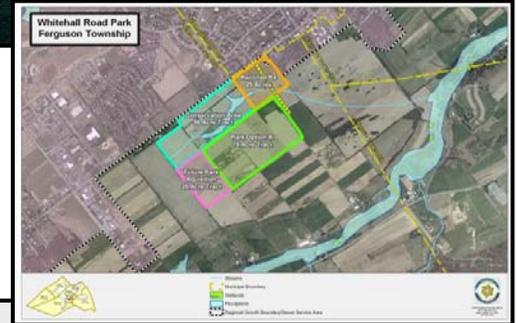




Centre Region Council of Government's PSU Whitehall Road Acquisition

Ferguson Township, Centre County



P roject Description:

The Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) received a \$159,000 DCNR grant in 2006 to use toward the acquisition of approximately 75 acres south of Whitehall Road and Blue Course Drive, in Ferguson Township, Centre County, for active and passive recreation.

The parcel of land is to be owned jointly by the Centre Region COG and Ferguson Township, and they expect to hold closing on the 75-acre tract in late 2007. The tract adjoins a 68-acre parcel of property that is being preserved for wellhead protection, and includes open and wooded land.

Located within one quarter mile of State College Borough and residential areas, and near an existing bikeway, this property was identified to meet growing recreation needs. The next step in this project will be hiring a consultant to develop a Master Site Plan.

This property will be purchased with \$100,000 in local funds from Ferguson Township and a \$664,400 donated appraised value of the land by the seller (Penn State University). Since the grant approval, the five participating municipalities have each approved the COG Articles of Agreement to jointly fund the planning, development and operation of this "regional" park.

"Support by Centre Region municipal officials and residents for the jointly-funded "Regional Parks Initiative" has been very strong since discussions began in 2001. The progress to date has been driven by the need for additional community sport fields and aided by the guidance and support of PA DCNR. Although the five municipalities have officially cooperated to maintain and program their parks on a regional, shared-funding basis since the 1960s, the Regional Parks Initiative is the first effort to jointly own and develop multi-municipal parks through the Centre Region COG.

The PA Keystone Fund has provided valued incentives to move forward on a cooperative, regional basis - rather than individually - with:

- *developing a Master Site Plan for the Oak Hall parklands (68 acres) near Boalsburg, acquired by the COG in 2005, and,*
- *the acquisition of the Whitehall Road parklands by the COG in 2007 (75 acres). This area adjoins State College Borough and has prompted the purchase and preservation of other nearby lands.*

The PA Keystone Fund has served as an important partner with residents and our municipalities - matching the state funds has challenged local officials to work together to fund these important "legacy" projects as a region. We look forward to continued partnerships with PA DCNR and the Keystone Fund as the region works to develop the planned facilities on those new regional parks."

Ronald J. Woodhead, Centre Region Parks and Recreation Director

Amount of funds awarded, year and matching sources:

2006: \$159,000 Keystone funding

Matching funds Ferguson Township (\$100,000) Donated Value \$665,400