



**GREEN  
SPACE  
ALLIANCE**

## VITAL LANDSCAPES OF THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGION PENNYPACK GREENWAY

Residents of the Delaware River Valley have long valued Pennypack Creek for its diverse and plentiful resources. For centuries, Native Americans hunted game in the surrounding forests and fished its waters. With European colonization, the Pennypack became a faithful partner in the region's economic growth, by powering mills and facilitating settlement by providing water, carrying away waste, and serving as a transportation corridor. The creek has also provided recreation for thousands of people who come to streamside parks to fish, picnic, or relax outdoors.

Home to more than 250,000 residents, Pennypack Creek's 56 square-mile watershed embraces northeast Philadelphia's urban and nearby suburban neighborhoods. Although much of the watershed's woodlands were cleared long ago for agriculture or, more recently, residential and commercial development, fine forests can still be appreciated in three large and precious natural areas along the lower two-thirds of the creek: Philadelphia's Pennypack Park, Montgomery County's Lorimer Park, and the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust's Pennypack Preserve.



Through the foresight of the City of Philadelphia and the Fairmount Park Commission in the early 1990s, Pennypack Park's 1,600 acres of natural and recreational lands today provide a 10-mile-long green ribbon stretching upstream from the Delaware River to the city's border with Montgomery County. Adjacent to the city's Pennypack Park lies the 250-acre Lorimer Park, in Montgomery County, a gift from philanthropist George Horace Lorimer in 1937. Further upstream, and separated from Lorimer Park by a narrow gap of still-undeveloped private land, is the Pennypack Preserve, a 720-acre natural area owned by the non-profit Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, and the largest publicly accessible private natural area in Montgomery County.

### WE NEED TO ACT

With only 14% of the Pennypack Creek Watershed remaining as forested land, each remaining acre lost to development exacerbates already devastating flooding, decreases habitat for wildlife, and further compromises water quality. Demand for developable land in the watershed is intense, given the creek's central location in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. Since most of the lower watershed is already built-out, the remaining unprotected natural areas need to be preserved, and the existing protected natural areas need to be restored to ecological health.

### WHAT'S BEING DONE

The Pennypack Greenway Partnership, comprised of multiple partner organizations, is evaluating the Pennypack Creek watershed from many perspectives in an attempt to improve environmental conditions and protect undeveloped land. The Philadelphia Water Department's Office of Watersheds is providing funding to complete a River Conservation Plan for the watershed, designed to reconnect the watershed's residents to the creek through a two-year community-based planning process. Temple University's Center for Sustainable Communities performed a detailed analysis of the upper half of the watershed, to determine the hydrology of the basin in preparing detailed guidelines for municipalities and planners hoping to reduce flooding.

#### FACTS & FIGURES

<b>Total Acres:</b>	36,026
<b>Developed Acres:</b>	28,110
<b>Protected Acres:</b>	3,357
<b>Additional Protected Acres Goal:</b>	1,000

*Data current as of July 2006*

#### HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- Support the organizations advocating for preservation and restoration of the valley's natural areas, including Friends of Fox Chase Farm, Friends of Pennypack Park, Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, and Montgomery County Lands Trust
- Participate in your municipality's Green Fields/Green Towns open space planning and conservation activities if you live in Montgomery County
- Encourage your municipal officials and Environmental Advisory Councils to update and enforce local environmental ordinances

# HIGHLIGHTS

## RESOURCE FEATURES

- Over 2,600 acres of publicly accessible land in three natural area parks and preserves
- Extensive woodlands, including several remnant stands of old-growth forest
- Forty miles of trails welcoming visitors to explore by foot, bicycle and horseback
- Fifteen miles of scenic stream corridor
- The cleanest of the five Delaware Estuary tributary streams originating in the suburbs and flowing through the city of Philadelphia
- Dozens of historic sites dating from the time of the colonial settlement in southeastern Pennsylvania

## SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

- Frazier's Bog, statewide significance
- Bethayres Swamp, countywide significance
- Big Oak Woods, countywide significance

## TREASURES

- Bethayres Swamp
- Council Rock
- Fetter's Mill State Historic District
- Fox Chase Farm
- Frankford Avenue Bridge
- Frazier's Bog
- Knowlton House

**// WHO WOULD EVER THINK THAT A PIECE OF PARADISE LIES RIGHT HERE IN OUR OWN BACKYARD, PRESERVED IN PERPETUITY? IT'S JUST SO TERRIBLY IMPORTANT TO HAVE THIS LAND, ETERNALLY BEAUTIFUL AND WILD AT ALL SEASONS OF THE YEAR. //**

—Ruth Demming, Pennypack Trust member

## MUNICIPALITIES (all or part)

Abington, Bryn Athyn, Hatboro, Horsham, Jenkintown, Lower Moreland, Philadelphia, Rockledge, Upper Dublin, Upper Moreland, Upper Southampton, Warminster

## WATERSHEDS/SUB-WATERSHEDS

Delaware River, Pennypack Creek including Wooden Bridge Run, Sandy Run, Huntingdon Valley Creek, Meadow Brook, Terwood Run, Southampton Creek

## GROWING LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS

### ACTIVE IN AREA

Audubon Pennsylvania, Fairmount Park Commission, Friends of Fox Chase Farm, Friends of Pennypack Park, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Montgomery County Lands Trust, Natural Lands Trust, Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, Philadelphia Water Department, Southampton Creek Watershed Association, Temple University's Center for Sustainable Communities, Trout Unlimited

## TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS VITAL LANDSCAPE, CONTACT:

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## ACTION ITEMS

- Volunteer for organized creek-cleanups, invasive plant management workdays, and native tree planting projects
- Participate actively in your municipality's planning commission to ensure that new development and redevelopment projects meet the requirements of the environmental ordinances

To learn more about vital landscapes throughout Greater Philadelphia, contact us:  
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