

Chapter 9: Scenic Resources Inventory

INTRODUCTION

Scenic resources help define the Region's rural character and are located throughout the Region. The term "scenic," however, is vague and its definition depends greatly on the geographic location of the specific resource. Even the municipalities within the Northern Federation define scenic resources somewhat differently in their individual comprehensive and/or open space, recreation, and environmental resources plans (open space plans).

This chapter identifies some of what the Northern Federation considers scenic, and how the municipalities of the Northern Federation define or identify scenic resources.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTER

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INVENTORY OF SCENIC RESOURCES

All of the municipalities in the Northern Federation agree that a variety of resources qualify as scenic, including: water resources, historic resources, scenic viewsheds, and scenic roadways. In addition, there are specific resources that municipalities identify as important local scenic assets, such as stream corridors, rolling hills and open fields, wooded areas, farmsteads, hedgerows, unique and specimen trees, fences, and walls.

A scenic resource can be any attractive feature. Some scenic resources, such as scenic roadways and vistas, have been specifically identified in this chapter. Although the information was compiled from each municipality's comprehensive plan and/or open space plan, this inventory does not attempt to list every scenic natural feature or wooded area in each municipality. See the individual municipal comprehensive and open space plans for more detailed information and for mapping of these resources. Natural and historic resources are discussed in Chapter 7 and 8, respectively, of this Plan.

SCENIC ROADWAYS

Scenic roadways are located throughout the Region. A roadway may be considered scenic because 1) it is dependent on the land features and may have an aesthetic element itself, or because 2) of the views or features seen from the road while traveling. Several of the Northern Federation municipalities have identified these two types of scenic roadways in their respective open space plans.



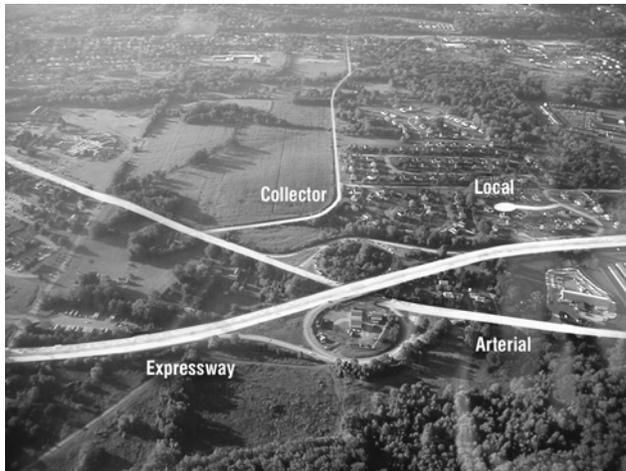
Many roadways are located along property lines, like the road pictured to the left, and do not follow a natural feature. While these roads may be scenic, they may not warrant protection to the same degree as those that follow a natural path, such as a stream or ridgeline.

All of the municipalities within the Region have identified and designated scenic roads even though the criteria or process may differ (see Figure 9-1). The list of scenic roadways information is from the municipal comprehensive and/or open space plans. However, the lists may not be all-inclusive as many of the maps are old, out-of-date,

and/or difficult to read. Please see the individual municipal comprehensive and/or open space plans for more detail and the mapping of such resources.

ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Roadway functional classification is an important land use and transportation-planning tool that establishes a hierarchy of roads based on their use relating to mobility and accessibility. Seven of the nine municipalities in the Region have linked functional classification to scenic roadways in their comprehensive plans and/or open space plans. The image below illustrates a typical road layout and its functional classification.



The definition of roadway functional classification below is excerpted from the *Road Functional Classification*, Technical Memorandum #1-04, An Element of *Connecting Landscapes* - the Transportation Plan for Chester County. Conflict between mobility and accessibility causes roads to “fail” from a congestion and safety standpoint. Mobility refers to the actual ability of the road to move traffic while accessibility refers to the ease of entering or exiting a roadway to or from adjacent properties.

To avoid the problem of “failure” it is useful to establish a classification of roads, based on function. It is also important to identify for planning purposes, the preferred design of each class of road so that as opportunities arise, roads can be improved appropriately. Municipalities can use functional classification in zoning and/or subdivision and land development ordinances and with the official map and ordinance. Determining the functional classification of roadways provides assistance with the following: 1) in setting capital improvement and maintenance priorities, and 2) in designing standards in respect to traffic volumes, adjacent land use, design, and the function and intent of roadways.

Upon initial consideration, the concept of roadway functional classification is not automatically linked to scenic roadways. However, while all nine municipalities in the Region have a roadway functional classification, seven municipalities: East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, South Coventry, Wallace, Warwick, and West Vincent, have tied scenic roadways to roadway functional classification in their respective open space plans for the two reasons stated above. Understanding the connection between roadway functional classification and scenic roads helps these municipalities determine potential conflicts between safety concerns and scenic preservation issues. It helps them identify when they will have to balance safety concerns with scenic degradation and therefore, help implement appropriate road improvement measures.

**Figure 9-1
Scenic Roadways in the Region
And the Corresponding Roadway Functional Classification**

Township	Designated Scenic Roadways	Functional Classification of Scenic Roadways
East Coventry has identified (with correlating roadway functional classification) either a portion or the entire length of the following roads as scenic in its 2003 Comprehensive Plan (based on the 1992 Open Space Plan):	Route 23 (Ridge Road)	major highway
	S. Keim Street, Ellis Woods Road, Porters Mill Road	Collectors
	Pigeon Creek Road	Local
	Fulmer Road	local/feeder
	Ebelhare Road	feeder/local
	School House Road, Harvey Lane	feeders
	Hershey Drive	Not classified
East Nantmeal has identified (with correlating roadway functional classification) either a portion or the entire length of the following roads as scenic in its 2002 Comprehensive Plan (based on the map produced for the 1993 Open Space Plan):	Route 401 - Conestoga Road, Fairview Road	minor collectors
	Hedge Road, Creamery Road, Marsh Road, Millard Road, Adams Drive, Mansion Road, Nantmeal Road, Valley Way Road, Iron Bridge Road, Murray’s School Road, Prizer Road, Horseshoe Trail, Templin Road, Wynn Road, Finney Road, Sweet Spring Road, Lyons Run Road, Trego Road	local roads

Township	Designated Scenic Roadways	Functional Classification of Scenic Roadways
<p>East Pikeland has identified (with correlating roadway functional classification) either a portion or the entire length of the following roads as scenic in its 1992 Open Space Plan:</p>	Route 113	minor arterial
	Hare's Hill Road, Kimberton Road	minor collectors
	Pickering Road, Lincoln Road, Clover Mill Road, Merlin Road, Western Road, Camp Council Road, Spring City Road, Spring Hollow Road, Chester Springs Road, Wall Street	local roads
<p>East Vincent has identified in its 1994 Comprehensive Plan either a portion or the entire length of the following scenic roads:</p> <p>The 1992 Open Space Plan discusses roadway widening and safety concerns and the impact to scenic roadways, but does not frame the discussion of scenic roadways in the context of roadway functional classification.</p>	Old Schuylkill Road, Alackness Road, Reitnour Road, Sheeder Road, Hollow Road, Hallman Mill Road, Lucas Road, Brown Drive, Kohl Road, Spring City Road, Stony Run Road, West Seven Stars Road, Ellis Woods Road, Brownbacks Road, Bertolet School Road	local roads
<p>North Coventry has identified either a portion (or several segments from a road) or the entire length of the following scenic roads in its 1992 Open Space Plan:</p> <p>The Township first designated a roadway functional classification system in its 1989 Comprehensive Plan and again in the 2001 comprehensive plan.</p> <p>The 1992 Open Space Plan discusses roadway widening and safety concerns and the impact to scenic roadways, but does not frame the discussion of scenic roadways in the context of roadway functional classification.</p>	Cold Springs Road, Fernbrook Road, Hill Camp Road, Unionville Road, Saint Peter's Road, Coventryville Road, Beeler Road, Shenkel Road, Valley View Road	local roads
	Laurelwood Road	North of 724- minor collector 724 to Harmonyville Road - major collector
	Cedarville Road	West of Laurelwood - minor collector; East of Laurelwood - major collector
	Route 724	minor arterial
	Catfish Lane	minor collector
	Keim Street, Harmonyville Road	major collectors

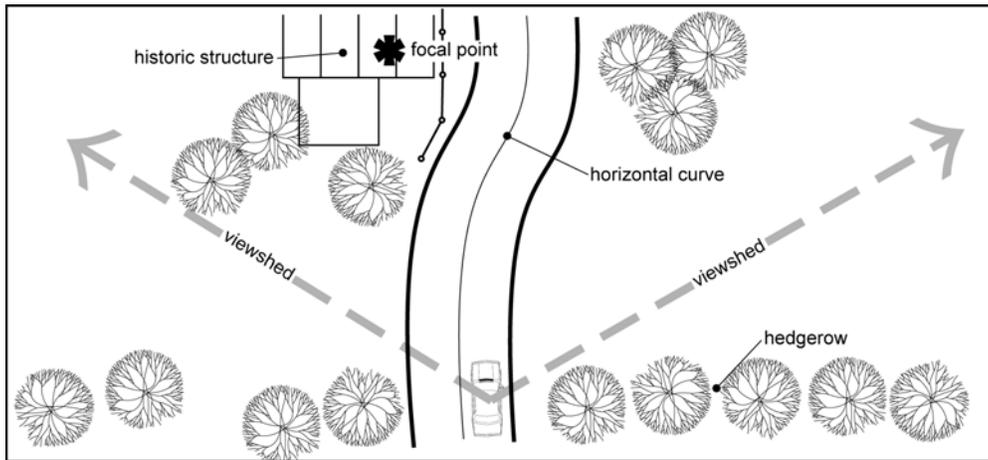
Township	Designated Scenic Roadways	Functional Classification of Scenic Roadways
<p>South Coventry has identified (with correlating roadway functional classification) either a portion or the entire length of the following scenic roads in its 1992 Open Space Plan:</p>	<p>Route 23 (Ridge Road), Route 100 (Pottstown Pike)</p>	<p>primary/arterials</p>
	<p>Harmonyville Road, Chestnut Hill Road, Coventryville Road, Daisy Point Road, Pughtown Road, Prizer Road, New Philadelphia Road, Favinger Road, Pigeon Creek Road, Young Road, Cadmus Road, Porters Mill Road</p>	<p>secondary/rurals</p>
<p>Wallace has identified (with correlating roadway functional classification) either a portion or the entire length of the following roads as scenic in its 1993 Open Space Plan:</p>	<p>Route 82, Route 282, Little Conestoga Road (from Fairview Church south to the Township boundary.)</p>	<p>major collectors</p>
	<p>Little Conestoga Road (Fairview Church north to the line), Fairview Road, Indiantown Road (south of Fairview), Indian Run Road, Marshall Road, Springton Road, Highspire Road</p>	<p>minor collectors</p>
	<p>Indian Run Road, Barneston Road, Devereux Road, Chalfont Road, Styer Road, Park Lane, Indiantown Road, Mapleflower Road, Seminary Road, Lippit Rd.</p>	<p>local rurals</p>
	<p>Various lengths of roads in the Township.</p>	<p>suburban road</p>
<p>Warwick has identified (with correlating roadway functional classification) either a portion or the entire length of the following roads as scenic in its 1992 Open Space Plan:</p>	<p>Route 23 (Ridge Road)</p>	<p>arterial road</p>
	<p>Pine Swamp Road, County Park Road, Bulltown Road, Harmonyville Road, St. Peter's Road</p>	<p>collector roads</p>
	<p>The remaining roads within the Township.</p>	<p>local roads</p>
<p>West Vincent has identified (with correlating roadway functional classification) either a portion or the entire length of the following roads as scenic in its 1992 Open Space Plan:</p>	<p>Route 100 (Pottstown Pike)</p>	<p>major arterial</p>
	<p>Route 401 (Conestoga Road)</p>	<p>major collector</p>
	<p>Birchrun Road, St. Mathews Road, Pughtown Road, Kimberton Road</p>	<p>minor collectors</p>
	<p>The remaining roads in the Township</p>	<p>Locals</p>

Roadway ownership is another factor that correlates to roadway functional classification and scenic quality. Municipalities often own and maintain more local roadways than roadways of higher functional classification; thereby they have direct control over maintaining their scenic quality. Often the Commonwealth owns higher designated roadways and therefore the municipalities must work with PennDOT to ensure scenic preservation objectives on those roadways.

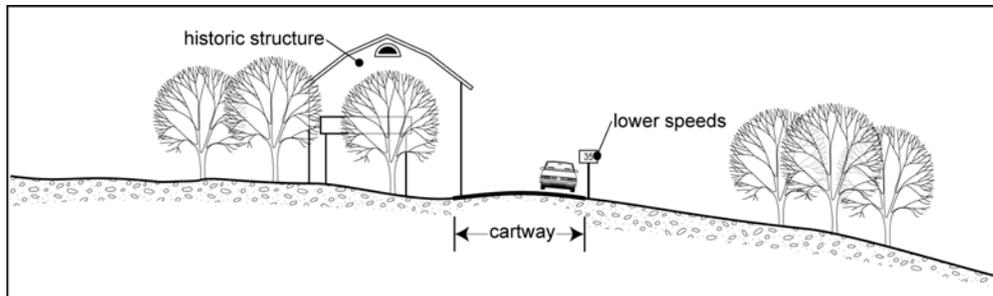
SCENIC VIEWSHEDS

A scenic viewshed, vista, or panorama is the broadest category of scenic resource because it encompasses essentially all of the other resources. For instance, a viewshed is scenic because it includes a beautiful, picturesque farmstead (historic structure) and hedgerows defining edges of farm fields, woodland, or ridgeline (or all of them) within the sight distance. See Figure 9-2 and Figure 9-3 for typical elements of a scenic viewshed. It is also a very sensitive resource and any development; especially that which is insensitive to design, the destruction of woodlands and other vegetation (clear-cutting), and inappropriate buffering/screening will interfere with viewsheds. Because the Northern Federation cannot preserve all scenic viewsheds or panoramas, it is important to preserve the most significant ones to retain the Regions rural character.

**Figure 9-2
Typical Elements of a Scenic Viewshed – Plan**



**Figure 9-3
Typical Elements of a Scenic Viewshed - Section**



East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, and Warwick townships have identified scenic viewsheds in either their comprehensive plans or in their open space plans (see Figure 9-4, below). In addition, these municipalities have mapped these identified scenic viewsheds in either one or both of their plans. This is the first step toward preservation.

**Figure 9-4
Scenic Viewsheds in the Region**

Township	Scenic Viewsheds, From:
East Coventry has identified potential scenic views in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan (based on the 1992 Open Space Plan):	Fulmer Road
	School House Road
	Hershey Road (not included in the 2003 comp plan)
	The intersection of Ebelhare Road and Willis Woods Road
East Nantmeal has identified the following scenic vistas in the 2002 Comprehensive Plan (based on the map produced for the 1993 Open Space Plan):	Conestoga Road (Route 401) - the Great Marsh
	Nantmeal Road (several)
	Fairview Road (several)
	Finney Road
East Pikeland has designate the following views and panoramas as scenic in its 1992 Open Space Plan:	Western Rd at the crest of the ridge, southeast of Route 113
	Kimberton Road at Royal Springs Creek
	Camp Council Road at the looping bend in French Creek
	Route 113 between Pickering Road and Chester Springs Rd
	Merlin Road, southwest of Lincoln Road
	St. Peter's Church on Clover Mill Road
	The ridge top east of Kulp Run
	Hillcrest Road and from Meadow Crest Drive
	The ridge tops above Spring Hollow Run and Stony Run
	A hilltop near Pine Drive
	Wall Street (various)
	Spring City Road at Stony Run
	The water tower in Kimberton
	The bridges over French Creek at Hare's Hill Road, Rapp's Dam Road, and Route 23

Township	Scenic Viewsheds, From:
<p>East Vincent has identified in its 1994 Comprehensive Plan the following scenic views and vistas:</p>	Pennhurst Road hilltop
	Hill Church Road at Bonnie Brae Road
	Bluffs along Brown Drive, west of Pennhurst Road
	Ridge Road (Route 23), between Buckwalter and West Seven Stars Roads
	Ridge Road (Route 23), west of Hoffecker Road
	The top of the southern slopes of the Route 23 ridge at Bertolet School Road, Brownbacks Road, Sheeder Road, Hoffecker road, and West Seven Stars Road
	a rise on the floor of the French Creek Valley, near the end of Traber Lane
<p>North Coventry has identified the following scenic views and panoramas in its 1992 Open Space Plan:</p>	Catfish Lane on the hill south of Route 724
	Sheep Hill Road near the Temple Road intersection
	Beeler Road near Porter's Mill Road intersection
	Keim Street hilltop, south of Bickel's Run
	Laurelwood Road, south of Cedarville
	Cedarville Road at Catfish Lane, Catfish Lane at Valley View Road, and Valley View Road, west of Catfish Lane, sweeping view of the Laurel Run stream valley and of Sheep Hill
	Cedarville Road, east of Miller Road
	the crest in Miller Road, north of Cedarville Road
	Hoffecker Road between Route 100 and Keim Street
	Cornfield west of Cherry Lane and north of Harmonyville Rd
	Unionville Road at Temple Road
	the heights of Shenkel Road, east of Cold Springs Road
	Harmonyville Road near Laurelwood Road
	Cemetery Road near Urner Street
	Route 724, west of Scholl Road
	Route 422, views of the Schuylkill River
The ridge top of Chestnut Hill	

Township	Scenic Viewsheds, From:
South Coventry has not identified specific scenic views or panoramas in its 1992 Open Space Plan or in its 1996 comprehensive plan.	
Wallace has not identified scenic specific views or panoramas in its 1993 Open Space Plan or in its 1986 comprehensive plan.	
Warwick has identified the following scenic views and panoramas in its 1992 Open Space Plan:	Valley of the South Branch along Warwick Furnace Road
	The valley of the French Creek along Harmonyville Road
	Southern vista along portions of Route 23 and the southern vista from Northside Road
West Vincent has not identified specific scenic views or panoramas in its 1992 Open Space Plan or in its 1985 comprehensive plan.	

LANDFORMS

Landform resources include but are not limited to: hills, valleys, ridgelines, and ravines. These natural landforms serve as the backdrop or foreground for some other resources such as woodlands, farmsteads and other historic structures. East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Wallace, Warwick, and West Vincent all acknowledge the importance of landforms in either their respective comprehensive plans or in their open space plans. Among the listed resources are: rolling hills, open fields, ridgelines, and valleys. (See the municipal plans for specific inventories.) One example of a landform with regional significance is the gorge seen from Route 100 near Flowing Springs Road because of its scenic beauty and the location along a major roadway.

**Figure 9-5
Scenic Landforms in the Region**

Township	Scenic Landforms
East Coventry	None specifically listed in 1992 Open Space Plan.
East Nantmeal	None specifically listed in 1993 Open Space Plan.
East Pikeland (identified in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	The river, hills, valleys, ridges, ravines, fields, and woods.
East Vincent (identified in its 1994 Comprehensive Plan)	Several "landmarks" and "environments" (such as the Schuylkill River environment).
North Coventry (identified in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	The river, hills, valleys, ridges, pastureland, water, cropland, and woods.
South Coventry (identified in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	Rolling agrarian valley and wooded hillsides.

Township	Scenic Landforms
Wallace (identified in its 1993 Open Space Plan)	Rolling fields, brushy hedgerows, and wooded hillsides.
Warwick (identified and mapped in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	Ridgelines
West Vincent (identified in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	Wetlands, valley floor, upland, ridges, and village.

SCENIC NATURAL FEATURES



Every municipality in the Northern Federation considers natural resources very important. Each municipality has identified and mapped natural resources in their respective comprehensive plans and open space plans. These natural resources are important because they provide: 1) scenic character of the Region, 2) areas for recreation and 3) critical habitat for associated ecosystems. Several such resources in the Region are: the French Creek (pictured to the left), designated a Pennsylvania Wild and Scenic River, the Great Marsh, and other water features (Stream valleys and water falls); wooded areas; trails and hedgerows and unique trees.

For a detailed inventory of the Region's natural resources see Chapter 7: Natural Resources Inventory.

**Figure 9-6
Scenic Natural Features in the Region**

Township	Scenic Natural Features
East Coventry (identified and mapped in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	Significant woodlands
East Nantmeal (identified and mapped in its 1993 Open Space Plan)	Large trees and rare plant species (map 6).
East Pikeland (identified in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	A large oak tree, small rapid on Pickering Creek, and placid pools in the French Creek.
East Vincent (identified in its 1994 Comprehensive Plan)	none specifically listed in OSRERP.
North Coventry (identified in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	Woodlands, hedgerow, and plants of note.

Township	Scenic Natural Features
South Coventry (identified and mapped in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	Woodlands and the French Creek Scenic River Corridor.
Wallace (identified in its 1993 Open Space Plan)	Woodlands and “significant” trees (map 3-4).
Warwick (identified and mapped in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	“Significant wooded areas” (map 4).
West Vincent (identified in its 1992 Open Space Plan)	Hedgerows, strands of tree lines, woodlots, water courses, stream valleys, wetlands, field and pasture, and wooded hillsides are natural features. The plan includes an extensive Visually Significant Landscapes map.

SCENIC MAN-MADE FEATURES



Not all scenic resources are created by nature. Man-made features, such as split rail fences (pictured below) and stone walls, covered bridges, farmsteads and other historic structures, and villages (St. Peter's Village pictured to the left) offer intrinsic scenic value to the Region. When renovating or repairing such structures and facilities, care should be taken to preserve the integrity and character. Although some of these resources may be difficult to protect, it is the

responsibility of individual municipalities to implement regulations and work with developers and/or landowners to preserve these features that lend to the historic character of the Region. See Chapter 4: Scenic Resources Plan for recommendations for the preservation of these scenic resources. In addition, there are many available programs for historic resource protection. For a detailed discussion on historic resources and preservation efforts, see Chapter 3: Historic Resources Plan and Chapter 8: Historic Resources Inventory. See Figure 9-7 for additional examples of scenic features/resources in the Region.



Figure 9-7
Examples of Man-Made Scenic Features in the Region



Historic structure and stone wall
in North Coventry



A rail fence frames a farm field
and hedgerow in North Coventry



Historic & rural architectural
details in West Vincent

REGIONAL IMPACTS TO SCENIC QUALITY

Amidst the beauty of the Region, there are interrupters that detract from the scenic nature and interfere with scenic viewsheds. Beyond development, things such as the Limerick Power Plant, billboards, cell towers, and poor design of parking and stormwater management facilities. Figure 9-8 below, lists if the municipal open space plan and/or comprehensive plan discusses or recognizes negative impacts. Most of the municipal plans do not list specific scenic impacts, but rather acknowledge that there are impacts. See the individual municipal documents for more information. See Chapter 4: Scenic Resources Plan for ways to address some of the more significant impacts.

Figure 9-8
Negative Impacts in the Region

Township	Recognition of Negative Impacts:
East Coventry	Recognizes negative impacts from the Limerick Generating Station in the 1992 OSRERP.
East Nantmeal	Not recognized per se.
East Pikeland	Recognizes negative impacts in the 1992 OSRERP.
East Vincent	Includes negative impacts in 1992 OSRERP and the 1994 Comp Plan.
North Coventry	Recognizes negative impacts in the 1992 OSRERP.
South Coventry	Not recognized per se.
Wallace	Not discussed.
Warwick	Not recognized per se.
West Vincent	Recognizes negative impacts in the 1992 OSRERP.

CURRENT RESOURCE PROTECTION EFFORTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Northern Federation is active in protection and preservation efforts. Most of the municipalities in the Northern Federation have identified and inventoried local scenic resources. Many scenic resources fall within another resource category, such as historic or natural resources, and therefore are protected through mechanisms designed for those types of resources. However, there are some additional efforts and activities that help capture those scenic resources that otherwise might not be preserved.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Five of the nine municipalities in the Region have participated in the Chester County Parks and Recreation Department's annual "Town Tours and Village Walks" during the summer months. These free tours promote historic education and the opportunity for people to become more familiar with scenic resources.

Municipalities that have participated in the walking tours are:

- **East Pikeland** - Merlin Hamlet, Kimberton, Rapps Dam, Bonnie Brae Park.
- **East Vincent** - Parkers Ford National Register Historic District.
- **South Coventry** - Coventryville. The township plans on tours of Pughtown in the future.
- **Wallace** - Glenmoore Village.
- **Warwick** – St. Peter's Village.

PROGRAMS

In addition to the walking tours, several of the municipalities have other community education programs:

- **East Coventry** - The township sponsored a celebration for the 200th Anniversary of the Bridge on Linfield Road in Parkerford.
- **East Pikeland** - The township newsletter often contains information on historic resource preservation activities or education.
- **East Vincent** - The Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) sponsors an Earth Day program for fifth graders from Owen J. Roberts Elementary Schools. The township is also initiating Bridge tours in the upcoming year.
- **Warwick** - The township newsletter often contains information on historic resource preservation activities or education.

LEGAL BASIS FOR SCENIC RESOURCE PROTECTION

The Pennsylvania Constitution and state legislation provide a solid foundation for regulating and protecting scenic resources at the municipal level. Several of these enabling provisions are listed below.

PENNSYLVANIA CONSTITUTION

The “Environmental Amendment” of the Pennsylvania Constitution states, “The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania’s natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustees of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all people.”¹

ACT 247, THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE OF 1968, AS AMENDED [MPC]

The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) is the legislation that empowers municipalities to plan their development through the use of comprehensive planning, ordinances, and official maps. While the comprehensive plan provides the policy basis for protecting resources, the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance are the two primary means of regulating and protecting scenic resources at the municipal level. The Municipalities Planning Code Sections 604(1) and 1103(a)(6) recognize aesthetics as a legitimate component of planning.

OTHER LEGISLATION

- Natural Resources Protection Legislation, see the *Legal Basis for Natural Resource Protection* in Chapter 7: Natural Resources Inventory.
- Historic Resources Protection Legislation, see the Legal Foundation And Historic Preservation Programs Section in Chapter 8: Historic Resources Inventory.
- The Outdoor Advertising Control Act of 1971, 36 P.S. §2718.104, et. seq.

CONCLUSION

The scenic resources described in this chapter define the rural character of the Region. The overall goal for regional resource protection is to establish a common approach that each municipality can employ for the consistent management of resources. To this end, Chapter 4: Scenic Resources Plan includes recommendations for determining what measures may be available to protect scenic resources on a regional basis.

¹ Article I, Section 27 of the Pa. Constitution, adopted May 18, 1971.

Figure Sources

Figure 9-1: Municipal Comprehensive and Open Space Plans. Various dates.

Figure 9-2: Chester County Planning Commission, 2005.

Figure 9-3: Chester County Planning Commission, 2005.

Figure 9-4: Municipal Comprehensive and Open Space Plans. Various dates.

Figure 9-5: Municipal Comprehensive and Open Space Plans. Various dates.

Figure 9-6: Municipal Comprehensive and Open Space Plans. Various dates.

Figure 9-7: Municipal Comprehensive and Open Space Plans. Various dates.

Photograph Sources

All: Chester County Planning Commission, 2002 - 2005.

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