

News for Immediate Release

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Governor Corbett Announces \$31.5 Million Investment in Recreation, Conservation, Community Revitalization Projects Statewide

Royersford – Governor Tom Corbett today announced an investment of \$31.5 million for 218 conservation and recreation projects designed to protect natural resources and revitalize communities across the state.

“The health and vitality of our communities is reflected in the quality of their parks and trails, access to rivers, open spaces and opportunities to be active outdoors,” Gov. Corbett said. “Through these grants, we’re able to fund hundreds of projects to help conserve and enhance our natural assets.”

Corbett, joined by Rep. Mike Vereb, said these investments include a \$202,000 grant to Montgomery County for improvements to Upper Schuylkill Valley Park. The work will include providing better access for people with disabilities to the river and to fishing, which is important to the adjacent county geriatric center; along with a canoe/kayak launch area; trails to the existing wildlife exhibit area along the river; a new rustic picnic area with pavilion; new signage; native plantings; and enhanced parking.

The DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships grant program combines several funding sources into one grant program. Funding comes from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources’ Keystone Fund,

which is generated from a portion of the realty transfer tax; the Environmental Stewardship Fund; the ATV/Snowmobile Fund generated through fees for licenses; and federal funds.

The grants will support a variety of proposals, including 43 trail projects; protecting 3,051 acres of open space; supporting 122 community parks; 12 river conservation projects; and 41 projects for regional and statewide heritage area, park, greenway and trail initiatives.

DCNR has placed a stronger emphasis on encouraging projects that develop green and sustainable practices and has made a number of resources available at <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/greening/greeninggrants.aspx>.

Some other funded projects include:

- The City of York will rehabilitate Penn Park, a 15-acre, 269-year-old park within two blocks of the heart of downtown. Development will include a "splash pad" with runoff water being recycled through a rain garden to reduce the impact on the storm drain system and to be used to water lawn areas.
- Towamencin Township in Montgomery County will implement a DCNR-funded master site plan for its 74-acre Fischer Park by creating a woodland sensory garden and boardwalk; developing a porous parking lot, rain gardens and bioswales to manage storm water; protecting critical buffer habitats along the stream in the park; incorporating skylights and use energy-efficient energy systems in a new restroom; and creating a native plants meadow which will not require frequent mowing.

- Lower Macungie Township in Lehigh County will begin developing Camp Olympic, and will create community gardens; an eco play area designed with natural materials and play equipment and durable art pieces that have an environmental and educational theme; and remove invasive species. This park will manage storm water through rain gardens and bioswales, and explanatory signage will be included to illustrate the benefits and functions of these best management practices.

The department also has put a considerable effort into implementing trail-related recommendations from the statewide outdoor recreation plan, and many trail projects are being funded, including: \$2.3 million for motorized trails for the opening of Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area in Northumberland County with an expected 200 miles of trails for off-road vehicles; and the acquisition of 1,200 acres for an off-highway vehicle park in Armstrong County.

More than \$2.3 million is being provided to Heritage Areas including: developing educational and interpretative signage for mobile devices; further development of the Mainline Canal Greenway and D&L and Schuylkill river trails; water trail enhancements, river town assessments; scenic byways; and to plan and market heritage tourism events.

For a list of grants by county, visit www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/index.aspx.

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