

# Livable Landscapes Open Space Program

Northampton County Open Space Initiative



Northampton County Parks and Recreation



# Northampton County 21<sup>st</sup> Century Open Space Initiative

Established in December 2004 after County voters by a majority of approximately 65%, approved a referendum in November 2002 to authorize **dedication of funds** for the purpose **to preserve and enhance the natural environment** of Northampton County.



# 15 Year Accomplishments

- Preserved 3,165 acres of natural areas
  - Total investment \$5.20 million
- Awarded 79 municipal park grants
  - Total investment \$7.7 million
- Selected in 2004 by DCNR top pilot new conservation landscape initiative – Lehigh Valley Greenways
- 160-acre Gall Farm was purchased by the County and is undergoing a Master Site Plan to develop a County Farm Preserve
- Regional trails are built
- Large conservation projects





# Northampton County Updated Open Space Plan

On January 7, 2016, Northampton County Council adopted

- Ordinance #601-2015  
**"Livable Landscapes" – An Open Space Plan Program for Northampton County**
- Further providing for the administration of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Open Space Initiative.

***Livable Landscapes Action Plan*** recommendations:

- To modify the Open Space Program Guidelines
- Be consistent with the goals and implementation strategy
- Align grant funding program with current Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan



# Action Plan Goals



- 1. To conserve, restore, and enhance natural resources*
- 2. Provide and maintain an exemplary park, trail, and recreation system*
- 3. Conserve, restore, and enhance a greenways and blueways network*
- 4. Preserve farmland and farming to meet food production, economic, and open space needs*



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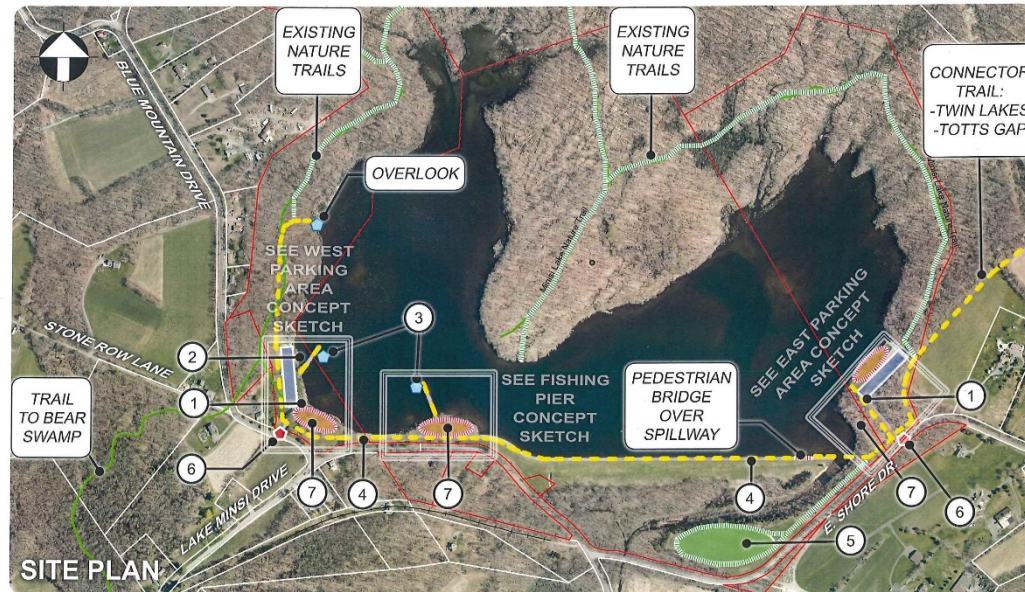


# Gall Farm Master Site Plan





# Minsi Lake Improvements



ACCESSIBLE RESTROOM FACILITIES



ACCESSIBLE KAYAK LAUNCH



ACCESSIBLE FISHING PIER



ACCESSIBLE TRAIL



ACCESSIBLE PICNIC TABLES



ENTRY GATEWAY FEATURE



NATIVE MEADOW



OCTOBER 2017

NOT TO SCALE

**MINSI LAKE OVERALL CONCEPT PLAN**  
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PA



# 2019 Livable Landscapes Grant Program

Northampton County Ordinance No. 673-2019 adopted the **Livable Landscapes Grant Program Guidelines** to replace the Environmental Services Assistance Grant Guidelines

- Adopted July 18, 2019



## Eligible Applicants

- Municipality
- Council of Governments within Northampton County
- Authorized Organizations (501c3 & Charitable)
- Institution of Higher Education





# Grant Program Purpose

*To protect the County's important natural features by assisting municipalities and organizations to acquire, restore, and enhance permanently protected lands to conserve natural resources and provide outdoor recreation for future generations*



# Land Conservation Options

- Fee simple acquisition  
or
- Conservation easement
- Within natural areas, greenways, trails, critical habitat, and open space
- Threats of development
- Connectivity to conserved lands
- Critical habitats at risk for degradation
- Public access





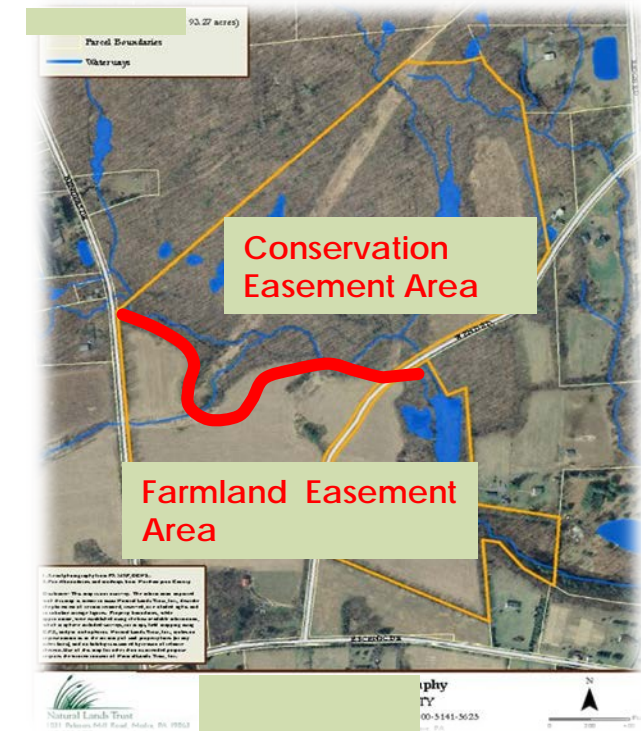
# Land Conservation Options

- Land Donation  
or
- Bargain Sale
- Within natural areas, greenways, trails, critical habitat, and open space
- Threats of development
- Connectivity to conserved lands
- Critical habitats at risk for degradation
- Public access



# Creative Conservation

- Parcels with Joint Conservation Efforts
  - Parcels that would fit into farmland and conservation easements
  - Create linkages to additional farmland and/or conservation easements
  - Parcels would not qualify totally under farmland preservation and/or conservation easements





# Conservation Priorities

- In current Comprehensive Plans and other state, county, and local plans
- Identify if land is within the Natural Heritage Inventory
- Important to preserve flora, fauna, native ecological systems, trails, open space, scenic features, etc.
- Preserve habitat for rare, threatened or endangered plant or animal species
- Ecological or natural communities at risk of destruction or degradation



# Ecological Restoration & Benefits

- Convert developed lands to natural areas
  - Riparian buffers
  - Meadows
  - Woodlands
  - Agricultural areas
  - Open Space
- 
- Natural Areas
  - Critical Habitat
  - Sustainable stormwater management
  - Best Management Practices





# Streambank Stabilization





# Municipal Park Enhancements





# Help support open space for future generations!



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