

# PIKE COUNTY TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY

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**THE LACKAWAXEN RIVER CORRIDOR FROM  
HAWLEY BOROUGH TO LACKAWAXEN TOWNSHIP**

PA DCNR # BRC-TAG-25-167

Date: October 4, 2022

Woodland Design Associates, Inc.  
119 Lincoln Street, Honesdale, PA 18431



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was funded in part by



### PIKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

Matthew M. Osterberg

Ronald R. Schmalzle

Tony Waldron

Retired Commissioner: Steve Guccini

### THE LACKAWAXEN RIVER TRAILS

A local partnership comprised of concerned citizens, various trail and recreation enhancement committees and local business members.

### STUDY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Jessica Yoder, *Representative*

Pike County Planning Commission

Lisa Champeau, *Public Relations Manager*

Wayne Memorial Health System

Cody Hendrix, *Representative*

National Park Service – Upper Delaware  
Scenic & Recreational River

Sarah Corcoran, *Forest Watch Coordinator NEA*

Sierra Club

Grant Genzlinger, *Representative*

Lackawaxen River Trails  
Palmyra Township

Brad Kiesendahl, *Woodloch Resort*

Visitors Center & Tourism Business  
Representative

Allan Kowalczyk, *Representative*

Lackawaxen Township & Planning  
Commission Member

Kraig Obermiller, *Committee Chair*

Boy/Girl Scout Organization

Scott Savini, *General Manager*

Blooming Grove Hunting & Fishing Club

Keith Gunuskey, *Superintendent*

Wallenpaupack Area School District

Bill Gibney, *Representative*

PA Fish & Boat Commission

Ellen Enslin, *Representative*

Pike County Conservation District

### WOODLAND DESIGN ASSOCIATES, INC. TEAM:

Michael Wood RLA, ASLA, Principal

Nathan Ruckinger, RLA

Emily Wood, RLA

Jessie Rutledge, Environmental Planner

Jayson Wood, RLA, CPRP, LEED AP

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## FOREWORD

### FOREWORD

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This report, although written to be a stand-alone document, was a direct result of the successful completion of the Wayne County Trail Feasibility Study in 2020. Although this report covers a different study area, there are many similarities between the two final reports, specifically the focus of the Lackawaxen River corridor. We recommend reviewing the Wayne County Trail Feasibility Study for more information.

In early 2019, as the Wayne County Trail Feasibility Study neared its successful completion, the Lackawaxen River Trails group, approached the Pike County Commissioners to gauge their interest in applying for a grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to conduct a trail feasibility study in their County. The grant would fund a trail feasibility study that would continue the work of Wayne County. This grant's study area would focus on the area from Hawley to Lackawaxen within the Lackawaxen River corridor with the support of the railroad owner and operator to utilize their lands.

The Pike County Commissioners understood that it was important to have the approval of both the Palmyra and Lackawaxen Township Supervisors prior to authorizing an application for a grant for the study, since lands within these municipalities are located within the study area. Following meetings in March 2019 with the Supervisors of both Townships, Pike County Commissioners, Pike County Planning Commission staff, and Lackawaxen River Trails group members, letters of support for the study were received from both the Palmyra and Lackawaxen Township Supervisors. Subsequently, the County agreed to pursue a grant for a trail feasibility study. These support letters can be found in Appendix B.

However, as public input meetings were held during the feasibility study process, it became clear that citizens were not in support of new trails at this time, nor projects that may stem from this study regarding trails, trailheads, or river access locations.

In addition to the public input, the Township Solicitor for Lackawaxen Township made it clear that the Supervisors no longer supported any public trails along the Lackawaxen River through their Township and would take action to prevent such from happening. The Commissioners are encouraged to consider the opposition expressed by the public and the Lackawaxen Township Supervisors. At this time, it is recommended that the proposed trail, found feasible in this report, not be pursued, or proposed at this time.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Pike County is known for its breathtaking views, public lands, and outdoor recreation. Tourism, without a doubt, plays a huge role as Pike County is home to Grey Towers, Delaware State Forest and countless lakes, and natural areas. Almost half of Pike County is made up of State or Federal Lands, which provide locals and visitors space to connect with nature and explore trails. Many local formal and informal outdoor groups and residents in the area have come forward with input regarding a desire to hike, bike, canoe, kayak, fish, bird watch, and socially connect along the Lackawaxen River. Many have demonstrated a willingness to spend both money and time toward these interests. Even more have expressed the ability of this trail to fill not only a physical trail-way gap along a currently inaccessible natural feature of the county, but also a greater social, economic, and environmental gap.

As the result of this interest, the Pike County Trail Feasibility Study began with investigating the potential of a trail network combining hiking, biking, and non-motorized boating along the meandering river. This study focused its interest specifically through Palmyra and Lackawaxen Townships, within the greater Lackawaxen River corridor. A public influenced process examined the opportunities to create connections between key community recreational resources and continue to improve and positively impact the local economy through outdoor recreation.

After completing an inventory and analysis of existing conditions and regulations, extensive interaction with the public began. A study committee that included community members involved with business, recreational, tourism, and municipal backgrounds was created. A successful on-line survey assisted in collecting the public's need, desires, and concerns. Public meetings were held to identify the pros and cons of such a proposed trail system and to collect any concerns directly impacted or adjacent landowners may have. Once evaluated, solutions were determined to address "gaps" both physically and legally and concerns were addressed.

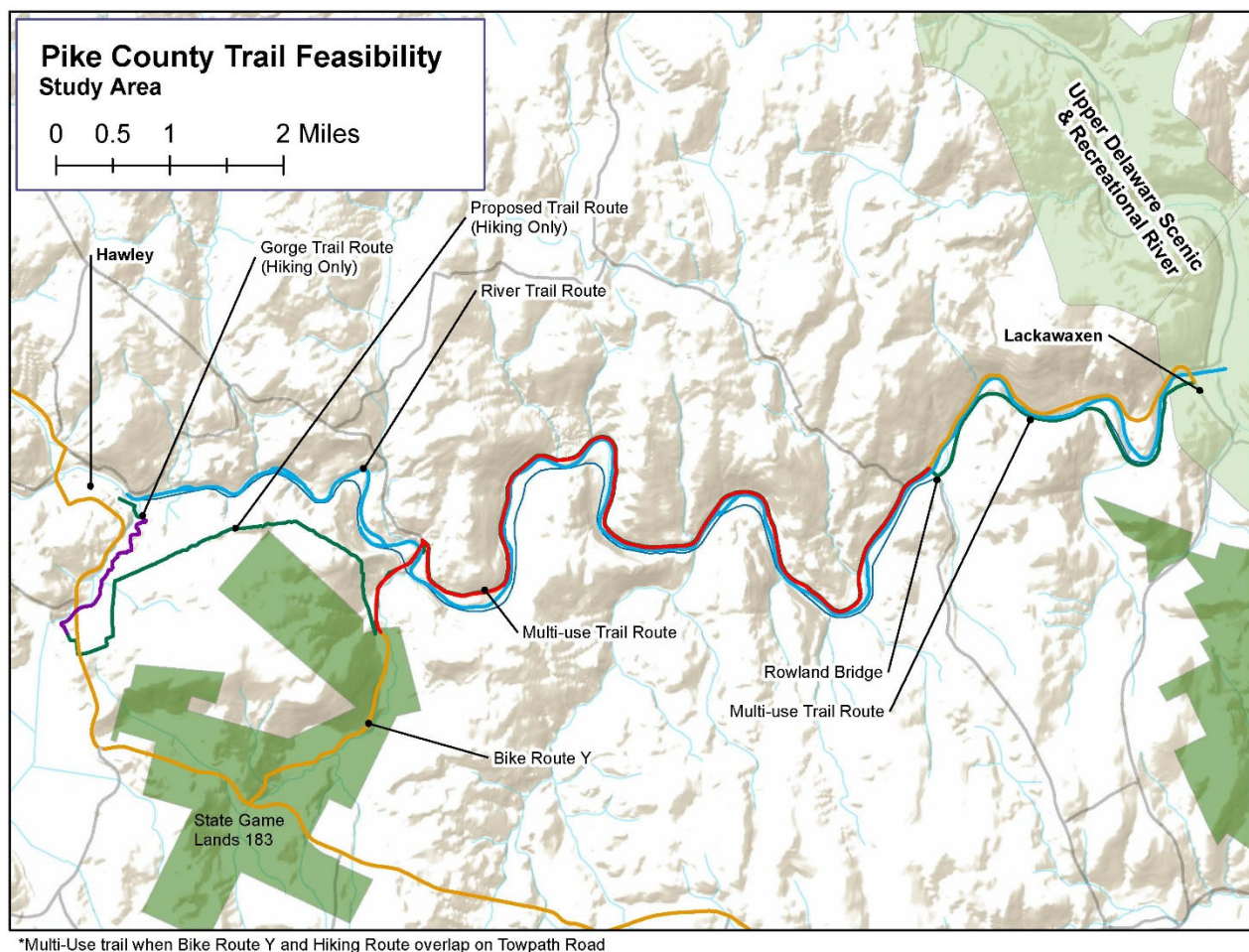
Based upon the data acquired, a Trail Concept Plan was created, illustrating the potential of a future multi-use trail system within the greater Lackawaxen River corridor. The Trail Concept Plan depicted the large scale and long-range vision for what the trail system could become - using the river, railroad lands, and municipal and state road corridors to connect the community to the environment along an area that currently lacks opportunities for active and passive recreation.

The successful implementation of this large-scale vision for the trail system within the greater Lackawaxen River corridor must begin with a strong and obvious starting point. Gathered public opinion suggests the County should prioritize the design and development of the Trailheads along the Lackawaxen River & Towpath Road (State Route 4006) for river access and safe parking for use of the existing Bike Route Y. The study also identified the importance of connection to existing trail systems being developed in Wayne & Pike Counties on the northern section of proposed trail corridor, specifically the Gorge Trail & River Walk Trail System back to Bingham Park. This feasibility study is also the continuation and result of a successful trail feasibility study along the same river corridor between Honesdale and Hawley in Wayne County, PA, finalized in 2020.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ultimately, the Pike County Trail Feasibility Study determined that public support for the project is not strong, particularly in Lackawaxen Township. However, this report does conclude that it is physically and legally feasible to construct the segments of the Trail Concept Plan as shown below and in Appendix E. It is hoped that the Final Feasibility Study continues to reach additional residents in the community and begins to mobilize new public and private support for the project. Beyond assessing the opportunities and challenges associated with each trail segment, this study also includes proposed funding and phasing strategies to implement the Trail Concept Plan.

The realization of the Pike County Lackawaxen River Trail System begins with the completion of this feasibility study. Now is a critical time to build public support and interest with the intent to move beyond planning into design and construction of the trail system. Developed and refined in response to the needs and concerns expressed by residents, landowners, recreational users, business owners, and municipal officials, the construction of the first segment is essential to maintaining community interest and building community partnerships.





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**Proposed trailhead at Rowland Bridge connecting Bike Route Y to the multi-use trail along the railroad.**



**Rendering of Trailhead along S.R. 0590 & Bike Route Y creating access to river and parking.**

## INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

## INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

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### Vision Statement

The Lackawaxen River Trails (LRT) vision is a 40-mile multi-modal trail system that closely follows the Lackawaxen River in Pike and Wayne Counties. With several opportunities for interconnected trails, parks, waterways, and open spaces, this effort would encompass significant natural resources and diverse communities. Trail users will be connected to the Lackawaxen River, local historical and cultural sites, and enjoy healthy outdoor activities while creating economic opportunities for the local business community.

### Study Purpose & Goals

The Pike County Trail Feasibility Study will evaluate the interest, ability, and costs to create a trail from downtown Hawley, PA (Wayne County) to Lackawaxen Township. The Study will:

- Identify the boundaries of a proposed Lackawaxen Trail System through Pike County, a stretch of approximately 13 miles.
- Identify potential obstacles in the development of such a trail, and to offer solutions or alternate routes and cost estimates.
- Evaluate the natural, cultural, and historical assets along the corridor and offer suggestions to connect trail users to these resources.
- Identify trail linkages and greenway connections.

### Trail Corridor Description

The roughly bounded trail corridor passes through Palmyra and Lackawaxen Townships. It includes the Lackawaxen River, Towpath Road (State Route 4006), and the Stourbridge Line railroad. At the eastern end is the confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware Rivers, Veterans Memorial Park, and the Zane Grey Museum. On the western end, the trail would ideally meet up in downtown Hawley (Wayne County) at Bingham Park where it would connect with the Wayne County extension on this trail network (see Study Area & Boundary Extent Map Appendix A).

Over the course of the Feasibility Study, the Design Team presented findings to the Study Committee and County Commissioners in a series of meetings. A list of the Study Committee members is found on Page 1 of this document. A record of meeting minutes and guidance is included in this report (Appendix C). At the direction of the Study Committee and the County Commissioners, a study area base map focusing on the greater Lackawaxen River corridor between the Borough of Hawley and Village of Lackawaxen, Pennsylvania as described above was created. Over time, as physical and legal restrictions were documented, the study area grew and changed. The Study Committee and Commissioners allowed for flexibility which ultimately resulted in the success of this study.

Except for a few locations, the majority of the Study Area is very rural in nature. Areas adjacent to Hawley, the Village of Rowland & the Village of Lackawaxen offer a few sidewalks and existing



## INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

infrastructure and utility access, but the bulk of the study area is unrefined and natural. Large swaths of woodland sections, beautiful scenic views and private residential areas are found along the corridor.

### Geographic Resources and Demographics

Pike County, Pennsylvania is a large rural county located in northeastern Pennsylvania with a population of 58,535 (2020 Census). The Lackawaxen River plays an important role in Pike County's history, a constant reminder of the past and its use for transportation of coal down the Delaware and Hudson Canals, as well providing for a booming logging industry. Now the area is widely known for its abundant amount of tourist destinations in which allows for a greater economic influx and increased employment opportunities. Pike County provides areas for both locals and visitors to partake in recreational activities all year round; including but not limited to kayaking, swimming, fishing, boating, hiking, photography, skiing, bird watching, snowshoeing, hunting, canoeing, plant identification, and team sports.

Many of Pike County's citizens reside and work below the Route 6 corridor, leaving the area north of this barrier as primarily rural, second homes dedicated to recreation and open space. The greater Lackawaxen River corridor, which can be found in this northern section of the county, is home to an abundance of plant and animal species and provides a wealth of increased outdoor recreational opportunities. By developing this corridor, the historically significant regional locations identified by the Local History Round Table in their "Local History Past-Port—for the Northern Pocono Mountains Region" are strengthened to make it a one-of-a-kind cultural experience; along with a strong social connection between the river, future users (local and visitors), and the natural environment.

Hawley, Pennsylvania, once known for its connection to the transportation of coal down the Delaware and Hudson Canal and holds a population of 1,174 (2020 Census). Tourists are attracted to the shores of Lake Wallenpaupack for various recreational activities such as, boating, fishing, swimming, hiking etc. There are a series of existing trails that run along the Lackawaxen River and Lake Wallenpaupack's Dam. Hawley's historical charm is still present throughout the town, featuring the renovated Hawley Silk Mill and O'Connor Cut Glassware Factory. Many small shoppes and restaurants can be found along the downtown.

Palmyra Township, Pennsylvania was once a much larger municipality within both Pike & Wayne Counties. It was split in 1814 when Pike County was created, divided into two at Wallenpaupack River (Wallenpaupack Creek). The resulting municipality, Palmyra Township, Pike County was approximately 39.5 acres with a population today of approximately 3,300. Tourists are attracted to the extensive recreational activities within the municipality surrounding and adjacent to Lake Wallenpaupack which falls within the western boundary. With numerous outdoor opportunities available to tourists, the community could see an increase in economic benefit of upgraded facilities including trail use in the area.

Lackawaxen Township, Pennsylvania is the largest township in Pike County. It is named after the Lackawaxen River that runs through the township. Logging played an important role in the township's history as logs were sent down the Lackawaxen, to the Delaware, where the Lackawaxen River and the Delaware River meet at the township line. Tourists are attracted to the historical characteristics of the township and the recreational activities on the Lackawaxen and Delaware River; including but not limited to, kayaking, fishing, tubing, and rafting. With numerous outdoor opportunities available to tourists, the

## INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

community could see an increase in economic benefit of upgraded facilities. In the 2020 census it was reported that approximately 5,000 people call this township home.

Rowland, Pennsylvania is a small community located along the Lackawaxen River approximately 7.4 miles east of Hawley within Lackawaxen Township. Although Rowland is small, opportunities for wildlife observation and scenic views abound as State Route 590 enters Rowland from the north and meanders along the Lackawaxen River to its confluence with the Delaware River within Lackawaxen, PA. Just under 5 miles up State Route 590 to the north of Rowland is Woodloch Resort. Woodloch Resort is the destination of countless tourists to the area, looking to embrace nature and outdoor recreation opportunities.

### Proposed Trail Compatibility

Through the process of the Feasibility Study, the proposed trail routes and uses must also take into consideration and work to be compatible with planning efforts for the state, county, and local levels. This proposed trail network would implement numerous recommendations in the *State Outdoor Recreation Plan* by connecting citizens to recreational opportunities of various types. This trail would also satisfy the goals of the *Lackawaxen-Shohola Comprehensive Plan* and the *Pike County Open Space, Greenways, and Recreation Plan*; specifically, Chapter 9 Greenways, Trails, and Byways that sheds focus on Bike Y and Bike Y1, and the desire for additional trail opportunities.



### PHYSICAL INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

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#### Study Area Mapping

At the kickoff of the study, the study area was defined as: beginning at the Wayne & Pike County line in Hawley Borough travelling east, following alongside of the railroad and river corridor, and ending at the confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware Rivers in Lackawaxen, PA. The illustrated study area includes an additional 500' on the north and south of these bounding objects (State Route 4006 and the Stourbridge Railroad line) to account for any areas where trail design might be altered due to site conditions. As the study continued and legal and physical restrictions were discovered, additional area was added to the study area specific to areas around the Wallenpaupack School District, Kimbles Road and the connection between these areas through state lands and utility right of ways west of the original study area. The increased study area is reflected in both base mapping and proposed trail mapping (Appendix E).

#### Physiographic Features

The physiography of this corridor is defined by the river valley, cutting through the landscape, leaving steep cliffs, wide floodplain areas, and picturesque views at each turn, from one end to the other.

#### *Railroad Owned Lands*

The Stourbridge Railroad Lands are delineated based on “Valuation Engineering Mapping”. These engineering maps, termed “Val Maps”, were made to clearly delineate the location, width, right-of-way location and scope of the railway line during its creation. The Val Maps for the rail line segments within the study area were provided by Myles Group, the operator of the train system between Hawley and Lackawaxen. The maps clearly show the rail lands and its position adjacent to properties, as it was outlined when it was founded in 1864. The maps also clearly document the deeds which the railroad affects. A copy of these maps is included in Appendix B.

#### *Topography*

Early in the planning process, the topography was studied to determine possible obstacles along the railroad and Lackawaxen River. The topography varies greatly and is an important focal point of the river corridor. This information can be found in Appendix A – Topography Map. It is easy to see areas adjacent to the river where topography lines get closer and represent steeper slopes and in some areas rock cuts. These areas were identified as potential physical constraints and were investigated in the field to see if space was available for access or if an alternative route would be required. There were a few areas identified in the study where rock cuts on both sides of the railroad required alternative solutions. The Trail Concept Map reflects the trail route that avoids these areas.

## PHYSICAL INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

### *Soils*

Identifying soils is a key part to the planning process and can tell you a lot about a given area. Hydric and hydric inclusion soils mean the area can be ponded and saturated with water, allowing for wetland plants to grow. The inventory of soils allowed the Design Team to point out these areas of concerns and do an in-fields investigation to identify any possible wetlands and waters. Soils information was also reviewed regarding erosion and drainage. It is important to consider these soil properties in the layout of a potential trail route to choose a path that will not be physically impacted or destroyed quickly due to natural elements. Many of the soils found along the study corridor showed conditions that would be concerning in steeper sloped areas. Fortunately, the proposed trail route follows primarily gently sloping areas in uplands.

### *Land Use*

Land use within the corridor is primarily characterized by rural housing and undeveloped forest lands throughout the corridor from west to east. At either end, community hubs exist in Hawley and Lackawaxen, expressing the importance of creating a linear recreational connection between the two communities. North of the corridor exists a higher population characterized by developed private communities and resorts, potentially making use of the future recreational opportunities within the river corridor.

### *Zoning*

Within Palmyra Township, the proposed trail route travels through zoning districts noted as *Special Purpose, Highway Commercial, and Residential*. Within Lackawaxen Township, the proposed trail route travels through zoning districts noted as *Low Density Residential, Neighborhood Development, and Rural*.

Lackawaxen and Palmyra Townships both categorize “Public and semi-public uses” as acceptable conditional uses within their township *Schedule of Uses* for all noted zoning districts. Palmyra Township specifically notes *Public and semi-public* uses to include cultural, educational, health, recreation, religious, and welfare uses. With both townships, having addressed these conditional uses, the planned publicly accessible trails would fall within the acceptable zoning for the townships.

Lackawaxen Township has a specific section of their zoning ordinance (section 535 Public and Commercial Access Areas on the Delaware River and Lackawaxen River), specifically 535.2 Lackawaxen River that states “*Public and Commercial access areas shall not be permitted along the Lackawaxen River*”. This requirement appears to conflict with the Public Highway designation of the Lackawaxen River, see section “State Waters” under the Legal Feasibility chapter of this report, which legally allows for public access within the banks of the river.

## PHYSICAL INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

### Natural Features

The Lackawaxen River Watershed is highlighted by the PA Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) as a high-quality (HQ) river. All tributaries and contributing streams flowing into the main stem of the Lackawaxen River are also designated as high-quality. The Lackawaxen River is also identified as a Trout Stocked Fishery by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, meaning the PA Fish & Boat Commission visits sections of the river to release trout from their fisheries into the river for recreational purposes. These designations of a watershed tend to reflect a higher quality of the surrounding environmental features associated with hydrology, flora, and fauna. This is a unique and outstanding feature of this area that should be both protected and open for exploration. Passive recreation, such as the activities identified in this study, meet those specifications for being low impact while allowing locals and visitors to be able to engage and explore the area.

#### *Hydrology*

Hydrology is a main focal point for this project as the study area stems from the river corridor. The Design Team identified the wetlands and waters along the possible trail route and considered those features in the process of proposed trail planning. This allows for the Design Team to plan for alternative routes where the trail would encounter these hydrological features when necessary. The “Regulated Floodway” and “Regulated Floodplain” information was acquired from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) dataset that has been created and distributed through the Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access (PASDA). The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) provided information of mapped wetlands within the study corridor, allowing us to note those areas as “points of concern” and do an on-site investigation. A visual representation of this information can be found in Appendix A.

Additionally, the Lackawaxen River is owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, making it a “Public Highway”. This streambed has been found through legal analysis, historical research and/or in Pennsylvania court decisions to be submerged lands of the Commonwealth. This designation allows for travel along the river, within its high-water banks, for recreational purposes, lending the river to be an existing paddle trail for the length of this study and further north toward Honesdale, PA.

#### *Flora & Fauna*

The proposed trail will be of minimum impact to the environment. The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory requires consideration for all environmental features. Data is collected from the proposed area under a review process to determine if the area has any threatened and endangered species, and special concern species, the PNDI can be found and reviewed in Appendix B.

### Cultural Features

Tying back into the cultural history of a corridor retains the essence of where the regional history came from while propelling it towards a more modern and improved recreational destination. This region has a sense of “place” at each turn, specifically within the river valley often characterized by the steep hills on the south side of the river. These hills undoubtedly hold more history than was ever told or written, but culturally, you can still see relics of these past uses along the way.

## PHYSICAL INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) plays a critical role in carrying out many responsibilities in historic preservation. The study area was submitted to their office to review with data collected from years of studies to find any potential impact the construction of a trail may have to historic items within the landscape. The response to the inquiry can be found and reviewed in Appendix B.

### *Historic*

The Gravity Railroad was used to haul coal by gravity from mines to Honesdale, Pa and then by boat on the canal. Inclined planes are what allowed the railroad to operate on gravity. The rails in Honesdale were made of wood and the surface had wrought iron strips that secured it to the rail. Everyone believed this rail system would not work, but it was a huge success. The towpath was traveled by mules, pulling the canal boat at a pace of 1-3 miles per hour. In Lackawaxen Township, logging played an important role in the town's history. Logs were tied together and floated down river until they reached their destination.

### *Archaeological*

The towpath for the historic canal is still visible along portions of the proposed trail, with some of the lock houses preserved and the stone walls adjacent to the Towpath Road paralleling the river. Preserving and highlighting these archaeological features will be a key component of implementation of a trail network in the future.

## Physical Features

While the study area travels through primarily remote and forested areas, there are homesteads and developed areas along the way. There are some instances of driveways and road crossings along the proposed trail route but there are no visible structures or other encroachments.

### *Bridges, Canals, Culverts, and Tunnels*

Early in the planning process, the topographic features and aerials were studied to determine possible bridges, canals, culverts & tunnels that would need to be considered. These areas were then noted to allow the Design Team to investigate these areas of concern in the field. Along the railroad corridor specifically, there are several trestle bridges, creek crossings, and stormwater culverts installed that were identified and taken into consideration during the planning process. These locations would all need to be vetted for any necessary permitting needs during the construction and implementation process in the future. Identifying them now allows for planning and budgetary concerns to be addressed in the future.

## Utilities

The presence of utilities within a trail corridor allows for future planning of facilities for visitor use, maintenance, and emergency situations. The study team has recognized that aside from the public sewer and water available on the western boundary within Hawley Borough the remainder of the corridor is lacking in available utility resources. Electricity is available within a reasonable distance from proposed trail head locations for the potential use in lighting infrastructure.

One thing to note in this area is the cell phone service is lacking. Although not considered a traditional "utility" as there is no hard wire connection, it has become a desired need for most locals and visitors to



## PHYSICAL INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

the area. Lack of service in this area was brought up numerous times from both the Study Committee and Public Participation and should be considered thoroughly by the County to try to work with cell phone providers to increase reliability in this area for both the safety of users and emergency response teams.

### Intersections and Access Points

When considering the multiple trail routes that exist within the corridor and the proposed addition of another multi-use trail, access points and intersections with existing infrastructure are a pivotal aspect to be considered for future trail design and implementation.

#### *Road, Rail, Private Crossings (Driveways), Easements*

A large portion of the trail will follow both the existing Bike Route Y along State Routes 4006 & 590 (north side of the river) and the railroad line (south side of the river). Each of these corridors pose opportunities and risks associated with safety to users. Through careful planning and signage, any location where users and traffic intersect will be made safer and organized to ensure the safety of all.

#### *Pedestrian and Vehicular Access Points*

Trailheads for access to any one of the trails (paddle, biking, or multi-use) will play a significant role in use, care, and success of the trail network. The Design Team, through multiple site visits, selected a series of locations that would be the most logical access points for trail use based on proximity, ownership, evidence of existing use, available parking, and accessibility. These proposed locations were vetted with the Study Committee and agreed upon as the best destinations for users to access the recreational opportunities of the trail system. While some locations require further coordination with landowners, the study has given a direction for the County to move in for future funding and implementation.

### Community Assets and Other Recreation

#### *Hawley Borough*

Hawley, PA is less than one square mile, but holds a handful of private and public recreational opportunities. Bingham Park, Riverside Park Dog Park, Soaring Eagle Rail Tours, and the Hawley Public Library are just a few examples of well-developed community recreation opportunities within walking distance of the study area. These community features along with a variety of small shops and restaurants within the main street corridor of the town provides locals and tourists with a unique small-town experience.

#### *Village of Lackawaxen*

The Village of Lackawaxen is home to the Zane Grey Museum, Roebling Bridge, and access to the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, all of which are located at the terminus of the study area. This small area provides a rare mix of historical, natural, and recreational features that brings in countless tourists year after year. Veterans' Memorial Park, a small township park in the area, offers a playground, tennis and basketball courts, baseball and softball fields, and passive recreation space along the study area as well.

## PHYSICAL INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

### *State Lands*

Over 30% of Pike County is made up of State or Federal (Public) Lands. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry District 19 manages over 72,000 acres in Pike County while the Pennsylvania Game Commission is responsible for more than 24,000 acres. Directly adjacent to the trail corridor study area is State Game Lands 183 which contains nearly 2,778 acres of forested terrain with formal and informal trails throughout.

### *Federal Land*

Where the Lackawaxen River meets the Delaware, the trail corridor study area enters the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River corridor. For years the Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River has been providing recreational access to hundreds of thousands of people in one of the most densely populated regions. The Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River is the dividing boundary between Pennsylvania and New York along portions of five (5) counties and fifteen (15) municipalities.

### *Woodloch Resort*

Woodloch Resort is a vacation destination resort located approximately five miles from the Lackawaxen River corridor and this report's defined study area, north off S.R. 0590 on Welcome Lake Road. Woodloch Resort is a family run, award winning lakeside family resort that brings in countless visitors from all over the world to the area to enjoy nature and outdoor recreation. Although many visitors focus on the amenities the resort has to offer on site, just as many guests utilize the location as a launching point to explore the scenic and unique areas adjacent to the property, such as the Delaware and Lackawaxen River corridors, Hawley and Honesdale, PA.

### *Private Residential Communities*

Many private residential communities exist within proximity to the study area. Masthope, Fawn Lake Forest, Woodloch, and Woodledge Village, all reside within 5 miles of the study area corridor and contain a mix of primary and 2<sup>nd</sup> family homes. These communities provide primary homes and vacation homes to families that have strived to live in an area that boasts abundant open space, natural features, and outdoor recreational opportunities. Additional outdoor recreational opportunities within the area will satisfy these property owners by providing them with more opportunities to explore and enjoy the areas they call home or have chosen as a place to find reprieve from their typical daily lives.

## Environmental Hazards

### *Environmental Assessment Studies*

During the site review, a general site investigation for any solid waste disposal or buried tanks was completed. Although a more thorough investigation would be required for any construction or development activities, it can be noted that no visual indication of such facilities was found in the field.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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#### Project Study Committee

The Pike County Trail Feasibility Study Committee was assembled in December of 2020. The committee members, listed on the acknowledgement page of this report, include officials from Pike County, Wayne Memorial Health System, Upper Delaware National Park Service, Palmyra and Lackawaxen Townships, Woodloch Resort, Wallenpaupack Area School District, PA Fish and Boat Commission, as well as community leaders and local business owners.

#### Study Committee Meetings

Over the course of six (6) meetings, the Study Committee reviewed and provided feedback for each of the attached appendices (requesting data gathering, information, map, and report assembly, etc.). Their insight provided critical information regarding landowners, local nodes and connections, and the public's interpretation of the presentation and intent of the trail system. Meeting notes were taken and issued for all six (6) meetings, with specific requests and changes noted. These are provided, with the PowerPoint presentations, in Appendix C. General items reviewed and requested during these meetings include the identification of physical constraints, the results of the public survey (covered in later sections), preferred multi-use trail locations, and trail head locations.

The following is a chart of the dates, times, and locations of the Study Committee meetings conducted:

Study Committee Meeting #1	December 21, 2020: 11:00am – 12:30pm	Zoom Meeting
Study Committee Meeting #2	February 23, 2021: 10:00am – 11:30am	Zoom Meeting
Study Committee Meeting #3	June 8, 2021: 1:00pm – 1:30pm	Zoom Meeting
Conceptual Design Charette (Study Committee Meeting #4)	September 8, 2021: 2:00pm – 4:00pm	Pike Co. Emergency Training Facility
Study Committee Meeting #5	January 10, 2022: 2:00pm – 3:30pm	Zoom Meeting
Study Committee Meeting #6	April 7, 2022: 1:00pm – 3:00pm	Pike Co. Emergency Training Facility

#### Public Meetings

Throughout the Feasibility Study, along with presenting to the Study Committee, the Design Team presented the project at two (2) meetings, which were open and advertised appropriately to the public. The first meeting was an effort to introduce the Consulting Team, Study Committee Members and explain the goal of the Feasibility Study and the work to be done. The second meeting took place to present the Final Draft Report and Conceptual Trail Plans. Both public meetings took place at the Pike Co. Emergency Training Facility in Blooming Grove Township, Pike County, PA.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following is a chart of the dates, times, and locations of the Public Meetings were conducted:

Public Meeting #1 July 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2021 - 7:00pm	Pike Co. Emergency Training Facility
Public Meeting #2 June 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2022 - 7:00pm	Pike Co. Emergency Training Facility

### *Public Meeting #1*

Emphasized comments which were included, considered, and reflected in the plans and report include:

1. Safety and policing on or near the trail
2. Trespassing on private property
3. The presence of trash along or near the trail
4. The presence of illegal substances
5. First responders having access to the trail

Please refer to Appendix D for additional information including public comment, questions and written responses to questions posed at the meeting or through email within two weeks following the public meeting.

### *Public Meeting #2*

Emphasized comments which were included, considered, and reflected in the plans and report were very similar to public meeting #1 and include:

1. Safety and policing on or near the trail
2. Trespassing on private property

Please refer to Appendix D for additional information including public comment, questions and written responses to questions posed at the meeting or through email within two weeks following the public meeting.

## Key Person Interviews

During the Feasibility Study, the Design Team kept a list of key individuals outside of the Study Committee, who the Study Committee members asked to be interviewed. Each of these individuals provided a unique perspective due to their role in or adjacent to trail systems in general or this specific trail study. Although a synopsis of everyone's interview is provided in this report, Appendix D features notes taken during each interview, with quotes and the questions posed.

As part of the Wayne County Trail Feasibility Study (2020), Tom Myles (Railroad Operator) was interviewed. That interview is being included in this report as the information gathered continues to pertain for continuity of the study corridor from Honesdale to Lackawaxen. Tom Myles is the operator of the railroad within the study corridor. This interview was conducted over two separate field days while walking the length of the railroad between Honesdale and Hawley. During the interview, Mr. Myles



## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

expressed his interest in the project, and an eagerness to see the trail project come to fruition seeing it as a logical tourist use. He also detailed some of his design criteria for creating the 10-foot-wide multi-use trail along the railroad.

During the interview it was learned that the Myles Group is not the owner of the railroad property, but rather Paul Brancato, President of the Stourbridge Railroad. Subsequently the Design Team reached out to Mr. Brancato to both inform him of the Feasibility Study and seek support for the Study and permission to enter the property to conduct the due diligence necessary to complete the study. Through the process of the Wayne County Trail Feasibility Study an email was received on January 7, 2019, and documented in the aforementioned report providing written cooperation for the Study and the ability to access and use the site

Some of Mr. Myles preferred design guidelines for the trail are as follows: The trail shall be placed a minimum of (8) eight ft. from closest rail (PUC's guideline is 12' minimum from center of rail, see PUC section below); the trail should be designed to be on river side of tracks as much as possible; trail crossings over the tracks should be minimized and directional fencing utilized; existing drainage facilities should be maintained; and the trail elevation should not be graded higher than the railroad bed; trail use should be limited to hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, and snow shoeing, no motorized vehicles, or horses should be allowed. Mr. Myles also mentioned that he had been given a verbal commitment to a donation of stone from a local commercial development site that could be used for a trail subbase. It was a substantial quantity of stone, which should be considered a donation for future grant application money matching. Mr. Myles also noted that several of the adjoining property owners along the route from Honesdale to Hawley had shown an independent interest in obtaining private railroad crossing to access their lands transected by the railroad. He asked that coordination also occur to try to utilize some of these crossings, if installed, as a trail crossing.

### *Person #1 – Lynn Conrad (Rail-Trail Council)*

Woodland Design scheduled and conducted a phone call interview with Lynn Conrad of the Rail-Trail Council in Uniondale, PA. The Rail-Trail Council is a non-profit organization developing recreational trails in Northeastern, PA just 30 miles northwest of the trail corridor this study is focusing on. The Council has worked to purchase and restore over 38 miles of trail (D&H) as well as maintains and restores an additional 18 miles (O&W/Endless Mountain). Lynn recently retired as the Executive Director of the Council and offered invaluable insight into the processes of obtaining, maintaining, and restoring trails through first-hand experience.

### *Person #2 – Vito Manzione (Forest Fire Company)*

Nathan Ruckinger (WDA) reached out for a phone call interview with Vito Manzione of the Forest Volunteer Fire Department in Lackawaxen Township, Pike County, Pa. Vito is an Engineer for the Department and has been with the Fire Department for many years. The Fire Department is responsible for primary coverage for the western area of Lackawaxen Township. Emergency access to remote areas of their coverage area has been a point of emphasis for the fire company in recent years. Throughout the interview, the need for emergency access, signage, and upgraded equipment was discussed as measures that could be implemented to increase safety and access for rescue teams along the proposed trail corridor.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### *Person #3 – Tom Shepstone (Shepstone Management Company, Inc.)*

Emily Wood (WDA) reached out to Tom Shepstone for further clarification on the history of the Railroad Property from Honesdale to Lackawaxen and how railroads change ownership. Mr. Shepstone, formerly President of the Shippers Association, who at one time owned and ran the railroad, holds a wealth of knowledge regarding this property and how and when it changed hands over the years. Tom's interview was integral in understanding ownership of the railroad lands and how it came to operate as a tourist / excursion train after its defined past as the heart and soul of commerce in this area.

### *Person #4 – Blooming Grove Hunting Club*

Nathan Ruckinger (WDA) scheduled and conducted a phone call interview with Scott Savini of the Blooming Grove Hunting Club. Mr. Savini is part of the Study Committee for the trail and has been involved since the beginning of the study. The Hunting Club is a privately owned and managed wildlife reserve, in existence since 1871, amassing more than 19,000 acres of pristine wilderness within the area. With the study corridor bordering lands owned by the club in remote areas of the region, it was integral to the study to have their insight and consideration as part of the process.

### *Person #5 – PGC (Phil Kasper), PennDOT (April Hannon), PPL EU (Chad Huber & Janet Lemach)*

Nathan Ruckinger and Emily Wood (WDA) conducted short interviews with each of these organization members to gauge the view of trail cooperation/implementation within their respective jurisdictions of activity (Pa Game Commission lands, PennDOT State Roads, and PPL Right-of-Ways). While short, the conversations contributed greatly to the final proposed trail route as part of the feasibility study. Please see Appendix D-6 for procedures associated with easement acquisition on PPL EU Right of Way for trails.

### *Person #6 (previously interviewed during the Wayne County Trail Feasibility Study) - Public Utility Commission (PUC)*

Woodland Design contacted the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) via phone and spoke with Rodney Bender, PUC Rail-Safety Engineering Manager, regarding the Wayne County Feasibility Study and the PUCs applicable, jurisdictional requirements. However, as previously mentioned the information gathered continues to pertain to this study. The PUC's role in a project like this one, is to review trail portions which fall within their jurisdiction and provide mediator support between outside entities and the owner and operator of the railroad. The trail would come under jurisdictional review wherever it crosses the tracks or crosses a roadway parallel to the tracks. As the owner operator of the railroad has agreed to allow the Study the PUC would simply assist in conversations moving forward and review and drawings proposed. The PUC does not have standards for construction but requires a minimum horizontal clearance of 12' from the center of the tracks and a 22' vertical clearance when on the railroad right-of-way.

During the interview it was expressed that the PUC is specifically interested in making sure specific maintenance agreements are arranged between the PUC, the train owner, and the entity providing the crossings. The County prefers to take the lead regarding continued maintenance and installation. This can be further

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Public Online Survey

From March 1, 2021, to June 1, 2021, a Public Survey was posted online via the hosting site “[surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)”. It was distributed via email, social media, parks and trailheads, and the County website. This Public Survey was composed of ten (10) questions. The questions were developed, arranged, and worded by Design Team and the Study Committee, to logically generate the most information possible. The questions ultimately focused on the wants, needs, and desires an individual would have, if a trail were placed as described. Two of the questions intentionally provided space for written opinions, so those surveyed had very few limitations. This was done intentionally so that all thoughts and uses might be considered.

Publishing and sharing the survey online via “[surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)” on the Pike County website, Woodland Design’s Facebook page, Pike County’s Facebook page, and various other willing group’s websites provided ease of access for those with internet access. A link to the survey was also able to be copied and shared online, providing even greater distribution. The survey was made available in hard copy and at the conclusion of the survey 12 of these handwritten surveys were submitted. The Design Team manually entered these written surveys digitally, so they were included in all final survey report graphs and data. There were 825 total responses collected through the survey process, including both digital and handwritten. All questions were optional and could be skipped. The total number of responders to each question is included in the full summary found in *Appendix D*.

A list of the questions and a summary of results is provided below, the full data response can be found in *Appendix D*:

#### 1. Where do you live?

State:

County:

Township/Borough:

This information was gathered for the Study Committee to confirm that information collected represented input from not only the two (2) municipalities included in the study area, but from the greater region. Most responders stated they lived within Pennsylvania, and more specifically in Pike County, representing a large range of municipalities within and adjacent to the study area.

#### Q2. What is your age? Select one.

☐ Under 18    ☐ 18-24    ☐ 25-34    ☐ 35-44    ☐ 45-54    ☐ 55-64    ☐ 65+

The Study Committee selected this question to have a better understanding of the ages and activities of those responding to the survey. This question was compared against known Census data to assure the survey represented a wide range of users with like area demographics. Results showed a range of age from responders, but most responses came in from those over the age of 35.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### **Q3. Please indicate your general interest for the development of a multi-use trail along the Lackawaxen River corridor connecting Hawley & Lackawaxen.**

- ☐ Yes, I think a multi-use trail would be a great addition.
- ☐ No, I do not think a multi-use trail would be appropriate.
- ☐ Maybe, I would like to know more.

The Study Committee wanted to include this question early in the survey process to get a feel for the general support of the idea of a multi-use trail in the community. 84% of those who responded to this question answered 'Yes, I think a multi-use trail would be a great addition'. A comment section was opened for this question and additional comments can be reviewed within Appendix D.

### **Q4. Of the following, what outdoor activities do you regularly participate in (Choose all that apply)?**

- ☐ Walking/Hiking    ☐ Running    ☐ Bicycling    ☐ XC Skiing/Snowshoeing    ☐ Fishing    ☐ Camping
- ☐ Kayaking/Canoeing    ☐ Wildlife Observation    ☐ Photography    ☐ Other (please specify)

The Study Committee selected question 4 to start to address user's needs, wants, and desires for a multi-use trail in their community, specifically related to outdoor activities. Of those who responded to this question Walking/Hiking and Wildlife Observation were most selected. XC Skiing/Snowshoeing fell at the bottom of the list as it was only popular with 26% of responders. This question was used to guide physical design of the trail system to accommodate multiple uses desired by responders. As noted, an option was "other (please specify)" which 100 responders selected and provided feedback. For a full list of responses please see Appendix D.

### **Q5. Please rank the following uses of multi-use trail to your preference 1 (most preferred) – 4 (least preferred).**

\_\_\_\_\_Recreation    \_\_\_\_\_Health & Exercise    \_\_\_\_\_Commuting    \_\_\_\_\_Time with Family & Friends

Question 5 addressed the needs, wants and desires of the community by having responder's prioritize general use and expectation of the trail. It was identified, through this question, that many responders viewed a multi-use trail as primarily an opportunity for recreation and health and exercise. Commuting was the least preferred option.

### **Q6. If a multi-use trail were present along the Lackawaxen River corridor connecting Hawley & Lackawaxen, how often and when would you use it? (Choose all that apply)**

How often:

- ☐ Never    ☐ Less than 10 times a year
- ☐ 10-25 times a year (Monthly)    ☐ 25+ times a year (Weekly)

When:

- ☐ Year – Round    ☐ Spring    ☐ Summer    ☐ Winter    ☐ Fall

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Study Committee used question 6 to focus in on the need of a trail system. By asking ‘how often & when’ the Study Committee was able to gather that most of the responders to this question could see themselves using the trail frequently and throughout the entire year. This response combined with the responses found in question 3, emphasized a great support and desire for the multi-use trail.

### **Q7. Who do you believe would benefit from a multi-use trail along the Lackawaxen River corridor connecting Hawley & Lackawaxen? (Choose all that apply)**

- ☐ Families      ☐ Children      ☐ Young People      ☐ Visitors      ☐ Local Community      ☐ Elderly  
☐ Special Needs Groups      ☐ Commuters      ☐ Businesses      ☐ Educational Groups  
☐ Pet Owners      ☐ Other Groups (please specify)

Question 7 was included in the survey to provide feedback on who the community felt would benefit from a proposed trail the most. This information provides a two-fold opportunity, first to identify who the public sees as the main benefit, and secondly to compare this information to the research conducted on trail benefits-- so the County can then work to educate the public on all the benefits a multi-use trail can provide across all user groups.

The results show that families, visitors, the local community, young people, children, and pet owners, in the eyes of those surveyed, would have the most benefit from a multi-use trail. Business and commuters were selected the least. Responders also provided a handful of suggestions under the “other groups (please specify), these answers are shown in Appendix D.

### **Q8. What general features / amenities do you believe a multi-use trail along the Lackawaxen River corridor connecting Hawley & Lackawaxen should include? (Choose all that apply)**

- ☐ Directional and way-finding marker      ☐ Interpretive signage at point of interest      ☐ River Access  
☐ Rest areas & seating      ☐ Picnic Areas      ☐ Access to drinking water      ☐ Toilet facilities  
☐ Parking      ☐ Exercise stations      ☐ Pet Areas      ☐ ADA accessibility

Question 8 was developed as the most specific question regarding amenities that could be incorporated into the trail system. In general, all the options except for three (3) were found to be an amenity more than 50% of survey responders wished to be a part of the multi-use trail: Exercise stations was selected by less than 25% of responders; Access to drinking water was selected by less than 40% of responders; Pet Areas was selected by less than 45% of responders. Woodland Design notes that this is in line with recent trends in trail use.

### **Q9. Please provide any additional comments or questions.**

While working through the selection of questions for this survey, the Study Committee decided that question 9 would be left with the ability for respondents to openly comment. All the comments are included in Appendix D. 214 comments were collected: each reflecting a wide range of support, questions, and concerns.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

**Q10. If you would like to be kept informed about the multi-use trail or would like to volunteer, please provide your contact information. Please note if you are interested in being added to a donation contact list. (Name, Mailing Address, Email, Phone)**

Appendix D features a list of 429 citizens who contributed basic contact information and expressed their desire to be kept informed about the multi-use trail or to volunteer in the future. 327 of those responders indicated their desire to be placed on a donation contact list.

### *Summary*

In summary, the information gathered from the Public Survey, Public Meetings, and the Study Committee meetings showcased a strong desire for the regional trail system, as illustrated, in the coming section(s), with some overall concern for safety, private property trespassing and littering.

The most striking information given during this process was the desire for a trail system which included *three elements*—a multi-use trail, a bike trail, and a paddle (water) trail to provide increased recreational opportunities to the area. Past investigation has revealed that the Lackawaxen River is considered a “public highway”, meaning that the area within its banks is public land. The railroad lands, which extend from Hawley to Lackawaxen, have been reviewed with the owner and the operator and both are willing to accommodate a multi-use trail along it. The Design Team moved forward, under the guidance of the Design Charette, to mark how these three trail types could be strengthened within the corridor.



### NEEDS, WANTS & DESIRES

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This feasibility study is intended to reflect the needs, wants and desires of the public to direct the planning of, and potential future implementation of, a multi-use trail network. Through public survey, public meetings, and study committee meetings, Woodland Design collected and considered the wants, needs, and desires of the population for three unique trails systems through a common corridor. The resulting proposed trail routes and trail system was created utilizing such information. While opposition to the study was present from the public, all input was welcomed during the study as no project is complete without considering concerns or reasoning for rejection of the idea as well as positive impacts of a trail system.

#### Planning Efforts

Throughout the planning portion of this study, the project team was presented with both physical and legal hurdles that had to be negotiated. While it was the intention of the multi-use trail to follow the railroad from Hawley to Lackawaxen, some of these physical constraints led the design team to explore alternative routes for trail implementation. In doing so, a connection to a trail already in planning was found and a strong connection to the local school system was developed. This connection expands the user group of the trail system immensely in the northern portion of the proposed network.

It should also be noted that, if the railroad were ever to shut down or be put on the market, the existing railroad properties and rail route would be a perfect future trail and it would be recommended that the county work with Wayne County to purchase the lands for conversion. However, at this time that is not being considered an option and alternative trail routes were reviewed.

#### Planned Trail Uses

It is the intent of this study to explore opportunities to enhance access to the existing and proposed trail systems within the river valley. Those existing uses include both boating (non-motorized) and biking. It was noted that the existing bike route is used primarily by “intense” bikers looking to bike for distance or speed. The planned trail would allow room and facilities for additional users to move at a more leisurely pace along the trail in a thoughtfully designed network, including trailheads to increase safety. The same can be said about water trail users, due to lack of access. Most kayakers or canoers utilizing this portion of water trail are committed to longer trips for the more experienced. The addition of trail heads and water access points will allow for shorter trips and increase the ability for all user types (beginner to advanced).

Proposed trail systems increase trail use types in the area by allowing space for hiking, walking, running, cross country skiing, etc. In this location, these types of trail uses are currently not allowable on the existing water and bike routes due to both inabilities to conduct those activities on the trail type (you can't hike in a river) or due to safety concerns (snowshoeing or cross-country skiing on a S.R. is not recommended). These proposed trail systems build off trails being developed in the area, some of which the proposed trail route connect to directly.

## LEGAL FEASIBILITY

### Managed Trail Uses

The trail system is intended to be utilized by hikers, bikers, and kayak/canoers and other similar passive recreation. Currently, it is not the intended purpose of this study to facilitate trail use by ATV/motor vehicles or horses as these uses are often conflicting with the intended uses. Eliminating these uses also lowers the risk of conflicts between adjacent landowners and alleviates additional safety concerns for the local emergency departments.

### Current and Future Demographics

Current demographics of the County and area was presented and discussed in the introduction of this report. It is anticipated that age ranges will maintain relatively similar over time, but that overall population will continue to increase as citizens of PA and nearby states continue to move out of cities and into more rural areas. It has already been documented that second homes have been converted to primary residences over the last two years and this trend is expected to continue. There has also been a drastic increase in additional second homes, in both recreational communities and residential lands throughout Pike County.

### Socioeconomic Profile of Trail Users

The socioeconomic profile of the trail users would mirror primarily that of the local demographics within the area, which was presented earlier within this report. The residents would most likely be the primary users of the trail because of increased opportunity for use and exposure. This profile spectrum would be altered seasonally as more tourists and visitors flock to the area in the summer months. This influx to the region may skew this mean average of users within the area due to proximity to higher population urban areas such as New York. Additionally, visitors to Woodloch Resort and second homes in the previously mentioned residential communities nearby may find the opportunity for additional outdoor recreation attractive during their stay, causing the profile of the user group of the trail system to be slightly skewed from that of the local demographics of the area.

### *Demand*

Trail demand across the state is increasing year after year as municipalities and residents see the social and economic benefits that arise from increased recreational opportunities close to home or in desirable vacation destinations. This location is no different as locals and visitors both utilize the picturesque river valley for fishing, kayaking, biking, bird watching and hiking. This proposed trail system would simply facilitate clustering these uses to specific spots (trailheads) and provide additional safety measures to make the trail system attractive to both highly active users and leisurely users and families.

### *Initial Usage*

Initially, this trail system would be utilized primarily by kayakers/canoers and bikers as the first phase of implementation would include a river trailhead to allow for the widest range of uses. This trail and trailhead system would provide parking and river access while also creating opportunities for users to park and ride or walk along the existing Bike Route Y in a safe location.

## LEGAL FEASIBILITY

### *Projected Usage*

It is projected that, with the proposed trail route connecting two heavily visited summer tourist destinations Hawley/Lake Wallenpaupack and Lackawaxen/Delaware River through a scenic, natural, and easily traversed trail route that the use of this trail will match many of the surrounding highly visited trail systems. These include the D&H/O&W Trails in Lackawanna Susquehanna and Wayne Counties and the D&L Trail in Bucks, Northampton, Lehigh, Carbon, and Luzerne Counties. Both of which are thriving trails with countless users daily and year-round. It is expected that outdoor recreation will not only never cease to be desired, but only grow over time. As cities and urban areas become more densely populated and the desire to “get away” to much more rural, undeveloped areas with designed recreational opportunities continues to grow, destinations like the proposed trail system shown in this report will be a factor when people travel.

### *Seasonal vs. Year-Round Demand*

It is anticipated that year-round use of the proposed multi-use trail will occur as shown in the public survey regarding time of year use and types of use desired. Although there will be a significant drop off in number of patrons visiting and using the trail system once winter weather enters the area, it is expected that cross-county skiing and snow shoeing will occur. Trail maintenance in winter months is not anticipated for the multi-use trail. The water and bike trail will see more of a seasonal use and these activities are not desired once snow and cold impact the area as the dangers of the activities increase dramatically.

### *Assessment of ATV Use*

Early in the study, ATV use was discussed to determine whether the County and Study Committee was interested in including it as a proposed use. It was agreed unanimously that, at this time and for this report, ATV use would not be considered.

## Impact of Potential Trail Uses on Design

When considering multi-use trail systems, several factors weigh into the design specifications of the network. Use type, soils, available widths, adjacent wetlands or waters, and access to facilities all play an integral part in the design. This trail network is no different as portions of the trail are intended to follow roadways and access roads while other lengths will need to be newly built. These newly built sections will require a different approach than those following existing stable surfaces. While the trail would be adjacent to the Towpath for portions of its length, it would be intended to acquire funding to plan and implement an appropriately wide trail for safety along the roadway. Considering the users of said trails, there are numerous surface types that could be utilized for the newly built portions. In most cases, 8'-10' stone dust trails are the most user friendly and easily maintained option for hikers and bikers.

### *Potential impact of trails on adjacent land uses*

Within the project corridor, specifically along the proposed trail route which includes the existing Bike Route Y and water trail, the impact on adjacent land uses would be minimal. As previously noted, the river valley is primarily rural residential development. As planned, a lengthy portion of the proposed trail would follow the existing Towpath Road along the river. The extension of the existing municipal and

## LEGAL FEASIBILITY

state roads as well as the development of a trail on railroad owned property would have no impact on the adjacent land uses continuing as they currently function.

### Safety and Emergency Considerations

While working within a remote corridor and trying to implement a trail network, safety is a main focal point for both emergency personnel and trail users. This concern became very apparent through input from the Study Committee and the public as both expressed recent experiences where safety and emergency access were an issue. Navigation within a corridor without wayfinding was one of the main concerns. This remoteness led the emergency responders in the area to acquire funding to install “river markers” along the river and roadway so that when emergency personnel are contacted, the users have a way to reference where they are located within the corridor, leading to faster response times.

This issue of safety is heightened even further when the lack of cell service to the river corridor is incorporated into the equation. While some cherish the moments when cell service is lacking and you can connect to nature, that thought changes rapidly in an emergency. In speaking with emergency services for the area, it was noted that a stretch of railroad property is particularly difficult to access, even with ATV or UTV’s due to stream crossings and trestle bridges between Kimbles and Rowland. These areas have posed a concern to the emergency responders for many years. To address these concerns, the trail route was altered, and the most remote stretches of the railroad corridor were avoided.

While traveling the railroad property was the desired path for users, the portion that has been adjusted to follow the Towpath Road is no-less picturesque and offers much more visibility and access. The relocation of the trail to this side of the river lends itself to additional funding opportunities with its new connection to State Roads and existing PA Bike Route. The last action taken by the Design Team was identifying and incorporating possible trailheads along the river to serve both the river users and trail users (biking and hiking). These trailheads will serve as additional identifiable and accessible points for emergency responders both on the river and on the trail network.

As implementation of the trail occurs, it would be a key component of increased safety to involve the local emergency response agencies in the conversation. Their input would allow a thorough and thoughtful plan to be implemented that addresses any concerns that could arise. This report can also serve as a vehicle for those agencies to apply for additional grants and funding to acquire upgraded equipment meant for accessing remote locations.

## LEGAL FEASIBILITY

As described in the previous section of the report, three trail types are desired in this Trail Feasibility Study: water (paddle, wade, access), biking, and multi-use (hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, etc.). Aside from looking to make sure all three trail types can physically be planned through the corridor; this study investigates the legal feasibility of implementing the work. This is done by reviewing landowners of the proposed trail routes and ensuring there is nothing legal restricting the proposed trail like disagreeing landowners or municipal or state laws. Information collected during this investigation is listed below.

## LEGAL FEASIBILITY

### Ownership of Identified Trail Corridor / Potential Alignment

#### *Current Property Owners*

In a past study finalized in 2020 for Wayne County, PA for a very similar project, “Valuation Engineering Mapping” was brought to the attention of the Design Team. These engineering maps, termed “Val Maps”, were made to clearly delineate the location, width, right-of-way location, and scope of the railway line during its creation. The Val Maps for the rail line segments within the study area were provided by Myles Group, the operator of the train system between Honesdale and Lackawaxen. The maps clearly show the rail right-of-way and its position adjacent to or within properties, as it was outlined when it was founded in 1864. The maps also clearly document the deeds which the railroad affects. A copy of these maps is included in the noted Appendix B.

The legality of using the railroad right-of-way as a trail, rather than strictly a railway was questioned multiple times, by various landowners, throughout the process. However, previous information gathered from the Wayne County Trail Feasibility Study along the same corridor provided resolution to the concern. Because this legal opinion was posed and the multi-use path along the railroad right-of-way is such a fundamental centerpiece of the trail network, the law firm of SPALL, RYDZEWSKI, ANDERSON, LALLEY & TUNIS, P.C, of Hawley PA was retained as part of the Design Team on August 26, 2019, to investigate the legal use of the railroad right-of-way for a trail system and to provide a document outlining their findings. On November 6, 2019, a legal opinion was provided to the Design Team by Attorney John Spall regarding the use of the railroad property for a multi-use trail (Appendix B). In summary, the opinion supports trail use by citing the language within the Quitclaim deed from 2003 (Appendix B), as well as examination of property owner and railroad deeds indicating no reversionary rights to the railroad property.

#### *Approaching Property Owners*

Through the process of laying out a potential trail route, there were several locations identified where the proposed trail route would be required to go off railroad properties due to physical constraints. As the study continued and public input was collected, it was also noted that many of these locations were on properties owned by those who were unwilling to work with Pike County in the future to develop the lands for recreational use, as temporarily identified in the study. These locations were noted, and additional study area was included in the study to produce a trail system with as few gaps as possible.

It has been noted throughout this report (public input, public meetings), that many landowners approached the study committee and design team, prior to the need for the design team to approach property owners, to contribute their thoughts and desires for the routes. Once the proposed trail route was finalized based on all collected data, there was a short list of landowners identified where future discussions would be required. A handful of these landowners were contacted, and the resulting discussions documented in Appendix D.



## LEGAL FEASIBILITY

### State Property

#### State Roads

Pennsylvania State Bike Route Y (US Bike Route 36 (USBR36)) exists along U.S. Route 6 which crosses just past the eastern edge of the Study Area through Hawley, PA. This Bike Route extends 398 miles across the center of Pennsylvania, from Ohio to New York. It follows much of U.S. Route 6, which was one of the first highways used to move natural resources, people, and products across the country. Towards the eastern edge of PA, this Bike Route also extends to include the Towpath Road (SR 4006) by way of Kimbles Road. As such, the route showcases U.S. industrial history, including the first underground mine, the first steam locomotive, and the first lighthouse on the Great Lakes. Cyclists along PA Bike Route Y/USBR 36 will also experience the Allegheny National Forest, Lake Erie, and the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon. Portions of bike lanes and travel ways in some areas accommodate bike traffic, and in others, do not. Legally, PennDOT, based on the Commonwealth's designation of Route 6, Kimbles Road, and S.R. 4006, as a PA Bike Route, allow the use of bikes in the travel lanes of all roads noted.

PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has begun development of a Master Plan for Bike Route Y/USBR 36 including suggested improvements and wayfinding. In 2017, a design guide for the first 160 miles was released. This action and data provided to date, provide the opportunity for a potential acceleration of the bike trail project within the corridor when combined with action taken on this Feasibility Study, with the opportunity to pursue grants and achieve requirements set by PennDOT.

Within this corridor along Kimbles Road, Tow Path Road, and State Route 590, the Right-of-Way width varies. In some of the areas along the Tow Path Road and 590, PennDOT Right-of-Way maps illustrate that PennDOT ROW has encompassed the adjacent remnants of the canal and tow path system. It would be the desire of the project to utilize this PennDOT ROW, creating a separate multi-use trail adjacent to the road and separated by a barrier. Due to narrowing topographic features in various locations, the trail may require the use of "sharrows" as necessary, like the planned improvements in the *PA Route 6 Bicycle Master Plan Design Guide*. Overall, additional ROW would not need to be acquired to achieve this, due to the existing width demonstrated within the PennDOT ROW maps.

As demonstrated within the *Pennsylvania Route 6 Bicycle Master Plan Design Guide* which is being utilized for the westernmost portion of Route 6, the intended improvements to accommodate bicyclists include a widening of the shoulders up to 5' width where possible and a rumble strip between the bike route and vehicular traffic route. Where expansions cannot be maintained due to existing site conditions or narrowing of the roadway, "sharrows" would be planned with the appropriate signage and roadway markings. Utilizing the proposed *Design Guide* across the entire State Route 6 would make wayfinding, familiarization, and implementation more easily recognizable across each region. In locations where a separate trail system adjacent to the roadway is not feasible, this system of a shared multi-use trail along the roadway would be the desired implementation strategy.

In addition to biking, Kimbles & Towpath Road were proposed as hiking routes within the road right of way. This provides for opportunities for trail connectivity in areas where physical restrictions (rock cuts) and safety concerns impacted the proposed trail's ability to avoid the multi-use trail area along the railroad.

## LEGAL FEASIBILITY

### *State Waters*

The Pennsylvania Department of Environment Protection (PADEP) has designated the Lackawaxen River, in the Study Area, as a public highway (per the Public Highway Declaration Act and the List of Navigable Streams). This allows the public to use, travel, and move within its banks legally. This is further elaborated on under the PA Fish and Boat Commission's definition of navigable waterways/public waters, proposing recreation, fishing, floating, wading all as legal uses.

Additionally, DCNR has developed a program called the Water Trail Designation Program. This program works to designate water trails by first suggesting a feasibility study be completed then working through an application process to become formally designated. More information regarding the benefits and process of the Water Trail Designation Program can be found on DCNR's website at:

<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/TrailDevelopment/WaterTrailDesignation/Pages/default.aspx>

### Adjacent Property Owners

Although it is recommended that the County continue to keep an open conversation with adjacent landowners to stay connected with the community and address any current or future concerns through the development of the proposed trail system, it is not required as the current design does not physically impact their lands. As discussed in previous sections, the use of public participation such as surveys and public hearings allowed for initial discussion and interaction between adjacent landowners and the County. This report took in all comments and questions and made a reasonable effort to research and address all concerns directly impacted or adjacent landowners expressed, specifically safety, littering, and trespassing.

### Method for Trail Establishment

It is recommended that the next action to be taken by the County is to secure trail easement agreements with the various landowners through further negotiations. It is imperative that the first landowner be the Stourbridge Railroad Company, the owner of the railroad property. Second, it is recommended that the County approach landowners associated with trailhead locations, specifically on the Towpath Road and work to finalize agreements or property sales.

The document, "Model Trail Easement Agreement with Commentary", 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, produced by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association, updated January 19, 2018. This document, included in Appendix B, has been presented to the County for consideration and potential use.

## Trail Concept Plan

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### Base Map

At the direction of the Study Committee and the County Commissioners, a study area base map was created showing a roughly bounded trail corridor passing through Palmyra and Lackawaxen Townships. It includes the Lackawaxen River, Towpath Road (State Route 4006), State Route 0590, and the Stourbridge Line Railroad. At the eastern end is the confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware Rivers, Veterans Memorial Park, and the Zane Grey Museum. On the western end, the trail would ideally meet up in downtown Hawley (Wayne County) at Bingham Park where it would connect with the Wayne County extension on this trail network (see Study Area & Boundary Extent Map Appendix A). Although the proposed final trail routes grew to extend outside the original Study Area, a launching off point was critical to begin the process.

Base data collected from the publicly available source Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access (PASDA) was added to the map such as, but not limited to, hydrology, topography, soils, and existing infrastructure to help guide the physical layout of the proposed trail. When areas of new study area were added to the mapping, due to physical and legal constraints, this same data was reviewed to guide the proposed trail location.

### Proposed Trail Maps

Nine (9) Proposed Trail Maps, located in *Appendix E*, illustrate the Final Pike County Trail Feasibility Study Area, from The Wayne/Pike County Border south of Hawley to the Village of Lackawaxen. These maps include all pertinent information gathered during multiple Study Committee and Public Meetings. Base information including property lines, aerial imagery, hydrology, roads, and topography were compiled using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data received from Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access (PASDA) during this project. Over multiple site visits, specific limiting factors were documented using a hand-held Trimble GPS unit for location, field notes, and photos. All specific opportunities for the trail(s) are shown and all constraints numbered at their specific location, with notes in the summary chart. From this map, an inventory of parcels that would be affected by the desired trail placement was gathered. Those landowners were contacted (see *Appendix D*). Landowners who wished not to allow the trail within their property were recorded and the maps updated to reflect these findings.

The legend includes desired parking areas, trail heads, and river accesses proposed at various locations dictated by the Committee based on the opportunities provided over the course of the Study.

### Renderings

Three (3) renderings are included and described below:



## TRAIL CONCEPT PLAN



**Rendering of proposed trailhead at Rowland Bridge connecting Bike Route Y to the multi-use trail along the railroad.**



**Rendering of Trailhead along S.R. 0590 & Bike Route Y creating access to river and parking.**



# TRAIL CONCEPT PLAN



**Rendering of proposed multi-use trail along the railroad and River showing educational and safety signage and protective fencing.**

## Cost Estimate

The cost estimate information provided is based on 2022 estimated industry standard pricing; Pennsylvania prevailing wage rates for Municipal and State funded projects; and applicable fees. These costs are approximate and only for a 10-foot-wide, compacted gravel, multi-use trail, with signage and adequate stormwater drainage. These numbers can serve as a guide for grant funding applications, however, specific adjustments and inclusions through design development can greatly affect pricing. The following is a list of the various sections of the overall trail system, where the section is defined by a designated stop or start physical feature. There is no priority given to any of these sections, and the sections are compiled in a west to east location listing.

• Proposed trail section from TH1 in Hawley to Gorge Trail (2,000 LF)*	\$200,000.00
• Proposed trail section from Gorge Trail to Wallenpaupack School (3,800 LF)*	\$380,000.00
• Proposed trail section from Wallenpaupack School (TH7) to SGL Parking area to (21,000 LF)	\$2,100,000.00
• Proposed trail section along Kimbles Road from SGL Parking Area to Kimbles (7,300 LF)	\$730,000.00
• Proposed trail section along SR 4006 from Kimbles to Rowland Bridge (45,000 LF)	\$4,500,000.00
• Proposed trail section from Rowland Bridge to Beisel Rd (15,000 LF)	\$1,500,000.00
• Proposed trail section along Beisel Road to Lackawaxen Boat Launch (TH6) (4,000 LF)	\$400,000.00
Approximate subtotal:	\$9,810,000.00

**\*Trail Section TH1 and the Gorge trail are a separate project being completed by a cooperating group traveling from Cromwell Ave up Wallenpaupack Creek towards Lake Wallenpaupack.**



## TRAIL CONCEPT PLAN

The following is a list of the proposed trailheads (vehicular parking and toilet facilities (composting) recommended along the trail core route where none currently exist as either part of an already established recreational site. Trailhead 1 (TH1) is the existing trailhead in Hawley connecting to the proposed below:

Towpath Road River/Trailhead (Potential property for purchase – TH2)	\$139,500.00
Pederson Property River/Trailhead (Potential Property of Nature Conservancy TH3)	\$139,500.00
Rowland Bridge Trailhead/Parking (TH4)	\$139,500.00
State Route 590 River/Trailhead (TH5)	\$139,500.00
Lackawaxen Boat Launch Trailhead (TH6)	\$139,500.00
Wallenpaupack School District Trailhead (TH7) (parking already exists)	\$100,000.00
Approximate subtotal:	\$797,500.00

\*Please note numbers do not include maintenance costs. All linear feet (LF) are approximate and should be verified. Cost is based upon a typical construction cost of \$100.00 per linear foot for new trail construction obtained from detailed analysis by this Consultant, of a Historic Unit Cost Report for “trail” search of bid activities within the state of Pennsylvania on April 1, 2022, by PennBid Program website ([pennbidprocureware.com](http://pennbidprocureware.com)). The evaluation was for those projects within 2021.

Trail heads are for a minimum of 12 parking spaces, crushed stone base at a lump sum cost of \$17,500.00, with 2 paved ADA accessible parking spaces and 25-foot paved access route at a lump sum cost of \$22,000.00. Toilet facilities are a dry composting double unit as manufactured by Clivus Multrum, Inc., or equal at the site delivered and installed price (prevailing wage rates) of \$95,000.00/unit. A \$5,000.00 allotment provided for incidental signage, and site accessories. Prices were determined by a combination Penn Bid Historic Unit Cost Report and documentation on file by the design Consultant for similar scope of work within 25-mile radius of the proposed site for projects utilizing PA DCNR funding in 2022.

All cost data resources are on file at the office of the Consultant and are subject to change over time.

A projected total construction cost of \$10,607,500.00, with an additional design and administrative cost of \$901,637.50 (8.5% of total construction costs) brings the grand total to approximately \$11,509,137.50.

TRAIL MANAGEMENT, OPERATION, MAINTENANCE,  
& FISCAL FEASIBILITY

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Maintenance Tasks, Cost, & Responsibility

The responsibility of trail maintenance will fall primarily on the County and/or volunteer organizations which take on an active role. A written maintenance plan should be created and followed throughout the course of the year. Having a written plan will save the County and/or volunteer organizations time and money as well as the ability to devote hours to each task. A recent study conducted in June 2015 by the Rails to Trails Conservancy & PA DCNR found that “60 percent of rail-trails do not have organized maintenance plans”. Having a trail maintenance plan creates an organized list of tasks to be completed throughout the year as well as demonstrates exercised responsibility to keep the trail safe for users while assuring safe and functional facilities. Tasks specified within the maintenance plan will include restroom and fence maintenance, trash cleanup/receptacle emptying, removing downed trees, stormwater maintenance, vegetation pruning, invasive species management, and mowing. Seasonally, clearing the trailheads of snow will allow visitors access to the trail while eliminating the need to groom the entire trail as flatter sloped trails experience many cross-country skiers. Also included will be maintenance of any damage to the wayfinding or trailhead signage, such as vandalism.

During the study, several organizations and groups offered their continued support for trail maintenance and trash cleanup: including local chapters of the Boy Scouts, the National Audubon Society, the local chapter of Trout Unlimited and other local trail groups. Another group recommended to contact for possible involvement by the Study Committee is the newly formed “Keep Hawley-Honesdale Beautiful”, which frequently conducts roadside litter pick-up along U.S. Route 6 primarily in the study corridor. The volunteer work that these groups can provide can lower the incurred costs of trail cleanup throughout the year and increase public support for the trail system through community involvement. Many documents are available providing maintenance and operation costs for Pennsylvania Trails, as there are many ways to build, operate, and maintain one, for a multitude of uses. The documents “PA Trail Design and Development Principles [2013]”, “Maintenance Practices and Costs of Rail-Trails [2015]” and “Rail-Trail Maintenance and Operation [2005]” by the Rails to Trails Conservancy, as well as “Construction and Maintenance for Trails [2007]” by AmericanTrails.org were used to generate approximate costs. Improvements like paving and the frequency of mowing can greatly affect these costs. During final design, County maintenance personnel should provide input regarding preferred maintenance and equipment availability to achieve desired operation while remaining within the available budget.

Approximate maintenance cost per mile annually [2022]:	\$1,750.00-\$3,000.00
Total yearly maintenance cost [2022] for total trail length:	\$32,375.00 - \$55,500.00

It should not be over-looked that along with Pike County, two municipalities (Palmyra & Lackawaxen Townships) have proposed trail sections within their jurisdiction. It is recommended that Pike County make efforts to engage these host municipalities in taking an active role in contributing toward the construction and maintenance of the trails proposed. These communities will gain both financially to their tax base and recreationally for their citizens. These municipalities can qualify on their own for grant opportunities through many of the same opportunities found later in the study.

## TRAIL MANAGEMENT, OPERATION, MAINTENANCE, & FISCAL FEASIBILITY

### Maintenance Schedule

Maintenance of the trail, as detailed above, will be a joint effort by the County and each respective volunteer group and municipality. It is generally assumed that a crushed stone trail will need to be resurfaced about every ten years. This task will not be considered as part of the regular seasonal maintenance of the trail and should be planned for at the onset of trail implementation. Regular, weekly maintenance is recommended with an in-depth maintenance review twice a year, to ensure winterization and spring opening.

### Trail Operation Revenue

Revenue via trail fees is not an anticipated income stream as part of this project. However, it is expected that businesses between Hawley and Lackawaxen will benefit from trail implementation due to store and restaurant patronage by trail users. This economic impact will not be immediately evident until the full length of the trail has been implemented and in place long enough for residents and visitors to utilize it on a regular basis. If desired, a parks or trails membership card and fee can be established to assure revenue and ongoing support. Donations for maintenance from the private sector as well as yearly financial support from the County and host municipalities are other sources to be explored.

### Trail/Risk Management

Public recreational opportunities and liability come hand in hand. Liability associated with proximity to a public trail was one concern raised by landowners adjacent to the trail during the first public meeting. Having an organized maintenance plan will lessen the likelihood of accidents or injuries occurring on the trail because of poor trail conditions. Public recreation locations are covered from a liability standpoint under the PA Recreational Use of Land and Water Act. Damage accrued from frequent use of the trail (degrading) and vandalism can be limited through the inclusion of vandalism deterrent paint and selecting materials that withstand frequent use; however, these items will have to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Opportunities for citizens to notify the County or municipality of an issue currently exist and the trail should be inventoried and assessed annually by maintenance personnel to assure upkeep.

### Fiscal Feasibility

Multiple grant opportunities exist to fund the three types of public trails proposed in this study. Over the course of the Feasibility Study, many groups came forward, including the Local History Round Table, Keep Hawley-Honesdale Beautiful, and the Lackawaxen River Trails; all offering grant pursuit abilities and volunteer maintenance. By gaining grants, donations, and sweat equity from volunteer groups and host municipalities for construction and maintenance, trail construction and upkeep costs are kept fiscally responsible.

# IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

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The request for proposal made by Pike County for this Feasibility Study, and subsequently included within the study tasks, requested an implementation matrix to show a strategy for execution of the entirety of the project. Subsequently, items have been prioritized based on need and impact for the continuation of development, not necessarily by location or price. It is, however, recommended that the first item be spearheaded by Pike County as the lead for execution. Overall, the Committee and County were interested in a recommended approach to fund, design, and construct the entire multi-use trail system, including support facilities (trailheads). The result is a recommended approach that addresses the proposed trails system logically through phasing and to minimize any unnecessary trail gaps.

It should be noted that there is no harm in swaying from the recommended approach, specifically if any groups or municipalities other than Pike County want to work on specific segments they identify as important or achievable due to location or price. The host municipalities: Palmyra and Lackawaxen Townships have the independent means of executing portions of this project within their jurisdiction via a combination of grant funding and other municipal and private sources and should be encouraged to do so, if desired. It should also be noted that groups, such as the Lackawaxen River Trails, having been successful financially, with volunteers, and helping to identify specific projects, such as river access development, can subsequently engage the municipalities as vehicles for matching funds to successfully obtain available grants.

It is recommended that Trailhead 5 (at the gas-line crossing along Towpath Road) be funded and constructed first. This will immediately give bikers and river users an approved access point where they can safely park and utilize the existing trail network along a stretch of river that has battled trespassing and safety issues for years.

From the “Cost Estimate” section above: State Route 590 River/Trailhead (TH5) \$139,500.00

In completing the selected trailhead first, many choices and issues will be worked out in this “pilot” approach for the County. For example: signage selection, the creation of a maintenance plan, experience through the funding and construction process, and the experience of running a joint municipality trail will all be gained by the team members creating this trailhead. All these selections and choices can be applied to the subsequent sections being designed and built, saving time and money. Pike County also has the unique opportunity to reach out and work with Wayne County to the north where they are successfully implementing trailheads along the Lackawaxen River, in multiple locations, following a very similar Feasibility Study along the Lackawaxen and spearheaded by the same community groups.

After this Trailhead is completed, the next section(s) of the trail recommended to be funded, designed, and constructed would be the trail from the planned Gorge Trail to Wallenpaupack School, east of Route 6. By creating this connection from Hawley to Wallenpaupack School property, the connection to the greater trail system north of Hawley is then established. Users traveling into Hawley from the northern system into Wayne County now have a route for access to Lake Wallenpaupack. Additionally, creating the connection to the school system would facilitate interest and urgency for the implementation of the connection onto the PPL Right-of-Way down to Kimbles Road. While this section, monetarily, may be a greater obstacle, it poses the most reward for use and builds great interest being connected to the school

## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

system and populated area around the Lake. Appendix D-6 elaborates on the Easement acquisition process for trails on PPL EU Right of Ways.

A list of grants for which this project may apply, with tentative application dates are provided below in the “Grants” section of this report.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX				
Phase *	Name	Responsible Parties	Estimated Costs	Funding
1	Trail Head #5	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$139,000.00	For all phases, please refer to Grant list for funding opportunities based on Phase Type and Responsible Party pursuing the Phase.
2	Gorge Trail to Wallenpaupack School	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$380,000.00	
3	Hawley to Gorge Trail	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$200,000.00	
4	Trail Head #7	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$100,000.00	
5	Wallenpaupack School to SGL Parking Area	Pike Co. and/or Palmyra Twp. and Lackawaxen Twp.	\$2,100,000.00	
6	Trail Head #2	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$139,000.00	
7	Trail Head #3	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$139,000.00	
8	Trail Head #6	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp.	\$139,000.00	
9	SGL Parking along Kimbles	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$730,000.00	
10	Kimbles to Rowland Bridge	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$4,500,000.00	
11	Trail Head #4	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$139,500.00	
12	Rowland to Beisel Road	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$1,500,000	
13	Beisel Road to Lackawaxen	Pike Co. and/or Lackawaxen Twp	\$400,000	

\*See phase map in Appendix E

## Grants

### *Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources (DCNR)*

Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources provides a variety of funds towards motorized and non-motorized trails under their *Recreational Trails Program (RTP)*. Their *Non-motorized Trail Grant Program* opens in January each year. These grants typically require a 50 percent match; however, non-cash matching options are available. To gain more information regarding non-cash matching options and grant funding limits, applicants are encouraged to reach out to their PA DCNR Regional Advisor.

*Grant Round: Jan. 22nd – Apr. 22nd; annually.*



## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources provides a variety of funds towards motorized and non-motorized trails under their *Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) Grant Program* for park rehabilitation and development, trail development, and land acquisition; including ATV (All-Terrain vehicles) projects and opens in January each year. These grants typically require a 20 to 50 percent match; however, non-cash matching options are available. There is no maximum dollar amount. There is however a \$500,000 cap on pre-construction funds. To gain more information regarding non-cash matching options and grant funding requirements, applicants are encouraged to reach out to their PA DCNR Regional Advisor.

*Grant Round: Jan. 15th – Apr. 22nd; annually.*

Contact: <http://apps.dnrc.pa.gov/grants>

Rachel Carson State office Building  
400 Market Street Harrisburg, PA 17105

### *Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)*

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development offers the *Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP)*, among others. Act 13 of 2012 establishes the Marcellus Legacy Fund and allocates funds to the Commonwealth Financing Authority to provide matching funds for the “planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of recreation trails, open space and parks.” Projects which provide river conservation are also desired. Municipalities, businesses, institutions, and authorized organizations can apply. Grants of up to \$250,000 are awarded and a 15 percent match of the project cost is required.

*Grant Round: February 1st – May 31st; annually.*

DCED also offers the *Multimodal Transportation Fund* which focuses on alternative forms of transportation and is specifically for projects over \$100,000. Funds may be used for the development, rehabilitation, and enhancement of transportation assets to existing communities, streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation assets and transit-oriented development. Municipalities, Councils of Governments, businesses, economic development organizations, ports and rail/freight are eligible. Grants of this type do not exceed \$3,000,000. 30 percent matching is typically required. The Fund is separate from PennDOT’s Multimodal Program.

*Grant Round: March 1st – July 31st; annually.*

DCED is also the administrative authority for the Monroe County Local Share Account (LSA). This grant is provided under Act 71 (the Gaming Act). These funds may be used for economic development, community development, and public interests’ projects in Monroe, Carbon, Lackawanna, Northampton, Pike, and Wayne Counties. This grant has no maximum and no match required.

*Grant Round: July 1st – September 30th; annually.*

## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

DCED is also the Administer of the *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)*. This is provided as identified under the Pennsylvania Act of 179 of 1984 as amended, for any eligible community development activities. Funding uses include housing rehabilitation, public services, community facilities infrastructure improvement, development, and planning. Pike County is currently eligible through the entitlement program which provides annual funding to designated municipalities. 75% of each entitlement grant must be used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons. For projects of this nature, funding would be specific to American Disabilities Act requirements.

*Grant Round: Annually, each year has a specific application period.*

Contact: <http://www.dced.pa.gov/how-to-apply>

Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North St. 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225  
1-866-466-3972

### *Local Share Account (LSA) - Statewide*

In conjunction with the Commonwealth Financing Authority and the Department of Community and Economic Development, the PA Race Horse Development and Gaming Act allows for the distribution of gaming monies for qualifying projects throughout the state. Over the last several years this opportunity has been made available for projects over \$25,000 and under \$1,000,000 with no required match. Eligible applicants include municipalities and Counties with redevelopment and revitalization projects. Applications are typically received from January to March of each year.

Contact: PA Department of Community and Economic Development

Center for Community Enhancement  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225  
(717)787-6245

### *Local Share Account (LSA)- Monroe County*

In conjunction with the Commonwealth Financing Authority and the Department of Community and Economic Development, the PA Race Horse Development and Gaming Act allows for the distribution of gaming monies for qualifying projects for Monroe County and the five (5) contiguous counties, which includes Pike County. Over the last several years this opportunity has been made available for projects over \$25,000 and under \$1,000,000 with no required match. Eligible applicants include municipalities and Counties with redevelopment and revitalization projects. Applications are typically received from July - September of each year.

Contact: PA Department of Community and Economic Development

Center for Community Enhancement  
LSA – Monroe County Program  
400 North Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225  
(717)787-6245

## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

### *Penn State Extension's Dirt and Gravel Roads Program*

The purpose of this program is to create a better public road system with a reduced environmental impact. Focuses of the program are to reduce the impact of road runoff and sediment into local streams and to reduce long term maintenance costs of the gravel roadways. Any state or local public entity that owns and maintains public roads is eligible to apply. The portion of this trail that proposes navigating along Bucks Cove Road would be an excellent candidate for this grant program to create a walkable/bikeable lane on the road while better managing the stormwater runoff into the Lackawaxen River. Monies are made available through an on-going application process at the local Conservation District. Application, contract, and other funding forms are available at the [dirtandgravel.psu.edu](http://dirtandgravel.psu.edu) website. This grant is a 50 percent matching grant.

Contact: [www.extension.psu.edu](http://www.extension.psu.edu)

### *Pennsylvania Game Commission*

Pennsylvania state wildlife grants program this grant program focuses money towards the conservation, preservation, and benefit of endangered species and their habitat. Grant award amounts and requirements change year to year. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to their regional Game Commission representative:

Contact: 2001 Elmerton Avenue Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797  
(717)787-4250

### *Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PAF&BC)*

The PAF&BC provides funds to develop and construct boating facilities to public entities, including townships, boroughs, municipal and county governments as well as non-profit groups that have or will have the capability to provide boat access facilities that are open and available for public use. This grant can cover up to 50% of costs for land acquisition, project design and engineering, development, expansion, and construction of public recreational boat access facilities.

PA DCNR State Parks offer a variety of signage with rules and regulations. These signs include laws conveying the ticketing, towing, and prosecution which may result if regulations are not followed. It is recommended that signage be like those PA DCNR provides. The PAF&BC periodically issues call for projects, it is important to check their website for updates.

Contact: 1601 Elmerton Avenue P.O Box 67000 Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000  
(717)705-7800

### *Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)*

The PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP) provides funds to develop and construct non-driver access to public transportation, trails, bicycle facilities, etc. This program is funded through the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program. Project construction costs for this grant are for at least \$50,000 and do not exceed \$1,000,000.

## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

\*Rails with trails projects, adjacent to active (not abandoned) lines” directly qualify for Eligibility under Appendix A of PennDOT’s Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Guidance Procedures. This should be confirmed with the PennDOT TA-Set Aside Grant Coordinator.

*Grant Round: All submitted information is due between July through September, on a two-year cycle. This should be confirmed with the PennDOT TA-Set Aside Grant Coordinator.*

The *PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF)* provides funds to develop and construct projects which provide access to or additional types of transportation. This includes, but is not limited to greenways, bicycle facilities, crosswalks, traffic lights, transit stops, upgrades, signage, and improving transportation connectivity. Grants are available for projects with a total cost of \$100,000 or more. Grant amounts normally do not exceed \$3,000,000 for any project. Local match is not less than 30% of the amount awarded.

*Grant Round: All submitted information is typically due to PennDOT by November 1<sup>st</sup>, annually. This should be confirmed with the PennDOT TA-Set Aside Grant Coordinator.*

*Contact: PennDOT District 4*  
65 Keystone Industrial Park Dunmore, PA 18519  
(717)775-3276

### *Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC)*

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) offers several mini-grants (typically up to \$20,000) for existing and proposed trails (water, pedestrian, cyclist, and snow sport) and awards a “River of the Year” each year. The Lackawaxen River was River of the Year in 2010.

*Contact: Northeast Region*  
175 Main Street, Luzerne, PA 18709  
(570) 718-6507

### *Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau (PMVB) Community Impact Grant*

At the time of this report the Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau is offering grants to municipal and redevelopment authorities and agencies for projects that improve the quality of life, support recreation, and have a lasting community impact. A 50% match is required with a limited amount of funding available. Submissions were due by April 30, 2022, and awards were made on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. (This is the first of a possibly annual grant).

*Contact: Marlyn Kissner*  
Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau  
mkissner@poconos.org  
(610) 751-4932

# IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

## Recommendations

As part of the study process, the Pike County Commissioners asked the Study Committee to formalize a list of recommendations addressing implementation of the trail project. Recommendations are as follows:

- Enter into an easement agreement with the owner of the Railroad for trail use within the rail right-of-way so the core of the trail can be created and opened to the public.
- Enter into an easement agreement with landowners for trail use on their property, large portions of the trail can be finalized and opened to the public.
- Develop working relationships with property owners adjoining the railroad right of way to address concerns regarding trespassing, littering, conflict with neighboring land use such as hunting and privacy, by utilizing solutions already in existence at other well-established trail routes, such as volunteer policing, and alternative routing or closure during rifle big game hunting seasons.
- Develop a list of grants to be applied for – acquisition grants for properties to be used along the trail corridor are particularly beneficial to the creation of the trail network.
- Coordinate support with each Municipality to attain fiscal, operational, and legal support.
- Having the County enter into a contract agreement with the Lackawaxen River Trails would be very helpful. This group can then provide day to day operations, maintenance, matching funds, enforcement of trail rules, and public outreach for the trail.
- The Lackawaxen River Trails can be designated to work with landowners to address their continued concerns, such as: trespassing, littering, safety during rifle hunting seasons, designations of river accesses, and displaying of signage (rules and regulations).
- The review of State Route 590, Kimbles Road and the Towpath Road Bike Designation and possible upgrades, including signage can be pursued.
- The County or the Lackawaxen River Trails should consider the development of a feasibility study to have the Lackawaxen River formally designated as a State Water Trail as indicated in the DCNR program.
- Priority should be placed on moving forward with the water trail portion of the project because of the current interest of the PAF&BC in Wayne County's Trail Feasibility Study and progress that has been made as well as their interest in Pike County's study. A grant application should be filed with them for development of the various water access points.

## SIGNAGE PLAN

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### Trail Logo

It is recommended that the County follow suit with Wayne County, PA's current signage plan developed for the Lackawaxen River trails to maintain continuity and connection between the two counties on their similar goal. The logo can be found on the group's website [lackawaxenrivertrails.org](http://lackawaxenrivertrails.org).

### Sign Type

Over the course of the Feasibility Study a variety of requests and comments were made pertaining to the two varieties of signs which exist on multi-use trail systems throughout the state. It is recommended that wayfinding signage in the forms of mile markers, trail head name and mapping, and arrow signage, all match and are coordinated. This will assure ease of reproduction and replacement as well as provide a uniform design as the trail system grows and expands. It is also recommended, as mentioned above, that the county work closely with Wayne County and groups moving their trail system along the Lackawaxen River to keep signage consistent throughout the entire corridor and trail system.

### Wayfinding and Rules

At a minimum, signage at trail heads should be provided which state the name of the trail, provide a map of the trail route with distances and surrounding public focal points, and outline the following rules and regulations:

#### Trail Rules and Regulations

1. Trail use is from dawn until dusk.
2. Trail use is for pedestrians, bicyclists, pets on leashes, cross country skiing, and snow shoeing. No motorized vehicles are permitted.
3. All trail users are to remain on the trail pathway, river accesses, or designated recreational areas. Please enjoy the surroundings without damaging them or trespassing.
4. No littering or dumping. Those found in violation will be subject to Pennsylvania Littering and Illegal Dumping Laws (PA Vehicle Code, Title 75 Chapter 49).
5. Please follow all signage rules and regulations. Portions of this trail are closed during different dates and times throughout the year.
6. No hunting is permitted.
7. Alcohol is prohibited on this trail system and in parks statewide.
8. Fires are prohibited.
9. All weapons are prohibited.
10. No camping or overnight activities are permitted.

"Engaging in activity prohibited...constitutes a summary offense under section 7506 of the Crimes Code (regarding conduct on Commonwealth property.)"

*-PA DCNR. Title 17 Rules and Regulations. Subpart B: State Parks. Chapter 11. General Provisions. Page 24-25.*

PA DCNR State Parks offer a variety of signage with rules and regulations. These signs include laws conveying the ticketing, towing, and prosecution which may result if regulations are not followed. It is recommended that signage be like those PA DCNR provides.