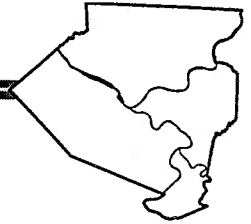


# ALLEGHENY COUNTY



# CONSERVATION CORRIDOR PLAN



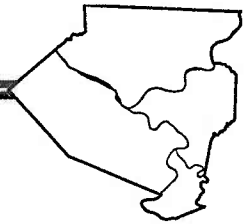
## Conservation Corridors Plan

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Conservation Corridors Plan



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## Allegheny County Conservation Corridors Plan

Conservation corridors are ribbons of undeveloped open space which include and link sensitive natural features of Allegheny County. They include floodplains, wetlands, and steep unstable slopes, and often follow stream valleys. The meandering corridors can link wildlife habitat and gamelands providing migration routes for wildlife or link parks and historic features with trails for people.

The Allegheny County Planning Department has mapped a system of conservation corridors throughout the county and is proposing that they be protected through the actions of municipal governments and community groups. The success of this plan depends on each of the county's 130 municipalities adopting it.

A draft plan was presented at a public meeting sponsored by the Allegheny County Planning Department. Suggestions from citizens and municipal officials and staff for adding several areas were received and the plan was revised where appropriate.

We encourage and will provide assistance to municipalities and community groups who use this plan as a blueprint to protect the conservation corridors in their areas.

### Development of the conservation corridor plan

Allegheny County contains diverse land use patterns, from the urbanized areas of the city of Pittsburgh to the rural areas of the Potato Garden Run watershed in western Allegheny County. This diversity made it more complex to establish an objective system because if all potential conservation corridors have to meet the strict requirements established for identifying a conservation corridor in a rural area, then not a single conservation corridor would exist in the urbanized areas. And conversely, if all conservation corridors have to meet the requirements established for



the urbanized areas, then *all* rural areas would be identified as conservation corridors.

This plan describes an objective system to incorporate both extremes and the areas in between.

## Benefits of protecting conservation corridors

**Improve recreation opportunities:** Conservation corridors can provide trails for bicycling, hiking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, and wildlife observation. They can also improve public access to riverfronts.

**Protect natural environment:** Conservation corridors help protect wildlife and habitats. They help conserve wetlands and can preserve characteristic Allegheny County features such as steep wooded hillsides and undeveloped stream valleys. They also provide migration routes for wildlife that are important to the biodiversity of the region.

**Offer educational opportunities:** Conservation corridors allow students and the general public to observe plants and animals in their natural environment.

**Reduce air pollution:** When conservation corridors contain trails, people can walk or bike (and avoid motorized transport) in the corridors to schools, parks, libraries, and workplaces. Also, trees within a corridor mitigate air and noise pollution.

**Increase property values:** Along their routes, conservation corridors can attract residents and businesses, increase property values and improve marketability.

**Connect cultural features:** Some cultural features have the possibility of being incorporated into the proposed corridors. The cultural features identified include the following:

- Municipal, county, and state parks greater than five acres.
- Pennsylvania State Game Lands.
- Land trust owned lands.
- Regional and local trails.
- Other cultural features, such as parks, trails, Beechwood Farms, and golf courses, as appropriate.



## Basic criteria of conservation corridors

Conservation corridors in Allegheny County contain sensitive natural features, create linkages, and have significant size or scale.

**Sensitive natural features:** Certain areas are included and should be protected in conservation corridors because they contain sensitive natural features such as—

- Wetlands.
- Steep slopes (greater than 25%)<sup>1</sup>.
- 100 year floodplain<sup>1</sup>.
- Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory Areas.
- Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas<sup>2</sup>.
- High quality streams<sup>3</sup>.

**Linkages:** Conservation corridors can create linkages that allow people and wildlife to move freely between connected areas. If we can protect these ribbons of green space then we're protecting the continuity that currently exists.

**Scale:** It is important for a conservation corridor to be more than a narrow strip of vegetation paralleling a stream. A corridor should not only include the area directly adjacent to the stream, but it should also be wide enough to include all of the sensitive natural features within the stream valley, for the entire length of the stream.

Conservation corridors provide the following functions:

- Reduce environmental hazards such as landslides and floods.
- Prevent soil erosion.
- Maintain and improve water and air quality.
- Reduce wind velocities.
- Moderate temperatures.
- Provide migration corridors.
- Reduce sedimentation in streams.

**Notes:**

1. *Defined as first order features on the Physical Capabilities Map of the Allegheny County Land Use Element, Proposed Land Use Plan, 1978.*
2. *Information taken from the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory, Draft, November 1993*
3. *Information provided from the AGIS System by Allegheny County Planning Department*



## Organization of the plan

Areas that contain all three of the conservation corridor criteria—sensitive natural areas, linkages, and scale—were chosen as part of the proposed comprehensive conservation corridor system for Allegheny County.

This plan provides a framework or blueprint that will guide municipalities, conservation groups, and others as they develop their corridors.

To organize the plan, the conservation corridor system was divided into separate but connected corridors and each corridor named after the watershed in which it is located. The plan contains 29 major corridors throughout the county.

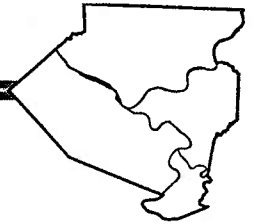
### ***Prioritization***

After the corridors were identified, they were ranked according to the following qualities:

- Number of Natural Heritage Areas in or adjacent to the corridor.  
(A Natural Heritage Area is either a pristine or recovering natural area that has essentially the same ecological conditions that are believed to have existed prior to European settlement, and is large enough and buffered enough to support and permanently protect the natural community. A Natural Heritage Inventory was conducted for Allegheny County by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in 1993.)
- Number of wetlands and other sensitive natural features in or adjacent to the corridor.
- Number of parks in or adjacent to the corridor.
- Number of trails in or adjacent to the corridor.
- Number of linkages.
- Number of historical features in or adjacent to the conservation corridor.

When a tie was encountered, the corridor with the larger area was ranked higher.

This ranked the 29 conservation corridors identified in the Conservation Corridor Plan. However, this ranking was based on what exists today. Tomorrow, a corridor may have fewer conservation corridor qualities and



may lose position in the ranking. Therefore, the corridors were grouped so minor changes in rank won't affect a corridor's priority.

**High Priority:** A high priority conservation corridor contains the most environmentally significant features. The preservation of these corridors will have a more positive impact on the county than other corridors. The majority of the high priority corridors are large tracts of land which, for the most part, have not been disturbed by development.

**Medium Priority:** A medium priority conservation corridor contains sensitive natural features that are not as significant as those in a high priority corridor. Typically these corridors have been impacted by a fair amount of development.

**Low Priority:** A low priority conservation corridor contains sensitive natural features that have been heavily impacted by development. The majority of these corridors contain only steep slopes that have been identified as environmentally sensitive areas.





**Priorities and ranking of conservation corridors based on features**

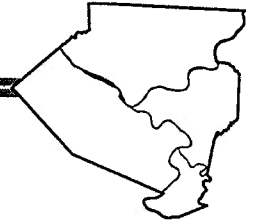
Corridor	Natural Heritage Areas	Parks	Trails	Wetlands	Linkages	Total	Rank
<i>High Priority</i>							
Pine Creek	5	18	3	35	6	67	1
Potato Garden Run	2	1	2	40	5	50	2
Montour Run	2	1	3	35	5	46	3
Deer Creek	3	0	3	20	5	31	4
Chartiers Creek	3	10	2	13	3	31	5
Sewickley Creek	2	8	2	10	6	28	6
Turtle Creek	1	10	2	11	3	27	7
Youghiogheny River	1	5	2	12	5	25	8
Stony Camp Run	3	15	1	1	4	24	9
Plum Creek	3	2	3	12	3	23	10
<i>Medium Priority</i>							
Flaugherty Run	0	0	1	14	3	18	11
Pittsburgh	1	2	2	6	4	15	12
Robinson Run	0	2	2	6	4	14	13
Lowries Run	1	6	1	1	4	13	14
Bull Creek	2	3	2	0	4	11	15
Tom's Run	2	2	1	2	4	11	16
Long Run	1	3	1	2	3	10	17
Kelly Run	0	2	1	0	4	7	18
Thompson Run	1	4	0	1	0	6	19
<i>Low Priority</i>							
Sawmill and Western	0	3	1	0	2	6	20
Peters Creek	1	2	0	2	1	5	21
Sandy Creek	0	0	1	3	1	5	22
Hoffman Slopes	0	0	1	0	3	4	23
Millers Run	1	0	0	0	3	4	24
Streets Run	0	1	0	0	2	3	25
Homestead Run	0	0	1	0	2	3	26
Beckets Run	1	0	0	0	2	3	27
Becks Run	0	0	0	0	2	2	28
Curry Hollow	0	0	0	0	0	0	29



### *Allegheny County Conservation Corridors Plan Map*



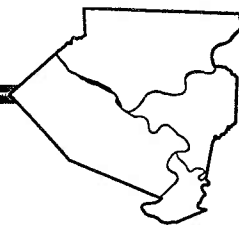
*Plan for Allegheny County showing its 29 conservation corridors. Although the county is continuing to develop rapidly, about half of its 744 square miles are still undeveloped. This Conservation Corridor Plan must be put in place while there are still undeveloped areas available. Detailed versions of this map are available from the Allegheny County Planning Department.*



***Additional data on conservation corridors***

<b>Corridor</b>	<b>Corridor Number*</b>	<b>Municipal-ities</b>	<b>Historical Sites</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<i>High Priority</i>					
Pine Creek	4	8	9	12,040	1
Potato Garden Run	28	1	0	4,505	2
Montour Run	27	6	2	4,092	3
Deer Creek	6	9	5	11,443	4
Chartiers Creek	24	17	8	4,195	5
Sewickley Creek	1	13	6	7,432	6
Turtle Creek	9	11	3	5,982	7
Youghiogheny River	15	4	14	5,928	8
Stony Camp Run	5	2	5	2,163	9
Plum Creek	8	4	1	3,053	10
<i>Medium Priority</i>					
Flaugherty Run	29	4	3	4,030	11
Pittsburgh	20	4	12	660	12
Robinson Run	26	5	1	1,865	13
Lowries Run	3	7	1	3,621	14
Bull Creek	7	6	5	8,626	15
Tom's Run	2	7	0	4,212	16
Long Run	12	4	2	1,440	17
Kelly Run	17	2	1	3,128	18
Thompson Run	11	5	2	832	19
<i>Low Priority</i>					
Sawmill and Western	23	2	5	550	20
Peters Creek	18	5	7	4,063	21
Sandy Creek	10	2	0	1,411	22
Hoffman Slopes	22	3	10	660	23
Millers Run	25	2	1	2,703	24
Streets Run	19	2	0	1,130	25
Homestead Run	13	2	0	482	26
Beckets Run	16	1	1	1,078	27
Becks Run	21	1	1	442	28
Curry Hollow	14	3	0	711	29

\*See the corridor map on page 7.



## Descriptions of Allegheny County's Conservation Corridors

The 29 conservation corridors identified in the Conservation Corridor Plan are described on the following pages. All descriptions contain the following sections:

- Location
- Priority
- Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas
- Amenities
- Municipalities
- Linkages

### Definitions

The description of the conservation corridors contain the following specialized terms:

**Conservation Corridor:** Conservation corridors are ribbons of undeveloped open space which include and link sensitive natural features of Allegheny County.

**Natural Heritage Inventory:** The Inventory identifies and maps Allegheny County's most significant natural areas. The inventory was conducted for Allegheny County in 1993.

**Natural Areas (NA):** (For a definition, see page 4.)

- **Pristine Natural Area:** A feature that has essentially the same ecological conditions that are believed to have existed prior to European settlement, and is large enough, and buffered enough, to support and permanently protect the natural community.
- **Recovering Natural Area:** An area that is relatively undisturbed, or past disturbances are essentially minor, and the landscape has largely recovered to a pristine condition.

**Biological Diversity Areas (BDA):** The Allegheny Natural Heritage Inventory defines the three following classes of Natural Areas:



- **Special Species Habitat:** An area that includes natural or human influenced habitat that harbors one or more occurrences of plants or animals recognized as state or national species of special concern.
- **High Diversity Area:** An area found to possess a high diversity of species of plants and animals native to the county.
- **Community/Ecosystem Conservation Area:** An area that supports a rare or exemplary natural community (assemblage of plants and animals), including the highest quality and least disturbed examples of relatively common community types.

**Dedicated Areas (DA):** A property, possibly disturbed in the past, where the owner's stated objectives are to protect and maintain the ecological integrity and biological diversity of the property largely through a hands-off management approach, with intervention only when there are demonstrable threats to the ecology of the area.

**Landscape Conservation Areas (LCA):** A large contiguous area that is important because of its size, open space and habitats, and although including a variety of land uses, has not been heavily disturbed and thus retains much of its natural character.

**Other Heritage Areas (OHA):** The Allegheny Natural Heritage Inventory defines the two following classes of Natural Areas:

- **Scientific Area:** An area that is consistently utilized for scientific monitoring of the environment, or other natural science studies.
- **Educational Area:** Land regularly used by educational institutions, local environmental organizations, or general public for nature study or instruction.

**Managed Lands:** Managed lands as defined in the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory are owned or leased properties that are included in the report because of their importance, or potential importance, to the overall maintenance and protection of ecological features of the county. Managed lands can be public or private.



## Corridor 1: Sewickley Creek

### Location

The Sewickley Creek conservation corridor is located in the Baden, Ambridge, Mars, and Emsworth quadrangles in northwestern Allegheny County. The corridor consists of 7,432 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Sewickley Creek corridor is classified as high priority.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Sewickley Creek corridor contains the Big and Little Sewickley Creek Landscape Conservation Area (LCA) as identified by the Allegheny Natural Heritage Inventory. The LCA recognizes the largely unfragmented forest character of this part of the county. A large portion of this LCA is located in the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed. The inventory has also identified the Camp Meeting Woods Biological Diversity Area (BDA) in the Sewickley Creek Watershed. This BDA encompasses a forest and stream community. Sewickley Creek has been designated as a high quality, trout stocked fishery by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. Little Sewickley Creek has been identified as a medium gradient clearwater creek.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Sewickley Creek corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Alleppo
- Bell Acres
- Edgeworth
- Franklin Park
- Glenfield
- Haysville
- Leetsdale
- Leet
- Marshall
- Sewickley Heights
- Sewickley Hills
- Sewickley
- Osborne

### Linkages

The Sewickley Creek corridor provides connections to the Tom's Run, Lowries Run and Pine Creek conservation corridors and natural resources located in Beaver County. In addition, the corridor provides a connection with the Ohio River in Leetsdale, at Little Sewickley Creek's confluence with the Ohio River.

The Sewickley Trail provides a connection to the Marshall Trail. This creates a continuous link from the Ohio River north to the Beaver County line



## Corridor 2: Tom's Run

### Location

The Tom's Run Corridor is located in the Ambridge and Emsworth quadrangles in northwestern Allegheny County. Tom's Run Corridor consists of 4,212 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Tom's Run Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Tom's Run Corridor contains the Tom's Run Valley Biological Diversity Area (BDA) and Tom's Run Conservation Land which is owned by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC). The Tom's Run Valley BDA is recognized for its large expanse of forest and relatively undisturbed natural qualities.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

- The Tom's Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:
- Alleppo
- Emsworth
- Glenfield
- Kilbuck
- Ohio
- Sewickley Heights
- Sewickley Hills

### Linkages

The Tom's Run Corridor provides connections to Sewickley Creek and Lowries Run Corridors and to the Ohio River in Glenfield and Kilbuck Township. In addition, the corridor is connected to the Pine Creek Corridor via the Rachel Carson Trail.



## Corridor 3: Lowries Run

### Location

The Lowries Run Corridor is located in the Emsworth and Pittsburgh West quadrangles in northwestern Allegheny County and contains 3,621 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Lowries Run Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory has identified the north facing slopes along Lowries Run as a Biological Diversity Area (BDA). This area provides habitat for a Pennsylvania State Species of Special Concern.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Lowries Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Avalon
- Bellevue
- Ben Avon Heights
- Emsworth
- Kilbuck
- Ohio
- Ross

### Linkages

The Lowries Run Corridor provides connections to the Tom's Run, Hoffman Slope and Pine Creek Corridors. In addition, the Lowries Run Trail connects the Ohio River with the Harmony Trail.





## Corridor 4: Pine Creek

### Location

The Pine Creek Corridor is located in the Mars, Valencia, Emsworth, Glenshaw and Pittsburgh East quadrangles in north central Allegheny County. This Corridor contains 12,040 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Pine Creek Corridor is classified as a high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory has identified the Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve Other Heritage Area (OHA), Crouse Run Valley Biological Diversity Area (BDA), Willow Run Slopes Biological Diversity Area BDA, Hemlock Grove BDA and North Park Lake BDA as natural heritage areas. The Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve OHA is identified as being significant because of its educational and scientific areas. The Crouse Run Valley BDA provides habitat for a Pennsylvania State Species of Special Concern and is also a high diversity forest area. Hemlock Grove BDA, Willows Run Steep Slope BDA and the North Park Lake BDA also provide

habitat for a variety of Pennsylvania State Species of Special Concern.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

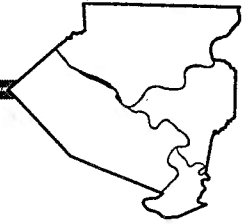
### Municipalities

The Pine Creek Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Fox Chapel
- Hampton
- Indiana
- McCandless
- O'Hara
- Pine
- Richland
- Shaler

### Linkages

The Pine Creek Corridor provides connections to the Hoffman Steep Slopes, Lowries Run, Sewickley Creek, Stony Camp Run and Deer Creek Corridors and to natural resource features located in Butler County. The Corridor connects the City of Pittsburgh with the North Hills communities.



## Corridor 5: Stoney Camp Run

### Location

The Stony Camp Run Corridor is located in the Glenshaw, New Kensington, Pittsburgh West and Braddock quadrangles in central Allegheny County and contains 2,163 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

Stony Camp Run Corridor is classified as a high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Stony Creek Corridor contains the following natural heritage areas as identified in the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory. The Trillium Trail Biological Diversity Area (BDA) is known for its per-vernal and vernal wildflowers. Stony Camp Run, a part of the Squaw Run headwaters, is a high quality warm water fishery as identified by the Department of Environmental Resources. Presently this 32 acre managed land is owned and managed by Fox Chapel Borough. This area comprises the Fox Chapel Land Conservation Trust Areas 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 18. The Guyasuta Run Valley is identified as a BDA because it contains two significant natural

communities identified as high diversity area.

These include the dry mesic acidic central forest community and northern hardwood forest community located on the eastern slopes.

Guyasuta Run itself is recognized as a high quality warm water fishery by the Department of Environmental Resources. Camp Guyasuta is a Boy Scout reservation located within a large portion of this valley. Salamander Park OHA, a park owned and managed by Fox Chapel Borough, provides habitat for native flora and fauna and is used for educational purposes.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Stony Camp Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Fox Chapel
- O'Hara

### Linkages

The Stony Camp Run Corridor provides connections to the Pine Creek and Deer Creek Corridors and to the Allegheny River Bikeway and Rachel Carson Trail via the Trillium Trail.



## Corridor 6: Deer Creek

### Location

The Deer Creek Corridor is located in the Valencia, Curtisville, Glenshaw and New Kensington West quadrangles in northeastern Allegheny County. The Corridor contains 11,443 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Deer Creek Corridor is classified as a high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Deer Creek Corridor contains the following Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas. The Deer Creek Valley Biological Diversity Area (BDA) is significant because it represents isolated pockets of natural land that have survived development and disturbance of the land has occurred to a high degree in the general area. The Deer Creek Stream has been recognized by the Fish and Boat Commission as one of the most important streams in Allegheny County because it supports a wide variety of fish species. The Campbell Run Valley BDA is recognized for its high diversity as a result of elevational ranges, soils, etc. in its relatively large forest tract. The Blue Run Valley Other Heritage Area (OHA) is significant for its native plants and animals. The Blue Run Valley OHA also functions as an outdoor classroom for Fox Chapel School District. The land is owned and managed by Fox Chapel High School.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Deer Creek Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Cheswick
- East Deer
- Frazer
- Harmar
- Indiana
- O'Hara
- Springdale
- West Deer

### Linkages

The Deer Creek Corridor provides connections to the Stony Camp, Pine Creek and Bull Creek Corridors, the Allegheny River, in Springdale Borough and Springdale Township, and natural resource features in Butler County.



## Corridor 7: Bull Creek

### Location

Bull Creek Corridor is located in the Curtisville, Freeport and New Kensington West quadrangles in northeastern Allegheny County. Bull Creek Corridor contains 8,626 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Bull Creek Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The following natural heritage areas have been identified by the Allegheny Natural Heritage Inventory in the Bull Creek Corridor. Harrison Hills Biological Diversity Area (BDA) contains river tributary valleys, steep slopes and river floodplain. Millerstown Woods BDA contains a fairly large contiguous tract of forest.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Bull Creek Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Brackenridge
- Fawn
- Frazer
- Harrison
- Tarentum
- West Deer

### Linkages

The Bull Creek Corridor provides connections to the Deer Creek Corridor, the Allegheny River in Harrison Township, and to natural resources located in Butler and Westmoreland Counties.



## Corridor 8: Plum Creek

### Location

The Plum Creek Corridor is located in the New Kensington West, New Kensington East, Braddock and Murrysville quadrangles in eastern Allegheny County and contains 3,053 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Plum Creek Corridor is classified as a high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Plum Creek Corridor contains the following natural heritage areas as identified by the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory. Barking Slopes Biological Diversity Area (BDA) is classified as having significance because the BDA has the highest quality of intact steep slope along the Allegheny River and is a high diversity natural area. Plum Creek Valley BDA is also identified as having high significance. Plum Creek is a primary tributary to the Allegheny River. Portions of the stream valley have retained their natural qualities which includes three significant natural communities. The presence of these communities classify this BDA as a high diversity area. Two managed lands are located in the Plum Creek BDA, these include the Dark Hollow Woods Park and the Penn Hills Community Park.

The Lower Allegheny River Islands BDA is recognized as having significance not only for the habitat it provides to a number of animal species identified as Pennsylvania Species of special concern, but also for the island habitat and natural communities which are directly associated with this riverine system. These islands are considered managed lands and are owned by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and the Pennsylvania State General Services Administration.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Plum Creek Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Penn Hills
- Plum
- Oakmont
- Verona

### Linkages

The Plum Creek Corridor provides connections to the Allegheny River, in Plum Borough, to the Turtle Creek Corridor via the Turtle Trail and to the Sandy Creek Corridor via the Allegheny River Bikeway.



## Corridor 9: Turtle Creek

### Location

The Turtle Creek Corridor is located in the Braddock, Murrysville and McKeesport quadrangles in eastern Allegheny County and contains 5,980 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Turtle Creek Corridor is classified as a high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Turtle Creek Corridor contains the Simpson Run Biological Diversity Area (BDA) as identified by the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory and is recognized as the most significant natural heritage site in eastern Allegheny County. Simpson Run is a tributary to Turtle Creek and the lower slopes of the stream valley provide habitat for a Pennsylvania State Species of Special Concern.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Turtle Creek Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- East McKeesport
- East Pittsburgh
- Monroeville
- North Braddock
- North Versailles
- Pitcairn
- Plum
- Trafford
- Turtle Creek
- Wall
- Wilmerding

### Linkages

The Turtle Creek Corridor provides connections to the Pittsburgh Corridor and to natural resource features located in Westmoreland County. The Turtle Trail links the Turtle Creek Corridor with the White Oak Trail.



## Corridor 10: Sandy Creek

### **Location**

Sandy Creek Corridor is located in the Pittsburgh East and Braddock quadrangles in eastern Allegheny County and contains 1,411 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### **Priority**

The Sandy Creek Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### **Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas**

The Sandy Creek Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

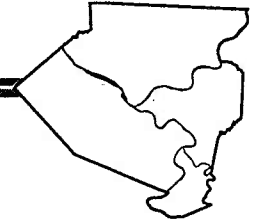
### **Municipalities**

The Sandy Creek Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- City of Pittsburgh
- Penn Hills

### **Linkages**

The Sandy Creek Corridor provides a connection to the Monongahela River in Penn Hills.



## Corridor 11: Thompson Run

### Location

Thompson Run Corridor is located in the Braddock quadrangle in eastern Allegheny County and contains 832 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Thompson Run Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Thompson Run Corridor contains the Bullock-Pens Park Other Natural Heritage Area (OHA) as identified by the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory. This is an important educational area located in Churchill Borough. The twenty-four acre park is predominately forested and recognized as having notable ecological significance.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Thompson Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Churchill
- Monroeville
- Penn Hills
- Turtle Creek
- Wilkins





## Corridor 12: Long Run

### Location

The Long Run Corridor is located in the Glassport quadrangle in south eastern Allegheny County and contains 1,440 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Long Run Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Long Run Corridor contains the Jack Run Valley Biological Diversity Area (BDA) as identified by the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory. The Jacks Run BDA includes a forest of high diversity and includes two of only three stocked, high quality, trout fishery streams in the county, Jacks Run and Long Run.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Long Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- McKeesport
- North Versailles
- South Versailles
- White Oak

### Linkages

The Long Run Corridor provides connections to the Turtle Creek Corridor and the Youghiogheny River via the White Oak Trail. The Corridor also provides connections to natural resource features located in Westmoreland County.



## Corridor 13: Homestead Run

### Location

The Homestead Run Corridor is located in the Pittsburgh East and Braddock quadrangles in central Allegheny County and contains 482 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Homestead Run Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Homestead Run Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

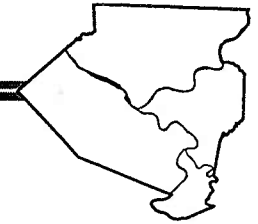
### Municipalities

The Homestead Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Duquesne
- West Mifflin

### Linkages

The Homestead Run Corridor is connected to the Streets Run and Curry Hollow Corridors via the Steel Heritage Trail and to the Monongehala River in West Homestead, Homestead and Munhall.



## Corridor 14: Curry Hollow

### Location

The Curry Hollow Corridor is located in the Glassport and McKeesport quadrangles in southern Allegheny County and contains 711 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Curry Hollow Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Curry Hollow Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory areas.

There are no historic areas located in this Corridor.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Curry Hollow Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Dravosburg
- Duquesne
- West Mifflin

### Linkages

The Curry Hollow Corridor provides connections to the Monongehala River in Duquesne and West Mifflin.



## Corridor 15: River

### Location

The Youghiogheny River Corridor is located in the Glassport, McKeesport and Donora quadrangles in southeastern Allegheny County and contains 5,928 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Youghiogheny River Corridor is classified as a high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Youghiogheny River Corridor contains the Liberty Valley Biological Diversity Area (BDA) as identified by the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory. The Liberty Valley BDA consists of a largely forested river tributary valley that enters the Youghiogheny River from the west just upstream of the town of Liberty.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Youghiogheny River Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Elizabeth
- Liberty
- Lincoln
- Port View

### Linkages

The Youghiogheny River Corridor provides connections to the Youghiogheny River in Elizabeth Township, Liberty Borough, Lincoln, Port View, and Monongahela River, in Forward Township and Port Vue, to the Peters Creek, Kelly Run and Becket Run Corridors via the Monongahela River Trail and to natural resource features located in Westmoreland County.



## Corridor 16: Beckets Run

### Location

The Beckets Run Corridor is located in the Monongahela and Donora quadrangles in southeastern Allegheny County and consists of 1,078 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Beckets Run Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Beckets Run Corridor contains the Beckets Run Biological Diversity Area (BDA) as identified by the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory. This BDA's habitat supports a rare woodland

wildflower which is classified as a Pennsylvania State Species of Special Concern.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Beckets Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Forward

### Linkages

The Beckets Run Corridor provides a connection to the Kelly Run Corridor and to natural resource features located in Washington County.



## Corridor 17: Kelly Run

### Location

The Kelly Run Corridor is located in the Glassport, McKeesport, Monongahela and Donora quadrangles in southeastern Allegheny County and consists of 3,128 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Kelly Run Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Kelly Run Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

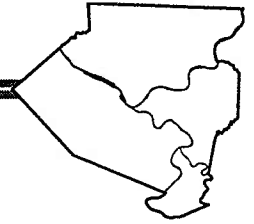
### Municipalities

The Kelly Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Forward
- West Elizabeth

### Linkages

The Kelly Run Corridor provides connections to the Becketts Run Corridor, the Youghiogheny River, in Forward Township, and natural resource features located in Washington County.



## Corridor 18: Peters Creek

### Location

The Peters Creek Corridor is located in the Glassport quadrangle in southern Allegheny County and contains 4,063 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Peters Creek Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Peters Creek Wetland Biological Diversity Area (BDA) provides habitat for a state endangered plant, considered a Pennsylvania Species of Special Concern.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Peters Creek Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Clairton
- Jefferson
- South Park
- West Elizabeth
- West Mifflin

### Linkages

The Peters Creek Corridor provides connections to the Monongehala River in Clairton and to natural resource features in Washington County.



## Corridor 19: Streets Run

### **Location**

The Streets Run Corridor is located in Pittsburgh East and Glassport quadrangles in central Allegheny County and contains 1,130 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### **Priority**

The Streets Run Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### **Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas**

The Streets Run Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### **Municipalities**

The Streets Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Baldwin
- Brentwood

### **Linkages**

The Steel Heritage Trail provides connections to the Becks Run and Homestead Run Corridors and to the Monongahela River in Baldwin Borough.





## Corridor 20: Pittsburgh

### Location

The Pittsburgh Corridor is located in the Pittsburgh East quadrangle in central Allegheny County and contains 660 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Pittsburgh Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Pittsburgh Corridor contains the Frick Park Other Heritage Area (OHA) area as identified by the Allegheny Natural Heritage Inventory. Frick Park is the largest, least developed park located in the City of Pittsburgh. It also contains a nature center which is used for educational purposes.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Pittsburgh Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Braddock
- City of Pittsburgh
- Rankin
- Swissvale

### Linkages

The Pittsburgh Corridor is linked to the Allegheny River via Highland Park and the Allegheny Bikeway and to the Monongahela River via the Steel Heritage Trail and Frick Park.



## Corridor 21: Becks Run

### Location

The Becks Run Corridor is located in the Pittsburgh East quadrangle in central Allegheny County and contains 442 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Becks Run Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Becks Run Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Becks Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- City of Pittsburgh

### Linkages

The Three Rivers Heritage Trail provides links to the Sawmill and Western Run and the Streets Run Corridor as well the Monongahela River in the City of Pittsburgh.



## Corridor 22: Hoffman Slopes

### Location

The Hoffman Slopes Corridor is located in the Emsworth, Glenshaw, Pittsburgh West and Pittsburgh East quadrangles in central Allegheny County. This Corridor contains 660 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Hoffman Slopes Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Hoffman Slopes Corridor does not contain any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Hoffman Slopes Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Millvale
- Reserve
- Shaler

### Linkages

The Hoffman Slopes Corridor provides a connection with the Allegheny River in Shaler Township, and contains the Three Rivers Heritage Trail which links western Allegheny County with the eastern portion of the County.



## Corridor 23: Sawmill and Western Run

### Location

The Sawmill and Western Run Corridor is located in the Pittsburgh West quadrangle in central Allegheny County and contains 550 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Sawmill and Western Run Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Sawmill and Western Run Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Sawmill and Western Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- City of Pittsburgh
- Greentree

### Linkages

The Three Rivers Heritage Trail provides connections with the Chartiers Creek and Becks Run Corridors.



## Corridor 24: Chartiers Creek

### Location

The Chartiers Creek Corridor is located in the Pittsburgh West, Canonsburg and Bridgeville quadrangles in western Allegheny County and contains 4,195 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Chartiers Creek Corridor is classified as a high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory has identified the Painter Run Slopes Biological Diversity Area (BDA), Gifilin Woods Other Heritage Area (OHA) and Mayview Valley Biological Diversity Area (BDA). The Painter Run Slopes BDA provides a habitat for a rare plant, consider a Pennsylvania Species of Special Concern. The Gifilin Woods OHA is a natural heritage educational area owned and operated by Upper St. Clair Borough. The Mayview Valley BDA represents a high diversity area.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Chartiers Creek Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Bridgeville

- Carnegie
- City of Pittsburgh
- Collier
- Crafton
- Heidelberg
- Ingram
- Kennedy
- McKees Rocks
- Pennsbury Village
- Robinson
- Rosslyn Farms
- Scott
- South Fayette
- Stowe
- Thornburg
- Upper St. Clair

### Linkages

The Chartiers Creek Corridor provides connections to the Montour Run, Robinson Run, and Millers Run Corridors and to the Ohio River in Kennedy Township.



## Corridor 25: Millers Run

### Location

The Millers Run Corridor is located in the Pittsburgh West, Canonsburg and Bridgeville quadrangles in western Allegheny County and contains 2,703 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Millers Run Corridor is classified as a low priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Millers Run Corridor contains the Millers Run Biological Diversity Area (BDA) as identified by Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory.

This BDA habitat supports a state rare plant species of special concern.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Millers Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Collier
- South Fayette

### Linkages

The Millers Run Corridor provides connections to Robinson Run and Chartiers Corridors and to natural resource features located in Washington County.



## Corridor 26: Robinson Run

### Location

The Robinson Run Corridor is located in the Oakdale, Pittsburgh West and Canonsburg quadrangles in western Allegheny County and contains 1,865 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Robinson Run Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Robinson Run Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Robinson Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Collier
- McDonald
- Oakdale
- Robinson
- South Fayette

### Linkages

The Robinson Run Corridor provides connections to the Montour Run, Millers Run and Chartiers Creek Corridor. In addition, The Corridor provides connections to natural resource features located in Washington County.



## Corridor 27: Montour Run

### Location

The Montour Run Corridor is located in the Ambridge, Oakdale and Pittsburgh West quadrangles in western Allegheny County and contains 4,092 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Montour Run Corridor is classified as high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Montour Run Corridor contains the Moon Run Slopes Biological Diversity Area (BDA) and the Montour Run Valley Landscape Conservation Area (LCA) as identified by the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory.

The Moon Run BDA habitat supports a state rare plant species of special concern. The Montour Run Valley LCA contains forested slopes and stream valleys on the eastern and western sides of Montour Run. This site is recognized as being a "rarity in this rapidly developing part of the county" by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

A portion of the Montour Run Valley LCA has been acquired by the Hollow Oak Land Trust, a local conservation organization.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

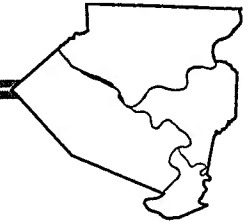
The Montour Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Coraopolis
- Findlay
- Kennedy
- Moon
- North Fayette
- Robinson

### Linkages

The Montour Run Corridor provides connections to the Potato Garden Run, Flaugherty Run, Chartiers Creek and Robinson Run Corridors, Ohio River in Coraopolis, and to natural resource features in Washington County.





## Corridor 28: Potato Garden Run

### Location

The Potato Garden Run Corridor is located in the Aliquippa, Clinton and Oakdale quadrangles in western Allegheny County and contains 4,505 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Potato Garden Run Corridor is classified as a high priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory has identified the Clinton Wetlands Biological Diversity Area (BDA) and Raccoon Creek Valley Landscape Conservation Area (LCA) as significant natural heritage areas within Allegheny County. The Clinton Wetlands BDA encompasses a robust-

emergent marsh community. The Raccoon Creek Valley LCA is a relatively large, minimally developed largely forested patch of land that encompasses parts of Allegheny, Washington and Beaver Counties.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Potato Garden Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Findlay

### Linkages

The Potato Garden Run Corridor provides connections to Flaugherty Run and Montour Run Corridors, the Montour Trail and to natural resource features in Washington and Beaver Counties.



## Corridor 29: Flaugherty Run

### Location

The Flaugherty Run Corridor is located in the Aliquippa, Ambridge and Oakdale quadrangles in western Allegheny County and contains 4,030 acres.

*(See the map on page 7.)*

### Priority

The Flaugherty Run Corridor is classified as a medium priority corridor.

### Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas

The Flaugherty Run Corridor does not include any Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas.

*(Refer to the Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory definitions on page 9.)*

### Municipalities

The Flaugherty Run Corridor extends through the following municipalities:

- Coraopolis
- Crescent
- Findlay
- Moon

### Linkages

The Flaugherty Run Corridor provides connections to Potato Garden Run Corridor, to the Sewickley Creek Corridor via the Coraopolis Bikeway and Sewickley Trail and to natural resource features located in Beaver County.



## Sources

Information contained in the corridor descriptions were obtained from the following sources.

*Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory*, by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

*AGIS Map containing Historic Sites* as identified by Southwestern Regional Planning Commission

*AGIS Map* containing National Wetland Inventory wetlands

*Allegheny County Trail Plan, Draft*, as defined by Allegheny County Planning Department

*Allegheny County Riverfront Policy Plan*, by Environmental Planning and Design

*Greenways for Pittsburgh Program*, by the City of Pittsburgh

*Vacant/Sensitive Land Management Program*, by the City of Pittsburgh

*Allegheny County Railroad Corridor Study*, by Comsis Corporation

*Montour Run Watershed Stormwater Management Plan*, by GAI Consultants, Inc.

*Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Plain Maps* for Allegheny County

*Classification of Commonwealth Waterways*, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, Chapter 93,

*Pittsburgh International Airport, Environmental Conditions*, Figure 10, by Michael Baker Jr., Inc., Consulting Engineers

*Findlay Township Open Space and Recreation Plan*, 1992 by John Rahenkamp Consultants, Inc.

Various municipal park and open space maps



# Appendix: Process for Developing the Allegheny County Conservation Corridors Plan

## ***Methodology***

To create a conservation corridor system for Allegheny County, the following methodology was used:

1. A set of criteria for conservation corridors was developed specifically for Allegheny County.
2. An inventory and analysis of natural and cultural resources was prepared.
3. A corridor system was developed for Allegheny County.
4. The draft corridor system was presented to the public for comments and suggestions.
5. The corridor system was segmented into components to ease naming, locating, and describing.
6. A description was prepared for each conservation corridor component.
7. Conservation corridor components were prioritized.

## ***Criteria***

Mapping all the open space in Allegheny County as conservation corridors has little practical value. Therefore, it was important to establish criteria.

Conservation corridors are large tracts of land that include environmentally sensitive natural features such as steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, and sensitive plant and animal communities. Environmental criteria are the primary consideration when mapping conservation corridors. However, cultural features add interest and social value to a corridor. Therefore, historical sites, parks, existing trails, game lands, and other cultural features were also mapped and given consideration when developing the Conservation Corridors Plan.

## ***Inventory and Analysis***

Once the criteria were established, the natural and cultural features were mapped and analyzed.

A **natural resources overlay** contains environmentally sensitive features which can be included in conservation corridors. The natural resources overlay for Allegheny County contains the following features:

- Wetlands



- Steep slopes (greater than 25%)
- Hydrology
- 100-year floodplain
- Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory
- Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory Areas
- High quality streams

At the completion of the natural resources mapping, noticeable patterns were identified. In Allegheny County, the environmentally sensitive areas are, for the most part, near the streams and rivers which have cut deep valleys into the elevated sedimentary rocks of the Allegheny Plateau. The patterns clearly followed the county's major valleys.

A **cultural resources overlay** contains cultural features which can be included within or connected by conservation corridors. The cultural resources overlay for Allegheny County contains the following features:

- Municipal, county, and state parks greater than five acres
- Pennsylvania State Game Lands
- Land Trust owned lands
- Regional and local trails
- Historic sites

Combining the natural and cultural overlay maps helped to identify throughout the county where natural and cultural features overlapped. This compilation was synthesized and refined and presented to the public as a draft Conservation Corridor Plan.

### ***Draft Presentation***

The Allegheny County Conservation Corridors Plan was presented twice, once to the Allegheny County Planning Department and the second time at a public meeting. Suggestions were made by citizens, local municipal officials, and staff to add several areas to the corridor system. The suggested areas were reviewed and included when they met the criteria.

### ***Greenway Components***

In order to locate, name, and describe the conservation corridors, it was necessary to divide the corridor system into 29 smaller components. The components were named according to the corridor's physical association with a local stream or tributary. In some cases, smaller corridors were grouped together.

### ***Descriptions and Priority***

Each of the 29 components were described and prioritized. The prioritization process is summarized on page 4.



*Report prepared for the:*

***Allegheny County Board of Commissioners***

*Tom Foerster, Chairman  
Pete Flaherty  
Larry Dunn*

*Prepared by:*

***Allegheny County Planning Department***

*Raymond L. Reaves, Director  
441 Smithfield Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
412-350-5960*

***Project Manager***

*Roy Kraynyk*

***Graphic Design***

*Michael J. Ostrowski*

***Consultants***

*Pashek Associates, Landscape Architects  
Janis Ramey, Writer*