

Pocono Forests and Waters Conservation Landscape



Fast Facts



Counties-Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne.

Within this landscape are several distinct areas. Luzerne, Lackawanna and western Carbon have ecological and cultural characteristics associated with the Northern Anthracite field, including the Lackawanna and Wyoming “Valley” communities of Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne communities of Hazleton and White Haven and the Carbon community of Jim Thorpe. The culture and ecology of Monroe, Pike, and Wayne have been influenced by the Delaware River, its river communities and its long-standing tourism industry.

The Landscape,, with vast tracts of public land faces growth pressure which often contrasts with the longstanding network of vibrant communities and generations of lifestyles linked closely to the land. The Landscape has a history of commitment to partnering that was forged decades ago and saw environmental, government and tourism leaders all working for the good of Northeastern Pennsylvania’s outdoors.

What is a Conservation Landscape?

The Conservation Landscape is a place-based strategy for natural resource stewardship and advocacy in key landscapes across our state where there are strong natural assets, local readiness and support for land conservation, locally-driven planning, and community economic revitalization efforts.

Vision

Amplify regional efforts to conserve the Landscape’s natural resources through partnership and networking with core values of Conservation, Community, and Connections.

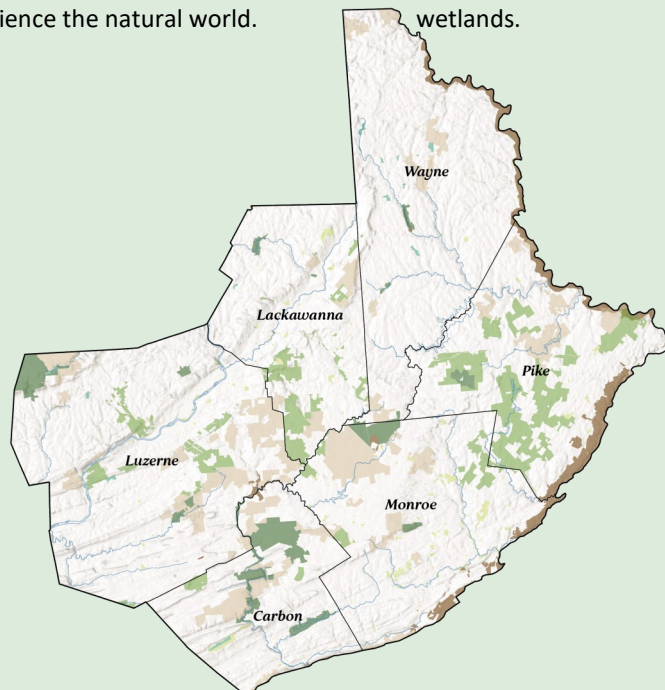
The Pocono Forest and Waters Conservation Landscape is enriched with sprawling state park, state and federal forestlands, abundant wildlife, fertile wetlands and clean, cold waterways -- all enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors in the communities.

The region has a rich and diverse past, ranging from early settlements along the rivers and valleys, industrial development and extractive uses, outdoor leisure, sporting and vacation activities. Here, among vast natural resources that include the greatest concentration of wetlands in the state, there are large tracts of both public and private forested lands. Beyond the state parks, state and national forests, there are many local parks and private camps and hunting clubs, many with rich, long-reaching histories. The public benefits from this natural wealth go on and on: a sense of community, clean water, and clean air, an array of outdoor recreation and sporting activities and many opportunities to learn about and experience the natural world.



At the heart of the Pocono Forests and Waters region:

- Conserved Land: a core of protected DCNR-owned public lands including 3 State Forest Districts and 14 State Parks as well as 3 National Park Sites, a National Wildlife Refuge, Game Commission Lands and numerous Land Trust holdings.
- Trails: miles of recreational trails thread through the landscape, providing hours or days of outdoor fun in forested, urban and rural settings;
- Water: the area represents about 8 percent of the state’s total land mass, and is home to roughly 20 percent of wetlands.



Goals

Conservation – Conservation was the core focus around which the Landscape was initially established. While this goal remains important, the scope and scale has shifted to efforts which focus on buffering state lands and championing stewardship of the region's array of natural resources. The natural beauty of the region, coupled with its proximity to large urban centers, has made it a destination for millions of people and many generations to live, visit and enjoy unlimited outdoors activities. Area lakes, downhill ski areas, and resorts draw visitors seeking less-rustic vacations.

Community – This goal has largely revolved around education and expressing the importance of the work of the Landscape in a way that resonates with various constituencies ranging from government leadership, concerned citizens, local conservation and stewardship organizations, outdoor recreation users and advocates to state forest and park staff. This education extends to include working to impart to all regional stakeholders an appreciation for the values of the region as well as its natural and recreational resources. Relying on core values of neighboring state park and forestlands, partners are enhancing benefits to surrounding communities in the landscape with expanded and creative opportunities to conserve the character

of a diverse and beautiful region, increase outdoor recreation and sporting opportunities, tap into the abundant nature-based tourism market, inform and educate local officials and business people, municipal governments and organizations and develop local economies and work forces.

Connections – This goal has become increasingly important in recent years. Efforts include working to connect the community to resources, state lands and other stakeholders. It even includes working to champion and support connections that enable greater access to the region's natural resources. Multitudes are drawn to the Landscapes trails, greenways, woods and marshes, streams and lakes for hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, birding, canoeing, rafting, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and numerous other low-impact, recreational activities. The Landscape seeks to protect and enhance the resources supporting these nature-based recreation and sporting experiences, and expand opportunities for both visitor and resident.

Formed to address key challenges in the region and enhance environmental integrity of the land and corresponding public benefits, Pocono Forests and Waters is a partnership working together to forge a greener future. Our partners include:

- Federal, state, and local governments
- Land trusts, trail groups, and other non-profit organizations
- Regional tourism boards
- Local businesses



More Information

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