



Concept Plan for the Brandywine Creek Greenway West Branch Addendum

*A partnership of twenty-four greenway municipalities
and the Brandywine Conservancy
April 2013*



Acknowledgments

Greenway Liaisons

City of Coatesville

East Fallowfield Township

Modena Borough

Newlin Township

South Coatesville Borough

Valley Township

West Brandywine Township

West Caln Township

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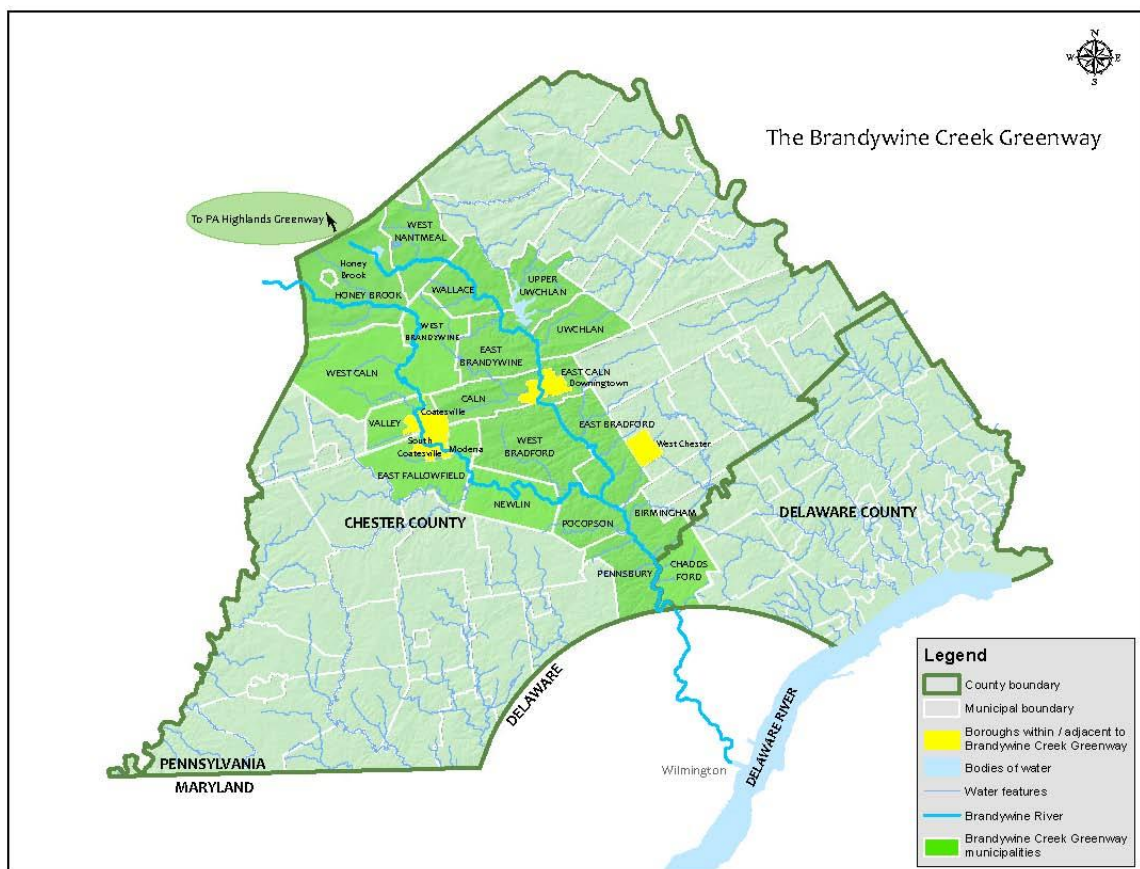
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Preface

From June to December 2012, eight municipalities that border the west branch of the Brandywine Creek, now called the West Branch Region, participated in the Brandywine Creek Greenway planning process. The West Branch Region municipalities include Newlin Township, East Fallowfield Township, Modena Borough, South Coatesville Borough, City of Coatesville, Valley Township, West Caln Township, and West Brandywine Township. The eight west branch municipalities bring the number of partnering greenway municipalities to twenty-four. See Figure 1.

Figure 1: Study Area



Glossary (additions)

Greenway A greenway may be broadly defined as a corridor of protected public and private open space managed for conservation and/or recreation purposes. Its width varies from narrow ribbons of green that run through urban and suburban areas to larger landscapes that incorporate diverse natural, cultural and scenic features.

The Greenway Vision

The Vision Statement, below, reflects the broader greenway study area that includes 24 municipalities along the main stem and both branches of the Brandywine Creek.

The Brandywine Creek Greenway is envisioned as a 30-mile long conservation corridor of varying width stretching from the Delaware State Greenway, near the Delaware state line in Chadds Ford, to the Horseshoe Trail Greenway and the Pennsylvania Highlands Greenway in the north. The proposed Greenway spans 24 municipalities along the main stem and east and west branches of the Brandywine Creek and consists of publicly- and privately-owned lands. The vision is for it to include an interconnected system of open spaces, natural and cultural features, formal trails, informal paths, parks, river access points, and wildlife corridors; and will link the Brandywine Creek with many Chester and Delaware County communities including Chadds Ford Village, West Chester Borough, Downingtown Borough, City of Coatesville, South Coatesville Borough, Modena Borough, Honey Brook Borough, and Elverson Borough.

Summary of Meetings and Events

The following summarizes the tasks and events that were used to collect data and to engage the West Branch Region for completion of this Addendum to the Concept Plan:

2012

July – September

- Municipal presentations and introduction
- Inventory mapping circulated for review

October

- West Branch Region Workshop

December

- Draft Addendum and Concept Map distributed for informal review

January

- Revised Addendum and Concept Map distributed for review

2013

March

- Final Draft of the Addendum completed



Goals and Objectives

The West Branch Region municipalities generally concur with the Goals and Objectives presented in the Concept Plan for the Brandywine Creek Greenway dated June 2012. One additional Goal and three Objectives are added in this Addendum:

Goal 8: Economic Prosperity

To foster economic activity in urbanized areas

- Objective 1 Increase the number of visitors to existing recreational facilities within the greenway.
- Objective 2 Implement regional open space and transportation initiatives such as the Central Chester County Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan, the Struble Trail, and the Chester Valley Trail.
- Objective 3 Promote the city and boroughs as trail towns that offer a range of goods and services for greenway visitors.

Planning Context and Consistency

Pennsylvania

DCNR identifies major greenway corridors that exist or are under development in the state whether they are land or water based (or combination) on the PA Major Greenway Corridors Map. The West Branch Region is recognized by DCNR as an integral part of the Brandywine Creek Greenway (referred to on the PA Major Greenway Corridors Map as the Mason Dixon Greenway).

Regional Plans

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's (DVRPC) 2035 Greenspace Network Map shows the West Branch of the Brandywine Creek as a major greenway corridor, and DVRPC's Conservation Focus Area Map includes portions of the West Branch in the Brandywine Valley and Upper Brandywine Agricultural Region as conservation focus areas.

Pennsylvania Highlands Greenway

Two municipalities in the West Branch Region are located within the Pennsylvania Highlands, bringing the total number of greenway municipalities in the Highlands to seven. Figure 2 illustrates Chester County Highlands municipalities and the Brandywine Creek watershed. Figure 3 illustrates the Pennsylvania Highlands Greenway. For more information go to <http://www.outdoors.org/conservation/wherewework/highlands/>

Figure 2: Pennsylvania Highlands Region of the Greenway

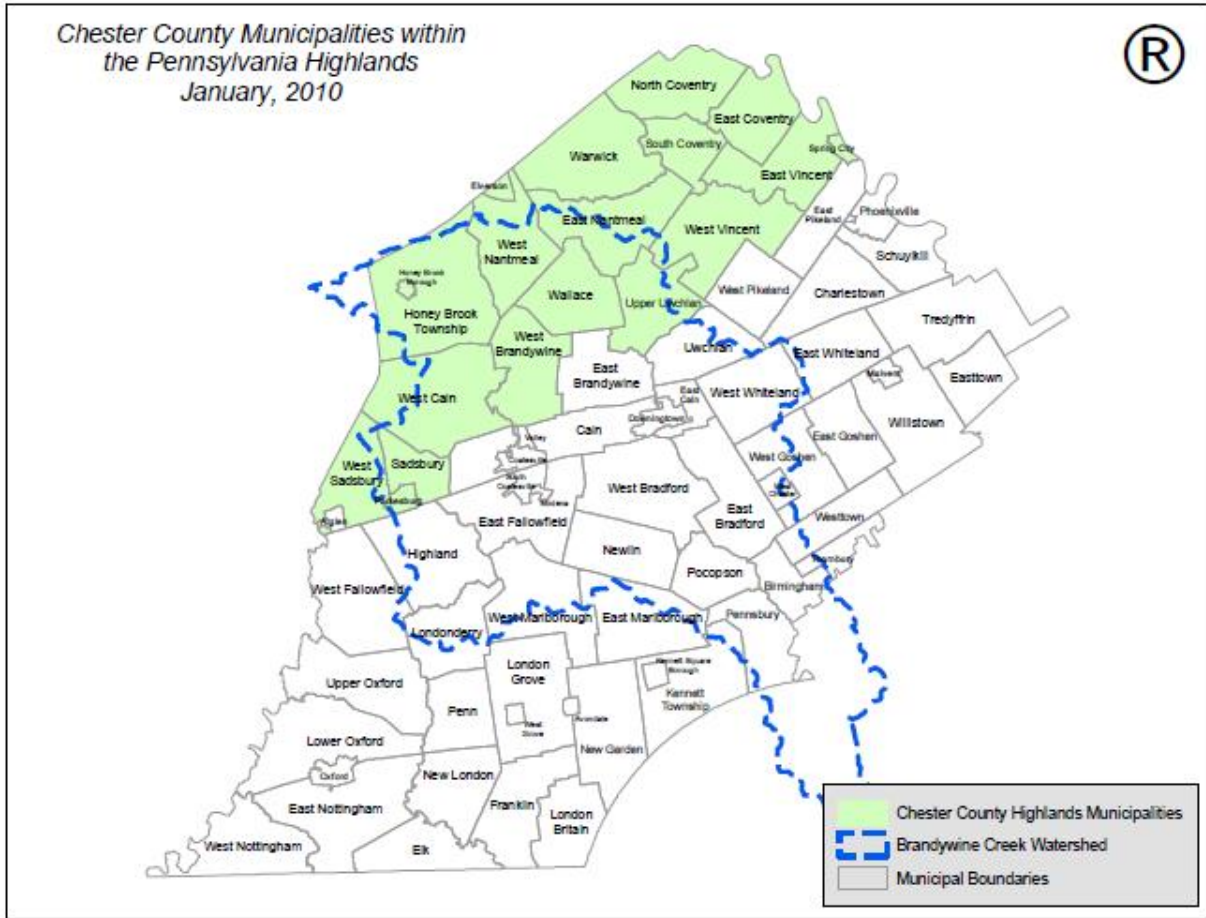
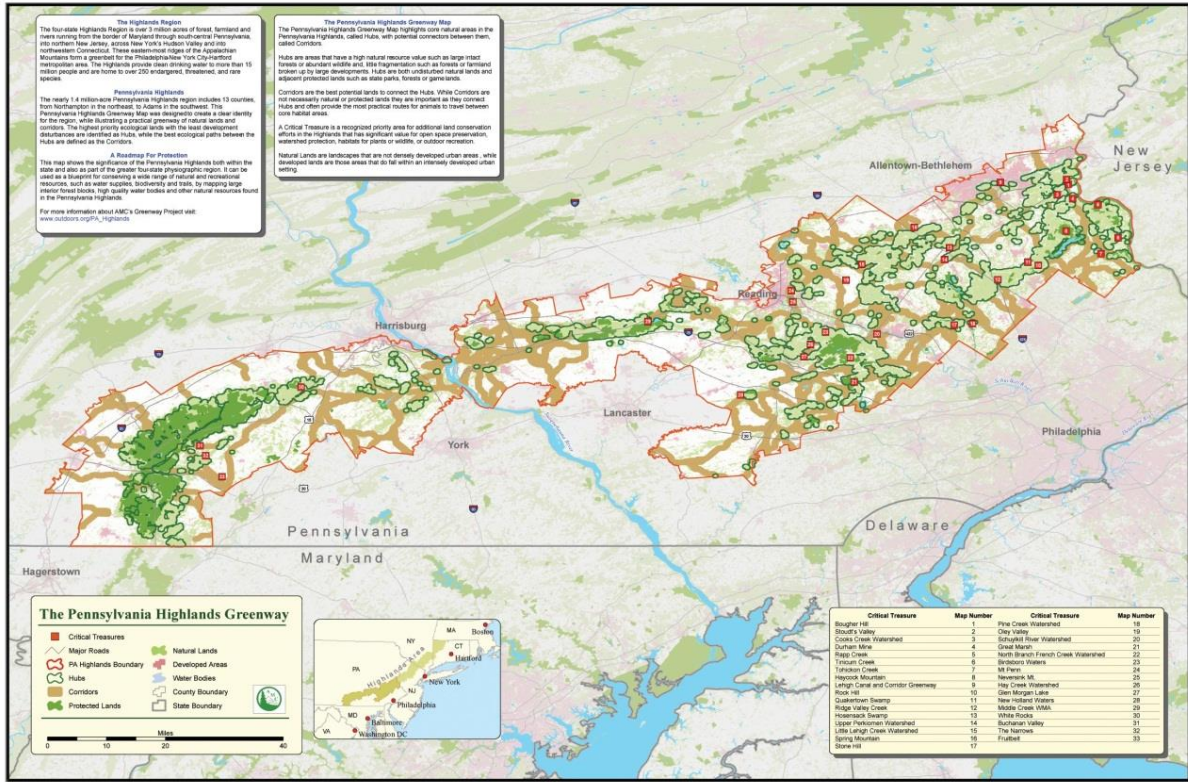


Figure 3: The Pennsylvania Highlands Greenway



Lower Brandywine Scenic River

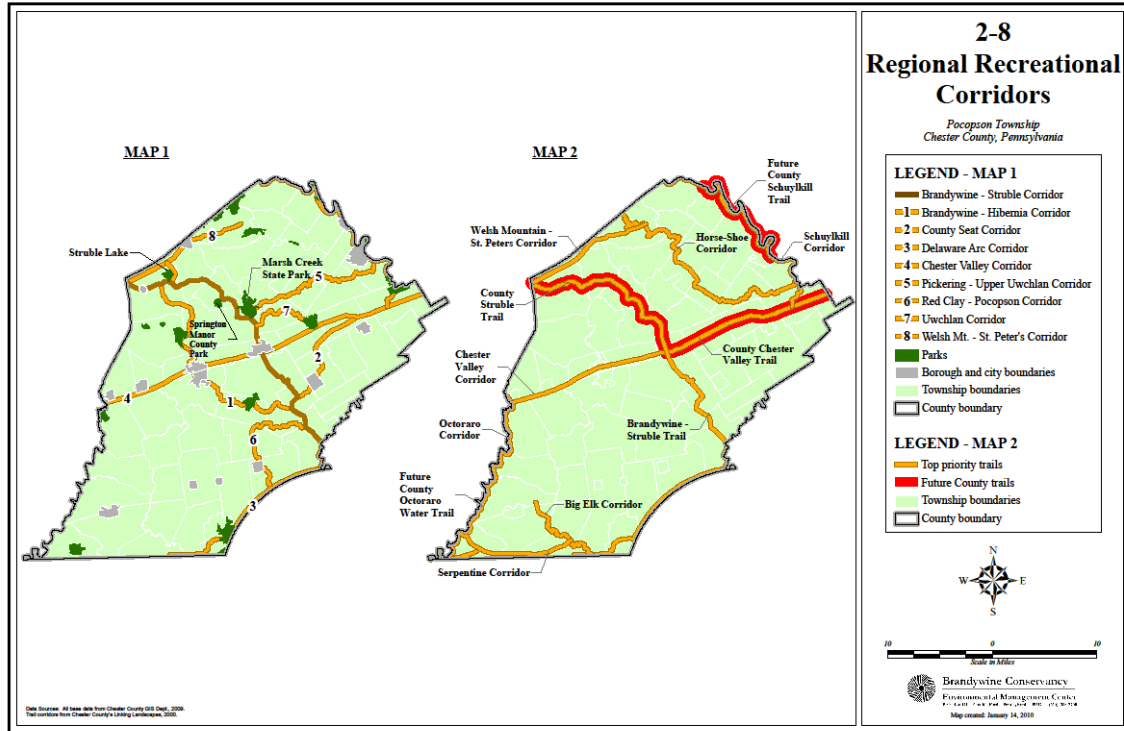
The Lower Brandywine Scenic River region is located within the West Branch Region of the Brandywine Creek Greenway including Newlin and East Fallowfield Townships. The Lower Brandywine Scenic River corridor begins at the Delaware state line, continues up the main stem of the Brandywine, includes the east branch south of Downingtown and the west branch to Buck Run and Doe Run.

Chester County

Chester County is the fifth-most populous county in Pennsylvania, with a population of 503,897, according to the United States Census Bureau 2011 estimate. The East and West Branches of the Brandywine Creek were first mapped by the Chester County Planning Commission as the Brandywine-Struble and Brandywine-Hibernia Regional Recreation Corridors, respectively (Figure 2-2 in Concept Plan), in Linking Landscapes, the open space component of the Chester County Comprehensive Plan. The Chester Valley Regional Recreational Corridor links the east and west branches of the Brandywine along the Chester Valley rail corridor. Linking Landscapes defines a Recreation Corridor as a 2,000 foot wide planning zone that is potentially a location for a regional trail. See Figure 4.



Figure 4: Chester County’s Regional Recreational Corridors



The west branch of the Brandywine Creek is also identified in *Linking Landscapes* as a Wildlife Biodiversity Corridor, a broad conceptual planning zone that could link important wildlife habitats and improve wildlife migration along the Brandywine Valley. These wildlife transportation corridors should avoid overlap with human transportation corridors wherever possible since wildlife habitat can be damaged by intensive human use.

In *Watersheds: An Integrated Water Resources Plan for Chester County* (2002), an element of the *Chester County Comprehensive Plan*, seven priority management objectives were identified for the Brandywine Creek:

- Reduce stormwater runoff
- Restore water quality of impaired streams
- Protect vegetated riparian corridors
- Increase public access to streams
- Undertake integrated water resources planning for growth areas
- Implement source water protection measures
- Protect/enhance water-based cultural, historic, and recreational resources

Watersheds lists the Rock Run/Sucker Run sub-basin in West Caln Township as one of the highest priorities to restore stream conditions and sensitive resources. It is also



listed as a first-order stream corridor with more than 35% in a woodland or wetland condition that should be protected. First order streams are also called headwater streams that occur in the upper reaches of the watershed. Other issues identified in *Watersheds* included recommended protection of surface water intakes for public water supplies at Embreeville, Rock Run, and Wagontown.

Municipal Comprehensive Plans

Each comprehensive plan of the west branch municipalities was collected and reviewed by the Brandywine Conservancy for consistency with the greenway initiative. In some cases, if a municipality's plan was found to be consistent with County planning documents, then it was viewed as consistent with the greenway initiative. For some west branch municipalities, comprehensive plans have not been updated for over ten years.

Inventory maps that were generated to develop this concept plan addendum were also reviewed by each municipality for consistency with their current planning documents. This Addendum to the Concept Plan is consistent with the open space preservation, natural resource protection, and recreational amenity goals of each of the eight West Branch Region municipalities.

Greenway Functions

Twelve possible greenway functions were identified for the Brandywine Creek Greenway. West branch representatives were asked to vote for what they perceived would be the most popular of these functions in their municipality. Results of the Greenway Functions Checklist task, completed during the regional workshop for the West Branch Region, are listed below:

West Branch Region (eight municipalities) - Greenway Functions

- Recreation (7 votes)
- Plant and animal (6 votes)
- Water quality (6 votes)
- Education (5 votes)
- Flooding (5 votes)
- Buffers (4 votes)
- Historic (4 votes)
- Economic opportunities (3 votes)
- Transportation alternatives (3 votes)
- Scenic (3 votes)
- Agricultural lands (2 votes)
- Air quality (0 votes)

The most popular function selected by the West Branch Region municipalities was to promote recreation and public use of municipal-, county- and state-owned open space. The second-most popular functions were to preserve and enhance plant and animal corridors and to enhance water quality in the Brandywine and its tributaries. The municipalities with a greater degree of urbanization indicated that, despite dwindling natural resources in highly developed areas, it was important to protect and enhance what few natural resources remained. The west branch municipalities indicated that fostering outdoor education and mitigating flooding were the third-most popular functions of the greenway. The high score of outdoor education is possibly related to the large population and numerous schools within the west branch boroughs of Modena and South Coatesville and the City of Coatesville. These results are somewhat consistent with the top three priority functions identified by the collective 24 greenway municipalities as shown in Table 1 (recreation, plant and animal, water quality). Providing transportation alternatives was less of a priority in the West Branch Region than it was in the other regions, where transportation is ranked fourth by popular vote.

Although greenway functions have been ranked by overall popularity, it is important to consider that the less popular greenway functions are important to some municipalities, and each municipality has its own unique view of how the greenway will function in its community. This Addendum to the Concept Plan is intended to acknowledge and respect the uniqueness of each municipality in the West Branch Region while recognizing our common needs and opportunities.

Table 1: Greenway Functions for all 24 Municipalities

Greenway Theme Maps	Possible Greenway Functions	Votes
Natural Features	Preserve vital plant and animal habitat corridors such as riparian buffers, wetlands, and woodlands	18
	Enhance water quality in the Brandywine and its tributaries	17
	Improve air quality in developed areas	1
	Control and/or mitigate flooding in flood-prone areas	14
Open Space and Recreation	Manage economic opportunities to boost local economy	7
	Promote recreation and public use of municipal, county, and state-owned open space	19
	Foster outdoor education and school access to open space	10
	Provide transportation alternatives for walking, bicycling, and equestrian activities	16
Cultural	Buffer the Brandywine Valley from intense development	9
	Preserve productive agricultural lands	9
	Protect state- and municipally-designated scenic resources	9
	Preserve nationally and municipally-designated historic structures and districts	14

Votes for greenway functions categorized by Theme Maps: Map 2 - Natural Features; Map 3 - Open Space and Recreation; and Map 4 - Cultural Features.

Hubs, Nodes, and Corridors

General Patterns and Observations

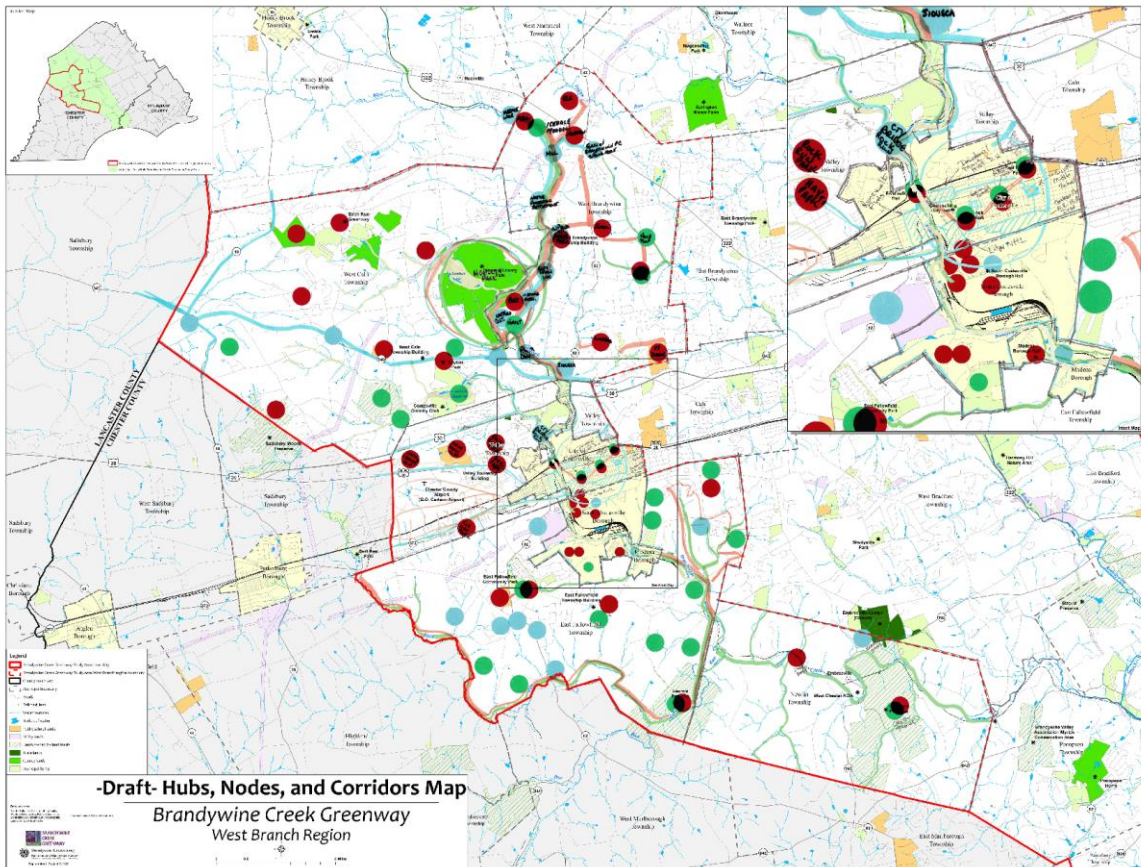
During the West Branch Regional Workshop, municipal representatives mapped significant natural, cultural, and recreational features within their municipalities. The hubs, nodes and corridors task helped to identify key features within the larger context of the greenway. See Figure 4.

Two hubs were identified: Hibernia County Park as a natural/cultural/recreational hub (see Figure 5, area circled in red, blue and green); and the City of Coatesville/Borough of South Coatesville/Modena borough area as a cultural hub (see Figure 5, inset, area circled in blue). Hibernia County Park provides multiple recreational opportunities including over 900 acres of trails, woodlands, meadows, pavilions, camping, picnic areas, Chambers Lake, and historic Hibernia Mansion which offers public tours. The City of Coatesville, Modena Borough and South Coatesville Borough combine the culture and history of the steel mills and a unique industrial heritage with modern day goods and services in a highly developed region. South Coatesville is home to the newly-constructed Chester County Emergency Training Center campus and numerous recreational facilities along the Brandywine.

Many of the well-known parks, recreation areas, historical sites and natural areas within west branch municipalities are shown as nodes. Examples of nodes along the west branch include: ChesLen Preserve, Coatesville Reservoir, and the Coatesville High Bridge. They also include historic sites such as Boxtown, Bakers Farm and Myers Camp in South Coatesville and Indian Hannah's grave and the Stargazer's Stone in Newlin Township.

Examples of natural and recreational corridors include: trails, riparian buffers, floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, and the waters of the Brandywine Creek and its tributaries. Cultural corridors are highlighted along existing roads, including Route 340 through West Caln Township, State and Business Route 30 in Valley Township, and along Route 372 in Valley Township.

Figure 5: Workshop Product - Hubs, Nodes and Corridors



The entire length of the west branch of the Brandywine Creek from Newlin Township to West Brandywine Township is highlighted as a natural corridor. West Brandywine highlighted the Brandywine Creek as also a cultural and recreational corridor along the length of the municipal boundary from Valley Township to Honey Brook Township. The west branch, from the north of West Brandywine Township to its confluence with the east branch at Shaws Bridge, functions as a water trail for canoeists and kayakers. Buck Run and Doe Run in East Fallowfield Township were identified as natural and recreational corridors that envelop the southern tier of the municipality. Various parks and recreational facilities are linked with recreational corridors in East Fallowfield Township, City of Coatesville, and West Brandywine Township. A ridge of woodlands and steep slopes forms a corridor along the railway lines in the south of Valley Township.

When the eight workshop maps were pieced together, patterns began to emerge. Recreational nodes were less numerous in West Caln and Newlin Townships than the other west branch municipalities because there are few public recreation facilities. They became more concentrated in the urbanized areas surrounding Coatesville, most likely because park facilities are provided to meet the recreational needs of

densely populated areas. Corridors that connect recreational nodes (i.e., trails) are fragmented. Cultural nodes are dispersed throughout the West Branch Region with clusters in the City of Coatesville, Modena Borough, and South Coatesville Borough. Historic sites cluster along the Brandywine and are associated with early settlement patterns. Natural nodes are predominantly found along creeks and streams and include local parks, interior woodlands, and lands owned by land trusts. Consistent throughout all municipalities is the concept of the west branch as a natural corridor that links habitat areas.

West Brandywine Township portrayed the west branch of the Brandywine as a natural, cultural, and recreational corridor and emphasized the potential connectivity among its resources while most municipalities envisioned the west branch as a recreational corridor. West Caln and Newlin Townships did not envision any significant recreational use along the Brandywine. This is possibly due to the significant protected lands in Newlin Township and the significant woodlands and special protection sub-watersheds in West Caln Township. Given their relative seclusion and limited development, West Caln and Newlin Townships could become destinations for night sky viewing.

Analysis and Discussion

Protected Lands

A large area of privately-owned lands protected by conservation or agricultural easements is located in the south of the West Branch Region. In Newlin Township, privately-protected lands and the ChesLen Preserve, owned by Natural Lands Trust and accessible to the public, are situated along the west branch of the Brandywine. In the southeastern quadrant of East Fallowfield Township, privately-protected lands are aligned with Buck Run and include the Laurels Preserve, owned by the Brandywine Conservancy and accessible to Conservancy members. There are a few scattered parcels of protected lands in West Caln and West Brandywine Township. A concentration of publicly-owned/publicly-accessible open space occurs along the west branch of the Brandywine through Valley, West Brandywine, and West Caln townships. Creeks that are within the 100-year floodplain and are protected from further development within the West Branch Region include: the entire West Branch Brandywine Creek, Buck Run and Dennis Run in East Fallowfield Township, Sucker Run in Valley Township, Rock Run in West Caln and Valley townships, Birch Run in West Caln Township, and an unnamed tributary that follows Telegraph Road in West Brandywine Township.

Unprotected Resources

Important bird areas, woodlands, special protection waters, and Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) sites occur throughout the west branch and many

are not currently protected. In West Caln Township, hundreds of acres of woodlands that are connected along Birch Run occur on unprotected privately-owned land. Other significant areas of woodland complexes on privately-owned land occur in Valley Township north of Route 372 and in East Fallowfield Township south of Route 372. According to the National Audubon Society, Important Bird Areas (IBA) are sites that provide essential habitat for one or more species of bird for breeding, wintering, and/or migration. One IBA is situated at the border between East Fallowfield and Newlin townships where it occurs on permanently protected private land.

PNDI stands for Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory which is the Environmental Review (ER) function of the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP). It is set up to help identify impacts to threatened, endangered or rare plants, animals, natural communities, and geologic features throughout Pennsylvania. The four Jurisdictional Agencies of the Heritage Program include PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (Bureau of Forestry) (DCNR), PA Game Commission (PGC), PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) and US Fish & Wildlife Services (USFWS). Small PNDI sites are scattered along the west branch of the Brandywine and most are permanently protected in publicly-owned lands. However, some of these sites do occur on private land. Remarkably, a PNDI site is located in the City of Coatesville, north of Business Route 30 and east of Route 82, in a highly developed region of the west branch. For more information on PNHP and PNDI, visit <http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/>.

Water Quality

Special measures are required to ensure conservation of water quality in Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP)-designated special protection (High Quality and Exceptional Value) watersheds. Regulatory and non-regulatory provisions can be explored that would protect mature woodlands and enhance riparian buffers with a focus on special protection watersheds. The Brandywine Creek Watershed Conservation Plan, prepared by Brandywine Valley Association and the Chester County Water Resources Authority in 2003, identifies the high quality watersheds in West Caln Township as priority areas for conservation and protection of water quality. Other high quality watersheds occur in West Brandywine, East Fallowfield, and Newlin townships. DEP lists the west branch of the Brandywine as “impaired” from the northern border of the City of Coatesville to the south through Newlin Township. Various small tributaries are also impaired in Newlin Township, East Fallowfield Township, Valley Township, and West Brandywine Township. All west branch municipalities are required to implement NPDES Phase II regulations.

Summary of Study Area Opportunities

The west branch municipalities generally concur with the Opportunities and Challenges presented on pages 37 and 38 of the Concept Plan for the Brandywine Creek Greenway dated June 2012. Additional Opportunities and Challenges added by this Addendum for the West Branch Region include:

- Hibernia County Park serves as a popular natural, cultural and recreational hub for residents of surrounding communities.
- Coatesville, South Coatesville, and Modena are coordinating a network of interconnected urban recreational trails.
- The Chester Valley Trail will ultimately provide an east-west connection between the east and west branches of the Brandywine Creek Greenway.
- Thousands of acres within special protection watersheds are candidates for conservation or agricultural easements, and include woodlands and PNDI sites.
- Cultural and historic resources can become better interpreted for the public, especially where there is a direct connection to the Brandywine Creek.
- The west branch of the Brandywine is actively used for recreation by canoeists and kayakers, and there are opportunities to improve access.
- Utility lands are prominent in the West Branch Region and may provide trail connections between neighborhoods and public open space.

All of Pennsylvania's streams are periodically assessed by DEP to determine whether the waters are meeting their designated uses. Biannually, DEP publishes the **Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report**, which includes the **305(b) assessment**. Segments which fail to attain their designated uses are then listed on the 303(d) Impaired Waters list and placed on a schedule for DEP to develop a control plan for discharges to the stream, including stormwater runoff, that strives to bring that stream segment back into compliance. The Integrated 305(b) Assessment and 303(d) Listing is available at:

<http://www.depweb.state.pa.us>

Summary of Study Area Challenges

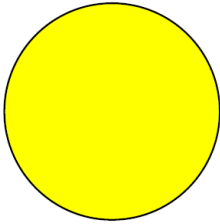
- Water quality in the west branch of the Brandywine Creek and in several tributary streams is impaired.
- Several historic dams are located along the Brandywine that impair water quality, migration of fish, and recreational use.
- Some areas of the West Branch Region are highly developed with few natural corridors remaining and provide only minimal recreational open space.
- Select municipalities have expressed opposition to recreational trails in their municipality and connecting trails cannot be proposed there.

Concept Map

Regional Corridor

The Regional Corridor refers to the greenway study area as defined by the 24 municipalities in Chester and Delaware Counties. Inventory and analysis maps extend beyond the Regional Corridor to provide contextual information.

Hub



Hubs along the West Branch Region include:

- City of Coatesville and South Coatesville Borough with a large population and congregation of businesses, services, cultural attractions, and recreational facilities
- West Caln Township - Hibernia County Park with its massive acreage, natural habitat areas for migrating birds, and recreational opportunities such as hiking, horseback riding, boating, biking, and fishing

Satellite Hub



Satellite Hubs along the West Branch Region include:

- Parksburg Borough – population center

Destination Point



Destination Points along the West Branch Region include:

- East Fallowfield Township - Laurels Preserve, owned by the Brandywine Conservancy, hiking, bird watching, scenic areas with covered bridges, open to members only
- Newlin Township - ChesLen Preserve, owned by Natural Lands Trust, hiking, scenic views, open to the public

Node



Many of the West Branch Region's well-known parks, recreation areas, and historical sites are nodes as are natural areas that provide critical wildlife habitat. Many recreational, cultural and natural nodes were identified in each municipality with a wide range of sizes and functions.

Gateway



Six gateways are proposed at the following west branch locations:

- West Brandywine Township Building – Hibernia Road and Lafayette Road
- West Brandywine Township - Icedale Road
- West Caln Township - Hibernia County Park, Park Road and Head Road
- Coatesville - The Flats/Brandywine River Trail, Business Route 30 and Route 82
- South Coatesville - Arcelor Mittal Park, Modena Road and First Avenue
- East Fallowfield Township - East Fallowfield Township Park, Mortonville Road

Creek Access



Public access to the Brandywine Creek is currently permitted in four locations along the west branch of the Brandywine:

- Newlin Township – near Laurel Road and Young Road
- Newlin Township – at the Cheslen Preserve, Brandywine Drive, south of Rt. 162
- Newlin Township – at the ChesLen Preserve, Route 162 at Stargazer Rd.
- West Brandywine Township – Icedale Road

Privately-owned creek access occurs in five locations on the west branch or its tributaries:

- Newlin Township – near the boundary with Pocopson Township, Northbrook Canoe
- Newlin Township – Brandywine Outfitters, Mortonville (for clients only)
- East Fallowfield Township - Buck Run, Speakman No. 1 covered bridge (white water)
- Coatesville – Route 340 bridge crossing, lands owned by A. Duie Pyle west branch (white water only)
- West Brandywine Township – Old Mill Bible Camp

Lake access for boating and fishing is available at:

- West Caln Township - Hibernia County Park – Chambers Lake

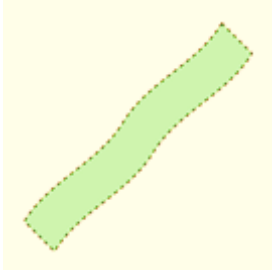
Major Corridor



The Major Corridors within the greenway include:

- Main Stem of the Brandywine, Chadds Ford to Shaws Bridge
- Upper East Branch of the Brandywine, Shaws Bridge to Struble Lake
- West Branch of the Brandywine, Shaws Bridge to Honey Brook Borough

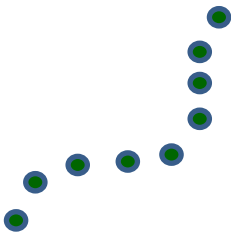
Minor Corridor



Minor Corridors along the West Branch include:

- West Bradford Township (Southern Region) - Broad Run
- East Fallowfield Township, Newlin Township - Buck Run
- East Fallowfield Township - Unnamed Tributary at Misty Patch Rd.
- East Fallowfield Township - Dennis Run
- West Brandywine Township (Central Region) - Beaver Creek

Green Corridor



Green Corridors along the West Branch include:

- Pocopson Township (Southern Region) – Pocopson Creek
- Valley Township - Sucker Run
- East Fallowfield Township - Chester Valley South Bank
- East Fallowfield Township - Tributary to Buck Run at Timacula Road
- Valley Township – Sucker Run
- Valley Township - Country Club Valley
- Valley Township, West Caln Township - Rock Run
- West Caln Township - Birch Run
- West Brandywine Township - Beaver Creek
- West Brandywine Township - West Branch Indian Run

Existing Land Link



Existing Land Links along the West Branch include:

- Newlin Township - Public trails at the ChesLen Preserve
- East Fallowfield Township Park trails
- Coatesville – River Walk Trail
- South Coatesville – Community Park Trails

Conceptual Land Link



Conceptual Land Links that provide connections to the Major Corridor or Minor Corridors within the West Branch include:

- Modena Borough - Broad Run to Modena Trail, West Bradford Township, East Fallowfield Township,
- East Fallowfield to South Coatesville Trail
- East Fallowfield to Modena Trail
- Dennis Run Trail - from East Fallowfield Township Park trails to Modena Borough
- Buck Run Trail – from Parkesburg Borough to the Broad Run Trail, East Fallowfield Township
- City of Coatesville, South Coatesville Borough, and Modena Borough urban trail system
- Chester Valley Trail – from City of Coatesville to Parkesburg Borough, City of Coatesville, Valley Township
- Coatesville to Hibernia Trail – City of Coatesville, West Brandywine Township
- West Brandywine Township - Hibernia to Honey Brook Township Trail

Water Corridor

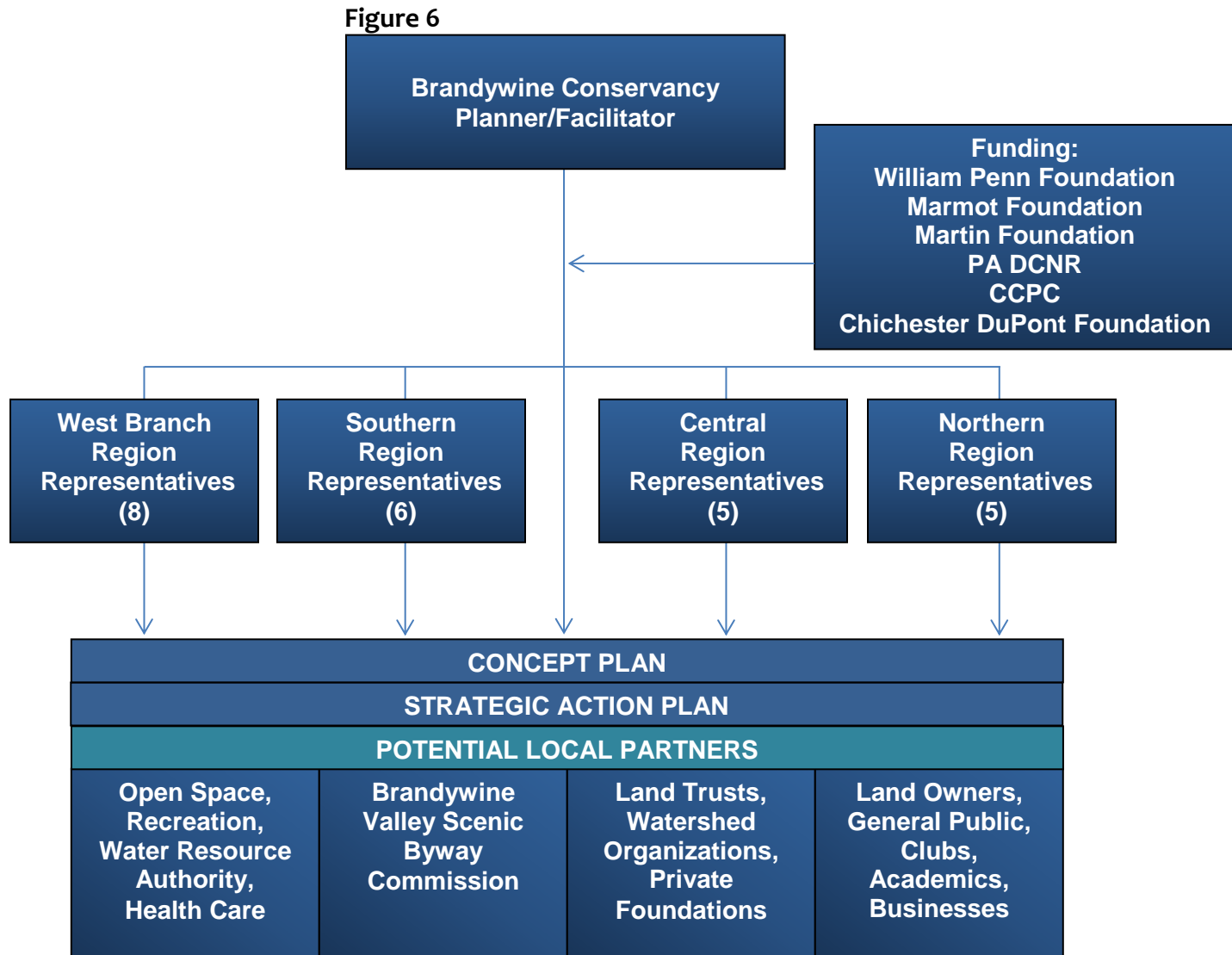


The Water Corridors in the West Branch include:

- West Branch Brandywine

Organizational Framework

The organizational framework that serves the greenway concept planning effort is shown in Figure 5-1 on page 49 of the Concept Plan and is revised to show greater detail in Figure 6 below. It includes the Brandywine Conservancy in a leadership role and the 24 municipalities, organized by four regions, providing key input and guidance to the Conservancy.



Next Steps in the Greenway Planning Process

The Brandywine Conservancy has secured funding for Phase II – Strategic Action Plan and, during 2013, will work with all 24 municipal partners to initiate Phase II.

