

# Outdoor and Small-Town Tourism, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development

November 19, 2020

# Thank You to Our Cohosts

Rural Community  
Action Assemblies



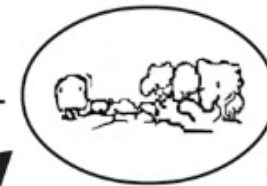
FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF PHILADELPHIA



**PennState**

College of Agricultural Sciences

*The Center for*



*Rural Pennsylvania*

*A Legislative Agency of the Pennsylvania General Assembly*

# Agenda

- 9:30 a.m. – Call to order
- 9:35 a.m. – Welcoming remarks: Kyle Kopko, Director, Center for Rural Pennsylvania
- 9:40 a.m. – Outdoor and Small-Town Tourism, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development
  - Ta Enos, CEO, PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship
  - Cheryl Hargrove, President, Hargrove International
  - Meredith Hill, Director of Conservation Landscapes, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
  - *Moderator:* Julie Fitzpatrick, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Downtown Center
- 10:40 a.m. – Small Group Breakout Discussion
- 11:05 a.m. – Break

# Agenda

- 11:10 a.m. – Resource Chat on Outdoor and Small-Town Tourism, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development
  - David Kahley, President and CEO, The Progress Fund
  - Jamie Bennett, Executive Director, ArtPlace America
  - *Moderator:* Valerie Case, Sales Manager, Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau
- 11:55 a.m. – Closing remarks: Micah Gursky, Executive Director, Tamaqua Area Community Partnership
- 12:00 noon – Conclude



# Biographies

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### **Jamie Bennett** **Executive Director** **ArtPlace America**

Jamie Bennett is the executive director of ArtPlace America, a 10-year fund that supports artists working as allies in equitable community development. ArtPlace has invested over \$100 million to support projects in rural, suburban, tribal, and urban communities of all sizes across the United States, as well as in sharing knowledge from that work in ways that are both useful and actually used by practitioners. ArtPlace convenes and connects people who are committed to this work in order to help build a strong and ongoing field of practice. Previously, Bennett was chief of staff and director of public affairs at the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), where he worked on the national rollouts of the "Our Town" grant program and of partnerships with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Health and Human Services, and Housing and Urban Development. Before the NEA, Bennett was chief of staff at the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, where he worked on partnerships with the NYC Departments for the Aging, of Education, and of Youth and Community Development. Bennett has also provided strategic counsel at the Agnes Gund Foundation, served as chief of staff to the president of Columbia University, and worked in fundraising at the Museum of Modern Art, the New York Philharmonic, and Columbia College.

### **Valerie Case** **Sales Manager** **Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau**

Prior to her role as sales manager for Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau Valerie Case served the Pocono community as the vice president of operations for the Pocono Chamber of Commerce. Case has over 15 years of experience in human services, receiving certifications in numerous methodologies, including life space crisis intervention, rational emotive behavioral therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, and sanctuary model. Case was a head trainer for the sanctuary model at KidsPeace National Hospitals and Residential Centers. During her time with Resources for Human Development (RHD), she assisted in opening three homes for dually diagnosed individuals, developing programs for those individuals to function in a community environment. Case cofacilitated the clinical certificate program for employees of RHD, a nine-month training program for direct service professionals. Additionally, during her time with RHD, she participated in a national focus group for best practices in crisis intervention, as well as being highly involved with the training of staff in new modalities. In her transition from mental health, Case started with the chamber of commerce, assisting with the resurgence of this important organization in the community.

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She serves as the cochair on the 2030 Monroe County Strategic Doing Business Development Committee and assisted with bringing the inaugural Pickle Me Poconos festival to the region in October 2019. Case has an M.S. in counseling and human services from Chestnut Hill College and a double B.A. in psychology and sociology from Moravian College.

**Ta Enos**  
**Founder and CEO**  
**PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship**

Ta Enos is founder and CEO of the PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, a regional nonprofit dedicated to marrying conservation and economic development to strengthen and inspire communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds. Enos has a rural entrepreneurship background and 20 years of experience in journalism and public communications in Alaska and Pennsylvania. As CEO of the PA Wilds Center, Enos has scaled the nonprofit to \$1 million in operations in less than five years and built a team that is developing models for asset-based rural development that are recognized nationally. Before founding the nonprofit in 2013, Enos served as the PA Wilds Small Business Ombudsman for five years, working with entrepreneurs across the 13-county Pennsylvania Wilds region. Prior to moving home to rural Pennsylvania, Enos spent 10 years as a news reporter and editor in Alaska.

**Julie Fitzpatrick**  
**Executive Director**  
**Pennsylvania Downtown Center**

Julie Fitzpatrick has been with the Pennsylvania Downtown Center since 2005 and was appointed executive director in July 2019. She has been involved with a variety of projects in communities all over the commonwealth, including community visioning, developing regional downtown revitalization strategies, establishing tourism infrastructure plans, and developing business improvement district plans and other strategic planning activities. She also provides board and committee education and technical assistance to designated Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Keystone Communities Main Street and Elm Street programs, as well as to communities that are nondesignated. Currently, she is working with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources on a project focused on nature-based placemaking, and with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on developing a design guidelines workbook.

Fitzpatrick has an M.S. in community and regional planning and a B.A. in art history and anthropology, both from Temple University, and has done coursework in its landscape architecture program. She attributes her focus on people-centered service and the importance of building

# Biographies

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relationships to 18 years of small business management at a locally owned independent downtown pharmacy. Her previous nonprofit experience includes volunteering with Mulberry Arts Studio, WITF-public TV and radio, the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County, and the Susquehanna Waldorf School. She served on the board of the Susquehanna Sustainable Business Network for more than six years and is currently on the board for the Pennsylvania Urban & Community Forestry Council, the Susquehanna Riverlands Leadership Committee, and she is a member of the Pennsylvania Pedestrian & Pedacycle Advisory Committee. She serves her local community by volunteering with the Marietta Restoration Associates.

**Micah Gursky**  
**Executive Director**  
**Tamaqua Area Community Partnership**

Micah J. Gursky is the rural health clinic administrator and director of business development and physician relations for the 49-bed St. Luke's Miners Campus in Coaldale, PA.

He served as a member of the Tamaqua, PA borough council from 2000 to 2003 and from 2006 to 2017, including eight years as president, and was named Pennsylvania's Council Person of the Year in 2016 by the State Association of Boroughs.

Gursky works with the Tamaqua Area Community Partnership (TACP), a charitable, place-based, comprehensive community development organization in Tamaqua. Its efforts include historic preservation, heritage and ecotourism, downtown revitalization, arts and culture, recreation, affordable housing, and neighborhood improvements. TACP operates the Tamaqua Community Arts Center and Hope & Coffee, a recovery-friendly coffee shop that hires people in recovery from addiction.

The nonprofit recently started a new planning effort, Tamaqua Choose Happiness, an effort to make Tamaqua a place where peoples' happiness is a community goal.

Gursky serves on the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh's Affordable Housing Advisory Council, chairs the Sexual Assault Resource Counseling Center of Lebanon & Schuylkill Counties (SARCC), and represents his county on the Northeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Planning Organization.

Gursky has a bachelor's degree from Princeton University.



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### **Cheryl Hargrove** **President** **Hargrove International**

Author, instructor, and 35-year travel industry veteran, Cheryl Hargrove is best known as the National Trust for Historic Preservation's first director of heritage tourism. During her tenure with the organization, Hargrove developed the key steps and principles for sustainable tourism focusing on history and culture. She recently worked with the Georgia Department of Economic Development as director of industry and partner relations. Hargrove also served as associate director of National Geographic's Center for Sustainable Destinations, where she assisted international destinations develop and market their place-based experiences. Her other industry experience includes working for Travel South USA, America's oldest and largest regional travel promotion organization, as both director of public relations and as manager of its United Kingdom office; promoting a World's Fair; opening a convention hotel; and serving as a special events/public affairs consultant.

Hargrove recently authored *Cultural Heritage Tourism: Five Steps for Success and Sustainability* as part of the American Association for State & Local History book series. She recently taught cultural tourism online

for the University of British Columbia, is an associate member of the Society of American Travel Writers, and is a lifetime member of the International Association of Business Communicators.

Her consultancy currently focuses on cultural heritage tourism assessment, planning, development and management, as well as nonprofit/tourism business sustainability. She has assisted more than 150 destinations, government agencies, and businesses, including work in every state in the U.S. and in 13 countries. Through USAID and the U.S. Department of State, she participated in international tourism leadership and training programs for cultural heritage tourism in Kosovo, Serbia, Albania, and Croatia. Hargrove is frequently asked to speak at international and national conferences, including the World Heritage Forum in Copenhagen, the Canadian Museum Association, the China Leadership Summit, the Educational Travel Conference, and APEC Tourism Policy Forum, plus numerous state and regional conferences.

She has a master's degree in tourism administration from the George Washington University and a bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia's Grady School of Journalism, and she has a certificate for tourism & international cooperation for development from the UNWTO Themis Foundation and the George Washington University.



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**Meredith Hill**  
**Director of Conservation Landscapes**  
**Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources**

Meredith Hill is a member of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR) executive staff. She leads DCNR's Conservation Landscape Program and directs the agency's groundbreaking work within the Pennsylvania Wilds, a rural landscape that covers a quarter of the state's geography.

The Pennsylvania Wilds is the largest and oldest of eight conservation landscapes designated by the state more than a decade ago. The program convenes diverse partner groups for collaboration around landscape-level and place-based approaches to shared conservation, recreation, community, and economic development goals.

The Pennsylvania Wilds work is focused on revitalizing communities through nature and heritage tourism in a way that creates economic opportunity, bolsters local pride, and inspires stewardship of the region's special places. It uses a strategic and integrated approach to building and branding a regional outdoor destination through targeted infrastructure investments, entrepreneurial assistance, regional marketing, and proactive planning.

Prior to conservation landscape work, Hill was DCNR's Greenways and Land Use coordinator, where she managed implementation of Pennsylvania's Statewide Greenways Plan. Before coming to DCNR, she held several management positions with Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection. She also served the Pennsylvania State Legislature as a Legislative Fellow working with the Game and Fisheries and Bipartisan Management Committees.

Hill has degrees in environmental resource management and public service, both from Penn State University.

**David Kahley**  
**President and CEO**  
**The Progress Fund**

David Kahley has four decades of professional experience in community and economic development, including tenure as the executive director of the Main Street Project of Port Townsend, a historic coastal seaport that successfully used tourism to revitalize two Victorian-era business districts. He was the assistant to the president and property manager of Pittsburgh History and Landmarks

# Biographies

## Rural Community Action Assemblies

Foundation, a nonprofit organization that developed and operated Station Square, a retail, office, hotel, and restaurant complex along the city's downtown waterfront.

The Progress Fund serves western and northern Pennsylvania, northern West Virginia, and western Maryland. Under Kahley's leadership, in 2011, The Progress Fund was the recipient of the Wachovia Wells Fargo NEXT Award for Opportunity Finance, the industry's most coveted award for community development financial institutions. The organization also received a Placemaking Award for Excellence in 2015 from Pittsburgh's Urban Land Institute for strategy and investments associated with the Trail Town Program® in towns along the Great Allegheny Passage, the nation's first economic development program that captured the potential of rail-trail based recreation.

Kahley is certified by National Development Council's Economic Development Professional Program and the Urban Land Institute's Real Estate Development Finance Professional Program. He resides in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, where he chairs the city's planning commission and enjoys time as a commercial-rated airplane pilot and helicopter instructor.

### **Kyle Kopko** **Director** **Center for Rural Pennsylvania**

Dr. Kyle C. Kopko earned his Ph.D. in political science from The Ohio State University in 2010. From 2010 to 2020, Kopko served as a political science professor at Elizabethtown College. During this time, Kopko served in a variety of academic and administrative roles, including Assistant Dean and Associate Dean.

In 2020, Kopko was appointed Director of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, a legislative agency of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. In this capacity, Kopko oversees the Center's operations, including research and grant programs that examine a wide range of policy issues that affect rural Pennsylvanians.

Kopko has spoken on a wide range of policy and political topics. He has taught courses on American national government, Pennsylvania politics, and constitutional law.

Kopko is the author or co-author of more than 30 scholarly publications, including two university press books on vice presidential candidates. Kopko's research has also received national and international media attention in numerous outlets, including The Wall

# Biographies

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Street Journal, The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, the British Broadcasting Corporation, CNN, C-SPAN, and Fox News Channel.

A native of central Pennsylvania, Dr. Kopko lives in Elizabethtown with his wife, Sarah, and daughters, Mary and Clara.



# Biographies

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### **Theodore Alter**

**Professor of Agricultural, Environmental, and Regional Economics,  
and Codirector, Center for Economic and Community Development  
Penn State University**

Ted Alter is professor of agricultural, environmental, and regional economics in the Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education Department at Penn State. He is codirector of Penn State's Center for Economic and Community Development and is coeditor of the Entrepreneurship Research Journal. In addition, he is an adjunct research fellow in the Australian Center for Agriculture and Law at the University of New England in Australia. Alter served from 2012 to 2017 as one of the lead researchers for the institutional analysis and community-led action initiative of the Invasive Animal Cooperative Research Centre in Australia. The Victorian Rabbit Action Network, one of the community-led action projects stemming from this initiative, recently received the 2019 United Nations Public Service Award in recognition for its contributions to strengthening working relationships and shared responsibility among citizens and communities, industry, and government.

Alter's research, teaching, and community engagement work focuses on community and rural development, resource and environmental economics, community engagement in natural resource management, community and entrepreneurship, behavioral and public sector

economics; the practice of public scholarship and civic engagement in higher education; and the political economy of democracy. In recent years, he has advanced his work to include the study of public and collective choice, democracy and innovation, and how paradigms of public discourse have shaped complex societal issues from technology and communications development to entrepreneurship and public-private partnerships. A central component of his work focuses on issues of democracy, emphasizing the roles played by societal organizations such as governments, private sector businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and colleges and universities.

### **Cheryl Cook**

**Deputy Secretary for Market Development  
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture**

Cheryl Cook was appointed deputy secretary for market development in January 2017, following nearly two years as the agency's chief innovation officer. As a deputy secretary, Cook oversees the Bureaus of Farmland Preservation, Food Distribution, LEAN, and Market Development.

Cook previously served from April 2003 to March 2009 as PDA's deputy secretary for marketing and economic development. Between state appointments, she served in the Obama administration as deputy undersecretary for rural development and then as the USDA's chief information officer. Cook also served in the Clinton administration as Pennsylvania state director for the USDA's Rural Development programs.





Welcome

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Kyle Kopko

Director

Center for Rural Pennsylvania

## Outdoor and Small-Town Tourism, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development

- Ta Enos, CEO, PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship
- Cheryl Hargrove, President, Hargrove International
- Meredith Hill, Director of Conservation Landscapes, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
- *Moderator:* Julie Fitzpatrick, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Downtown Center

Cheryl Hargrove

President

Hargrove International

“Traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.

It includes cultural, historic and natural resources.”

*- National Trust for Historic Preservation*



## The valued **CULTURAL HERITAGE Visitor**

- Older (49 vs. 47)
- More affluent
- Educated
- Often married
- Frequent traveler — taking 3.61 leisure trips in the last three years (compared with 3.4 trips for the general leisure traveler)
- Spends more on travel, an average of \$1,319 per trip vs. \$820
- More likely to stay in a hotel, motel, or B&B
- 46% of total trip expenditures were spent on activities, dining & shopping

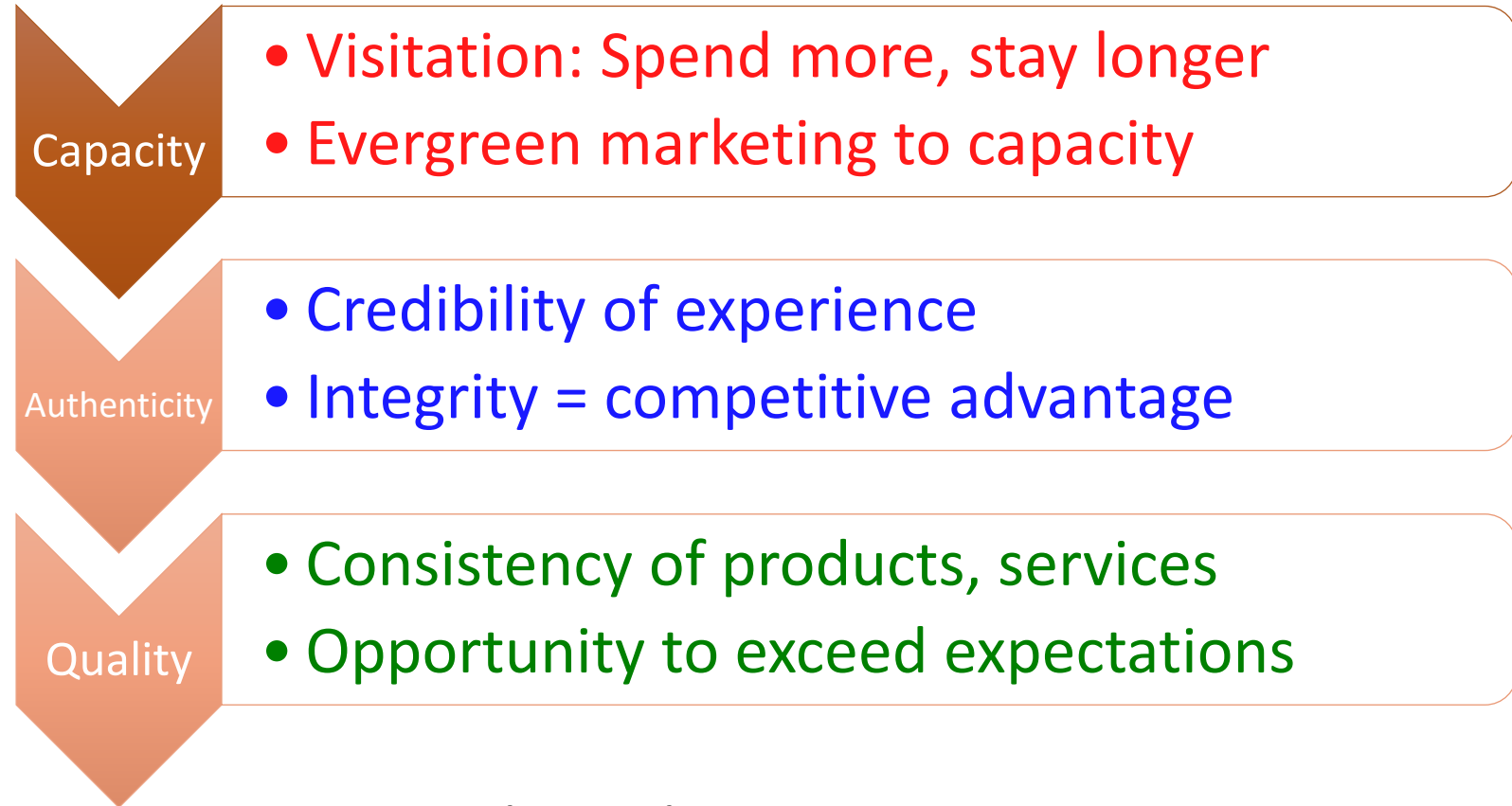
Source: Mandala Research LLC, 2013

- Visited heritage buildings/historical buildings (42%)
- Attended cultural/heritage fair, festival (40%)
- Attended historical reenactments (38%)
- Participated in an organized tour of local history or culture (37%)
- Visited living history museums (37%)
- Took a tour focusing on local architecture (34%)
- Researched family history (32%)
- Shopped for items made by local artisans, craftspeople (31%)
- Visited farms and ranches (25%)
- Explored small towns (24%)
- Experienced local or regional cuisine for a unique and memorable experience (23%)
- Self guided walking tour (22%)

Source: Mandala Research LLC, 2013

While history or heritage activities may not be the **MOTIVATOR** for the trip, travelers often engage in heritage as part of their visit to a destination.

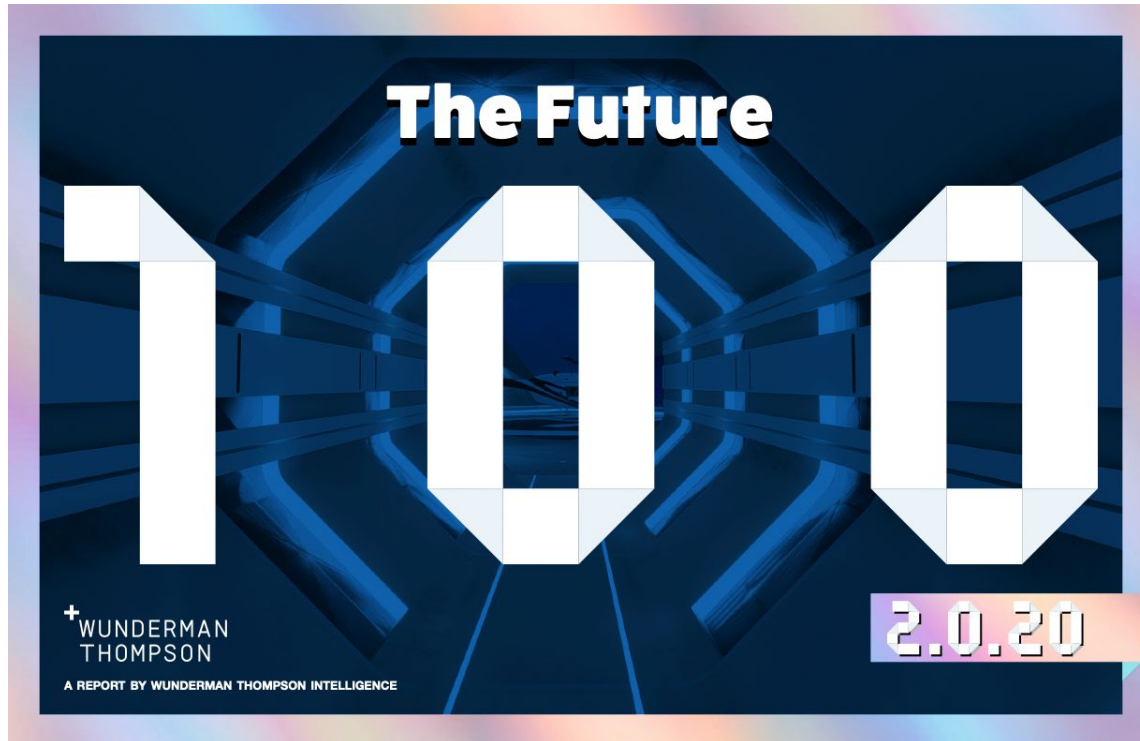
## Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism



Balance of benefits: Resident, resource, visitor



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**20 accelerated trends from the Future 100 2020**

<b>01</b>	<b>11</b>
01 Optimistic futures <b>4</b>	11 Regenerative agriculture <b>36</b>
02 Taming tech's influence <b>8</b>	12 Skincare 2.0 <b>40</b>
03 Protective tech, protective everything <b>11</b>	13 Anti-excess consumerism <b>42</b>
04 New digital communities <b>15</b>	14 The new superstore <b>47</b>
05 Privacy era <b>19</b>	15 Health concierges <b>50</b>
06 Legacy preservation <b>22</b>	16 Wellness architecture <b>52</b>
07 Disaster-proof destinations <b>23</b>	17 Digital spas <b>55</b>
08 The new super-creatives <b>26</b>	18 Engineering companionship <b>59</b>
09 Unconventional brand actions <b>31</b>	19 New payment gestures <b>62</b>
10 Future-proof ingredients <b>34</b>	20 Gen Z finances <b>64</b>

Source: The Future 100: 2.0.20 (March 2020) Wunderman Thompson

[intelligence.wundermanthompson.com/trend-reports/the-future-100-2-0-20/](https://intelligence.wundermanthompson.com/trend-reports/the-future-100-2-0-20/)





Curated Resources in:

- Fundraising
- Financial management
- Mission + operations

## Appalachia Nonprofit Resource Center



*ARC's Appalachia Nonprofit Resource Center offers free resources for nonprofits navigating the COVID-19 crisis.*

## Meredith Hill

Director of Conservation Landscapes

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation &  
Natural Resources

# Pennsylvania is an Outdoor State

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## OUR OUTDOOR SPACES

**6,100** local parks, totaling **195,000** acres | **20** state forests, totaling **2.2** million acres | **121** State parks, totaling **300,000** acres

More than **12,000** miles of trails, including more than **1,700** miles of rail trails



**513,000**-acre Allegheny National Forest

**1.5** million acres of State Game Lands



**19** national park sites

**12** heritage areas, six with national designation



**3** national wildlife refuges

2020-2024 PENNSYLVANIA OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN | 23

## Why is Pennsylvania a Top Trail State?



DCNR is working to provide a trail within 10 minutes of every Pennsylvanian



Pennsylvania has **2,111** miles of rail trails

and **2,355** miles of water trails



In addition, there are

**7,100** mi. **6,221** mi. **2,641** mi. **2,500** mi. **908** mi.

DCNR awards about **\$8M** annually to support trail projects

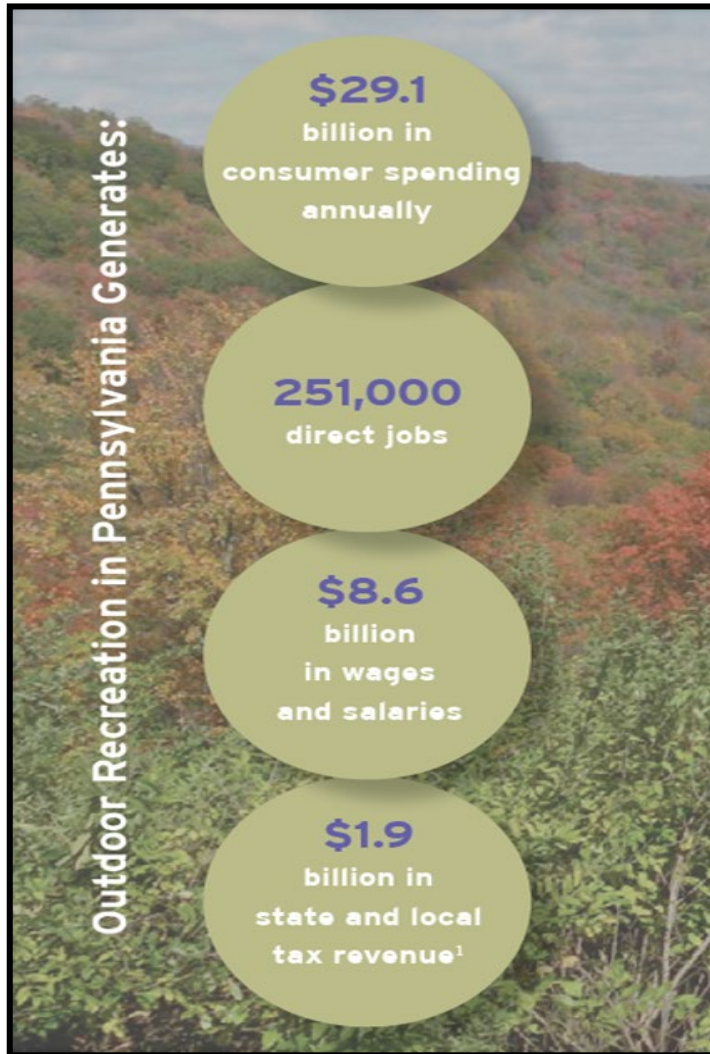
and designates a "Trail of the Year" to promote trails in PA





# Economic Impact

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“Our small towns and villages and cities struggle for economic viability... why not embrace the outdoor industry, one of PA’s top income generators?”

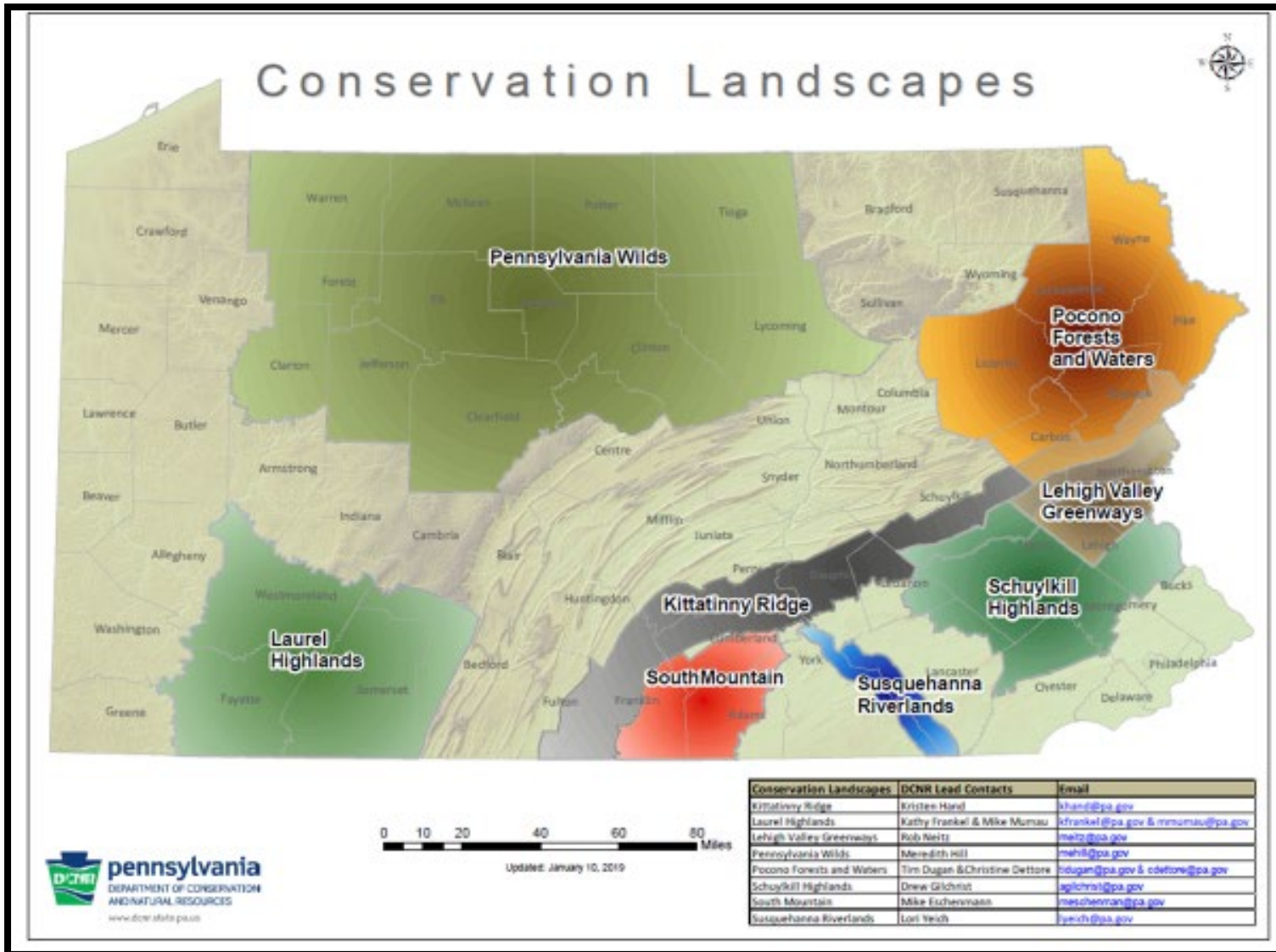
– *Elissa Garofalo, Executive Director, the D&L Heritage Corridor and SCORP TAC member.*

The nation’s overall economy is increasing at a rate of **2.4%**. Outdoor recreation is tracking at **3.9%**.<sup>1</sup>

**70%** of Pennsylvanians agree that outdoor recreation amenities such as parks and trails attract new residents and businesses to communities.

*(2019 Spring Lion Poll)*





- Accomplish PA DCNR's mission through partnerships that promote efficient, effective programs that respond to community needs and shared values and goals.
- Place-based approach to coordinate strategic investment and action in large landscapes, around the values of sustainability, conservation, outdoor recreation, cultural heritage, and community revitalization.

# Key Program Elements

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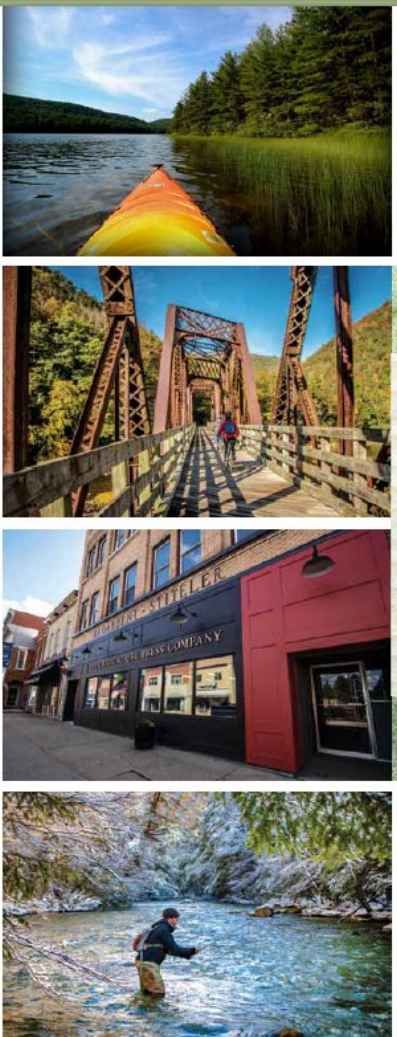
- Presence of DCNR lands; long-distance trail corridors
- Sense of urgency and readiness
- Stakeholder engagement and collaboration
- Partnerships
  - State government as convener
  - Internal and external staff leads
  - Shared vision/values/priorities
  - Interagency coordination
  - Leverage other \$
- Strategic investments
  - Infrastructure
  - DCNR grants including mini-grants
- Deployment of DCNR bureaus in a place/region.





# Program Evaluation

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2019

PENNSYLVANIA  
CONSERVATION  
LANDSCAPES

*Models of Successful  
Collaboration*

*After more than a decade  
these landscapes are  
meeting their stated goals  
and have shown great  
resilience adapting to  
leadership changes  
and to local  
community needs.*

[elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1750563&DocName=PA\\_Conservation\\_Landscapes\\_Report2019.pdf](http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1750563&DocName=PA_Conservation_Landscapes_Report2019.pdf)



# Outdoor Recreation = Essential Service

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## Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation Spiked during COVID-19

From Spring 2019 to Spring 2020:

**+36%**  
state park  
visitors

**+62%**  
trail  
users

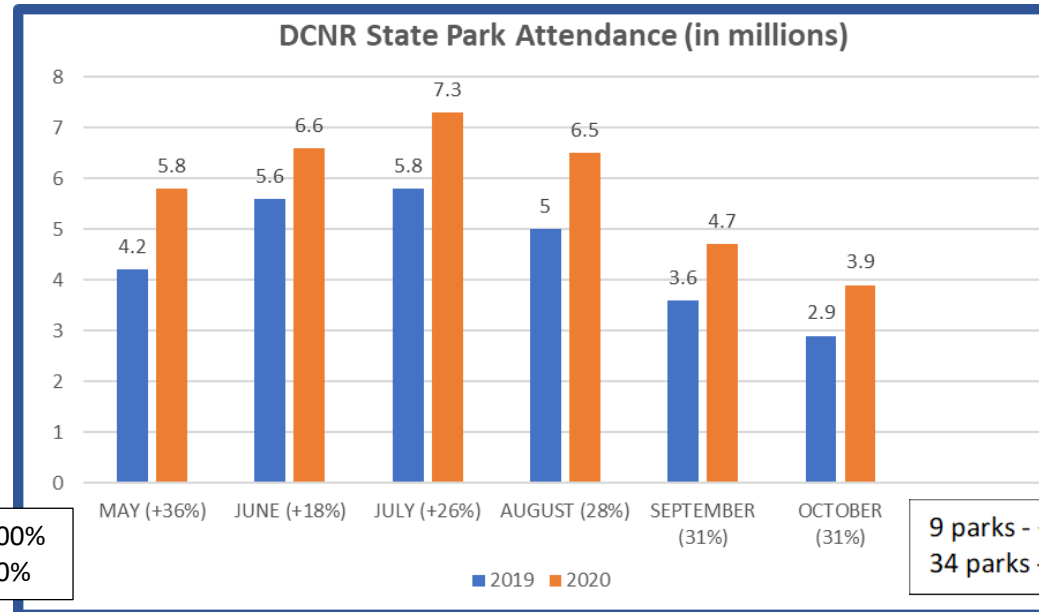
**+139%**  
state park camping  
reservations



**4 out of 5**

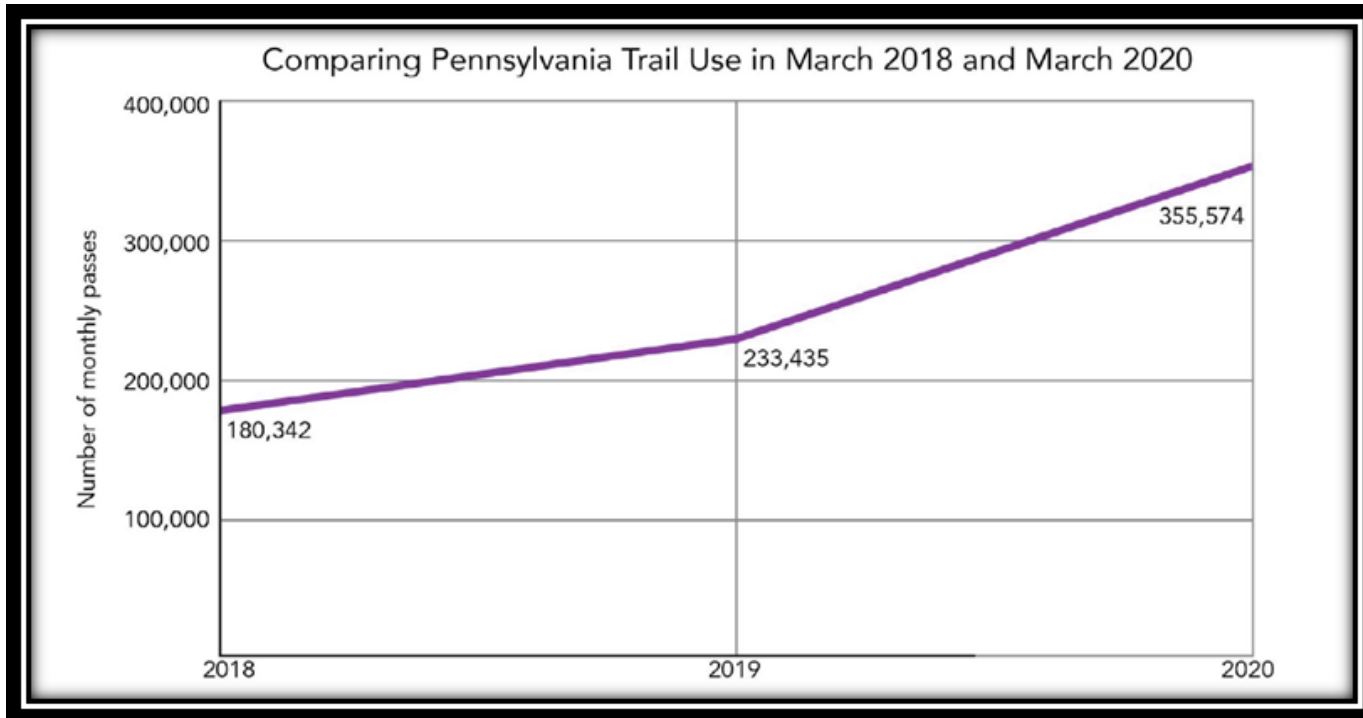
U.S. adults agree that visiting local parks, trails, and nature preserves is essential for their mental and physical well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Percent increases based on trail counters and state park visitation data. 4/5 figure comes from National Recreation and Parks Association survey, April 2020.



# Trail Use

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## THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S IMPACT ON PENNSYLVANIA'S NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS:

Increased Use, Added Strain, and a Newfound Appreciation



**"EVERY DAY IS LIKE A WEEKEND DAY NOW."**

[pecpa.org/pec-blog/measuring-covid-19s-impact-on-trail-use/](https://pecpa.org/pec-blog/measuring-covid-19s-impact-on-trail-use/)



# The Business of Outdoor Recreation

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### Outdoor Recreation Equipment Sales Jumped during COVID-19



Percentage change in U.S. sales, March/April 2019 to March/April 2020.  
Data source: NPD Group Market Research

#### OTHER:

- RV sales: up >50%
- RV rentals: up 30%
- Boat launch permits: up 54% from same time last year
- Fishing licenses: up about 20% from same time last year





# Lessons Learned

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- Our outdoor spaces are more important than ever. Continued investment in them is paramount.
- Sharing pivoting strategies among our networks is important.
- There is power in partnerships — “We will get through this together.”
- Renewed interest in rural communities means opportunity.
- Online connectivity is critical.





# Grant Support

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## DCNR Grants

There are a variety of grants available from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) through the Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) to assist local entities and conservation organizations with everything from park, recreation and conservation. Our grants can fund the planning, acquisition and development of public park, recreation areas, trails and open spaces. We also support regional and statewide programs and conservation organizations whose missions aligns with ours.

Eligible applicants include municipalities, municipal agencies, non-profit organizations, state heritage areas, pre-qualified land trusts and for some programs, for-profit enterprises. Most programs require a 50% cash or non-cash matching contribution.

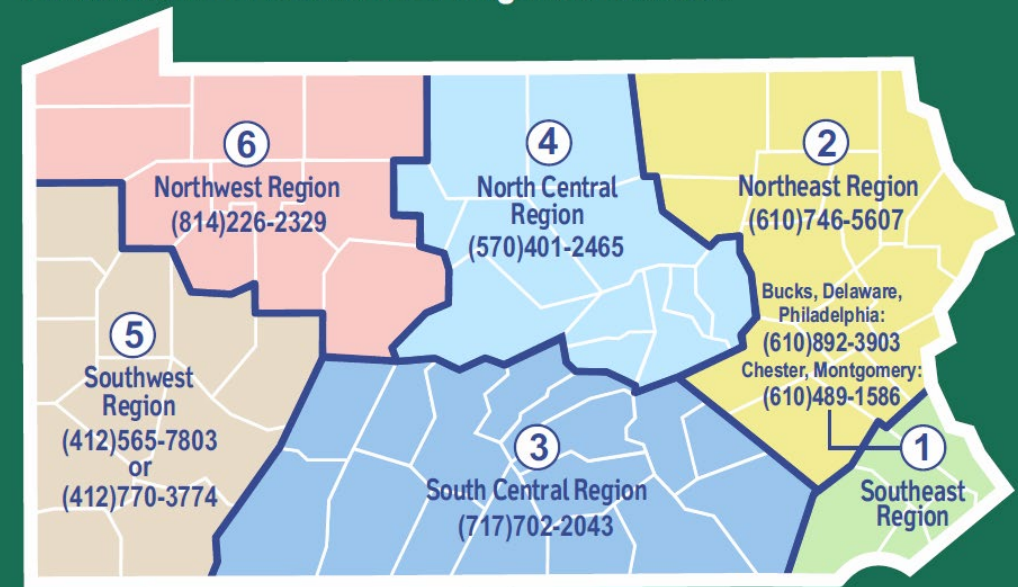
For additional information on the grants offered by DCNR or to apply for a grant, please visit [www.dcnr.pa.gov](http://www.dcnr.pa.gov).



- Community parks & recreation (including special funding for small communities)
- Land acquisition
- Partnerships
- Trails
- Rivers conservation & riparian buffers

## How to Get Help

Contact one of DCNR's six Regional Offices.



**pennsylvania**

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

[www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/Grants/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/Grants/Pages/default.aspx)



# More Information

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[www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/ConservationLandscapes](http://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/ConservationLandscapes)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=jES9kV5R0KY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jES9kV5R0KY)



Meredith Hill  
Director, Conservation Landscapes Program  
PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
[mehill@pa.gov](mailto:mehill@pa.gov)



Ta Enos

CEO

PA Wilds Center for  
Entrepreneurship



# Rural Community Action Assemblies



# OUR VISION

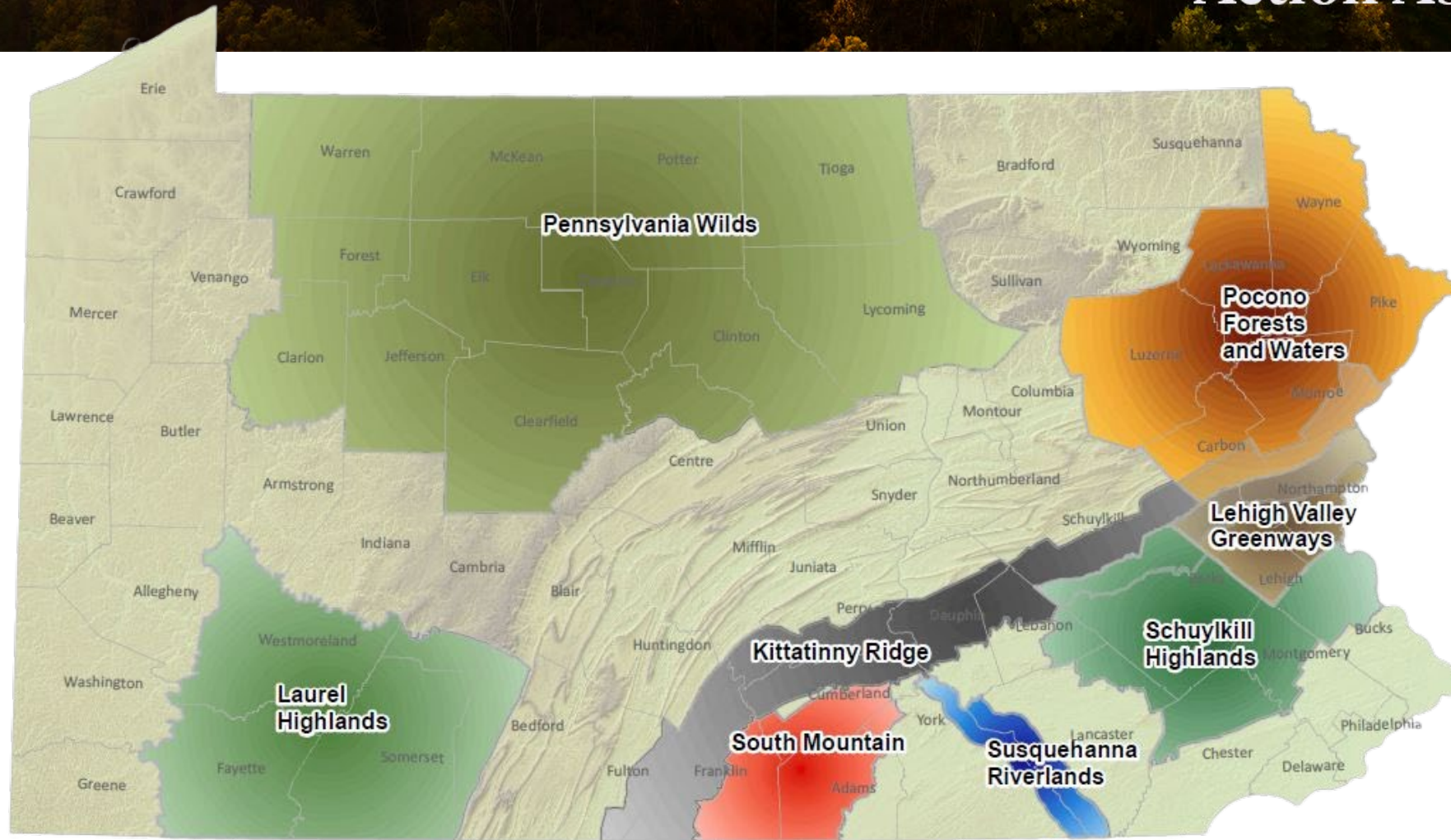
Building an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem to Help  
Revitalize Communities in Rural PA



**PA WILDS CENTER**  
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
a 501(c)(3) nonprofit

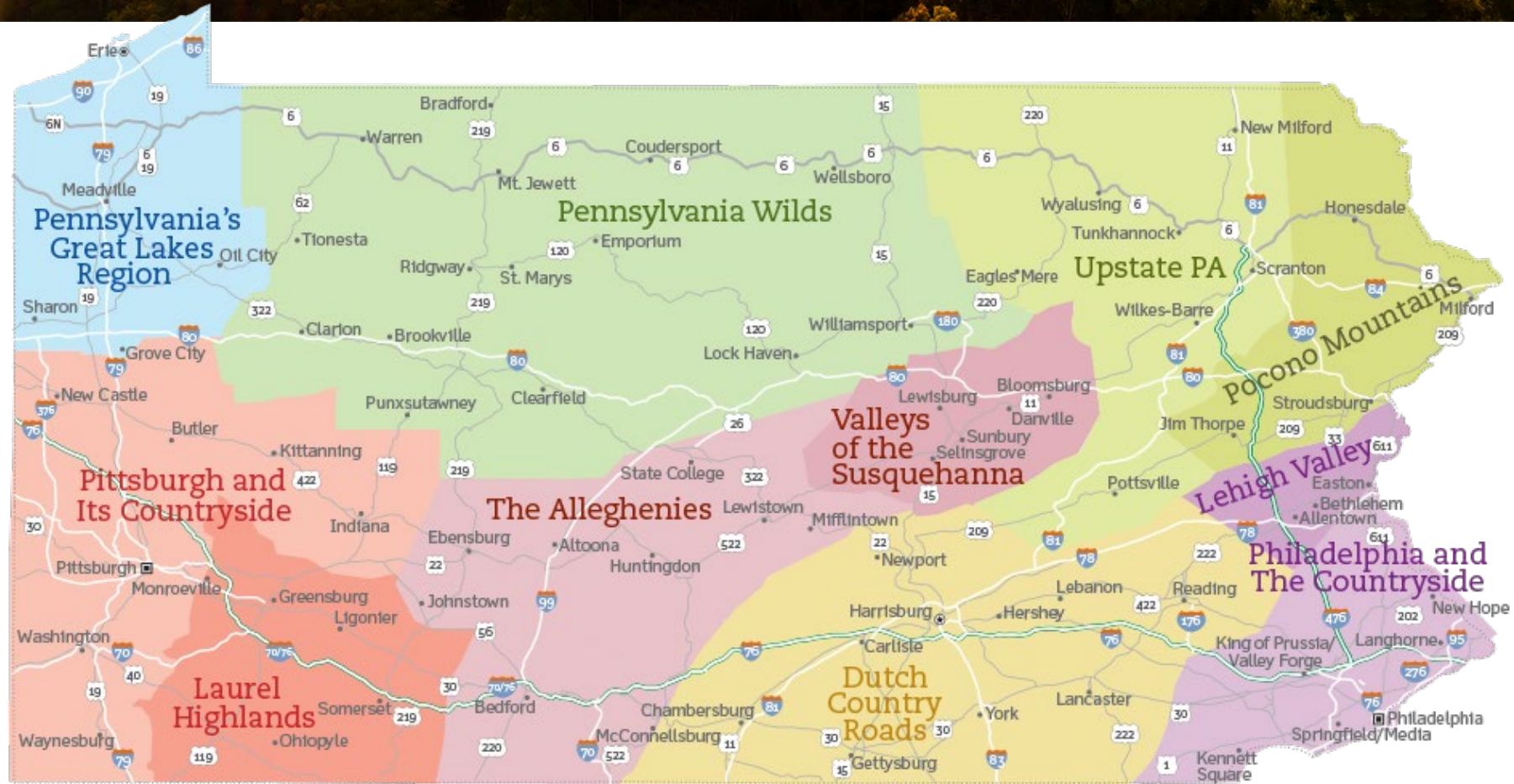


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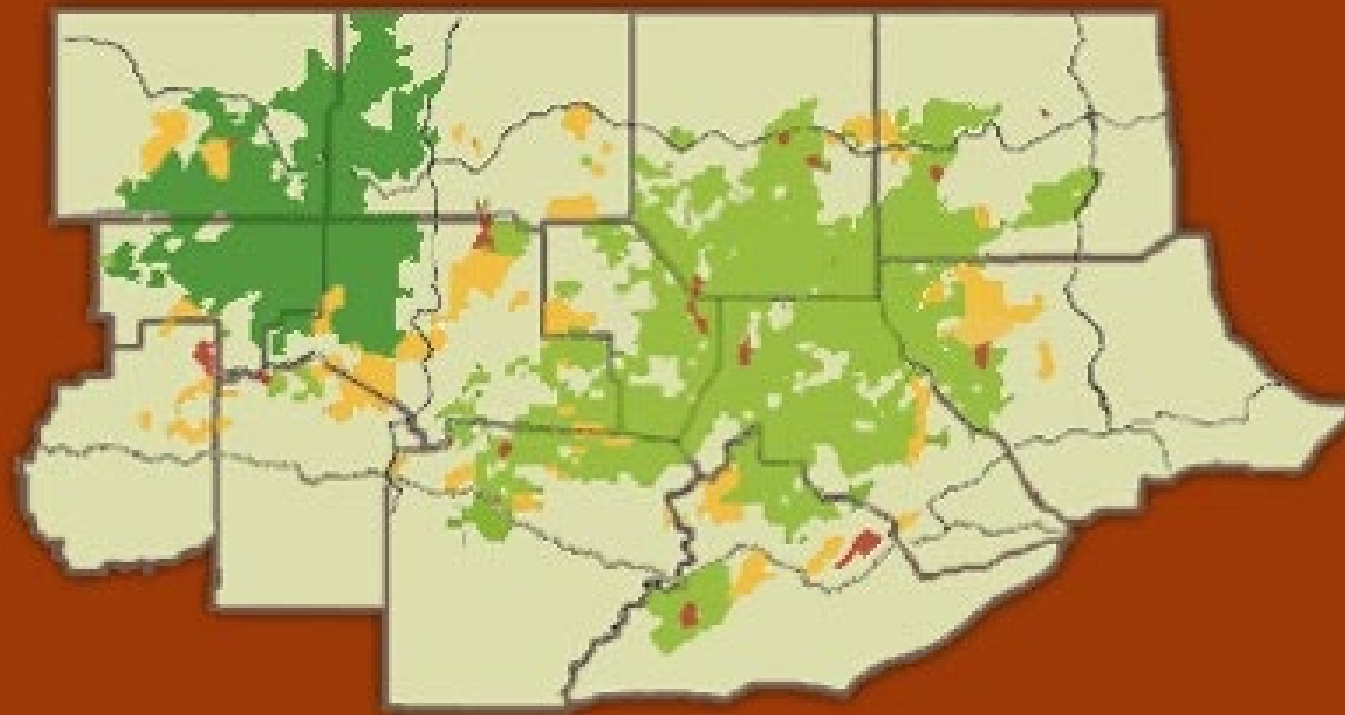




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## Public Lands in the PA Wilds



■ Allegheny National Forest   ■ State Game Lands   ■ State Forest   ■ State Parks



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# Rural Community Action Assemblies



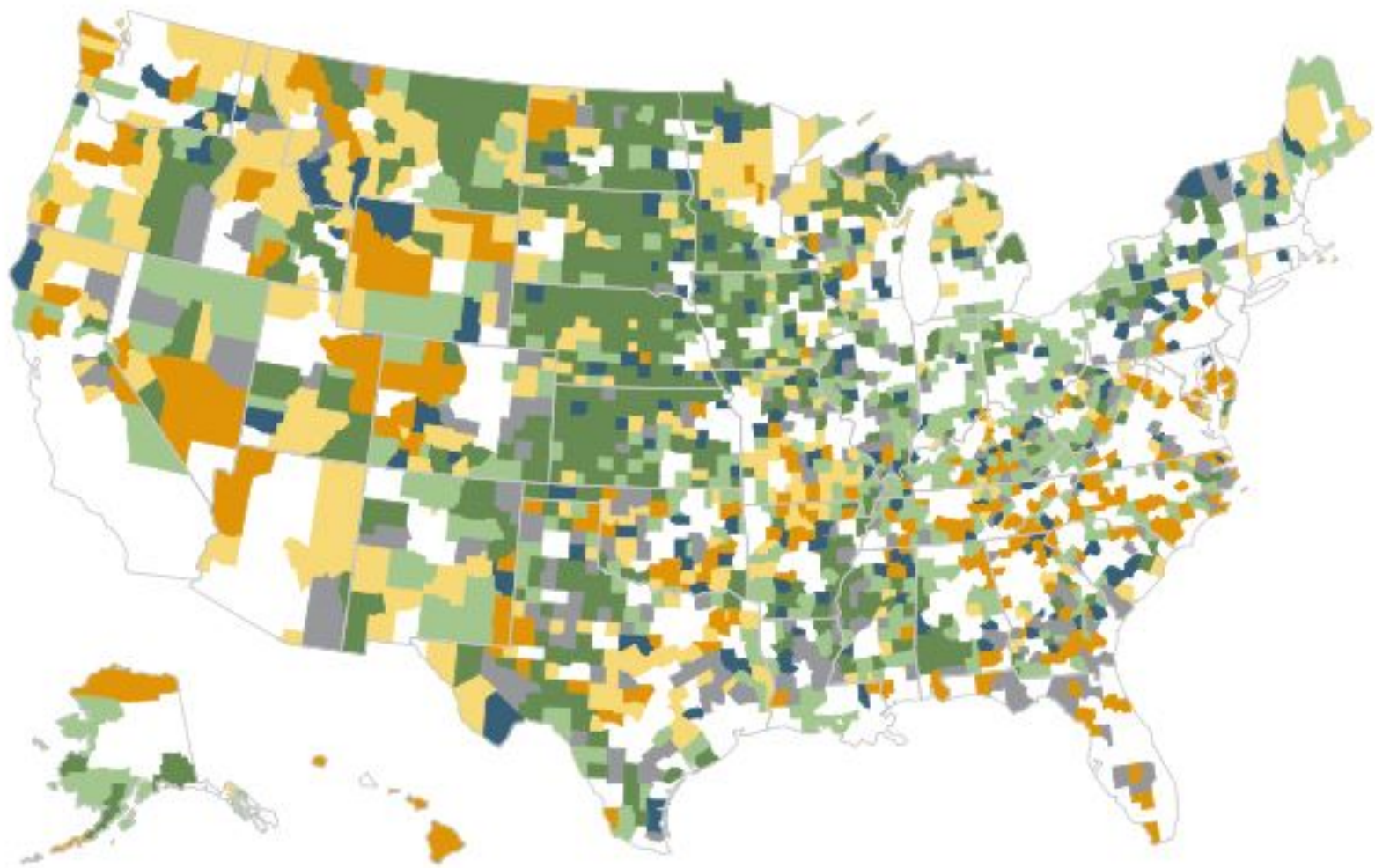
15+ years local, state, federal partners from the public and private sectors have made coordinated investments to grow this industry in the rural PA Wilds region

DCNR + DCED, county governments among core partners

Critical funding partners: PA Council on the Arts, ARC, EDA, USDA, nonprofit, corporate, foundation partners



Figure 3: Spatial Distribution of Rural Migration Types



# Rural Community Action Assemblies

# Rural Community Action Assemblies



**NOT ALL RURAL COUNTIES ARE LOSING PEOPLE  
SOME ARE GAINING.**



“Destination counties are unique ... in that they lose few young adults.”

“Destination counties ... are rich in natural amenities and outdoor recreation.”



# Rural Community Action Assemblies

## ABOUT THE PA WILDS CENTER

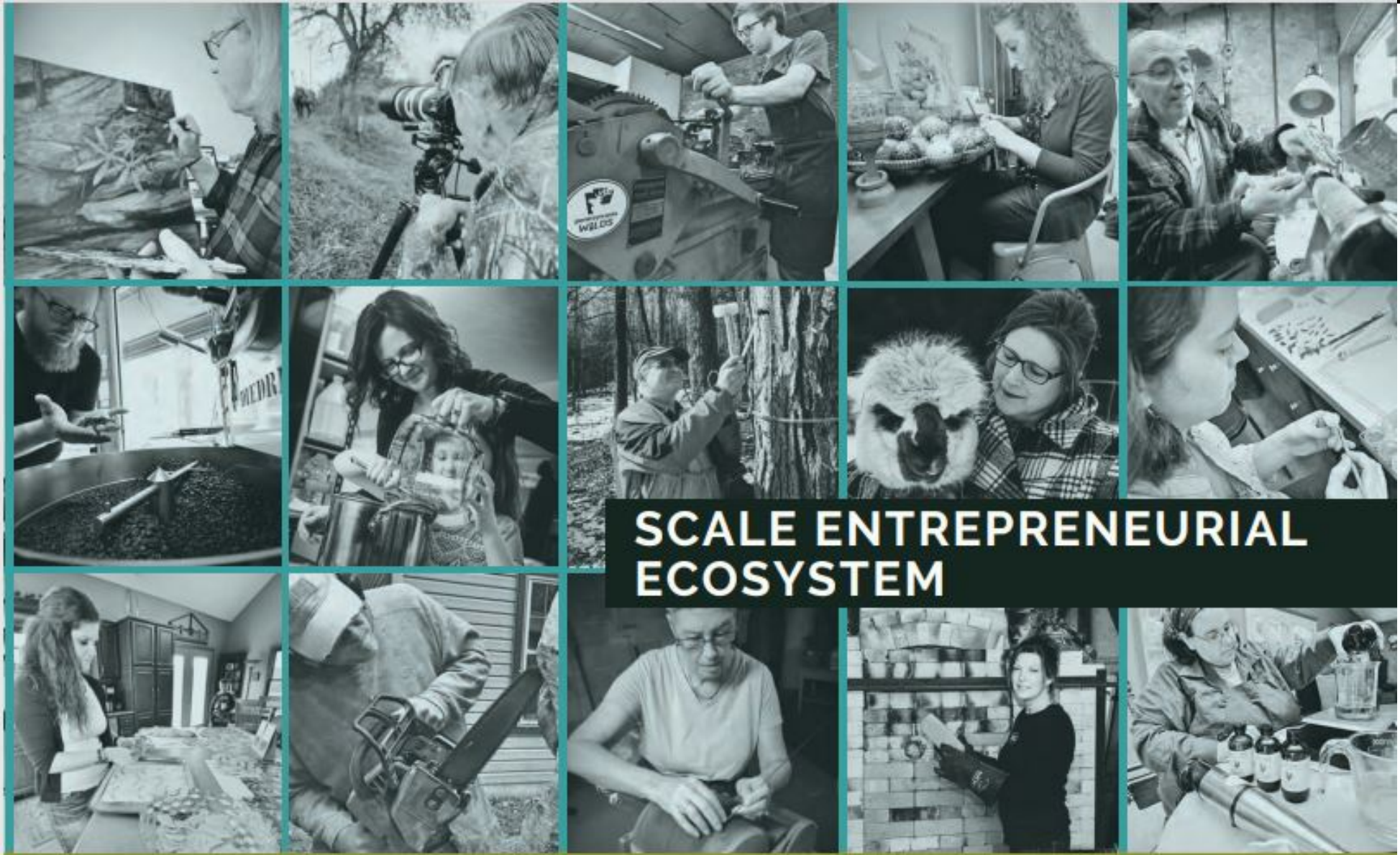
### MARRYING CONSERVATION + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, Inc. (PA Wilds Center) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
- Our mission is to integrate conservation and economic development in a way that strengthens and inspires communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds.
- Our work is sustained through partnerships, program fees, philanthropic giving, grants, and entrepreneurial activities related to the Pennsylvania Wilds brand.
- PA Wilds Center is the state's external lead organization for the PA Wilds Conservation Landscape; the nonprofit works with state partners at the policy level and helps coordinate activities in the landscape by a wide range of public and private partners.
- PA Wilds Center is the administrative home for the PA Wilds Planning Team, a 12-county stakeholder group formed through a groundbreaking Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement. The Planning Team helps shape the Center's programs and services.





# Rural Community Action Assemblies



**SCALE ENTREPRENEURIAL  
ECOSYSTEM**





# Rural Community Action Assemblies

OUR PLACE-BASED BRAND

## THE PA WILDS



Our place-based brand is associated with our region's tremendous public lands, outdoor experiences, maker culture, rural lifestyle, and stewardship ethic.

Tied to the PA Wilds Conservation Landscape effort that aims to grow nature tourism in the region to create jobs, diversify local economies, inspire stewardship, and improve quality of life.



OF A PLACE-BASED BRAND

## THE POWER

OF A PLACE-BASED BRAND



The I [heart] NY campaign is a prime example of how a place-based brand can fuel economic development and boost local pride. Developed in the 1970s, this iconic trademark is owned by Empire State Development, New York state's chief economic development agency, which licenses it for merchandise to the tune of \$30 million annually.



Local leadership nurtured a grassroots campaign to promote this small college town as the Live Music Capital of the World and to play up its "Keep Austin Weird" sentiment that became popular as the city threatened to homogenize. Today, Austin is one of the fastest-growing cities in the United States, and in 2014, its leisure and business travelers exceeded 45 million.



# Rural Community Action Assemblies





# Rural Community Action Assemblies



Growing and connecting unique small businesses  
in the Pennsylvania Wilds

## MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

A network of businesses and organizations involved in the PA Wilds products/experience, called the Wilds Cooperative of PA ([WildsCoPA.org](http://WildsCoPA.org)), and resources to help this network succeed, including referrals to PA's robust business service provider network, business-to-business referrals, etc.



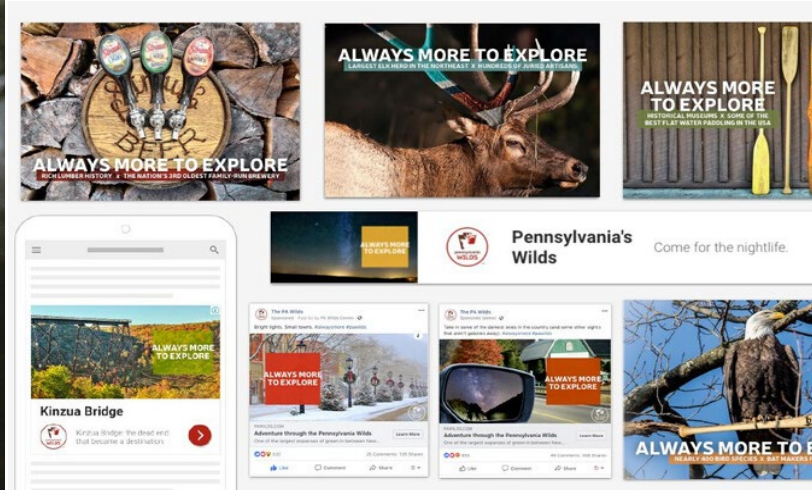
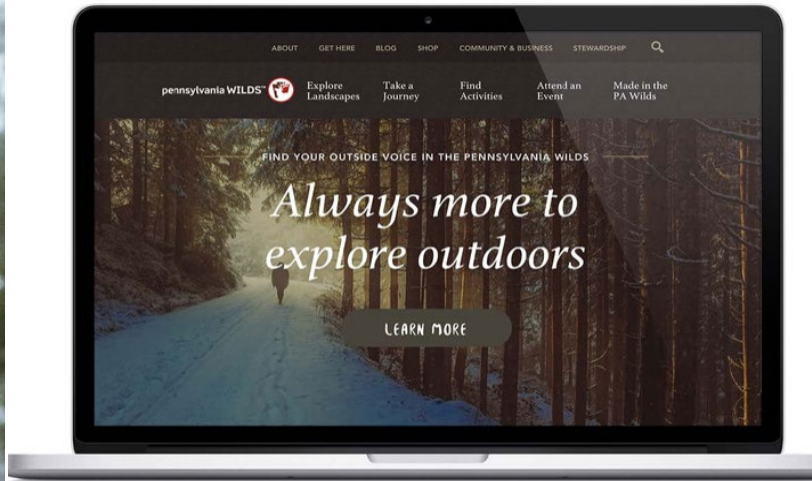
# Rural Community Action Assemblies



Regional commerce infrastructure to help rural entrepreneurs in the Wilds Cooperative access markets and to address gaps in visitor capacity (includes brick-and-mortar PA Wilds Conservation Shops and a soon-to-launch online PA Wilds-branded marketplace). This commerce infrastructure includes a charity checkout campaign that raises funds for PA Wilds state park/forest improvements (state parks/forests are a major visitor draw in the PA Wilds).



# Rural Community Action Assemblies



**THE PA WILDS:  
A PLACE FOR ENDLESS DISCOVERY**

Destination and lifestyle marketing to drive physical and online visitation to the region and support stewardship messaging (pawilds.com, related social media channels, media placements).



## PA WILDS MEDIA LAB

### CREATE, LEARN, CONNECT


- Supports our entrepreneurial network through tools, technologies and professional development
- Staff will utilize the space to create the content and platforms necessary to drive our entrepreneurial ecosystem around the PA Wilds lifestyle brand






# Our Ecosystem COVID Response

# Rural Community Action Assemblies



## White Paper on the Early Impacts of COVID-19 on the rural Pennsylvania Wilds Initiative

 An Early Summary Report for Stakeholders  
PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, Inc.  
Published May 8, 2020



*live today*  
**THE WILDS ARE WORKING**  
Rural Entrepreneurship in Uncharted Times

GUEST:  
**LAURA LEE ROBINSON**  
LA BELLE AUBERGE B&B

WHEN: 6.4.20 @ 11AM  
#WILDSOOPERATIVEOFFA

All Videos



- PA Wilds Makers Market: Lucky Shot Photography 8 hours ago · 105 Views
- PA Wilds Makers Market: Pine Springs Pottery 7 hours ago · 455 Views
- PA Wilds Makers Market: Your First Pottery 8 hours ago · 427 Views
- PA Wilds Makers Market: PA Made 9 hours ago · 215 Views
- PA Wilds Makers Market: Day 1 Kick Off 13 hours ago · 348 Views
- Wilds Are Working: It Is What It Is 2 days ago · 34 Views
- Wilds Are Working: 5507 Hill Vineyard & Winery a week ago · 101 Views
- Wilds Are Working: La Belle Auberge Bed & Breakfast a week ago · 58 Views
- Wilds Are Working: MILKCOOL Playhouse 2 weeks ago · 75 Views

# COVID-19 RELIEF

PA STATEWIDE SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Julie Fitzpatrick

Executive Director

Pennsylvania Downtown Center

# Nature-Based Placemaking

Rural Community  
Action Assemblies



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY  
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



[padowntown.org](http://padowntown.org)







\$43.3 BILLION –  
SPENDING BY  
TRAVELERS TO  
AND/OR W/I PA

*(2017 TOURISM ECONOMICS)*

**\$22.2 BILLION** - LEISURE

OVERNIGHT TRAVELERS

**\$14.2 BILLION** - LEISURE DAY-  
TRIPPERS

LODGING - \$6 BILLION

FOOD AND BEVERAGE - \$9.0 BILLION

RETAIL - \$6.7 BILLION

**RECREATION - \$7.5 BILLION**

TRANSPORTATION - \$14.1 BILLION



LEISURE VISITORS  
IN-STATE SPENDING  
ROSE 2.5% TO \$36.3  
BILLION

*(2017 TOURISM ECONOMICS)*

DAY-TRIP LEISURE VISITORS ACCOUNTED  
FOR 60% OF ALL DOMESTIC VISITOR  
SPENDING ON RECREATION IN PA

**120.4** MILLION DAY-TRIP LEISURE VISITORS,  
SPENDING \$15.6 BILLION (\$3.8 BILLION ON  
RECREATION)

EACH VISITOR SPENT EST. **\$129/TRIP**

**60.7** MILLION DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT  
LEISURE TRAVELERS, SPENDING \$18.5  
BILLION (\$2.3 BILLION ON RECREATION)

EACH VISITOR SPENT EST. **\$304/TRIP**

---

### NATURE-BASED STRATEGIES

- Is your town visitor ready?
  - Food
  - Lodging
  - Retail
  - Experiences
  - Training of staff
  - Acceptance by civic leadership
  - Acceptance by residents





---

### CURRENT USERS VS. POTENTIAL VISITORS

- Who are they? Where are they coming from?
- How did they learn about your trail/town/park?
- What else are they doing while they're visiting?
- Are they having a memorable experience that they are sharing with friends and family?
- How can you help make their trip worthwhile?
- Are they returning?
  - To visit
  - To live



### PRIZM PROFILES

Demographic Data – education, income, housing and race

Economic Data - # of businesses, employees, sales/class; types of businesses, etc.

Psychographic Data (consumer behavior profiles) – including comprehensive information about media preferences, travel, auto, restaurants, shopping, telecommunications and financial services



### PROFILE OF A RECREATIONAL USER

#### MORE LIKELY TO:

Belong to an arts association & environ.org. - Contribute to PBS  
Go to the movies, museums & live theater  
Belong to a civic club & a parent assoc. - Buy board games & books in stores & online  
Own a dog and/or a cat - Dine out at non-fast food restaurants  
Enjoy photography and/or woodworking - Enjoy entertaining at home

# Top 5 segments represent **55.0%** of households in Quakertown, PA (borough)



Rank: 1  
Hhlds: 550  
Hhld %: 14.91  
% in Benchmark: 1.39  
Index: **1,073**

Not all of America's chic sophisticates live in major metros. Brite Lights, Lit City is a group of well-off, college educated, middle-aged couples settled in the nation's satellite cities and suburbs. Despite living further out from the urban downtowns, they still like to go out on the town with frequent meals out and karaoke evenings.



Rank: 2  
Hhlds: 465  
Hhld %: 12.61  
% in Benchmark: 1.32  
Index: **958**

Ethnically diverse households found mostly in second cities, Struggling Singles are middle aged and mid-career. They enjoy a wide variety of sports and entertainment activities that fill their social calendars.



Rank: 3  
Hhlds: 390  
Hhld %: 10.57  
% in Benchmark: 1.29  
Index: **820**

Widely scattered across the nation's suburbs and second cities, the residents of Home Sweet Home tend to be younger, midscale families living in mid-sized homes. The adults in the segment, mostly under 55, have gone to college and hold professional and white-collar jobs. These folks stay busy remodeling and improving their homes, enjoy the occasional night out singing karaoke, and follow professional sports.





Rank: 4  
Hhids: 348  
Hhid % 9.44  
% in Benchmark: 2.46  
Index 384

Middleburg Managers arose when empty nesters settled in satellite communities, which offered a lower cost of living and more relaxed pace. Today, segment residents tend to be middle class with solid white-collar jobs or comfortable retirements. In their older homes, they enjoy reading and needlecrafts, while time outside the home is spent at club activities and cultural events.



Rank: 5  
Hhids: 277  
Hhid % 7.51  
% in Benchmark: 1.67  
Index 450

They may be older and retired, but the residents of American Classics are still living the American Dream of home ownership. Homeowners living a comfortable lifestyle, these couples are below average in their technology use, preferring to find their entertainment outside of the home.

### NATURE-BASED PLACEMAKING

THE CONCEPT BLENDS A  
VARIETY OF THEORIES  
AND APPROACHES INTO  
A STRATEGIC,  
THOUGHTFUL, AND  
PRACTICAL  
REVITALIZATION  
PROGRAM:

PA DCNR'S CONSERVATION LANDSCAPES

PA HERITAGE AREAS

RIVER TOWNS/TRAIL TOWNS

MAIN STREET FOUR-POINT APPROACH®

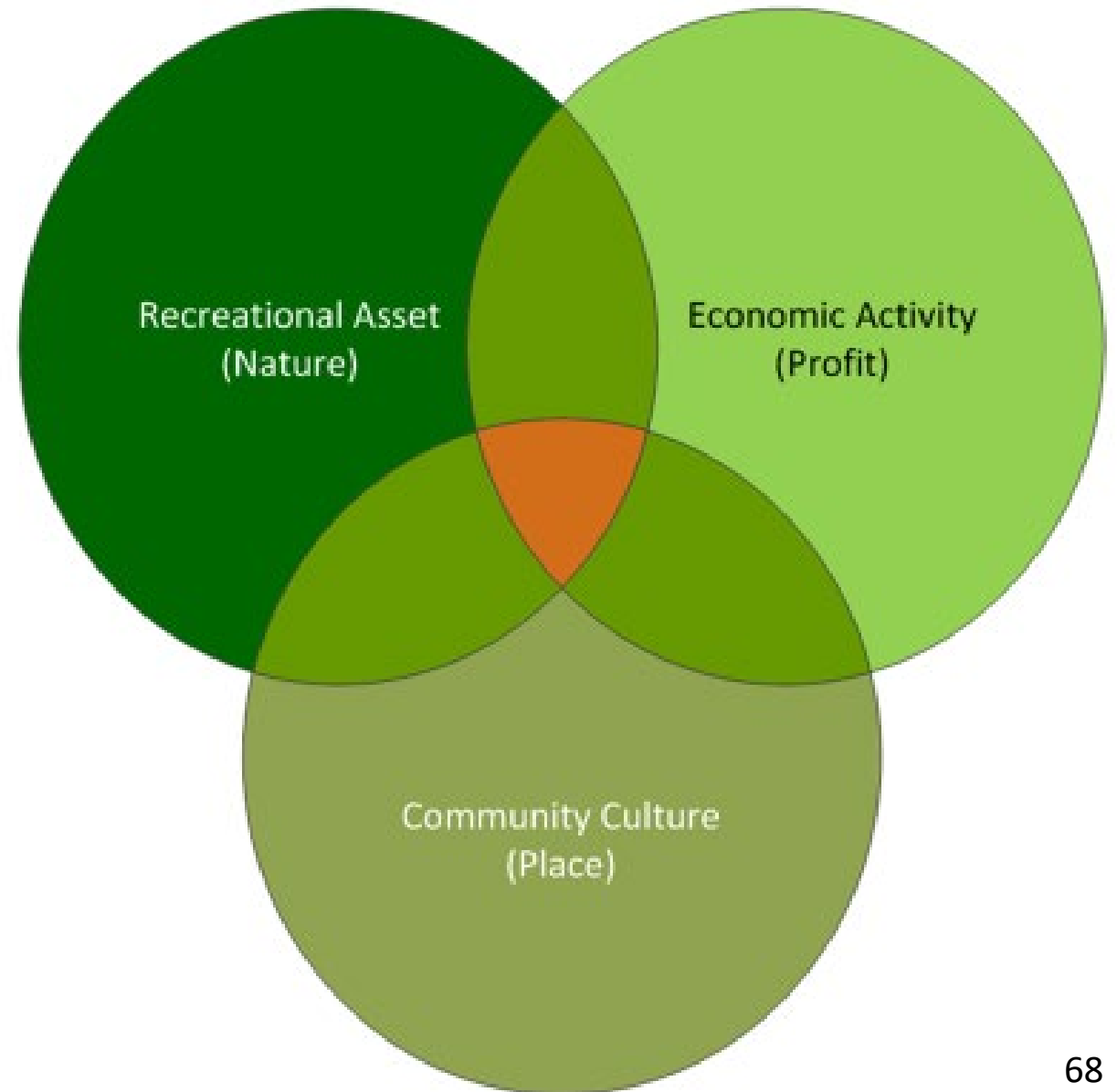
PA ELM STREET FIVE-POINT APPROACH

*CIVIC TOURISM* (DAN SHILLING)

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS/TRIPLE  
BOTTOM LINE THEORY

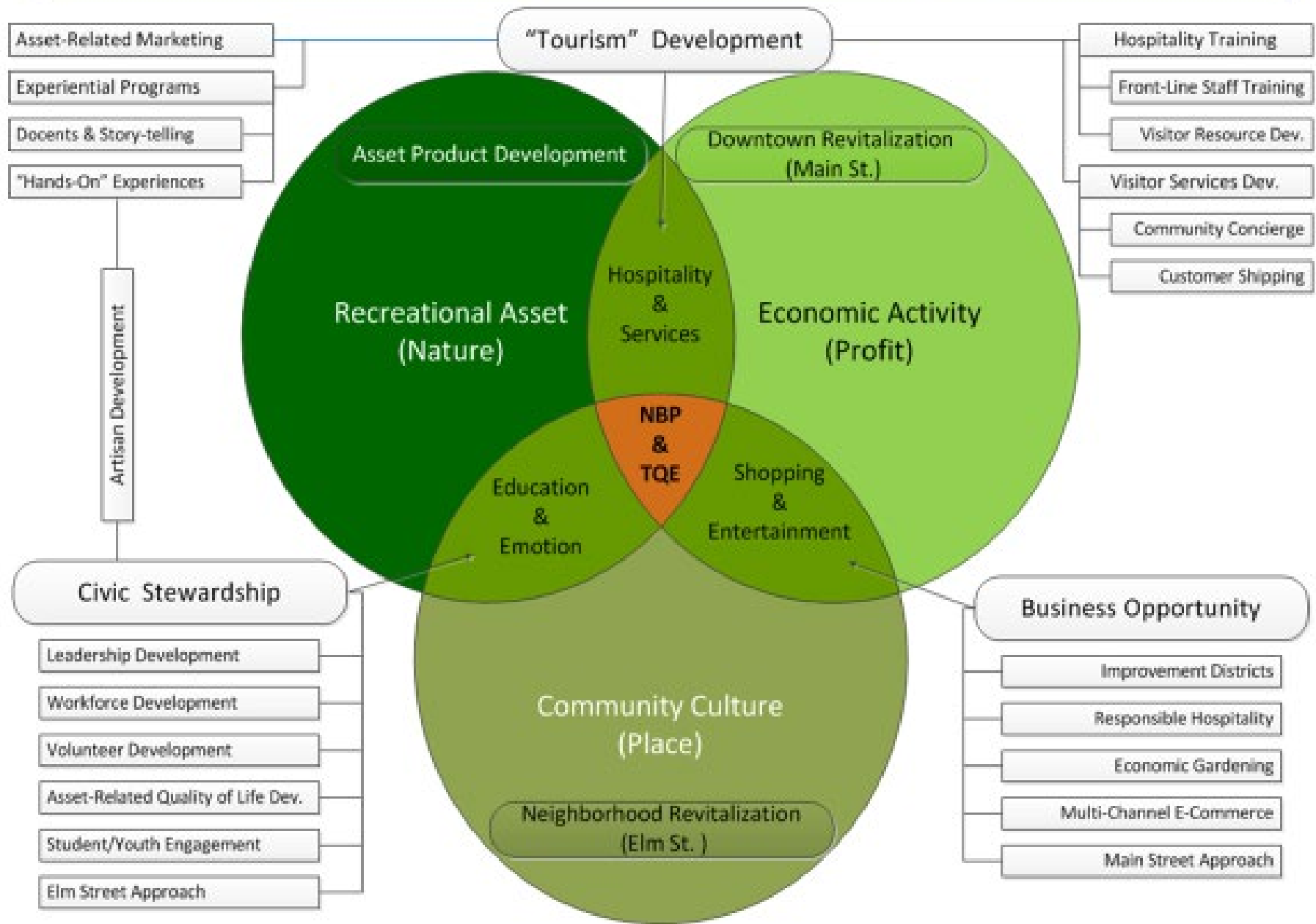


*THREE BASIC ELEMENTS*



# Nature-Based Placemaking (NBP) & the Total Quality Experience 7-24-2013

Community  
Assemblies





ORGANIZATION /  
COMMUNITY

IMPORTANCE OF:  
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE  
COMMUNITY READINESS  
COMMUNITY CAPACITY  
COMMUNITY PRIORITY / INTEREST /  
WILLINGNESS

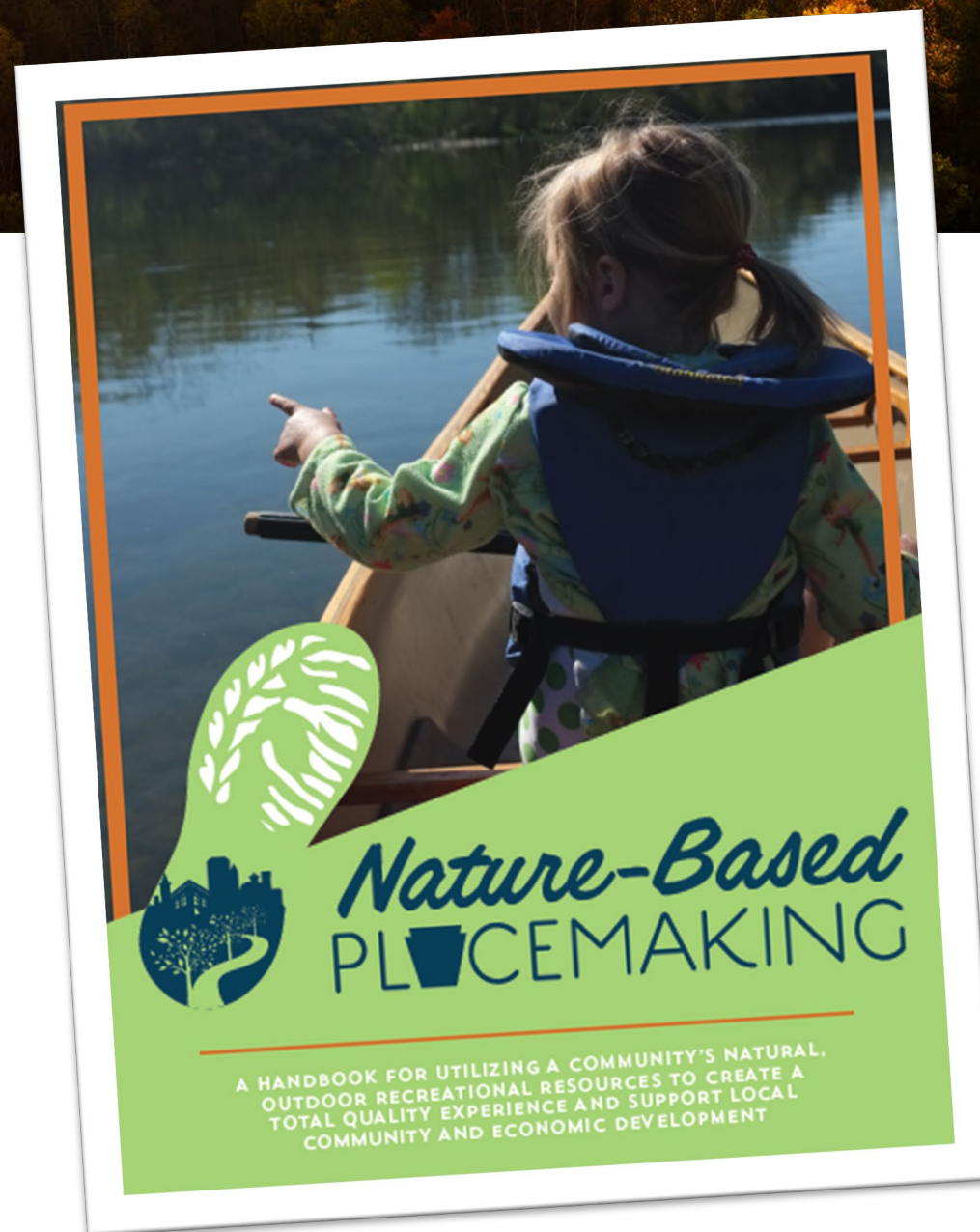
### NATURE-BASED PLACEMAKING DESIGNATION

#### MOVING FORWARD:

- ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS
- VIDEO TO SHOW THE IMPORTANCE OF A NATURE-BASED PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE IN YOUR COMMUNITY
- VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS (1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> WEEK IN DECEMBER):
  - LOCAL LEADERSHIP/ELECTED OFFICIALS
  - BUSINESSES: EXISTING AND POTENTIAL
- COMPLETING PLANNING WORK IN THREE PILOT COMMUNITIES



# Rural Community Action Assemblies



<https://padowntown.org/resources/categories/nature-based-placemaking>

# Rural Community Action Assemblies

## UPCOMING NATURE-BASED PLACEMAKING WORKSHOPS

---

December  
1, 2 & 3

*Local Leadership  
Development*

AND

*Business Enhancement &  
Development*

December  
7, 9 & 10





# Questions and Discussion

Please consider:

- What did you take away from the presentations?
- How did the presentations relate to your work?
- How do the presentations apply in the community you work with?
- What additional information would have added value to the presentations?
- What additional information would be valuable for future rural community action assemblies?
- How is the virtual format of the assembly and how else would you like to receive information on rural development?

Share your feedback with Nathaniel Borek at [Nathaniel.Borek@phil.frb.org](mailto:Nathaniel.Borek@phil.frb.org).

# Small Group Breakout Discussion

- Participants will be randomly assigned to separate “tables” for continued discussion, followed by a five-minute break.
- These discussions will not be recorded.
- We will reconvene at 11:10 a.m.



## Resource Chat on Outdoor and Small-Town Tourism, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development

- David Kahley, President and CEO, The Progress Fund
- Jamie Bennett, Executive Director, ArtPlace America
- *Moderator:* Valerie Case, Sales Manager, Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau

David Kahley  
President and CEO  
The Progress Fund





The  
**Progress**  
Fund

# Corporate structure

- Recognized that loan capital could influence change
- Incorporated in 1997 – as not-for-profit, nongovernmental entity
- Primary mission: Grow the rural tourism industry in SW PA
- Certified community development financial institution (CDFI) — lender to underserved individuals and businesses
- PA DCED-approved area loan organization (AOL) — state loans
- SBA Community Advantage (CA) lender — PPP loans recently
- Total assets \$55 million
- To date, provided \$82.3 million in 584 loans across 365 businesses



# The Progress Fund's approach

- Grow the tourism industry in western PA, western MD, northern WV
- Also support sustainable agriculture — think “cheese and wine”
- We believe that many smaller projects add up into big result
- Local economies are driven by small business growth and success
- We expect entrepreneurs to identify marketplace opportunities, then consider options
- We work to help entrepreneurs get open, stay successful, grow appropriately
- Historic assets attract customers, small-town downtowns especially
- Impatience lead us into developer role, to get the ball rolling
- We look to “win some” and avoid many others

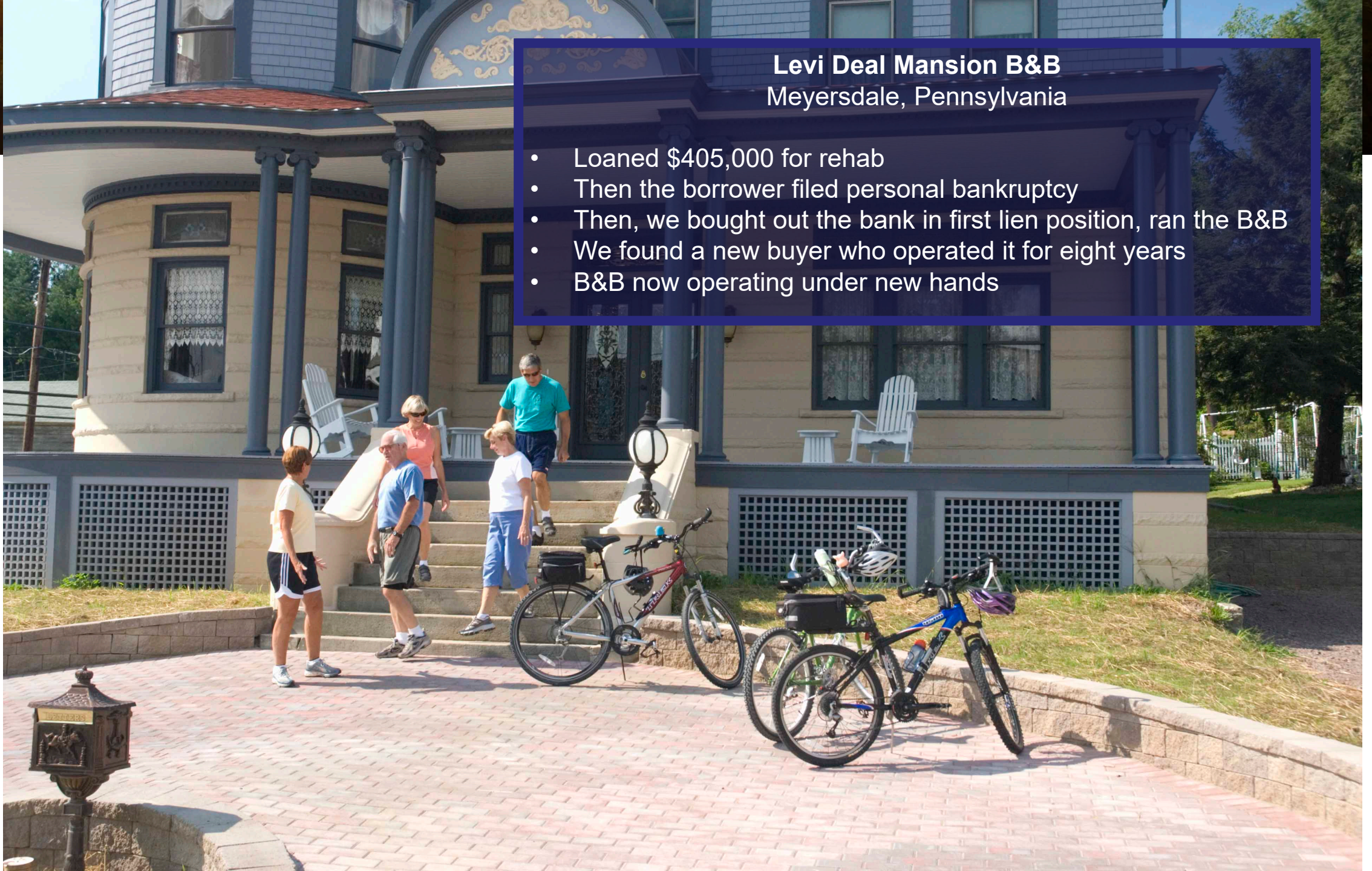
# Resources of The Progress Fund

- On balance sheet:
  - Total assets \$55 million — since 1997, provided \$82.3 million in 584 loans across 365 businesses
  - Ample funds in hand to make new loans; we appreciate referrals
- Off-balance-sheet resources:
  - DCED business loans — certified economic development organization (CEDO)
  - PPP loans – SBA Community Advantage (CA) lender
  - Grants from PA CDFI network grant program
- Technical assistance:
  - All prospective borrowers receive tailored advice
  - Borrowers talk with borrowers
  - Trail Town Program shares knowledge of lessons learned



## Levi Deal Mansion B&B Meyersdale, Pennsylvania

- Loaned \$405,000 for rehab
- Then the borrower filed personal bankruptcy
- Then, we bought out the bank in first lien position, ran the B&B
- We found a new buyer who operated it for eight years
- B&B now operating under new hands







**Country Cupboard and Nature Run Wood Works  
Laughlintown, Pennsylvania**

- Old Zider's General Store was empty for 25 years
- Owner serving life sentence
- Catch-22 of restrictions — conservation easement vs. local codes
- Obtained grant commitment from regional foundation
- Negotiated new conservation easement and purchase
- Completed historic rehabilitation
- Found tenant, now in place for over six years





# Bright Morning B&B, West Newton





# 125 Jefferson Court, West Newton







Another community development project by:

The  
**Progress**  
Fund

[progressfund.org](http://progressfund.org)

724.216.9160



Jamie Bennett  
Executive Director  
ArtPlace America



# ARTPLACE

Rural Community  
Action Assemblies

## Investing in Artists as Allies

Rural Community Action Assembly:  
Outdoor and Small-Town Tourism, Entrepreneurship,  
and Economic Development

**Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia**  
November 2020

**ArtPlace America** is a 10-year fund  
that has invested more than \$100 million  
in **rural, suburban, tribal, and urban** communities  
to support **artists as allies in equitable community development.**



# Liz Lerman

“An Atlas of Creative Tools”  
Arizona State University  
Phoenix, AZ









# Wormfarm Institute Reedsburg, WI





# Barter Theatre Abingdon, VA





# Appalachian Artisan Center Hindman, KY



AGRICULTURE & FOOD RESEARCH



ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY RESEARCH



HEALTH RESEARCH ROOTS & WINGS  
The West End Poetry Opera



HOUSING RESEARCH



IMMIGRATION RESEARCH



PUBLIC SAFETY RESEARCH



TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH



[www.ArtPlaceAmerica.org](http://www.ArtPlaceAmerica.org)



# ARTPLACE

Rural Community  
Action Assemblies

**Jamie Bennett**

[jamie@artplaceamerica.org](mailto:jamie@artplaceamerica.org)



@sarmoti

Valerie Case

Sales Manager

Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau



Valerie Case

Sales Manager

Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau



**POCONO MOUNTAINS<sup>SM</sup>**  
VISITORS BUREAU

# Tourism as currency

- \$2.4 billion in annual revenue
- Number-one industry in the four-county region
- 63% of the job market in Monroe County specifically





**POCONO MOUNTAINS**<sup>SM</sup>  
VISITORS BUREAU

## COVID-19 shifts

- Creating PSAs with the hospitals to serve the local market and serve the community
- Created Small Towns and Retail task force
- Microsite on our website that is continuously updated with the most recent and relevant information: [www.poconomounatins.com](http://www.poconomounatins.com)
- Monroe 2030 – GEW – Celebrating Opportunity



**POCONO MOUNTAINS<sup>SM</sup>**  
VISITORS BUREAU

## Uniquely PMVB

- Pocono Television Network
- Three cable systems, 400,000 homes across 12 counties; extending soon to Roku, Apple TV, and Fire TV
- Streaming on [www.poconomountains.com/](http://www.poconomountains.com/)



# Questions and Discussion

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# Closing Remarks

Rural Community  
Action Assemblies

**Micah Gursky**

Executive Director

Tamaqua Area Community Partnership



# Thank You and Don't Forget

- Please share your feedback by taking the event survey.
- What topics and resources are you interested in learning more about?