

# **Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Profile and Observations**

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## Forward

This brief profile of the Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative (CLI) is designed to outline the work of the CLI and to provide a view on several lessons that leaders and funders believe have surfaced through the work. We have based this profile paper on review of the CLI documents and on seven interviews with nine people – those most closely involved in the implementation and the funders. This paper is not meant to serve as a case study on the Initiative. The evidence gathered during the development of this profile suggests that more lessons around effective practices could be learned through a thorough case study of the Laurel Highlands.

## About the Conservation Landscape Initiative (CLI)

The Laurel Highlands has long served as a recreation destination for residents of Pittsburgh and Ohio, providing a broad range of natural, cultural and historical assets for visitors to enjoy. The area is located one hour east of Pittsburgh in southeastern Pennsylvania and is defined by three Allegheny Plateau ridges: the Chestnut, Laurel and Allegheny Ridges, and portions of several watersheds, including that of the Youghiogheny, Stonycreek and Conemaugh Rivers. In addition to its natural resources, numerous historical and cultural sites are also located within the Laurel Highlands, including: Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater and Kentuck Knob, Flight 93 National Memorial site, Fort Necessity National Battlefield, Johnstown Flood National Memorial and Allegheny-Portage Railroad National Historic Site, among others.

Spanning five counties – Bedford, Cambria, Fayette, Somerset, and Westmoreland – the region contains three Heritage corridors, the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor, the National Road Heritage Area, and the Allegheny Ridge State Heritage Area, as well as Pennsylvania’s only Appalachian mixed mesophytic forest, one of the most biologically diverse temperate forest regions on earth. The area can also boast of the 70-mile Laurel Highlands Trail, one of three National Scenic Trails in the state, and the 135-mile Great Allegheny Passage, which is part of a biking/hiking trail system that extends from Pittsburgh to Washington, DC. The Youghiogheny and Stonycreek Rivers provide excellent opportunities for some of the best whitewater boating in the country.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has a strong presence in the Laurel Highlands, with significant assets and lands including seven state parks—Laurel Hill, Linn Run, Laurel Mountain, Laurel Summit, Kooser, Laurel Ridge and Ohiopyle—as well as Forbes State Forest.

The convergence of these defining features along with the opportunity to improve both the quality of life and economic conditions of the region’s communities—some of the poorest in Pennsylvania—made a strong case for the Department to focus its work by creating a Conservation Landscape Initiative in the fall of 2005. Laurel Highlands is recognized as an intact area and has been described as a legacy tourism region much like the Poconos. As such, this CLI has a level of “brand recognition” as it pursues its goals.

The Laurel Highlands CLI has established three goals:

- 1. Revitalize core communities and expand local and regional economies through sustainable resource use and development.*
- 2. Conserve, restore, and improve ecological (aquatic and terrestrial), cultural, historic, and recreational resources of the region to sustain economic growth.*
- 3. Build capacity and constituency in the region to implement and maintain the revitalization of communities and sustainability of the ecological, cultural, historic, and recreational resources of the region.*

## Setting the Direction for the CLI

### Bringing Partners Together

Early and direct involvement of DCNR leadership was critical in gaining support from key stakeholder organizations in the region. Secretary DiBerardinis and his senior staff led the CLI effort for approximately two years in advance of the designation of a DCNR CLI lead in the fall of 2007. The Secretary met with the Western PA Conservancy, the organization responsible for acquiring and conserving large tracts of land in Laurel Highlands, including the land that was to be added to Ohiopyle State Park. He also met with several funders – the Richard K. Mellon Foundation, Heinz Endowments, and others. At these early meetings, the Secretary promoted a vision for the CLI and gained buy-in from these important partners. In addition to gaining support from the Conservancy and foundations, the Secretary met with the municipal officials in the rural Borough of Ohiopyle. These face-to-face meetings helped establish an important early threshold of trust between DCNR and the Borough.

The small group of organizations that the DCNR leadership initially approached came to be called the “Investors’ Group.” While the priorities and agenda for the CLI largely emerged from DCNR’s mission, particularly as it pertained to connecting communities to their natural resources, the specific goals were established with significant input from the Investors’ Group through a series of meetings over the course of approximately two years. The number of stakeholders has grown significantly – the Investors Group is now the Steering Committee and a group of 50 to 60 stakeholder comprise what is known as the Laurel Highlands Team, comprised of organizations and people, including funders, governmental agencies, community organizations and others. See Appendix B for a full list of Steering Committee members and partners.

The Laurel Highlands CLI is divided into four sub-landscapes and largely corresponds to the natural geography of the Allegheny Plateau ridges:

- **Laurel Ridge** is the core area of the Laurel Highlands CLI and, at over 70 miles long, contains over 200,000 acres. Nearly 50 percent of Laurel Ridge is in public

ownership. The broad ridge contains seven state parks, including Ohiopyle State Park, and the Laurel Ridge trail.

- **Chestnut Ridge** is mostly forested land with some of the region's greatest biodiversity. With approximately 95 percent of the land in Chestnut Ridge privately held, Chestnut Ridge is under threat from sprawl.
- **Great Allegheny Passage** is a 150-mile multiuse rail trail between Cumberland, Maryland and Pittsburg, PA. In the Laurel Highlands CLI, the GAP follows the Casselman River then the Youghiogheny River. This project is the leading early implementation project and is focused on the trail, trail towns and corridor of the GAP.
- **Stonycreek-Quemahoning and Greater Johnstown Region** is known for high quality whitewater paddling and wilderness style fly fishing. The region encompasses a new Whitewater Park, the Stonycreek River corridor and the core city of Johnstown and associated trail and park development. It also includes the Flight 93 National Memorial corridor.

In 2007, DCNR commissioned Fermata Inc., a consulting firm specializing in sustainable recreation and tourism, to study the opportunities for the Laurel Highlands CLI and make recommendations on where to focus efforts of the CLI. The Steering Committee leadership team consists of Lauren Imgrund from DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation in Harrisburg, Frances Stein from DCNR's Bureau of State Parks working in the region as the regional lead, and Brad Clemenson from the Pennsylvania Environmental Counsel who serves as an external lead partner.

The work team used the recommendations in the Fermata report as a starting point for identifying priority projects. The team assessed the likelihood of project completion based on cost and importance from a conservation or recreation perspective and then drafted annual workplans based on the ongoing decisions of the work group. Though Laurel Highlands is divided into sub-landscapes, the work of the committee is configured around the priority projects rather than the sub-landscapes.

Laurel Highlands currently has three priority efforts, although there are a number of smaller projects.

- Developing a joint master plan for the Ohiopyle State Park and the Borough of Ohiopyle
- Creating trail connections to communities, particularly in the Great Allegheny Passage
- Developing the overall Laurel Ridge interpretive plan

The first two projects were identified as opportunities for early "wins" to demonstrate the value of the CLI approach. In addition, DCNR recognized that because they had significant land holdings – seven parks and a forest – all located in Laurel Ridge, there was an opportunity to develop a single interpretive plan to guide the work within the Laurel Ridge.

DCNR made a series of strategic grants (listed and described in Appendix A) that advance these priorities as well as the CLI's overarching goals.

### ***Ohiopyle State Park and Ohiopyle Borough Implementation Strategy***

Ohiopyle State Park contains over 20,500 acres and draws 1.5 million visits a year. The park completely surrounds the Borough of Ohiopyle, which has 77 year-round residents. The Fermata study recognized Laurel Ridge as having the greatest potential for short-term implementation success and Ohiopyle as a key location for future development work for DCNR. Fermata identified Ohiopyle as the portal for bringing people into the Laurel Highlands and called the park "one of the finest in the entire eastern US." The rich scenery and recreational and natural amenities completely surrounding Ohiopyle Borough make it a portal, as opposed to a "gateway" that lies on the edge of the resource.

In addition, Ohiopyle State Park had existing relationships with other agencies, funders and nonprofit organizations, which made the transition to the CLI practice of working in partnership with others easier than for other parks in the Laurel Highlands with little or no experience of this kind. DCNR was able to tap into those existing external relationships for support of the CLI.

Historically, town-park relations in Ohiopyle have been strained because of the circumstances under which the park was created. Land acquisitions by the Western PA Conservancy in the late 1950s and early 1960s and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the early 1960s became what is now Ohiopyle State Park. In the early 1960s, Pennsylvania condemned properties belonging to Ohiopyle residents to help create the park. This forced transfer of land created hard feelings between residents and the state. According to DCNR staff, the creation of the CLI and the new presence of DCNR leadership in the region demonstrated a shift in the Department's approach and has helped to repair that relationship.

Borough residents today rely heavily upon the park for their livelihoods. Observers, including DCNR staff, recognize the symbiotic relationship between the park and the Borough, noting that the success of one is necessary to the success of the other. As one interviewee stated,

*"I can tell you why the CLI is concentrated in Ohiopyle. If they had not, I'm not sure the Borough would have survived."*

At the recommendation of Fermata, the Park and the Borough, together with other partners, are now engaged in joint master planning and implementation, which some expect will serve as a model for state park/community joint planning in other communities and states. This significant effort, funded by the Richard King Mellon Foundation, is already bearing fruit as evidenced by the award of \$1.9 million from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to improve the Route 381 corridor through Ohiopyle Borough and \$1.3 million from PennVEST to implement stormwater

management practices. This project will enhance the community's capacity to walk and bike by improving crosswalks, creating bike lanes, and employing traffic calming techniques to make Route 381 safer and more welcoming for everyone. The changes will provide connections between the falls area of the State Park and the Borough of Ohiopyle.

## Trail Connections to Communities

### *Great Allegheny Passage*

A leading early implementation project of the CLI is focused on trails, trail towns and the corridor of the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP). The GAP has been a catalyst for the Trail Towns program, one of DCNR's strongest partners in the Laurel Highlands, and for economic development in the region. The focus of this effort is on establishing trail and trail town visions and associated implementation projects. Expanding and linking trails to communities, such as those along the Great Allegheny Passage, advances DCNR's goal of revitalizing communities by linking sustainability, recreation, and economic development. The funding scenario for the GAP grew out of the early discussions with the Investors Group and from a planning process funded by DCNR. The Department of Community and Economic Development partially funds the Trail Town Program in conjunction with private funders. DCNR has focused its support of the trail completion by funding the Allegheny Trail Alliance (ATA).

*“The work of the Great Allegheny Passage has led to the work of the Trail Towns because it was immediately evident that the trail was attracting a lot of people and they got to know the little towns along the way. As a result, bed and breakfasts, soda shops, ice cream shops, cafes are popping up. Then we saw folks from Pittsburgh buying dilapidated homes in these communities and fixing them up.”*

Recent GAP work has focused on finishing the trail in Pittsburg and there has also been considerable work by the Trail Town Program, with the support of DCNR and other partners, to link towns to the trail and develop new businesses that serve visitors and other trail users.

### *Laurel Ridge Trails Assessment*

In 2009, Pennsylvania Environmental Council completed a Laurel Ridge Trails Assessment under the aegis of the CLI, mapping existing legal and illegal trails and exploring potential connections to communities. The assessment also made recommendations for new trail segments and removal of illegal or unsustainable trails.

Some of those interviewed pointed out that there have been philosophical differences among partners about adding more trails to Laurel Ridge. Some partners see the current trail system as under-resourced and think that more focus should be applied to improved

maintenance rather than building new trails that will, in all likelihood spread existing and ongoing resources even thinner. On the other hand, a DCNR staff person commented that the CLI approach brings in community linkages and along with them the potential for more interested stakeholders with more resources.

## Laurel Ridge Comprehensive Interpretive Plan

Laurel Ridge has a large concentration of public land holdings and offers numerous outdoor recreation opportunities, such as whitewater rafting, hiking, and biking. With so much land and limited staffing, DCNR personnel recognized the value of an interpretive plan for the entire Laurel Ridge.

According to the Laurel Highlands work plan, the Laurel Ridge Comprehensive Interpretive Plan will provide a regional framework for interpretive elements and associated infrastructure and management actions for the Laurel Ridge, building on the cooperative work already underway.

DCNR staff meet regularly for plan development and frequently seek input from partner organizations. The interpretive plan has been in process for about a year and is nearing completion in the next few months. Recently, DCNR has increased its staff support to help move the interpretive plan process along.

## Challenges and Successes

Early findings from this profile point to a number of challenges and successes that are potential lessons learned for future practice. Largely, the Laurel Highlands CLI is perceived as a success story and has strong support from partners who anticipate greater success as the work progresses.

### Challenges

- **Lack of readiness in some communities.** Some communities have struggled with “readiness” for this work. Interviewees described numerous reasons for obstacles encountered. There are communities in extreme poverty that lack basic infrastructure and resources and have little excess capacity to become engaged in the CLI. The Laurel Highlands CLI is located in Pennsylvania’s Appalachian region, a region that has long struggled with poverty. Fayette County, Pennsylvania’s poorest rural county and the second poorest county behind Philadelphia County, had 19.5 percent of its population living in poverty in 2007<sup>1</sup>. DCNR and its partners recognize that they will need to grapple with how to ensure that the work of the CLI elevates the social and economic health of the less resourced communities in the region.

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<sup>1</sup> U. S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates for states and counties; 2007. <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/index.html>.

Another perspective offered by one interviewee is that some communities do not yet perceive a benefit from working in a regional approach:

*“They are not seeing that what is good for the community next door is good for mine.”*

In comparison to the rest of the progress evidenced in the CLI, the work in Chestnut Ridge has been slow. This pace is seen as appropriate by some partners. Chestnut Ridge is 95 percent privately held land, making conservation planning difficult. Partners working to acquire land in that sub-landscape prefer to “keep it quiet, find receptive landowners, and quietly work with them without hoopla.” One interviewee suggested removing Chestnut Ridge as a sub-landscape and let the work continue “under the radar.” To date, the CLI has not been highly visible in Chestnut Ridge and there is not much of a constituency focused on that area. A DCNR staff member stated that Chestnut Ridge has not been a focus because “we decided to focus on the areas where we had the greatest potential for success in terms of readiness and DCNR resources such as our parks and the GAP which was significantly funded by DCNR.”

- **Grant funding process.** The DCNR grant making process is seen as offering a number of barriers to implementation: It has been described as “too slow when there is a pressing need to move on an opportunity” such as land acquisition and “not flexible enough to meet the needs of communities,” as they arise. As is often the case when matching funds are required of grants, communities in Laurel Highlands have struggled to raise the match for DCNR’s programs.
- **Initial pace of implementation.** DCNR seemed to have a more measured approach with the Laurel Highlands in contrast to other CLIs, like the Schuylkill Highlands, perhaps owing to some early missteps in Schuylkill Highlands and the historically negative reputation DCNR had in Laurel Highlands. As a result of this caution, the initial phase of the CLI work was viewed by some partners and staff as moving too slowly. One interviewee stated, however, that there was significant early work to align partner interests around the sub-landscape configuration of the CLI, which may help explain the slow pace of implementation. The addition of the co-leads (internal and external) helped to advance the work across the CLI as a whole. The time it took to develop an interpretive plan was also seen as “taking too long,” as a result of initial shortage of staff.
- **Uptake of CLI concept across DCNR.** Though it may not necessarily be a challenge in the future it is worth noting that, at this point, it is too early to tell how well the CLI concept has permeated throughout all of the DCNR staff involved in the region. Said one partner:

*“I had hoped that DCNR as an entire department would be invested in this but what I see is one section of DCNR. The Secretary created the concept but probably even he wouldn’t say that it’s been 100% effective in involving the entire department.”*



## Successes

- **Increased partner attention to Laurel Highlands.** Although the Laurel Highlands was not necessarily a priority investment area for some of the funding organizations, they responded to the Secretary's enthusiasm and request for partnership. The CLI has changed the way these funders approach the region. In the words of one funder:

*"It probably increased our interest in investments in that area. There's greater potential for Laurel Highlands as a test case or demonstration location for figuring out a regional economic development strategy."*

Having DCNR leadership at the table early lent legitimacy to the effort and helped to acquire partners for the emerging CLI.

- **Significant and unique partnership.** The Borough of Ohiopyle, DCNR, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and other partners are engaging in a joint master planning process that many view as critical to the survival of the Borough. This is a significant and unique partnership that can serve as a model for state parks and forests in how to build connections to communities that benefit all.

The parks and forests in the Laurel Ridge sub-landscape report that creating a joint interpretive plan offers greater opportunities to talk to each other and work more closely with outside partners than standard operating procedure would have allowed. Partners report that they have new relationships with each other and with other state agencies as a result of the CLI.

For the most part, those involved in the effort view the CLI largely as successful in establishing and strengthening collaboration.

*"I really feel the work is extremely productive. In terms of bringing all the parties to the table, it has been incredible successful. I think [DCNR] landed on a model that works and they should stick with it."*

- **Implementation wins have raised the CLI's profile.** There has been significant early work on establishing trail and trail/river town vision with the communities along the Great Allegheny Passage. The strong partnership between DCNR and the Trail Towns program is promising for continued progress in building trail connections to communities and spurring economic development as a result. In April 2009, DCNR hosted the Laurel Highlands Summit, a two-day event that focused on the potential of the natural and recreational resources in the landscape to be a real catalyst for economic development across the Laurel Highlands. The Summit, which had over 160 attendees, was extremely well received by communities, partner organizations, and other state agencies. Some perceive that

the Summit also raised the visibility and the value of the CLI work in the region among those who were previously unaware of the work.

- **High level of readiness in some communities.** Some communities are at a higher level of readiness and interest to engage in the work of the CLI. They recognize the economic value of the CLI and have been able to mobilize resources for matching funds to DCNR grants in order to advance the work in their communities.
- **Pace of implementation.** Although in many ways the CLI in Laurel Highlands is relatively young, it has moved forward quickly with great partner support. DCNR's approach in Laurel Highlands is showing signs of having a positive effect on those involved in the efforts. Stakeholders are thinking more collaboratively and many DCNR staff in Laurel Highlands are coordinating efforts to a greater extent than they have in the past.

*“Without DCNR creating this effort, I don't feel there was going to be a holistic approach to the region [among stakeholders]. Certainly nothing was in play; there was dabbling over the years, but nothing of this magnitude.”*

*“I think it is different [how DCNR is operating internally]. We never really worked with Recreation and Conservation—always worked with Forestry. We're seeing more work done across bureaus, and some freedom to do that work. Everyone is on board. The focus on community stuff is also different—the fact that they are paying me to go down to a community meeting. People in upper management are allowing it to happen.”*

## Conclusion

Overall, interviewees were enthusiastic about the work completed in the Laurel Highlands, their collective ability to overcome early challenges, and they anticipate continued positive outcomes from the work as it progresses. This enthusiasm translates to high expectations for the future impact of the CLI and potential directions for the work. For example, the Laurel Highlands Summit demonstrated a growing interest in the CLI among the area's business community. One interviewee mentioned that some partners have expressed an interest in creating a formal or informal organization in the Laurel Highlands modeled after the Sierra Business Council, which is focused on engaging the business community in the Sierra Nevada Mountains around sustainable development. At the same time, interviewees showed pragmatism when discussing the CLI's ability to advance and sustain the work to the extent that partners desire, given resource limitations, including staffing.

Though only a small number of partners were interviewed for this profile, preliminary data suggest that Laurel Highlands can serve as a model of success for agencies and

organizations interested in establishing partnerships and priorities around large landscapes.

## Appendix A. DCNR Strategic Grants in Laurel Highlands

Several grants prior to the creation of the CLI in the fall of 2005 laid the groundwork for what would later become the CLI. This snapshot of strategic grants represents only a portion of the investments in the Laurel Highlands. DCNR made other C2P2 grants in the region that were not central to the CLI goals; these grants are not included here.

DCNR's grant funding requires at least a one-to-one match from other sources so the \$4 million dollars in strategic grants leveraged at least an additional \$4 million in resources. Additionally, other state agencies have made investments in the Laurel Highlands that align with DCNR's strategic goals.

Finally, DCNR provided funds to organizations working statewide or across multiple regions or for work broader than the strategic goals of the CLI. A portion of these grants, to partners such as the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Trail Towns, are for activities in the Laurel Highlands central to the strategic goals of the CLI. Because of the broader scope of these grants, they are not included in the table below.

Table 1 outlines C2P2 grants dating back to 2003 seen by DCNR staff as strategically important to the development of the CLI initiative in Laurel Highlands. These grants were made from Grant Round 9 (2003) to Grant Round 14 (2008):

<b>Grantee Type</b>	<b>C2P2 Grantees</b>	<b>Grant Purpose</b>	<b>Number of Grants</b>	<b>Total Grant Value</b>	<b>Average Grant Size</b>
<b>Cities and Municipalities</b>	Conemaugh, Connellsville, Downtown West, Newton, Johnstown, Ohioyle	Gateways, Park Development & Planning, Playground, Bridge, Greenway & Open Space Planning	11	\$1,586,000	\$144,000
<b>Counties</b>	Cambria, Somerset, Westmoreland	Land Acquisition, Trail Work, Trail Bridge Work	6	\$542,000	\$90,000
<b>Land Trusts</b>	Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Western Pa Conservancy	Acquisition, Easements, Trail Study	11	\$2,136,000	\$194,000
<b>Organizations</b>	(Is or should PEC be included? Likewise, is Trail Towns included?) Cambria Somerset Authority, Fay-Penn Economic Development Council, Mountain Watershed Inc., Regional Trail Corporation, Student Conservation Association Inc., Yough River Trail Council	Trail Work, Education Center, Whitewater Study, Capacity Building, Ski Trail work	13	\$1,698,000	\$131,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>\$4,043,000</b>	<b>\$99,000</b>

## Appendix B. Steering Committee and Work Teams

### Laurel Highlands Work Team

Adrian Stouffer, OECP  
Al Thomas, FD & C  
Amy Camp, Trail Town Program  
Brad Clemenson, PEC Lead  
Cathy McCollom, Trail Town Program  
Cindy Dunlap, BRC  
Cynthia Carrow, Western PA Conservancy  
David Kahley, Progress Fund  
Davitt Woodwell, PEC  
Donna Holdorf, National Road Heritage Corridor  
Doug Finger, BSP  
Ed Callahan, BOF  
Frances Stein, Regional Lead  
Gilson Gilford, BSP  
Jay Parrish, Topo Geo  
Jeff Anna, BSP  
Jeff Johns, BSP  
Jim Segedy, PEC  
John Hallas, BSP  
Joy Wilhelm, DCED  
Kathy Frankel, BRC  
Lauren Imgrund, Central Office Lead  
Linda Boxx, Allegheny Trail Alliance  
Mark Ickes, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau  
Mary Lorah, BSP  
Mike Kane, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies  
Mike Kuzemchak, Western PA Conservancy  
Mike Mumau, BSP  
Mike Piaskowski, BRC  
Mike Quinn, Stonycreek-Quemahoning Initiative  
Miranda Crotsley, BSP  
Olga Herbert, Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor  
Stacie Faust, BSP  
Terri Kromel, BSP  
Tracy Stack, BRC

## Laurel Highlands Steering Committee (Investors Group)

Brenda Barrett, BRC  
Brian Hill, Richard King Mellon Foundation  
Caren Glotfelty, Heinz Endowments  
Cindy Dunn, DCNR, Deputy Secretary  
Cynthia Carrow, WPC  
Dan Devlin, BOF  
David Kahley, Progress Fund  
Davitt Woodwell, PEC  
Donald Welsh, PEC  
Elizabeth Lynn, McCune Foundation  
Frances Stein, BSP  
Greg Socha, WPC  
Brad Clemenson, PEC  
Gretchen Leslie, OECF  
Jim Denova, Benedum Foundation  
Jim Grace, DCNR, Deputy Secretary  
John Dawes, Foundation for PA Watersheds  
John Norbeck , BSP  
John Quigley, DCNR, Secretary  
Joy Wilhelm, DCED  
Ken Klothen, DCED  
Lauren Imgrund, DCNR  
Linda Boxx, McKenna Foundation  
Lynda Waggoner, WPC  
Mike Kane, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies  
Mike Kuzemchak, WPC  
Mike Watson, Richard King Mellon Foundation  
Paul Zeph, DEP  
Scott Izzo, Richard King Mellon Foundation  
Scott Roberts, DEP  
Tom Saunders, WPC

## **DCNR Laurel Highlands Leadership Team**

Al Thomas, FD & C  
Brad Elison, BOF  
Brenda Barrett, BRC  
Cindy Dunn, Deputy Secretary  
Dan Devlin, BOF  
Eugene Comoss, FD&C  
Frances Stein, BSP  
Gretchen Leslie, OECP  
Jeff Johns, BSP  
Jim Grace, Deputy Secretary  
John Norbeck, BSP  
John Quigley, Secretary  
Lauren Imgrund, CLI Coordinator

## **Ohio pyle Steering Committee**

Amy Camp, Trail Towns  
Brad Clemenson, PEC  
Cathy McCollom, Trail Towns  
Connie Smithberger, Ohio pyle Borough  
Ed Knoll, Ohio pyle Borough  
Frances Stein, DCNR  
Fred Wright, Ohio pyle Prints  
Jeff Johns, DCNR  
Jim Segedy, PEC  
Davitt Woodwell, PEC  
Joe Szczur, Penn Dot  
John Hallas, DCNR  
Lauren Imgrund, DCNR  
Mark McCarty, Ohio pyle outfitter  
Stacie Faust, DCNR  
Tracy Stack, DCNR

## Other Supporting Organizations and Partners

Allegheny Ridge State Heritage Area/PA Mainline Canal Greenway  
Cambria County Commissioners  
Cambria County Conservation District  
Cambria County Planning Commission  
Cambria County Visitors Bureau  
City of Johnstown  
City of Connellsville  
Connellsville Redevelopment Authority  
DCED  
DEP  
Fayette County Commissioners  
Fayette County Conservation District  
Fayette County Planning Department  
Fayette County Redevelopment Authority  
Johnstown Area Heritage Association  
Johnstown Redevelopment Authority  
Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau  
Ligonier Valley/Pittsburgh Westmoreland & Somerset Railroad Association  
Mountain Watershed Association  
National Park Service  
Penn Dot  
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission  
Pennsylvania Game Commission  
Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission  
Powder Mill Nature Preserve: Carnegie Museum Field Laboratory  
Redevelopment Authority of Somerset County  
Somerset County Commissioners  
Somerset County Conservation District  
Somerset County Planning Commission  
Stonycreek Conemaugh Rivers Improvement Project  
University of Pittsburgh Airglow Observatory  
Westmoreland County Commissioners  
Westmoreland County Conservation District  
Westmoreland County Planning Department



## Appendix C. Interviewees

Cynthia Carrow	Western Pa Conservancy
Brad Clemenson	PEC
Caren Glotfelty	Heinz Endowments
John Hallas	DCNR, State Parks
Brian Hill	R.K. Mellon Foundation
Lauren Imgrund	DCNR
Cathy McCollom	Progress Fund, Trail Town Program
Frances Stein	DCNR, State Parks
Mike Watson	R.K. Mellon Foundation