

**Appendix C**

**11/20/08 Meeting Attendee Questionnaire Summary**

**3/31/09 Meeting Comments and Public Review Draft Feedback**

A questionnaire was provided to each of the 11/20/08 Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan Public Meeting attendees. The questionnaire was designed to provide an opportunity for attendees to express their opinions regarding Spring Creek’s future and its surrounding lands. 75 meeting attendees filled out a questionnaire. A summary of each question’s results are as follows:

*1. In what municipality do you reside?*

The most represented municipality is State College Borough at 25% followed by College Township at 16%. The least represented areas participating in this survey include Milesburg Borough (1%) and Halfmoon Township (3%).

	Qty.	%
Bellefonte Borough	9	12%
Benner Township	3	4%
College Township	12	16%
Ferguson Township	3	4%
Harris Township	6	8%
Halfmoon Township	2	3%
Milesburg Borough	1	1%
Patton Township	7	9%
Potter Township	4	5%
State College Borough	19	25%
Walker Township	3	4%
Spring Township	4	5%
No Response	2	3%
<i>Total</i>	75	100%

*2. As related to the Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan site, please rank the following elements regarding their significance to you and your family with 1 being the most valuable and 5 being the least valuable.*

Responses identify that continued agriculture use on the Site is the element with the least significant value (4.5 average rating). The element responders identified with the most significant value to the Site is the conservation of natural resources (1.9 average rating) followed by the availability of passive recreation activities.

3. *Please describe specific locations (if any) within the Canyon and Uplands that are of particular importance or meaning to you and your family.*

The Canyon area and Spring Creek are frequently mentioned in the survey results as being the most important or of the most sentimental value within the site. Approximately 24% of people who answered the questionnaire have never visited the site.

**Specific comments include:**

Canyon and Creek itself

The Canyon and uplands surrounding the canyon. Protecting the uplands is the key to protecting the Throughout its length, Spring Creek is a world class Stream. This resource should be open to fisherman and managed to sustain fish opportunities.

The Creek is very important to my family and me. The area is a unique resource that I grew up knowing and loving. I hope others will be able to do the same

I cherish the Canyon and Virgin forest and protective explands. I spent a lot of time there.

The entire project project area needs to be preserved as a conservation area and a open land buffer zone between State College and Bellefonte. I would like to see retrograde development with as many effects of human activity as possible removed.

Spring Creek and adjoining low lands Benner historic

Stream corridor & canyon area contributing tributary area & uplands

Canyon area

Natural beauty of the site, butterfly occurences of note

Canoeing /Fishing Spring Creek -Bird, Santuary in uplands (wildlife)

Bike trails through canyon

Canyon Stream Area should be preserved development should be allowed by interchange

Banks of the stream for fishing and recreation;Uplands;Development areas

The stream for fishing access; unique uplands & forest area

The creek itself is most important to me. Water quality is the highest priority.

Canyon -entire stream; upland adjacent hunting areas

Spring Creek for fishing, hiking & birdwatching

Stream, riparian corridor, limestone cliffs

Fishermans paradise because of the plants I've seen there; all of the water table because clean water is so important

The Creek

The stream bed as well as upland areas surrounding the stream bed

Nature plants along Spring Creek and in upland

The whole thing! It's an entire ecosystem & you can't slice and dice it

All areas

Uplands - maintain nutrient, soil and pollutant retention

The canyon area along the stream cliff area; have also been on upland are overlooking North end of Canyon that is outside the project and which has been taken over by development. I don't want to see runoff and stormwater drainage that is now occurring in that area anywhere else in the canyon

Connections of Canyon & uplands all pieces are interconnected restore integrity of natural core of centre Spring Creek fishing for wild trout. Aquatic health of stream is my #1 priority. I would like both the canyon & the uplands to be used solely for conservation of natural resources and public enjoyment of those natural resources.

Spring Creek - water and fishery and wetlands/flood plains; the bluffs; foot path/wild plants, birds; and historical Benner Cemetery

Benner Cemetery and history of Benner Iron works and farms; Spring Creek itself & rock cliffs; fish research station

Protection of the watershed

The Entire canyon from fisherman's paradise to rock road in state college. One Sunday I biked that route Spring Creek in the canyon

Spring Creek, the whole property is important

They are all important to me

Whole canyon. This is unique opportunity for the people of central PA. This land should be preserved as Parkland for us. Agricultural land exists elsewhere for PSV, which obviously already has more than it needs! They just got rid of Circleville Farm and are constantly acquiring and investing land (flippers). My family and I have gone on wildflower walks to see the lady slippers and wild orchids when they are in bloom

All of it

Walking along the old railroad bed from the fish hutching to Rockview

Spring Creek

All of it

The Creek itself: water quality cliffs; Rare & endangered species of plants & butterflies ; Don't know more specifics of land parcel since the property has been inaccessible to the public

The entire uplands should be revegetated to best protect the canyon

The uplands area about two miles in I have canoed the creek 3 or 4 times. If you were to go 2 miles down the creek, the creek makes a turn and the surrounding canyon is particularly beautiful and the wilderness and rocky area is very scenic

Restore upland areas to forest land; Protect soils and water quality; Allows no further agriculture

Natural areas or potential natural areas

Spring Creek and the upland biodiversity and health of uplands that impact the creek

Stream & Upland

Ignorant regarding uplands; natural hiking (unpaved) on trail running from shiloh to fishermans paradise

The Creek and Canyon are most important. But what happens on the uplands directly impacts the canyon and creek. The uplands should be restored to a natural state and agriculture should be banned. I have been to the property many times.

Along the Creek

Entire canyon

The ground road/grassy path road that follows the creek as a walking path to walk with dogs, for exercise , and rest.

No particular area all in general

I live on Barnes Lane and am a Benner Twp. Planning Commission Member. That the orchard doesn't grow over in invasive species is a concern to me personally. But the entire area is important to me as a

Protect canyon area from roque trails

*4. What future recreation activities would you participate in if they were incorporated into this site?*

Over 90% of survey respondents indicate that they would use future unpaved hiking and biking trails throughout the site. Other potential popular future activities include bridal/equestrian trails (75%) nature study areas (55%), cross country ski trails (53%), and fishing areas (52%).

*5. Compared to other open space areas in or around this region, how does this site compare?*

The majority of respondents (90%) feel that the Spring Creek Canyon has highly significant value and meaning to the region. No survey participants answered that the site has no significant value to the region.

*6. What is your biggest concern regarding future activity on this site?*

Specific comments include:

Will get ruined by overuse; Canyon area will be stressed by activities & overuse  
My biggest concern is that public lands will be transferred to a private entity that can restrict public uses such as hiking, hunting, nature study, etc. The public should have unfettered access to this site

Must conserve natural resources & integrity of Spring Creek; Restrict agricultural testing/use

That its natural resources be preserved and agricultural use is limited since it is so directly connected to this county's watershed

My biggest concern is the future use of this site. I would not want to see excess development on this land, such as intensive recreation, buildings, large-scale production ag. And etc.

Non-sustainability agriculture - runoff impacting stream; too much open space allowed; allowing invasive species unregulated uses; public harming canyon walls, history - species concern

Ownership of land, there is also a wonderful history of the industry that existed in the canyon that most people do not know about

Preserving the unique natural resources; preventing negative impacts

I don't believe agricultural is consistent with master plan goals

That Benner Twp. Will become the owner of the canyon itself and will be unable to protect and preserve it.

This land would be better untouched than to go to PSU ag

Improper stewardship of the land scares me. The area is so unique and beautiful they should be left alone

Sale farm land; protect canyon

That the college of Ag will clear cut the uplands and extend their crop lands from the corner of Rock Rd. & Barn Lane. They will tear down the University owned houses and make continuous crop farming to facilitate bio-fuel research crops

I don't want to see Penn State or any other entity do any further development or agricultural use of the project area. I feel that preservation of the uplands is a key to preservation at the canyon

Development of this sensitive area

That the entity which receives the land has the institutional capacity, money, manpower, political will, and conservation ethic to protect and enhance the environmental resources of the canyon and surrounding land, now and in the future

100 years ago the Cifford farm on Big Hollow Road now owned by PSU and I understand used to be a church garden.

Canyon area

That the conservation of the natural resources be jeopardized by all the other potential interests and uses listed above

Ownership - PSU will ruin it/no agricultural ?? should be in the watershed.

Commercial development/PSU development except along narrow road corridor

Building too close to the canyon; I would like to see much of the land preserved but the land along the I-99 is just as important, due to traffic noise

That the land will only be used for passive uses land by the interchange should be developed utilizing of land that has good access and public utilities in the centre region. Provide a map of uses and keep the canyon area as natural as possible.

Don't restrict it too much

Add the Centre County schools as a potential management stakeholders

No mention if hunting area should be available for hunting

Hunting is not listed as an activity

Penn State livestock facilities and active recreation

This is public land that should not be owned by a private entity. The land should be owned and managed by a public/gov/organization that received public funding

Plant community or cliffs vulnerable to hikes & especially rock climbers Ag operations on uplands should be eliminated or strictly restricted. Future owner(s) need adequate resources to protect and manage natural resources - neither Benner Township or PSU

Preserving native communities of plants and animals  
Will not be open to public

The maximum use of the lands to lie undisturbed for future generations. And as well to promote recreational activities that minimally disturb the lands. I would appreciate that DCNR become the owner of these lands, if their resources for active management

That it could become appropriated for development of urban/suburban structures  
That the ecological stability of the land will be destroyed; That Penn State will not honor the wishes of the community and will treat this precious property as farmland - and not preserve anything; That the uplands and Spring Creek will not be treated

I don't want any development on this land

I feel that the whole process has been flawed. Decisions have been made behind closed doors. This area should be conserved as it is No development, no agriculture, no developed paths - no other uses other than passive recreation. DCNR or PGC Consider concerns of the local rock climbing community; the canyon has quality limestone cliffs will access and development of climbing areas be allowed. Contact the Centre County, PA climbing conservancy

The ecological integrity of the watershed area is preserved, if not improved; That guaranteed the public access be a priority over conserving the area environmentally PSU reniging on the conservation easment either overtly or by inaction - eg agricultural runoff that will degregate the quality of the water; Building over sensitive lands resulting in loss of unique species and wildlife; I want a guardian of the land

That this gem of natural resources needs to be retained as unified whole. Let's make this a state park! This is a unique gift from God for us to be. His caretakers & preservers, good stewards. Why are Governor, PSU, & Benner Twp. Claiming land I am opposed to agriculture and to any construction of buildings or additional roads or additional utility lines etc. I hope to see this area managed as a natural area. I favor DCNR (natural area) ownership or Game Commission Ownership  
Active recreational opportunities

Over management. People will "love the Canyon to death"; Don't try too hard to improve on Nature. Don't "pave" anything  
Not allow Penn State to get it  
To ensure that Ag and/or recreational use of the uplands do not compromise the environmental quality of Spring Creek & Canyon  
That the Canyon be preserved as open space for future generations. I do not trust Penn State to preserve this land. DCNR is the most ideal entity to hold & protect & I fear pollution and future possible sale of land to private developers or private owners that may deny public access and might fail to preserve the natural resources of the area  
Too many people interfering in this area. If picnic areas are created outhouses etc. will follow. Don't trust that PSU would follow the "rules"; as it has done before area should be maintained as natural area, not wide open to public  
Penn State ownership does not make sense - Have been poor stewards in many cases. Losing this area as a precious environmental area. DCNR may be the best managers. This property belongs to the people, it should not belong to PSU. The Game Commission or DCNR should manage the land for the people  
My biggest concern is that a huge "stakeholder" is a huge university will create an agricultural complex that will ultimately harm the resources of Spring Creek Canyon  
That this land would be used for agriculture, which is a waste of its unique potential and could be harmful to the creek  
This land belongs to the people. It should never be sold to PSU. God isn't making anymore land and it is imperative that this "virgin" territory be kept in its natural state with minimal development. The eleven governmental agencies listed in #1 should  
The impact that PSU might have if they become an owner  
That PSU will ruin it  
Sell the land to the PA Game Commission  
The land will be developed  
No agricultural  
That water quality will degrade from activities, re-agriculture. Also that the owner will disregard the conservation easement (and it wouldn't be the first time an easement was ignored or over-turned)  
That you guys are missing a huge opportunity to protect a gem as a state natural area.

Carolyn Yagle

3.23.09-1

**From:** Environmental Planning & Design  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2009 8:42 AM  
**To:** Carolyn Yagle; Andrew Schwartz  
**Subject:** FW: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: No to Boaters in the Canyon

Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
412-261-6000 phone  
412-261-5999 fax

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Nieman [mailto:p9men@comcast.net]  
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2009 7:33 PM  
To: info@canyonplanning.com  
Subject: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: No to Boaters in the Canyon

This is an enquiry e-mail via <http://www.canyonplanning.com/> from:  
Paul Nieman <p9men@comcast.net>

To whom it may concern: I commend your efforts of planning for the future of the area.

I live in Pittsburgh and drive 3 hours to fish Spring Creek several times a month. It is a world class fly fishing destination- it is NOT a world class kayak/canoe destination- nor would it ever be. The water is too shallow to be viable as a boating destination. There is more than enough water and space below Bellefonte for this type of activity. I come up and stay at the EconoLodge and eat at the local restaurants, buy gas, snacks etc... As do hundreds of others specifically to fish. I can't imagine boaters enjoying such low waters coupled with dealing with hundreds of anglers on stream. I know this is a delicate subject to some- but I am being realistic and not just self serving- as I also kayak. Please consider my remarks as you do your planning. Thanks

Paul Nieman  
1006 Duncan Lane  
Pittsburgh PA 15236

Carolyn Yagle

3.23.09-2

**From:** Environmental Planning & Design  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2009 8:43 AM  
**To:** Carolyn Yagle; Andrew Schwartz  
**Subject:** FW: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: Spring Creek project

Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
412-261-6000 phone  
412-261-5999 fax

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Keith Beaver [mailto:biggie@pa.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2009 10:47 PM  
**To:** info@canyonplanning.com  
**Subject:** Spring Creek Canyon Planning: Spring Creek project

This is an enquiry e-mail via <http://www.canyonplanning.com/> from:  
Keith Beaver <biggie@pa.net>

As one who drives over an hour to fish Spring Creek, I would be against proposing use of this area for kayaks and canoes. I would, however be in favor of opening up the road through the "canyon" for bicycling and jogging. Thanks for reading this.

Subj: **Spring Creek corridor- Public comment**  
Date: 3/26/2009 8:32:56 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time  
From: hendric@comcast.net  
To: BENNERTWP@aol.com

Michael L. Hendricks  
1259 Edward St.  
State College, PA 16901

March 26, 2009

re: **The Spring Creek Canyon**

**Conservation Strategy**

*Restoration • Education • Appreciation*

*A Master Plan and Management Plan for the Spring Creek Canyon*

To whom it may concern:

Unfortunately, I could find no provision to submit written comments, so I am sending this to a number of individuals involved in the planning process.

I am writing this letter to express my objections to the inclusion of kayaking/canoeing access in Spring Creek Canyon. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the public meeting on March 31, 2009.

I am a resident of College Township and an avid fisherman. I fish on 100 to 150 days per year, with 25 to 30 of them on Spring Creek. I consider Spring Creek my "home stream". I would like to begin with an explanation of trout fishing, since the planners clearly do not understand the intricacies of our sport. Trout fishing is a quiet, contemplative sport. The trout are very wary and spook at the site or sound of anything unusual. Expert anglers wear drab clothing or even camo to avoid spooking the trout. They begin by watching a pool for as much as 10 to 15 minutes before stepping into the water. They identify each feeding trout and plan how to wade into position to fish for that trout, given the current, depth and location of other feeding trout. A game plan is made to make sure the approach is made consistent with the goal of the angler. Does he want to fish for the largest trout or just catch the most. Wading into position can spook trout. A spooked trout can alert other trout in the pool by swimming erratically around the pool looking for cover to hide, usually under a rock or in a brush pile. When the game plan is developed, wading into position is done very slowly and carefully to avoid alerting the trout to your presence. Careless wading can send trout scurrying from 100 or more feet away! Trout are especially wary in a stream with a lot of fishing pressure, such as Spring Creek. Once the fish are spooked, they may resume feeding in 20 to 30 minutes; on the other hand, they may not risk showing themselves until after dark. Two years ago, an international youth fly-fishing contest was held on Spring Creek. The

winning teams sported an unusual piece of fishing gear: knee pads. The winning teams literally crawled on hands and knees to approach the trout! This brings me to my objections to boating in Spring Creek.

- Fishing and boating are not compatible in a small stream such as Spring Creek. A single kayaker will spook the trout and ruin an evenings fishing for as many as 200 anglers! Imagine what a kayak will do to the trout if the trout are so spooky that knee pads are needed to win a tournament. Conflicts will arise, harsh words spoken, rocks thrown, fights may break out.
- Fishing has been going on in Spring Creek for many, many years. Spring Creek has developed a worldwide reputation for excellent trout fishing, just minutes away from an urban area. There are not many places in the world where there is an abundant wild trout population, with public access, so close to major population areas. While on Spring Creek, I have met anglers from Quebec, Ontario, Maine, Vermont, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio and Michigan. Spring Creek is indeed well known. Angling on Spring Creek is a year-round endeavor. Because of its spring sources, Spring Creek never freezes, indeed it rarely gets below 40F. Spring Creek trout feed and can be caught all year long. In 23 years of fishing Spring Creek, I have seen one kayaker. Are you willing to ruin an established recreational activity to promote one that is currently not practiced?
- Spring Creek is too small for boating. Summertime and Fall flows will not permit even kayaking without walking the boat through riffles. Allowing boating is not consistent with your own *"Guiding" Principals number 2* "Balance recreation opportunities with the site's capacity and sensitive environs." Spring Creek has no capacity for boating.
- The draft plan recommends 2 boat launch sites, but no take-out sites. Where will the boats take out?
- Fisherman's Paradise, located on the downstream end of the canyon, is a world renowned special regulation area which has been in existence for at least 60 years. One of the "Paradise" signature regulations is "no wading." Anglers are not permitted to wade, yet you propose to allow boating. Will boaters be cited if they touch the stream bottom? From Shiloh Road to the Paradise there is no vehicular access. Boaters will not be able to take-out until they reach the Paradise. Will they take-out in the Paradise waters where there is no wading (how do you get out of kayak without wading?) or will they boat through the Paradise, then through posted property to take out below the Paradise? Where is there sufficient, safe parking to accommodate boaters?
- Several sections of posted lands exist below the Canyon. Will boaters be trespassing if they boat through these waters? One is controlled by a very prestigious fishing club. How will those anglers feel about kayakers in waters they pay to fish with an \$80,000 club membership? You are likely to get sued over that one, since Spring Creek is not likely to be a considered "navigable water."

In short, I am adamantly opposed to boating in Spring Creek!

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the plan.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Hendricks

## Carolyn Yagle

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**From:** Jennifer Shuey [jennifer@clearwaterconservancy.org]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2009 11:17 AM  
**To:** Carolyn Yagle  
**Subject:** FW: Spring Creek Canyon Important Update

FYI

Jennifer Shuey, Executive Director  
ClearWater Conservancy  
2555 North Atherton Street  
State College, PA 16803  
(814) 237-0400  
[www.clearwaterconservancy.org](http://www.clearwaterconservancy.org)

Please join us as a member of ClearWater!

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**From:** Jon W. Eich [mailto:jweich@co.centre.pa.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2009 11:14 AM  
**To:** Ted Onufrak  
**Cc:** Jennifer Shuey; Robert B. Jacobs; Robert Leonard  
**Subject:** RE: Spring Creek Canyon Important Update

Hi Ted

I would support the transfer to either DCNR or the Game Commission, particularly of the canyon lands.

The easement restricting future transfer & use of land needs to be incorporated into the legislation & deed regardless of who gets the property.

The easement needs to be negotiated and finalized before the land is transferred -- and that should be in the legislation.

The ecological footprint of the canyon should determine future land uses. I am not opposed to Penn State receiving land for agricultural research, but that land needs to be outside the sensitive environmental area of the canyon. I am on the record recommending that the SCI Rockview lands between the Benner Pike (PA 150) and I-99 be designated for this purpose.

Jon

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**From:** Ted Onufrak [mailto:tonufrak@uplink.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2009 10:59 AM  
**To:** Jon W. Eich; Steve Dershem  
**Subject:** FW: Spring Creek Canyon Important Update

John/Steve – I don't have Commissioner Rogers email address, but pass this along. Would you guys consider supporting this and asking Conklin and Hanna to sign on?

Ted

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**From:** PA Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs [mailto:pfsc@pa.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 26, 2009 4:45 PM  
**To:** PFSC

3/31/2009

**Subject:** Spring Creek Canyon Important Update

Rep. Kerry Benninghoff is introducing legislation to sell the Rockview Spring Creek Canyon property to the Game Commission. He currently has a co-sponsor memo going around right now. Please contact your representative and ask them to co-sponsor this important legislation.

The PGC has the funds to purchase the property in an escrow account that can only be used to purchase replacement lands for the Toftrees property (SGL 176) that was ruined by Penn State from their spraying of affluent on the land. The PGC has offered twice what PSU has offered for the land.

We have an unprecedented opportunity to make this parcel a major asset to the surrounding communities by revegetating the uplands with warm season grasses, that will provide habitat for grassland birds, pheasants, and other wildlife typically found in large expanses of grassland habitat. Shrub and grassland habitat will be a bird watchers paradise and protect the water quality in Spring Creek. In short, this area could be a major asset to the community and outdoor recreation.

Sportsmen's groups and conservationists have already announced their opposition to transferring the land to entities that do not have the mandate to protect land in its natural state. The PGC is the only entity that will guarantee the protection this pristine property deserves.

**We ask that you join with us to ensure that the land is protected in perpetuity for use by hunters and recreationists, as well as providing outstanding habitat for wildlife, by supporting the transfer of this land to the Pennsylvania Game Commission.**

**For more information: <http://www.pfsc.org/Rockview.html>**

Below is a forwarded message from ClearWater Conservancy regarding the Public Review Draft of the Canyon Master Plan. This entire so-called planning process has been designed from the start to assume PSU will be the owner of the property.

Copies are now available on line and in four locations around the county.

Whether you have time to review the document or not (it's long!), please try to attend the Public Meeting next Tuesday, March 31 at 6:30pm at CPI in Pleasant Gap. Public feedback is very important. There is still time for you to take a stand and voice your opinion.

FORWARDED MESSAGE FROM CLEARWATER CONSERVANCY:

The Public Review Draft of the Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan has been posted to [www.canyonplanning.com](http://www.canyonplanning.com) by the project consultant.

The open house / public meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 31, 2009 at 6:30 pm at the Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology, 540 North Harrison Road, Pleasant Gap, PA 16823. This meeting will be covered by C-NET. Please visit their website at <http://www.centreconnect.org/> following the meeting for a broadcast schedule.

On March 25<sup>th</sup> by noon, a paper copy of the report will be available at the following locations for on-site review only:

Benner Township municipal building, 1224 Buffalo Run Road, Bellefonte, PA 16823

Schlow Centre Region Library, 211 South Allen Street, State College, PA 16801

Centre County Library, 200 North Allegheny Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823

ClearWater Conservancy, 2555 North Atherton Street, State College, PA 16803

Also anticipated to be available by the end of the day on March 25 is the full Conservation Values document prepared by the project's Technical Advisory Committee and additional volunteer technical experts. This document will be one of the appendices to the Master Plan.

Comments on the Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan are due on April 7, 2009 to the project consultant, Environmental Planning and Design at the contact information below. Questions may be addressed to them.

Please help to spread the word. Feel free to forward this email widely and/or post a link on your organization's website to [www.canyonplanning.com](http://www.canyonplanning.com).

On behalf of the volunteers on the project's Steering Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and Public Advisory Committees, we hope to see you at the March 31 public meeting.

Thank you for your continued interest.

Jennifer Shuey, Executive Director  
ClearWater Conservancy  
2555 North Atherton Street  
State College, PA 16803  
(814) 237-0400  
[www.clearwaterconservancy.org](http://www.clearwaterconservancy.org)

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Frank Page  
3/30/09

To EPD,

I have reviewed the public draft for the Master Plan and have a few comments for your consideration as you prepare the final document. Most of these are relatively minor (some positive feedback, too!), and I go through them below in page order. First, however, there is one serious issue that I want to bring to your attention at the outset, and this regards the sections of the plan that deal with stormwater management. There is a thorough discussion of the need to adapt to the policies of upstream communities that could affect water quality and stormwater runoff into the Site; however, I am very disappointed that there is little or no discussion of the effects that policies and activities within the Site might have on communities that are downstream of the canyon – namely Bellefonte and Milesburg. This is without a doubt the top issue of concern to my community and, as you might recall, I said as much in our initial discussions. I accepted the assurances that the plan would address these concerns and set the issue aside while we worked on the rest of the plan, but in the final review I find that my initial concern has not been addressed and would like to see some revision on this issue.

In 2004 two hurricanes came through Centre County in immediate succession and caused flooding all along the downstream sections of the Spring Creek. In Bellefonte, the flooding was a direct result of the Spring Creek overflowing its banks due to increased stream flow. In Milesburg, this increased flow actually choked off the discharge of the Bald Eagle Creek where the two streams meet, causing the Bald Eagle to overflow its banks, flooding my own neighborhood right up to my front door. In the immediate aftermath, FEMA has recently redrawn the flood plain map in Milesburg to acknowledge the reality of a larger flood plain than has existed in the past – this directly due to upstream land development, increased discharge into the Spring Creek, and other issues regarding upstream stormwater management. It is not difficult to imagine a scenario where activities under the master plan/easement could further complicate the problem of flood control in our communities. If, for example, such activities (well intentioned as they might be) lead to more discharge into the Spring Creek through the site and increased normal stream flow, or if stormwater runoff is managed in such a way that storm flow is increased, then when the next perfect storm comes to town we could have another major flood.

I discussed this issue with the Milesburg Borough Council President and he concurs that this is an important issue and one that we would like to see more directly and explicitly acknowledged in the Master Plan. We would like to see more reflexive language that focuses not only on the need to adapt canyon planning to the policies of upstream policies, but also adapt to the needs and concerns of downstream communities, and to avoid the type of “zero-sum” situation between land preservation and human communities that I have spoken about in my previous comments.

My additional comments follow...

- Regarding Part 2, which I am seeing for the first time, I thought this was well done and I was quite interested to learn all of these details. I like maps, and this definitely helped to put our previous discussions into perspective.
- The discussion in Part 3 is still a bit awkward, especially the Goals and Objectives discussions on page 52. It still leaves the impression that the goals are, even now, a work in progress – as

evidenced by such language as “the goals/objectives include...”. In my opinion, there should be more closure to these lists, i.e. “the goals/objectives are...”. In the Goals section especially, I think it would sound better if all of the final set of goals were bulleted (the original two and also those that evolved during the process) and what you *have* bulleted were just included as discussion points. So it would read more like: “The initial goals were given by the legislation, which included...A and B. During our work, additional goals such as X and Y emerged. The final goals are – list them all in numbered bullet points.” This would also make the Goals section more consistent with the format of the other sections.

- On page 62 in the second paragraph there is a line “the definition of restoration on this Site will be different than...”. I would suggest this be changed to “the definition...may be different than...” because these definitions may be appropriate in some contexts, but need to be modified in others.
- Regarding the possibility of controlled burning (see page 65, #1J) – I would point out that this may require policy action by Benner Township that hasn’t been mentioned in the Policy section. I don’t know if Benner has a no-burning ordinance, but a lot of municipalities do, for health and safety reasons. At least it should be stated that a possible future burning ordinance should be constructed so as to allow controlled burns in the canyon.
- In Rec. #1S on page 68, the language is out of date. It says there are three trails types, the first two are walking trails and the third is not mentioned because it was the bike trails that have been removed from the discussion. Just something that was missed ;-)
- Regarding Rec. #1U about active recreation, I like what you did here with the three options. I wondered, though, as I read through the rest of the document, why active recreation is not mentioned in some other sections. For example, it is not mentioned as a Capital cost, even though this could be one of the most significant capital expenditures. I know that active recreation is not in the “first wave” of actions to be taken, so doesn’t need to be listed on the budget table, but I think a paragraph that emphasizes or restates these possible future capital costs would be appropriate. Also, active recreation is not mentioned in the Studies section, although it is clearly identified in #1U as a topic for future study (more on that below).
- Another comment about active recreation: has the possibility of placing active recreation near the Rock Road entrance now been rejected? (see #1V where you say its limited to the NE corner). You mentioned at our last meeting that the location might change – my concern is that this would be a relatively major change to the plan and if active recreation is moved to a different location after the public comment period has expired, there could be some public outcry if the new location is controversial. This is probably not something you can do a lot about, and might also be covered by the call for a study, but should be worded carefully to avoid misunderstanding.
- Finally, I did I double take at #1W which recommends the completion of a “master plan to determine capacity and impacts of active recreation.” I think I understand the “what and why” for this study; nonetheless my first thought was “what? we need a master plan? I thought I was reading the master plan?!” I could definitely see some confusion arising from this, and maybe it could be rephrased or clarified?

- On page 73, in the outline 1b is a line about nutrients to be avoided unless a “roadblock to growth”. This is a confusing double negative - rephrase to say “unless necessary to growth”?
- Generally about the discussions of nutrients, herbicides, etc in Recommendation 5, there is a lot of discussion on this topic within the outline, and it is useful and important but maybe should be discussed in a separate section somewhere before the outline is presented? This mixing of this discussion into the outline clutters the presentation of the sample sequence, which would be easier to follow if it was more factual and could refer to a prior discussion of possible options.
- In #6D on page 75, I think the title line should say “connect pedestrian trails between...”.
- I like the recommendations and discussions of protection of cultural resources. As you know, this was one issue that concerned me, and the end result in this area is satisfactory. Good job here!
- Finally, regarding the revised operations/management structure, I think you did an admirable job of trying to take ownership out of the discussion, but there are still some problems. First, there are still two places where ownership is explicitly discussed. On page 104 in the DCNR paragraph you present reasons against DCNR ownership of the site, which seems out of place in context of this document. A similar statement is made later regarding the Game Commission's desire for ownership. More importantly, I think there is still a degree to which you are implicitly suggesting a particular set of owners for the land. Re: Everyone in the LaMP must have an easement. Only easement holders can be part of the LaMP. If ownership and easement holding have a direct connection. (I'm still a little confused about how easements work and might be making a bad assumption here) then it logically follows that any and all recommendations about who is best for management are also implicit recommendations for ownership. I want to emphasize that (1) you make a very well constructed and persuasive argument for multiple management of the site and (2) politics and diplomacy aside, I think it's OK to make such a recommendation. In fact, I think you are bowing too much to a small minority with a very loud voice by avoiding all mention of ownership. But this is such a messy issue, I think the approach you have taken is probably appropriate – but be aware, I think you haven't eliminated the problem so much as you have hidden it with a change in wording.
- The idea for applying for a PEER grant I thought was a great idea!

On the whole, I think you did a great job!

See you on Tuesday...

Bryce Taylor, Milesburg PAC Representative



March 31, 2009 – comments for public meeting

Andrew JG Schwartz and Carolyn Yagle  
Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Schwartz and Ms. Yagle,

ClearWater Conservancy would like to commend Environmental Planning & Design and all of the stakeholder volunteers involved in developing *The Spring Creek Canyon Conservation Strategy: A Master Plan and Management Plan for the Spring Creek Canyon*. We especially would like to recognize the efforts of the Technical Advisory Committee and additional technical volunteers in the creation of the *Conservation Values of the Rockview Divestment Lands*. Overall, we are very pleased with the results of the planning process.

ClearWater Conservancy generally endorses the plan. The following statements highlight specific issues and/or recommend specific modifications that we would like to see incorporated into the plan:

- The Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan balances a multitude of perspectives and several sometimes-competing land uses that were integrated into the scope of work for the planning process while protecting many of the natural and cultural resources on the site. ClearWater would like to recognize that the Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan does not fully protect all of the site's natural and cultural resources, but is a workable compromise that conserves and restores much of the site's natural and cultural heritage while sensitively addressing the additional uses of "passive recreation" and a defined scope of "agricultural research and education for conservation purposes".
- The 235 acres previously described as parcel #2 in the Sweetland Engineering and Associates survey of the 1,800 acres of Rockview land north of Interstate 99 should not be retained by the PA Department of General Services for distribution at a later time. ClearWater recommends divesting the entire 1,800 acres north of I-99 in a

comprehensive manner to the proposed property owners in accordance with the site activities described in the Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan using the timeline illustrated below.

- ClearWater Conservancy fully supports the need for additional active recreation resources within the Nittany Valley Region. However, we believe that this site is not an appropriate location for active recreation facilities because of the significance and sensitivity of the natural and cultural resources in close proximity to the area recommended to accommodate this use. We encourage the community to engage in a region-wide site suitability analysis to determine the most appropriate locations for active recreational use. Further, we feel that nearby Rockview land between I-99 and Route 150 may be suitable for more detailed consideration. If a nearby parcel is deemed suitable for more intense recreation programming, we encourage the community to adopt the third option for “potential environmental education structures and/or organized outdoor recreation activities” proposed by the Master Plan—a Living Laboratory for Community Recreation and Conservation.
- ClearWater recommends removing the 25 acres of active recreation use from the Master Plan and replacing it with “agriculture research/education for conservation”. To compensate, we also recommend reducing the middle “agriculture research/education for conservation” pod by 25 acres to expand the restoration area, further increase the buffer, and smooth the edge of the interface between restoration and agriculture to maximize the area of core forest on the site.
- ClearWater strongly supports the Master Plan’s recommendation that conservation easements be pursued on adjacent properties to promote resource conservation, ensure the continued viability of core forest, encourage groundwater infiltration, and improve water quality in Spring Creek itself.
- Critical to the ultimate protection of the significant and sensitive natural and cultural resources on this site is having an effective management structure in place to ensure their security and address possible conflicts between public use and protection. ClearWater Conservancy therefore supports the Master Plan in recommending the following timeline:
  - DCNR and ClearWater should begin working on the conservation easement immediately
  - Legislation to **authorize** the transfer of the 1,800 acres of Rockview land north of I-99 consistent with the use and management recommendations of the Master Plan may be introduced upon the completion of the Master Plan.
  - However, the **actual transfer** of land will not take place until the time that the conservation easements are recorded and the Land Management Partnership is functioning at a sufficient level to address the issues associated with opening the land and its significant and sensitive natural and cultural resources to public use.

- Rockview State Correctional Institution will retain ownership and site security until these protective conditions are met and the land is transferred to new owners. Further, Rockview's active management of the site in the interim between the completion of the Master Plan and the land transfer should also be consistent with the recommendations of the Master Plan (e.g., no tilling and planting of areas designated for restoration, no tree removal, no earth disturbance, etc.).
- By entering into the Land Management Partnership and conservation easements as recommended by the Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan, prospective landowners are giving the community the assurance that they have the interest, will, and resources to implement the Master Plan over time. It is also important to note that DCNR and ClearWater should require a conservation easement with each landowner, including state agencies.

ClearWater Conservancy has been fully committed to the success of this master planning process and has invested a significant amount of our resources in this effort to date.

We will continue to support the implementation of the Master Plan through time by holding, monitoring, and enforcing the conservation easements; becoming a member of the Land Management Partnership; and as resources allow, participating in restoration and education activities on the site.

Thank you for the opportunity to shape the future of this exceptional community resource and to share our comments at this time. We look forward to working closely with the other stakeholders as we implement the vision of restoration, education, and appreciation created for the lands of the Spring Creek Canyon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelleann".

Kelleann Foster  
President



**SIERRA  
CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

Gary Thornbloom  
Chair, Sierra Club Moshannon Group  
702 Hall Road  
Julian, PA  
814-353-3466 [bearknob@verizon.net](mailto:bearknob@verizon.net)

March 31, 2009

Environmental Planning & Design

100 Ross Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Planners:

Sierra Club Moshannon Group strongly objects to the draft Master Plan as made available at the end of March 2009. The Moshannon Group has over 1100 members approximately half who live in the Centre Region.

We offer the following observations that are specific to your document—page number, quote, our comments:

Page 9

**The Public Advisory Committee (PAC) served as a liaison between the general public and the Planning Team**

**[What was the extent of PAC members interactions with the general public?]**

Two (2) Public Meetings were hosted to review project analysis findings as well as to obtain feedback on draft master plan and management plan concepts and draft report documentation. **A majority of verbal and written feedback received from the general public during the project timeframe focused on concerns about potential property ownership – a topic which the Scope of Work defined for this Master Planning and Management Planning project does not address.**

**[Why has this not been addressed? This goes to the heart of our objection to this entire process, and is why we see this process as a sham.]**

42

Major impacts to consider in regards to the overlying land use and Site activities include the direct and indirect impacts on groundwater recharge, water quality and the sustainability of the groundwater, including supplying stream base flows and public and private wells. The permeable nature of the Spring Creek carbonate rock formations can be characterized as natural conduits. These natural conduits, be it bedrock joints and fractures, solution cavities or sinkholes at the surface, result in a more or less direct connection to groundwater and as a result play a significant role in groundwater recharge as well as groundwater quality. **Measures to mitigate the concentration of**

**agricultural byproducts and application of nutrients and pesticides are recommended to safeguard the groundwater quality**, particularly in areas of shallow and well drained soils, closed depressions and sinkholes. Additionally, any introduction of impervious surfaces, development or land uses to these areas should be avoided, including the concentration of stormwater runoff.

**[Why mitigate instead of eliminate?]**

55

**This Master Plan does not identify any recommendations related to the Site's future ownership.... educate the public about conservation-oriented agriculture**

**[How can you state this when the entire process has been driven by owners that were determined behind closed doors, with no public input, and massive public objection and rejection? And AG, again—why, if not for any already selected owner? AG is not what is best for this land—science has already determined that.]]**

62

Recommendation #1 – Accommodate and balance **four types of activities** on the Site In context of this Strategy's goals, objectives and principles, suitable Site activities include:

- Conservation;
- Restoration;
- Agriculture research/education for conservation purposes; and
- Recreation.

**[What was the basis for these four types of activities?]**

96

**A host of key stakeholders, along with the general public, has emerged with a unified view on the fundamental importance of conserving this unique area; however, their unified view on conservation is not without an array of diverse opinions on how the site should be conserved and/or under whose responsibility the Site should exist.**

**[The array of opinions is basically divided between the already identified owners—or key stakeholders—and the general public.]**

97

**Based on completed analyses, no one organization has emerged as ready, willing, and/or able to assume the responsibility for the entire site and manage it in accordance with the recommendations of this Master Plan.**

**[This is only because the Master Plan was driven by predetermined ownership—that is to say, the deck in the “completed analyses” was stacked.]**

98

**The public recognizes that certain state agencies regularly perform these functions at various venues throughout the state; however, these agencies may not have the level of resources to devote to the Spring Creek Canyon Site in its entirety.**

**[This is a ludicrous statement when we all know that these agencies have had their hands tied by a political decision made behind closed doors. Ludicrous also when you consider that DCNR manages 2.1 million acres and the PGC manages 1.4 million acres—we are talking about adding 1,800 acres to what either of these agencies manage quite nicely for all Pennsylvanians.]**

99

To date, no single organization exhibiting the mission, capacity and will to manage the Site in accordance with the requirements of the Master Plan has stepped forward to take responsibility for the Site as a whole. Based upon the completed capacity analyses, organizations such as Benner Township, Penn State University, and the Fish & Boat Commission collectively have the most potential and willingness, but not all of the resources or capacity, to independently manage the Site.

**[ Why? Because hands were tied, the deck was stacked, and public input has been ignored.]**

104

PADCNR will participate in the writing of the Conservation Easement and will monitor the Conservation Easement in tandem with the Clearwater Conservancy. Local ownership will enable more direct involvement by the citizens of the area than would be possible under state ownership of the Site.

**[So there should be more local ownership of DCNR lands???? I do not think anyone would support this and that exposes the sham of the case that the planners and predetermined owners are trying to push on the general public. The problem is that this is transparent—the emperor has no clothes!]**

108-109

#### State Resource Potential

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is committed to the long-term conservation and public use for passive recreation of the Spring Creek Canyon area. However, the **assessment of state agencies that provide related conservation and recreation services yielded findings showing no single state agency has the funds, staff, mission, and expertise to manage the Spring Creek Canyon area on its own with current level of resources.** There is potential to generate support to assist with some level of operation and management from the Commonwealth but clearly not for the whole Site.

**[Once again, this is a ludicrous statement when we all know that these agencies have had their hands tied by a political decision made behind closed doors. Ludicrous also when you consider that DCNR manages 2.1 million acres and the PGC manages 1.4 million acres—we are talking about adding 1,800 acres to what either of these agencies manage quite nicely for all Pennsylvanians.]**

Pennsylvania Game Commission

PGC has already formally expressed interest in purchasing and operating this Site. The mission of PGC is not fully consistent with the full range of uses proposed for the Spring Creek Canyon area as a site for conservation and passive recreation. While PGC appears to have funding and staffing, their management structure is centered on extensive service areas encompassing many counties, typically not small individual sites. PGC staff works across a wide service area – they are not housed at a single site anywhere. The Spring Creek Canyon Site requires an **on-site** organization and management structure that simultaneously undertakes conservation, facilitates public use, and develops stewardship through a multi-faceted partnership program.

**[Is this a fair characterization of PGC capabilities? Would different conclusions be in order if it was assumed throughout the process that PGC was to be the owner?]**

### **Capacity Summary**

**Based upon the analysis completed as part of this planning process**, no one organization is ready, willing, and/or able to assume the responsibility for the entire Site and manage it in accordance with the recommendations of this Master Plan.

**[Analysis based on what is best for the Canyon, analysis with either no preconceived ownership, or with different ownership would likely yield a very different conclusion]**

125

Appendix H contains a list of selected funding sources that could be pursued for Spring Creek Canyon Site projects and programs.

[Where is H ?]

126

**Total \$239,174 Partners**

**[So the 'partners', including Benner Township, are going to kick in c. 300k????? What amount will be looked for from each of them?]**

**In addition to the organizational operations budget, funding for operating and managing the site will be needed.**

**[State Agencies do not have the resources, but the "partners" do? Another ludicrous statement in as much as the "partners" will likely be looking to the State for money.]**

We object to the fact that ownership of Spring Creek Canyon and its uplands has been predetermined with no public input, and that what is best for this land has not been what has driven the process.

Due to past ownership Spring Creek Canyon has escaped from development that is spreading throughout the Centre Region. Pennsylvania owns it and under Section I Article 27 of our constitution has an obligation to protect it. This land should be part of a greenway that would improve the quality of life in our area for all the generations to come. This is exactly what Public Lands are all about, yet due to a political decision

made behind closed doors and with no public input you have moved forward in a planning process that has been a sham.

We strongly support the Pennsylvania Game Commission as being not only willing, but also an agency with the resources, expertise, and mission that would best protect Spring Creek Canyon forever.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Thornbloom". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" being more prominent and the last name "Thornbloom" following in a similar style.

Gary Thornbloom

Chair

Sierra Club Moshannon Group

3.31.09-3

March 31, 2009

Spring Creek Canyon planning group:

The draft Spring Creek Canyon (SCC) Master Plan and Management Plan represents a tremendous amount of work by many individuals and provides significant guidance for appropriate uses and actions for future use of this site. The report Goals, Objectives and Principles serve to define and prioritize the many issues particular to this unique site. It is clear that the environmental consultant firm and the many groups/committees providing input considered conservation, preservation and ecologic enhancement of the site to be the primary and overriding concern. Other issues, including recreation and agriculture are addressed, but the report envisions these activities occurring only as they are consistent with the conservation goals and principles.

A useful concept of site use has emerged from the master plan; that of defining the best and most appropriate use for each part of the site, regardless of ownership(s) of the site or portions of the site. The plan suggests that conservation easements be written with primary consideration for these appropriate uses, rather than the agenda of any entity or institution that may own or manage a portion of the site. **It is vital that conservation easements be in place prior to any divestment of land.**

Another concept emerging from the management plan is that of Land Management Partnership (LaMP). The report describes a possible LaMP involving Benner Township, Penn State University and Fish and Boat Commission. Overall management decisions for the site would be coordinated through a LaMP that would be staffed with a site coordinator, a development director and a field operations manager. It is not immediately clear whether personnel that implement the various tasks such as site development, site maintenance, security, or agricultural production would be under the direction of the LaMP staff or of the three participating entities.

While many public and private groups or agencies have been identified as having some interest or concern about SCC, the major driver of the current study is Benner Township, with primary funding from DCNR;. Penn State, PA Fish and Boat Commission, and Rockview SCI are important stakeholders in this planning process. Given the organization and mandate for this planning process, it is difficult to see how the consultant or the planning advisory groups could objectively consider the important issue of site ownership. Any dispassionate reader of this report would conclude that the management of the unique site will present significant challenges, will require considerable human and financial resource commitment and will be successful only to the extent that the management of the site preserves and enhances the natural resources of this site. Indeed, the report states that "...this 1800 acre site serves as a world-class landscape for resource management".

Of the many groups with interest in SCC, there are few with both a primary mission of conservation, and the resources to provide overall guidance for site management. The current "owners-apparent", that is. Benner

Township, Penn State and, perhaps, PA Fish and Boat Commission, all have interest in the site and bring some resources to the table, but they may not be the most appropriate groups to provide overall site direction. For a small-population township, like Benner, to manage a major land resource like SCC would require major inputs of funds, perhaps from DCNR and other state-related agencies. Penn State has significant expertise in environmental management but does not have a primary mandate to manage this type of resource for best public and conservation interests. The Fish and Boat Commission has experience in managing aquatic/riparian sites but their mandate and background is less extensive in management of such diverse and ecologically-fragile areas as are found in the canyon and upland areas of this site.

**Despite previous statements and actions of the governor and the legislature, there are compelling reasons to reconsider DCNR as a major player in the management of this site. Background and expertise in the management of natural and cultural resources, as well as financial and personnel resources should be primary considerations as the PA legislature considers any divestment of this land.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence and Barbara Hutchinson  
Harris Township residents  
501 Hubler Rd.  
State College, PA 16801  
814-466-7568  
<hutch195@comcast.net>

3.31.09 - 4



SPRING CREEK WATERSHED COMMUNITY

*A grassroots stakeholder initiative*

Spring Creek Watershed Community  
c/o ClearWater Conservancy  
2555 North Atherton Street  
State College, PA 16803

March 31, 2009

Andrew JG Schwartz and Carolyn Yagle  
Environmental Planning and Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Schwartz and Ms. Yagle,

The Spring Creek Watershed Community is a grassroots organization that works to protect and enhance the quality of life and the natural resources of the Spring Creek Watershed. We wish to compliment you on the broad perspective and the attention to detail that are evident in *The Spring Creek Canyon Conservation Strategy: A Master Plan and Management Plan* that you have presented for public review and comment.

We generally support these Plans, and we believe that they are well prepared, that they set forth a strategy that assures protection and restoration of the unique natural resources of the site, that provides for reasonable public access, and that outlines a workable Management Plan.

We offer the following comments for your consideration:

1. Providing for active recreation anywhere on this property is inconsistent with the conservation and restoration goals of the plan. It is particularly undesirable at the location indicated on the Plan because of its upgrade proximity to especially sensitive areas. We recommend that no area for active recreation be provided on this site.
2. The timing of the transfer of ownership of the property to be divested relative to the execution of the required conservation easement is considered in Part 7 of the Plan. Because this issue has been the subject of some controversy, we recommend that the language be strengthened to say that the conservation easement must be executed before or at the time of transfer of ownership. We also suggest that you include a requirement that the proposed conservation easement be subject to public review and comment before execution.
3. Because site security must be maintained at all times, and especially after the lands are opened to the public, some arrangement must be made to provide this service in the interval between the time the land is transferred away from the state and the time the Land Management Partnership is able to provide it.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important contribution to the protection and restoration of the Canyon and to the opening of the lands to limited public access.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Donaldson", written in a cursive style.

Robert Donaldson  
Past Chairman

p. 1 of 3

## A RESPONSE TO THE SPRING CREEK CANYON MASTER PLAN

March 31, 2009

When placed in proper perspective, the attempted divestiture of the Spring Creek Canyon land north of Interstate 99 has long been fraught with poor judgment exacerbated by political deception.

From the very onset, Gov. Rendell, by entering into surreptitious agreement with Penn State for the acquisition of 1,800 acres of publicly owned property, committed grave misjudgment on at least two counts: (a) totally disregarding public input and (b) not initiating a study to determine the best use of the land for optimum public benefit.

One must conclude, therefore, that the governor--in an overt breach of office--has been and, for that matter, continues to be guilty of completely ignoring public trust as well as irresponsibly administering public property: charges that could be potential cause for litigation.

What Gov. Rendell apparently forgot (or perhaps never considered) is that "public office is a public trust" and should not be abused for political gain or self-aggrandizement.

\*\*\*\*\*

In my estimation, the *Spring Creek Canyon Conservation Strategy* is unsuitable for adoption for the following reasons:

1. It unrealistically proposes recommendations that, at this juncture, have little relevance with regard to the Rockview land's divestiture. In fact, until the ultimate fate of that land is clearly delineated, any plan for its development would be premature.

In this case, it would be wise to determine (a) whether the land should undergo subdivision in preparation for long-term governance by multiple stewards or (b) be conserved in perpetuity as a unified, natural preserve under one steward. To proceed otherwise simply defies logic by "placing the cart before the horse."

What's more, the premature act of formulating the *Conservation Strategy* bulldozes the public into thinking that that is the only direction in which to proceed.

-----  
*Note:* Of considerable interest is that throughout its entire text, the *Conservation Strategy* persistently refers to "long-term conservation" rather than "preservation in perpetuity." One wonders, therefore, whether the concept of "long-term," with its implied limitations, was used purposefully.

2. The plan, in considerable part, is devoid of both objective and imaginative concepts because of prior bombardment by, and adherence to, pre-ordained ideas spawned by prospective owners (Penn State, Benner Township, etc.). In essence, therefore, much of the plan is nothing more than a dressed-up version of previous, shop-worn presentations.

3. Although the idea of "conservation through easement" may be in accord with long-term objectives, it is completely discordant with the principles of perpetual preservation.

It takes little imagination to realize that, even with precise formulation, land easement has the inherent potential for being laden with loopholes and, therefore, is not necessarily a guarantee for either preservation or perpetuity.

The only absolute guarantee to continuous land preservation is through establishment by law. Our state and national parks, for example, are not dependent upon concocted tomes of regulations to confirm their undisputed longevity.

4. The plan's concept of a multi-managerial organization (in addition to being replete with hypothetical rationalizations) is way too complex, creates an atmosphere conducive to conflict, and, as a result, presents a formula for chaos.

The section devoted to Operations & Management is, unequivocally, the weakest in the entire *Conservation Strategy*.

\*\*\*\*\*

In conclusion, there is no deadline for making a decision with regard to the Rockview land divestiture; therefore, *it is absolutely imperative to take the time to get it right!*

Please acknowledge.

Lou Hass  
132 Airport Road  
Centre Hall, PA 16828-9000

phone: 814-364-1890  
e-mail: [lfh2@psu.edu](mailto:lfh2@psu.edu)

p. 3 of 3

Cc: Senator Jake Corman, State Legislature  
Representative Kerry Benninghoff, State Legislature  
Representative Mike Hanna, State Legislature  
Daniel W. Sieminski, Assoc. VP for Finance and Business, PSU  
David Breon, Chairman, Benner Twp. Supervisors  
John Elnitski, Benner Twp. Supervisor  
Jennifer W. Shuey, CEO, ClearWater Conservancy  
Kathryn Ombalski, Watershed Coordinator, ClearWater Conservancy  
Gary Thornbloom, Group Chair, Sierra Club, Moshannon Group

Statement prepared by Robert Eberhart for presentation at the Open House/Public Meeting on the Spring Creek Master Plan on March 31, 2009,

(Contact information: Address: 27 Mahala Street, Port Matilda, PA 16870; Phone: (814) 692-7114; email: rje1@psu.edu)

Good evening. My name is Bob Eberhart. I was a member of the Public Advisory Committee that worked with the consultants in developing the Plan we are considering this evening. I was appointed to that Committee by the Supervisors of Halfmoon Township. They are familiar with my views on this subject and have given me leave to say what's on my mind.

I will be critical about where we are on the Canyon issue. But I want to be clear that I am not being critical of the Consultants. Although I don't agree with some of the basic assumptions of the Plan, I think that given the complexity of the Plan, the variety of viewpoints that they had to deal with, and the limited time they were given, the Consultants worked hard to present a workable plan. As I watched them struggling to meet a series of deadlines, I kept wondering, what's the hurry? The Canyon has been there for a hundred years. Why don't we give these people the time to do the best job they can?

What I really want to talk about is my belief that the politics of the issue have frequently gotten in the way of protecting the Canyon. Here are a few examples:

1. What started the whole discussion about the Canyon lands was the decision that Penn State was to become the owner of most of the tract. This decision was made in Harrisburg, and it was made before the public became aware of it and without the opportunity for public comment. Since the issue surfaced, many of the citizens of Centre County have expressed their opposition at several public meetings like this one. But the decision remains unchanged, and many of us believe that Penn State is about to receive more than 1100 acres of the people's land without the people's consent. That ownership decision has created most of the dissent surrounding the Canyon discussion, and I think it unlikely that consensus agreement will be reached on this point. This, in turn, makes it difficult to develop a Master Plan that will be widely accepted.

2. Another example: In thinking about the state agencies that might manage the Canyon lands on behalf of the public, only two come to mind, DCNR and the PGC. To many, DCNR would be the preferred agency; but DCNR has repeatedly said that it is not interested in taking over the Canyon lands, citing the lack of resources. To me, it seems that a motivated conservation agency like DCNR would seize the opportunity to protect a unique natural resource like the Canyon and that it would find the funds in its \$341 million dollar annual budget to manage it. My conclusion has to be that DCNR, a part of the Rendell administration, has been told not to show any interest in taking over the Canyon lands. If that is true, we have, for political reasons, lost the option of having the state's primary natural resource agency manage this land for the benefit of all Pennsylvanians.

3. And another example: Last fall Senator Corman attended a public meeting organized by a group of citizens opposed to legislation that would have transferred the Canyon lands out of state ownership. He heard the discussion, saw the logic in the slogan "Plan First, divest second" and, to his credit, he killed the pending legislation. We who believed in that slogan "Plan first, divest second" thought it meant that a plan would be developed that defined the best uses of the land and outlined the ways to protect and preserve it. After that was done, the decision would be made as to which entity should own and manage the land in accordance with that plan. That seemed like a logical approach. But when the present planning effort was organized, it began with the assumption that Benner Township, Penn State, the Fish and Boat Commission and Rockview were to be the future owners and that the Master Plan would be developed with that ownership in mind. The plan we now have was developed with as much concern for what the owners wanted as to how it could be best managed in the interests of the public.

4. Here is a final example of how politics has gotten in the way of providing maximum protection for these lands. The Canyon area itself includes a little more than 3 miles of Spring Creek, the associated riparian areas, and the limestone cliffs and the rare plant communities that live on them. It includes the most sensitive and ecologically valuable resources on the entire site. This is an area that cries out for professional land management. But with the plan we now have, it is understood that about 400 acres of the Canyon are to be given to Benner Township, a small township with limited resources. While I appreciate the good intentions of the Benner Township Supervisors and am aware that their management of the land will be guided by a conservation easement, I simply do not understand why the Canyon should be given to any small township and not to a land management agency. The decision to do this was clearly made for political reasons and not with the primary goal of providing the best stewardship for the Canyon.

My overall conclusion is that we are now so mired in politics and the self-interest of some of the parties, that we can no longer hope to provide the best possible protection for the Canyon.

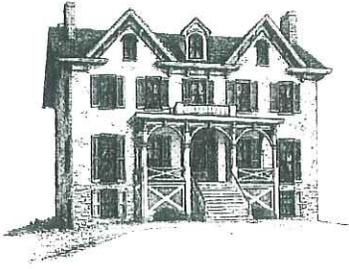
Well, what should we do, you ask. My answer – we should set aside the present plan, go back to square one and start over.

We should begin a new planning effort built on the initial premise that the land should remain in state ownership and be managed by the state agency best able to do that. If Penn State or any other organization believes that it has a better use for this public land, then it should make that case in the public arena and not through its political connections.

I appreciate that much time and money has already been spent on planning for the Spring Creek Canyon. If we started over, not all of that would be wasted. Much of the new information and many of the management recommendations that have been developed during the present planning effort would be invaluable to future managers of the land.

The Spring Creek Canyon is an ecological gem. We are fortunate that it has been protected for so long. And we are fortunate to have the opportunity now to protect it for the "generations yet to come." I know we can provide a better plan than the one we now have. I think we should try again.

3.31.09-7



# CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## CENTRE FURNACE MANSION

1001 East College Avenue ☪ State College, Pennsylvania 16801 ☪ 814.234.4779

March 31, 2009

Andrew JG Schwartz and Carolyn Yagle  
Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Schwartz and Ms. Yagle,

The Centre County Historical Society (CCHS) has appreciated the opportunity of working with you and participating through the Technical Advisory Committee in the document, *The Spring Creek Canyon Conservation Strategy: A Master Plan and Management Plan for the Spring Creek Canyon*. While information about some of the cultural resources within the Spring Creek Canyon site were identified when the planning process began, new information has been assembled and the possibility of additional cultural resources still to be identified have been highlighted in the creation of the document on *Conservation Values of the Rockview Divestment Lands*.

The CCHS recommendation to the Master Plan has outlined several methods or guidelines that meet state and federal requirements and procedures in the protection of cultural resources. They include a Cultural Resource Assessment of prehistoric and historic resources, National Register of Historic Places listing for the Benner Cemetery, and possible National Register listing for the Village of Rock. The Spring Creek Canyon offers a unique and significant educational opportunity -- one that will be substantially strengthened through the assessment, identification, and preservation of these cultural resources.

### **CCHS Recommendations:**

The Centre County Historical Society joins ClearWater Conservancy in the following recommendations related to the significant and sensitive cultural and natural resources of the Spring Creek Canyon. These recommendations are in support of the Master Plan and in support of an effective management structure being in place before the land is transferred. CCHS recommends:

- \* DCNR and ClearWater should begin working on the conservation easement immediately
- \* Legislation to **authorize** the transfer of the 1,800 acres of Rockview land north of I-99 consistent with the use and management recommendations of the Master Plan may be introduced upon the completion of the Master Plan.
- \* However, the **actual transfer** of land will not take place until the time that the conservation easements are recorded and the Land Management Partnership is functioning at a sufficient level to address the issues associated with opening the land and its significant and sensitive natural and cultural resources to public use.

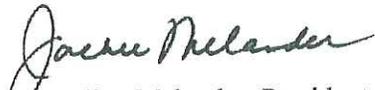
\* Rockview State Correctional Institution will retain ownership and site security until these protective conditions are met and the land is transferred to new owners. Further, Rockview's active management of the site in the interim between the completion of the Master Plan and the land transfer should also be consistent with the recommendations of the Master Plan (e.g., no tilling and planting of areas designated for restoration, no tree removal, no earth disturbance, etc.).

In addition to these recommendations, the Centre County Historical Society would like to make explicit the recommendations of educational opportunities discussed by the Technical Advisory Committee and implied in the Master Plan:

\* Once the transfer of land has occurred and planning commences, that future work on the properties by the owners commit to broad community educational opportunities about cultural and natural resources.

Again, CCHS has appreciated the opportunity to be involved in planning for the future of the Spring Creek Canyon, and we look forward to working with others in the community to enhance awareness and appreciation of this exceptional Centre County resource.

Sincerely,



Handwritten signature of Jacqueline Melander in cursive script.

Jacqueline Melander, President  
Board of Governors  
Centre County Historical Society

3.31.09 - 8

2929 Buffalo Run  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
March 31, 2009

Andrew JG Schwartz and Carolyn Yagle  
Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Schwartz and Ms. Yagle,

In a large scale planning process such as this for these 1800 acres of Rockview Lands there is a built in expectation to address a wide spectrum of diversified needs and interests. However, special attention needs to be paid to the conservation values with every separate decision. Leniency on one parcel alone could jeopardize the integrity of the entire canyon.

Attention needs to be paid especially to highly sensitive areas such as parcel #2 where active use combined with vehicular traffic could unduly compromise the ecology. By increasing the configuration and size of the forest buffer between the middle field and the proposed agriculture research/ education area, such issues as invasive species can better be addressed..

Other suggestions include: Designating the use and ownership of all the 1,800 acres simultaneously  
Commencing immediately in developing the terms of the easements on each parcel, and transferring ownership only after the completion of the easement  
Carefully establishing security measures before public access is determined

So much effort has gone into resolving the constraints of this process. The current draft proposal serves as the "first fitting". There is a now a need for adequate time to sort out the reactions to the proposal enabling everyone to filter out the better solutions. Regretably, it appears now the clock is running out before this important phase can occur.

An additional missing component of major importance is the identification of financial support and specific commitment of all who are to be involved in a substantial way. Hopefully, means can be found to carry this responsibility over many years to come.

I am most grateful for all the hard work and generous effort given by the committees combined with the achievements of consultant. To have planned first, and divested second has led us all to having a better chance to devise a distinguished path for the future heritage of this uniquely significant sanctuary.

Sincerely,



Barbara Fisher

## PASSIVE RECREATION. What is it?

Stan Kotala wrote: "State Game Lands are for wildlife. Their primary purpose is not to be a playground for humans" -

I think almost everyone agrees with Stan's statement (except, ironically, maybe the Game Commission). The whole purpose of the Conservation Easement and Management Planning, which everyone has worked so hard on, is to minimize the adverse impacts that too many humans can make on their favorite playgrounds. They may mean well, but every suggested use has its pitfalls.

In the very special Canyon area, we especially want to limit most forms of "**Active**" Recreation, which is defined as any recreational activity "which substantially changes the landscape". We still need & support the YMCA's ball-fields and buildings, and Enviro-Ed centers etc. -- just not in this location.

Motorized recreation is too destructive. Biking, kayaking, might fall into the "active" category, too, Think "building" a bike trail, or even over-building a hiking trail. (I'm guilty there) Too much impact. We need those things, too; just not in this location. Rock-climbing, caving, horse-back riding? not as passive as you think. See how complicated it gets?

"**Passive**" recreation, does **not** change the landscape, and can include hunting, fishing, berry-picking (*passive, extractive*); as well as hiking, birding, photography, plant ID, nature study (*passive, dispersed*). These things will be allowed, with some guidelines (Stay on the trail, licenses & seasons, i.e.)

We should always think about habitats first, before doing anything that may be too "active".

Jean

Jean Aron  
[shorthiker@aol.com](mailto:shorthiker@aol.com)  
227 Kimport Ave.  
Boalsburg, PA 16827

## Carolyn Yagle

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**From:** Environmental Planning & Design  
**Sent:** Monday, April 06, 2009 8:16 AM  
**To:** Carolyn Yagle  
**Subject:** FW: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: Spring Creek Canyon comments

Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
412-261-6000 phone  
412-261-5999 fax

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert P. Brooks [mailto:rpb2@psu.edu]  
Sent: Saturday, April 04, 2009 11:32 AM  
To: info@canyonplanning.com  
Subject: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: Spring Creek Canyon comments

This is an enquiry e-mail via <http://www.canyonplanning.com/> from:  
Robert P. Brooks <rpb2@psu.edu>

Dear AJ and Co. - Thanks for all your efforts to point the Canyon management and transfer process in the right direction. I did not get a chance to say hello at the public meeting the other night. I offer one comment of substance below:

If a state resource agency is to be involved in owning and/or managing the Canyon associated lands being transferred from Rockview, it should be DCNR, with possible assistance by PFBC. In this instance, I do not believe the PA Game Commission is an appropriate agency. The public hunting opportunities are limited on this property due to its linear shape and probable high demand for passive outdoor recreation. As demonstrated by the recent lack of public input for a prescribed burn in a local State Game Lands, the PGC does not have a strong record in incorporating diverse opinions about an issue into decision-making. Thus, DCNR is the agency of choice.

## Carolyn Yagle

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**From:** Environmental Planning & Design  
**Sent:** Monday, April 06, 2009 8:31 AM  
**To:** Carolyn Yagle  
**Subject:** FW: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: PGC land steal

Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
412-261-6000 phone  
412-261-5999 fax

-----Original Message-----

From: chris thomas [mailto:christhomas1952@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Sunday, April 05, 2009 8:47 PM  
To: info@canyonplanning.com  
Subject: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: PGC land steal

This is an enquiry e-mail via <http://www.canyonplanning.com/> from:  
chris thomas <christhomas1952@yahoo.com>

here are statements if they get the land,there is going to be nothing but there way.No access to the residents unless there hunting.Here are quetes from there main employes who say if they get it it will be gamelands .....

Bluetick  
HuntingPA Political Pro Staff  
The man

Registered: Fri Oct 31 2003  
Posts: 8810

Loc: Franklin County Originally Posted By: houndsman1952The Bill by Benninghoff, is a rough draft.Hanna and others are not letting it go through without amendments.

The amendments are going to require,many needed funds from far more than 1 agency.

The PGC,does not have these type funds.

So they are not even being considered.

You have the biggest sportsmans association,in PA. pushing for bills,that are just going to sit and die.

This land will not be just gamelands so why should the PGC, invest 2 million dollars.

They need to find that amount of land for half of a million.And invest the other 1.5 million,in the property.

And still have limited hunting on the Rockview property.

HB 1158, Benninghoff's bill, is not a rough draft. If it would go through both houses and be signed into law, it will stand on it's own. Hanna might try to amend the bill, that is the tact he took last year. In the end, sportsmen and the local citizens in Brenner Township raised enough ruckus to stop the slam dunk.

Why would any amendments by Hanna require additional funds? The bill as it is now sells all land for \$1 for everyone but the GC. The GC tab is \$2 million. THEY DO HAVE THE MONEY - cash in hand. They need no state legislative authority to spend more than the \$400 per acre for this land as the US Fish and Wildlife Service is the controlling authority over the use of the escrow money.

The largest state sportsmans club??? PFSC does indeed support this sale to the GC. They were the spearhead organization for hunters last year top stop the sale to PSU as well. Little early in the session to determine outcomes.

The reason the GC is not mentioned in the press much, or at these meetings is they are being excluded from the discussion. First, the administration has placed a gag order on them. This means they can not get out there and state their case as can the other players. Add the contrived "conservation study" and the suggested outcome of PSU getting the land. As I have been saying for some time, this thing is a huge inside political deal. The Governor and his minions deciding something without any concern for public opinion other than to how to defeat it.

If the current bill by Benninghoff goes through, the only purpose for the study will be for the round file. It holds no weight in this discussion. Even if PSU gets the land, the legislature would have to specifically make the conservation easement and considerations part of the grant. Only then would the study and easement have any bearing.

Trout is right, the main purpose of that study was to sway the opinion of those less informed. PSU and political friends want people to think that this is a done deal with lots of protections.

It isn't.

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Hunting - more than just buying a license. Get involved!

GalThatFishes  
Honored

Registered: Thu Sep 06 2007

Posts: 6367

Loc: 2A, 2B If the PGC buys the land, they will indeed be game lands.

you can read here.

<http://www.huntingpa.com/forums/ubbthreads.php?ubb=showflat&Number=1075677&fpart=14>

If you don't put stipulations in the bill.

And Benninghoff's bill goes through.

The game commission can do what they please and not a thing can be done.

## Carolyn Yagle

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**From:** Environmental Planning & Design  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 07, 2009 8:21 AM  
**To:** Andrew Schwartz; Carolyn Yagle  
**Subject:** FW: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan

Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
412-261-6000 phone  
412-261-5999 fax

-----Original Message-----

From: Carolyn Mahan [mailto:cgm2@psu.edu]  
Sent: Monday, April 06, 2009 7:05 PM  
To: info@canyonplanning.com  
Subject: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan

This is an enquiry e-mail via <http://www.canyonplanning.com/> from:  
Carolyn Mahan <cgm2@psu.edu>

April 7, 2009  
Andrew Schwartz and Carolyn Yagle  
Environmental Planning and Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Schwartz and Ms. Yagle,

I support the general endorsement of the Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan by ClearWater Conservancy. I think that the plan should make it absolutely clear that protection/management/conservation/restoration should be independent of ownership. This provision must be paramount. In addition, the natural resources of the Spring Creek Canyon are significant to the ecology and biodiversity of our Commonwealth. As such, their preservation should be considered the top priority of the management plan. Therefore, active recreation, intense use, human-induced habitat fragmentation (roads, trails), encroachment, and introduction (inadvertent or planned) of non-native species should be avoided. My final concern that must be addressed is enforcement of the terms of any conservation easement. The property will have to be continually monitored with enforcement personnel to ensure that the resources remain protected. I am not sure how Benner Township, Penn State, DCNR (or any potential owner) could ensure such enforcement. I am not sure if this issue was addressed in the plan. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.  
Sincerely,

Carolyn G. Mahan, PhD  
Associate Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies Penn State

April 7, 2009

Re: Public Comments on "The Spring Creek Canyon Conservation Strategy"

To the honorable members of the Spring Creek Canyon Committees,

I am an environmental professional, community planner, and advocate for bicycle recreation and commuting within Centre County. I wish to endorse the Spring Creek Canyon Conservation Strategy with the strong reservation that present draft fails to adequately or consistently address the potential for biking as an appropriate passive recreational use within the Spring Creek Canyon. In general, bicycle recreation should be within consideration for detailed master planning because:

- Bicycles can use the existing facilities (namely the creek-side service road) eliminating need for additional development or disruption of undeveloped soils
- Bicycle users are less prone than pedestrian users to stray from developed trails and demonstrate potential as an appropriate form of low-impact passive recreation
- Portions of the trail system that are ADA accessible would also be accessible to low-to-moderate skill recreational riders and commuters; this dual use can concentrate visitation to designated/developed areas and create synergistic funding opportunities for improvement
- Designated bicycle trails designed with best practices (reference [www.imba.com](http://www.imba.com), [www.railstotrails.org](http://www.railstotrails.org), et'al) have been shown to offer better visitor control, greater ecological protection, and decreased need for enforcement when compared to trails that exclude bicycle usership all-together. The proven principle is to design trails to keep bicycles in the appropriate places rather than try to police their out-right exclusion.
- Assessment of specific passive recreation uses and effective design and management strategies should be a subject of more detailed master planning.

In addition, I offer the following specific feedback on the draft report:

1. pg 46 Natural Communities Analysis.

*Quote: " These areas are relatively intact due to limited human disturbance. Recreation in and adjacent to the Canyon should be limited to foot traffic directed along specified trails and to fishing and non-motorized boating on the Creek itself."*

Recommendation : Add bicycling and cross-country skiing to the provisional list of recreation classes appropriate in and adjacent to the canyon. "Foot Traffic" is not inclusive of biking and cross country skiing which are included in later appropriate use recommendations (ref 1D and 1G).

2. pg 63 Recommendation #1D

Quote: “ Provide for appropriate recreation opportunities including hiking, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, birdwatching and crosscountry skiing within the Lands for Conservation.”

Recommendation: Add 'bicycling' as a recreation activity in Recommendation #1D. Bicycling is included in the summary table on page 92; the narrative recommendation on page 63 should be revised for consistency.

3. pg 64 Recommendation #1G

Quote: Provide for appropriate areas designated for passive recreation uses including hiking, canoeing/kayaking, birdwatching and cross-country skiing.

Recommendation: Add 'bicycling' as a recreation activity in heading text for Recommendation #1D, pg 64. Biking is discussed in the subtext of this recommendation and in the summary table for Recommendation #1G on page 92, but omitted from the main heading text for this recommendation.

4. pg 67- 68 Recreation

Quote “ The types of passive recreation appropriate for the Site include pedestrian-oriented trails, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, bird watching, cross-country skiing and hunting.”

Recommendation: Add 'bicycling' as an appropriate form 'passive' recreation.

Thank-you for your consideration of sending a more consistent and inclusive message regarding bicycle usership within the future master planning of this resource that we all wish to appreciate and protect.

In conservation, in inspiration, and with wisdom,

Kevin Gombotz

Centre Region Bicycle Coalition Executive Committee Member  
Chair of the State College Design Review Board

4.7.09-2

**Carolyn Yagle**

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**From:** Environmental Planning & Design  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 08, 2009 8:23 AM  
**To:** Andrew Schwartz; Carolyn Yagle  
**Subject:** FW: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: Spring Creek Plan comment

Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
100 Ross Street, 5th Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
412-261-6000 phone  
412-261-5999 fax

-----Original Message-----

From: dennis dusza [mailto:ddusza@comcast.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, April 07, 2009 7:31 PM  
To: info@canyonplanning.com  
Subject: Spring Creek Canyon Planning: Spring Creek Plan comment

This is an enquiry e-mail via <http://www.canyonplanning.com/> from:  
dennis dusza <ddusza@comcast.net>

This is overplanning at its best. Trying to have all these parties and entities have a stake in decision making is just a recipe for disaster. Increased public access is definitely desirable but what you have created is a monster. The main goal was to increase public access but save the place from overuse. What you have proposed will just destroy the unique characteristics of this place.

When you add up the price tag of what you are proposing, it is off the charts. Perhaps the best thing would be just to have the Department of Corrections keep the property but abandon operations on the north side of the Highway. Move the orchard over to another location near the Forestry Camp either by moving trees or planting new ones. Enter into agreements with the Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission regarding the use of the land. A couple of parking lots and a couple of bathroom facilities are all that are needed. One parking lot and facility at Benner Springs and one at Fisherman's Paradise. Some small parking lots on the top. The old road can be sprayed to kill the weeds and allow for a walking path. No bikes or horses. Simple recreation nothing fancy and the place gets the needed protection without all the development. The farm fields on the top could be put into warm season grasses and harvested once a year. What you have proposed is way over the top and does nothing to protect this valuable area only exploit it. Penn State and Benner Township should not even be considered in this manner.