

OTHER SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

The Heinz Endowments have supported a number of other watershed and brownfield projects in Pennsylvania:

WATERSHEDS

Allegheny Watershed Network

The Allegheny River is one of the most diverse freshwater ecosystems in the eastern United States. The Allegheny Watershed Network, a project of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, functions as the primary source of information and support for organizations and agencies working on environmental projects within the Allegheny watershed. The Network's goal is to coordinate the work of these groups in order to implement a comprehensive conservation strategy throughout the Allegheny River watershed.

Western Pennsylvania Watershed Protection Program

The Watershed Protection Program is working to protect and restore Pennsylvania's unique water resources on an ecosystem basis, and to foster separate technologies to preserve and reclaim watersheds. The program supports preservation, acid mine drainage and stream-bank stabilization projects as well as non-point source pollution abatement and water monitoring.

The Juniata River Project

The Endowments support the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Juniata Riverkeeper Program which focuses on protection and restoration of the Juniata watershed in central Pennsylvania. The watershed, a major tributary of the Susquehanna/Chesapeake Bay system, is extraordinarily diverse and still relatively unspoiled. This program focuses on four areas: agriculture, wetlands, land conservation and environmental education.

Left: On a canoe trip, led by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, groups of students and adults look for crayfish and study the healthy life of the Juniata River.

Background: Through a Geographical Information System, Pittsburgh RISES identifies hundreds of brownfield sites in Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh.

BROWNFIELDS

The Phoenix Land Recycling Company

The Phoenix Land Recycling Company is a non-profit corporation that facilitates the assessment and remediation of brownfield sites for economic reuse. The organization partners with local economic and industrial development agencies, commercial realtors and developers to identify locations with a high potential for economic reuse. It conducts comprehensive assessments and develops remediation plans for these sites, and with the remedial requirements and costs quantified, it assists in marketing the sites to prospective purchasers.

The Center for Land Renewal

The Center for Land Renewal is leading the development of the Brownfields Network, a forum through which organizations and individuals across the country can communicate and share information on industrial site reuse.

Pittsburgh RISES

Pittsburgh RISES (Regional Industrial Site Evaluation System) is a geographical information system and database of available industrial properties in the Pittsburgh area. The project, a collaboration between the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University, is providing custom physical, economic and environmental analyses, so informed decisions can be made by prospective developers, planning organizations, community groups and policy makers.

About The heinz endowments

Founded more than four decades apart, the Howard Heinz Endowment, established in 1941, and the Vira I. Heinz Endowment, established in 1986, are the product of a family commitment to community that began with H.J. Heinz and continues to this day. In life, Howard Heinz and Vira I. Heinz contributed to setting the highest possible standards of effective philanthropy. The mission of their foundations is to be diligent, thoughtful and creative in helping to carry those standards forward. The Heinz Endowments are based in Pittsburgh and they share a commitment to supporting the efforts of non-profit organizations, primarily in western Pennsylvania, in the areas of arts and culture, children, youth and families, economic opportunity, education, and the environment.

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HEADLINES

Environment Program

The Heinz Endowments

Winter 1998

Multi-Stakeholder Process Broadens Impact of Environment Program Grants



One of the largest salamanders in North America, the Hellbender, found in French Creek, can grow to be 29 inches long and weigh up to 5 1/2 pounds.

The Heinz Endowments' Environment Program is seeking to add a new dimension to its grantmaking. Over the past four years, the program has developed a "green team" approach, an ongoing effort to rally grantees to work together on specific projects. In the future, the Endowments will attempt to create additional leverage by encouraging a more self-sustaining "green network"

of diverse community stakeholders.

As the program grows, it is uniting not only grantees, but an interactive web of community organizations, business owners, government officials and citizens. The program is now working toward using multi-stakeholder processes to add to the momentum of many environmental initiatives — giving them strength and solidarity and increasing the likelihood of long-term success.

"It is becoming clear that the Environment Program is not simply creating a series of project teams, it is also forging diverse and sometimes unexpected linkages to create an

expanding network of environmental action," stated Ed Wilson, a consultant to the OMG Center for Collaborative Learning, a firm engaged to monitor the environment program as part of an ongoing evaluation.

But forming these partnerships can be difficult. The dynamics of bringing diverse groups to the same table provides valuable lessons in discipline and diplomacy.

"Addressing the challenges of the environment cannot be done in piecemeal fashion," stated Andrew McElwaine, director of environment programs. "In an effort to meet their project goals, we've watched many of our grantees form partnerships with a broad circle of people and organizations and tackle the challenges of winning public support. It's been truly remarkable to watch new alliances form and smart programs become integrated into the community."

Two areas in which the Environment Program is working to build green networks are *Watersheds* and *Brownfields*. These areas reflect the program's commitment to environmental protection and ecological restoration.

networks

The slag pile of Nine Mile Run looms over the community of Duck Hollow near Pittsburgh.



WATERSHEDS



The French Creek Project

French Creek has been called the most biologically diverse watershed in Pennsylvania. It flows 117 miles from western New York through northwestern Pennsylvania to Franklin, where it drains into the Allegheny River. French Creek, named by a young George Washington in 1753, is the habitat for more species of fish and mussels than any other stream in Pennsylvania. It is also home to an increasing number of endangered species as pollution and human impacts continue to threaten its biological diversity.

The French Creek Project is a five-year initiative with three central goals: to raise public awareness about the value of the stream; to catalyze the development of a community based watershed organization; and to preserve the stream's habitat, maintain biological diversity and protect endangered species.

Through unique public outreach programs, the project has gained widespread support from groups and individuals throughout the watershed. It has also managed to focus state-wide media attention on the project's success.

"The main challenge for watershed initiatives is to instill a sense of ownership in the people who live there," stated Brian Hill, the project's director. "It's essential for us to build grassroots support by engaging groups that are often viewed

as disparate — environmentalists, farmers, business leaders, local government officials, teachers and landowners. This approach encourages community acceptance and can change the way people think about and act toward the creek and its tributaries."

"The project staff have rallied widespread community support and they've made people realize what a valuable resource French Creek is for the entire region," stated Melisa Crawford, environment program associate.

"The project's strategy for promoting consensus on sustainable use of this watershed has made it a model for effective ecosystem management and watershed protection."

Despite French Creek's numerous successes, it is not immune to the challenges faced by other watershed initiatives across the country. For example, because there are over 40 municipalities in the French Creek watershed, the coordination of regional land use policies has been fragmented.

Another common challenge is keeping the public informed. "We are continually struggling to overcome skepticism in the community related to environmental projects," Hill said. "Many people see environmental initiatives as potential impediments to what they want to do — farmers want their

livestock to have access to the creek, businesses don't want the environment to deter economic growth — our challenge is to integrate the goals of the project into the community and build trust among all stakeholders."

The French Creek Project has responded to these potential barriers by reaching out to key community groups and engaging them in efforts to protect and preserve the watershed. These efforts are captured in the following initiatives:

Advisory Committee

The French Creek Project has a 30-member advisory committee that includes representatives from sportsmen's clubs, chemical and industrial manufacturers



and conservation groups, as well as academics, farmers, landowners and citizens. The committee provides advice about how the project should proceed and it has assisted in the development of a vision plan for the entire watershed.

Top: A view of French Creek from Franklin, PA, where it drains into the Allegheny River.

Above: Students attempt to catch small fish species for study and release.

Canvassing the Creek

The Canvassing the Creek initiative is a door-to-door outreach effort to introduce the community to the French Creek Project. "We knew that a top-down project wouldn't be well received and that we needed public support for protection of the watershed," said Hill. "We thought that door-to-door canvassing would be the most effective way to get the message out to the public and engage them in the project's goals."

Eco Tourism Initiative

The French Creek Project staff is training volunteer naturalists to help people learn more about the natural history of the watershed through canoe, hiking, bus and train trips.

Environmental Alliance for Senior Initiative

French Creek staff are bringing high school and college students together with senior citizens to carry out water quality monitoring.

The French Creek Calendar

The project is using history and the arts to reach fourth grade students in the Crawford Central School District. Based on a French Creek motif, they are using their art, poetry and prose to engage other people in thinking about the creek. Their work will be featured in the Meadville Council on the Arts Community Art Show and a French Creek Calendar.

BROWNFIELDS

The Nine Mile Run Greenway Project

"Perhaps the most striking opportunity noted for a large park is the valley of Nine Mile Run..."

Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr., 1910

In 1911, when Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr. was a consultant to Pittsburgh's Civic Commission, he recommended a major park be created on a beautiful, 240 acre stretch of land that extended to the Monongahela River.

No one listened. Today, almost 90 years later, the land is buried under 150 feet of steel slag and it is the largest undeveloped brownfield site in the City of Pittsburgh.

But the stream valley and desolate slopes of Nine Mile Run may be changing. Through several unique partnerships, plans for housing, parks, walkways and open space are becoming a reality. Nine Mile Run is now seen as an opportunity to reinvent the concept of an urban community and its relationship with the environment.

With support from the Heinz Endowments, Carnegie Mellon University's Studio for Creative Inquiry is part of an interdisciplinary effort to address the open space on the site and integrate the natural environment with the new community. Through its Nine Mile Run Greenway Project, the Studio has four main objectives: develop stewardship; identify and model sustainable approaches to urban open space development; utilize contemporary tools to communicate about complex environmental problems; and promote bio-diversity in brownfield reclamation.

In an effort to meet these goals, the Studio, a research facility in the School of Art at Carnegie Mellon, has engaged a group of engineers, artists, historians, designers, scientists and policy experts. An integral part of their plan is to create an informed public discussion around the issue of brownfield reclamation, re-vegetation and social re-use.



The barren mountain of industrial waste and the stream valley of Nine Mile Run

"Nine Mile Run presents an enormous challenge to reconsider the industrial revolution and its implications on our culture and environment," stated Tim Collins, co-director of the Nine Mile Run project. "It is a chance, through the work of an entire interdisciplinary team, to be part of creating a strong bond between people and the experience of a place."

The Nine Mile Run Greenway Project is reviewing the area's historic uses and industrial past, its botanical and entomological make-up, wetland function, stream morphology and landscape. Results of this site assessment will provide the basis for a conceptual design for the park and greenway and for restoration of the stream. In partnership with the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, the Studio will also develop an exhibit of the Nine Mile Run project, including drawings, maps and computer models.

"Our primary goal is to create an informed citizenry that is prepared to advocate for green and open space on Nine Mile Run and other brownfield sites," stated Bob Bingham, also a project co-director. "We are in the process of building an understanding of the complex issues surrounding the site — and then integrating the value of Nine Mile Run's open space into the fabric of our communities."

In meeting this challenge, the project team has made experiential learning, including site tours and public materials, an integral part of that educational process. Through on-site programming Nine Mile Run staff regularly invite school children and adult groups to explore various aspects of soil, water and development issues.

If the new partnerships around Nine Mile Run continue to grow, the site has the potential to be an international model for sustainable development and brownfield re-development. But the project faces two central challenges — aggressively building a public message

around the need to reclaim the stream and re-vegetate the slopes, and bringing all stakeholders to the table to agree on a common path for the site — including resolution of concerns surrounding maintenance, transportation, land use and waste water problems.

"Over its history, Nine Mile Run has been used for a hunting club, a ball field, gas wells and finally a slag dump for millions of tons of industrial waste," stated Andrew McElwaine. "Now it has the potential to make Pittsburgh one of the most exciting places in the country for sustainable development and brownfield re-development. The Studio for Creative Inquiry has provided sound leadership in advancing the integrated, open-space development of the site. Through its work, perhaps the vision of Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr. will finally be realized."

Key Partners:

The network that is supporting the goals of the Nine Mile Run Greenway Project includes the following:

The City of Pittsburgh

The Department of City Planning commissioned a master planning study of the 240 acre site of Nine Mile Run, which proposes to build 1200 residential units and create almost 100 acres of public space.

The Urban Redevelopment Authority

The URA, now the owner of the Nine Mile Run site, identified four design principles for the project: develop open spaces which serve multiple needs and connect Frick Park to the riverfront; modify the stream channel to minimize bed erosion and provide new stream side planting; integrate stormwater management within the overall open spaces of the site; and restore vegetation on the slag pile.

The Environmental City Initiative

ECI is working with Carnegie Mellon to strengthen partnerships with the City of Pittsburgh, the Urban Redevelopment Authority and other environmental groups in the region. It is acting as a liaison between different stakeholders and promoting understanding of the Nine Mile Run project within the community.

University Partners

In addressing the multi-disciplinary facets of developing the Nine Mile Run site, the project has involved a number of university partners, including: The University of Pittsburgh, Chatham College, Penn State and Carnegie Mellon. Contributing programs and departments include: geology, art history, stream ecology, entomology, botany, landscape architecture, wetlands science and public policy.

The Pittsburgh Children's Museum

The Museum provided funding to art professor and Nine Mile Run Project Co-Director Reiko Goto to develop an art and science curriculum for grade-school children. Her research interests include insect habitat and sound in urban environments.

Key Partners:

The network that is supporting the goals of the French Creek Project includes the following:

Allegheny College

Allegheny College hosts the French Creek Project and is located in the center of the watershed in Meadville, PA. In addition to its outstanding environmental science program, the college recently created the Center for Economic and Environmental Development as part of an initiative to foster sustainable economic development in northwestern Pennsylvania. The Center is working with various industries on pollution prevention and encouraging municipal cooperation and more sensible land use development patterns.

Pennsylvania Environmental Council

PEC has brought valuable expertise to the French Creek Project in the area of public education and outreach. It has worked with a wide array of audiences to build partnerships and deliver the message of watershed protection and biological preservation.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

In addition to purchasing and protecting hundreds of acres in the French Creek watershed, the staff of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy has conducted stream studies on various sections of creek. The research has included aquatic evaluation and identification of the presence of mussels, darters and important plant species that are endangered.



Above: Scientists study the impact of slag on the stream water and aquatic life.

Left: Blast furnace waste from Pittsburgh area steel mills was transported to the Nine Mile Run site.