

*The Clarion River  
Greenway:  
Connecting our Past with a  
Vision for our Future*

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## *Acknowledgments*

## *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 Clarion is a unique river that has a rich history as a core industrial area, and a bright future that boasts some of the best recreational activities in the state of Pennsylvania. Once called the most polluted river in the Commonwealth, today 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 to those who plan on enjoying a trip down the river. The map orients visitors with the access points along the river, along with various natural, cultural, and historic destinations along the river. The second step was the creation of four access signs along the river. The signs are modeled after the water trail map, and 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 Mill Creek access.

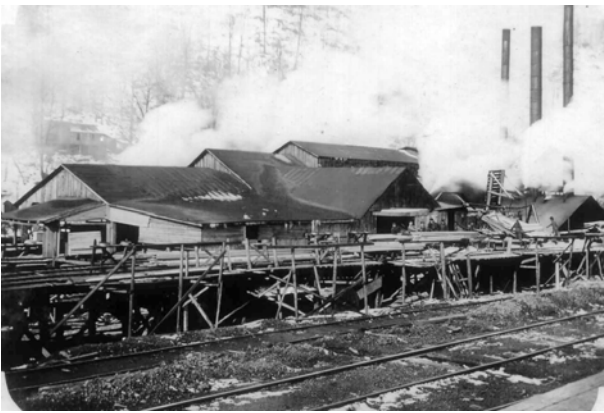
The greenway corridor will serve as a link between all the natural, cultural, and historical resources along the Wild and Scenic Clarion River corridor. Ultimately, the Clarion River Greenway will become an extremely valuable asset to the region as a result of extensive work by many stakeholders. The reemergence of the Clarion has resulted in a growing interest in recreational opportunities along the Wild and Scenic portion of the river and has served as the 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 continue to facilitate the remarkable recovery of the Wild and Scenic Clarion River.

## *The Past*

The story of the Clarion River is a story of nature's awesome resiliency. Once called, "the most polluted river in the Commonwealth," today the river has been 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 received its current name from surveyor David Stanard, who, in the early 1800s, wrote that the sound of 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 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 was a much different place, as it 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 area they referred to the Clarion as, "Riviere au Fiel" meaning River of Hate (Davis, 1887).

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



Mill in Portland Mills, along the Clarion River

It was not until the early 1800s that the region began to be inhabited by Europeans, and over the last two hundred years the history of the Clarion River has been a compelling story of resource exploitation, degradation, resilience, and amazing recovery. As a 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. At the same

time, industries such as iron and coal mining, tanning, chemical manufacturing, and boat building could also be found along the Clarion River.

Other industries also sprouted as the region developed. In the mid-1850's, boats were built along the banks 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, for transporting coal down the Mississippi River.

The resources from around the Clarion River area made very significant contributions to the expansion of the United States. But while regions far from the Clarion benefited from its abundance of resources, the Clarion was left with many scars that would take decades to heal. During this time the Clarion River was a sink for sediment from reckless logging jobs, discharge from tanneries, chemical plants and paper mills, and acidic drainage from bituminous coal mines. 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 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 had already begun to change. By the early 1900s,



Boat building along the Clarion River.  
*Courtesy PA Lumber Heritage Region*

most timber operations had closed as much of the resource had been exhausted. In 1924, Piney Dam was completed outside 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 last act of the original timber industry that started

along the Clarion in the early 1800s. The banks of the Clarion 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 stated goal of the newly formed program was "to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural or recreational features in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations." It was not long after the Act's passage than an effort began to have the Clarion River designated. In 1971, the US 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. But the people of the Clarion, much like the river itself, have a resilient nature, and were determined to see designation happen.

The major problem identified by the federal government was pollution from the paper mills, municipal sewage systems, and coalmines. The final report from the federal government stated, "At such time as the water quality is improved to permit suitable

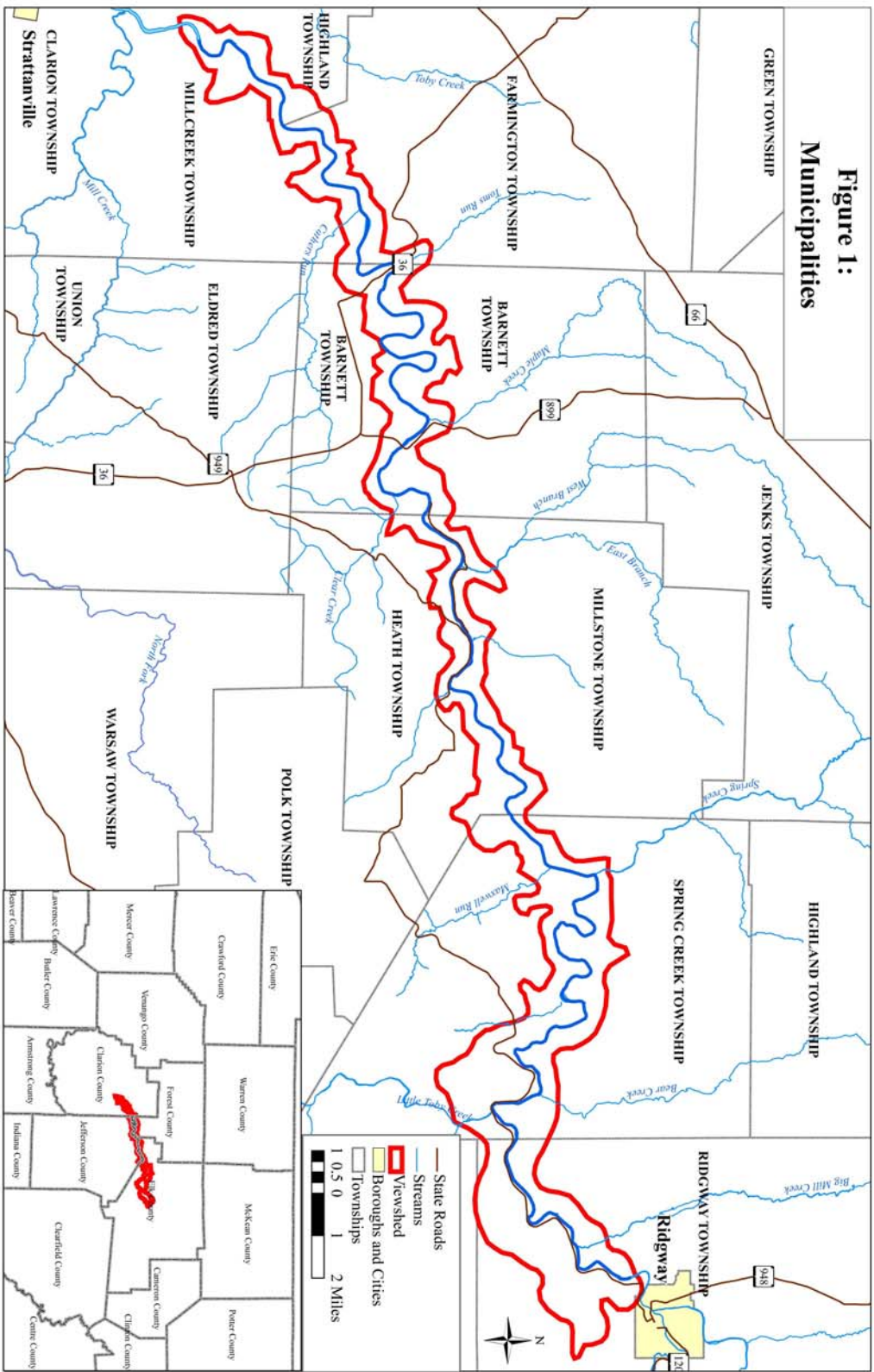
outdoor recreation activities which are now precluded, the Clarion should be reconsidered for possible addition to the National System.” This gave hope to River’s supporters, and the effort to improve water quality expanded.

After more than two decades of continued improvement, the push to add the Clarion River to the list of Wild and Scenic Rivers began again in the early 1990’s. After several years of study, and unanimous passage by the Pennsylvania Legislature and the United States Congress, the Clarion designation was signed by President Bill Clinton on October 19, 1996. This made the Clarion one of only two rivers entirely within Pennsylvania that have been recognized under the Wild and Scenic Act, the other being the Allegheny River.

The designation begins at the Allegheny National Forest/State Game Lands Number 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 (See Figure 1). Along this 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 the history of Clarion River is a critical component of the identity of the region, pieces of this history will be woven through the greenway plan as we look towards the future, while keeping a sharp eye on the past.

**Figure 1:  
Municipalities**



## *The Present*

Today, the Clarion River is well on its way to recovery. From its headwaters in McKean County until it empties into the Allegheny River, the Clarion River's future is full of potential. Water quality has show dramatic improvement, and a rich biodiversity is returning. In 1994, 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 therefore are good indicators of water quality. The survey identified 52 species along the river, several state and regionally rare species were found, including green-faced clubtail, which was thought to be extirpated in Pennsylvania. The diversity of dragonflies and damselflies is proof of the river's recovery.



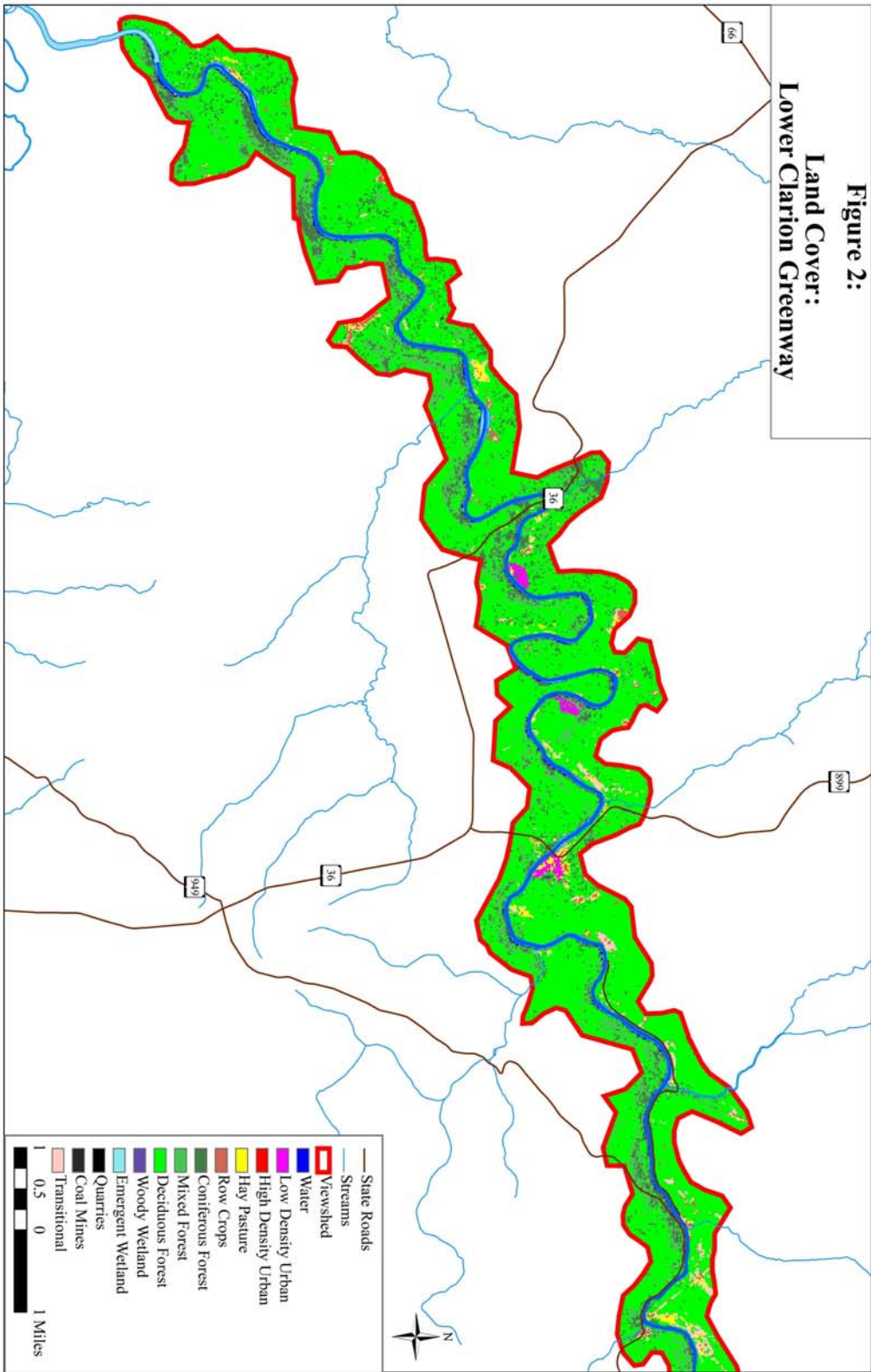
*Canoeists enjoy a relaxing day on the Clarion*

A diverse sport fishery is now thriving along the river, and more anglers, paddlers, and other tourists are taking advantage of the inspiring natural characteristics of the Clarion corridor. A testament to the amazing recovery of the Clarion River is its Wild and Scenic designation. Only one other river entirely within Pennsylvania, the Allegheny River, has received such recognition. Through the designation, 30 miles of the river have been designated scenic and about 20 miles of the river have been designated recreational.

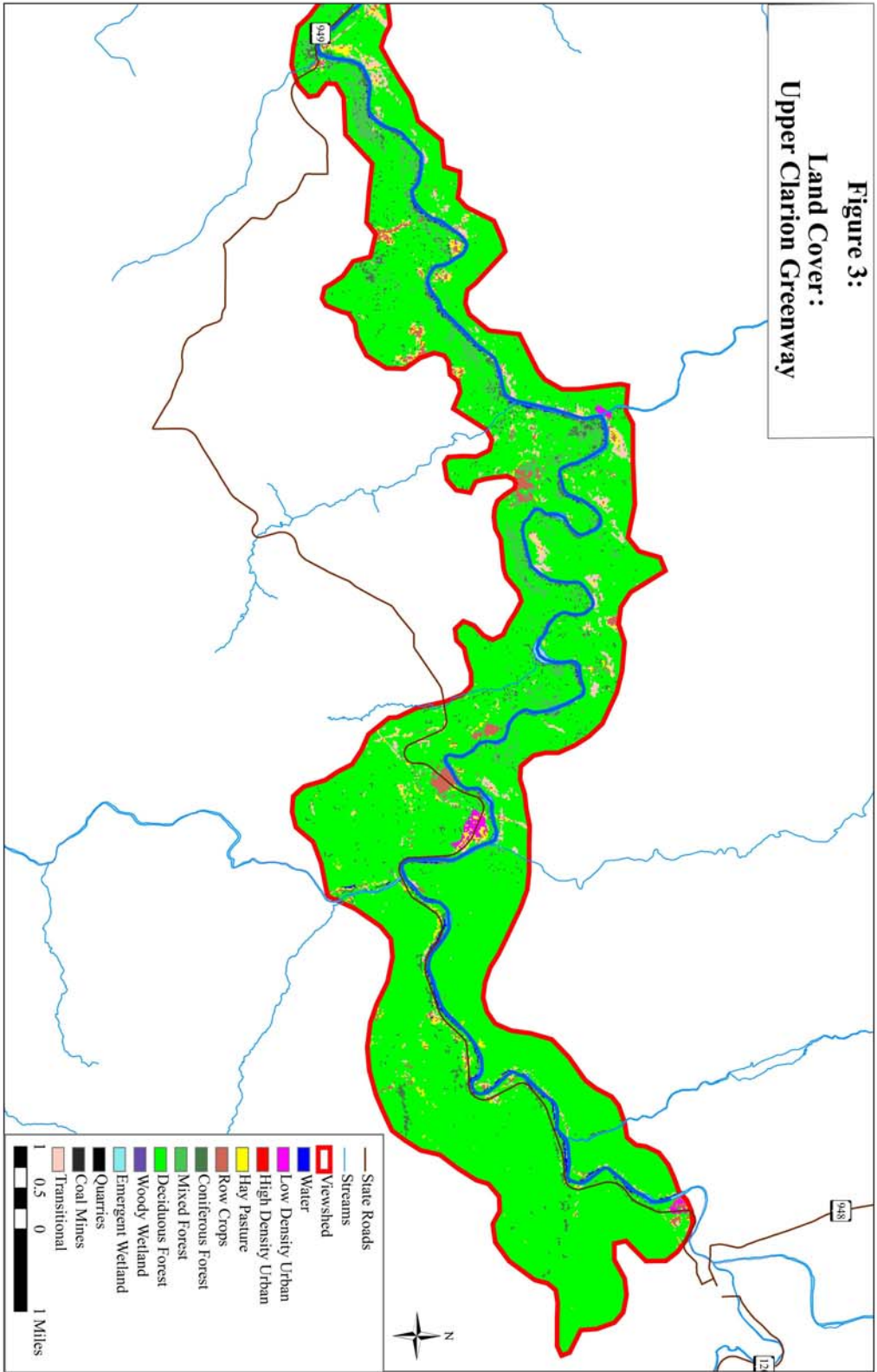
The topography along the greenway is ruggedly hilly, with steep banks along the river and a limited floodplain. The vast majority of the landscape along the greenway is blanketed by thick Pennsylvania forestland, with limited wetlands areas scattered throughout (See Figures 2 and 3). The topography along 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 Plateaus 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 also a popular spot for long drives during autumn months, enjoying change of seasons, through the Allegheny forests.

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

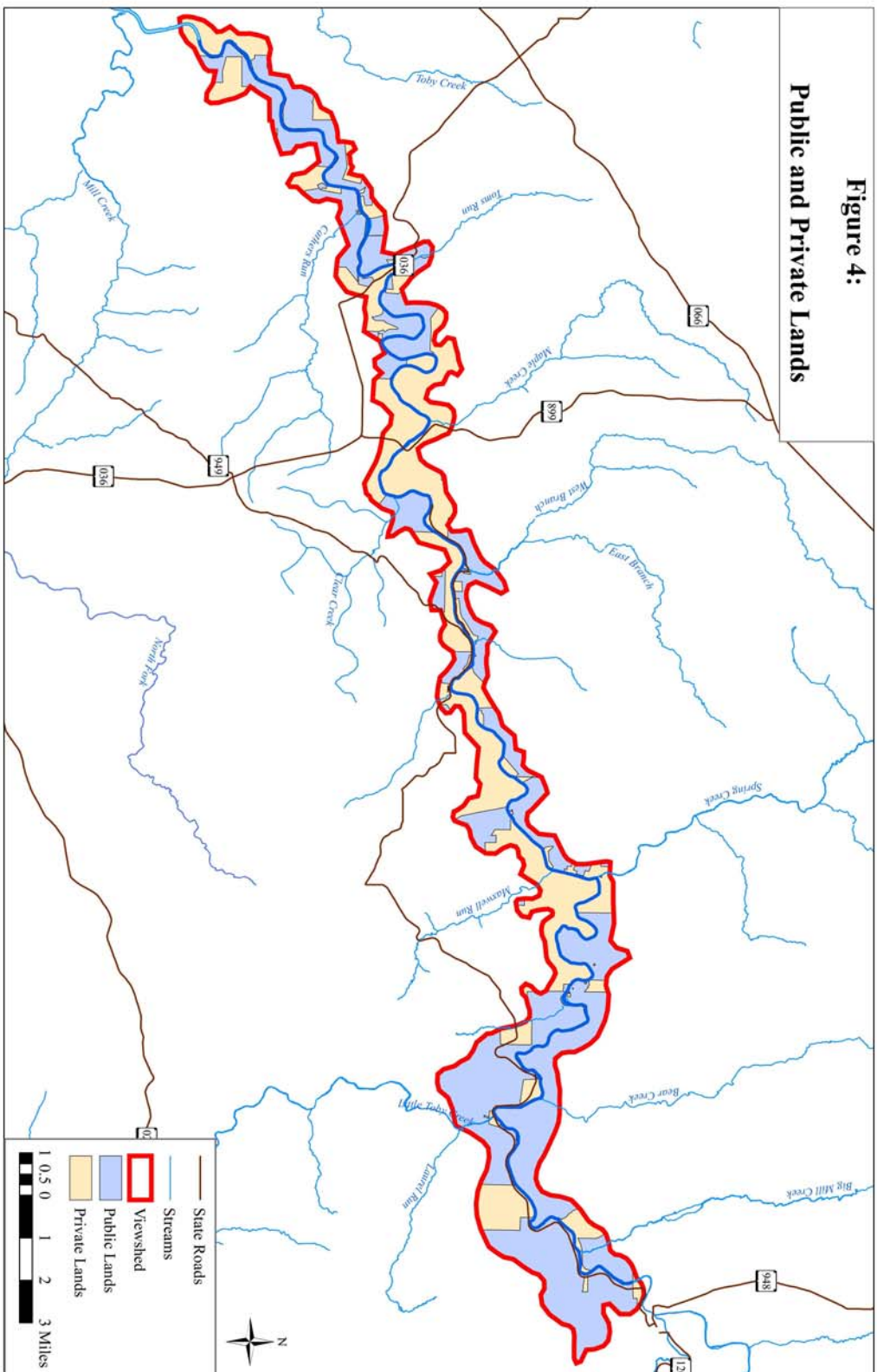
**Figure 2:**  
**Land Cover:**  
**Lower Clarion Greenway**



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



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



While the natural environment has seen very positive changes over the last few decades, many locals worry about socio-economics 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 eight townships that are traversed by the Clarion River Greenway, seven of them have seen a population increase from 1990 to 2004. However, closer estimates show that populations in four of the eight townships decreased between 2000 and 2004, while 3 townships saw their populations increase, and one township had no population change within the time period.

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 has resulted in a growing interest in recreational opportunities along the Wild and Scenic portion of the river and has served as the 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 continue to facilitate the remarkable recovery of the Wild and Scenic Clarion River.

## *The Potential*

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

The Clarion River Greenway will encompass the 51.7 miles of the river, from just downstream of Ridgway in Elk County to the backwaters of the Piney Dam in Clarion County, that have been recognized by the federal Wild and Scenic program. Along with the water resources of the Clarion River, the Greenway will encompass the viewshed along the river, which roughly equates to .50 miles from the water's edge, on both sides of the river.

One of the first questions that often arises regarding the Clarion River Greenway is, "What is a greenway?" According to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 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. The goal of the Clarion River Greenway is to fit into option three. Through this effort, the Greenway will be developed to benefit both the natural environment of the region, and the visitors and residents of the region. This plan will explore possibilities of strengthening the natural history of the Greenway, while also promoting its cultural identity and historical features.

There are many different definitions for greenways. These definitions vary throughout the country, and even the world. The definition that best fits this project is the one developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for their Greenways Program. Their 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)."*

The state of 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 creation 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. Ultimately, the Clarion River Greenway will connect with other greenways to greatly expand the benefits and opportunities associated with the Clarion River Greenway.

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 areas grow, develop, and diversify. Along the greenway, visitors will find opportunities for a vast array 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. Figure 5 outlines some of the major benefits that will result from the development of a Clarion River Greenway.

*Figure 5: Benefits of Greenways*

**Economic:**

- Can help create a diversified economy.
- Can be a catalyst for economic development.
- Protected greenways increase surrounding property values.

**Recreational:**

- Provide recreational opportunities in natural areas for families/individuals of all ages and abilities.
- Provide safe opportunities for a multitude of outdoor activities.

**Environmental:**

- Protect water quality by buffering non-point sources of water pollution.
- Preserve the biological diversity of plant and animal species by maintaining the connections between natural communities.

**Social/Community:**

- Enhance a sense of place in the community or region.
- Educate visitors to, and residents of, the region about the cultural, historical, and natural assets of the area.
- Offers potential health and physical fitness benefits through various recreational opportunities.
- Trails within the greenway will provide alternative connections between greenway communities.

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 5 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 entirely within the state of Pennsylvania.

The Clarion River Greenway is also included in the Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region and the Pennsylvania Wilds area. Both of these regional efforts are drawing increased attention to the Clarion River and surrounding lands. The Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region is one of eleven heritage regions designated by the State of Pennsylvania to showcase the unique resources and history found throughout the state. The lumber heritage region will showcase the rich historical resources in the area with the abundance of outdoor recreation activities available to both visitors and residents. The Pennsylvania 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, the Clarion River Greenway is on the western boundary of the Wilds. The goal of the PA Wilds program is to increase tourism and other related industries throughout the region.

The easy access to the Clarion River Greenway for millions of residents from several surrounding states, coupled with regional efforts to promote the area, are likely to make the Clarion River Greenway a regional focus and a regional 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.

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 that 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 woven through the rich natural resources of the area, it is only fitting that the future shall return to a focus on the natural offerings of the Clarion River.

With major cities and attractions branching out from all directions from the Clarion River Greenway, there are a multitude of possible routes visitors can take to reach the greenway. Along these various routes, there are many "gateways." Gateways are the areas where major routes into the greenway cross other major routes traversing the region (See Table 1 and Figure 6). These can be seen as important areas to provide information and other resources to those driving to the greenway, and also those individuals who may not be aware of the greenway, but would be interested in what the greenway has to offer.

Gateways are fitting locations for advertising opportunities promoting the Clarion River Greenway. The greenway itself, along with specific attractions can be promoted to reach

both the regular visitor and the individual who has not previously been to the Clarion River Greenway. Also, needed items, ranging for outdoor gear to film could also be sold in and around these areas, as users of the Clarion River Greenway could be a targeted audience.

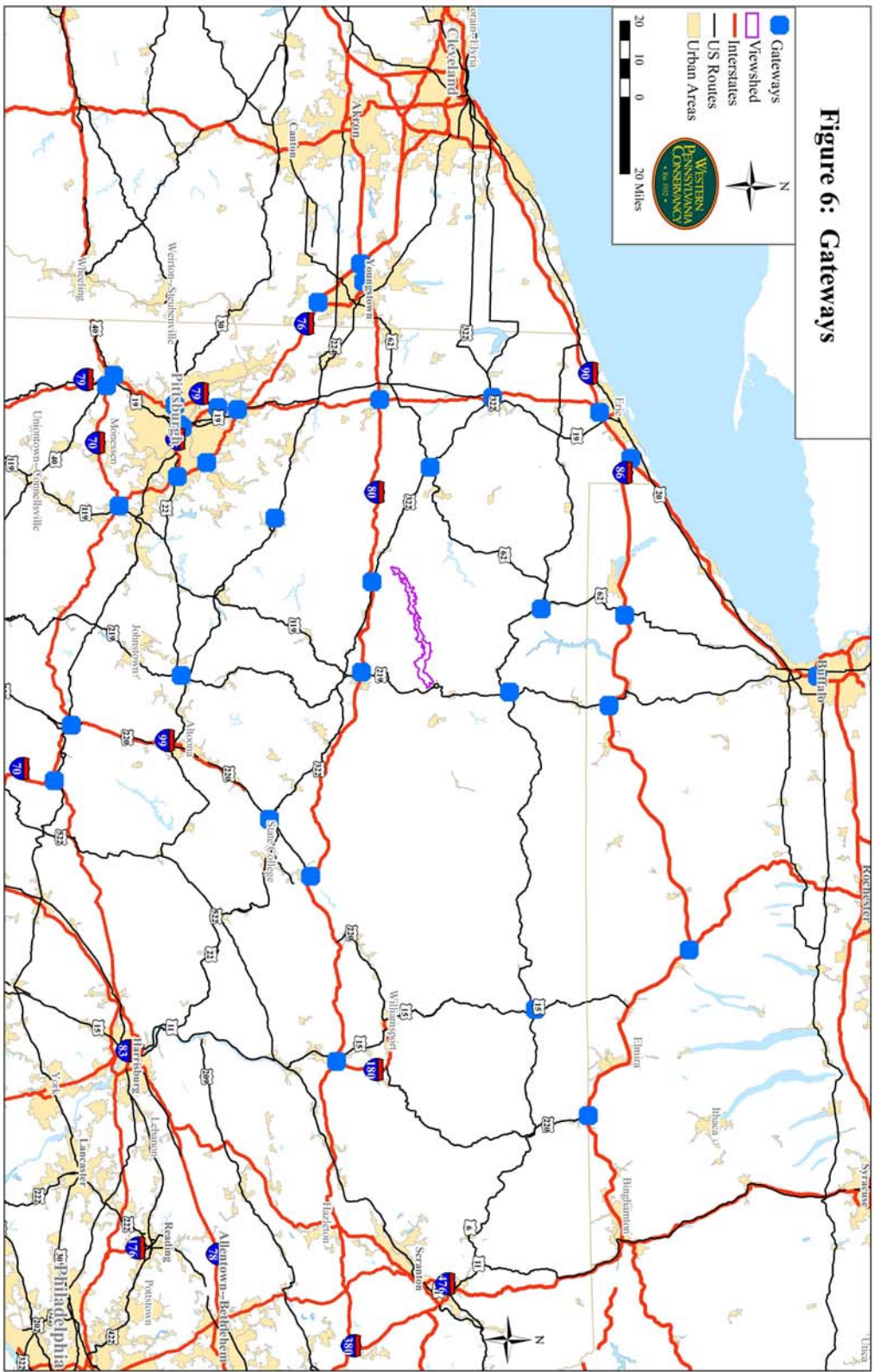
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**Table 1: Major Gateways into the Clarion River Greenway**

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<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	US22
I-279	I-376	
I-279	I-579	PA28
I-279	I-99	US22
I-279	I-79	
I-76	I-79	US19
I-80	I-79	
I-90	I-79	
I-90	I-86	
I-80	I-680	
I-76	I-80	
I-76	I-680	
I-390	I-86	
I-90	I-190	
I-86	US62	
I-86	US219	
I-76	PA28	
US6	US219	
I-80	US219	
I-80	US322	
I-422	PA28	
US22	US219	
US322	I-220	
I-80	I-220	
US6	US62	
US322	US62	
US15	US6	
I-86	I-220	
I-79	US6	

This greenway plan is the latest step in an effort to protect and promote the Clarion River. In 2004, a water trail map for the river was completed for the entire 100-mile length of the Clarion. This water trail map is a comprehensive guide to the river and its resources. All access points along the Clarion River are depicted on the map, along with all public



lands and various destinations that can be found. Related to the map, four water access signs have been created as well. The four signs show a portion of the water trail map, and are invaluable in orienting visitors to the portion of the Clarion River they are about to enjoy. The four signs are spread out along the Clarion River and can be found at Ridgway, Irwin Run, Cooksburg, and Mill Creek. The third step in this Clarion River work is the development of this greenway plan. This plan will be an overarching management document that will serve as a guide for those working to continue the amazing story of the Clarion River.

A goal of the Clarion River Greenway plan is for it to be a stakeholder's vision for the future of the river. To ensure this goal was achieved, a concerted effort was made to collect public input throughout the process. A key component of the planning process was the development of a steering committee of Clarion Greenway stakeholders. The steering committee consisted of a diverse array of individuals, ranging from local business owners to municipal officials. These individuals are members of the local community who have vast knowledge about the Clarion's past, present, and future. These community leaders helped assemble a strategy for collecting local public opinion about the greenway program, through interviews, surveys, and public workshops. The steering committee was utilized to ensure that the plan includes local and regional hopes for the Clarion's future. 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 public meetings. These public meetings gave an opportunity for all stakeholders to voice their vision for the Clarion River Greenway. 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.



*Stakeholders provide valuable input during a public meeting*

As you will see in the coming pages, the Clarion River Greenway is broken down into a series of five reaches that will center around 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 to and from the hubs and destinations shows the routes that will most likely be used by visitors to the greenway.

Knowing where these links are can provide a valuable planning tool. Along these links are locations where services, 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 beneficial for future promotion of the Clarion River Greenway. Along these major links, signage and other promotion of the greenway should be a priority.

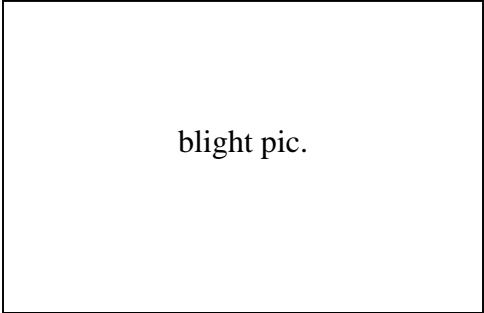
Throughout this Greenway Plan will be a series of recommendations. These recommendations were born out of the stakeholders' vision for the Clarion River Greenway. From this vision, recommendations have been developed that address the specific concerns raised by the stakeholders. These recommendations 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.

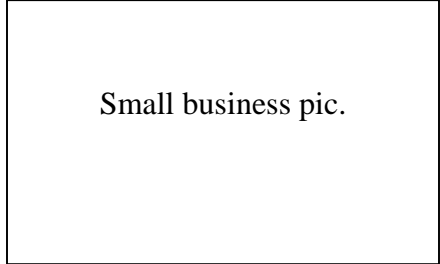
## *Clarion River Greenway Economic Overview*

As part of the greenway planning process, a survey of local businesses was conducted to develop a general understanding of the local economy and of the opinions local businesses have towards a Clarion River Greenway. This was an important early step in understanding a more comprehensive view of the Clarion River Greenway, beyond the natural resources and recreational opportunities of the greenway. A copy of the survey is included. The survey was 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, a list of businesses within five miles of the greenway was developed. The list developed was comprehensive, although there is always a possibility that some businesses were missed, especially those operated out of residences, and those that do not advertise or have a listing in the phone book. We also surveyed a small group of businesses in Ridgway and Clarion. While technically outside of the greenway, both of these boroughs have a major impact on the Clarion River Greenway.



After just a cursory review of the survey responses, several themes became evident. One is that businesses along the greenway are typically small in size. The largest business, by far, had 25 full time employees and a maximum of 67 part time employees. The second largest business had 35 fulltime employees and 40 part time employees. Sixteen of the 34 respondents to this question had zero full time employees. These businesses either employed only part time employees, or were small businesses who were run by their owners.



It was also evident that high paying jobs were not prevalent in and around the greenway. Eighteen of 31 respondents to a question about salary said they paid their employees between minimum wage and \$8 per hour, and the highest salaries, from those respondents, was between \$10 and \$15 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 overall the majority of businesses that responded to the survey offer employees salaries between the minimum wage and \$8 per hour.

Below is an overview of the responses that were received from various 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 respondents 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. Fall was also mentioned quite often in many of the answers. The busiest months for most of the businesses is from May to October. This response would seem to indicate that the Clarion River and surrounding lands have a positive impact on the local businesses because the months from May to October are also when public lands in the region experience their highest visitation numbers. Therefore, many of those visiting the local businesses are probably also enjoying activities along the Clarion River.

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

There was not one answer that dominated this question, but several items were mentioned numerous times. Eight respondents said equipment, such as canoes, bikes, and ATVs, were not readily available to their customers. Six stated that customers asked for 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 8 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?**

The majority of responses to this question indicated that most customers to area businesses are return customers. A deeper look 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 size of your business currently 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 vast majority, 23 responses, indicated that an increase in revenues and customers was needed for expansion to be feasible. Other requirements, that were listed less frequently, included more advertising (8), more space (4), and a greater 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 ultimately 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:

**Table 2: Clarion River Greenway Business Survey Statement Rankings**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<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 again 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.

**Table 3: Clarion River Greenway Business Survey Importance Rankings**

Rank	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 with much potential for growth. The responses to the survey demonstrate the opportunity for businesses in the region that serve both seasonal and non-seasonal needs of the local communities. As the popularity of the Clarion River Greenway continues to grow the growth potential of the region's economy will increase as well. 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 higher paying jobs in the region. As mentioned earlier, the highest paying jobs were in the \$10-\$15 per hour range, while the majority of jobs offered salaries close to minimum wage. Through the planning process, several stakeholders were concerned about the lack of higher paying jobs that keep younger generations in the area. The enticement of higher paying jobs should be aggressively pursued, perhaps through incentives, to diversify the local economy and increase options to those looking to stay in the general area.

The businesses that responded to the survey see the generally see the greenway as a benefit to 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 on their on business. Regarding what the greenway should focus on, the vast majority of businesses thought natural resource protection and improved recreational or business opportunities were of the utmost importance. Fewer, but still a majority of respondents, also 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 economy 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 reaching a robust, diversified economy in the future.

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

The Clarion River Greenway will follow the same route as the Wild and Scenic portion of the river, beginning 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 7).

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 been the recipient of several awards. 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 street in the residential portion of the borough, close to Main Street, or shopping the diverse array of stores along Ridgway's downtown. Ridgway provides a great location from which to begin daytrips along the Clarion Greenway that



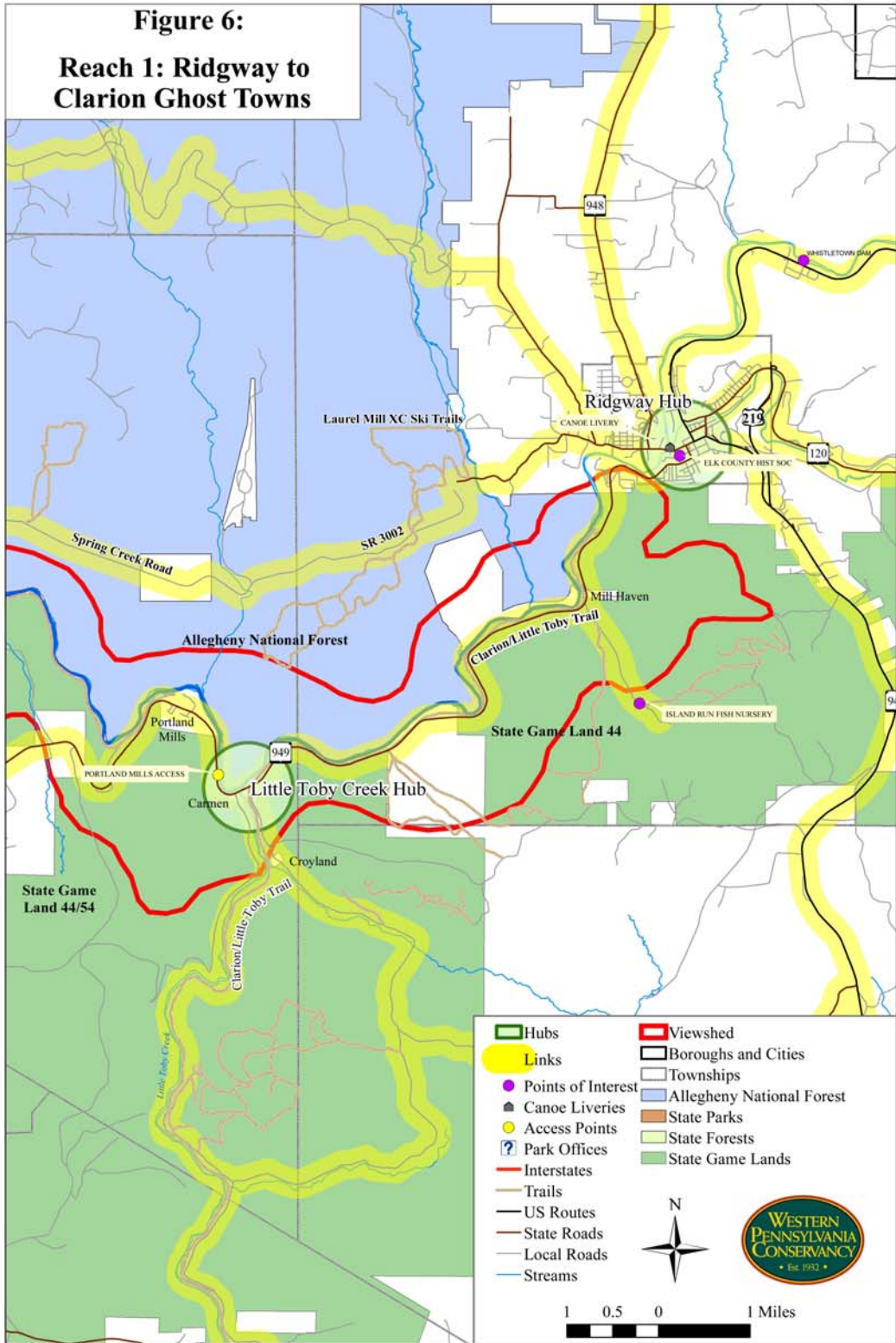
*Picturesque downtown Ridgway*

include floats down the river or bike trips or nature hikes along the riverbank. Ridgway is also 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 to its next location. Today, Ridgway boasts a bustling downtown that has been able to preserve many of its historic structures while welcoming growth and development that allows the area to thrive. Currently, Ridgway does have some abandoned industrial sites that should be viewed more as an opportunity than as blight. Proper remediation and redevelopment of these sites can protect the region's natural resources and promote economic growth.

**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**



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

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

could be utilized to provide the public with access to the river. There is also funding available for such a project 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 offered between Johnsonburg and Ridgway. An access point above Ridgway will provide access for those interested in fishing, and also those who would be interested in beginning their greenway tour with a float through historic Ridgway. Efforts should be explored to develop public access to the Clarion River both within the 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 river access is available 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 are devoid of development, as not even a railroad line is 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. The Clarion River is one of only two rivers lying entirely within Pennsylvania that has received this designation. Two other rivers that are partially contained within the state, the White Clay Creek and the Lower and Middle Delaware River, have also been designated through the Wild and Scenic program.

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, much to the disappointment of supporters, it was determined that the river did not meet the standards of the Wild and Scenic program. But 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 coalmines. 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 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 designation on October 19, 1996 (National Park Service, 2005).

The Wild and Scenic designation of the river 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 at all familiar with the river. One issue that has been brought up by several stakeholders throughout the greenway process is the limited signage along the river. This lack of signage can inhibit new visitors to the river who are not sure where they are on the river, and where they can and cannot take their canoes out of the water for a short break or for an overnight camp. Development of limited, but visible, signage addressing river miles and surrounding infrastructure would greatly improve the experience of many visitors and limit the amount of accidental trespassing on private lands.

**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.**

A major link entering and leaving this portion of the greenway is State Route 949. For several miles, SR 949 runs along the southern banks of the Clarion, until it turns to the south around 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 Ridgway, Portland Mills, and Heath Station, this link 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 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 that are located within the Clarion River viewshed contain several thousand acres of game lands. State Game Lands 44 is the largest within the Clarion Greenway, comprised of 24,529 acres, all in Elk County (Pennsylvania Game Commission, 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 riding during certain portions of the year. As can be seen on the map of reach one, the trails along within SGL 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 or driving along SR 949, visitors experience an area 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 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 extensive tanning industry in the region, which needed 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*

Just upstream of 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, it is barely noticeable that the town of Carmen ever existed.

Connecting Ridgway and the ghost towns is the Clarion/Little Toby Trail, another major destination for those visiting Clarion River



*Clarion/Little Toby Trail Sign in Carmen*

Greenway. The trail provides excellent hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing opportunities along the Clarion 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 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.

While some former logging towns, such as Carmen and Croyland, have virtually disappeared off the map, 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. Today, the area is only a minor hub that attracts 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,

**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.**

as there are no hotels and the surrounding State Game Lands do not allow camping. 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 Greenway.

The topic of ghost towns along the Clarion touches on the issues of population growth and economic development. These two issues were brought up by various stakeholders throughout the planning process. Of the 10 townships that are traversed by the Clarion Greenway, only five saw a population increase from 2000 to 2004. Also, nine of the 10 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. Development of 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 and 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 for those services visitors will need. These services include 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.

**Recommendation #6:**  
**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 chamber of commerces do include portions of the greenway. There is no business association focused solely on the greenway. The development of a business association could bring local business together to focus on issues specific to their needs within the greenway.

**Recommendation #7:**  
**Explore the creation of a Clarion River Greenway Business Association as a way to organize businesses to address needs specific to the area.**

One aspect of the Clarion River Greenway that could be promoted to the benefit of local businesses is the winter recreational opportunities in the region. Cross-country skiing, snoeshoeing, and snowmobile riding are already popular uses within the greenway, but with additional promotion, the area could become a haven for winter sports enthusiasts. Nearly all local businesses surveyed said their busiest times were late spring to early fall.

**Recommendation #8:**  
**Increase promotion of winter recreational opportunities along the Clarion River Greenway to expand local economic opportunities throughout the year.**

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.

A key component of promotion of the greenway should be unique signage that educates visitors about the greenway, while not taking away from the aesthetic enjoyment 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 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 Greenway should also work closely with other efforts to promote the area. The PA Wilds program and the Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region are two efforts that will bring attention to the region. Both of these efforts are ramping up towards a comprehensive 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 a cost savings to both local interests and the larger efforts.

**Recommendation #9:  
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.**

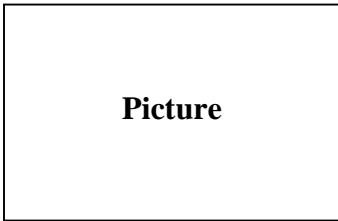
One project suggested during the planning process that could benefit from a close, working relationship between stakeholders along the Clarion River Greenway and the PA Lumber Heritage Region, is the development of a historical center somewhere along the greenway. The center would be a central repository 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 #10:  
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 around 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, starting just downstream of Ridgway and ending a few miles downstream from Millstone. For the purpose of this greenway plan, Irwintown, within the Allegheny National Forest, was selected as the point where this reach will end. Irwintown was chosen because the Allegheny National Forest lands around this area are a hub of the forest's recreational activities.

Through this second reach of the Clarion River Greenway there is not much of a change in scenery from the initial reach. In fact, the majority of the Clarion Greenway is dominated by legendary Pennsylvania forestland. The forests in the greenway can generally be divided between hemlock northern hardwood forests, consisting of sugar maple, yellow birch, red maple, American beech, and eastern hemlock trees in the upper portion of the greenway, and Appalachian oak forest in the lower portion of the greenway. There are occasional stands of white pine, along with Allegheny hardwood forests, which are basically the same as northern hardwoods forests, with the addition of black cherry.

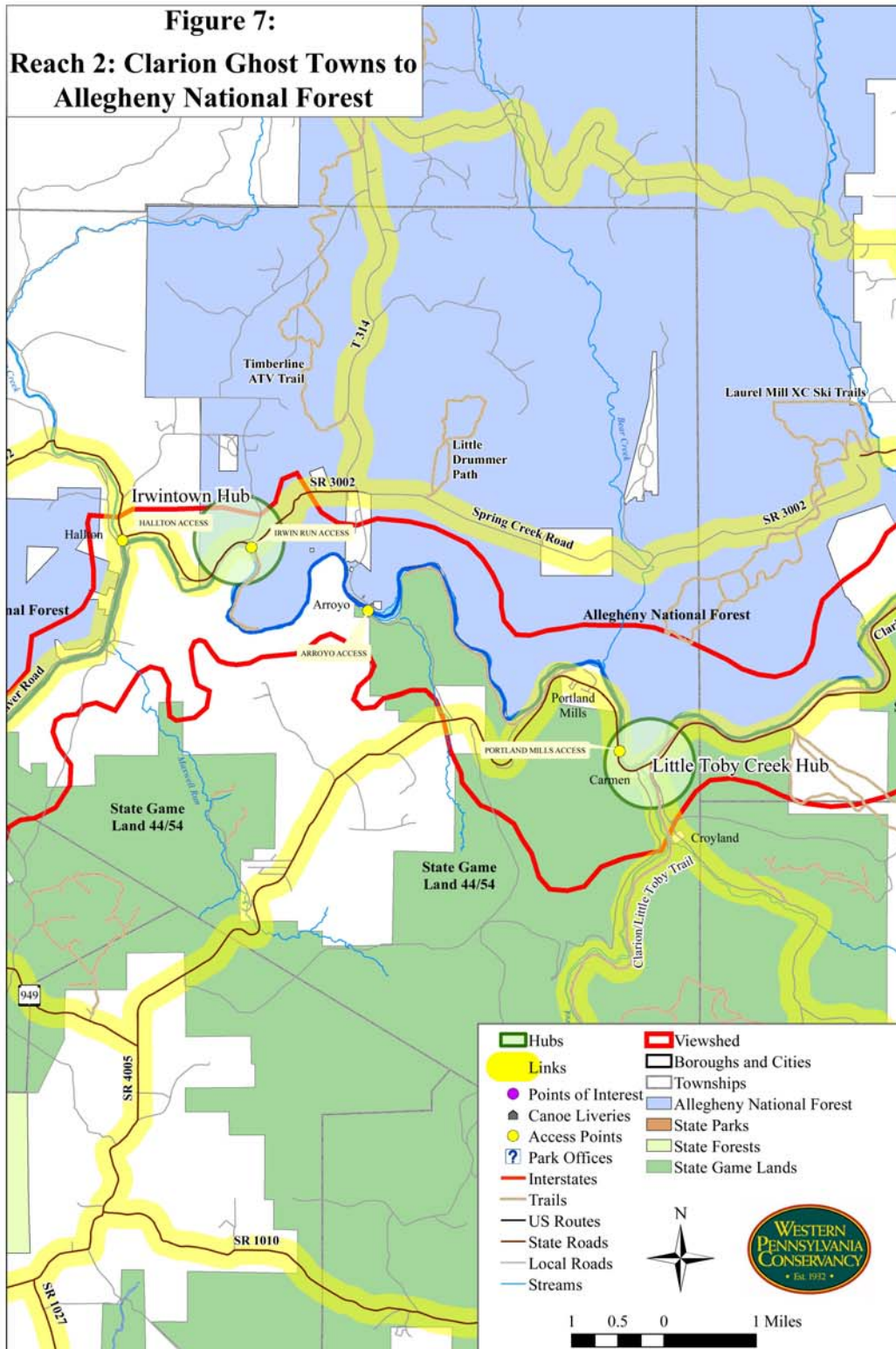


The secluded nature of the Clarion River Greenway has protected a significant amount of natural habitat. However, as the number of visitors increase, pressure on the greenway's most critical natural areas will rise as well. Visitors will continue to seek out more secluded areas in an attempt to avoid growing throngs of visitors. While the ability of visitors to seek the more the natural areas should be protected, 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 that are most suitable for more intensive uses.

**Recommendation #11:**  
**Guide intensive recreational use activities towards areas that are most suitable to sustain them and ensure the most critical natural areas are protected.**

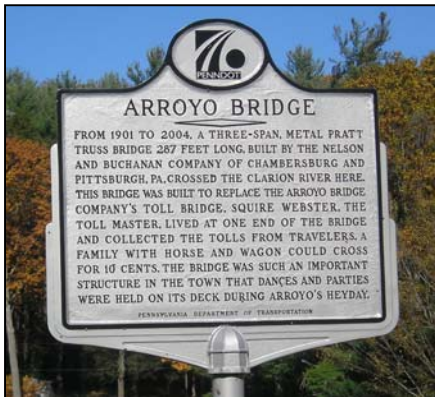
This particular reach of the greenway demonstrates the abundance of protected public lands along the Clarion, as almost the entire length of the river through this reach is bordered on both sides by public lands. To the north lies the Allegheny National Forest, and to the south lies State Game Lands 44. The abundance of public lands has limited development through this reach, and a couple of river miles past Portland Mills, State Route 949 turns away from the river, 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 limited floodplain.

Several miles downstream from Portland Mills, visitors encounter the small former lumber town of Arroyo, and pass underneath 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 former lumber towns along the greenway share a similar life history of a dramatic rise and fall that followed the lucrative timber industry, it should not be assumed that their stories are all the same. Each of these towns has its own story that includes 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 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 bridge was purchased by the county. 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, it is difficult to imagine that these lively events of the past occurred 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, built in 1901, was removed. The bridge was the last remaining turn-of-the-century thru-truss bridge on the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River. The bridge was replaced by a more modern bridge that today crosses the Clarion River at Arroyo. As time passes, more cultural and historic features along the Clarion will continue to deteriorate and at times require replacement. With each artifact that is removed, a piece of the Clarion's rich history is lost. The cultural and historical features of the region are critical to the region's future; therefore,

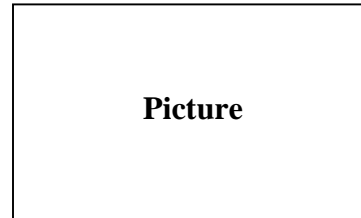
protection and preservation of these symbols should be undertaken whenever possible. A first step would be to develop a comprehensive inventory of all the cultural and historic sites along the Clarion. This first step will allow all stakeholders in the region to be aware of what structures currently exist along the Clarion River. The inventory can be used to educate both residents and visitors about the greenway's history, and also to alert people to historic structures when development is imminent.

**Recommendation #12:  
Conduct and record an  
inventory of the historic and  
cultural sites along the  
Clarion Greenway to  
preserve and protect the  
resources when feasible.**

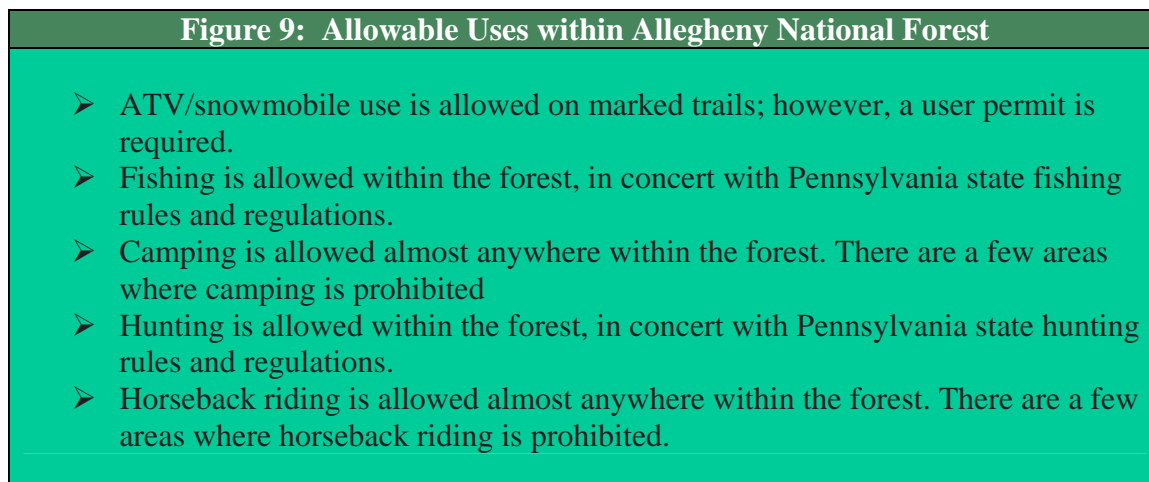
Apart from Arroyo, most of the remaining lands along the south bank of the river from Little Toby Creek to Irwintown continue to lie within State Game Lands 44. Just a few

miles after passing Arroyo, north of the river, lies Irwintown, situated where Irwin Run empties into the Clarion River. 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 access to the river is maintained by Allegheny National Forest staff.

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). Today, the forest is often called “a land of many uses,” as fishing, hunting, hiking, camping, biking, ATV/snowmobile use, horseback riding, skiing, and boating and canoeing/kayaking are all allowable uses within the national forest boundaries, with certain restrictions (see Figure 8). 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.



Tourists from around the country are drawn to the forest every year to camp, fish, hike, hunt, canoe, kayak, and observe wildlife. 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 that includes 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, ANF website).



The popularity of Allegheny National Forest requires a major link into the Clarion Greenway at this point for access. That major link is PA Route 3002, which enters at Irwintown. Route 3002 provides access to the national forest 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).

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 grouse (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 day trip destination, although it is out of the way for most.

The trail runs through scenic natural areas, including mature coniferous forests and wetlands along Cole Run, a Clarion tributary. The trail traverses an area of the Allegheny National Forest that is only bisected by an access road built by the Pennsylvania Game Commission in the 1950's, so hikers can experience a distinct sense of solitude. The trail is partially located on the southern most 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 area of Irwintown. 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.

Throughout the national forest, there are also opportunities for expanding the trail network. New trails will provide additional incentives for past visitors to return, and the increase in trail opportunities will add to the draw for new visitors. One possible new hiking trail would run from Arroyo to Irwintown. The trail would utilize the abandoned Clarion River Railroad grade, and therefore, will not have a large negative impact on the natural resources of the area. A group of local volunteers has previously completed clearing and brushing approximately two-thirds of the distance from Arroyo toward 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 #13:**  
Allegheny National Forest staff should explore the viability of a new hiking trail connecting Arroyo to Irwintown.

Throughout the planning process, a significant amount of comments were made relating to trail development. Specific comments addressed the need for more trails that connect to the Clarion River itself. Beyond the Clarion/Little Toby Creek Trail and the trails associated with the greenway's state parks, there is a large percentage of the river that is not accessible by trail. Comments were also received regarding the lack of paved biking trails that could be utilized by family's looking to spend a leisurely day along the greenway. While the majority of comments supported and requested the addition of new trails, there were also some comments requesting that no new trail development be

**Recommendation #14:**

**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.**

approved. Due to these conflicting viewpoints, it is important that any efforts to expand the greenway's trail network be done in a very open, and public process, and attempts be made to avoid those specific areas, where individuals would not like to see additional trails.

The diverse recreational opportunities seen within the Allegheny National Forest and throughout the greenway, from historical to cultural to natural escapes, provide visitors to the area 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 choices of activities.

In addition to the array of recreational activities occurring within the national forest, resource extraction remains a significant activity. Oil and gas drilling are common in many segments of the forest. According to the U.S. Forest Service, approximately 94% of the mineral rights within the forest are owned by private interests. Currently, there are approximately 7,000 producing oil and gas wells within the forest's boundaries (U.S. Forest Service, ANF website).

Lumber operations are also common within the forest, as over 90% of the forest is open to timbering. According to the U.S. Forest Service, from 1987 through 2004, gross receipts from Allegheny operations totaled just over \$304 million. Roughly 99% 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 is 7,407 acres. This amount of land represents between 1% and 2% of the total Allegheny acreage (U.S. Forest Service, 2005).

These operations within the forest demonstrate that while timber industry activity along the Clarion 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 lands, and also most public lands. The practice is allowed within the national forest, Clear Creek State Forest, and the state game lands. Fortunately, modern timber practices are vastly 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 Greenway, and hamper efforts to bring new tourists to the area.

At least some of the concern appears to come from a lack of information about timber practices and timber controls in the region. One concern was about the apparent lack of

erosion and sedimentation controls close to the river. 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 an individual erosion and sedimentation plan that is strictly enforced and subject to review under guidelines developed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (Chubon, 2005).

Another concern voiced was that clearcutting of timber was allowed in visible areas, and that this practice could impact tourists coming to the area. According to Pennsylvania law, clearcutting—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. This oversight will ensure proper steps are taken by timber interests to protect the greenway’s natural resources.

**Recommendation #15:**  
Greenway stakeholders should work closely with timber interests to ensure sustainable forestry practices are followed throughout the greenway.

Throughout the planning process, the issue of more education within the greenway was also 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, 2005). To ensure relevant information about management techniques is reaching the public, and to promote healthy dialogue within the greenway, guided tours should be expanded on 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.

**Recommendation #16:**  
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.

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 this is rarely understood by the general public. Efforts must be amplified on this front. More education

signage should be developed at public land boundaries, explaining what agency manages the land, and outlining the agency's goals. Other media, such as information 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 #17:  
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.**

As outlined above, the Allegheny National Forest remains a “land of many uses.” This continues to be a point of contention for some who wish to see the forest managed more towards conservation. Others want an even greater 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 10). This reach is the longest of the greenway, spanning just over 15 river miles.

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 throughout this reach. 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 Greenway's natural beauty. Promotion of this picturesque road was brought up through the planning process, and has also been discussed by the Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region. Most of the roadway lacks even the simplest of road signs informing drivers that they are on River Road. In addition to installing more street signs along the roadway, the possibility of nominating River Road to be a Scenic Byway should also be pursued. Today, the only two National Scenic Byways in Pennsylvania are 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. Scenic byways are



*Scenic River Road on an autumn afternoon*

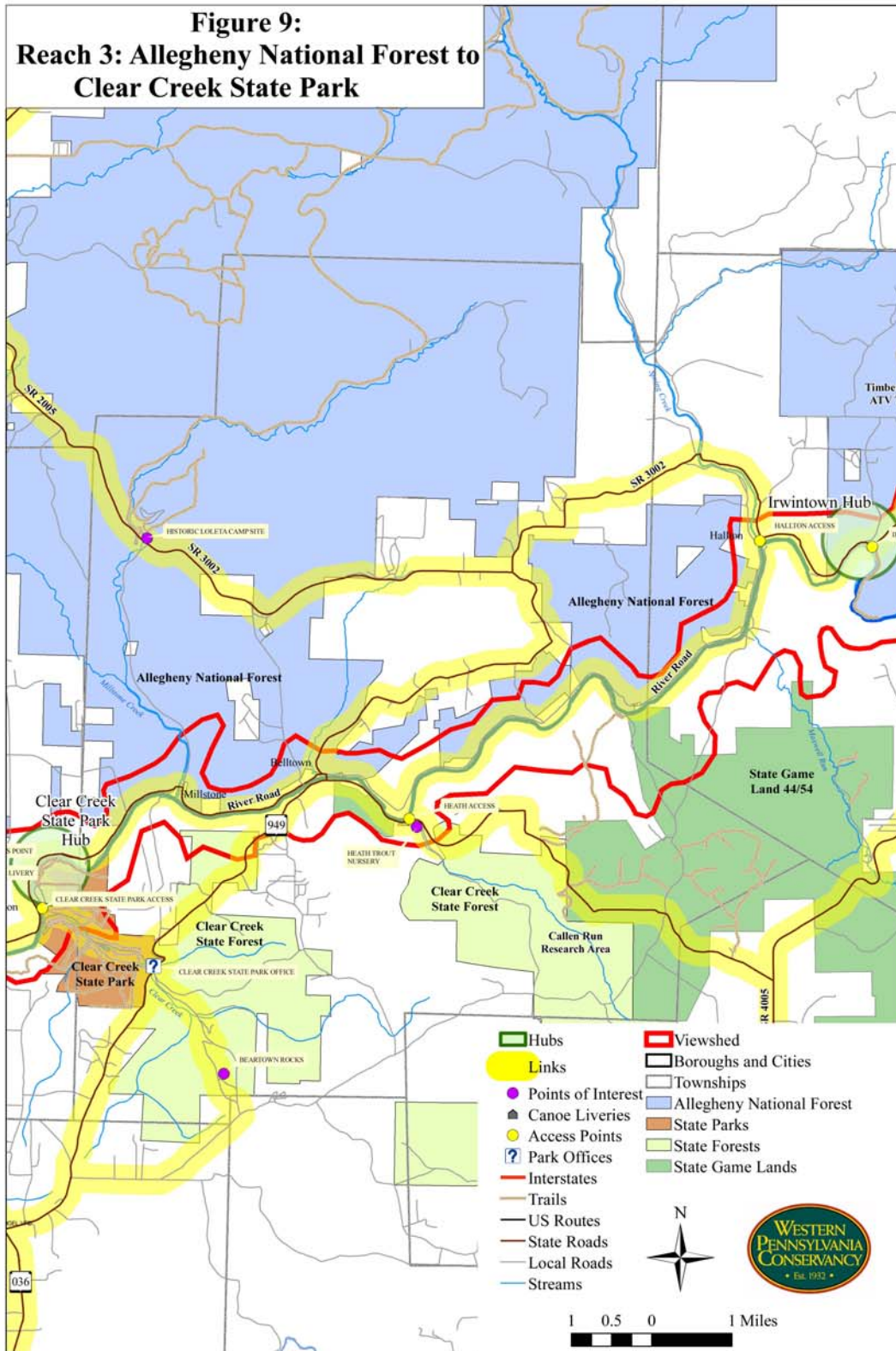
administered under the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. If chosen as a scenic byway, River Road would be eligible for funds through the National Scenic Byways Discretionary Grants program to support and enhance the byway. There are only 126 byways in 39 states, and achieving the byway status is no small undertaking, but River Road's unique characteristics make it suitable for the designation, and becoming a byway would greatly enhance River Road and the Clarion River Greenway.

Similar to the first two reaches, Reach #3 has extensive lands within 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 10). 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

**Recommendation #18:**  
**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.**

**Figure 9:  
Reach 3: Allegheny National Forest to  
Clear Creek State Park**



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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 regulation 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% 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 about the potential for increased visitorship within the greenway, and the impact it will have on their lands.

Visitors flock to the Clarion 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

**Recommendation #19:**  
**Support current, successful efforts to educate visitors to respect private property. Promote “leave no trash behind” programs and explore promotion of additional similar efforts.**

will elicit return trips. It is critical that Clarion 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, there already endeavors to educate visitors

regarding respecting property rights and leaving no trash behind. At the Pale Whale Canoe Livery in Cooksburg, all renters are given a bag to bring back their own 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.

To further curb illegal activity along the river, efforts should be made to reduce the amount of trespassing onto to private property that is currently occurring. A first step would be to increase cooperation between agency staff and local law enforcement, while most trespassing within the greenway is accidental, law enforcement presence could greatly reduce more intentional trespassing.

**Recommendation #20:**  
**Increase cooperation between agency staff and local law enforcement and form a community watch group to curb trespassing problems.**

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.

Additional projects should be undertaken to ensure that trash is removed from the greenway and that a trip along the Clarion remains an aesthetically pleasing experience. Recurring 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, once before season and once after season, to maximize effectiveness. Local high-school students are the majority of volunteers during

**Recommendation #21:**  
**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.**

the cleanup, and they 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. In addition to local high-school students, other groups such as local fishing clubs and the

scouts could also participate. Beyond the primary benefit of cleaning the river, efforts such as this will promote the greenway as a recreational opportunity to those who are not familiar with the river, and foster a connection to the river in those that participate.

Associated with basic littering and disregard for the Clarion Greenway is the more specific concern of illegal dumping. The impacts of illegal dumps on the scenic value of the greenway is obvious, but these dumps can also severely degrade habitat in the area, and cause severe water-quality degradation, depending on what substances are discarded.

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 with 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 they see. 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 chapters of PA CleanWays, the organization is regional in nature, so other chapters cover both counties. 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.

**Recommendation #22:**  
**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.**

Beyond pollution concerns, visitors who see illegal dumps along the river may be less likely to return to the greenway in the future. Each county and municipality along the greenway should make a concerted effort to reduce or eliminate the illegal dumping problem in the region. This could be done by using increased staffing, utilizing volunteers, creating feasible dumping alternatives, and increasing public education regarding the problem of illegal dumping. These local governments 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 stays 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 hard for visitors to realize all the various opportunities that are available throughout the region. The environmental, historical, and cultural opportunities are scattered through the greenway, and many are easy to miss if you are 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 trip.

**Recommendation #23:**  
**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. However, despite Reach #3 being more populated than the first two, only very 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 the largest of the nearly 75 tributaries that empty into the Clarion 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. The tributary is one of three popular waterways through this reach. Hallton also includes a canoe and kayak access point that is on State Game Lands 28 and is 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 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 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 there is a canoe and kayak access that is very accessible because of the road.

North of Millstone, about four miles from the river, lies Loleta, a popular destination for the region's visitors. The site offers visitors 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. 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 for shipping products out of the area. However, the area's timber was exhausted in 1913, and the industry moved to its next location, 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, which provide great access to the site (U.S. Forest Service, 2005).

As mentioned previously, the rich history, along with some of the environmental, cultural, and recreational resources along the greenway, can be difficult to find. Specifically related to the region's history, much could be lost as the years pass if we do

**Recommendation #24:**  
Develop informational tours, focusing on different aspects of the Clarion River Greenway, to educate the greenway's visitors.

not make significant efforts to pass this history from one generation to the next. One opportunity to inform visitors about the various resources available throughout the greenway is through guided tours focusing on a specific aspect of the greenway. Historical aspects, natural resources,

cultural locations, could also be focused on through these tours, which will provide another valuable tool for educating the 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. The trip down the Millstone is an enjoyable one as it flows almost entirely through national forest lands. However, due to fluctuating water levels, the entire creek is only passable certain times of the year. Some whitewater will be found when water levels are high enough for



*Loleta Sawmill (courtesy PA Lumber Heritage Region)*

a trip down Millstone Creek, so overall the journey has a moderate level of difficulty.

Across the 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 a variety of curelean 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, IBAs are, “priority areas for the conservation of globally threatened, range restricted and congregatory birds (Birdlife International, 2005).” 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 available from the Forest District office. All of the cabins on the state forest are leased and 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 with one transaction from the Frazier family, and the park was dedicated in 1934. As mentioned earlier, PA Route 949, which returned to the riverbank at Heath, turns south again near this point, and actually forms a portion of the eastern boundary of the park, providing access from Ridgway and points east. Despite often 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. The park is often utilized by those looking to spend a few days along the river, or as an overnight stop by those canoeing or kayaking down the Clarion River.



*A cabin at Clear Creek State Park*

The state park is named after Clear Creek, which flows through both the park and Clear Creek State Forest (Clear Creek State Park Management Manual, 1995). This creek is a popular destination as it provides ample opportunities for fishing, canoeing, and kayaking. Also, 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. The idea of a possible hiking trail between the two parks has also been discussed. Expansion of the two parks has resulted in a very short distance between boundaries.

**Recommendation #25:**  
**Ensure that all stakeholders are involved in any future steps taken to explore a trail between Cook Forest State Park and Clear Creek State Park.**

Throughout the planning process this issue was brought up several times. Arguments both for and against this trail were raised. Those who support the trail see it as a logical step in the evolution of the parks. Those against the trail fear the impacts it could have nearby private property and the currently undeveloped land the trail would pass through.

Whatever steps are taken regarding this trail must be done cautiously, ensuring all stakeholders are involved in the process.

A unique aspect about Clear Creek State Park, is that it is the only site along the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River that offers established campsites on the banks of the river. The park offers visitors 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, however, there are no established sites.

Throughout the 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 search out sites and develop a campsite on lands they believe are public lands, however, at times the camper has mistakenly set up on private lands. While the preference for some to camp off the beaten trail indicates the need to continue to allow camping along the river within Allegheny National Forest, the establishment of additional campsites along the river could prevent some conflicts with private property owners. All public land managers that allow camping should explore the feasibility of additional primitive campsites along the river. These sites give visitors a unique opportunity to thoroughly enjoy the beauty of the Clarion River and the Clarion River experience to its highest degree.

**Recommendation #26:**  
**Land managers along the greenway that allow camping should explore the feasibility of additional primitive, riverfront campsites.**

There is also much confusion among visitors and residents regarding on what lands camping is permitted. Four different categories of public lands can be found along the greenway, each category of land has a different set of guiding policies regulating camping. A more thorough overview of these various camping regulations can be found in Appendix E. 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, furtaking, 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, has the ability to swap lands with other public land

managers. This is a tool that PGC does explore along the river, and has used in other parts of the state. Opportunities to complete such swaps should continue to be explored, and executed when possible to ensure adequate camping sites are available throughout the Clarion River Greenway.

Overall, this third reach of the Clarion River Greenway travels through 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*

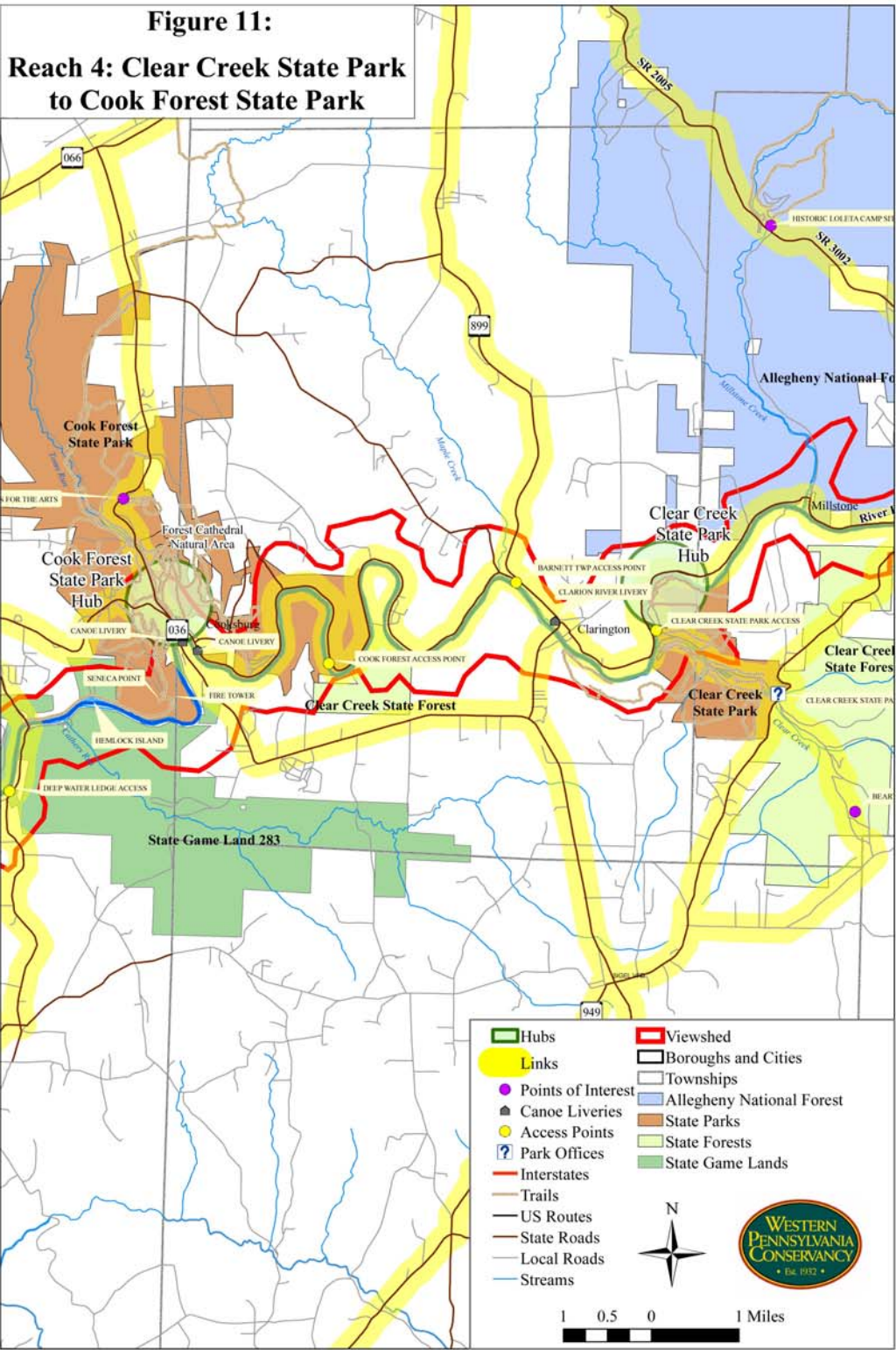
The fourth reach of the Clarion River Greenway begins at Clear Creek State Park and covers about 10 river miles to Cook Forest State Park (See Figure 11). Through this reach, the Clarion River takes a less direct path as it snakes through the greenway. As the crow flies, the distance between the heart of Clear Creek State Park at Clarrington and the heart of Cook Forest State Park at Cooksburg, is a little 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.

The location of this reach of the Clarion 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 and the ability to get away from more developed areas is one of the major reasons people flock to the Clarion River. This is an area where the rush of everyday life can be forgotten by escaping to a natural area devoid of the accoutrements of the modern world. However, as do most enjoyments in life, this seclusion also comes with a downside. The remoteness of the area can become a hindrance in an emergency situation, as it prohibits the use of cell phones. While this is typically seen as a benefit, as it allows one to further enjoy the Clarion River's natural setting, this feeling quickly changes during an emergency.

Stakeholders in the area are concerned that in an emergency, they are unable to contact emergency services to request help. A quick solution to this problem would appear to be to build a cell phone tower in the area. However, very few see the construction of a several-hundred-foot metal tower in a secluded natural area as a welcomed addition. One option that should 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 a flagpole. Co-locating cell phone towers is when a small tower is attached to an already existing structure, 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. Any attempts to address this issue must be done in a very cautious manner that strives to increase the safety of both the residents and visitors to the greenway, while protecting the natural aspects of the greenway.

**Recommendation #27:**  
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 the majority of 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 within a greenway known for such activities. The two state parks are accessible by three major roadway links that pass through the reach. As mentioned previously, State Route 949 forms a portion of the eastern boundary of Clear Creek State Park, while State Route 899 travels north to south between the two parks and State Route 36 passes through Cook Forest State Park. Within a greenway that is often untouched by asphalt, the accessibility



of these sites has greatly aided in them becoming some of the most popular destinations within the greenway.

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, there is an additional access between the parks, provided by Barnett Township. This access is located along State Route 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. Through this reach, the organization owns a parcel on the north side of the river, across from Clear Creek State Park, a parcel that straddles the river between Clear Creek State Park and Cook Forest State Park, and a parcel along the western boundary of Cook Forest State Park.

WPC is dedicated to allowing the public to utilize these lands for various activities. While WPC has transferred the majority of their conservation lands to the commonwealth of Pennsylvania for permanent protection, the organization still owns approximately 1,900 acres along the river within all four counties that the greenway traverses. WPC also owns conservation easements on over 500 acres of land—these are private lands where uses are restricted to ensure conservation of the land—and the subsurface rights (drilling and mining rights) to over 900 acres.

<b>Table 4: WPC Protected Lands</b>	
<b>Type of Preservation</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Fee Simple	1,874.28
Conservation Easement	505.14
Subsurface ownership	952.60

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

Several thousand acres of land that was protected by WPC has been conveyed to the state. These lands include over 6,000 acres to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, nearly 1,300 acres to the Bureau of State Parks, 124 acres to the Bureau of Forestry, and four acres to the Fish and Boat Commission. Through the years, 68 acres have also been conveyed 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.

Table 5: WPC Conveyed Lands	
Receiving Entity	Acres
PA Game Commission	6,091.30
PA Bureau of State Parks	1,273.13
PA Bureau of Forestry	124.00
PA Fish and Boat Commission	4.18
Allegheny National Forest	68.30

The major hub within this reach of the Clarion River Greenway 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. The park welcomes upwards of 150,000 visitors during peak summer months. During the off-season winter months visitorship at the park drops to about 5,000 visitors per month. During these months, many visitors are attracted to the winter activities available along 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 offers nearly 30 miles of hiking trails, including a portion of the 141-mile Baker Trail. The trail 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 commonwealth. 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 area is the aptly named Forest Cathedral area of the park. The area contains towering white pines and hemlock and provides visitors with striking scenery of a forest similar to those 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 Cathedral exceed three feet in diameter and approach 200 feet tall (Pennsylvania Department of Conservation of Natural Resources, 2001). The Forest Cathedral totals over 500 acres and is located in the eastern portion of the park.

The park itself is nearly divided in half by Tom’s Run, a tributary to the Clarion River, which lies entirely within the state park. Approximately 2.5 miles of Tom's Run is stocked with trout, so it is a popular spot for anglers. The popularity and accessibility of Tom’s Run makes it another important tributary of the Clarion River.

Just east of Tom’s Run is Henry Run, a small Clarion tributary with headwaters that sit just outside the Forest Cathedral area of the park. The tributary traverses both public and private lands. Previously, the land around Henry Run was a source of natural gas, and several abandoned gas wells were left behind once the resource was exhausted. One

**Recommendation #28:  
Approach the plugging of flowing gas wells cautiously to assure hydrologic conditions associated with the abandoned wells are well understood before wells are plugged.**

abandoned gas well became an artesian discharge, which released polluted mine drainage into Henry Run. The immediate solution would appear to be plugging the abandoned gas well to eliminate the polluted discharges to Henry Run. However, a recent examination of this practice has 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 very 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 the AMD is contained where it can be treated most successfully. Hydrologic conditions should always be thoroughly investigated before plugging is commenced.

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 cause potential visitors to seek other areas to recreate. 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 #29:  
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 that is 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 a critical issue as the river continues a journey towards complete recovery. Today, management of public lands in the greenway is disconnected in some respects, although the majority of land managers within the greenway have similar management goals. Many of the land managers are also facing similar management concerns, such as non-native species out-competing native species and illegal dumping.

Coordination between the various public managers and private landowners could prove very beneficial to all involved and is highly recommended.

Regarding issues such as non-native species along the greenway, 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 especially a concern in the greenway as the plant is very invasive, and can quickly overrun miles of streambank if left unchecked. If one landowner develops an effective

plan and is able to eliminate non-native species on their property, their effort could prove fruitless if the same species continues to thrive on an adjacent property, and eventually moves back into the property 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 of 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 also allow for the sharing of information regarding practices that have been successful in 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. As many of the land managers and landowners are already spread thin by their many different activities, this effort should not be time intensive. The best approach most likely would be a working group of Clarion River Greenway land managers and private landowners. This committee could meet quarterly, but also develop a network that would allow the managers and owners to stay in communication through the phone and email.

It is important to note that any such advisory committee would be completely non-regulatory. No individual landowner or land manager has 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 allow the various landowners to have a higher level of communication.

**Recommendation #30:**  
**Form a Clarion River Greenway Land Managers Committee to ensure 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 and visitation in the Clarion Greenway increases, coordination among the various land managers will prove to be 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, which is the western border of the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River (See Figure 12). This end point lies about 6.5 miles upstream from Clarion Borough.

Although it is located outside of 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 thriving borough of 6,000 residents that is also home to Clarion University. Situated along the river, the borough is a launching point for various river-related activities. The river is very accessible in Clarion from the boat dock provided by the borough. The wide, slow moving backwaters of the Piney Dam along the Borough of Clarion allows visitors to enjoy an experience different than that typically enjoyed along the faster, free flowing portion of the Clarion 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 and can be

**Recommendation #31:**  
**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.**

used to educate people about the region and instill a desire within them to return. Another event that showcases the region is the annual Clarion River Sojourn, which is hosted by 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

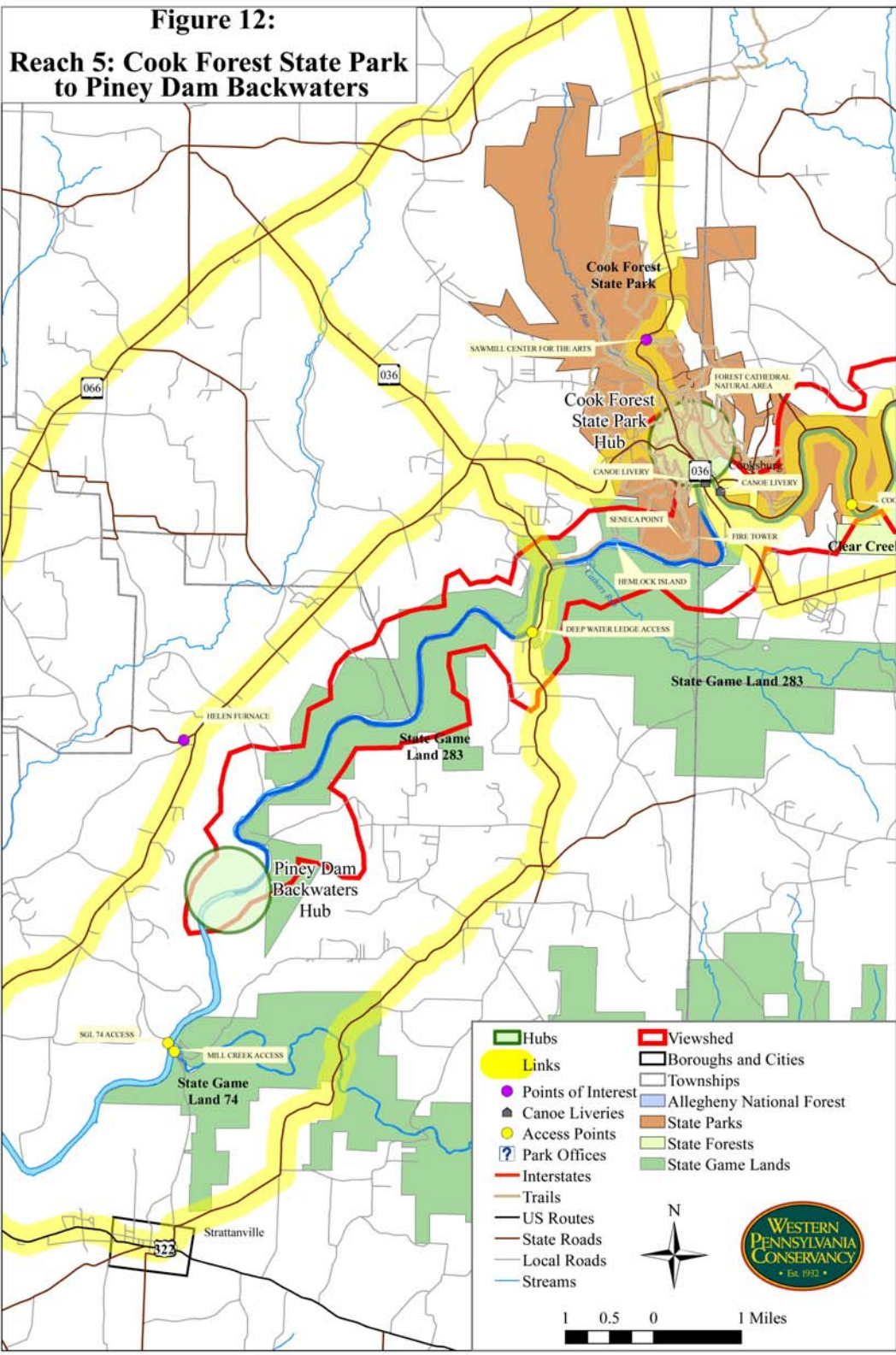
many to the wonders of the river. The festival could coincide with the annual sojourn and include events all along the river—in Ridgway, in Cooksburg, and in Clarion for example—and could truly showcase the area. Such an event should also be used to educate visitors about all aspects of the Clarion River and the greenway.

From the western boundary of Cook Forest State Park to the end of the Wild and Scenic portion of the Clarion River, the river is almost completely surrounded by State Game Lands 283. Only a few acres of private lands are interspersed with 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 seclusion of the



Clarion River Greenway can be a detriment, as well as a benefit. Within Reach #4 recommendations regarding contacting emergency officials were made, however, the next step is for the emergency officials to be able to reach those in need. The seclusion of the Clarion River Greenway makes some areas of the river particularly difficult to reach. Long stretches of the river go for miles without roadways along the banks. As depicted in Figure 14, significant stretches of the river do not have a roadway within a quarter mile of riverbank. These isolated stretches are particularly abundant through Reach #5, with another significant stretch within Reach #2.

This situation could cause an emergency to become worse, as emergency officials will have a difficult time reaching those in need if they are within these stretches of the river. Of course, emergency officials plan for this type of event, and are trained to assist in water rescue, but rescue in these situations could be hampered due to the lack of vehicular access to the river. Once again, the struggle is to balance the secluded nature of the Clarion River that many come to enjoy, and the safety of those same visitors.

**Recommendation 32:**  
**Develop a system of coordination between emergency management officials to ensure the best approaches to handling emergencies occurring along the river are utilized.**

Within SGL 283 there is a canoe/kayak access and several hiking trails. Through this reach of the river travels a portion of the North Country Trail, a very popular destination within the greenway used by hikers who could travel from New York through North Dakota on the trail. The trail is very well known among hikers and attracts people from around the country. Within State Game Lands 283 a nearly continuous 475-mile segment

**Recommendation #33:**  
**Complete the portion of the North Country Trail that passes through the Clarion Greenway. Completion will increase visitorship to the trail and the entire greenway region.**

of the trail that stretches from New York, comes to an end. To reach the next segment, hikers must abandoned trails for roads. A short distance from where this segment of the trail ends, hikers can pick up an unofficial segment of the trail along an abandoned railway, which is maintained by the Allegheny Valley Trails Association. Efforts are

underway to develop connections to the western portion of the trail that travels through Ohio, and eventually extends through North Dakota (North Country Trail Association, 2005). Other portions of the North Country Trail also pass through the Clarion Greenway. Through Cook Forest and Clear Creek state parks and the Allegheny National Forest, the trail collocates with the trail systems in the respective parks. Construction of the needed connections would entice even more hikers to visit this portion of the trail. Today, the incompleteness of the trail and the requirement to walk along roadways to travel some segments is a major deterrent to many hikers. Finishing this trail will increase visitorship to the trail and greenway.

Unique destinations await area 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, and only



a couple of miles off of Pennsylvania Route 36; but the focus of the organization is the second location, which is actually within Cook Forest State Park. The 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 traditional arts and crafts and historical collections that are on display, and various classes that are available 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 through the summer.

The center has become a popular destination and today is a 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. When this happens, not only is a historic structure torn down, a part of the cultural history of the area is also lost. 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 that promote economic growth while protecting the region's cultural identity.

**Recommendation #34:**  
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 away from Cook Forest State Park. Just off of State Route 1005 is the restored Historic Helen Furnace. The iron furnace is one of several that operated in the region



*Helen Historic Furnace*

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" Furnace. The name continued to change and today most refer to the structure as Helen Furnace. It is located in northeastern Clarion County, north of Clarion Borough. Readily accessible amounts of iron ore and timber in the lower portion of the Clarion River Greenway led to the construction of iron furnaces throughout region. During the 1800s, at least 30 iron furnaces operated within Clarion County 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 anywhere from 25 to 100 men. Unlike the timber industry—which was greatly scaled back, but still remains in the region—today there are only remnants 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 sites recognized as National Historic Landmarks along the greenway.

Considering the rich history of the region, several sites along the Clarion would be a perfect fit for a historical designation. During its peak industrial period, the resources from the Clarion 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 will serve to educate visitors and residents about the region’s dynamic history.

**Recommendation #35:**  
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.

Another resource along the Clarion River Greenway that could use additional promotion and clarification is the recreational opportunities available to visitors. With several different public agencies managing land along the greenway, all with different goals and objectives, determining what uses are

**Recommendation #36:**  
Develop a Clarion River Greenway Recreation Guide to educate visitors about the various recreational opportunities offered within the greenway and the surrounding area.

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 what activities that

wanted to partake in along the greenway, it would likely also reduce the amount of illegal uses that occur 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 between the various land managers is only the first piece of puzzle, the second half of the puzzle 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, along with the 10 municipalities that are traversed by the greenway, should explore the creation 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 an ordinance that is in the best interest of the river, the greenway, and the various landowners.

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 that could be created for the Clarion River Greenway, is that most previous ordinances were not multi-jurisdictional. This could

**Recommendation #37:  
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.**

make the development of a conservation ordinance along the Clarion River Greenway more complex; however, in the long run the ordinance would be extremely 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 that is a broad set of goals and objectives. From the master ordinance, each individual

municipality would then be able to create a specific ordinance to address their particular needs, challenges, and opportunities.

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 nature that exists 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 fishermen out to experience one of Pennsylvania's great rivers.

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

**Preface**

This follow 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. The meeting was facilitated by Elizabeth Watson, of Watson Heritage Strategies. This report was also compiled by Ms. Watson. 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 C.

**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 C.

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 rivers' 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 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, such that some 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 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 land owners 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 land owners.

## 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, and without addressing it, any proposal for a greenway on the Clarion River is probably

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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; his original email text appears as Appendix XX and has developed into the following discussion. None of these issues was raised (at least in a way that got any comments recorded) during the public meetings.

doomed to failure. (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;
- 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.

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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.

A grave concern among participants is a clear and present need for emergency services and communication. One land owner, 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 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 carve it out as 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.

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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.

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; 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 (American Indians) 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 WPC's Watershed Assistance Center), 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 need to 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 probably 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, never really seeing the light of day. With the completion of this plan, and information gathered in previous plans, stakeholders along the Clarion River have all the information they need to ensure the river reaches its full potential. Other plans that have been 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 cooperation with the Clarion River Greenway Plan provide all the background data and future direction needed for the long-term protection of the Clarion River and its surrounding resources.

### Phase I: Organizational development

The first step needed in implementing the Clarion River Greenway is an organization to take ownership over the plan 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 river itself (over 100 miles) is possibly one deterrent to a local watershed group. However, to be successful, management of the river must be done in a holistic manner that does not focus solely on one geographic segment.

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. The formation of the organization is needed to apply for grants and other funding to implement projects within the greenway.

The proposed Clarion River Watershed Association, which would need non-profit, 501(c)3 status from the Internal Revenue Service, could utilize all past planning documents, and private and public funding to implement recommendations and development 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: Marketing and Promotion of the Clarion River Greenway

An important role of the Clarion River Watershed Association will be informing the public about the Clarion River Greenway. To be effective at this, 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, 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 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.

### Phase III: Project Prioritization

Once the Clarion River Watershed Association is developed and fully operational, it will be time for the organization to start looking at the various projects that are before them. With over 20 recommendations from the greenway plan, this task could seem daunting. A critical first step will be for the group to prioritize the proposed projects.

It will be nearly impossible to work on all the projects at once, therefore, 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 needed to track and participate in implementation.

### Phase IV: Secure Project Funding

Once the Clarion River Watershed Association has prioritized the list of projects, they will be ready to start moving forward with those projects that were ranked highest. A key first step is to secure funding for the chosen projects. There are a multitude of funding sources available for many of the projects, including state, federal, and private funding. There is a diversity of projects within the greenway plan, not all are centered around the natural environment. It will be important for the organization to search for funding outside the traditional natural resources funding sources for money for some projects. Within the greenway plan, several funding sources are mentioned; this will serve as a starting point during the search for funding. It would be beneficial for the organization to partner with other organizations who are active within the region; this cooperative effort will allow all partners to be more cost-effective in the long run.

## Phase V: Project Implementation

The final 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 all important steps in this phase. During this phase it is important that the organization contact other local conservation groups, or their local agency representatives when a questions arises.

Ultimately, the implementation of the greenway plan will be a never-ending process. This will be a positive, as the group will want to continue to implement the projects that improve the Clarion River Greenway and make it a success that benefits all residents within the visitors to the Clarion River Greenway.

*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 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: Recommendations*

<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>Recommendation #2:</b> Explore opportunities for the development of public access to the Clarion River in Ridgway, utilizing PFBC funds.
<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>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>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>Recommendation #6:</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>Recommendation #7:</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>Recommendation #8:</b> Increase promotion of winter recreational opportunities along the Clarion River Greenway to expand local economic opportunities throughout the year.
<b>Recommendation #9:</b> 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.
<b>Recommendation #10:</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>Recommendation #11:</b> Recreational uses should be guided towards areas that are most suitable for intensive uses to ensure the most critical natural areas are protected.
<b>Recommendation #12:</b> Conduct and record an inventory of the historic and cultural sites along the Clarion Greenway to preserve and protect the resources when feasible.
<b>Recommendation #13:</b> Allegheny National Forest staff should explore the viability of a new hiking trail connecting Arroyo to Irwintown.
<b>Recommendation #14:</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>Recommendation #15:</b> Greenway stakeholders should work closely with timber interests to ensure sustainable forestry practices are followed throughout the greenway.
<b>Recommendation #16:</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 held.
<b>Recommendation #17:</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>Recommendation #18:</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>Recommendation #19:</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>Recommendation #20:</b> Increase cooperation between agency staff and local law enforcement and form a community watch group to curb trespassing problems.
<b>Recommendation #21:</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>Recommendation #22:</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>Recommendation #23:</b> Develop a website promoting the Clarion River Greenway. The site should include a virtual tour of the greenway.
<b>Recommendation #24:</b> Develop informational tours, focusing on different aspects of the Clarion River Greenway, to educate the greenway’s visitors.
<b>Recommendation #25:</b> Ensure that all stakeholders are involved in any future steps taken to explore a trail between Cook Forest State Park and Clear Creek State Park.
<b>Recommendation #26:</b> Land managers along the greenway that allow camping should explore the feasibility of additional primitive, riverfront campsites.
<b>Recommendation #27:</b> 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.
<b>Recommendation #28:</b> Approach the plugging of flowing gas wells cautiously to assure hydrologic conditions associated with the abandoned wells are well understood before wells are plugged.
<b>Recommendation #29:</b> Develop a timeline for addressing the remaining AMD problems in and around the Clarion River Greenway.
<b>Recommendation #30:</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>Recommendation #31:</b> 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.
<b>Recommendation 32:</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>Recommendation #33:</b> Complete the portion of the North Country Trail that passes through the Clarion Greenway. Completion will increase visitorship to the trail and the entire greenway region.
<b>Recommendation #34:</b> Local governments within the greenway should develop incentives that promote economic development while protecting the region’s cultural and historic resources.
<b>Recommendation #35:</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>Recommendation #36:</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>Recommendation #37:</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.

## *Appendix C: 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 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?
  - e.
3. Land Uses & Land Ownership (including Greenways 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 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 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

### **Questions #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 #4: 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 #5: 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 satellite] 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

### **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

- Iron ore industry history

**Question 3: What historical sites do you think should be interpretive 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

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

- Sawmill - amphitheater - funding issues
- Longtime 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 interpretive that are not currently?**

- Not currently interpreted:

- Portland Mills, Hallton chemical plant, tannery, Arroyo, Whiskey Springs, Millstone, Dames, 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?

- 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: CSM

### **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: CSM

**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

- 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: CSM

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

- Pristine, not a lot of trailers, camps, etc.
- Hemlock Island (fires, ATV's) - 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?**

- 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: ABT

**Question 1 Do you think that the Clarion 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

Date: 5/25/05 - session 2

Location: Brookville

Facilitator: ABT

**Question 1 Do you think that the Clarion 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 - ATV's, 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 [f]or 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
- 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: ABT

**Question 1: Do you think that the Clarion 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 & hw 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 D: 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. The Creek 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 1500 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 furtaker 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, furtaking, 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>

