

# MUNNELL RUN FARM MASTER SITE PLAN

MERCER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

BRCTAG-10-55



SEPTEMBER 2005  
PASHEK ASSOCIATES

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## Acknowledgements

The contributions of the following groups and individuals were vital to the success of this Master Site Development Plan. They are commended for their interest in the projects and the input they provided throughout the planning process.

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This project was financed in part by a grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

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## Acknowledgements

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2004, the Munnell Run Farm Foundation, Inc. (MRFF) applied to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) for a grant to fund the preparation of a Master Site Plan for the Mercer County-owned Munnell Run Farm. The grant was received and subsequently the MRFF retained Pashek Associates to prepare the Master Site Plan.

Early on in the planning process, the study committee developed a general goal for the master site plan. This goal was to increase public awareness and interest in the farm through marketing and development of new facilities, in addition to offering education focusing on sustainable agriculture for the benefit of the agricultural community, school groups, and the community at large.

The recommendations for Farm improvements reflect this goal. Public input into the site planning process ensures that the plan reflects the immediate and future needs of the Farm and the surrounding community.

## VISION FOR THE FARM

Having a working farm with room for expansion of educational and agricultural facilities, as well as existing facilities that may be renovated for reuse, provides the MRFF with an opportunity for development of a high-quality facility that will educate visitors from a community (and surrounding region) of which agriculture is a large part. The potential for development of agricultural, educational, and commercial facilities resulted in a unique vision for the improvements at Munnell Run Farm.

## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The master plan for Munnell Run Farm is a result of intensive analysis of the farm property, active public participation, and in-depth discussion regarding the agricultural, commercial, and educational facility needs of the Farm.

Based on the inventory and analysis of the site, public input received throughout the master planning process, and prior design experience, Pashek Associates

recommends the development of the following facilities and general site improvements at Munnell Run Farm:

- Wagon Tour Trail / Access Road
- Gravel Entrance Drive
- Fruit / Display Orchard
- Display Pasture / Hayfield
- Maple Syrup Grove
- Value-Added Agriculture Facility
- Rural Life Museum
- Public Restrooms (multiple sets)
- Poultry Coop
- Animal Display Barn
- Farmer's Market Facility
- Community Vegetable, Herb, and Perennial Gardens
- Gift Shop
- Bigler House (local historic house c. 1840s) to be used as a classroom
- ADA-Accessible paved walking trail (approximately 1/8 mile)
- Welcome Center including: offices, classrooms, laboratory, kitchen, library / conference room, storage space, and public restrooms
- Farm-Scale Composting Area
- Rustic Outdoor Amphitheater / Woodlot Trail Improvements
- Honey Production Facilities (Beehives)
- Stormwater Retention Pond
- Renovations to several existing site buildings
- Parking Areas for office employees, visitors, and buses
- Relocation of the existing Bridge Department Garage

Also, the MRFF should pursue the acquisition of a portion of the Woodland Place property immediately to the east. Acquisition of, or right-of-way through, approximately four (4) acres in northern portion of the aforementioned property would provide a suitable location for a shorter, more direct access road to the farm and would also offer approaching visitors a dramatic view of the farm's facilities and fields.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Ideally, the Munnell Run Farm Foundation (MRFF) would construct all proposed improvements in one

phase, minimizing construction activities, disruptions, and realizing “economies of scale” construction savings. However, few organizations can afford to proceed in this manner and find it more appropriate to phase construction over an extended period of time.

Pashek Associates recommends that the improvements to Munnell Run Farm be constructed in a series of logical phases. Depending on the MRFF’s financial situation and the success of grant writing efforts, this phasing plan may be either expedited or lengthened.

Recognizing the MRFF’s desire to construct improvements as quickly and efficiently as possible, we recommend eight (8) phases of construction for Munnell Run Farm, with an approximate 3-year time period between the stop and start of construction between phases. This phasing schedule will allow time for the MRFF to organizing fund-raising efforts and maximize grant-writing efforts.

### **PHASE I - \$ 252,063**

The first phase of construction should concentrate on the implementation of public restrooms, which are an immediate need at the Farm. The proposed self-composting restroom near the existing classroom building, along with the proposed conventional restrooms on the west end of the existing machinery barn, should both be constructed. This will fill the immediate need for restrooms and enable the Farm to better accommodate school groups and other visitors. Other items that should be included in the first phase of construction are the removal and relocation of fencing to make room for the future Bigler House relocation, relocation of the children’s garden and development of the community vegetable / herb garden, relocation of the Bridge Department garage, removal of the existing trailer, improvements to the existing woodlot trail, and lawn seeding.

### **PHASE II - \$ 543,332**

The second phase of construction at Munnell Run Farm should include removals of the silos, barn foundation (partial), and block shed north of the existing Bridge Department garage; construction of two parking lots, including two (2) accessible parking spaces and bus parking spaces and turnaround, north of the existing gravel lane; construction of the ADA-

accessible walking loop path encircling the future Bigler House location; earthwork; renovations of the existing twelve-bay garage (Farmer’s Market) and existing machinery barn (Rural Life Museum), and purchase of plants for the community gardens, and lawn seeding.

### **PHASE III - \$ 291,700**

Phase III construction should consist of: removals of the smokestack at the boiler house, abandoned farm equipment, the water tower, and barbed wire pasture fencing along the south side of the existing gravel lane to the west of Munnell Run; construction of a portion of the gravel entrance road extending to the relocated Bridge Department garage, along with a parking lot including one accessible parking space; earthwork; construction of the unpaved wagon trail, rustic amphitheater, and farm-scale composting facilities; renovations to the two-bay garage; relocation of the Bigler House onto the Farm site; construction of the poultry coop; and lawn seeding.

### **PHASE IV - \$ 404,152**

The focus of Phase IV construction should be the renovation of the existing laundry building into the Value-Added Agriculture facility and Commercial Kitchen. Other items include: gravel paving for a portion of the entrance road along with parking lots including two (2) accessible spaces, concrete walkways, and earthwork.

### **PHASE V - \$ 171,902**

The emphasis of Phase V construction should be the completion of the Farm entrance road and other facilities or improvements associated with a Farm visitor’s experience upon entering the Farm site. Other items to be included in this phase are: a parking lot containing one accessible parking space, the site entrance sign, fencing, earthwork, seeding for the proposed display pasture, and fruit tree plantings for the proposed orchard.

### **PHASE VI - \$ 349,796**

The sixth phase of construction at Munnell Run Farm should consist of earthwork, gravel paving, signage, concrete walkways, construction of the retention pond, bank barn renovations, construction of the proposed animal display barn and wind energy conversion

system, and installation of the honey production facility (bee hives), and area security lighting.

## **PHASE VII - \$ 907,618**

The seventh phase of construction is considerably more costly than other phases because it contains the construction of the proposed 4,250-square-foot office building / welcome center. Items associated with this structure's construction include: removal of the remaining portion of the barn foundation; two accessible parking spaces with signage; concrete walks and stairs; and earthwork. The office / welcome center facility was planned in later phases because the Mercer County Conservation District has existing offices on the site in an existing house on the eastern portion of the Woodland Place property, and because the funds necessary for construction of the proposed facility may take more time to raise than funding for other facilities.

## **PHASE VIII - \$ 289,262**

The eighth and final proposed phase of construction should focus on renovations to the existing boiler house into a Machine Shop. This will include removal of most interior machinery and the addition of garage doors on the lower level (western side). Related improvements that should accompany the renovation of the boiler house are earthwork and concrete sidewalks.

These estimates were based on the assumption that the implementation of the facilities will occur through a public bidding process, utilizing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's 2005 Prevailing Wage Rates. However, volunteer labor, as well as donated equipment and materials, may dramatically reduce construction costs. In addition, the MRFF, Inc. may pursue the construction of some of the proposed facilities utilizing the Cool Spring Township or Mercer County Public Works Departments. It is anticipated that this would also reduce the projected construction costs. Additionally, alternate sources of funding, including grant opportunities identified herein, may help to offset the expense to the MRFF, Inc.

Also, the Master Site Plan assists the MRFF in planning for the operation, maintenance, and management of the Farm by recommending a variety

of programs and partnerships that can help save costs and/or bring revenue to the Farm.

## **SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES -**

### **ONE TO THREE YEARS**

Based on the input received during this study, and the resulting recommendations of this plan, we recommend that the MRFF begin the master site plan by following the short-term implementation strategies outlined below, in addition to Phase I construction tasks.

- Officially adopt this Master Plan, as a resolution of the MRFF Board of Directors, as the guide for the development of improvements to Munnell Run Farm.
- Retain a consultant to prepare design development documents for all proposed Farm improvements, and prepare construction documents for Phase I improvements.
- Retain a consultant to prepare and submit an NPDES Permit application to the Mercer County Conservation District Office.
- The MRFF should work with local community groups, scouting organizations, local vocational schools, and surrounding school districts to construct smaller improvements to the Farm (signage, fencing, gardens, etc.)
- Bid and construct Phase I improvements as mentioned previously.

In addition to these activities, the MRFF must continue its effort to raise the funds necessary for construction of Phase I and begin preparing implementation strategies for future phases.

**INSERT FINAL MASTER PLAN**

# CHAPTER 1

## BACKGROUND DATA



## PROJECT INTRODUCTION

In 2004, the Munnell Run Farm Foundation, Inc. (MRFF) applied to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) for a grant to fund the preparation of a Master Site Plan for the Mercer County-owned Munnell Run Farm. The grant was received and subsequently the MRFF retained Pashek Associates to prepare the Master Site Plan.

A Master Site Plan provides the MRFF and the Mercer County Conservation District with the framework for making decisions regarding the development of facilities to meet the educational, agricultural, and commercial needs of Munnell Run Farm and its visitors.

The process of master planning includes analyzing natural features such as topography, hydrology, soils, and vegetation, as well as working with interested citizens to form policies for development. This multi-layered approach, involving the Mercer County community and its decision-makers, along with the MRFF, yields both short- and long-term strategies for facility development. It is important to note that the Master Plan developed as a part of this study is meant to be a flexible tool for planning. Specific details of the design and the final locations of facilities may be adjusted throughout the design process.

A thoughtfully-developed master plan should identify ways to maximize educational, agricultural, and commercial opportunities with the most efficient use of resources. For example, existing facilities are re-used wherever possible to reduce new development costs, and prevent unnecessary disturbance of land. Likewise, careful planning can reduce operating and maintenance expenses. Therefore, efforts are made throughout the plan to identify improvements to the farm that are feasible and affordable to the County and the MRFF.

## STUDY FORMAT

The master planning process involves a number of steps, including:

- o Analyzing community- and facility-related background information;
- o Establishing goals and objectives for farm development;
- o Encouraging public participation through study committee meetings and public input sessions;
- o Preparing an inventory of existing site facilities and conditions;
- o Conducting a site analysis of natural and cultural resources;
- o Determining the county and regional needs for agricultural and environmental education;
- o Preparing a master site development plan for the farm;
- o Estimating construction costs;



- o Preparing a phased capital improvement plan; and
- o Identification of implementation strategies to finance the capital improvement plan.

## STUDY GOAL

Early on in the planning process, the study committee developed a general goal for the master site plan. This goal was to increase public awareness and interest in the farm through marketing and development of new facilities, in addition to offering education focusing on sustainable agriculture for the benefit of the agricultural community, school groups, and the community at large.

## BENEFITS OF AGRICULTURE AND ECOLOGY EDUCATION

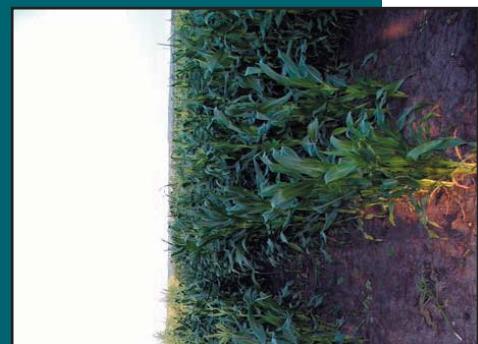
Agriculture plays a critical role in the economy and quality of life in Mercer County, as it has done in years past. In addition to fueling the local economy, agriculture preserves a portion of the cultural heritage of the County, and in-turn promotes community pride. Mercer County is one of the top agricultural counties in Pennsylvania, with over 1,000 farms (166,000 total acres) producing over \$58 million annually in dairy products, nursery and greenhouse crops, beef products, and various grains.

To be sustainable, agriculture must be ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially responsible. Sound soil and water conservation practices on farms, including sustainable forestry practices, benefit the environment through cleaner streams and lakes, safer groundwater, and more abundant wildlife habitat. A profitable farm is less dependent on federal farm policy and less susceptible to the pressures of urban sprawl. Agriculture can provide the surrounding community with nutrient-rich locally produced foods that can reconnect farmers with consumers.

Children and adults in and outside of the local agricultural community need to be made aware of the importance of agriculture in the community, the costs of producing food for our tables, and benefits of sustainable farming. This will help to ensure training of a future generation of farmers, the education of future consumers, and development of opportunities and economic incentives for local farms. All of these are critical to the growth of the sustainable food market, the preservation of agricultural lands, the quality of the environment, and health of the community.

## INTRODUCTION TO MERCER COUNTY

Mercer County is located in western Pennsylvania about 65 miles north of





Pittsburgh, and is also within one-hour driving time from the cities of Erie, Pennsylvania, and Cleveland, Ohio. Comprised of an area of 683 square miles, the County shares its western border with the State of Ohio. The County is also bounded by Crawford County to the north; Venango and Butler Counties to the east; and Lawrence County to the south. Mercer County also encompasses 31 Townships, 14 Boroughs, and the Cities of Sharon, Hermitage, and Farrell.

In 1800, Mercer County was created as an act of the general assembly of its three established counties (church districts). The County was originally divided into four townships, with others being founded and divided throughout the first half of the 19th century. The first county courthouse was built in 1807, and Mercer County played an integral role in the development of the Erie Extension Canal that connected the Ohio River with Lake Erie. In 1850, three townships were ceded to Lawrence County to the south, creating the current county boundary.

Mercer County is a rural community with several pockets of urban development in its various boroughs and cities. Commercial development, with the exception of agriculture, is concentrated around major transportation corridors. The main influences to the growth and development of the County were canal and river freight (iron and coal), rail transportation, and major roadway access. Hospitals have been among the major employers in the County throughout its history. State Route 18 is a main commercial corridor, passing through the City of Hermitage and the Borough of Greensville, traversing the county north-to-south in its western half. Six different state routes converge in Mercer Borough from all directions. There are also two major interstate highways intersecting in Mercer County: I-79 provides access to and from Erie to the North and Pittsburgh and West Virginia to the South. I-80, which spans the entire continental U.S. from east to west, intersects I-79 in Southeastern Mercer County. These routes have played pivotal roles in the growth of shopping, hotels, and other commercial development in municipalities such as Grove City Borough, and the cities of Sharon and Hermitage.

By taking a drive in any direction through just about any area of Mercer County, one can easily witness a county-wide commitment to agriculture. Mercer County promotes its agricultural heritage through a variety of related organizations, such as the Agricultural Development Council. Formed in 1983, its purpose is to promote agricultural development and rural conservation, and to inform residents of the importance of agriculture in their County. In addition, the heritage of agriculture is promoted through such programs as the annual country tour, agriculture career days, farmers' markets, agriculture land preservation programs, and educational programs. A large



consumer base is available to agribusiness owners in Mercer County, as it is within a 500-mile radius of over 40% of the population in the United States and Canada.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

From 1980 to 2000, Mercer County was in a period of slight decline with a steadily decreasing population, as shown in the table below. Over this period, the population decreased by 8,006 people, from 128,299 in 1980 to 120,293 in 2000, representing a 6.24% decrease. The majority of this decrease took place between 1980 and 1990, when the population dropped from 128,299 to 121,003 (-5.69%). The lesser population decrease from 1990 to 2000 (710 people) represents a 0.59% decrease.

<i>Mercer County Population (per U.S. Census Data)</i>			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Change (Persons)</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
1980	128,299	--	--
1990	121,003	-7,296	-5.69%
2000	120,293	-710	-0.69%

Despite the decreasing population, the total number of households in Mercer County increased from 44,657 in 1980 to 46,712 in 2000. This change represents a 4.60% increase. This indicates a decline in the number of persons per household, which declined from 2.87 in 1980 to 2.57 in 2000. The chart below reflects the number of persons in households, organized by relationship to the householder.

<i>Mercer County Household Relationships (2000 Census)</i>		
<i>Relationship to Householder</i>	<i>Number of Persons</i>	<i>Percentage of Population</i>
Householder	46,712	38.8%
Spouse	25,609	21.3%
Child	33,638	28.0%
Other Relative	4,083	3.4%
Non-Relative	3,889	3.2%
Group Quarters	6,362	5.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120,293</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Age distribution among the Mercer County population shifted from 1980 to 2000. The percentage of the population under the age of 18 decreased from



26.73% to 23.43% while those age 65 and older increased from 13.00% to 18.07%. The percentage of the population ages 19-64 remained the same during the same time frame, comprising 60.27% of the population in 1980 and 58.50% in 2000. The number of young people in the County is declining and the number of senior citizens is increasing. The steady percentage of middle-aged people indicates that a steady amount of families are moving into the County. If these trends continue, the need for family-oriented recreational and /or learning opportunities will remain constant, and the need for senior recreational and /or learning opportunities will increase slightly.

## **RELATED FACILITIES SYSTEM**

The recommendations of this study are intended to provide the optimal level of service to Mercer County residents and other visitors to the Farm. In order to determine the appropriate direction of recommendations, recreational, agricultural, and educational opportunities that are available (or not available) in the County and the surrounding region must be understood. This system of related facilities must then be compared to demand, which is based on the region's population and the proximity of potential Farm visitors.

Some traditional active- and passive-recreational parks will be considered in the study because they may include facilities similar to those at Munnell Run Farm, although more emphasis will be given to facilities offering agricultural or environmental education opportunities within the Western Pennsylvania / Eastern Ohio, Southwestern New York region.

## **REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTERS**

Because the majority of traditional recreational parks do not offer activities and programs similar to those currently or yet-to-be offered at Munnell Run Farm, proximity to those parks and their facilities were not considered during this study. Instead, related facilities offering programs and activities involving environmental education and / or sustainable agriculture were taken into account due to their greater significance to the project.

Environmental education centers are one type of related facility. These facilities are usually included in state parks, or are operated by some level of state, county, or local government, much like the Mercer County Conservation District operates Munnell Run Farm. Size and extent of programming for each facility varies greatly, depending on population base and available resources. Because this type of facility may be few-and-far-between, a driving-time use radius of 1-1/2 hours (approximately 75 miles) was used to determine the possible area of service to the farm. This area covers the northern half of Western Pennsylvania, as well as parts of Southeastern New York and Eastern



Ohio. The following facilities were included in that area.

#### **Frick Environmental Center**

This rustic building is located in Frick Woods Nature Reserve in upper Frick Park in the City of Pittsburgh (Allegheny County), approximately 70 miles from Munnell Run Farm. The entrance is near the corner of Beechwood Boulevard and Forbes Avenue. The 150 acre reserve offers a variety of gardens filled with native plants in its meadows and woodlands. The extensive trail system is used by the Center staff as a resource for educational programs and by the public for nature walks. School group trips are offered, as are college student intern positions for various interests.

One special event offered at the Frick Center is the Maple Days Festival, a four day event held in March for preschool through fifth grade school groups. Children travel in groups to demonstration sites that include visits with a Native American, a pioneer, and a modern sugar farmer. Other activities include hands-on tree-tapping with an auger, a touch table filled with sugaring supplies, a stage show with Ms. Maple demonstrating photosynthesis, and the opportunity to taste real maple syrup. Special age-appropriate slide shows are shown for the younger and older students.

#### Contact Information:

Frick Environmental Center  
2005 Beechwood Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217  
Phone: (412) 422-6538  
Website: [www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/parks/html/the\\_frick\\_center.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/parks/html/the_frick_center.html)



#### **Rachel Carson Homestead**

The historic Rachel Carson Homestead is located in the Allegheny River community of Springdale (Allegheny County), near the intersection of the Pennsylvania Turnpike (PA 76) and Route 28, approximately 68 miles from Munnell Run Farm. The mission of the Rachel Carson Homestead Association is to preserve, restore, and interpret Rachel Carson's birthplace and childhood home; and to design and implement education programs and resources in keeping with her environmental ethic. Programs offered are aimed at instilling in children a "sense of wonder" about the natural world around them. Programs include:

- Guided Tours
- Badge Workshops for Scouting Groups in Ecology, Eco-Action, and Outdoor Surroundings
- Hosting of School Group Field Trips
- Outreach Program (visiting schools) to explore a variety of nature topics
- Teacher Packets, providing background material and resources to integrate Rachel Carson's ideals into their respective classroom curriculums



- Self-guided Wild Creatures Nature Trail with interpretive signage and historical information
- Rachel Carson Trail (34-mile strenuous hiking trail), offering views of Allegheny River

Contact Information:

Rachel Carson Homestead

Phone: (724) 274-5459

E-mail: [carsonhomestead@verizon.net](mailto:carsonhomestead@verizon.net)

Website: <http://www.rachelcarsonhomestead.org>

**Raccoon Creek State Park**

Raccoon Creek State Park features 7,572 acres of land, and is located in southern Beaver County, approximately 75 miles from Munnell Run Farm. The park can be accessed from the west on US 22 and US 30, or from the north and south on PA 18, which passes directly through the park.

Facilities at the park are a mix from the early Civilian Conservation Corps camp to modern facilities. Recreation opportunities in Raccoon State Park include camping, fishing, boating, and hiking trails. The park also boasts a 9-month per year DCNR Environmental Education and Interpretive Program (one of twenty state-wide), offering outdoor environmental education programs for school groups. This center, along with other centers in other state parks under the same program, aims to develop a citizenry that is aware of and concerned about the total environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, attitude, motivations, commitment and skills to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current environmental problems and the prevention of new ones.

Contact Information:

Raccoon Creek State Park

3000 State Route 18

Hookstown, PA 15050-9416

Phone: (724) 899-2200

Manager: Gene Hart

E-mail: [raccooncreeksp@state.pa.us](mailto:raccooncreeksp@state.pa.us)

Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/raccooncreek.aspx>

**Jennings Environmental Education Center**

This facility is located near the intersection of State Routes 8, 173, and 528 in northern Butler County, approximately 27 miles from Munnell Run Farm. The Center is accessible from State Route 528 (Prospect Road).

Jennings Environmental Education Center is one of several state parks





specifically dedicated to provide environmental education and interpretation to the community. The Center boasts a year-round DCNR Environmental Education and Interpretive Program. A variety of programs are available for children, teachers, and the general public that increase knowledge and awareness of the beauty and importance of our natural resources.

Programming is offered year-round to schools, civic groups, and the community. Educational programs are age-specific and generate learning through discovery and a hands-on approach. The respective program age groups are described below:

Pre-school - These programs combine sensory awareness, discovery learning, storytelling, and nature crafts to help preschoolers learn and experience their environment during each season.

Elementary - (grades K-5) - Children are actively involved in the environment around them. Emphasis is placed on the student's imagination and the power of observation.

Intermediate - (6-8) - Programs are centered on exploring the environment using a scientific approach. Students are responsible for collecting and analyzing data.

Secondary - (9-12) - Programs emphasize critical thinking and problem solving skills while fostering an appreciation for the environment. Jennings offers Watershed Education and other programs on topics like acid mine drainage, problem solving and biodiversity.

College - Several programs are offered for students with a wide range of backgrounds. Internship opportunities are available for students seeking degrees in environmental education, resource management, biology and other related fields.

Teacher Training - A variety of natural history and curricula workshops are available to teachers. These workshops are designed to provide information and ideas that can easily be integrated into the classroom.

Special Events - Special programming, on a variety of topics, includes maple sugaring, environmental scout day and earth week.

Special Populations - Students with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities participate in programs adapted to meet their special needs.

Public Interpretive Programs - Community programs present various environmental topics in an informative and entertaining way through slide presentations, trail walks and public workshops. A schedule of community



programs is available at the center.

A unique attraction at Jennings is its 20-acre relict prairie, which includes the spectacular and well-known prairie flower, the blazing star. Jennings was the first reserve established in Pennsylvania to protect an individual plant species and remains the only public and protected prairie in the Commonwealth. The relict prairie ecosystem is rare in Pennsylvania. During late July or early August the prairie is in full bloom, and is accessible via the Center's trail system.

Contact Information:

Jennings Environmental Education Center

2951 Prospect Rd.

Slippery Rock, PA 16057-8701

Phone: (724) 794-6011

Manager: David Johnson

E-mail: [jenningsp@state.pa.us](mailto:jenningsp@state.pa.us)

Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/jennings.aspx>

**Moraine State Park**

Moraine State Park is located near the Boroughs of Portersville and Prospect in Western Butler County, approximately 28 miles from Munnell Run Farm. The park is accessible from U.S. Route 422, PA State Routes 8 and 528, and along several local roads.

The park operates a 3-month per year DCNR Environmental Education and Interpretive Center, open primarily during summer months. Activities include pontoon boat tours of the lake.

Other park facilities include a system of hiking trails, a biking trail, seven picnic shelters of various sizes, casual picnic areas, organized group tent-camping, 13,600 acres of designated hunting areas, and the 3,225-acre Lake Arthur, an outstanding warm-water fishery that hosts canoe and boat rentals, a private marina, several public boat launches, and swimming areas. Winter activities such as snowmobile-riding, sledding, ice-skating, and ski-sailing are also available in the park.

Contact Information:

Moraine State Park

225 Pleasant Valley Rd.

Portersville, PA 16051-9650

Phone: (724) 368-8811

Manager: Obie Derr

E-mail: [morainesp@state.pa.us](mailto:morainesp@state.pa.us)

Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/moraine.aspx>



### **Cook Forest State Park**

Cook Forest State Park is located along on State Route 36 in Cooksburg, PA (Clarion, Forest, and Jefferson Counties), a 65-mile drive from Munnell Run Farm. State Route 36 passes directly through the park and provides primary access points to park facilities, which include 29 miles of hiking trails, an 11.5-mile bike route along one-way unpaved roads, rental cabins, picnic areas, organized tent-camping areas, fishing and canoeing areas, and an area of old-growth forest known as the Forest Cathedral.

The park houses a 3-month DCNR Environmental Education and Interpretive Program offering guided trail walks and outdoor classroom sessions at an amphitheater during summer weekends. A weekly interpretive schedule is available at the park office. The environmental learning center is located in the Log Cabin Inn at the Main Picnic Area. The Historical Room displays logging and rafting tools, models and artifacts.

A unique park facility is the Sawmill Craft Center and Theatre. A local, non-profit craft organization housed in the historic sawmill offers traditional crafts on display, a gift shop and classes. Demonstrations and classes on various crafts are presented throughout the summer and fall seasons for children and adults. The Verna Leith Sawmill Theater seats 180 people and presents plays, musicals and other entertainment throughout the summer season.

#### Contact Information:

Cook Forest State Park  
PO Box 120  
Cooksburg, PA 16217-0120  
Phone: (814) 744-8407  
Manager: Marcia Gordon  
E-mail: [cookforestsp@state.pa.us](mailto:cookforestsp@state.pa.us)  
Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/cookforest.aspx>

### **Clear Creek State Park**

Clear Creek State Park encompasses over 1,675 acres in Jefferson County. The park occupies a scenic portion of the Clear Creek Valley from PA 949 to the Clarion River. The park is accessible from State Route 949 which stems from State Route 36. The drive to the park from Munnell Run Farm encompasses approximately 69 miles.

The park has a 3-month per year DCNR Environmental Education and Interpretive Program. During the summer months, an environmental educator presents guided walks, hands-on activities and evening campfire programs in the camping area, and is also available to explain and interpret the natural



phenomena of the park. A visitor center with logging and nature exhibits is open from spring through fall months. The Ox Shoe Self-guiding Historical Trail, allows hikers to discover the logging history of the Black Forest of Pennsylvania during a one-hour leisurely walk.

Other recreational facilities include rental cabins and yurts, tent- and trailer-camping sites, canoe rentals, hunting, fishing, swimming, 25 miles of trails including a 1/2-mile exercise trail, picnic areas, and winter activities such as sledding / tobogganing and cross-country skiing.

**Contact Information:**

Clear Creek State Park  
38 Clear Creek State Park Road  
Sigel, PA 15860-9502  
Phone: (814) 752-2368  
Manager: Marcia Gordon  
E-mail: [clearcreeksp@state.pa.us](mailto:clearcreeksp@state.pa.us)  
Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/clearcreek.aspx>

**Northfork Environmental Education Center (NEEC)**

The NEEC is located near the town of Brookville, PA (Jefferson County), a 67-mile drive from the Munnell Run Farm site. The Center, located in the 100-acre Dr. Walter Dick Memorial Park in Brookville, is accessible from Waterplant Road, which stems from State Route 322 (also State Route 28).

Programming at the NEEC includes summer camps for youth during June, July, and August, professional development opportunities for teachers and youth leaders year-round, and weekend workshops during the spring, summer, and fall. Subjects include water quality, aquatic resources, wildlife conservation, and land conservation. The Northfork Conservancy has set up a land trust that offers concerned citizens an opportunity to preserve and protect wild and scenic places in and around Jefferson County through the implementation of land conservation measures such as conservation easements, bargain sales, and donations of undeveloped land.

**Contact Information:**

Northfork Conservancy  
Waterplant Road  
Brookville, Pa. 15825  
Phone: (814) 849-5260  
Website: [www.homestead.com/northforkconservancy/index.html](http://www.homestead.com/northforkconservancy/index.html)

**Pymatuning State Park**

Pymatuning State Park is located in southwestern Crawford County. The park office is located near the Crawford-Mercer County line about 1.5 miles north



of Jamestown, Pennsylvania. Approximately three-fourths of the reservoir area is located in Crawford County and the remaining one-fourth is located in Ashtabula County, Ohio. The park office is a short drive (approximately 22 miles) from Munnell Run Farm. From the east and west the park is accessible by US 6, US 322, PA 18, PA 285 and PA 58.

Pymatuning is one of the largest state parks in the Commonwealth. The large lake provides excellent fishing, swimming, and boating throughout the year. Rental Cabins, a wildlife management area open to controlled hunts, and winter activities such as sledding and skating are among other activities offered at the park.

This State Park also offers a wide variety of environmental education and interpretive programs throughout the year. Through hands-on activities, guided walks and evening programs, participants gain appreciation, understanding, and develop a sense of stewardship toward natural and cultural resources. Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and youth groups. Teacher workshops are available.

Pymatuning has two natural areas. Blackjack Swamp consists of 725 acres and provides habitat for unique natural communities. In the northern part of the lake is Clark Island which has 161 acres of mature hardwood and white pine forest. Visitors are welcome to explore these undeveloped natural areas.

**Contact Information:**

Pymatuning State Park  
2660 Williams Field Road  
Jamestown, PA 16134  
Phone: (724) 932-3141  
Manager: Pete Houghton  
E-mail: [pymatuningsp@state.pa.us](mailto:pymatuningsp@state.pa.us)  
Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/pymatuning.aspx>

**Asbury Woods Nature Center**

The Asbury Woods Nature Center is located just north of Interstate 90 in Erie, PA (Erie County), approximately 70 miles from the Munnell Run Farm site. The Center's new classroom building, which houses the Center's offices, is accessible via Asbury Road, which stems from Sterrettania Road (State Route 832), off of I-90.

Asbury Woods is a 200-acre tract of wetlands, trails, forests, streams, fields and historic properties. With five distinct natural and recreational areas (listed below), Asbury Woods is one of the premier environmental centers in northwestern Pennsylvania.



- Asbury Woods Nature Center (a restored, modernized 70-year old cottage with classrooms and laboratory);
- Asbury Community Park (offers traditional active and passive recreation);
- Brown's Farm (renovated barn classroom offering environmental education programs focused on watersheds, agriculture, history, and land use; along with an environmentally-sound porous paving parking lot);
- Greenway Trail (4.5 miles for jogging, hiking, and fishing access to Walnut Creek);
- James Wildlife Preserve.

Asbury Woods offers a diverse array of activities and programs, from hiking and mountain biking in the summer to cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter. Each year, Asbury Woods hosts more than 90 different public programs, such as nature camps, summer camps, themed hikes, creek clean-up days, gardening classes, beekeeping workshops, beginner's dulcimer lessons, and barn dances. In addition, annual events such as the Maple Syrup Festival, Autumn Fest (hayrides, etc.), National Trails Day (trail clean-up and construction), and Winter Wonderland (music, refreshments, festivities) are offered to individuals and families of all ages.

Contact Information:

Asbury Woods  
4105 Asbury Road  
Erie, PA 16506  
Phone: (814) 835-5356  
Fax: (814) 835-5653 Fax  
Website: [www.asburywoods.org](http://www.asburywoods.org)

**Oil Creek State Park**

Oil Creek State Park is situated between the Drake Well Museum and Titusville, PA to the north, and Oil City, PA four miles to the south, in Venango County. The main entrance to the park is off of PA State Route 8, one mile north of the Borough of Rouseville. Oil Creek State Park is approximately 42 miles from Munnell Run Farm.

The primary purpose of the park is to tell the story of the changing landscape. The early petroleum industry's oil boom towns and important oil well sites are in contrast with clean trout streams and forested hillsides seen today throughout the park. The events of the exciting 1860s, the time of the original oil boom, receive special emphasis.

Displays and programs are at Petroleum Centre, the focal point of the early oil boom.



Other facilities include picnic areas, canoeing, and fishing along Oil Creek and its tributaries. Over 6,250 acres are also open to hunting, trapping, and dog-training.

The park has a 9-month per year (early spring through late fall) DCNR Environmental Education and Interpretive Program. The Wildcat Hollow Outdoor Classroom is for use by school groups. Near Petroleum Centre, the facility includes a bus parking lot, picnic pavilion, restrooms, activity field and four theme trails, including: Wetlands Trail (one mile); Geology Trail (one mile); Oil History Trail (0.25 miles); Forestry Trail (0.25 miles).

**Contact Information:**

Oil Creek State Park  
305 State Park Road  
Oil City, PA 16301-9733  
814-676-5915

Manager: Holly Best  
E-mail: [oilcreeksp@state.pa.us](mailto:oilcreeksp@state.pa.us)  
Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/oilcreek.aspx>

**McConnell's Mill State Park**

The 2,546-acre McConnell's Mill State Park is situated on the Slippery Rock Creek, near the intersections of State Route 19 and U.S. Route 422 in Lawrence County. The park is approximately 26 miles from Munnell Run Farm and is accessed by McConnell's Mill Road stemming from U.S. Route 422, and by Johnson Road stemming from State Route 19.

Recreational opportunities in the park include hiking trails of various difficulty, some with views of the scenic glacier-carved Slippery Rock Creek Gorge.

The park also offers camping, picnicking, and rappelling areas, hunting and trapping, whitewater rafting, and fishing. Swimming is prohibited due to swift water.

McConnell's Mill also has a DCNR Environmental Education and Interpretive Program that operates for 3 months each year. Guided tours of the restored gristmill are available from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Off-season tours are available by appointment. Guided nature walks are conducted every Saturday and Sunday during the summer season. A variety of topics, settings and subjects are discussed and explored. The glacial formation and history of the gorge are discussed in DCNR Bureau of Topographical and Geological Survey and Bureau of State Parks publications.



One special event at the park is the McConnell's Mill Heritage Festival. Held on the third or fourth weekend in September, the festival celebrates the operational era of the Old Mill (1852-1928). Visitors can witness artisans and craftspeople at work and try old-time games and crafts. Other activities include mill tours, corn grinding demonstrations, musical entertainment, a Civil War encampment and food vendors.

Contact Information:

McConnell's Mill State Park  
RR 2 Box 16  
Portersville, PA 16051-9401  
Phone: (724) 368-8091  
Manager: Obie Derr  
E-mail: morainesp@state.pa.us  
Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/mcconnellsmill.aspx>

**McKeever Environmental Learning Center**

The McKeever Center is immediately adjacent to and shares facilities with the 2,856-acre Maurice K. Goddard State Park in Northeastern Mercer County. The park is approximately 13 miles from Munnell Run Farm, and is accessible via local roads that stem from State Route 358, off of I-79.

The main facility at Maurice K. Goddard State Park is the 1,860-acre Lake Wilhelm, which is open to fishing, boating, and swimming. Abundant wetlands, old fields and mature forests conserved around the lake provide a diversity of habitats for wildlife, especially waterfowl, eagles, and ospreys.

Other recreational opportunities include three public boat launches, a marina, several large picnic areas, casual picnic areas with tables, a 12-mile paved bike trail, hunting and trapping, as well as winter activities such as sledding, ice-skating, ice-fishing, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling.

The ten buildings comprising the McKeever Center are folded into a 205-acre natural wooded parcel adjacent to the park, and offer a wide variety of interpretive and educational programs year-round. The Center is administered by Slippery Rock University of PA through the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Programs focusing on interrelationships and diversity within the planet's environs, as well as the importance of human understanding of and impact on these systems, are offered to school students from elementary school to middle school / junior high school age. Hands-on activities, outdoor programs, and traditional classroom lecture sessions are utilized. Length of programs ranges from 4-5 hours to 5 days / 4 nights.

The McKeever Center also has approximately 4 miles of hiking / walking





trails offering access to the nearby park and the various plant communities within the McKeever property. Other facilities include two houses built with environmentally friendly methods, available as rentals for group or business retreats. Buildings contained within McKeever Center include offices, a 186-seat auditorium, a 20-person conference room, 3 lodges with a total capacity for 150 people, a dining hall, and an outdoor amphitheater / classroom with capacity for 100 people.

Contact Information:

Maurice K. Goddard State Park

684 Lake Wilhelm Rd.

Sandy Lake, PA 16145-8715

phone: (724) 253-4833

Manager: Donald E. Campbell

E-mail: goddardsp@state.pa.us

Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/mauricekgoddard.aspx>

McKeever Environmental Learning Center

55 McKeever Lane

Sandy Lake, PA 16145

phone: (724) 376-1000

fax: (724) 376-8235

E-mail: info@mckeever.org

Website: <http://www.mckeever.org/>

**TAMPEEL Environmental Education Center**

Located in Warren, OH (Trumbull County), the Trumbull Area Multi-purpose Environmental Education Lab (TAMPEEL) is a Trumbull County Educational Service Center (TCESC) program that provides outdoor science experiences to students in grades 5 and above throughout Trumbull County. Students from 17 school districts learn about the environment through authentic hands-on experiences during three days of instruction. Students have access to wetland areas, a pond, field areas, forested tracts with trails, and a pavilion.

The TAMPEEL is approximately 37 miles from Munnell Run Farm, and is accessible via local roads stemming from U.S. Route 422 in Warren.

Contact Information:

Trumbull County Educational Service Center

347 N. Park Ave.

Warren, OH 44481

Brice Harris, Supervisor of Science and TAMPEEL Program

TCESC Supervisor

Phone: (330) 675-2800 ext 120

Fax: (330) 675-2814



Email: brice.harris@neomin.org

Website: <http://www.trumbull.k12.oh.us/Parents/Tampeel/default.htm>

### **REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION FACILITIES**

Although many environmental education centers are located with the 75-mile use radius developed for this project, very few place emphasis on agriculture. The following facilities vary in size from the Munnell Run Farm, and some are outside of the normal use radius, but still must be considered during this project due to their similarity to Munnell Run Farm in terms of existing facilities and programming goals. In effect, all working farms, whether instituting educational programs, could also be considered as related facilities because farmers are potential Munnell Run Farm visitors.

#### **Robert A. Macoskey Center for Sustainable Systems Education and Research**

The Robert A. Macoskey Center at Slippery Rock University is a renovated farm house and surrounding 83-acres facility that serves as a demonstration and research site for the Master of Sustainable Systems degree program. In operation since 1990, the Macoskey Center promotes sustainability through demonstration, education, and research. Several educational programs are offered, including an Earth Festival and Sustainable Living Workshops. Educational facilities have also been constructed, such as the outdoor garden classroom and interpretive trail. Sustainable technologies implemented in the design of the Macoskey Center include:

- Municipal-scale Composting
- Organic Gardening and Farming
  - hands-on experience for school groups
  - provision of produce for the Macoskey Center-managed Slippery Rock Farmers' Market
- Renewable Energy and Green Building Strategies
  - passive solar principles
  - local and natural materials
  - minimal use of non-renewable resources)

#### **Contact Information:**

The Macoskey Center at SRU

247 Harmony Road

Slippery Rock, PA 16057

Phone: (724) 738-4050

E-mail: [macoskey.center@sru.edu](mailto:macoskey.center@sru.edu)

Website: <http://www.sru.edu/pages/756.asp>



### **Mahoning Farm**

The 275-acre Mahoning Farm is located on Ohio State Route 46 in Canfield, OH (Mahoning County) and is approximately 37 miles from Munnell Run Farm. Mahoning Farm is the agricultural component of the Mill Creek MetroPark District, a system of several parks throughout the urbanized sections of the Mahoning Valley.

The farm is leased from Mahoning County and is operated by the Mill Creek MetroPark District. The Ohio State University also designated Mahoning Farm an agricultural research facility and provided ample funding for facility development. Educational facilities at the farm include classrooms, display areas, and McMahon Hall, an all-purpose room with a kitchen and capacity for 250 people. This facility is available as a rental year-round. Additional farm buildings house farm offices, farm machinery, livestock, and antique farm equipment.

#### Contact Information:

Mill Creek MetroPark District  
7574 Columbiana-Canfield Road  
P.O. Box 596  
Canfield, OH 44406  
Phone: (330) 702-3000  
Fax: (330) 702-3010  
Email: [millcreek@cboss.com](mailto:millcreek@cboss.com)  
Website: <http://www.millcreekmetroparks.com/mahoningcounty.htm>



### **Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture**

The Stone Barns Center is an 80-acre organic non-profit farm including gardens, pastures, and forests, with an educational center, greenhouses, and a restaurant, all located in the middle of Westchester County, New York, approximately 30 miles north of New York City.

The farm offers school students in Kindergarten through high school an opportunity to learn the importance of ecological, community-based agriculture, soils, and natural ecosystems through hands-on education programs. Programs involving underlying principles of community-based farming and instructional strategies for incorporation into classroom curriculums are also offered for teachers. School programs may also be customized to meet specific needs. All educational programs are offered year-round.

Stone Barns Center is also home to Blue Hill at Stone Barns, a restaurant that



offers guests a menu full of fresh products from the Center's farm and other farms of the Hudson Valley. Blue Hill at Stone Barns is an exhibit, a classroom, a conservatory, a laboratory, and a garden. The restaurant will reflect the spirit of the farm and the market. The kitchen expresses ideals of the educators, preservationists, farmers, cooks, and servers who learn and work at the Center.

The Stone Barns Center strives to achieve high production and quality through sustainable farming methods, such as intense crop rotation, composting, and symbiotic growth of livestock and plant crops.

Contact Information:

Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture  
630 Bedford Road  
Pocantico Hills, NY 10591  
Phone: (914) 366-6200  
Fax: (914) 366-7905  
E-mail: [info@stonebarnscenter.org](mailto:info@stonebarnscenter.org)  
Website: [www.stonebarnscenter.org](http://www.stonebarnscenter.org)

**Lutherlyn Environmental Education Center**

Lutherlyn Environmental Education Center is a privately operated facility located near Prospect Borough in Butler County, offering K-12 programs in an agricultural setting.

The Lutherlyn Environmental Education Program (LEEP) offers learning adventures for all ages. LEEP is renowned throughout western Pennsylvania for its high quality, science-oriented programs. The programs are based on experiential learning techniques and involve exploring the vast resources available at Lutherlyn, including 640 acres of deciduous forests, coniferous plantations, streams, lakes, wetlands, meadows, fields, sites of Native American activity, a maple sugar shack, sites of early European settlement, and the first straw bale house built in Pennsylvania. Individual programs are focused on subjects such as wildlife behavior, ecosystem studies, geology, local history, life skills of native americans, and environmental stewardship. All activities are hands-on, and are between 1 and 4 hours in duration. Learning field trips can also be customized.

Contact Information:

Lutherlyn Environmental Education Program  
Lutherlyn Camp, Conference, and Retreat Center  
P.O. Box 355  
Prospect, PA 16052  
Phone: (724) 865-9079  
Email: [leep@lutherlyn.com](mailto:leep@lutherlyn.com)



Website: [www.lutherlyn.com](http://www.lutherlyn.com)

## HIERARCHY OF RELATED FACILITY SUMMARY

A summary of the various related facilities in the surrounding region indicates a sufficient number of environmental education centers, with a noticeable deficiency in agriculture-based educational facilities and/or programs. Thus, need to expand and market educational programming that focuses on sustainable agriculture at Munnell Run Farm is confirmed.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Public participation in the design process is important in ensuring that the final master plan is fully supported by local decision-makers and members of the community. The public participation process for the Munnell Run Farm Master Site Plan included several methods of input, including:

- Public Input Sessions
- Key Person Interviews
- Study Committee Meetings

Input received from each of these activities guided the development of the Munnell Run Farm Master Site Plan.

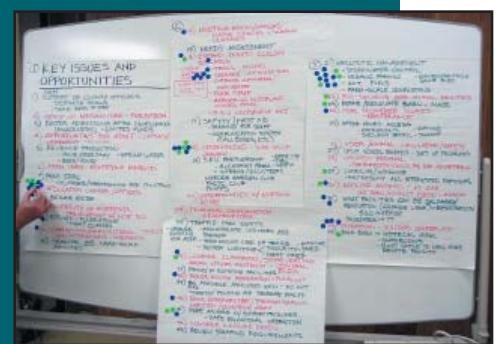
The Munnell Run Farm Foundation (MRFF) appointed a Study Committee to assist with the preparation of the master plan for the Munnell Run Farm. This group represents diverse interests within the community, including local farmers, employees of nearby environmental learning centers, teachers, Conservation District employees, and other members of the community.

Members of the Study Committee held planning meetings before Pashek Associates began the master planning process. The data collected at these meetings was provided for incorporation into this study.

The Study Committee also met four times during the course of the project to guide preparation of the master plan. Members of the committee provided valuable insight and background information on the farm, assistance in determining site-specific deficiencies, evaluation of master plan concepts, input on the design of the final master plan, and a thorough review of the master plan recommendations and implementation strategies.

## **STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING ONE**

On February 23, 2005, the first of four project study committee meetings was held at the Munnell Run Farm classroom building, with the intent of holding





a brainstorming session. This yielded various opportunities, constraints, and a list of desired facilities or activities on the Farm property. During this initial stage of the project, Pashek Associates received valuable input from the Study Committee about the site and its programming that may not have otherwise been considered. A nominal group technique was used, in which each attendee was allowed to express one idea at a time, then the next attendee did the same, until all ideas were exhausted. So that creativity would not be limited, all ideas were considered. Key issues and opportunities listed during the brainstorming session were as follows:

- 1) Animals for farm education/ revenue
  - Chicken coop / breeding
  - Pigs sold in fall
  - Turkey pen (moveable)
  - Ducks
  - Milking areas
- 2) Entrance/access solely for farm (possibly from North)
  - Rt. 258
  - Limited by need for maintenance / money
- 3) Planning for expansion/ flexibility
- 4) Accommodate large groups- support facilities
  - 100+ school groups, etc.
  - Restrooms, shelters, etc.
  - Kitchen to host pot-luck dinners
- 5) Revenue sources/ self-sustainability
  - Ex.- sell spring water
- 6) Hands-on opportunities
  - Kitchen/lab
  - Interact with animals and plants
  - Food production
- 7) Parking for events
  - Bus access/ circulation
  - Hard surfaces
  - Non-continuous parking - provide several smaller lots at different locations throughout property, not one large lot
  - Minimize road surfacing
- 8) Opportunities with trout nursery
  - Educational value
- 9) Oxidation of water for trout - "babbling brook", waterfalls above nursery
- 10) Upgrade existing barn
  - Classroom
- 11) Special events on weekends
  - Year-round



- 12) Classroom/lab space for large numbers
  - Multi-purpose room/movable divisions
  - Lab equipment- sinks
  - Storage
  - Flat work space
  - Stackable chairs/ fixture
  - Digital capability/ Computer-video
- 13) Need signage- main site and individual facilities/ interpretive, directional
- 14) Greenhouse, hoop house, seed exchange (children plant seeds), farm sell trees
  - Community gardens
- 15) Non-auto circulation/ access
  - Golf carts
  - Wagons
  - Bikes
  - Wheelchairs
- 16) Pavilions- outdoor classrooms
  - Family picnics/ rentals
  - Various Sizes
- 17) Composting/ Agriculture education
- 18) Historic farm life presentation
  - Ex.- Bigler House
- 19) Office space/ lunch area/ visitors' center
- 20) Expand solar energy system
  - Lighting
- 21) Other alternative energy sources
- 22) Old well/ water tank/ windmill is a safety issue and eye-sore
- 23) Medical facility for safety
  - Call box/ phone
- 24) Further develop trails in wooded area
  - Orchard
  - Maple sugar
  - Beehives
- 25) Property leased, not owned
  - Grants available on 25 year leases or more
  - Conservation easement preserves current land use forever
- 26) Craft area- weaving, etc.
  - Maybe loft area in barn
    - Benches
    - Tables
    - 24x40+
  - Items can be sold in store
  - Storage/ drying areas



- 27) Accommodate tenant farmer if barn is used for other purposes- separate barn
- 28) Museum in barn- historical society with classroom
- 29) Accommodate geriatric population on site
  - Volunteering
- 30) Working barn should be accessible for learning/ maintenance equipment
- 31) Pond needed- in swale north of classroom
- 32) Farm market- some in Greenville, Jackson Center, Sandy Lake
  - Advertising
- 33) Gift shop for revenue
- 34) Primitive farming demonstrations
- 35) Donor items/ naming rights
- 36) Value-added dairy in laundry building

The Study Committee also gave tentative ideas for sources of key person interviewees. These included any residents, businesses, or organizations that could provide input on the Farm or would have interest in sponsorship of future activities. Contacts identified as possible Key Person Interviewees included:

- Tenant Farmer
- Former Employees of the Farm
- Lions Club
- Rotary Club
- Local Optimists Club
- Mercer County Chamber of Commerce
- Department of Education
- Local Elementary School Principals / Science Teachers
- John Oliver, former DCNR Secretary, Mercer County Landowner
- Slippery Rock University - MS3 Program and Harmony House
- McKeever Environmental Center

### **PUBLIC INPUT SESSION ONE**

The first of two public input sessions was held on March 15, 2005 at the Penn State Cooperative Extension Office on State Route 19 north of Mercer Borough. The meeting was advertised to the public in two public notices published in the Sharon Herald on March 5, 2005, and March 12, 2005. Copies of these notices can be found in the appendices of this report. The goal of this meeting was twofold: 1) to gain input about the site and its programming that may not have been considered thus far; and 2) to spark community interest in the Munnell Run Farm Master Plan.



A brief introduction to the project was given, including progress to date, scope of work, and tentative project schedule. A brainstorming session, similar to that held during the first Study Committee Meeting, was also held. This session identified opportunities, constraints, and a list of desired facilities or activities on the Farm property. A nominal group technique was used, in which each attendee was allowed to express one idea at a time, then the next attendee did the same, until all ideas were exhausted. So that creativity would not be limited, all ideas were considered. Key issues / opportunities listed were as follows:

- 1) Gain support of County officials
  - Definite goals
  - Take ideas to them
- 2) Impact of nursing home- public perception of the farm
- 3) Better advertising after development (awareness)- limited funds is a problem
- 4) Opportunities for adult classes/learning (i.e. quilting)
- 5) Revenue production
  - Value added dairy
  - Bees/ honey
  - Spring Water
- 6) Farm label identifying products
- 7) Farm store
  - Classes/ timber framing for construction of store
- 8) Education center/ offices are needed
- 9) Boiler house is an unknown opportunity
- 10) Diversity of interests
  - Partnership with historical society and other groups
- 11) Working Kitchen/classroom laboratory – Kitchen can aid in fundraising
  - Night classes
- 12) Gardening/ agricultural- composting
  - Demonstrations on weekends
- 13) Seasonal and year-round activities
- 14) Meeting room/ offices
  - Native species landscaping classes
- 15) Needs assessment is required to generate support
- 16) Expand forest ecology education
  - Unique location
  - Trails
  - Benches
  - Signage- self-guided tours
  - Outdoor classroom/ amphitheater
  - Train staff



- Mercer County Woodland Owners Association
- PSU Cooperative Extension

17) Safety/ first aid

- Training for staff
- Communication system (call boxes, etc.)

18) Greenhouses- year-round growing

19) Slippery Rock University Partnership, along with other local colleges

- Grove City
- Thiel
- Westmoreland
- McCoskey Farm
- Interns/ volunteers
- Mercer Garden Club
- Photo Club
- Phipps

20) Opportunities with nursing home

21) Holistic Management is needed

- Storm water control
- Organic Farming
- Alternate fuels
- Farm-scale composting
- Environmentally sound building

22) Bio-security near animal facilities

23) Repair/ renovate barn- image

24) More volunteer sources

- Maintenance

25) After hours access

- Operations
- Gating
- Security patrol- township

26) User/ animal circulation/safety

27) Visit school boards- set up programs

28) Harvest festival

- Instituting a fee for booths - could pay for advertising

29) Liability/ insurance

- Represent all interested partners

30) Explore access- Rt. 258

- See barn/ woodlot as first- image

31) What facilities can be salvaged/ renovation (change uses)- restoration

- Silo- office
- Smokestack

32) First/last impression- visitors center,

33) Barn

- Historical model



- Classrooms
- Move cattle to new, more remote facility

34) Financial coordination

- Grants writing

35) Traffic- farm identity

- Accommodate visitors and farmer
- Upgrade existing A.D.A. Access
- Year-round use of trails
- Motion- ACT
- Better lighting (security timed, night uses)

36) Combine classroom, store, eating areas, offices restroom- central building

37) Phones in existing facilities

38) Bigler House restoration- funding?

39) Facilities need to be done well- or do not build

- Avoid “Stretching” funding and decreasing quality

40) Trail (interpretive) through various habitats/ vegetative areas

41) More animals with support facilities

- Safe, educational interaction

42) Consider wildlife needs

43) Review staffing requirements

Key issues and opportunities listed during the brainstorming session were then prioritized by attendees. Each attendee was given four dot stickers representing votes for facilities or programming needed at the Farm. Attendees were asked to place dots next to the listed facility or programming idea that they felt was most needed or most important. Any amount of votes could be given to any one facility/idea if desired. The facilities receiving the most votes are those with the highest priority according to meeting attendees. Results were as follows (listed from highest to lowest priority):

- 1) Holistic management
  - a. Storm water control
  - b. Organic farming
  - c. Alternate fuels
  - d. Farm-scale composting
  - e. Environmentally sound building
- 2) Education Center/ offices
- 3) Expand forest ecology education
  - a. Unique location
  - b. Trails
  - c. Benches
  - d. Signage- self-guided tours
  - e. Outdoor classroom/ amphitheater



- f. Train staff
- g. Mercer County Woodland Owners Association
- h. PSU Cooperative Extension
- 4) Greenhouses- year-round growing
- 5) Impression- visitors center, etc
- 6) Explore access- Rt. 258
  - a. See barn/ woodlot first- image
- 7) Kitchen- fundraising
  - a. Night classes
- 8) More animals with support facilities
  - a. Safe, educational interaction
- 9) Meeting room/ offices
  - a. Native species landscaping classes
- 10) What facilities can be salvaged/ renovation (change uses)- restoration
  - a. Silo- office
  - b. Smokestack
- 11) Barn
  - a. Historical model
  - b. Classrooms
  - c. Move cattle to new, more remote facility
- 12) Combine classroom, store, eating areas, offices restroom- central building
- 13) Bio-security near animal facilities
- 14) Repair/ renovate barn- image
- 15) More volunteer sources
  - a. Maintenance
- 16) Liability/ insurance
  - a. Represent all interested partners
- 17) Revenue production
  - a. Value-added dairy
  - b. Bees/ honey
  - c. Spring Water
- 18) Gardening/ agricultural- composting
  - a. Demonstrations on weekends
- 19) Traffic- farm identity
  - a. Accommodate visitors and farmer
  - b. Upgrade existing A.D.A. Access
  - c. Year-round use of trails
  - d. Motion- ACT
  - e. Better lighting (security timed, night uses)
- 20) Bigler House restoration- funding?
- 21) Trail (interpretive) through various habitats/ vegetative areas

## STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING TWO



The second study committee meeting was held on April 21, 2005. The objective of this session was to narrow the list of desired facilities so that size and characteristics of facilities on the revised list could be studied in more detail as the design phase of the project began.

Refinement of the list of desired facilities was performed via a site design exercise. Attendees were divided into three design groups, each of which was equipped with a full-size copy of the Site Analysis Plan, as well as markers, tape, etc. Each group was also provided with a series of small slips of paper representing the various desired facilities that were common to the lists that had been compiled at previous meetings.

Each group was instructed to propose as many facilities as they like on the site, and that no idea was too big or small during this exercise. Paper slips representing proposed facilities were not to scale. Several questions were to be considered during placement of facilities. These questions were as follows:

- 1) Why did you locate the facility at that specific spot on the plan?
- 2) What support facilities are needed for this facility (parking, pick-up/drop-off area, bus turnaround, extra storage space, etc.)?
- 3) What facilities benefit from being next to this facility?
- 4) Who will use this facility (example: school groups? tenant farmer? livestock?)? Who will manage the facility?
- 5) Will this facility have any effect on water quality in Munnell Run?
- 6) Will this facility have negative impacts on neighboring properties?
- 7) Will the placement of this facility displace an existing facility on the farm? Will the former facility be replaced (relocated)?

Each group discussed design ideas and the location of facilities on the site. Pashek Associates posed ideas to the group during the exercise, explaining that this was a two-way learning experience. Pashek Associates would learn more about the ideas for facilities that the Study Committee had gathered, and the Study Committee would learn about what happens during the site planning and design process.

Key Points made during each group's presentation of their site plans included, but were not limited to, the following:

**Group 1:**

- Need for Site Identity / More visibility
- Sequence of Experience / Views when visiting farm



- Wagon Trail Access to Hardwood Tree Plantation
- Amphitheater in woodlot
- Composting near woodlot
- New site entrance to the north of Woodland Place Home, site exit to South

**Group 2:**

- Site plan reflects farm if all facility desires were satisfied
- Retail facilities near Rt. 58 at new entrance to South of Woodland Place
- Orchard along Entrance road for better first impression
- Amphitheater in woodlot
- Organic facilities (chemical-free) near Munnell Run
- Single Parking Lot
- Addition of a picnic pavilion

**Group 3:**

- Greater exposure along Route 58 / Higher visibility
- Community Gardens moved near Rt. 58
- New Entrance north of Woodland Place - shortest distance
- Retail Cluster of facilities near Rt. 58
- Use existing buildings for education
- Welcome Center / Office / Classroom / Lab - all one facility or very near each other to make staffing easier
- Cluster other facilities according to use (farming)
- Circuit Trail - Walking/Biking - site loop is 2+ miles (well-suited to family use)

**STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING THREE**

The third study committee meeting was held on May 25, 2005. The objective of the meeting was to present the alternative conceptual master plans, receive feedback on proposed facilities, and learn about re-use or removal of existing facilities. A discussion was held after the presentation of each conceptual master plan. Comments made during that discussion are summarized as follows:

**Conceptual Site Plan Option 'A'**

Draft Master Plan Option 'A' explores the possibility of developing commercial facilities and signage near State Route 58 on the farm's southern parcel, north of the existing hardwood plantation and pasture. This development would



provide Munnell Run Farm with much-needed exposure without requiring any agreements or easements on land not currently owned by Mercer County.

The “working” portion of the farm is clustered in the central portion of the property, among the existing facilities. Facilities related to the functioning farm will be open to educational groups and area farmers who wish to use the facilities. Existing access to this area will be retained via the paved driveway, which passes underneath the Woodland Place building, and also through the existing lane extending east from State Route 258.

Comments made during discussion of this plan option are summarized as follows:

*Positives:*

- Having a cafe and Store in Welcome Center at front of property will expose visitors and other consumers to farm products
- Entrance drive provides nice experience (drive past market, through orchard)
- Having the Public Market near State Route 58 will draw more business - it's an easier stop to make if it's near the road
- Location of compost facility separate from other facilities is good, as is the idea of converting the old composting area into a semi-enclosed space for packaging of compost products
- Using the two-bay garage for a chicken coop is a good idea
- Including bottling, honey production, dairy production, commercial kitchen in the value-added agriculture facility is a good idea
- The Office building being visible from S.R. 58 will draw interest

*Negatives:*

- Larger classroom / meeting room needed (school groups of 120+)
- Staffing is an issue for separate welcome center and office building
- The much-used gazebo will remain, and the Bigler House must be moved to a new location
- The restroom in the office building must be public if there is to be a classroom in the building
- Community Gardens should be moved - drainage problem exists in location shown
- More parking needed for the office building

**Conceptual Site Plan Option ‘B’**

Option ‘B’ explores the development of an entrance road extending from State Route 58 to the central portion of the site, near most of the existing buildings. Consequently, development of new facilities is clustered in and around the



existing facilities rather than on the southern farm parcel. Although this plan option may limit visibility of the site from State Route 58, the proximity of proposed facilities to existing facilities will be beneficial to organization of education programs, and will make access easier for all farm visitors. Comments made during discussion of this plan option are summarized as follows:

*Positives:*

- Larger classroom / meeting room needed (school groups of 120+)
- High exposure for community gardens - perennials / display is important
- Ample room for overflow parking near public market
- Public restroom and welcome center in office building helps with staffing
- Using two-bay garage for a chicken coop is a good idea
- Bottling, honey production, dairy production, commercial kitchen in value-added facility a good idea
- Location of compost facility separate from other facilities, idea of packaging facility

*Negatives:*

- Location of compost facility separate from other facilities is good, as is the idea of converting the old composting area into a semi-enclosed space for packaging compost products
- Office building is hidden by Woodland Place, and most people don't know the farm is there because of its poor exposure
- May be able to have more facilities near orchard on southern property
- Need more room for Rural Life Museum; possibly in existing white barn (currently the Rural Life Display is planned in the 12-bay garage)
- The much-used gazebo will remain, thus the Bigler House must be moved.

Other comments made during the discussion which apply to both plans are as follows:

- Another desired facility is an animal display barn (approximately 20' x 40') - similar to that at Mahoning Farm in Canfield, OH.
- The Bridge Department Garage must be moved to another building on the site
- Munnell Run Farm Foundation will approach Woodland Place regarding the acquisition of a right-of-way through the northern portion of their property. This would provide a shorter entrance road and better view of farm facilities.

### **PUBLIC INPUT SESSION TWO**

The second of two Public Input Sessions was held on June 30, 2005 at the



Munnell Run Farm Classroom Building. The focus of the meeting was to present the Draft Final Master Plan and receive feedback for further revision. It was explained that the Draft Final Master Plan was the result of feedback from the two alternative concept plans developed earlier in the project process, and that the Draft would be revised further before project completion. Facilities included in the Draft Master Plan included:

- 3,500-sq.ft. Welcome Center - including MCCD and MRFF Offices, Large Classroom, Public Restrooms, Library / Maps Room, and Storage Space
- Open-Air Farmer's Market (renovated 12-bay garage)
- Gift Shop (renovated 2-bay garage)
- Relocation of the Bridge Department Garage
- Relocation of Bigler House for use as a classroom
- Machinery Shop (renovated boiler house)
- Rural Life Museum (renovated machinery barn)
- Display Facilities for Animals and Poultry
- Community Gardens (perennials and herbs/vegetables) and relocated Children's Garden
- Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS) - wind turbine
- Value-Added Agriculture Facility with commercial kitchen
- Wagon Trail for Farm Tours
- Gravel Entrance Road Extending from S.R. 58 to the south of Woodland Place
- 79 Parking spaces, including 3 bus spaces and 8 ADA-accessible parking spaces (in 7 separate lots)
- Farm-scale composting facility
- Honey Production Area (6 beehives)
- Rustic Outdoor Amphitheater in the existing woodlot
- Maple Syrup Grove in the existing hardwood plantation
- Fruit Orchard
- Display pasture along entrance road
- Removal of the existing water tower, barn foundation, silos, smoke stack at the boiler house, block shed near the barn foundation, and trailer
- General Repairs to the Bank Barn

Estimated construction costs were also reviewed, as was a strategy for implementation. The total estimated cost for project implementation was approximately \$2.9 million, and it was recommended that a seven-phase strategy be employed for implementation. A three-year time period between each phase would allow sufficient time for the MRFF to raise funds. Emphasis would be placed on implementation of commercial facilities in early phases, so as to increase the Farm's potential revenue production, which could aid in





funding later phases. Comments made during the presentation and review of implementation strategies were as follows:

- Public Restrooms need to be implemented in the first phase, because it is an identified need right now. (the Office building houses the only public restrooms shown in the plan, and would be implemented in phase 5)
- The small concrete foundation known as the "hobo-shed" near the water storage tank attached to the boiler house, currently housed a restroom facility, and access to sanitary sewer and water lines is available.
- A second restroom is needed near the existing classroom facility, and clivus multrum (self-composting) restrooms may be the most cost-effective method of construction. A traditional restroom facility would require installation of sanitary sewer line and most likely a grinder pump). The self-composting restrooms such as the one located near the existing woodlot could be built into an enclosure so that it resembles a traditional restroom. Water would also be needed for hand-washing.
- Space is needed to store animals when they are not on display. The bank barn is currently used by the tenant farmer, and this use will continue. Currently there are no facilities for over-wintering animals on site, so seasonal storage only is needed. One option is to construct an animal display barn, the other is to arrange for local farmers to bring animals to the farm for display and then return the animals to the farmers afterwards.
- The poultry display barn should be smaller, and resemble a traditional chicken coop to be located near the Bigler House. Space is also available to the north of the Bigler House for construction of an animal barn.
- The Office Building may need to be larger than what is shown on plan. Room is needed for a kitchen that would be available if the gathering space were to be rented for events. This facility is not included in the conceptual building footprint designed by the MRFF.
- Taking into account the pole construction and metal siding of the Bridge Department Garage, a new building (steel building, etc.) would be more cost-effective than relocation of the existing structure.
- The Mercer County Historical Society should provide funds for the Rural Life Museum (renovation of the Machinery Barn). The machine shop can temporarily be housed in the three-bay garage until renovations are complete on the boiler house. The Rural Life Museum could be implemented at the same time other facilities on the farm are being implemented (during early phases of construction) because outside funds would support it.



- A handicapped-accessible path, approximately 1/8 mile in length, would better serve the elderly residents of Woodland Place. One possible location for this facility would be surrounding the Bigler House plot. This would give visual access from the path to community gardens, children's gardens, and perhaps an animal display barn and / or chicken coop.
- All cost estimates and phasing prices explained during the meeting include material and labor and assume that all work is publicly bid and funded directly by the MRFF. All acquisition of donations, grants, volunteer labor, etc. will result in a cost savings from the quoted cost estimate.
- Operations and Maintenance Costs are NOT factored in to the cost estimate, but will be analyzed and estimated in the final Master Plan Report.

### **PUBLIC / ELECTED OFFICIALS MEETING**

One meeting to introduce local publicly-elected officials to the Munnell Run Farm Master Site Plan project was held on July 12, 2005. Attendees included two Mercer County Commissioners, one Jefferson Township Supervisor, and Study Committee / MRFF members.

A brief review of the Master Plan Process and project progress to date was given, along with a presentation of the Draft Final Master Plan, as it was revised per comments from the previous meeting (Public Input Session Two). Facilities included in the Final Master Plan included:

- 4,250-sq.ft. Welcome Center - including MCCD and MRFF Offices, Large Classroom, Public Restrooms, Library / Maps Room, and Storage Space
- Open-Air Farmer's Market (renovated 12-bay garage)
- Gift Shop (renovated 2-bay garage)
- Relocation of the Bridge Department Garage
- Relocation of Bigler House for use as a classroom
- Machinery Shop (renovated boiler house)
- Rural Life Museum (renovated machinery barn)
- Public Restroom attached to Rural Life Museum, with indoor and outdoor access.
- A self-composting Public Restroom (clivus multrum) near the existing classroom building.
- Display Facilities for Animals and Poultry
- Community Gardens (perennials and herbs/vegetables) and relocated Children's Garden
- Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS) - wind turbine





- Value-Added Agriculture Facility with commercial kitchen
- Wagon Trail for Farm Tours
- An ADA-accessible walking trail, slightly more than 1/8 mile in length, encircling the Bigler House, animal and poultry display areas, and community gardens
- Gravel Entrance Road Extending from S.R. 58 to the south of Woodland Place
- 79 Parking spaces, including 3 bus spaces and 8 ADA-accessible parking spaces (in 7 separate lots)
- Farm-scale composting facility
- Honey Production Area (6 beehives)
- Rustic Outdoor Amphitheater in the existing woodlot
- Maple Syrup Grove in the existing hardwood plantation
- Fruit Orchard
- Display pasture along entrance road
- Removal of the existing water tower, barn foundation, silos, smoke stack at the boiler house, block shed near the barn foundation, and trailer
- General Repairs to the Bank Barn

The project cost estimate and implementation strategy (Phasing Plan) were also presented. The total cost for implementation of the Master Plan improvements was \$3,179,197. Seven phases of implementation were proposed, with approximately three (3) years between each phase. This time period would allow the MRFF to apply for and receive grants for construction of facilities, as well as raise money for grants that require matches of funding. Implementation of needed public restrooms and commercial facilities were the focus of early phases. This would enable the farm to better accommodate visitors and consumers, thus increasing potential for production of revenue that would aid in funding later phases. The following comments were made during the presentation of the final master plan and review of project implementation strategies:

- Public Restrooms should be implemented in the first phase, because it is an identified need right now. (the Office building houses the only public restrooms shown in the plan, and would be implemented in phase 5)
- The public restroom proposed near the existing Boiler House should be relocated to the rear (west) side of the existing Machinery Barn, which will become the Rural Life Museum. The existing block stalls there could be used in the restroom's construction, the location is still near the existing sanitary sewer line that runs through the site, and indoor / outdoor access would be possible.
- The second public restroom (near the existing classroom building)



should not be attached to the classroom structure, but instead be a separate structure in close proximity to the classroom.

- The animal display barn should be located outside of the proposed walking trail loop to prevent cross-traffic of animals and farm visitors.
- A County Commissioner expressed concern about advertising and forming partnerships with other local organizations and facilities, such as Jackson Meadows (a local farmers' market and flea market), as well as joining organizations such as the County Chamber of Commerce and other similar regional groups
- MRFF Members re-iterated to the Commissioners and Township Supervisors that the MRFF would not be asking the County for funding, but instead would focus on drawing funds from a variety of private and public sources related to individual proposed facilities. (i.e. Historical Society, Pennsylvania Conservation Corps, etc.). There is an interest in approaching as many possible funding sources as possible in order to expedite the estimated 20+ year implementation schedule.
- It was also suggested that the MRF website be linked to the County's website, for a low-cost method of raising awareness of the Farm.

## **STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING FOUR**

The fourth and final meeting of the project study committee was held on August 18, 2005 with the intent of receiving input on the final master plan and narrative report. Pashek Associates briefly reviewed project progress to date: Public Participation; Community Background; Inventory and Analysis of site conditions and information; Preparation of alternative conceptual master plans; and Development of the final master plan and narrative booklet, which had been distributed to the Study Committee for review earlier in August.

The various aspects of the Draft Master Plan were explained, as it had been revised from input received on the two alternative master plan concepts. Facilities included in the Draft Master Plan include:

- 4,250-sq.ft. Welcome Center - including MCCD and MRFF Offices, Large Classroom / Banquet Room, Kitchen, Public Restrooms, Library/Maps Room, and Storage Space
- Open-Air Farmer's Market (renovated 12-bay garage)
- Gift Shop (renovated 2-bay garage)
- Relocation of the Bridge Department Garage
- Relocation of Bigler House for use as a classroom
- Machinery Shop (renovated boiler house)
- Rural Life Museum (renovated machinery barn)
- Display Facilities for Animals and Poultry
- Community Gardens (perennials and herbs/vegetables) and relocated



#### Children's Garden

- Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS) - wind turbine
- Value-Added Agriculture Facility with commercial kitchen
- Wagon Trail for Farm Tours
- Gravel Entrance Road Extending from S.R. 58 to the south of Woodland Place
- 79 Parking spaces, including 3 bus spaces and 8 ADA-accessible parking spaces (in 7 separate lots)
- Consideration for future access road location north of Woodland Place (approximately 4 acres of property acquisition required from Woodland Place)
- Farm-scale composting facility
- Honey Production Area (6 beehives)
- Rustic Outdoor Amphitheatre in the existing woodlot
- Maple Syrup Grove in the existing hardwood plantation
- Fruit Orchard
- Display pasture along entrance road
- Removal of the existing water tower, barn foundation, silos, smoke stack at the boiler house, block shed near the barn foundation, and trailer
- General Repairs to the Bank Barn

During the discussion of the draft narrative report, several comments were offered by the attending study committee members. These comments are summarized as follows:

- Trout Unlimited has funded similar projects in the past and should be mentioned in the “Sources of Funding or Other Services...” section of the report.
- The Road may need to be moved ahead in the phasing schedule, as it may be needed for fire protection.
- The agricultural emphasis may need to be downplayed and emphasis may need to be spread to more broadly include various aspects of conservation. This may appeal to more people.
- The woodlot trail may need to be explained in further detail if it is possible that all or a portion of it is made handicapped-accessible. (materials, width, etc.)
- More parking may be needed for the rental banquet room facility at the office. (overflow parking may be utilized in surrounding fields)
- Another use for the stormwater retention pond is for fire protection.
- The trail and amphitheatre should be referred to as the “forest ecology” area as it has potential for educational programs emphasizing forest ecology.



Several study committee members did not have the chance to review the entire draft narrative report and would offer further comment (in the form of edits marked on the draft report) after the meeting. Yet other members who could not attend this meeting supplied written comments for review by Pashek Associates.

### **KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS**

Key Person Interviews were conducted to give interested parties an opportunity to provide input into the master planning process. Due to the interviewees' variety of interests in the farm, no standard set of questions could be developed. Instead, separate sets of questions for each interviewee were created to yield more significant results. Pashek Associates selected the following individuals with whom to conduct key person interviews:

- Ms. Heather House, Director of Educational Outreach, Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)
- Mr. Dale Rains, Munnell Run Farm Tenant Farmer
- Mr. Fran Bires, McKeever Environmental Learning Center
- Dr. Dan Dziubek, Associate Professor of Parks and Recreation / Environmental Education, Slippery Rock University
- Mr. John G. "Jerry" Johnson, Mercer County Historical Society
- Mr. Jim Rust, Chairman, Mercer County Conservation District

Complete results of the key person interviews can be found in the appendices of this report.

# CHAPTER 2

## SITE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS



## INVENTORY

In preparation for the development of a master plan, it is important to have an understanding of the existing physical characteristics of the site. These characteristics help identify opportunities and constraints and will influence the placement of amenities. These include the placement and location of any roads, structures, or proposed facilities, as well as development costs.

Analysis of natural features such as soils, topography, vegetative cover, and water features; as well as cultural features including access, zoning/adjacent land uses, existing structures, and utilities/rights of way; provide valuable input in recognizing those opportunities and constraints. This multi-layered approach provides the input necessary for the development of a comprehensive and thoughtful plan. The analysis is summarized below and represented graphically on the Site Analysis Plan.

### LOCATION AND ACREAGE

Munnell Run Farm is located about one mile north of Mercer Borough on State Route 58 (Greenville Road) in the rolling hills of Mercer County, Pennsylvania. The property is situated to the west of Woodland Place; a personal care and assisted living facility that is accessible from State Route 58 to the north of Mercer Borough. The farm is easily accessible from Interstates 80 and 79. The 163-acre property is owned by Mercer County, leased by the Munnell Run Farm Foundation, Inc., and managed by the Mercer County Conservation District.

### SITE ACCESS

Primary access to the site is provided by the driveway for Woodland Place, which is accessed from State Route 58. There is also a gated secondary entrance on the western end of the site along State Route 258 (Clarksville Road).

### TOPOGRAPHY

The site includes gently rolling hills sloping toward Munnell Run, which bisects the site, flowing from north to south. Slopes range from nearly level up to 8%.

### ZONING

The Munnell Run Farm property is located in Coolspring and Jefferson Townships. The eastern half of the site is zoned “R-1. Residential-Agricultural-Low Density District” under the Coolspring Township Zoning Ordinance.



The western half is zoned “R-1. Residential-Agriculture” under the Jefferson Township Zoning Ordinance. “Agriculture and Related Uses” is among the principal permitted uses in both of these zoning districts.

### **SURROUNDING LAND USE**

Surrounding land uses include agricultural land and forested tracts. The Woodland Place facility is located immediately to the east. Rural residential lots are located along the western and southeastern edges of the property.

### **SITE HISTORY**

Agriculture has been a part of the Munnell Run Farm site history since the mid 1800s. The farm provided food for patients at the Mercer County Home and Hospital, now Woodland Place. Able-bodied residents worked on the farm cultivating crops and raising livestock. In addition to the existing buildings on the site, the property at one time had three houses, two chicken houses, two slaughter houses, dairy barn, three corn cribs, hide house, and a pig barn. The peak of production and diversity of the farm most likely occurred during the 1950s. Since the 1970s, over 170 acres were subdivided and several buildings were razed.

The property now known as Munnell Run Farm is held by the Munnell Run Farm Foundation (MRFF) through a 99-year lease and conservation easement from the County of Mercer. The MRFF manages the farm with support from the Mercer County Conservation District. The Farm now offers agricultural, ecological, and environmental education programs that feature outdoor, hands-on activities for all ages.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Munnell Run Farm currently uses ecologically-friendly practices including: composting, a solar-powered pasture watering system, a riparian buffer, a stormwater diversion terrace and grassed waterway, contour stripcropping, and a rotational pasture system. Other ecological best management practices (BMP's) have been implemented at the farm, such as a constructed wetland to filter barnyard runoff, a managed woodlot for education and wildlife habitat, and a hardwood plantation.

### **SOILS**

The United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service’s “Soil Survey of Mercer County”(Second Issue 1992), provides data on engineering properties of soils and interpretations of those properties as they affect the design and construction of site improvements. The survey also explains the





limitations of the soils for agricultural use, as well as uses related to community development and recreation, including suitability for road location, recreational facilities, and structures. In addition to the soil survey, Pashek Associates also reviewed the list of hydric soils and National Wetland Inventory for Mercer County to determine if wetland areas may be located on the farm site.

The soil survey identified the following soils (plan symbol in parentheses):

- **Ravenna Silt Loam (RaA)**  
0 to 3 percent slopes  
This soil consists of nearly level or gently sloping areas with somewhat poorly drained soils and a high water table during much of the year. This limits non-farm uses. A large acreage of Ravenna soils in Mercer County has been farmed.
- **Ravenna Silt Loam (RaB2)**  
3 to 8 percent slopes, moderately eroded  
This soil consists of gently sloping areas with somewhat poorly drained soils and a seasonal high water table. This limits non-farm uses. A large acreage of Ravenna soils in Mercer County has been farmed.
- **Canfield Silt Loam (CdB2)**  
3-8 percent slopes, moderately eroded  
This soil consists of gently sloping areas with poorly drained soils and a seasonal high water table. This limits non-farm uses. A large percentage of Canfield soils in Mercer County have been farmed.
- **Frenchtown and Luray Silt Loams (Fr)**  
These are nearly level areas of 75% Frenchtown soils and 25% Luray soils, with a high water table in most seasons that, along with poor drainage, limits non-farm uses. Some areas of this soil have been farmed in Mercer County, others require stabilization before plowing is possible.
- **Frenchtown Silt Loam (FeA)**  
0 to 3 percent slopes  
This soil consists of nearly level or gently sloping areas with poorly drained soils and a high water table. This limits many non-farm uses. About 75% of this land has been cleared and cultivated within the county.
- **Frenchtown Silt Loam (FeB2)**  
3 to 8 percent slopes, moderately eroded  
This soil is thinner and consists of gently sloping areas with poorly



drained soils and a high water table. This limits many non-farm uses. About 75% of this land has been cleared and cultivated within the county. The erosion hazard is moderate.

- **Wayland Silt Loam (Wa) - Coarse Variant**

These are nearly level areas with poorly drained soils and a high water table. It occurs on the flood plains of streams throughout the county and is flooded almost every year. This severely limits non-farm use.

Wayland Silt Loam is a hydric soil - *Wayland* (NY0078) - and all remaining site soils contain the hydric soil *Frenchtown* (OH0085). The only known wetlands on the Munnell Run Site occur in the existing riparian buffer along Munnell Run, which consist mainly of Wayland Silt Loam.

## VEGETATION

Most of the site acreage consists of pasture, cropland, or woodland. Several large, mature deciduous shade trees are scattered within the central activity of the site. A managed woodlot exists in the western portion of the site, containing young trees, semi-mature / pole-stage trees, woody shrubs, and perennials. A hardwood plantation, planted for eventual revenue from timber sales, is located in the southeastern portion of the site.

Due to severe fragmentation of forested areas by agriculture and other land development, several small “patches” of forest remain. These areas may be used by wildlife primarily as travel corridors, but lack sufficient size for management as wildlife habitats. The hedgerows and small wooded tracts on and adjacent to the Munnell Run Farm site fit this description.

## WETLANDS AND WATER FEATURES

According to National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, no jurisdictional wetlands are located on the Munnell Run Farm Property. However, the riparian buffer area along Munnell Run on the farm property can be classified as wetlands, as it exhibits saturated soils and wetland vegetation. A constructed wetland treats barnyard runoff and the effluent from the trout nursery, protecting water quality in Munnell Run. It is located just south of the existing bank barn, in the central portion of the site. Despite the lack of known jurisdictional wetland areas on the property, areas of hydric soils are present, as is shown on the Site Analysis Plan.

Munnell Run, the main water body on the Munnell Run Farm property, is a tributary of the Otter Creek which joins Coolspring Creek and eighth of a mile from its mouth to form the Neshannock Creek. The Neshannock Creek is



designated as a Trout Stocked-Fishery (TSF) by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Chapter 93 Water Quality Standards. Water quality in Munnell Run has also been monitored since 1988.

### **FLOODPLAINS**

A 100-year floodplain occurs along Munnell Run. This area is designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a Zone-A flood area. Zone A flood areas indicate special flood hazards and do not have base flood elevations determined. The approximate location of the floodplain boundary, per FEMA Map #4218630010B, is shown on the Site Analysis Plan.

### **RIPARIAN BUFFERS**

A forested riparian buffer that has a minimum width of 100 feet is maintained along Munnell Run to protect the stream from nutrients leaching from surrounding pasture and crop lands and to protect the stream banks from erosion and to provide shade that helps to moderate water temperature. Fencing protects riparian vegetation from grazing and vehicular access.

### **EXISTING FACILITIES**

The "Munnell Run Farm Mercer County Conservation District Facility Study" was completed in 2003. The study concludes that existing structures on the site range from poor to good condition. According to the study, several buildings are in need of repair and should be updated to be more energy efficient and ADA accessible. Some structures also need asbestos testing and/or removal. The following is a brief inventory and analysis of site facilities, as described in the 2003 study:

#### *1. Management Office*

Owned by Woodland Place, this building is home to the Mercer County Conservation District (MCCD) Headquarters. Utilities, including electrical, plumbing, and heating systems, are connected to Woodland Place, and are outdated. General repairs of the roof, support lintels, exterior brick are also needed. Several updates are needed for code compliance, including doorway widths and ADA access to restrooms. Generally, the building is not large enough for the needs of the MCCD.

#### *2. Mobile Home / Trailer*

The Mobile Home was used as a seasonal office for the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps. It is approximately 15 years old, and is equipped with plumbing, electricity, telephone, and a gas furnace. The trailer is not ADA- accessible, and major interior repairs are needed.



3. *Laundry Building*

This building is currently being used as a workshop and storage facility. Interior walls are in fair condition and the roof was replaced in 2000. Several major issues need to be addressed with this structure: energy-efficient fixtures need to be installed, restrooms and building entrance thresholds must be brought into ADA compliance and the electrical system is outdated. The existing boiler has been encapsulated because it contains asbestos, and needs to be removed.



4. *Area Agency on Aging Storage Building*

This small masonry building is located between the laundry building and three-bay garage, and is owned by the County. The Area Agency on Aging uses this building for "Meals on Wheels" storage. General repairs are needed to the roof and brick exterior. The building is in fair condition for its current use, housing a freezer / cooler.

5. *Three-Bay Garage*

Built in the early 1980s, this corrugated metal sided-and-roofed building includes a pit in the floor for vehicular maintenance services. The garage has electricity, heat, and hot water, which are in satisfactory condition for the building's current use.



6. *Boiler House*

Owned by the County, the Boiler House serves Woodland Place with two pumps for underground water and a backup emergency generator. A 15,000 gallon water storage structure is connected to the Boiler House. The concrete walls of the water storage tank are deteriorating and steel reinforcement is exposed. However, no leaking is apparent.

The two existing boilers are no longer in use. General repairs are needed to the roof, brick walls, and steel lintels. As of 2003, Woodland Place was attempting to tie into a municipal water system. The raised roof system, pipe insulation, and boilers need to be tested for asbestos.



7. *Machinery Barn*

This structure is a two-story, post-and-beam barn with painted wood siding and a slate shingle roof. Portions of the walls have been in-filled with brick and windows are single-pane steel frame windows. The building is heated poorly and houses machinery used on the farm. It is in fair condition for its current use, but if the barn's use changes, it will be in need of repairs.



8. *Two Bay Garage*

This masonry structure with deteriorating shingled roof is currently abandoned. Building structure should be checked for asbestos. The roof, windows, and fascia need to be replaced if any use is planned. Masonry block walls are in fair to good condition.

9. *Twelve Bay Garage*

This structure has a brick exterior with a shingled roof. Windows are single-paned with steel frames similar to those in other site buildings. The building is equipped with electricity and a heater, but does not have water service. It is in fair condition for its current use.

10. *Bridge Department Garage*

Constructed in the 1980s, this metal-sided structure is owned by the County and is used for the Bridge Department. The building has a shingled roof, and its exterior man-door needs to be replaced.

11. *Compost Building*

This structure is used for garden tool and supply storage, and thus has no need for utility service. It is adjacent to the remaining foundation of a demolished barn, the concrete floor of which is used for compost storage. The building is in fair to good condition for its current use.

12. *Trout Nursery*

Originally a slaughter house, this building was renovated in 1997 and is now operated by the Neshannock Chapter of Trout Unlimited as the Munnell Run Trout Nursery. This building is of masonry construction with timber trusses and a shingled roof. The building is in good overall condition.

13. *Bank Barn*

The Bank Barn is rented, along with 96 acres of land to tenant farmers. The building is of heavy post-and-beam construction with painted wood siding and a slate roof. General repairs have been undertaken on this building since the 2003 study and more may be needed.

14. *Pavilion / Classroom*

The enclosed portion of this structure houses a classroom currently used for meetings and school group gatherings. The un-enclosed portion of the structure houses picnic tables. The floor is insulated tongue-and-groove wood over a concrete slab, and the structure is of timber pole construction with a shingled roof. It is located where a pig barn originally stood, and is in good condition. Gravel parking is available immediately to the east.





*15. Solar Powered Pump*

This pump, used to provide water for the managed pasture, is housed within a small wooden structure with open sides for access. This structure is relatively new and is in good condition.



*16. Barn Runoff Control*

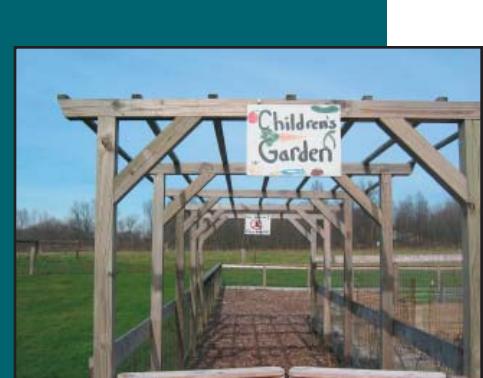
A system of diversions, storage terrace and constructed wetland is designed to decrease erosion and increase the infiltration rate of runoff water.

*17. Girl Scout Gardens*

These vegetable gardens are sponsored by the local Girl Scout troop. Garden areas are enclosed by 4"x 4" timber walls in good condition and covered with hay to protect seeds and young plants.

*18. Children's Garden*

The Children's Garden area is enclosed by an unpainted cedar fence that is in good condition. Several separate raised garden beds are bounded by timber walls, and a trellis is provided as support for plants.



*19. Diversion Terrace*

The diversion terrace is used to divert runoff water into the grassed waterway.

*20. Grassed Waterway*

The grassed waterway is designed to filter excess nutrients that have leached from agricultural fields, or allow sediment from the fields to settle before runoff water enters Munnell Run.

*21. Spring House*

The Spring House collects water from a natural spring.

*22. Stormwater Storage Terrace*

This terrace is designed to retain stormwater and allow for better infiltration.

*23. Barn Foundation and Silos*

Foundation walls remain from a demolished barn. Walls that are exposed above grade are cracked and chipped severely. Silos are of masonry construction, and the metal roof cap is damaged. Exterior brick is also cracked and chipped.

*24. Managed Woodlot*

Eleven acres of hardwood forest used to educate people in sustainable



forestry practices and ecological systems awareness. Approximately 2,400 feet of walking trail have also been constructed in the woodlot.

25. *Cropland*

## **SITE ANALYSIS MAP**



## ANALYSIS

### FARM PROGRAM

Based on input received through the public participation process, the study committee requested that Pashek Associates provide one or more of the following facilities as possible into the Munnell Run Farm Master Plan:

- o Value-added agriculture facility
- o Outdoor amphitheater
- o Bee hives for honey production
- o Wind Energy / "Bio-diesel" demonstration facility
- o Spring water bottling facility
- o Picnic pavilion / picnic area
- o Public restrooms
- o Office building
- o Classroom / laboratory
- o Parking facilities
- o Bigler House Relocation
- o Rural Life Museum
- o Greenhouse / Plant nursery
- o Chicken Coop
- o Community Gardens
- o Farm-scale composting
- o Orchard
- o Maple Syrup Grove
- o Farmer's Market
- o Kitchen
- o Welcome Center
- o Gift Shop / Store
- o Entrance Signage
- o Entrance Road Extension to State Route 58

### FACILITY DESIGN GUIDELINES

It is important to provide properly located, safe recreation facilities that are accessible to all park visitors. Safety issues include properly designed roads, restrooms and other structures, and trails. Accessibility issues include ensuring that facilities meet the needs of the physically- and mentally-challenged, as well as individuals experiencing temporary disabilities. Ensuring accessibility to all facilities not only accommodates those with disabilities, but also makes it easier for the general public to use the facilities. It is imperative that the Munnell Run Farm Foundation and Mercer County Conservation District take steps to protect the health, safety and welfare of all farm users.



Accessibility, in design terms, is described by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities to participate in the mainstream of public life. To do so, the ADA sets requirements for facilities to prevent physical barriers that keep people with disabilities from participating. When recreational facilities are built or altered, they must comply with the ADA standards by providing an accessible route to the area of use and spectator areas.

Standards / Guidelines include:

- *National Recreation and Park Association's "Facility Development Standards":*
  - establishes facility dimensions, orientation, and slope requirements.
- *Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP), [www.beneficialdesigns.com/trails/utap.html](http://www.beneficialdesigns.com/trails/utap.html)*
  - Based on the promise that trails should be universally designed to serve all users, UTAP encourages land managers to provide users with specific information regarding the trail so users can make an informed decision as to whether they have the ability to use the trail.
- *Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board's "Regulatory Negotiation Committee on Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas", September 1999, [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)*
  - sets minimum requirements for accessible trails, access routes, resting opportunities, benches, utility connections, and trash receptacles.
- *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title II Requirement for Public Facilities, [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)*

Taking into consideration the aforementioned standards and guidelines, in combination with Pashek Associates' prior experience, the following facility development recommendations were developed for Munnell Run Farm:

#### **Picnic Pavilions**

- Size varies
- Maximum 5% slope for accessibility
- Concrete pad beneath shelter
- Electrical service and charcoal grills at larger shelters (48-person capacity or more)
- Picnic tables and trash receptacles at all shelters
- Handicapped access ramps as needed
- Adequate landscaping for shade, especially on southern and western sides



### Wagon Trails

- 10' width
- Maximum 10% slope, located and graded in such a manner as to minimize disturbance and erosion
- Unpaved for cost savings
- Portions of the existing gravel lanes shall be used where possible
- Located in areas of varying vegetation and/or agricultural facilities (ex. hardwood plantation, cropland, pasture, etc.) to provide variety of scenery

### Restrooms

- Size varies
- Plumbed Facilities (water and sanitary sewer service)
- Lit by daylight only (high windows, skylights, etc.). Electricity needed for lighting only if night use is planned.
- Accessible route: maximum 5% slope
- Concrete Pad foundation
- Drinking Fountains

### Roadways

- 20' minimum cartway for two-way traffic, 12' minimum cartway for one-way traffic
- 10% maximum slope; 1% minimum slope for drainage
- Bituminous surfacing with drainage swales or simply sheet flow
- Security lights at key intersections or as desired

## ADJACENCIES

In addition to the above requirements, thought must be given to the appropriate adjacency of facilities. Ideally it is most desirable to locate facilities adjacent to one another only when they have a minimal impact on each other. For example, a composting facility should not be placed directly adjacent to a stream or spring house. An example of appropriate adjacency is the placement of community gardens near other planting facilities and access routes. Users must access the gardens, and soil treatment to planting facilities may be easier when the facilities are adjacent to one another. During the preparation of the alternative design concepts and the final master plan, Pashek Associates located the proposed facilities while considering issues of adjacency.

## PARKING STANDARDS

Parking must be considered for almost every facility. It would not be feasible to provide parking required for peak use events such as the Munnell Run Farm Day or other public gatherings, which may draw hundreds of visitors.





Although this is possible, the MRFF would be investing substantial funds in capital improvements that would only be utilized a few times each year. Excess parking facilities, occupying space that could have been available for the development of other facilities, would go unused for the remainder of the year.

Parking standards for this study were estimated using standards from Pashek Associates' prior experience with similar projects, as well as input from the project study committee. Parking spaces shall be provided to accommodate typical *daily use* of farm facilities, and parking standards for this study were figured from the daily use rate assuming 2.5 persons per car and 40 persons for school buses. (see charts below). Ideally, parking should accommodate average daily use while providing opportunity for overflow parking to meet peak use event needs.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Peak Use (in persons)</i>	<i>Daily Use (in persons)</i>	<i>Recommended Number of Parking Spaces</i>
Farmer's Market	120	72	30
Value-Added Ag. Facility	20	12	5
Various Public Gardens	20	12	5
Office Building	50	30	20 (employees and visitors)
Classroom / Laboratory	30	18	8
General Tours	40	24	10 spaces and/or 3 bus spaces
Outdoor Amphitheater	50	30	12
Rural Life Museum	30	18	8

### ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLANS

Based on the Inventory and Analysis of the Munnell Run Farm Property, along with the Public Input process and prior design experience, two alternative conceptual designs were prepared. The conceptual plans reflect input collected from the Study Committee, Key Person Interviewees, and residents of the community, as well as professional input from the staff of Pashek Associates. These design alternatives were prepared to express overall ideas, and not the final design.



## DESIGN GOALS

The alternative concepts were developed with the purpose of achieving several broad, general goals for Munnell Run Farm, as established by the Study Committee and partially derived from past planning studies. These goals are as follows:

- Providing quality, hands-on educational experiences for children and adults on a variety of agricultural, ecological, and environmental topics; through the development of facilities that are safe, enjoyable, and that promote learning in both the classroom and outdoor environment.
- Demonstrate the positive aspects of the interrelationship between agriculture and ecology, as well as the economic benefits of alternative agriculture systems.

## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTIONS

This master plan will serve as a tool to guide the development of Munnell Run Farm, which will directly affect the environmental- and agricultural education opportunities available to the surrounding community and region. Each conceptual plan identifies *potential* design ideas, including entrance and egress points and circulation patterns. In addition, the size, location, and layout of different facilities is explored, as well as each facility's compatibility with adjacent facilities.

The alternative conceptual master plans are outlined briefly in the following paragraphs. Following the development of these plans, they were presented to the Study Committee, who then evaluated the opportunities and constraints of each alternative concept, including the degree to which they meet the needs of the community and comply with the Munnell Run Farm project goals.

### **Option 'A'**

Draft Master Plan Option 'A' explores the possibility of developing commercial facilities and signage near State Route 58 on the farm's southern parcel, north of the existing hardwood plantation and pasture. This development would provide Munnell Run Farm with much-needed exposure without requiring any agreements or easements on land not currently owned by Mercer County.

The "working" portion of the farm is clustered in the central portion of the property, among the existing facilities. Facilities related to the functioning farm will be open to educational groups and area farmers who wish to use the facilities. Existing access to this area will be retained via the paved driveway, which passes underneath the Woodland Place building, and also through the existing lane extending east from State Route 258.



Facilities on all parts of the site are summarized as follows:

#### *Public Market*

Agricultural products grown and processed at Munnell Run Farm and at other local farms could be sold at an open-air public market area, consisting of a large open-air pavilion which partially encloses a gravel area to be used as extra market space, a modest cafe with outdoor seating plaza, and a store selling arts and crafts, antiques, etc. The cafe / store will house a public restroom, and will also serve as a welcome center for park visitors, exposing them to the finished products grown and processed on the farm.

This complex is accessible via a proposed entrance drive off of State Route 58 in the northeastern corner of the southern parcel of the Munnell Run Farm property. A 60-space parking lot is also proposed near the market complex. Parking will facilitate normal use by the market, as well as special events such as small flea-markets, etc. A gravel drive is proposed behind the market pavilion for sellers' vehicular access to market display areas.

#### *Entrance Road*

The proposed entrance road is 20' wide and paved with gravel. This will reduce costs compared to bituminous paving, along with adding to the rural character of the farm. The road extends west into the site from State Route 58, and brings visitors through the proposed parking lot, which will not be filled on non-market days, past the cafe and market complex, and a proposed fruit tree orchard on their way to the proposed MRFF / MCCD offices and classroom / laboratory facility. A maple syrup grove comprised of trees that will be included in the existing hardwood plantation is planned just to the south of the office / classroom building. A small parking area is located near the office building, with capacity for 10 vehicles. A picnic shelter is also proposed in this area, and will share parking with the office / classroom. The road terminates in a large loop to accommodate buses and emergency vehicles. Wagon tours begin at this point and access facilities throughout the property.

#### *Office / Classroom Building*

The proposed office building will house Mercer County Conservation District Offices (MCCD), allowing the MCCD to move from the undersized house to the east of Woodland Place. Any full-time MRFF employee offices will also be located in this facility, as will a small classroom / laboratory, and a private restroom. The location of this building also makes it the focal point of visitors as they enter the farm property.

#### *Wagon Trail / Tours*

Tours of the farm will be available by rides on a traditional haywagon, which will traverse a 10'-wide, unpaved trail that passes through the hardwood



plantation, along perimeters of pastures and crop fields, through the central facility area to the west of Woodland Place, and continues west toward the existing woodlot, trail, and proposed amphitheater. The wagon trail will utilize portions of existing lanes in the central portion of the site whenever possible.

#### *Value-Added Agriculture Facility / Commercial Kitchen*

A value-added agriculture facility, in which local farmers can bring unfinished goods for processing and storage, will be located in the existing laundry building after renovation. The facility will be open to local farmers for a small usage fee, and will provide opportunities to pasteurize milk, produce and store various cheeses, and will allow the farm to process honey from beehives and bottle water from the on-site spring.

The commercial kitchen will also be located in the laundry building, and will produce good such as tomato sauces, various juices, and other vegetable and meat products. Such products may also be sold at the cafe/store and public market.

#### *Honey Production Areas*

Two groupings of honey beehives are proposed on the site. One of these areas will be located near the wagon tour trail just south of the existing mobile home, which is to be removed. This will provide one stop on a farmwide tour, allowing visitors to see first-hand the production of raw honey. The other group of hives is proposed to the west of the existing classroom / picnic pavilion. The groups of hives are separated to prevent disease from spreading between colonies.

#### *Public Restroom*

A plumbed public restroom is proposed near the existing laundry building and a portion of the wagon tour trail. This restroom will be accessible to all visitors, whether by arriving to this portion of the site by wagon or by motor vehicle.

#### *Greenhouses / Plant Nursery*

Just to the west of the existing laundry building, ample space and sunlight is available for a greenhouse facility (shown as two linear buildings approximately 80 feet in length), pending the removal of the existing mobile home. A parking lot with capacity for 15 cars is also proposed, for use by the proposed value-added agriculture facility, greenhouses, and wagon tours.

#### *Bigler House*

The historic 1840s Bigler House, a local landmark, will be relocated to the site of the existing gazebo, just north of the main access lane. This location will allow for time-period landscaping around the house, and easy access for farm



visitors. Because the Bigler House may feasibly house a small classroom or laboratory, it's adjacency to the children's garden, girl scout garden, community gardens, and existing classroom is essential.

#### *Gardens*

Community gardens are proposed to the north of the existing children's garden, which will remain. The girl scout garden will also remain, and the existing composting area could be renovated to provide a semi-enclosed area to package compost products.

#### *Rural Life Museum*

A museum depicting past ways of life among agricultural communities is proposed to the east of the existing classroom and gravel parking area, near the existing bank barn. The museum itself may resemble a small barn. Displays will include antique farming equipment, household tools, and interpretive information panels explaining activities that took place in the historic rural household and farmstead. The existing gravel parking lot could be expanded to provide space for 15 to 20 cars, thus accommodating museum visitors.

#### *Farm-scale Composting Area*

The existing composting area at Munnell Run Farm is inadequate if the MRFF plans to utilize compost in the production of other materials, such as potting soils, fertilizers, etc. A farm-scale composting area is proposed just to the east of the existing woodlot. This area will contain several "wind rows", or long linear piles of manure and other compost materials, that can be easily turned with large machinery to expose more material to the air and bacteria therein. This will expedite the composting process. Wind rows should be 200 to 300 feet in length, 8 feet wide, and should allow ample room for machinery between rows.

#### *Amphitheater*

An outdoor amphitheater is proposed in the existing woodlot, and will be accessible from the existing shredded bark mulch trail. This facility could house as high as 50 persons, depending on desired size, and should be rustic in nature. Rustic fixtures could be built by volunteer labor such as scouts or other community groups, and would result in little or no clearing of the surrounding woodlot. Building materials should include timber and stone.

#### *Rainwater Cisterns*

A best management practice not currently implemented on the Munnell Run Farm site is the use of rainwater cisterns to gather water for watering gardens, crops, orchards, etc. Through the use of typical rooftop rain gutters, the proposed cisterns would capture water from the proposed public market shelter and the existing Bridge Department garage, providing water for the community



gardens, girl scout gardens, children's garden, and proposed orchard. This practice would also be consistent with the farm's policy of sustainable farming.

#### *Repairs, Renovations, and Re-use*

Many of the existing facilities in the central portion of the site are in need of repair, according to the 2003 Facility Study. The existing bank barn requires construction of a concrete berm to prevent further damage to wood siding by manure piles, and the existing boiler house, 3-bay garage, Area Agency on Aging Building, Water Storage Tank, Bridge Department Garage, and 12-Bay Garage are all in need of general repairs to walls, roofs, doors and windows, and possibly utility systems. When these repairs are performed, consideration should be given to using white paint on all buildings, along with the same color and type of shingling on roofs of all repaired buildings. This will give consistency to the farm facilities, create a look of cleanliness, and add to the pastoral setting.

In addition, repairs to existing facilities will be more cost-effective than construction of new facilities to house existing uses. Because the existing buildings are used primarily for maintenance and storage (garages and barns), they do not need to be renovated and/or maintained as high a degree as publicly-used buildings.

Exceptions include the laundry building, which will house the proposed value-added agriculture facility and commercial kitchen, and the two-bay garage. Although the roof and fixtures of the two-bay garage are in poor condition, the masonry block walls may be reused and the facility could be renovated into a chicken coup.

## **MASTER PLAN OPTION A**



### Option 'B'

Option 'B' explores the development of an entrance road extending from State Route 58 to the central portion of the site, near most of the existing buildings. Consequently, development of new facilities is clustered in and around the existing facilities rather than on the southern farm parcel. Although this plan option may limit visibility of the site from State Route 58, the proximity of proposed facilities to existing facilities will be beneficial to organization of education programs, and will make access easier for all farm visitors.

#### *Public Market*

Agricultural products grown and processed at Munnell Run Farm and at other local farms could be sold at an open-air public market area, consisting of a large open-air pavilion which partially encloses a gravel area to be used as extra market space.

This complex is accessible via the proposed entrance drive off of State Route 58 in the southeastern corner of the northern parcel of the Munnell Run Farm property. A 59-space parking lot is also proposed near the market complex, with ample open field space for overflow parking during large events. Parking will facilitate normal use by the market, as well as special events such as small flea-markets, etc.

#### *Entrance Road*

The proposed entrance road is 20' wide and paved with gravel. This will eliminate the need for costly bituminous paving and thus drastically reduce costs, along with adding to the rural character of the farm. The road extends west into the site from State Route 58, and brings visitors through a proposed fruit tree orchard and past a planned maple syrup grove that will be included in the existing hardwood plantation on their way to the proposed MRFF / MCCD offices and classroom / laboratory facility, as well as the public market. The road terminates in a large loop to accommodate buses and emergency vehicles. Wagon tours begin at this point and access facilities throughout the property.

#### *Office / Classroom Building*

The proposed office building will house Mercer County Conservation District Offices (MCCD), allowing the MCCD to move from the undersized house to the east of Woodland Place. Any full-time MRFF employee offices will also be located in this facility, as will a small classroom / laboratory, and a public restroom. The location of this building also makes it the focal point of visitors as they enter the farm property.



This facility will also serve as the welcome center for farm visitors. A small store will sell products grown and processed on the farm and offer information on educational programs and schedules of events. A small parking lot is proposed adjacent to the office complex to provide easy universal access and parking for office employees.

#### *Wagon Trail / Tours*

Tours of the farm will be available by rides on a traditional haywagon, which will traverse a 10'-wide, unpaved trail that passes through the hardwood plantation, along perimeters of pastures and crop fields, through the central facility area to the west of Woodland Place, and continues west toward the existing woodlot, trail, and proposed amphitheater. The wagon trail will utilize portions of existing lanes in the central portion of the site whenever possible.

#### *Value-Added Agriculture Facility / Commercial Kitchen*

A value-added agriculture facility, in which local farmers can bring unfinished goods for processing and storage, will be located in the existing laundry building after renovation. The facility will be open to local farmers for a small usage fee, and will provide opportunities to pasteurize milk, produce and store various cheeses, and will allow the farm to process honey from beehives and bottle water from the on-site spring.

The commercial kitchen will also be located in the laundry building, and will produce good such as tomato sauces, various juices, and other vegetable and meat products. Such products may also be sold at the cafe/store and public market.

#### *Honey Production Areas*

A large grouping of honey beehives is proposed on the site, north of the proposed composting area in the western portion of the site. This will serve as one stop on a farmwide tour, allowing visitors to see first-hand the production of raw honey, while keeping bees away from most of the other facilities on the site.

#### *Greenhouses / Plant Nursery*

Just to the west of the existing laundry building, ample space and sunlight is available for a greenhouse facility (shown as two linear buildings approximately 80 feet in length), pending the removal of the existing mobile home. Maintenance for the greenhouses could be easily performed by farm employees at the nearby farm offices.

#### *Bigler House*

The historic 1840s Bigler House, a local landmark, will be relocated to the site in the pasture just west of the Children's Garden. This location will allow for



time-period landscaping around the house, and easy access for farm visitors. Because the Bigler House may feasibly house a small classroom or laboratory, it's adjacency to the children's garden, girl scout garden, and existing classroom is essential.

#### *Gardens*

Community gardens are proposed within central island of the cul-de-sac proposed at the end of the farm entrance road. Plantings could include vegetables, display plots for crop plants, and perennials. The entire garden area would serve as a display to farm visitors and would be a focal point of approaching traffic on the entrance road.

#### *Rural Life Museum*

A museum depicting past ways of life among agricultural communities is proposed to the east of the existing classroom and gravel parking area, near the existing bank barn. The museum itself may resemble a small barn. Displays will include antique farming equipment, household tools, and interpretive information panels explaining activities that took place in the historic rural household and farmstead. The existing gravel parking lot could be expanded to provide space 15 to 20 cars, thus accommodating museum visitors.

#### *Farm-scale Composting Area*

The existing composting area at Munnell Run Farm is inadequate if the MRFF plans to utilize compost in the production of other materials, such as potting soils, fertilizers, etc. A farm-scale composting area is proposed just to the east of the existing woodlot. This area will contain several "wind rows", or long linear piles of manure and other compost materials, that can be easily turned with large machinery to expose more material to the air and bacteria therein. This will expedite the composting process. Wind rows should be 200 to 300 feet in length, 8 feet wide, and should allow ample room for machinery between rows. The existing composting area could be renovated to provide a semi-enclosed area for packaging of compost products.

#### *Amphitheater*

An outdoor amphitheater is proposed in the existing woodlot, and will be accessible from the existing shredded bark mulch trail. This facility could house as high as 100 persons, depending on desired size, and should be rustic in nature. Rustic fixtures could be built by volunteer labor such as scouts or other community groups, and would result in little or no clearing of the surrounding woodlot. Building materials should include timber and stone.

#### *Rainwater Cisterns*

A best management practice not currently implemented on the Munnell Run Farm site is the use of rainwater cisterns to gather water for watering gardens,



crops, orchards, etc. Through the use of typical rooftop rain gutters, the proposed cisterns would capture water from the proposed public market shelter and the existing Bridge Department garage, providing water for the community gardens, girl scout gardens, children's garden, and proposed orchard. This practice would also be consistent with the farm's policy of organic farming.

#### *Repairs, Renovations, and Re-use*

Many of the existing facilities in the central portion of the site are in need of repair, according to the 2003 Facility Study. The existing bank barn requires construction of a concrete berm to prevent further damage to wood siding by manure piles, and the existing boiler house, 3-bay garage, Area Agency on Aging Building, Water Storage Tank, Bridge Department Garage, and 12-Bay Garage are all in need of general repairs to walls, roofs, doors and windows, and possibly utility systems. When these repairs are performed, consideration should be given to using white paint on all buildings, along with the same color and type of shingling on roofs of all repaired buildings. This will give consistency to the farm facilities, create a look of cleanliness, and add to the pastoral setting.

In addition, repairs to existing facilities will be more cost-effective than construction of new facilities to house existing uses. Because the existing buildings are used primarily for maintenance and storage (garages and barns), they do not need to be renovated and/or maintained as high a degree as publicly-used buildings.

Exceptions include the laundry building, which will house the proposed value-added agriculture facility and commercial kitchen, and the two-bay garage. Although the roof and fixtures of the two-bay garage are in poor condition, the masonry block walls may be reused and the facility could be renovated into a chicken coup.

## **MASTER PLAN OPTION B**



## EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

During the study committee meeting held on May 25, 2005 a discussion was held concerning the opportunities, constraints, and ability of each conceptual master plan to meet the needs of the farm. Following the discussion, the committee instructed Pashek Associates to use the circulation pattern presented in Option 'B' while further refining placement of facilities in that plan.

The positive and negative comments on each alternative conceptual master plan are summarized in the following table:

Concept Plan - Option 'A'		Concept Plan - Option 'B'	
Positives	Negatives	Positives	Negatives
Cafe and Store in Welcome Center at front of property (exposure)	Larger classroom / meeting room needed (school groups of 120+)	High exposure for community gardens - perennials / display is important	Office is hidden by Woodland Place building
Entrance drive provides nice experience (drive past market, through orchard)	Staffing an issue for separate welcome center and office building	Ample room for overflow parking near public market	May be able to have more facilities near orchard on southern property
Public Market near State Route 58 will draw more business	Gazebo will remain, Bigler House must move	Public restroom and welcome center in office building helps with staffing	Need more room for Rural Life Museum; possibly in existing white barn
Location of compost facility separate from other facilities, idea of packaging facility	Need public restroom in the office building	Using two-bay garage for a chicken coop is a good idea	Gazebo will remain, Bigler House must move
Using two-bay garage for a chicken coop is a good idea	Community Gardens should be moved - drainage problem exists in location shown	Bottling, honey production, dairy production, commercial kitchen in value-added facility a good idea	Need to renovate more facilities for future reuse.



Bottling, honey production, dairy production, commercial kitchen in value-added facility a good idea	Need to renovate more facilities for future re-use.	Location of compost facility separate from other facilities, idea of packaging facility	
Office is visible from S.R. 58 - draws interest			

# CHAPTER 3

## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS



The master plan for Munnell Run Farm is a result of intensive analysis of the farm property, active public participation, and an in-depth discussion regarding the agricultural, commercial, and educational facility needs of the Farm.

Good planning helps to reduce future conflicts and safety issues, and can reduce operation and maintenance costs. Furthermore, a sound master plan acts as a valuable asset in attracting sources of grant funding for implementation of proposed facility development.

## PROPOSED RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The following basic principles were taken into account during the design of all proposed farm improvements included in the final master site plans, and should in-part govern their development.

- 1) Proposed improvements should be designed to provide universal access so that farm visitors of all ages or abilities are able to use them with ease.
- 2) As many existing facilities as possible should be renovated for re-use. This will result in cost savings for the farm. Changes in the use of several of the existing facilities on the farm was already planned prior to the beginning of this study.
- 3) Safety of farm visitors, employees, and animals should be taken into account when planning the location of all facilities, with emphasis placed on the adjacency to other farm facilities.
- 4) All improvements on the farm should focus on quality. High-quality site improvements will be more durable, easier to maintain, and more aesthetically pleasing. Improvements proposed in the master plan are, unless otherwise noted, intended to be permanent changes rather than temporary fixes to immediate needs. Management and decision-making efforts at Munnell Run Farm will be recognized more easily as visitors observe and utilize the high-quality facilities.

Based on the inventory and analysis of the site, public input received throughout the master planning process, and design principles such as those mentioned above, Pashek Associates recommends the development of the following facilities and general site improvements at Munnell Run Farm:

- Wagon Tour Trail / Access Road
- Gravel Entrance Drive
- Fruit / Display Orchard



- Display Pasture / Hayfield
- Maple Syrup Grove
- Value-Added Agriculture Facility
- Rural Life Museum
- Public Restrooms (multiple sets)
- Poultry Coop
- Animal Display Barn
- Farmer's Market Facility
- Community Vegetable, Herb, and Perennial Gardens
- Gift Shop
- Bigler House (local historic house c. 1840s) to be used as a classroom
- ADA-Accessible paved walking trail (approximately 1/8 mile)
- Welcome Center including: offices, classrooms, laboratory, kitchen, library / conference room, storage space, and public restrooms
- Farm-Scale Composting Area
- Rustic Outdoor Amphitheater
- Honey Production Facilities (Beehives)
- Stormwater Retention Pond
- Renovations to several existing site buildings
- Parking Areas for office employees, visitors, and buses
- Relocation of the existing Bridge Department Garage

Also, the MRFF should pursue the acquisition of a portion of the Woodland Place property immediately to the east. Acquisition of, or right-of-way through, approximately four (4) acres in northern portion of the aforementioned property would provide a suitable location for a shorter, more direct access road to the farm and would also offer approaching visitors a dramatic view of the farm's facilities and fields.

## MASTER PLAN DESCRIPTION

Having a working farm with room for expansion of educational and agricultural facilities, as well as existing facilities that may be renovated for re-use, provides the MRFF with an opportunity for development of a high-quality facility that will educate visitors from a community (and surrounding region) of which agriculture is a large part. The potential for development of agricultural, educational, and commercial facilities resulted in a unique vision for the improvements at Munnell Run Farm.

The final master plan takes advantage of the southern portion of the Munnell Run Farm property which provides opportunity for direct access to State Route 58 (Greenville Road). In addition, the plan also takes into account the MRFF's desire for acquisition of land for development of a more direct access road to the north of the Woodland Place facility. The intent of the master plan is to



maximize potential development on the current Munnell Run Farm property while preserving the site's pastoral setting. The centralized core of facilities will provide a clean visual consistency typical of an educational environment while incorporating existing and proposed agricultural uses.

Proposed facilities, as well as existing facilities to be renovated, provide opportunities for learning by both large groups and individuals. Providing access in compliance with ADA regulations also accommodates farm visitors of all ages and abilities.

### ENTRANCE ROAD

The road extends west into the site from State Route 58, and directs visitors along the northern edge of the southern-most parcel of the MRF property. A display orchard of fruit trees, a pasture for display of animals, and a maple syrup grove comprised of trees that will be included in the existing hardwood plantation are planned just to the south of the entrance road. Farm visitors will see firsthand some of the farm facilities as they approach the core of site facilities. The proposed entrance road is 20' wide and paved with gravel. This will reduce costs compared to bituminous paving, along with adding to the rural character of the farm.

A location for a future entrance road is shown on the final master plan. Extending a road through the northern portion of the Woodland Place property would provide a more direct from State Route 58, as well as a more picturesque view of the MRF site upon approach. We recommend that Munnell Run Farm pursue the acquisition of a portion of the Woodland Place property, or at least an access right-of-way through the aforementioned parcel from State Route 58.

### SIGNAGE

A major issue that was emphasized throughout the public input process was the need for better identification of the Munnell Run Farm site for travelers on State Route 58. To give the MRF the desired identity, a large facility sign is proposed at the beginning of the site entrance road along State Route 58. The sign should reflect permanence, rural qualities of the surrounding community, and the use of the Munnell Run Farm. Building materials should include stone, timber, and possibly sign foam. Colors should allow the sign to subtly blend with its surrounding environment while not detracting from its visibility along Route 58.



## PARKING

Proposed site parking will consist of 79 spaces, including 8 ADA-accessible spaces and 3 bus spaces, separated into eight separate lots. All spaces will be paved in gravel only, with the exception of accessible spaces, which will be constructed of bituminous paving.

The largest lots are located near the proposed welcome center and farmer's market. These lots contain 35 spaces, along with 3 accessible spaces, 3 bus spaces and a turnaround for buses and emergency vehicles. A pick-up/drop-off area is proposed on the north side of the welcome center, allowing buses to drop off school children near the building before parking. The 15-foot-wide turnaround may also be used to park two additional buses, and has an inside turning radius of 40 feet. Community perennial gardens are located in the central island of the turnaround.

Other smaller lots are located near the existing classroom / picnic shelter, north of the solar panel and pump house for livestock water, north of the three-bay garage housing the farm tour wagon, and south of the proposed value-added agriculture facility. Future expansion of the lot to the north of the farmer's market (12-bay garage) is possible to the north. This expansion would add 15 parking spaces, but would only be feasible with the extension of a future access road through the northern part of the Woodland Place property.

## WELCOME CENTER

The proposed welcome center is a 4,250-foot structure resembling a traditional bank barn. The building will include ground-level entrances on both the first and second floors, providing for an ease of access for visitors and staff members. The first floor will contain a large meeting room / classroom with movable partitions for smaller groups, a laboratory, a kitchen available with meeting hall rentals, public restrooms, storage space, and a furnace / mechanical room. The second floor will contain Mercer County Conservation District (MCCD) and MRFF, Inc. offices, private restrooms, a conference room with library, a maps display room, and receptionist's desk.

School groups will be able to enter the first level directly from the drop-off area and bus parking spaces. The second level is accessible via a deck (that may be used as an outdoor gathering space) which extends across the western and northern sides of the building, as well as from the main entrance to the east, where accessible parking spots are located.





Paved access walks from all adjacent parking lots are proposed. The welcome center location takes advantage of a portion of the existing foundation (and compacted subgrade beneath), and will require the removal of the existing barn foundation and brick silos. The large masonry blocks used to construct the silos should be salvaged for re-use elsewhere on the site, possibly as pavers.

### **PUBLIC RESTROOMS**

An immediate need, as identified throughout the public input process, is for public restrooms on the Farm. School groups currently perform various educational activities on the farm grounds without the use of a public restroom, with the exception of the self-mulching restroom near the existing woodlot, which is located on the western end of the site, far-removed from most farm facilities.

The Final Master Plan proposes the construction of two sets of public restrooms on the Farm, in addition to those planned in the proposed office building. One set of restrooms should be located near the existing classroom building. This restroom facility should consist of two (2) self-mulching restrooms housed in a traditional structure, separate from but near to the classroom building. Without the need for sanitary sewer service, the MRFF will save the expense of sewer line installation and possibly a grinder pump that would be needed to move sewage up hill to the sanitary line near the existing boiler house. A potable water line would be required for hand-washing facilities.

The second set of public restrooms should be built into the western side of the existing machine barn (which will become the proposed Rural Life Museum). The existing block stalls on that side of the building could be renovated and re-used in restroom construction, and the restrooms would be needed at a public-access facility such as the Rural Life Museum.

Public restrooms should also be made available at the Value-added Agriculture Facility / Commercial Kitchen, which would require restrooms as it would also be a public-access facility.

### **FARMER'S MARKET**

The twelve-bay garage is to be renovated for use as a farmer's market. This building is adjacent to open space which will be used for parking, as well as the welcome center offices if maintenance or other assistance is needed during market operation. The garage doors on the east and west sides of the garage may be opened during markets to create an open-air market atmosphere. The



market will not require utilities other than electricity, which is already provided to the existing garage building. Other building renovations such as window and door replacement may not be necessary due to the proposed periodic use. Markets may be monthly or possibly weekly, otherwise the building will be empty and may be used for storage in winter months.

### **GIFT SHOP**

The two-bay garage, now used for storage by the Bridge Department, should be renovated and possibly used as a gift shop to sell products manufactured on the farm as well as works of local craftsmen. The building structure should be checked for asbestos, and the windows and roof should be replaced if the building is to be re-used.

### **BIGLER HOUSE / GARDENS**

The Bigler House, an 1840s home of local historical importance, will be moved from its current location to the Munnell Run Farm property for use as a small classroom. Pasture fences will be extended to allow room for the Bigler House relocation northwest of the existing gazebo, and existing trees in the pasture to the west of the gazebo will be retained to provide shade around the house. A casual picnic area / outdoor gathering space will be provided to the north (back) of the house, consisting of picnic tables or possibly rows of bench seating.

A paved walkway provides access to the Bigler House, and to the relocated Children's Garden and proposed Community Herb / Vegetable Gardens southwest of the house. These gardens will include perimeter fencing similar to that at the existing Children's Garden. Individual plots, bordered by 4" x 4" timbers or other planks similar to those in the Girl Scout garden, will be maintained by various community organizations or school groups.

### **ACCESSIBLE WALKING LOOP PATH**

An ADA-accessible paved walkway will encircle the Bigler House facility and gardens, offering views of the gardens, pastures, animal and poultry display areas, and outdoor learning facility at the Bigler House. This trail will be approximately 1/8 of a mile, with access from the parking lot to the south of the proposed office building and from the main gravel lane. This trail will allow Munnell Run Farm to better accommodate some of the elderly residents of Woodland Place, as well as physically-challenged site visitors.

### **WIND ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEM**

During the master planning process, the MRFF, Inc. expressed the desire to apply for a grant to construct a Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS). A





wind-powered turbine atop an 80-foot tower can produce enough electrical power to reduce monthly electricity costs for an average single-family home by approximately \$100. Although this savings may represent a small portion of the electric bill for the Munnell Run Farm, it is still a reduction in utility cost.

The tower also is planned more as a demonstration site for a sustainable source of energy than for actual cost savings. Neither Cool Spring Township, Jefferson Township, nor Mercer County have ordinances containing regulations for wind-power systems. The construction of a WECS in Mercer County may lead to the development of ordinances in the future as local officials see the benefits of wind energy first-hand.

The placement of the WECS is critical for both safety and efficiency reasons. Sample ordinances state that the distance between a turbine tower and the nearest property line must be at least the height of the tower, measured from ground to top of rotor blade rotation. Rotor blade rotation radius for an 80-foot tower is 11 feet, making total height 91 feet. This “fall zone” ensures that the tower does not damage property owned by anyone except the owner / operator of the tower.

To avoid power-limiting turbulence, it is recommended that a wind turbine tower be high enough so that the bottom point on the arc of the rotor blades is at least 30 feet above any object within 300 feet of the tower, including trees.

Placement of the tower along the existing fence line to the north of the proposed Bigler House location will allow all distance requirements and/or recommendations to be met. The WECS will take advantage of open space created by pastures, which would be minimally affected by its construction or presence. This location takes advantage of prevailing winds, and is also visible to site visitors on State Route 58.

### **STORMWATER RETENTION POND**

A stormwater retention pond is proposed to the north of the existing classroom building. This location takes advantage of a natural swale and may be fitted with a dry hydrant to aid in fire protection. The outlet from this pond will be directed through storm sewer piping and into open natural swales that eventually empty into Munnell Run.

The pond will serve two purposes: 1) retaining barnyard runoff, and 2) serving as an educational facility for the study of wildlife, plant life, or ecosystems. The proposed size of the pond is between 1/4 and 1/2-acre.



## ANIMAL AND POULTRY DISPLAY AREAS

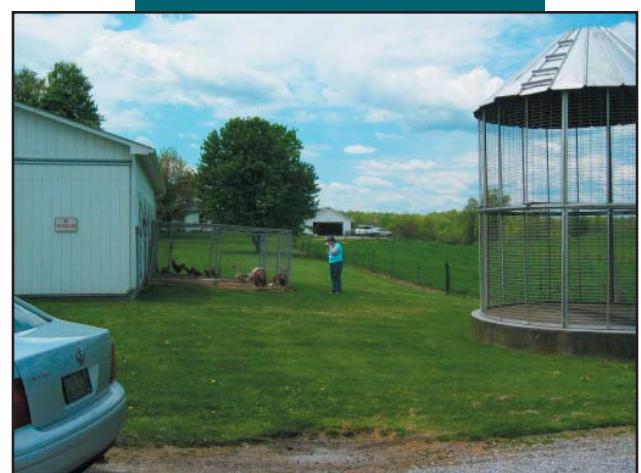
Displaying the various animals raised at MRF is an important part of the hands-on education experience that the farm offers. It allows visitors to interact directly with the animals and observe their habits.

Two areas for such display are proposed in the final master plan. The first is a small barn, approximately 1,200 square feet in area (30' x 40'), located to the north of the proposed Bigler House location. This building will temporarily house larger farm animals during warmer parts of the year. The barn is located outside of the accessible loop trail, so cattle stored in the barn are not required to cross the path pavement to enter and leave the barn. The second display area will be a traditional chicken coop, housing chickens, turkeys, and other poultry raised at the farm or "borrowed" for display from area farmers. These birds should be kept in separate location from other animals for noise reasons and to prevent disease. Poultry pens should allow for both indoor and outdoor viewing, as the concentrated noise within the barn may be overwhelming for sensitive farm visitors. The poultry display barn is located near the Bigler House as well, in order to provide easy access and viewing opportunities.



## RURAL LIFE MUSEUM

A museum depicting past ways of life among agricultural communities is proposed in the existing machinery barn. If renovated for public use, the machinery barn structure will need new windows, new stairs, and structural repairs. The building will also have to be better insulated for heating efficiency, and ADA-access to the second floor will need to be provided, most feasibly timber access ramps resembling decking.



Museum displays will include antique farming equipment, household tools, and interpretive information panels explaining activities that took place in the historic rural household and farmstead. Two parking lots, containing 8 and 5 parking spaces respectively, are proposed in close proximity to the Museum. Each of these two lots contains one accessible parking space. Concrete walkways will provide access to the building entrance.

## MACHINERY BUILDING

With the development of the Rural Life Museum, the existing machine shop used to repair farm machinery was displaced. The final master plan proposes the renovation of the existing boiler house into a machine shop. The building



is currently unused except that it houses two pumps that supply water to Woodland Place, and a backup generator to keep the pumps running during power failure. These pumps can remain in the building and will not obstruct any farm-related use. The two large boilers that occupy most of the floor area in the existing building, should be removed. Pashek Associates recommends that the boilers, the existing water tower, and the several pieces of abandoned farm equipment stored in the lawn to the south of the boiler house, be sold as scrap to a local dealer. This will raise funds and allow site development to take place. The tenant farmer should be consulted before this sale, as he is owner of some of the abandoned equipment.

The building structure is in need of several repairs. Exterior brick, steel lintels, and the building's roof are all in need of general repairs, and the structure and boilers should also be tested for asbestos. The existing silo presents a safety hazard: loose brick may fall as the structure deteriorates. The silo should be removed, and large garage doors should be added to the western side of the building to allow access for machinery to be repaired. One other building issue is the underground tunnels extending from the boiler house to Woodland Place. These tunnels once housed conduit but are now abandoned and may be used by wildlife such as raccoons. The tunnels should be sealed from inside the boiler house to prevent access.

Further building repairs, such as windows or cosmetic changes, may be unnecessary as this facility will not be open to the public and its current use does not require them. The exterior of the building may be painted or repaired only for consistency with other site structures.

The 15,000-gallon water storage tank that is attached to the northern side of the boiler house shows signs of deterioration, but not leaking. Steel reinforcement is visible through the disintegrated concrete, but the structure passed testing as late as 2003, when the "Munnell Run Farm Mercer County Conservation District Facility Study" was completed.



### **VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE FACILITY**

A value-added agriculture facility, in which local farmers can bring unfinished goods for processing and storage, will be located in the existing laundry building after renovation. The facility will be open to local farmers for a small usage fee, and will provide opportunities to pasteurize milk, produce and store various cheeses, and will allow the farm to process honey from beehives and bottle water from the on-site spring.



Several building repairs are needed, including replacement of the single-pane windows, stabilizing the concrete floor (under which is located the abandoned conduit tunnel connecting the boiler house and Woodland Place), and heating and electrical systems updates. The building's thresholds also need to be brought into compliance with ADA regulations and the existing boiler, which contains asbestos, should be removed.

Although the interior walls are constructed of white tiles, the ideal surface for interior walls will be white plastic sheeting. This surface will be easily cleaned and will also lend a clean appearance to this food-processing facility.

The commercial kitchen will also be located in the laundry building, and will produce good such as tomato sauces, various juices, and other vegetable and meat products. Such products may also be sold at the cafe/store and public market.

A proposed 10-car parking lot will accommodate users of the value-added facility, and a concrete walkway provides building access from the parking lot, which contains one ADA-accessible parking space.

### **BRIDGE DEPARTMENT GARAGE**

It is recommended that the existing Bridge Department Garage be relocated to the south, away from farm-related uses. The relocated garage will be accessible via the farm entrance road, and will eliminate the need for Bridge Department vehicles to travel through the central facilities area of the site. A gravel turnaround / loading area is also proposed to prevent larger Bridge Department vehicles from having to drive on surrounding lawn.

### **FRUIT ORCHARD**

Organic farming method may be used to grow a crop of fruit trees for fruit harvest in the summer and fall and for flower display in the spring. Visitors to the Munnell Run Farm site will pass the orchard and display pasture during their approach.

### **FARM-SCALE COMPOSTING AREA**

A farm-scale composting area is proposed just to the east of the existing woodlot. This area will contain several "wind rows," or long linear piles of manure and other compost materials, that can be easily turned with large machinery to expose more material to the air and bacteria therein. This will expedite the composting process. Wind rows should be 200 to 300 feet in length, 8 feet wide, and should allow ample room for machinery between rows. Packaging of compost products such as potting and planting soils may take place elsewhere on the site.





## RUSTIC AMPHITHEATER / WOODLOT TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

An outdoor amphitheater is proposed in the existing woodlot, and will be accessible from the existing shredded bark mulch trail. This facility will have capacity for 100 persons and should be rustic in nature. Rustic fixtures could be built by volunteer labor such as scouts or other community groups, and would result in little or no clearing of the surrounding woodlot. Building materials should include timber, stone, and earth.

The exact location of the amphitheater should be taken into account noise from State Route 258, as well as topography. The existing woodlot is relatively level, but some areas retain water and should be avoided when choosing a site for the amphitheater.

The existing woodlot trail will also need to be resurfaced in order to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations. A compacted aggregate surface such as crushed limestone with a larger aggregate base is recommended as it is more cost-effective than asphalt pavement or concrete. Signage may be instituted in the future, but with most tours of the woodlot being guided by Munnell Run Farm Foundation educators, the educational experience would be gained through direct instruction and explanation rather than independent reading of signage by visitors.

The amphitheater and improvements to the existing trail will enable Munnell Run Farm to better accommodate school groups and offer a hands-on learning experience in the aspects of sustainable forestry and forest ecology.

## RAINWATER CISTERNS

A site-wide best management practice proposed for the Munnell Run Farm site is the use of rainwater cisterns to gather water for gardens, crops, orchards, etc. Through the use of typical rooftop rain gutters, the proposed cisterns would capture water from the proposed farmer's market, welcome center, and the existing three-bay garage, providing water for the proposed community gardens, existing girl scout gardens and relocated children's garden, and proposed orchard. This practice would also be consistent with the farm's policy of sustainable farming.

## HONEY PRODUCTION AREA

A large grouping of honey beehives is proposed on the site, north of the proposed composting area in the western portion of the site. This will serve as one stop on a farm-wide tour, allowing visitors to see first-hand the production of raw honey, while keeping bees away from most of the other facilities on the site. Honey may then be processed and/or packaged as needed at the value-



added facility.

### **WAGON TRAIL / TOURS**

Tours of the farm will be available by rides on a large passenger wagon hauled by a tractor, which will traverse a 10'-wide, unpaved trail that passes through the hardwood plantation, along perimeters of pastures and crop fields, through the central facility area to the west of Woodland Place, and continues west toward the existing woodlot and trail, proposed amphitheater, and proposed composting and honey production areas. The wagon trail will utilize portions of existing lanes in the central portion of the site whenever possible.

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS**

The existing bank barn structure is in need of repairs. The structure is also in need of painting, mainly for consistency with proposed facilities.

Another needed improvement identified during the master planning process is the replacement of pasture fence along the south side of the main gravel lane, west of the riparian area along Munnell Run. This fence should be removed, the area cleared of brush, and a new barbed wire-and-timber post fence installed.

A maple syrup grove is also planned as a part of the existing hardwood plantation to the south of the proposed entrance road. This facility will not require development other than mowing to provide easy access, and equipment for tapping syrup from trees.

### **UTILITY SERVICES**

As with any public facility, a need exists to cater to the convenience of farm visitors who wish to use the various facilities available at the farm. Therefore, the final master plan must diligently address the utility concerns of each facility and provide services necessary to avoid inconvenience to farm visitors.

Based on discussions that occurred throughout the public input process, the following items must be given consideration:

- o The Welcome Center will require potable water, electricity, and sanitary sewer services. None of these services were available at the former barn, thus lines will need to be extended from elsewhere on the site.



- o Sanitary sewer, potable water, and electric services may be needed at the existing laundry building upon renovation for use as a value-added agriculture facility and commercial kitchen. If these utility services are already available, systems may need updated.
- o The majority of the site structures to be renovated and re-used may require updates to existing services that are already in place, as many are functional but outdated.
- o Additional security lighting may be necessary upon implementation of new facilities at Munnell Run Farm. Power for these area lights should extend from existing lighting while minimizing disturbance to existing site facilities. Other night-time lighting will be unnecessary, as farm facilities will be closed during night-time hours.
- o The Bigler House will require electricity and water service if it is to be used as a classroom.
- o Electric Service lines will need to be extended to the Wind Energy Conversion System, and these lines must connect to existing lines in order for electrical power produced by the wind turbine to be utilized for site electrical needs.
- o Some means of transporting water from the existing pump house to the commercial kitchen for filtering and bottling may be necessary. This utility should be seen as an element of that individual facility, and is unnecessary until development of the Value-Added Agriculture Facility / Commercial Kitchen occurs.

## **FINAL MASTER PLAN**



## ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Estimates of probable construction costs were developed for the proposed site improvements. These estimates were based on the assumption that the implementation of the facilities will occur through a public bidding process, utilizing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's 2005 Prevailing Wage Rates. To budget for inflation of costs for future improvements, we recommend a four percent (4%) annual increase be budgeted for all work occurring after 2005.

In Pennsylvania, all projects over \$25,000 are required to use the State's Prevailing Wage Rates for Construction. However, volunteer labor, as well as donated equipment and materials, may dramatically reduce construction costs. In addition, the MRFF, Inc. may pursue the construction of some of the proposed facilities utilizing the Cool Spring Township or Mercer County Public Works Departments. It is anticipated that this would also reduce the projected construction costs. Additionally, alternate sources of funding, including grant opportunities identified herein, may help to offset the expense to the MRFF, Inc.

Based on these requirements, the estimates of probable construction costs to implement all of the improvements being proposed on the Munnell Run Farm property are summarized as follows:

- o Demolition and Removals: Removal of the existing trailer, barn foundation, silos, smokestack at the boiler house, abandoned farm equipment, water tower, block shed, trees, fencing, as well as clearing and grubbing of pasture land and forested area.

Subtotal: \$ 37,575

- o Site Work: Earthwork, gravel entrance road and parking lots, Bituminous accessible parking, signage and line striping, concrete walks, fencing, retention pond, garden construction, wagon trail, rustic amphitheater, farm-scale composting facility, and rainwater cisterns.

Subtotal: \$ 338, 665

- o Site Structures: Relocation of the Bigler House and Bridge Department garage; renovations to the existing twelve-bay garage (farmer's market), two-bay garage (gift shop), boiler house (machine shop), laundry building (value-added facility), machinery barn (rural life museum); and development of two sets of public restrooms (one self-composting and one conventional), an animal display



barn, poultry coop, wind energy conversion system, bee hives, and a welcome center / office building (all development includes utilities).

Subtotal: \$ 1,890,620

- o Landscaping / Planting: Fruit trees, garden plants (vegetables / herbs / perennials), seeding for hay in additional pasture space, and lawn seeding.

Subtotal: \$ 44,100

- o Utilities: Area security lighting, including conduit and using existing poles where possible.

Subtotal: \$ 15,000

- o Additional Costs: Permits, erosion and sediment control, stake-out, mobilization, bonds and insurance (for contractor).

Subtotal: \$ 418,672

- o Professional Services: Design, construction document preparation, and construction observation.

Subtotal: \$ 232,596

- o Construction Contingency: To allow unknown field conditions to be addressed during the course of construction.

Subtotal: \$ 232,596

The total estimate of probable construction costs for Munnell Run Farm, in 2005 dollars, is \$3,209,825. Utilizing donated (volunteer) labor and materials, a significant savings may be realized. Acquisition of grants can further reduce the direct cost to the Munnell Run Farm Foundation.

## **COST ESTIMATE**

**CONTINUED**



## PHASING

Ideally, the Munnell Run Farm Foundation (MRFF) would construct all proposed improvements in one phase, minimizing construction activities, disruptions, and realizing “economies of scale” construction savings. However, few organizations can afford to proceed in this manner and find it more appropriate to phase construction over an extended period of time.

Pashek Associates recommends that the improvements to Munnell Run Farm be constructed in a series of logical phases. Depending on the MRFF’s financial situation and the success of grant writing efforts, this phasing plan may be either expedited or lengthened.

Recognizing the MRFF’s desire to construct improvements as quickly and efficiently as possible, we recommend eight (8) phases of construction for Munnell Run Farm, with an approximate 3-year time period between the stop and start of construction between phases. This phasing schedule will allow time for the MRFF to organizing fund-raising efforts and maximize grant-writing efforts.

### **Phase I - \$ 252,063**

The first phase of construction should concentrate on the implementation of public restrooms, which are an immediate need at the Farm. The proposed self-composting restroom near the existing classroom building, along with the proposed conventional restrooms on the west end of the existing machinery barn, should both be constructed. This will fill the immediate need for restrooms and enable the Farm to better accommodate school groups and other visitors. Other items that should be included in the first phase of construction are the removal and relocation of fencing to make room for the future Bigler House relocation, relocation of the children’s garden and development of the community vegetable / herb garden, relocation of the Bridge Department garage, removal of the existing trailer, improvements to the existing woodlot trail, and lawn seeding.

Based on the input received during this study, and the resulting recommendations of this plan, we recommend that the MRFF begin the master site plan by following the short-term implementation strategies outlined below, in addition to Phase I construction tasks.

- Officially adopt this Master Plan, as a resolution of the MRFF Board of Directors, as the guide for the development of improvements to Munnell Run Farm.
- Retain a consultant to prepare design development documents for all proposed Farm improvements, and prepare construction documents



for Phase I improvements.

- Retain a consultant to prepare and submit an NPDES Permit application to the Mercer County Conservation District Office.
- The MRFF should work with local community groups, scouting organizations, local vocational schools, and surrounding school districts to construct smaller improvements to the Farm (signage, fencing, gardens, etc.)
- Bid and construct Phase I improvements as mentioned previously.

In addition to these activities, the MRFF must continue its effort to raise the funds necessary for construction of Phase I and begin preparing implementation strategies for future phases.

#### **Phase II - \$ 543,332**

The second phase of construction at Munnell Run Farm should include removals of the silos, barn foundation (partial), and block shed north of the existing Bridge Department garage; construction of two parking lots, including two (2) accessible parking spaces and bus parking spaces and turnaround, north of the existing gravel lane; construction of the ADA-accessible walking loop path encircling the future Bigler House location; earthwork; renovations of the existing twelve-bay garage (Farmer's Market) and existing machinery barn (Rural Life Museum), and purchase of plants for the community gardens, and lawn seeding.

#### **Phase III - \$ 291,700**

Phase III construction should consist of: removals of the smokestack at the boiler house, abandoned farm equipment, the water tower, and barbed wire pasture fencing along the south side of the existing gravel lane to the west of Munnell Run; construction of a portion of the gravel entrance road extending to the relocated Bridge Department garage, along with a parking lot including one accessible parking space; earthwork; construction of the unpaved wagon trail, rustic amphitheater, and farm-scale composting facilities; renovations to the two-bay garage; relocation of the Bigler House onto the Farm site; construction of the poultry coop; and lawn seeding.

#### **Phase IV - \$ 404,152**

The focus of Phase IV construction should be the renovation of the existing laundry building into the Value-Added Agriculture facility and Commercial Kitchen. Other items include: gravel paving for a portion of the entrance road along with parking lots including two (2) accessible spaces, concrete walkways, and earthwork.



#### **Phase V - \$ 171,902**

The emphasis of Phase V construction should be the completion of the Farm entrance road and other facilities or improvements associated with a Farm visitor's experience upon entering the Farm site. Other items to be included in this phase are: a parking lot containing one accessible parking space, the site entrance sign, fencing, earthwork, seeding for the proposed display pasture, and fruit tree plantings for the proposed orchard.

#### **Phase VI - \$ 349,796**

The sixth phase of construction at Munnell Run Farm should consist of earthwork, gravel paving, signage, concrete walkways, construction of the retention pond, bank barn renovations, construction of the proposed animal display barn and wind energy conversion system, and installation of the honey production facility (beehives), and area security lighting.

#### **Phase VII - \$ 907,618**

The seventh phase of construction is considerably more costly than other phases because it contains the construction of the proposed 4,250-square-foot office building / welcome center. Items associated with this structure's construction include: removal of the remaining portion of the barn foundation; two accessible parking spaces with signage; concrete walks and stairs; and earthwork. The office / welcome center facility was planned in later phases because the Mercer County Conservation District has existing offices on the site in an existing house on the eastern portion of the Woodland Place property, and because the funds necessary for construction of the proposed facility may take more time to raise than funding for other facilities.

#### **Phase VIII - \$ 289,262**

The eighth and final proposed phase of construction should focus on renovations to the existing boiler house into a Machine Shop. This will include removal of most interior machinery and the addition of garage doors on the lower level (western side). Related improvements that should accompany the renovation of the boiler house are earthwork and concrete sidewalks.

## PHASED COST



## **SOURCES OF FUNDING OR OTHER SERVICES FOR PROPOSED FARM IMPROVEMENTS**

Many agencies provide grants or services to assist in providing financial resources to implement design and construction of facilities similar to those proposed for Munnell Run Farm. Some offer grants to implement educational programs in concert with these facilities. Others support the planning and implementation of projects with preservation of wildlife habitat or agricultural land use. Assistance can also be acquired in the form of technical help, information exchange, and training.

Submission of a thorough grant application may result in award of monies or services, given the competition for the grant award. Strategies for improving the chances of receiving a grant include:

- o Being well-prepared by knowing the grant agency, non-profit organization, or government group (contact persons, addresses, phone numbers); ensuring your organization and the project are eligible; and submitting a complete and accurate application ahead of the specified deadline.
- o Clearly indicating the grant agency's vision, interest, and plans in the application, to portray how your project furthers their goals. Describe how matching funds such as private contributions and other grants will leverage the available grant funding. Describe how maintenance of the site will be accomplished to help justify the request for a grant award. Show past successes such as how past projects were funded and built, or partnerships that were formed, and how this project will follow those successes.
- o Contacting the grant agencies by personally meeting with them to show your commitment to the project and to explain the project's benefits to the community and surrounding region.

Based on the potential sources of funding and other assistance for this project, Pashek Associates recommends that the Munnell Run Farm Foundation, Inc. pursue, at a minimum, the following funding and/or partnership opportunities:



Facility	Potential Funding Sources
Value-Added Agriculture Facility	First Industry Fund, Cresci (private fund)
Rural Life Museum	Mercer County Historical Society, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Mercer County Tourist Promotion / Convention Bureau
Other Farm Facilities, Wildlife Habitat and Agricultural Land Conservation	<p>Funding Opportunities --</p> <p>DEP Growing Greener Grants, Land and Water Conservation Fund, DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Programs, PA Game Commission, Local Banks (ex. Mercer County State Bank - Sandy Lake, PA and Ag Choice Farm Credit - Meadville, PA), Local Legislators, Senators, Congressmen (Phil English), Local Grange Organizations, Rotary Club, Lions Club, USDA Conservation Reserve Program, SAR, PDA, Center for Rural Pennsylvania, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Trout Unlimited</p> <p>Volunteer Labor Sources --</p> <p>Local Vocational Technical School, 4H Club, Local School Superintendent's Organization</p> <p>Marketing Opportunities --</p> <p>County Website Link, Allegheny Erie Earth Force, PA Nature Center Alliance</p>
Restrooms	Pennsylvania Conservation Corps, donated materials, donated / volunteer labor
Walking Trail	Donated materials, donated / volunteer labor
Landscaping	National Tree Trust, donated / volunteer labor



## POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The MRFF should explore all potential sources of funding and other assistance and apply for funding or assistance as often as possible. An application that is rejected one year may still be accepted in future years.

The following is a list of known potential sources of funding and other assistance as previously listed, along with descriptions, program requirements, and contact information:

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers Program:**

Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Program Goals: This program was authorized by Congress to award grants to rural and inner-city public schools, or consortia of such schools, to plan, implement, or expand projects that address the education, health, social services, cultural, and recreational needs of the community.

Program Restrictions: School Districts must collaborate with an outside entity, such as another public agency or non-profit organization

Use of Funds or Support: Applications must address four of the following program activities: literacy education programs; senior citizen programs; children's day care services; integrated education; health, social service, recreational or cultural programs; summer and weekend school programs in conjunction with recreation programs; nutrition and health programs; expanded library service hours to serve community needs; telecommunications and technology education programs for individuals of all ages; parenting skills education programs; support and training for child day care providers; employment counseling, training, and placement; services for individuals who leave before graduating from secondary school, regardless of age of such individual; services for individuals with disabilities.

Contact: 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Attn: CFDA 84.287, U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center, Regional Office Building 3, Room 36337th & D Streets, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4725

Phone: 1-800-USA-LEARN

Website: [www.ed.gov/21stcclc](http://www.ed.gov/21stcclc)

- **National Tree Trust**

Program Goals: This program provides tree seedlings for planting on roadsides, highways, or land under the jurisdiction of any federal, state, municipal, or transportation authority.



**Program Restrictions:** Limitations include a minimum of 100 trees to a maximum of 10,000 trees. All trees delivered must be planted, and only volunteers may do the planting. The trees must be planted on public property.

**Use of Funds or Support:** Monetary grants are provided to local tree-planting organizations that support volunteer planting and education efforts throughout the United States.

**Address:** Todd Nelson, 1120 G Street, Suite 770, Washington, DC 20005

**Phone:** 1-800-846-8733

**Website:** <http://www.nationaltreestrust.org>

- **Community Conservation Partnerships Programs**

**Agency:** Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

**Program Goals:** To develop and sustain partnerships with communities, non-profits and other organizations for recreation and conservation projects and purposes. The Bureau of Recreation and Conservation is responsible for fostering, facilitating and nurturing the great majority of these partnerships through technical assistance and grant funding from the Community Conservation Partnerships Programs.

**Program Restrictions:** See DCNR grant application manual for the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, as program restrictions vary by type.

**Use of Funds:**

1) Planning and Technical Assistance: Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plans; County Natural Area Inventories; Feasibility Studies; Greenways and Trails Plans; Rails-to-Trails Plans; Master Site Plans; River Conservation Plans; Education and Training; Peer-to-Peer Consultation and Circuit Riders (temporary employment of a full-time Park and Recreation Practitioner);

2) Acquisition Projects: Park and Recreation Areas; Greenways, Trails, and Rivers Conservation; Rails-to-Trails; Natural and Critical Habitat Areas;

3) Development Projects: Park and Recreation Areas; Park Rehabilitation and Development; Small Community Development; Greenways and Trails; Rails-to-Trails; Rivers Conservation; Federally Funded Projects; Lands and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Projects; Pennsylvania Recreational Trails

**Contact:** Mark Kulich, PA DCNR, Northwest Field Office, 1200 Lovell Place, Erie, PA 16503

**Phone:** (814) 871-4190

**Website:** <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us>



- **Community Improvement Grants**

Agency: Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Department

Program Goals: Focus is to support “greening” partnerships linking grassroots organizations, local community groups, and natural resource experts in support of community resource and natural resource management.

Use of Funds or Support: Encourages partnerships with and between diverse organizations and groups. Supports local improvement projects, tree planting projects in parks, greenbelts, schools, and community public spaces.

Contact: Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, Cooperative Extension in Mercer County, P.O. Box 530, 463 North Perry Highway, Mercer, PA 16137-0530

Phone: (724) 662-3141

Fax: (724) 662-1933

Email: MercerExt@psu.edu

Website: <http://mercer.extension.psu.edu>

- **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

Agency: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Program Goals: Designed to reduce erosion on sensitive lands, CRP also improves soil and water, and provides significant wildlife habitat.

Program Restrictions: Applications are for 10 and 15 year contracts.

Use of Funds or Support: The CRP offers annual rental payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost-share assistance to establish approved groundcover on eligible cropland.

Contact Info.: RR#12, Box 202 C, Greensburg, PA 15601-9271

Phone: (724) 834-9063 ext. 3 Fax: (724) 837-4127

Website: [www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/](http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/)

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants**

Agency: LWCF

Program Goals: To provide park and recreation opportunities to residents throughout the United States, to allow communities to acquire and build a variety of park and recreation facilities, including trails. Funds are annually distributed by the National Park Service through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

Program Restrictions: Communities must match LWCF grants with 50% of the local project costs through in-kind services or cash. All projects funded by the LWCF grants must be exclusively for recreation purposes, into perpetuity. Grants are administered through the DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2).



**Use of Funds or Support:** Planning and investment in an existing park system.

**Contact Info.:** U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Recreation Programs Room, MIB-MS 3622, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240

**Phone:** (202) 565-1200

**Website:** <http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/lwclf/>

- **National Recreational Trails Fund Act (NRTFA)**

**Agency:** PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) - administered through the Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2)

**Program Goals:** The recreational trails program provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. The program funding represents a portion of the revenue received by the Federal Highway Trust Fund from the federal motor fuel excise tax paid by users of off-road recreational vehicles.

**Program Restrictions:** A component of TEA21, matching requirements for the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Grants are 80% federal money, up to a maximum of \$150,000, and 20% non-federal money. However, acquisition projects will require a 50/50 match. “Soft match” is permitted from any project sponsor, whether private or public money. (“Soft match” includes credit for donations of funds, materials, services, or new right-of-way).

**Use of Funds or Support:** The department must distribute funding among motorized, non-motorized, and diverse trail use as follows: 40% minimum for diverse trail use, 30% minimum for non-motorized recreation, and 30% minimum for motorized recreation. The Commonwealth may also use up to 5% of its funds for the operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to the use of recreational trails. The department will also consider projects that provide for the redesign, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance, or relocation of recreational trails to benefit the natural environment.

**Contact:** Mark Kulich, PA DCNR, Northwest Regional Field Office, 1200 Lovell Place, Erie, PA 16503

**Phone:** (814) 871-4190

**Website:** <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us>

- **Pennsylvania Conservation Corps**

**Agency:** Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

**Program Goals:** This program provides work experience, job training, and educational opportunities to young adults while accomplishing



conservation, recreation, historic preservation, and urban revitalization work on public lands.

**Program Restrictions:** The project sponsors receive the services of a Pennsylvania Conservation Corps crew, fully paid, for one year. Sponsors can also receive up to \$20,000 for needed materials and contracted services. Sponsors must provide a 25% cash match on material and contracted services costs.

**Use of Funds or Support:** Funds may be used for materials and contracted services needed to complete approved projects.

**Contact:** Lou Scott, Director, 1304 Labor and Industry Building, 7th and Forester Streets, Harrisburg, PA 17120

**Phone:** (717) 783-6385

**Website:** <http://www.dli.state.pa.us>

- **Wal-Mart - Good Works**

**Agency:** Wal-Mart Foundation

**Program Goals:** Allows local non-profit organizations to hold fundraisers at their local Wal-Mart or Sam's Club. Wal-Mart and Sam's Club can elect to match a portion of the funds collected, up to \$1,000. Events held on the premises are eligible for funding when a Wal-Mart or Sam's Club Associate is actively involved in the event. Additionally, once the Wal-Mart or Sam's Club Associate has met certain criteria in the Matching Grant Program each year, a second source of funding is awarded to the store / club to use in the community. These funds do not require a fundraiser to be held, instead the funds can be awarded directly to a deserving organization.

**Program Restrictions:** Organizations that may qualify to receive funding through the Matching Grant Program are 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations or organizations that are exempt from needing 501(c)(3) status, such as public schools, faith-based institutions such as churches (must be conducting a project that benefits the community at large), and government agencies.

**Use of Funds or Support:** Community Improvement Projects.

**Contact:** Community Involvement Coordinator at your local Wal-Mart or Sam's Club store.

**Website:** [www.walmartfoundation.org/wmstore/goodworks](http://www.walmartfoundation.org/wmstore/goodworks)

- **Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation**

**Program Goals:** Education. Community improvement projects such as projects at parks and other public areas, housing for underprivileged and innovative environmental issues.

**Program Restrictions:** Organizations that may qualify to receive funding through the Matching Grant Program are 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.



Contact: The Foundation only accepts grant applications submitted online through the website.

Website: <http://www.easy2.com/cm/lowe/foundation/intro.asp>

- **PA Grows**

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA)

Program Goals: PA Grows is the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's new initiative designed to assist agricultural producers in gaining access to the capital they need to begin, continue, or expand their businesses. Through this program, producers can get the help they need to:

- Learn about federal financing programs available to farmers through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Small Business Administration;
- Learn about the requirements of the Commonwealth's new First Industries program;
- Locate the appropriate partners among local and regional economic development organizations;
- Find private lenders to partner with the Commonwealth in the Small Business First and Machinery and Equipment Loan Fund programs;
- Complete the paperwork necessary to apply for loans and grants.

Phone: Toll-Free 1-888-724-7697 (888-PAGROWS)

Fax: (717) 754-0176

Contact Info. for General Information: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110,

Phone: (717) 787-4737, Email: [aginfo@state.pa.us](mailto:aginfo@state.pa.us)

Website: [www.pagrows.com](http://www.pagrows.com) or

[www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&Q=133584](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&Q=133584)

- **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)**

Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture - Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)

Program Goals: SARE is a competitive grant program providing grants to researchers, agricultural educators, farmers, ranchers, and students in the U.S.

Research and Education Grants: Ranging from \$30,000 to \$150,000 or more, these grants fund projects that usually involve scientists, producers, and others in an interdisciplinary approach.

Professional Development Grants: To spread the knowledge about sustainable concepts and practices, these projects educate Cooperative Extension Service staff and other ag professionals.

Producer Grants: Producers apply for grants that typically run between \$1,000 and \$15,000 to conduct research, marketing and demonstration projects and share the results with other farmers and ranchers.



**Other grant opportunities:** Graduate students, community development practitioners, and ag-educators conducting on-farm research can apply for grants in some SARE regions.

**Other funding opportunities** - the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with other agencies, compiled a list of federal programs for sustainable agriculture, forestry, conservation, and community development in 2004. This list is available for free download at [www.sare.org/publications/ruralplaces.htm](http://www.sare.org/publications/ruralplaces.htm)

**Contact:** Northeast SARE, University of Vermont, Hills Building, 105 Carrigan Drive, Burlington, VT 05405-0082

**Phone:** (802) 656-0471

**Fax:** (802) 656-4656

**Email:** nesare@uvm.edu

**Website:** [www.uvm.edu/~nesare/grants.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~nesare/grants.html) and [www.sare.org/grants/index.htm](http://www.sare.org/grants/index.htm)

- **Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Community Conservation Program and  
Watershed Assistance Center**

**Support Offered:** Networking and possible funding sources for conservation programs and agricultural initiatives. The Watershed Assistance Center is currently involved in many agricultural initiatives, some of which are in Mercer County.

**Contact (Community Conservation Program):** Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Constituent Programs, 209 Fourth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

**Phone:** (412) 288-2777

Susan S. Neszpaul, Vice President of Constituent Programs, (412) 586-2368, [sneszpaul@paconserve.org](mailto:sneszpaul@paconserve.org)

Pam Geary, Director of Membership, (412) 586-2342, [pgeary@paconserve.org](mailto:pgeary@paconserve.org)

**Contact:** (Watershed Assistance Center): Nick Pinizzotto, Senior Director of Watershed Programs, 246 South Walnut Street, Blairsville, PA 15717.

**Phone:** (724) 459-0953

**Email:** [NPinizzotto@paconserve.org](mailto:NPinizzotto@paconserve.org)

**Website:** [www.wpconline.org/gardens/](http://www.wpconline.org/gardens/)

- **Center for Rural Pennsylvania Grants / Mini-Grants**

**Agency:** Center for Rural Pennsylvania

**Program Goals:** The Center for Rural Pennsylvania is a bipartisan, bicameral legislative agency that serves as a resource for rural policy within the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The Center works with various organizations to maximize resources and strategies that may



better serve Pennsylvania's 2.8-million rural residents, and promotes vitality of rural communities by awarding grants for research and model projects. The Center's Board of Directors annually approves topics for research and demonstration projects. All projects must show a clear relationship to one or more of the Center's mandated research areas, which are rural people and communities; economic development; local government finance and administration; community services; natural resources and the environment; rural values and social change; and educational outreach.

**Program Restrictions:** The Center's enabling legislation requires that Center grants be awarded to qualified faculty members of the Pennsylvania State University or State System of Higher Education (SSHE) universities. The qualified faculty member must serve as the project director. Partnerships with other academic institutions, community organizations, and other public and private agencies are encouraged. The Center does not require a cash match from applicants for the grant programs. However, investment by other partners clearly represents support and belief in a proposed project so the commitment of matching cash or in-kind funding can offer a competitive advantage to an applicant. Maximum allowable grant is \$50,000 per year, per project. Applicants must meet all grant requirements each year to receive continuing grant. Maximum allowable Mini-Grant is \$10,000 for projects of 9 months or less.

**Use of Funds or Support:** Rural research or model projects.

**Contact:** Mary Kandray Gelenser, Program Manager for Grants, Center for Rural Pennsylvania, 200 North Third Street, Suite 600, Harrisburg, PA 17101

**Phone:** (717) 787-9555

**Fax:** (717) 772-3587

**Email:** [info@ruralpa.org](mailto:info@ruralpa.org)

**Website:** [www.ruralpa.org/rfp.html](http://www.ruralpa.org/rfp.html)

- **Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education (PCEE) Grants**

**Program Goals:** The Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education is established to provide increased public and private access to quality environmental education through service, education, and research. The functions of the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education are to:

- Establish an environmental education computer network system to help disseminate environmental education materials and programs.
- Provide technical assistance for pre-service teacher preparation in the area of environmental education.
- Provide the opportunity for professional development through



continuing education.

- Promote the formation of partnerships with educators, schools, local officials, county conservation districts, business, industry, non-profit citizen and environmental education organizations.

The PCEE offers a wide range of grants and information on grants from other related agencies. Program restrictions vary greatly according to individual grant requirements.

Facilities may also become a member of PCEE's Facility Directory, linking them to other similar facilities and potential investors, patrons, and customers.

Contact: Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education (PCEE)  
Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA 16057

Phone: (724) 738-4555

Fax: (724) 738-4052

Email: PCEE@sru.edu

Website: [www.pcee.org/Useful\\_EE\\_Aids/Funding\\_Main.asp](http://www.pcee.org/Useful_EE_Aids/Funding_Main.asp)

- **Pennsylvania Green Project Bank**

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP)

Program Goals: The Pennsylvania Green Project bank is an interactive online marketplace where organizations seeking funding for environmental projects can be matched with organizations seeking to fund such projects. Potential sponsors can search for environmental projects by County, Watershed, Organization, Project Focus, or Dollar Amount.

The Green Project Bank also helps PA DEP to find Environmental Projects to fund, using various funds and monetary penalties collected each year.

Program Restrictions: An organization must submit a profile of a Green Project. For example: a project that restores watersheds; reduces energy or water use; prevents air, water, or land pollution; cleans up litter; educates students or the public about how they can improve the environment; or supports efforts to save habitats and sensitive areas. Project profiles are updated every six months if projects are still seeking sponsors.

Contact: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection  
DEP Grants Center, 15th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building,  
400 Market Street, P.O. Box 8776, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8776



*Phone:* (717) 705-5400 or 1-877-PAGREEN

*Email:* [greenprojectbank@state.pa.us](mailto:greenprojectbank@state.pa.us)

*Website:* [www.greenprojectbank.org](http://www.greenprojectbank.org) or

[www.dep.state.pa.us/greenprojectbank/](http://www.dep.state.pa.us/greenprojectbank/)

- **Lake Erie-Allegheny (LEA) Earth Force**

*Program Goals:* All Earth Force programs offer educators innovative materials, training and support that help youth connect to their communities and address environmental issues.

#### **CAPS**

Local Earth Force offices and affiliates offer Community Action and Problem Solving (CAPS), a program that trains and supports educators in the core Earth Force process. Local support helps educators connect to the community, creating hands-on learning experiences for youth.

#### **GREEN**

The Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN) brings science to life. GREEN has the tools teachers everywhere use to build exciting, hands-on science programs around watershed assessment and improvement projects. Resources include the innovative Protecting Our Watersheds curriculum, testing kits and online data entry and assessment tools at [www.green.org](http://www.green.org)

#### **Earth Force After School**

This program tailors the Earth Force process for out-of-school settings and gives facilitators a fun way to connect youth to their communities while reinforcing academic lessons learned during the school day. Training and support are offered nationwide.

*Use of Support:* Earth Force programs stand out for their professional development training and one-on-one support of educators. Support includes site visits, finding experts to speak to students, helping arranging field trips and more. Earth Force offices and affiliates create a powerful community network that educators and students can tap into to make their Earth Force projects a success. Earth Force programs are offered by Offices and Partners.

#### **Offices**

Earth Force has offices around the nation that tailor the Earth Force programs to the unique needs of their community or region. Through local offices Earth Force staff deliver CAPS, GREEN and Earth Force After School to their communities as well as programming unique to their area like FrontRange Earth Force's Green City program.



## **Partners**

Through the GREEN program, Earth Force has a train-the-trainer model for watershed organizations, nature centers and other local environmental nonprofits throughout the country. Partners then work with educators in their watershed to help lead their classes through watershed improvement projects. Many partners are part of the General Motors GREEN program, where GM staff serve as mentors to educators to help with project support.

Contact (Northwestern PA): Lake Erie-Allegheny Earth Force, 6270 East Lake Road, Erie, PA 16511

Phone: (814) 899-2572

Fax: (814) 899-0253

Email: LEAerie@earthforce.org

Website: [www.earthforce.org/section/offices/lea/](http://www.earthforce.org/section/offices/lea/)

- **Trout Unlimited**

Support Offered: Trout Unlimited partners with various environmental and/or conservation agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help preserve, protect, and restore North America's trout fisheries and surrounding watersheds. Trout Unlimited also takes an active role in the support of agricultural land conservation, as well as conservation education for youth and adults. Programs may offer grants and/or volunteer labor for specific projects.

In 2004, Trout Unlimited's 10,000+ active volunteers in over 400 local chapters in 35 states made a volunteer investment valued at over \$14 million toward coldwater conservation projects nationwide.

Special consideration may be given because the Neshannock Chapter of Trout Unlimited operates a trout nursery on the Munnell Run Farm property.

Contact: Neshannock Chapter, Trout Unlimited (Chapter 216)

P.O. Box 1362, Hermitage, PA 16148

Jim Mondok, Director -- [mondokjj@pathway.net](mailto:mondokjj@pathway.net)

Jeff Kremis, Treasurer -- [bentley48@neo.rr.com](mailto:bentley48@neo.rr.com)

Website: [www.neshannock-tu.org](http://www.neshannock-tu.org)

- **Mercer County Government**

Support Offered: Networking and Marketing via website links and county-wide advertisement programs that foster commercial, civic, and industrial interest. Assistance with fundraising activities may also be offered.

Agencies:



1) *Mercer County Convention & Visitors Bureau*

50 North Water Avenue

Sharon, PA 16146

**Phone:** 1-800-637-2370

**Email:** [mccvb@mercercounty.pa.org](mailto:mccvb@mercercounty.pa.org)

**Website:** [www.mercercountypa.org](http://www.mercercountypa.org)

2) *Mercer Area Chamber of Commerce*

143 North Diamond Street

Mercer, PA 16137

**Phone:** (724) 662-4185

**Email:** [mercerchamber@zoominternet.net](mailto:mercerchamber@zoominternet.net)

**Website:** [www.mercerareachamber.com](http://www.mercerareachamber.com)

3) *Mercer County Historical Society*

119 South Pitt Street

Mercer, PA 16137

**Phone:** (724) 662-3490

**Website:** [www.mchspa.org](http://www.mchspa.org)

4) *Mercer County Web Page* ([www.mco.co.mercer.pa.us](http://www.mco.co.mercer.pa.us))

-The “Links” web page lists businesses and resources in Mercer County. To be added to the list, email the following address:  
[webmaster@mcc.co.mercer.pa.us](mailto:webmaster@mcc.co.mercer.pa.us)

5) *Pennsylvania Visitors Network*

The Mercer County link at this organization’s website offers connections to county websites and attractions in the area. To advertise with the Visitors Network, call 1-888-802-5331.

**Website:** [www.pavisnet.com/mercier/index.html](http://www.pavisnet.com/mercier/index.html)

# APPENDIX ONE

# APPENDIX

## Two

# APPENDIX THREE

# APPENDIX FOUR

# APPENDIX FIVE