

APPENDICES A-I

Appendix A

Executive Summary of Greenway Feasibility Project Study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This feasibility study evaluates the potential for establishing a greenway corridor and trail along the south side of the Brodhead Creek, roughly paralleling the route of the historic Stroudsburg to Water Gap Trolley line. The identified study area for the project encompasses four municipalities: Stroudsburg Borough, Delaware Water Gap Borough, Stroud Township, and Smithfield Township. However, the importance of the project to a fifth municipality for safety and accessibility reasons, East Stroudsburg Borough, became apparent. East Stroudsburg lies just north of the Brodhead Creek. The study not only determined that a greenway and trail system is feasible at this location, it is also key to the development of a larger regional system of greenways and trails.

The study area includes one publicly owned park; Stroudsburg Borough's Glen Park in the western most reaches of the study area. Much of the study area has been actively used for years as a recreational corridor with Glen Park as its only public access point. In addition to the historic trolley corridor, the study area includes trails that cross a limited number of privately owned properties. Several owners contacted during the course of this study expressed an interest in the concept of a greenway corridor. In addition, an abandoned rail corridor of the former New York Susquehanna and Western railroad parallels the Brodhead Creek on its southern shore. This line offers unique trail opportunities as well.

Many users of the corridor were evident throughout the study. In addition to mountain bikers, walkers, hikers; cross-country runners and nature study groups from nearby East Stroudsburg University utilize the corridor. Also, fishermen and hunters frequent the corridor. The popularity of trails in general was borne out in the planning process; there was a great deal of support for a Godfrey Ridge Greenway project among the several hundred people who participated in the planning process. Interviews and findings in the public forums indicated that people were in favor of the greenway by offering ideas and support to bring the greenway to fruition. Also, a County-wide public opinion survey conducted during the course of the study found that trails are the most popular recreation facility for the greatest number of people.

The potential development of this corridor as a multi-objective greenway with trails fits into a broader vision for the development of a "Brodhead Greenway". This name evolved during the course of the project study and continues to grow in concept and form. The study corridor consequently has been renamed to the "Godfrey Ridge Section" of the "Brodhead Greenway". The vision for this section includes the development of an initial trail spine that serves both transportation and recreational needs and offers the opportunity to create an entire system of trails that could eventually link to this spine.

The Godfrey Ridge section is a key link to many surrounding public lands and trails both existing and planned. To the west, it offers a link along the Brodhead Creek to recent property acquisitions by Stroud Township. It would achieve this through the construction of a needed bicycle and pedestrian bridge recommended by this study to span the Brodhead Creek from Glen Park to lands to the north owned by the Borough of East

Stroudsburg near the Twin Boroughs Recycling Center. This also achieves a vital linkage to East Stroudsburg University and to major shopping facilities along Lincoln Avenue in East Stroudsburg. To the east, it offers a key link to recently acquired Smithfield Township Park lands and to a visitors' center proposed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. In addition, the eastern reaches also offer links to recently released plans for a trail system proposed by the National Park Service for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. By linking to the Borough of Delaware Water Gap, access to the Appalachian Trail, is provided. Congress recently designated the Appalachian Trail as one of sixteen (16) National Millennium Trails. Millennium Trails received a White House Millennium Council logo, have a map and description in the new National Trails website, will be honored in a national event on National Trails Day 2000, and benefit from increased recognition through enhanced media visibility, special partnership and funding opportunities.

As a multi-objective greenway, the Godfrey Ridge section can serve important ecological functions as a natural streamside buffer for river conservation. The Brodhead Watershed Association is currently preparing a River Conservation Plan for the Brodhead Creek. In addition many of the policies outlined in the County's recently adopted Draft Comprehensive Plan are served by the development of a greenway corridor at this location.

This study provides some budget cost estimates for further development of the greenway. However, more specific costs would have to be determined in a master plan phase for specific phases of the greenway and/or trail development efforts.

The consulting team hired to perform this study has concluded that the development of a multi-objective greenway with trails is feasible and has provided recommendations for its development. The recommendations fit into three broad categories related to access & safety, use, and connections. These are the "guiding recommendations" for further development of a greenway and trail system at this location. They are:

- **Guiding Recommendation #1** – Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle access between the three Boroughs and through the adjoining Townships.
- **Guiding Recommendation # 2** – Promote a multi-objective greenway approach for the Godfrey Ridge corridor.
- **Guiding Recommendation #3** - Encourage pedestrian and bicycle linkages to the Godfrey Ridge Corridor.

Under each of these guiding recommendations are specific actions categorized as immediate, mid-term or long-range. Immediate actions are specific and achievable next steps to be initiated or accomplished within the next year. Mid-term actions are to be initiated or accomplished within a two to five year planning horizon. Long-range actions are to be initiated or accomplished within a five to ten year planning horizon.

In conclusion, it is noted that some of the more immediate actions were initiated during the course of the study as their merits were apparent and timely opportunities justified immediate action. The momentum built during the course of the study is evident in the many news articles and editorials published. Further evidence of this momentum is noted by the formation of open space committees by each municipality to take advantage of the County's bond monies for open space acquisition. Also, municipal officials are thinking in terms of the regional benefits of open space and looking to form multi-municipal partnerships. Indeed, the time is ripe for the creation of greenways in Monroe County and the Godfrey Ridge section of the Brodhead Greenway is a lynch pin in a potential Countywide system of "Emerald Pathways".