
- Police don't know how to get there and don't want to respond

## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

- Designated primitive camp areas and enforcement - sign in & out
- Education - canoe/river safety
- [Better] indication of public versus private areas
- Limit # of campers
- Noise regulations
- Enforcement, more practical and effective education & documentation of visitors

Date: 5/25/05 - session 3

Location: Brookville

Facilitator: Christy Meredith

### **Question 1: What are the natural and scenic resources important to you?**

- Pristine, not a lot of trailers, camps, etc.
- Hemlock Island (fires, ATVs) - good natural area.
- Keep primitive nature of the river (especially downstream of Cooksburg).
- Concern about housing developments (zoning needs) especially as attractiveness increases.
- Respect private landowners.
- Trail not needed between Cook Forest and Clear Creek and other pristine areas.
- Maybe more trails in National Forest - connect trails.
- Archaeological sites – protecting.
- Better municipal zoning and regulations (including septic).
- Promotion of natural world and wildlife not found elsewhere (big animals).
- Logging near Millstone River – concerns.
- Oil and gas development (subsurface rights) – concerns about degradation.
- Estimate use of trails and natural areas needed.
- Allegheny National Forest Management Plan being done - need to get connected with efforts
- Camping and garbage on WPC land (ATV trails).

### **Question 2: What are the water quality and aquatic wildlife habitat issues and concerns?**

### *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

- Water quality concerns - plant & wildlife habitats
- Water quality is getting better and better.
- County landfill
- Still some AMD problems - Tom's Run?
- Purple loosestrife threat - multiflora rose
- Timbering in state game lands in Gravel Lick close to river, no erosion & sedimentation controls.
- Protection of Eagles - Maple Creek & Coleman Run
- Protection of River otters - Gravel Lick
- Continue to protect old growth forest areas and add to these areas (grasslands and other habitats)

### **Question 3: What is the next step for recreation and tourism in the region?**

- Action is being taken -
  - Incinerator, landfills, others
  - AMD remediation
- Better planning & zoning
- Pay attention and be educated

## **Recreation & Tourism**

Date: 5/24/05 - session 1

Location: Ridgway

Facilitator: Alysha Trexler

**Question 1: Do you think that the Clarion River Greenway area currently experiences too few, too many, or the right number of visitors?**

- Good number of visitors (or even too few) from Ridgway to Clear Creek
- Too many visitors from Clear Creek down
- Sections of river have too much use and others have little use of visitors
- Cook Forest area has some of the facilities to encourage use/visitors

**Question 2: What, if any, recreational activities and/or tourist venues are absent or inadequate for Greenway users?**

- Too few public guided opportunities for fishing, canoeing, etc.
- Public may be looking for package tours
- Opportunities for novice folk
- Opportunities for private businesses [to provide] for 'rustic' type facilities in recreation areas
- Effort made to create a variety of habitat in the viewshed
- Natural & healthy maintenance
- Early successional vegetation
- Need of garbage/recycling facilities & rest areas
- Private businesses should not be on public land

**Question 3: What is the next step for recreation and tourism in the region?**

- Recognize that there is growth over time
- Be aware that marketing will bring in the people
- Define goals before any more growth occurs



*Clarion River Greenway Plan*

Date: 5/25/05 - session 2  
Location: Brookville  
Facilitator: Alysha Trexler

**Question 1: Do you think that the Clarion River Greenway area currently experiences too few, too many, or the right number of visitors?**

- [Some feel] There is the right number right now, but...depends on who is deciding
- There is a need for family/low speed trails
- Too few opportunities for the visitors that come to the area for [to be] organized and managed
- Could have more visitors
- Lack of formal control of the visitors that come - making it seem like too many

**Question 2: What, if any, recreational activities and/or tourist venues are absent or inadequate for Greenway users?**

- Misuse/abuse of trails by groups - ATVs, mountain bikers, horseback riders - possibly limit group sizes
- Lack of marketing/pamphlet for visitors to follow
- Need of trails for passive [use] - quiet/natural
- Like to see a bike trail - not just for mountain bikes - paved trails to bike on
- Need for winter guided trails & other winter targeted activities for "organized" groups
- Hiking/snow shoeing
- Skiing
- Snowmobiling
- Need for good boundary markers for private and different public lands
- Need for signs indicating trails for walkers
- Unregulated canoe rentals & safety

**Question 3: What is the next step for recreation and tourism in the region?**

- See the agencies step up and see what they do with properties they own
- Signage - with direction and rules for [the] public
- Enforcement/education
- Plan development

## *Clarion River Greenway Plan*

- Need for guided programs
- Need for access of areas
- Education of visitors
- Groups of the area need to partner together
- Education on what is available in the local areas
- Internal communication

Date: 5/25/05 - session 3

Location: Brookville

Facilitator: Alysha Trexler

**Question 1: Do you think that the Clarion River Greenway area currently experiences too few, too many, or the right number of visitors?**

- An increase of campers over the past few years
- Don't know what to base it [answer to question] on [that is, "too few" or "too many" are relative terms]
- Visitors are seasonal
- There is a change in the number of visitors

**Question 2: What, if any, recreational activities and/or tourist venues are absent or inadequate for Greenway users?**

- The need for a portage trail around Piney Dam
- Develop defined camp sites along river (even w/ minimal fees)
- Have caution with new industries & new businesses
- Awareness of American chestnut trees & how they can attract tourists
- Need to get places to eat (little private businesses) - where to buy a lunch

**Question 3: What is the next step for recreation and tourism in the region?**

- Regulation of what happens in the area - tasteful buildings
- Need for zoning for recreation
- Educate tourists that it is their job to maintain pristine conditions
- Public education

## Appendix C: Camping Regulations within the Clarion River Greenway

### State Forests (Clear Creek State Forest)

The entire Clear Creek State Forest is open to primitive (non-motorized) camping. The forest is over 10,000 acres so it offers plenty of opportunities for visitors. Other uses, such as hunting and hiking, are also allowed throughout the forest, so it is important that campers respect other users enjoying the state forest.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/stateforests/kittanning.aspx>

### State Parks (Cook Forest State Park and Clear Creek State Park)

At Clear Creek State Park, 53 tent and trailer campsites are available. The area is open from the second Friday in April through the third Friday in December. Both electric and non-electric sites are available, and the campsites are either along or close to the Clarion River and Clear Creek. Clear Creek State Park also has 22 cabins and two yurts available for visitors.

Cook Forest State Park has 226 tent and trailer campsites. Some of the sites are open year-round, while others are seasonal. Both electric and non-electric sites are available. The park also has 23 cabins available to visitors.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/STATEPARKS/parks/clearcreek.aspx#recreation> and  
<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/cookforest.aspx>

### National Forests (Allegheny National Forest)

Camping is permitted nearly everywhere within the Allegheny National Forest. The only places within the forest that camping is not allowed is on the shores and within 1,500 feet inland of the timberline around the Allegheny Reservoir, or the shore of Tionesta Lake, except in a developed campground area designated for such use.

There are also designated camping areas spread out throughout the forest. The established campgrounds are categorized as primitive, moderately developed, and highly developed sites. Regulations apply, including a 14-day limit to stays within the forest.

Additional information can be found at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/allegheny/>

### State Game Lands (SGLs 28, 44, 54, and 283)

The state game lands are acquired through the Game Fund (funded by hunter and fur taker license sales) and some federal grant monies. The Pennsylvania Game Commission does not receive any funding from the state's General Fund. Camping is prohibited on state game lands. According to Pennsylvania law, these lands are acquired and managed only for uses incidental to hunting, fur taking, and game or wildlife management.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.pgc.state.pa.us/pgc/cwp/browse.asp?a=478&bc=0&c=70015>



*Appendix D: Clarion River Greenway Business Survey*

*This survey is being conducted by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and is part of the Clarion River Greenway Plan. We are seeking information from various businesses along the Clarion River Corridor to determine current economic status, past trends, and future desires for local businesses. Only Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the steering committee, and Clarion University data analysts will view the information obtained from these surveys for the Greenway Plan. The information will be used solely for determining the potential economic impact of the Clarion River Greenway, and will not be available to any outside entity for any other purpose.*

*Thank you for your participation in this very important project that is intended to enhance the Clarion River Region for the enjoyment of all future generations.*

**Business Name & Address (optional):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone (optional):**

(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been in business? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you always owned this business? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own any other businesses in the area? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your business a member of a tourist bureau? \_\_\_\_ Which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your peak period? (check one)

Winter

Summer

Spring

Fall

Any specific months? \_\_\_\_\_

During the period checked above, which of your products/services do customers request on a regular basis (check all that apply)? Please circle the primary service or product your business provides.

Canoe/Kayak/Tube rentals

Overnight accommodations

Guns

Clothing

Camping/Hiking supplies

Souvenirs

Conveniences

Hunting/Fishing supplies

Necessities

Fuel & Oil

Brochures, Maps, etc.

Meals (restaurant)

Other\_\_\_\_\_

*Clarion River Greenway Plan*

What do customers ask for that your business or another local business, or the area in general, cannot provide?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurants                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment rentals (canoes, boats, kayaks, bicycles, ATVs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restrooms                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide Services  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water fountains                | <input type="checkbox"/> Trails  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shuttles                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Tours (auto, hiking, historical interpretation, etc.)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hotels or other accommodations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational equipment         |  |

Approximately how many customers do you receive in a day during:  
peak season? \_\_\_\_\_ off season? \_\_\_\_\_

Are your customers typically **local** or visiting from **outside the region**? **Out-of-State**? (circle one)

During peak season, are your customers primarily **return customers / new customers** ?  
Off season: **return customers / new customers** (circle one)

Estimate the average revenue per month during peak season \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and average revenue per month during off season \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Estimate the total costs per month of the business during peak season \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and total costs per month during off season \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Over the past year, has your business revenue (circle one) **increased / decreased**? .... by \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ %

Over the past 5 years, has your business revenue (circle one) **increased / decreased**? .... by \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ %

Has the type of sales changed over the last 5 years? \_\_\_\_\_ What do you attribute this change to?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Has the number of sales transactions notably changed in the last 5 years? \_\_\_\_\_ What do you attribute this change to?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Has the cost of your products/services changed in the last 5 years? \_\_\_\_\_ What do you attribute this change to?  
\_\_\_\_\_

How many full time employees do you have (2004)? \_\_\_\_\_

How many part time employees do you have (2004)? \_\_\_\_\_

How many seasonal employees do you have (2004)? \_\_\_\_\_

How many employees did you have in 2003? \_\_\_\_\_ FT \_\_\_\_\_ PT \_\_\_\_\_ Seasonal



*Clarion River Greenway Plan*

What are the general hourly wages of your employees?

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minimum Wage-under \$8 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10-\$15   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$8-\$10               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Do you offer benefits to full time employees? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what type?

- |                                     |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Comparing the size of your business currently with what would be optimum, would your business **expand**, **contract**, or **stay the same**? (circle one)

If you wish to expand your business, what are your needs?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased revenue         | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased workforce       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Space requirements        | <input type="checkbox"/> More steady customer base |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More/better advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____               |

What are some strategies that you think would work best in this area for business improvement?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More/better advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate Cell Phone coverage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More steady customer base | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better Roads/access       |   |

It is noted that there are a number of empty storefronts and businesses for sale in the region. Do you agree with this statement? **Yes** or **No** (circle one)

**For the following statements, please rank your level of agreement: 1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Somewhat agree, 3 = Don't know, 4 = Somewhat disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree**

A Clarion River Greenway will help my business grow.

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

A Clarion River Greenway will deter or hurt my business.

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

A Clarion River Greenway will help develop high quality of life characteristics in the area

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

**Please rank the following on the level of importance to the Greenway: 1 = Very important, 2 = Somewhat important, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Somewhat unimportant, 5 = Not important at all**

Natural resource protection

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

*Clarion River Greenway Plan*

Improved/increased recreational or business opportunities

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

Historic preservation

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

Cultural interpretation

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

Do you have any project recommendations for the Greenway plan related to:

Natural resource protection? \_\_\_\_\_

Recreational or business opportunities? \_\_\_\_\_

Historic preservation? \_\_\_\_\_

Cultural interpretation? \_\_\_\_\_

Other? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there ways that you could help support Greenway projects?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cash Contribution/Donation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers         | <input type="checkbox"/> General Support            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Materials/Supplies | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                |

**Please provide any additional comments/suggestions:**

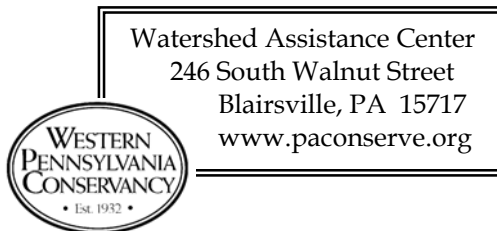
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Thank you for your participation in this survey.







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