

Chapter 10: Recreational Resources Inventory

INTRODUCTION

The Region is rich in natural, historic, and scenic resources. This wealth presents recreation opportunities for residents and visitors to the Region. The Region is one of the most utilized in Chester County in terms of recreation resources. Recreation choices range from passive recreation, such as a stroll through Warwick County Park searching for a Red-Headed Woodpecker, and active recreation, such as challenging your mountain biking skills on the rocky trails of French Creek State Park.

This chapter presents an inventory of recreation resources in the Region. For the purposes of this Plan, recreation resources shall include parkland and recreation facilities, trails and greenways, and community events and organizations. In addition, this chapter includes the legislation that enables municipalities and regional groups to manage recreational resources for use by residents of the municipality.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTER

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PARKLAND and RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Parkland and recreation facilities play an important role in the quality of life for residents of a municipality or region. The availability of such facilities can make an area an attractive place to live as well as a draw for visitors. In 2002, Chester County adopted *Linking Landscapes – A Plan for the Protected Open Space Network in Chester County, Pennsylvania*. *Linking Landscapes* is an element of the county's policy plan, **Landscapes**. Chapter four of *Linking Landscapes* provides an overview and description of national, state, county, and municipal parks in Chester County.

THE DEFINITION OF A "PARK"

The term "park" has no single definition that is recognized by recreational planners, and there is no established set of characteristics that a property must have in order to be called a park. *Linking Landscapes* defines a "park" as any outdoor property with few if any structures that meets all of the following criteria:

- Ownership in-fee or permanently eased for recreation by a government agency,
- Open to the general public,
- Specifically managed to provide public recreation, and
- Its primary use is public recreation.

This definition stresses that parks are acquired, designed, and managed to be public recreation facilities.

PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION

Parks are typically identified based on the type of recreation that takes place and the way in which they are used. Some parks are designed and maintained to be used primarily for strenuous recreation activities such as exercise, team sports, or child's play. This category of activities is referred to as "active recreation." Other parks are designed, maintained and used for quieter, less athletic activities, such as fishing, picnicking, and bird watching. This category of lower energy activities is known as "passive recreation," and they have a minimal effect on their surroundings. It should be noted that there are some activities that cannot be clearly defined as being exclusively active or passive recreation.

Active Facilities - Parks that provide active recreation commonly include tennis, volleyball and basketball courts; swing sets, playgrounds, and tot-lots; or fields for team sports such as football, soccer, baseball, and softball. Active recreation parks can be quite small, as in the case of a tot-lot, or they can cover multiple acres, as in the case with a sports field complex. In Chester County, most active recreation parks are less than 20 acres in size.

Passive facilities - Passive recreation parks in suburban or rural settings tend to be large and commonly provide picnic areas, and trails for hiking. These parks are often established on a site that already contains a historically significant landscape or a unique natural feature such as a stream or woodland. Passive recreation can include, but is not limited to: birding or bird watching, amateur astronomy or stargazing, and hiking (with some limitations).

Currently, municipal parks provide the vast majority of public active recreation opportunities within Chester County, and this situation is likely to continue. Municipalities are well suited to develop active recreation facilities because they are intimately aware of the recreational needs of the local population. Historically active recreation parks in the county have been purchased and managed by municipal governments.

CHESTER COUNTY RECREATION PARK STANDARDS

The Chester County Planning Commission and the Chester County Parks Department have developed a system for classifying each recreational park within the county. This system, called the 2001 Chester County Recreational Park Standards, is an updated version of the 1982 Chester County Park Standards first presented in the 1982 *Chester County Open Space and Recreation Study*.¹ For the purposes of this chapter we have organized the inventory of parks based on the guidelines included in *Linking Landscapes: Regional Parks, Sub-Regional Parks, Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Mini Parks*. These guidelines have been used to provide a general analysis of the Region's parks and recreation facilities.

**Figure 10-1
Chester County Recreational Park Guidelines**

Type of Park	Service Radius	Minimum Acreage Standard (per 1000 people)	Maximum Population	Size of Recreational Park
Regional	30 miles (1 hour drive)	20 acres	None	1000 acres +
Sub-Regional	7.5 miles (1/4 hour drive)	8.5 acres	100,000	400 to 999 acres
Community	2.5 miles (Equal to a 5 minute drive or a 30 minute walk)	3.0 to 6.0 acres	25,000	20 to 399 acres
Neighborhood	.5 miles (Equal to a 15 minute walk)	2.5 to 3.5 acres	5,000	.5 to 19.9 acres
Mini	.25 miles (equal to an 8 minute walk)	.25 acres	2,000	.01 to .49 acres

In order to provide a comprehensive inventory of recreation facilities in the Region, we have included a broad category entitled "recreation facilities" with each of the park classifications. This category will include facilities other than parkland where recreation opportunities exist in the Region.

¹ These categories of parkland are similar, if not identical, to those used in the municipal open space plans. These categories should be considered general in nature and may not be appropriate for all recreation facilities in the Region. Springton Manor Farm and the Struble Lake Recreation area, for example, would be considered Community Parks based on their acreage. However, they are included in the Sub-Regional category based on their usage and the fact that they are both operated by State Organizations.

REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Regional parks and recreation facilities are large-scale recreation areas serving an area larger than a single county. Because of their regional significance, such parks are usually provided and operated by federal or state governments. Typically, regional parks provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, both passive and active, particularly those requiring large land or water areas. Emphasis is often placed on recreation opportunities beyond the scope of those typically provided at local parks (community, neighborhood, and mini), including, but not limited to: camping, boating, and swimming. There are three regional parks and recreational facilities within the boundaries of the Region and they include French Creek State Park, (in which Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site is located), Marsh Creek State Park, and the State Gamelands. See Map 10-1: Recreation Resources for the location of these Regional Facilities.

FRENCH CREEK STATE PARK

This park is located on the Berks and Chester County border and is operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of State Parks and is over 7,400 acres in size. In Chester County, the Park is located primarily in Warwick Township with a portion (202 acres) in North Coventry Township. In addition to recreation opportunities (see Figure 10-2) the park area includes the Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site (see below) and the 108-acre Hopewell Lake that is used for boating and swimming in the warmer months and ice-skating in the winter. French Creek State Park has one of the only disc golf courses in the Delaware Valley and includes two courses that wind through the woods near the Lake.

Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site

This site is situated at the headwaters of the French Creek. It is located primarily in Berks County with a portion located in Warwick Township and is operated by the National Parks Service. Use of the Hopewell Furnace site dates back to 1771 and amenities other than recreational opportunities listed in Figure 10-2 include farm animals, a farm museum, the operating Hopewell Furnace, and educational programs that focus on the history and importance of the iron industry to the Region. 14 restored historic buildings are located on this site including the ironmaster's mansion, tenant houses, and the charcoal house that offer visitors a glimpse into the 19th Century.

MARSH CREEK STATE PARK

This park is located primarily in Upper Uwchlan Township, Chester County with a portion (262 acres) located in Wallace Township. Marsh Creek is operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of State Parks and is over 1,700 acres in size. The 535-acre Marsh Creek Lake is a year-round facility for non-motorized boating, windsurfing, and fishing and ice-skating in the colder months and other opportunities as listed in Figure 10-2.

STATE GAMELANDS NO. 43

The State Gamelands is a site of over 2,306 acres and is located in Warwick and West Nantmeal townships with a portion in Berks County. The gamelands are administered by the Pennsylvania Game Commission and are designed to provide wildlife habitat and a range of recreational opportunities as listed in Figure 10-2.

**Figure 10-2
Regional Park and Recreational Facilities - Recreational Opportunities**

	Amateur Astronomy/Birding	Boating/Windsurfing	Camping/Youth Hostel	Cross Country Skiing	Educational Programs	Fishing	Historic Features	Hunting/Shooting Range	Ice Skating	Orienteering	Picnic Area/Pavilion	Play Area	Sledding	Softball (informal)	Swimming	Trail - Bicycling	Trail - Equestrian	Trail - Interpretive	Trail - Walking/Hiking
French Creek State Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Hopewell Village/Furnace	✓				✓		✓		✓		✓						✓	✓	✓
Marsh Creek State Park	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
State Gamelands No. 43								✓								✓	✓		✓

REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES OUTSIDE OF THE REGION

Regional Parks within about 30 miles² of the boundaries of the Northern Federation: Blue Marsh State Park, Evansburg State Park, Lower Perkiomen Creek Park, Lums Pond State Park, Ridley Creek State Park, and Valley Forge National Historical Park (see below).

Valley Forge National Historical Park is located primarily in Montgomery County with a small portion in the Chester County municipalities of Schuylkill and Tredyffrin townships. This is an internationally known recreation area that straddles the Schuylkill River and provides access to a major historical site and the Schuylkill River Trail. Recreation facilities in this National park include: multi-use trails (bicycling, cross-country skiing, equestrian, and hiking), educational programs, fishing, Revolutionary War historic features, and picnicking.

City of Philadelphia - As a part of the Philadelphia metropolitan area, residents of the Region are fortunate to have access to the many amenities within the vicinity of the City of Philadelphia. These include, but certainly are not limited to: the Philadelphia Zoo, Fairmount Park System, the Wissahickon Trail, Independence Hall and related historic facilities, the National Constitution Center, the Franklin Institute, and the Museum of Natural History.

Pocono Mountains - The Pocono Mountain Region, just a short drive from the Region, offers recreation opportunities that range from winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding, and tubing to summer and fall activities such as mountain biking, hiking, river rafting, paint ball, and observing fall foliage.

This is not an exhaustive list of recreation resources in the greater region; rather it is just a sampling of the vast recreation resources that are within a 25 to 50 mile radius of the Region.

² The radius of 30 miles is based on the guidelines set forth in *Linking Landscapes* and Figure 10-1.

SUB-REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Sub-Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities provide a transitional area between regional and local parks by providing relatively large tracts of public open space and recreation opportunities within a short drive from home as listed in Figure 10-1. Serving a large area, but smaller than a County, sub-regional facilities are beyond the scope of municipal provision. Typically they are provided by County government, but can be provided jointly by more than one municipality or a conservation organization. Sub-regional parks generally provide trails, fields, courts, water recreation areas, picnic areas, and woodlands that local parks can only partially provide. Sub-regional facilities are geared to regular use on weekdays as well as weekends. There are three sub-regional facilities located within the boundaries of the Region and they include: the Crow's Nest Preserve, Springton Manor Farm, and Warwick County Park. See Map 10-1: Recreation Resources for the location of Sub-Regional Facilities.

CROW'S NEST PRESERVE

This 600-acre facility comprised of four 19th Century farms is located in Warwick Township adjacent to the State Gamelands, French Creek State Park, and the Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site. Crow's Nest is operated by the Natural Lands Trust and is primarily a conservation and research facility offering environmental education for residents (primarily children) throughout the year. In addition, Crow's Nest offers opportunities for recreation including approximately two miles of passive trails that attract birding enthusiasts, hikers, equestrians, and other opportunities as listed in Figure 10-3.

SPRINGTON MANOR FARM

Springton is a 300-acre demonstration farm complete with farm animals and related educational programs located in Wallace Township. This facility is operated by the Chester County Parks and Recreation Department and includes recreation opportunities as listed in Figure 10-3.

WARWICK COUNTY PARK

This County Park is over 500 acres in size and is located primarily in Warwick Township, with a 23-acre section located in South Coventry Township and a smaller section located in East Nantmeal Township. The Park has a full range of recreation opportunities and provides access to regional trail facilities: the Horse-Shoe Trail runs through the length of the Park and it is planned that the French Creek Trail will originate in the Park and provide access to the recreational opportunities listed in Figure 10-3.

**Figure 10-3
Sub-Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities - Recreational Opportunities**

Note: Hunting in both Crow's Nest Preserve and Warwick County Park is limited and in accordance with strict guidelines.

	Active Recreation	Passive Recreation	Birding	Cross-Country Skiing	Education Programs	Fishing	Gardens	Historic Features	Horse Shoe Pits	Hunting	Orienteering	Picnic Area	Play Area	Trail - Cycling	Trail - Equestrian	Trail - Hiking	Trail - Interpretive	Volleyball
Crow's Nest Preserve		X	✓		✓			✓		✓					✓	✓	✓	
Springton Manor Farm	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	
Warwick County Park	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

SUB-REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES OUTSIDE OF THE REGION

Sub-Regional Recreational facilities outside the boundaries of the Region but within about 7.5 miles include: Hibernia County Park and Struble Lake Recreation Area.

Hibernia County Park is located in West Caln Township just a few miles from the southwestern border of the Region. The historic Hibernia Mansion, an 18th Century Ironmaster's Home, overlooks the 900-acre park which is operated by the Chester County Parks and Recreation Department and offers active and passive recreation opportunities including birding, historic features, multi-use trails, and tot-lots. Chamber's Lake is located in the northwestern corner of the park and accommodates water recreation activities such as boating and fishing.

Struble Lake Recreation Area is located in Honeybrook Township just west of the boundary with East Nantmeal Township. This 146-acre park is operated by the Pennsylvania Fish Commission. The County Parks and Recreation Department maintains a 28-acre access area for boating and fishing.

REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL FACILITIES PRELIMINARY SUMMARY

Regional and Sub-Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities are primarily located to the west of the Route 100 corridor in Warwick and Wallace townships, the western-most communities of the Region. Although the need for public recreation facilities (based on land area and population) must be addressed in the individual municipal open space plans, we will provide recommendations that will address opportunities to expand the scope of these facilities in Chapter 5: Recreation Resources Plan.

COMMUNITY PARKLAND AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Community Parks and Recreation Facilities provide a local place for group and individual sports and exercise, both casual and organized. They are designed to serve outdoor recreation needs on a regular basis. Both active and passive uses are ordinarily provided within a community park as listed in Figure 10-1 and such activities may make use of adjacent or associated school or municipal facilities. There are nine community facilities within the boundaries of the Region and they include: Connie Batdorf Park, Kenilworth Park, Kimberton Community Park, Park on the Ridge, Towpath Park, Warwick Township Park, Welkinweir, The Wilderness Area, and Woody's Woods. See Map 10-1: Recreation Resources for the location of Community Facilities.

POTENTIAL OR PLANNED COMMUNITY PARKS OR RECREATION FACILITIES

The community facilities listed below are being considered and/or planned to enhance or establish recreation opportunities in communities in the Region.

East Coventry Township

Ellis Woods Park will encompass 13 to 14 acres of the tract where the Township Building is currently located. The master park plan for "Ellis Woods Park" has been completed and the township is actively seeking funding for the construction of this community park facility.

When completed (as proposed in phases), the amenities of Ellis Woods Park are expected to include: a multi-use field, 1 mile of fitness trail, a tot lot, a youth playground, and a multi-use court facility that will be used for basketball, in-line skating and the annual Bike Rodeo (see Community Events). Additionally, there will be a skateboard park and this park will provide the only formal access to the Pigeon Creek Stream Corridor and centrally located recreation facilities for current and new residents of the township and, based on the list of amenities, a limited regional benefit.

**Figure 10-4
Community Parks and Recreation Facilities - Recreational Opportunities**

	Active Recreation	Passive Recreation	Acres	Court – Basketball and/or Volleyball	Court – Tennis/Hockey	Fairgrounds and/or Pavilions	Field – Athletic/Baseball/Softball	Horseshoe Pits	Field – Soccer/Hockey	Lake/Fishing	Open Space – passive/Birding	Picnic Area/Pavilion	Playground/Tot Lot	Trail – Walking/Hiking/Exercise
Connie Batdorf Park (SC) ³	x	x	20.9				✓					✓	✓	✓
Kenilworth Park (NC)	x	x	22.1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Kimberton Community Park (EP)	x	x	39	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓
Park on the Ridge (EV)	x	x							✓			✓	✓	✓
Towpath Park (EC)	x	x											✓	✓
Warwick Township Park (WK)		x	90.3								✓			
Welkinweir (EN)			199			✓					✓	✓		✓
Wilderness Area (NC)		x	140								✓	✓		✓
Woody's Woods (SC)		x	240								✓			

East Coventry Township

The township owns 32.6 acres along the Schuylkill River known as the Heyser Tract for which a master plan and construction plan have been completed. The Heyser Tract will be dedicated to active recreation with the inclusion of ballfields, soccer fields, and multi-use fields. The 6.8 acre Wade Tract, another township acquisition that lies adjacent to the Schuylkill River, connects Towpath Park to the Heiser tract. See Map 5-1: Recreation Plan.

East Nantmeal Township

Has acquired 6 acres of land adjacent to their township building on Font Road. Specific recreation facilities have not yet been identified.

North Coventry Township

The township plans to add acreage to Kenilworth Park and the Wilderness Area.

³ We have included the following abbreviations for municipalities in the Region: East Coventry (EC), East Nantmeal (EN), East Pikeland (EP), East Vincent (EV), North Coventry (NC), South Coventry (SC), Wallace (WE), Warwick (WK), and West Vincent (WV).

Wallace Township

The Township is currently looking for funding for a master park plan for Wallace Township Community Park that is located on a 60-acre parcel adjacent to the new township building. Recreational facilities that are planned for this site include: a tot lot, 2 baseball fields (with soccer field overlays), an official size soccer field, and amphitheatre. See Map 5-1: Recreation Plan.

West Vincent

The county holds three separate parcels along French Creek in West Vincent Township that are a total of approximately 49 acres in size. These parcels are available primarily for passive recreation including fishing on French Creek and limited equestrian trail facilities.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PRELIMINARY SUMMARY

Five of the nine Northern Federation municipalities participating in this Plan have Community Parks within their boundaries: East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, and Warwick. It appears as though the remaining four have acquired land to accommodate community park facilities and are in varying degrees of planning.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Neighborhood Parks and Recreation Facilities provide spaces and facilities for recreation close to home as listed in Figure 10-5. Exercise and sitting areas for adults, play areas for children, and all-purpose field and court areas are generally part of a neighborhood park. Although large-scale active recreation facilities are more appropriate in community parks, they may be included if the size of the facility permits. There are several Neighborhood Facilities in the Region and they include (the number in bold in Figure 10-5 correspond to Map 10-1: Recreation Resources): Bickel Run Park, Burgess Park, Evan's Park, Margaret Howson Memorial Park, Kemp Road Park, Penn Street Recreational Area, River Road Athletic Fields, South Pottstown Green, Town Center Park, and Wagonseller Park. See Map 10-1: Recreation Resources for the location of Neighborhood Facilities.

POTENTIAL OR PLANNED NEIGHBORHOOD PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The neighborhood facilities listed below are being considered and/or planned to enhance or establish recreation opportunities in communities in the Northern Federation Region.

East Coventry Township

Although the township does not consider Towpath Park to be a neighborhood park, as expressed in their comprehensive plan, it does essentially meet the county's definition (See Figure 10-1). The township owns 32.6 acres along the Schuylkill River known as the Heyser Tract for which a master plan and construction plan have been completed. The Heyser Tract will be dedicated to active recreation with the inclusion of ballfields, soccer fields, and multi-use fields. The 6.8 acre Wade Tract, another township acquisition that lies adjacent to the Schuylkill River, connects Towpath Park to the Heiser tract.

North Coventry Township

The Parks and Recreation Commission plans to develop a park for passive recreation with uses such as a trail and sitting area(s) on a six acre tract that is situated along the Bickel Run that were formerly used for the keeping of cattle. Further, the Recreation Commission plans to develop 15 acres on Kemp Road as a mainly undisturbed area with a trail network

and passive recreation. The 22-acre Town Center Park is currently open space but passive recreational facilities are being considered for the future.

**Figure 10-5
Neighborhood Parks and Recreation Facilities - Recreational Opportunities**

	Corresponds to Map 10-1	Active Recreation	Passive Recreation	ACRES	Boat Launch/Rentals	Camping	Court - Basketball	Court - Tennis/Hockey	Field - Baseball/Athletic	Field - Soccer	Fishing	Picnic Area/Pavilion	Open Space - Passive	Playground/Tot Lot	Trail - Walking/Hiking	Volleyball
Bickel Run Park (NC)	1		X	6.7									✓			
Burgess Park (WE)	2		X			✓					✓					
Evan's Park (WV)	3	X	X	12.9			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Margaret Howson Park (WE)	4		X			✓					✓					
Kemp Road Park (NC)	5		X	15.4									✓			
Penn Street Rec. Area (NC)	6	X		1.56	✓		✓	✓			✓					
River Road Athletic Fields (NC)	7	X		12							✓	✓	✓	✓		
South Pottstown Green (NC)	8	X	X	1.76									✓	✓		✓
Town Square Park (NC)	9		X	22									✓			
Wagonseller Park (WE)	10	X							✓					✓		

MINI PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Mini Parks and Recreation Facilities are small walk-to facilities that primarily serve the daytime recreation needs of senior citizens and pre-school children with supervising adults. There are several mini parks or recreation facilities in the Region.

RECREATION BOARDS/COMMISSIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Only four of the nine municipalities in the Northern Federation have Park and/or recreation boards or commissions and they include: East Coventry, East Pikeland, East Vincent, and North Coventry townships. A recreation board or commission makes it possible for a municipality to focus planning and funding towards parkland and recreation facilities.

The following township and joint recreation boards/commissions have actively addressed recreation:

NORTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

North Coventry Township provides an annual fund to the Commission who provides recreation programs for community residents that include a martial arts program, tennis lessons, a summer day camp, and a children's Halloween party, and provides fields, tennis courts, and pavilion rentals for use by others.

WALLACE TOWNSHIP PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

Provides a four-week tennis camp free to Wallace residents (5-14 years old) and a summer playground program.

PHOENIXVILLE-EAST PIKELAND RECREATION COMMISSION JOINT BOARD

The Joint Board was created in 1989 by ordinance to provide recreational programs for the residents of East Pikeland. East Pikeland's funding provides for the use of Phoenixville Recreation department facilities which include: adult and youth leagues, weight-lifting and gym activities, instructional classes, summer recreation programs. The Joint Board represents the only one of its type in the Northern Federation.

DOWNINGTOWN AREA RECREATION CONSORTIUM (DARC)

DARC is a non-profit organization that was developed in August of 1992 by the eight municipalities that make up the Downingtown Area School District: Wallace, East Brandywine, Downingtown Borough, West Bradford, Uwchlan, Upper Uwchlan, East Caln, and West Pikeland. DARC offers children, teen, and adult classes as well as adult leagues, trips and special events. Residents who live in the Downingtown Area School District may participate in all programs at a flat rate. People living outside the district pay an additional fee. Pre-school soccer, Mommy & Me Dance Class, Kindermusik, cooking, body sculpting exercise, yoga, reupholstery, photography, computer instruction, and indoor golf lessons are examples of some of the programs being offered. DARC also offers discount ski tickets and amusement park tickets. For details, contact the DARC office at 610-269-9260 or visit DARC's web site at www.darcinfo.com or e-mail darc@kennett.net.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES

Institutional recreation facilities, such as those located on the grounds of a local elementary or high school, can supplement public facilities that were outlined in Figure 10-2 through 10-5 above. Although these facilities may not be openly available to the public, they are generally available during off-school hours on an informal basis or through agreement with the school district. Institutional recreation facilities provide areas for primarily active recreation. See Map 10-1: Recreation Resources for the location of Institutional Facilities.

**Figure 10-6
Public Institutional Recreational Facilities - Recreational Opportunities**

	Corresponds to Map 10-1	Auditorium/Ballroom	Classrooms/Rooms	Court - Basketball	Court - Play/All-Purpose	Court - Tennis	Field - All-Purpose	Field - Baseball/Softball	Field - Hockey/Soccer	Gymnasium	Playground	Swimming Pool (Indoor)	Theatre	Track
Downingtown School District (WE)	1	✓						✓						
East Coventry Elementary School (EV)	2	✓		✓			✓							
East Pikeland Elementary School (EP)	3	✓					✓			✓	✓			
French Creek Elementary School (EN, SC)	4	✓												
Kimberton Fire Company (EP)	5	✓	✓											
National Guard Armory (EP)	6	✓												
North Coventry Elementary School (NC)	7	✓	✓	✓							✓			
OJR High/Middle School Complex (SC)	8	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Spring City Little League (SC)	9		✓					✓						
Vincent Elementary School (EV)	10	✓	✓							✓	✓			

INSTITUTIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES OUTSIDE OF THE REGION

Several institutional recreational facilities are located in municipalities adjacent to the Region, these include, but are not limited to, the following: Senior Center of Phoenixville, the Phoenixville Recreation Center, Phoenixville Area School District Junior and Senior High Schools, Phoenixville area YMCA, Branch Library at Chester Springs, Spring City Elementary School.

COMMERCIAL/PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES

Commercial recreation facilities provide additional recreation opportunities for residents of the Region. These facilities and clubs supplement the public Park and Recreational Facilities discussed above and offer fee-based recreation opportunities for residents of all ages. The facilities located in the Region include golf courses, clubs, churches, camps, campgrounds, and equestrian facilities.

GOLF COURSES

There are six golf courses in the Region that provide recreation to residents and visitors to the Region. They include: Bellewood Golf Course (NC), French Creek Golf Course (EN), Kimberton Golf Course (EV), Spring Hollow Golf Course (EV), Stone Wall Golf Course (EN), and Stonewall2 Golf Course (WK). See Map 10-1 for the location of Golf Courses in the Region.

CLUBS

There are several active clubs in the Region that provide limited recreational opportunities based on the requirement of a membership. Clubs in the Region include, but are not limited to: Boy Scout and Girls Scout Clubs of America, Elverson Rod and Gun, Kimberton Gun Club, Northern Chester County Sportsmen's Club. In addition, there are several organized sports groups active in the Region and they are included in Figure 10-7.

CHURCHES AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Throughout the Region, there are church and religious institutions that provide recreation facilities including multi-use fields, playgrounds, tot lots, auditoriums, etc. The following religious institutions provide specific recreation programs in the Region: Harmonyville Church of the Brethren is located in Warwick Township and provides a two-week summer day camp whose primary goals is ministry while providing recreational opportunities for an average of 65 participating children.

Private Schools such as Westmont Christian Academy (NC) and the Kimberton Waldorf School (EV) may also have recreational facilities for use by local residents.

CAMPS AND CAMPGROUNDS

Camps and campgrounds provide facilities for outdoor recreation opportunities and are located throughout the Region. These facilities include: Camp Innabah (SC), Nueva Esperanza (NC), Camp Kelton (WV), Warwick Woods (WK), Camp Sankanac (EV). See Map 10-1 for the location of Campgrounds in the Region.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITIES

The Region is fortunate to have active environmental and conservation groups located in and working with the Northern Federation to promote the resources so important for recreation. Green Valleys Association and the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust are headquartered within the boundaries of the Region and the Natural Lands Trust operates the Crows Nest Preserve in Warwick Township.

GREEN VALLEYS ASSOCIATION (GVA)

GVA has an extensive education and outreach program which focuses on the following: School programs, teacher training, watershed stewardship, adult and family education, and camp programs. Green Valleys is dedicated to educating individuals in order to further the cause of environmental protection. For example: GVA's School Programs serves public and private schools, home school groups, and kindergartens. Programs are designed to supplement school curricula by providing direct learning experiences, and to assist schools and districts in meeting the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Environment and Ecology Academic Standards.

FRENCH AND PICKERING CREEKS CONSERVATION TRUST

In addition to the Trust's participation in the protection of vast areas of open space and the development of the French Creek Trail, they provide a newsletter through their website www.frenchandpickering.org that highlights activities in the Region. The Trust was founded in 1967 by Samuel W. and Eleanor M. Morris.

CROW'S NEST PRESERVE (NLT)

See Description under Sub-Regional Park and Recreation Facilities.

ORGANIZED SPORTS PROGRAMS

Organized sports and recreation have been providing recreation opportunities for the youth of America for decades and there is no exception in the Region. Figure 10-7 outlines the range of recreation opportunities available to the youth of the Region.

**Figure 10-7
Recreation Organization Details**

	Sports	Basketball	Baseball/Softball	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer/field hockey	Wrestling	Ages	Average # of Participants	Girls	Boys	East Coventry	East Nantmeal	East Pikeland	East Vincent	North Coventry	South Coventry	Wallace	Warwick	West Vincent
Chesmont Women's Softball									150								✓			
Coventry Little League			✓						>600								✓			
Coventry Soccer						✓		6-16	>600			✓					✓			
E. Brandywine Youth Assoc. Soccer						✓		6-16											✓	
Kimberton Fish and Game Assoc.														✓						
Kimberton Youth Athletic League														✓						
North Coventry Men's Softball			✓						150								✓			
Norchester Red Knights Football				✓					225											
Coventry Basketball		✓							140											
Glenmoore Girls Softball Assoc.								6-12	75	x										✓
Glenmoore/Eagle Little League			✓					6-12	350		x									✓
Lionville Youth Association		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		1500											✓
Norchester Optimists Club		✓	✓	✓			✓	6-15		x	x									✓
Phoenixville Am. Legion Baseball														✓						
Phoenixville Babe Ruth			✓											✓						
Phoenixville-Merion Youth League			✓											✓						✓
Phoenixville Soccer						✓								✓						
Vincent United Soccer									200								✓	✓		
Wildcat Lacrosse									200			✓					✓			

TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

Trails and potential trail corridors (greenways) provide access to and between the vast park and recreation facilities located in the Region. Trails provide recreation opportunities for multiple user groups including hikers, cyclists, and equestrians as well as access to wildlife habitat for birders and hunters. In addition to access, greenways can provide habitat areas for wildlife as well as areas of connection referred to as “Wildlife Bio-Diversity Corridors” in *Linking Landscapes*. A Wildlife Bio-Diversity Corridor is a “long strip of undeveloped or sparsely developed land that can be used by wildlife to pass from one wildlife preserve to another.” Therefore, these facilities provide recreation to humans while providing valuable habitat for wildlife to live and roam.

REGIONAL TRAILS AND RELATED FACILITIES

Regional Trails can provide access to and between parkland and recreation facilities in the Region. Further, these facilities can provide connection between facilities across county boundaries. The Horse-Shoe Trail, for example, extends from Valley Forge National Park to an area just north of Harrisburg. Three regional trails pass through or into the Region and they include: the Horse-Shoe Trail, The French Creek Trail, and the Schuylkill River Trail (eventual connection).

HORSE-SHOE TRAIL

This trail actually extends beyond the Region and is more appropriately considered a state facility. The Horse-Shoe Trail extends from Valley Forge National Historic Site to just north of Harrisburg where it connects to the Appalachian Trail. From east to west the trail traverses the following townships in the Region: East Nantmeal, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland, and West Vincent as well as Charlestown and Tredyffrin outside of the Region. Within the Region the trail connects Warwick County Park, St. Peter’s Village, French Creek State Park, and the Hopewell Village National Historic Site. Portions of the trail are located on private lands with no guarantee of continued trail use or finding the trail in the first place.

FRENCH CREEK TRAIL

This regional trail facility originates in Warwick County Park and follows the northern bank of the French Creek until it reaches Route 100 in South Coventry Township. Efforts are underway by the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust to eventually continue the trail east of Route 100 to Phoenixville where it would connect with the Schuylkill River Trail (See below) connecting 5 of the 9 municipalities in the Northern Federation Which include:

SCHUYLKILL RIVER TRAIL

The Schuylkill River Trail is a major trail facility that is currently located exclusively in Montgomery County and links the town of Montclair (across the Schuylkill River from Phoenixville) with Valley Forge National Historic Park and Manayunk, a Philadelphia suburb. This true regional facility is located along the Schuylkill River and plans are to continue the trail north to Pottstown and on to Reading in Berks County.

PICKERING TRAIL

The Pickering Trail is a facility that links East and West Pikeland and Charlestown townships.

LOCAL TRAILS AND RELATED FACILITIES

Trail facilities within municipal borders provide alternative transportation facilities and recreational facilities for residents. East Pikeland outlines the need for municipal trail facilities in their Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan and points out the “need for hiking/biking trails to provide for the safe movement of pedestrians throughout the Township.” The following local and/or municipal trail facilities are already in place or in the planning stages.

NORTH COVENTRY

Working on a community trail network to connect to the network of Regional Trails.

SOUTH COVENTRY

The township hopes to link the French Creek Trail with trails in Connie Batdorf Community Park in order to provide connection to this regional trail facility. In addition, the township intends to provide connection from Connie Batdorf Park to the extensive acreage of Woody’s Woods through the use of a trail.

WALLACE TOWNSHIP

Although Wallace Township does have limited access to approximately 30 miles of hiking, biking, and equestrian trails, a portion of these trails are located on private lands and access, to a large degree, is limited.

WARWICK TOWNSHIP

Aside from the trail facilities in French Creek State Park and the State Gamelands, residents of Warwick Township also have access to the following:

Crow’s Nest Preserve – NLT Trails

Boar’s Back Rail to Trail – Connects Elverson to St. Peter’s Village and provides connection to French Creek Trail and Horseshoe Trail.

Buzzard’s Trail – This trail initiates from St. Peter’s Road, winds to the northwest, and concludes on Route 345 in French Creek State Park.

WEST VINCENT TOWNSHIP

Developers of a number of properties within West Vincent have placed trails within and/or on or around the perimeter of the properties.

BIKEWAY NETWORK

Technically, the bikeway network developed by Chester County (with input from the Chester County Cycling Committee) is not a trail system. It does, however, provide a list of roadways in Chester County where recreational cycling should be accommodated and promoted. The Bikeway Network classifies and identifies roadways based on the appropriateness for bicycle recreation and [potential] transportation.

BEGINNER RECREATION

- 🚲 Terrain – Generally flat, with a few hills.
- 🚲 Travel Lane Width – Generally narrow due to secondary nature of roads.
- 🚲 Shoulder Width – Generally narrow due to secondary nature of roads.
- 🚲 Road Surface Condition – Generally acceptable to bicyclists. Will not create difficulties.
- 🚲 Vehicular Volume – Low, less than 500 vehicles per day.
- 🚲 Current Bike Use – Moderate uses based on field observations.
- 🚲 Primary Function – Intended for all but young children needing controlled and highly supervised conditions.
- 🚲 Other – These roads have strong scenic qualities. This category also includes all multi-purpose off road trails in the County.

Example in the Region: **Warwick Furnace Road** along the southern boundary of Warwick Township.

INTERMEDIATE RECREATION

- 🚲 Terrain – Flat or rolling, with occasional hills.
- 🚲 Travel Lane Width – Generally narrow due to secondary nature of roads.
- 🚲 Shoulder Width – Generally narrow due to secondary nature of roads.
- 🚲 Road Surface Condition – Generally acceptable to bicyclists, Will not create difficulties.
- 🚲 Vehicular Volume – Low to moderate volume, less than 5,000 vehicles per day.
- 🚲 Current Bike Use – Minimal to moderate activity.
- 🚲 Primary Function – Intended for riders with some experience in sharing the road with traffic. They also provide good connectivity between trip generators.
- 🚲 Other – May or may not have scenic values.

Examples in the Region: **Cedarville Road** in North Coventry and East Coventry townships.
 Saint Matthews Road in West Vincent Township.

COMMUTER/CONNECTOR

- 🚲 Terrain – Various conditions, with some moderate hills.
- 🚲 Travel Lane Width – Wide due to primary nature of road.
- 🚲 Shoulder Width – Minimal to moderate in width.
- 🚲 Road Surface Condition – Generally suitable for bicycling.
- 🚲 Vehicular Volume – High. More than 5,000 vehicles per day.
- 🚲 Current Bike Use – Minimal to moderate activity.
- 🚲 Primary Function – Major routes for through-travelers. Riders have greater expertise and use the fastest route possible to get to a specific destination.
- 🚲 Other – Intended for connective abilities between major residential and employment generators, not necessarily for scenic qualities.

Examples in the Region: **Route 23** in Warwick and South Coventry townships.

ADVANCED

- 🚲 Terrain – Various conditions, with some severe hills.
- 🚲 Travel Lane Width – Most roads need wider travel lanes.
- 🚲 Shoulder Width – Most roads need wider shoulders.
- 🚲 Road Surface Condition – Generally adequate for bicyclists.
- 🚲 Vehicular Volume – High, more than 5,000 vehicles per day.
- 🚲 Current Bike Use – Used only by bicyclists with advanced skill levels.
- 🚲 Primary Function – Intended for seasoned bicyclists who can accept generally unfavorable travel conditions.
- 🚲 Other – These roads serve as critical connectors to other routes on the network.

Examples in the Region: **Harmonyville Road** in Warwick, South Coventry, and North Coventry townships.
 Route 401 in Warwick and West Vincent townships.

BICYCLING ELEMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

While developing the bicycle element of the Chester County Transportation Plan, an analysis and needs assessment was completed for roadways that were included in the functional classification above. The recommendations for roadways included in the Region are included in Chapter 5: Recreation Resources Plan.

RAILS TO TRAILS

Throughout the country, abandoned or unused railroad rights-of-way have been resurfaced and transformed into trail corridors for the purposes of recreation and alternative transportation. An outstanding example of this phenomenon is the Schuylkill River Trail. The following is a list of abandoned or unused railroad right-of-way that may warrant consideration for use as trails.

EAST COVENTRY

An abandoned railroad right-of-way paralleling the Schuylkill River from Parker Ford to the far north township line.

EAST PIKELAND

An abandoned railroad right-of-way is located along the French Creek through the Village of Kimberton.

WARWICK TOWNSHIP

Boar's Back Rail to Trail – Connects Elverson to St. Peter's Village and provides connection to French Creek Trail and Horseshoe Trail.

GREENWAYS

EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP

Privately owned greenways are located throughout the township and used for equestrian purposes.

WALLACE TOWNSHIP

The proposed greenway for Wallace Township will be a loosely connected fabric of conservation lands, interwoven with those lands selected for development. Greenway lands will resemble a quilt pattern, reflecting the patchwork of fields and forests of the township's rural landscape. The township will create the greenway while managing growth and going through the process for development in the township.

WEST VINCENT TOWNSHIP

West Vincent is preserving greenways during the subdivision and land development process and will maintain the greenways pursuant to the *Greenway Land Stewardship Guide*, a guide developed by West Vincent Environmental Advisory Council with the help of Natural Lands Trust.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

REGIONAL EVENTS

Regional Events are those that draw visitors from beyond the boundaries of the given municipality and in certain cases beyond the boundaries of the Region.

KIMBERTON FAIR

The Kimberton Fair is held each year at the Kimberton Community Park and Fairgrounds and attracts visitors from the Region as well as the greater Delaware Valley Region. Carnival rides, games, and farm animals are but a few of the amenities at this event.

LUDWIG'S CORNER HORSESHOW AND COUNTRY FAIR

A full slate of classes offered by the Ludwig's Corner Horse Show gives hunter and jumper riders the opportunity to show before large crowds in a fun-filled, country fair atmosphere. Held Sunday and Monday of Labor Day Weekend, the show has been a Labor Day tradition for generations of families for more than a half century.

LOCAL EVENTS

EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP

Park Day, Easter Egg Hunt (200-300 kids), Children's Programs, Bike Rodeo, "Halloween Safe House" held by the township police and fire departments. The township sponsored a celebration for the 200th Anniversary of the Bridge on Linfield Road in Parkerford and holds events at the township's Revolutionary Cemetery.

EAST PIKELAND TOWNSHIP

Easter Egg Hunt at Kimberton Park and Kimberton Community Day (October), 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.

EAST VINCENT TOWNSHIP

Fourth of July Ceremony at the Revolutionary Soldiers Cemetery, Christmas Celebration at Hickory Grove School House, Annual Family Picnic at Park on the Ridge.

NORTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP

Egg hunt at Kenilworth Park and Halloween party.

SOUTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP

Coventryville Village Walking Tour (Annual).

WALLACE TOWNSHIP

Easter Egg Hunt (100 children thru age 12) and Tree-Lighting Ceremony. Halloween Party with costume judging, refreshments, and hayrides. Community Day in June with traditional community events.

WARWICK TOWNSHIP

Eleverson Garden Club holds their annual flower show in the Warwick Township Building in October.

WEST VINCENT

Community Day, Ludwig's Corner Horseshow, 4th of July Fireworks.

FUTURE COMMUNITY EVENTS

SOUTH COVENTRY

Concerts and other family events in Connie Batdorf Park.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

FRIENDS OF THE ARTS

The Owen J. Roberts Friends of the Arts promotes and supports cultural activities in the OJR School District by sponsoring such activities as field trips, art classes, school assemblies, student art exhibits, scholarships, art contests, and artists in-residence programs, with funds obtained through annual craft shows, garden tours, and holiday house tours.

REGIONAL RECREATION EFFORTS

RECONNECTIONS

The goal of the Master Plan being developed as a joint effort by North Coventry Township and Pottstown Borough is "Reconnecting the people of North Coventry Township and Pottstown Borough with each other and their Schuylkill River Heritage." The *Reconnections* project examines the potential physical, economic, social, heritage, and aesthetic connections between the two communities. The plan focuses on the Schuylkill River as the "heart" of each community's history. *Reconnections* proposes major recommendations and they include: enhancements to existing bridges, establishment of a new and/or revitalized trail system, establishment of a gateway system to the renovated recreational facilities all focusing on the physical link between the two communities, the Schuylkill River.

LEGAL BASIS FOR RECREATION PLANNING

The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) supports planning for Parks and Recreation in the Comprehensive Plan (or element thereof) in Article III – Comprehensive Plan. Section 301 – Preparation of Comprehensive Plan, states:

- (a) “The municipal, multi-municipal, or county comprehensive plan, consisting of maps, charts, and textual matter, shall include, but not be limited to, the following basic elements:”
 - (3) “A plan for movement of people and goods, which may include expressways, highways, local street systems, parking facilities, pedestrian and bikeway systems, public transit routes, terminals, airfields, port facilities, railroad facilities, and other similar facilities or uses.”
 - (7) (ii) “Identify current and proposed land uses which have a regional impact and significance, such as large shopping centers, major industrial parks, mines and related activities, office parks, storage facilities, large residential developments, regional entertainment and recreational complexes, hospitals, airports, and port facilities.”

CONCLUSION

The regional recreation resources inventoried in this chapter are important in maintaining the Region’s unique character and vitality. 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 5: Recreation Plan includes a set of minimum criteria that can be reviewed and implemented through each municipality’s zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances and any pertinent stand-alone ordinances. The Northern Federation can successfully implement its policies on a municipality-by-municipality basis without necessarily adopting a regional zoning ordinance. By adopting the same levels of protection, these resources can effectively be protected on a regional basis. The purpose of this inventory is to determine where gaps in protection measures may exist at the regional level. Chapter 5 includes recommendations for addressing these gaps and determining what additional measures may be needed to protect recreation resources on a regional basis.

Figure Sources

Figure 10-1: *A Plan for the Protected Open Space Network in Chester County, Pennsylvania*, prepared by the Chester County Planning Commission, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 2002.

Figure 10-2 through 10-7: Municipal Comprehensive Plans and Open Space Plans.

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