

Chapter Three - Potential Greenway Use & Impact

Potential Shawnee Greenway Users

The service area for the Shawnee Greenway system would primarily serve the residents of Shawnee Village and provide visitors with options for local travel without using an automobile.

The length of the trail system (2.5 – 3.0 miles) is not significant enough to draw people from long distances for the sole purpose of using this system. The Shawnee Greenway system will serve as an important adjunct to the McDade Trail (MRT) – which is a regional attraction.

Below are summary statistics indicating the actual and potential number of trail users based on the information provided by each agency:

NPS – Delaware Water Gap NRA

NPS Website

- 2002 Visits – 5,165,415
- 2003 Forecast – 5,043,105 (-2.37% Difference)
- 2004 Forecast – 5,063,737 (-1.97% Difference)

DRJTBC – Joint Toll Bridge Commission

Brian Hill (Superintendent - 570-476-6030):

Published numbers for 2002 are Average Daily Usage – 53,500 daily-both ways

PennDOT District 5–0

George E. Harley (District Safety/Studies Manager - 610-798-4254).

The Average Daily Traffic volumes, as found in the Pennsylvania Roadway Management System are as follows:

- US RT 209 (south of I-80) – 20,640
- US RT 209 (north of I-80) – 25,630
- US I 80 (west of RT 209) – 66,630
- US I 80 (east of RT 209) – 49,130

These figures are 2002 updated estimates.

PennDOT does not have data for township roads such as River Road.

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Appalachian Mountain Club – Appalachian Trail Conference

Glen Reynolds – (Mid-Atlantic Office – 717-258-5771)

Unfortunately, there is no systematic study that can provide very accurate user estimates for the section of trail passing through Delaware Water Gap. However, a study is underway as more pressure accumulates due to proximity of NYC and Philadelphia. Glen Reynolds is a Ridge Runner who has collected sample data along the trail between the Water Gap and the Wind Gap. This information is as follows:

May 23 – June 30 (5 week)

- 84 Day Hikers
- 102 Backpackers
- 205 Thru Hikers

July 4 – July 13 (10 day)

- 48 Day Hikers
- 64 Backpackers
- 91 Thru Hikers

Monroe County – (Open Space Plan) Projected Recreation Demand

The need for more parks and recreation facilities throughout the County was underscored throughout the Open Space and Recreation Plan, however, no user counts were provided. Generally, participants expressed that Monroe County is lacking in recreation facilities. While there is significant acreage in national and state parks, games and forests, there are few parks and recreation facilities for the daily needs of County residents. Connections and linkages were high priorities in the focus groups:

Regional Recreation Development

A comprehensive inventory of the recreational facilities and needs will be addressed in the forthcoming Regional Open Space Plan that Price, Smithfield, Middle Smithfield, and Delaware Water Gap are now jointly developing. Nevertheless, one can draw some general conclusions based on the Monroe County Open Space Plan. These both suggest that the minimum level of County and municipal recreation and park service is between 8 to 14 acres of land per thousand citizens.

Future park developments in the planning area include Regional Park within Smithfield Township. The park lies adjacent to the proposed greenway at River Road and Brodhead Creek.

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Smithfield Township– park demand– (from Comprehensive Plan)



Minisink Park in Smithfield Township.

The Smithfield Township Park Commission, a seven-member board, appointed by the Board of Supervisors oversees the Township's park system and makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for the operation and maintenance of these facilities. The parks include; 1) the 53 acre Waterfront Park, and 2) the 40 acre Minisink Park. Both of which are adjacent to the proposed greenway.

Waterfront Park constitutes what the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) refers to as a "community park," a facility

designed to service population within roughly a 3 mile radius. Community parks are intended to meet the broader recreational needs of several neighborhoods. They typically provide for both active recreation and preservation of unique landscapes. They also usually allow for group activities neither desirable nor feasible in neighborhood parks.

The Minisink Park is more akin to a neighborhood park and serves a somewhat smaller area. Such facilities are the basic unit of a park system in meeting the active and/or passive needs of neighborhoods. They help to create a sense of place for persons of all ages living in the service area radius. Minisink Park accomplishes and arguably serves a somewhat broader geographical area.

There is no County parkland within Smithfield Township and, therefore, the 89 acres of Township parkland must serve the needs of the 5,672 persons residing in the Township in 2000 according to the Census Bureau.

Projected User Levels for Shawnee Greenway

More than five million people visit DWGNRA each year. More than a third (36%) come to the park during the summer months of June, July and August; 26% use the park in the fall; 22% come in the spring; and 16% visit in the winter. The overwhelming majority (89%) of visitors come from New Jersey, New York or Pennsylvania. (Source: *McDade Trail Draft Environmental Assessment, NPS*)

Although the NPS does not, or cannot reasonably predict the level of increase in park use once the MRT is complete, it is reasonable to expect that Hialeah will be one, if not the most heavily used access areas or trailheads due to its

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location at the southernmost terminus of the MRT. Hialeah Access location is the first parking option for MRT users arriving from the south, as well as a location for trail users to jockey cars to or from other trailhead locations.

Potential Environmental Impact

The Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) is a partnership between The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and The Nature Conservancy.

The PNHP conducts inventories and collects data regarding the Commonwealth's native biological diversity. Information is stored in an integrated data management system consisting of map, manual, and computer files. The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index (PNDI) information system is continually refined and updated to include recently discovered locations and to describe environmental changes affecting known sites.

The PNDI search for the Shawnee Greenway resulted in four (4) potential impacts involving the following agencies' jurisdictions:

- US Fish & Wildlife Service (1)
- PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (1)
- PA fish and Boat Commission (2)

Future development of the Shawnee Greenway Trail would require that each of these agencies be contacted for further review of the project, as instructed within the PNDI receipt found within the report appendix.