

CENTRE COUNTY PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK:

Residents of Centre County,

On behalf of the Centre County Planning Commission, we are pleased to present the **2008 Centre County Planning Commission Annual Report**.

Last year, the national economic downturn began to affect Centre County's economy which over the years has usually been resilient. Inside this report, you'll see that there was a significant drop in the number of land development plans submitted to the Planning Office for review. This was also reflected in the construction industry where there was a considerable reduction in the number of housing lots created and developed.

Even though the economy has created financial hardships for many, the County remains committed to providing services that help reduce costs to our municipalities and residents. As in prior years, your tax dollars will be used wisely to improve our water, sewer, and transportation systems. In addition, we will ensure that Centre County services such as the First-time Homebuyer Program continues to provide affordable housing opportunities for our residents.

As you'll see in this year's report, the Planning Office staff continues to provide the most responsive and cost effective services to you, the residents of Centre County. Please contact us if you have questions or need assistance, we appreciate the opportunity to serve you.

Respectfully,

Robert B. Jacobs

COUNTY-WIDE ACHIEVEMENTS

The following are items that the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office (CCPCDO) assisted to achieve throughout the county:

- New Water Filtration Plants constructed in Madisonburg, Spring Mills and Rebersburg
- Millheim Borough adopted an Official Map Ordinance
- Municipal Parkland acquisition in Potter Twp. via multi-municipal cooperation
- Marion Township adopted new zoning ordinance consistent with the Nittany Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan
- The Centre County Agricultural Land Preservation Board preserved four farms
- Zoning was adopted in Huston Township
- Gregg Township on developing and adoption of Conservation Subdivision Design Ordinance and Village District regulations
- Feasibility studies were completed for the Bellefonte Central Rail Trail and the Brick Town Trail

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SUBDIVISION/ LAND DEVELOP- MENT ACTIVITY	2
--	---

UNDERUTILIZED SITE INVENTORY	2
---------------------------------	---

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL CONTROLS	3
-------------------------------------	---

L RTP	4
-------	---

MUNICIPAL BRIDGE TASK FORCE	4
-----------------------------------	---

CDBG	5
------	---

HOUSING	5
---------	---

MODEL INCLU- SIONARY REGU- LATIONS & POLICIES	5
--	---

GYPSY MOTH SUPPRESSION PROGRAM	6
--------------------------------------	---

WEST NILE VIRUS PROGRAM	6
----------------------------	---

NATURAL GAS DRILLING	7
-------------------------	---

GREENWAY PLANNING	8
----------------------	---

AGRICULTURE	9
-------------	---

FLOOD INSURANCE	9
--------------------	---

SUBDIVISION / LAND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

The *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC)* requires Planning Commissions to file an annual report with the governing body at the beginning of each year and is required to provide a listing of activities regarding reviews and actions relative to their administrative duties.

The Centre County Planning Commission (CCPC) performs a dual function concerning its involvement with subdivision and land development activity. The Planning Commission staff

must administer and enforce the *Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO)*, applicable throughout much of Centre County and they must also receive, review or monitor for review all plans originating from those municipalities having adopted their own subdivision and land development regulations (please reference the listing of municipalities on the *2008 County and Municipal Planning Controls* chart located on page three (3) for further details.) There are

ten (10) municipalities within the County that administer their own SALDO, with the remaining 25 municipalities under the jurisdiction of the County's Ordinance. Also, in cooperation with the County Recorder of Deeds Office, the CCPC monitors all subdivision and land development plans to verify if they have been properly approved by the appropriate municipal officials prior to recording.

Offered below is a summary of subdivision and land develop-

ment activity in Centre County and analysis of the distribution of activity throughout the County's 35 municipalities during 2008. The complete Subdivision and Land Development Activity report can be located on the County's website at www.co.centre.pa.us/151.asp; or contact Anson Burwell, Subdivision and Land Development Planner or Christopher Schnure, Assist. Subdivision and Land Development Planner for assistance.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY GENERAL SUMMARY

Of the 252 New Files generated in 2008, 112 files (44 percent) were created in those municipalities that fall under the jurisdiction of the Centre County SALDO and the remaining 140 New Files (56 percent) were for subdivision or land development activity located within the ten municipalities that administer their own local SALDO.

Of the 248 Recorded Plot Plans for 2008, 102 record plans (41 percent) were for those municipalities that fall within the administration of

the County's SALDO and the remaining 146 record plans (59 percent) were for activity occurring in the ten municipalities that administer their own SALDO; however, approximately half of the plans subject to local regulation fell within the Miscellaneous Plans category thus increasing the statistical percentage in this category accordingly.

In the Ten Year Comparison of compiled subdivision and land development activity for 2008, the total number of Subdivision Lots (267) represents a contin-

ued decrease in lots created and depicts another significant drop from the previous year's total of 421 lots.

A ten year comparison of Land Development Units show a county-wide total of 443 units created in 2008. This number represents only a slight decrease in land development activity from last yearly total of 483 units (which was better than expected).

Upon comparing the data compiled for 2008 with previous year's data, it is evident that the national, state and to a

lesser extent local economic conditions are having a negative effect on Centre County's subdivision and land development growth patterns.

The Planning Office anticipates a continued 'wait and see' attitude among the County's developers and is projecting a continued easing of subdivision and land development activity until existing lot and unit inventories have been significantly reduced, coupled with tangible signs of a sustained economic rebound.

UNDERUTILIZED SITE INVENTORY

CCPCDO is preparing to launch a Countywide Underutilized Site Inventory. The purpose of this inventory is to identify sites that are within reach of available infrastructure and that have real or perceived barriers to reuse or rehabilitation. These sites may include vacant land, vacant or underuti-

lized buildings and brownfield locations.

This inventory can include information of the physical characteristics of each site (known or perceived contamination, soil type, slope, etc.), availability of utilities, access to transportation facilities and the character of the surrounding com-

munity (land use, zoning, etc.) Sites may also be evaluated for their suitability to various types of development. It is envisioned that this inventory can be used by local officials, real estate brokers and developers to identify, reclaim/rehabilitate if necessary, and market these sites effectively to aid in com-

munity revitalization efforts and minimize future Greenfield development.

The CCPCDO is in the process of developing a website to aid in the development of this inventory and will be sending correspondence to each municipality soon in regards to submission of candidate sites.

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING CONTROLS

2008

	Adopted Comprehensive Plan	Planning Commission	Municipal SALDO Applies	County SALDO Ordinance Applies	Zoning Ordinance	Parkland Dedication Ordinance	Building Permit Ordinance	Federal Flood Insurance Program	Ag Security Area	Storm-Water Ordinance
CENTRE COUNTY	X	X		X						X
CENTRE REGION										
State College Borough	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
College Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Ferguson Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Halfmoon Township	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Harris Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Patton Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
LOWER BALD EAGLE VALLEY REGION										
Howard Borough	X	X		X			X	X		
Milesburg Borough	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
Boggs Township	X		X	X	X		X	X		X
Curtin Township			X				X	X		
Howard Township	X		X				X	X		
Liberty Township	X	X	X		X		X	X		X
NITTANY VALLEY REGION										
Bellefonte Borough	X	X	X		X		X	X		X
Benner Township	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Marion Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Spring Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Walker Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
MOSHANNON VALLEY REGION										
Philipsburg Borough	X	X	X		X		X	X		
Rush Township	X	X	X				X	X		
MOUNTAINTOP REGION										
Snow Shoe Borough	X	X	X		X		X	X		
Burnside Township	X		X				X	X		
Snow Shoe Township	X		X		X		X	X		
PENNS VALLEY REGION										
Centre Hall Borough	X	X	X		X		X	X		
Milheim Borough	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Gregg Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Haines Township	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Miles Township	X		X				X	X	X	
Penn Township	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Potter Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
UPPER BALD EAGLE REGION										
Port Matilda Borough	X	X	X		X		X	X		
Unionville Borough			X		X		X	X		
Huston Township	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Taylor Township			X				X	X	X	X
Union Township	X	X	X		X		X	X		
Worth Township	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN: 2008 UPDATE & BEYOND

In June 2008, the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2030 was updated in conjunction with the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Plan and the Air Quality Conformity Analysis to ensure compliance with the federal transportation legislation known as the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users or SAFETEA-LU.

The 2008 update saw the following revisions:

Addition of a number of structurally deficient bridges. A structurally deficient bridge is one that is deemed safe, but in need of

costly repairs or replacement to bring it to current standards.

Addressing the influx of Act 44 funding. Act 44 provided increased state funding for highways, bridges and mass transit, and also made fundamental changes to the way the mass transit funding is distributed in the Commonwealth.

Addressing federal Year of Expenditure requirements. Year of Expenditure is a federally established standard for projecting project costs in the anticipated year of construction.

Cost and revenue projection revisions shifted projects amongst four-year time pe-

riods and unfortunately removed some projects from the LRTP in order to maintain required fiscal constraint.

Work began in 2008 on the four-year update of the LRTP. The Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) is federally required to adopt a new LRTP by September 2010.

One of the key elements of the update includes the development of new socioeconomic forecasts, which projects population and employment figures through 2040. In order to accurately project growth, CCMPO staff will contact municipali-

ties to discuss anticipated future growth and development.

Additionally, the CCMPO is acquiring the services of a consultant to develop a travel demand model, which will utilize those socioeconomic forecast numbers to determine anticipated traffic volumes and patterns. A travel demand model allows the CCMPO to consider the potential impacts that candidate transportation improvements will have on the transportation network.

To learn more about the LRTP, please visit the CCMPO's website at www.ccmpto.net.

MUNICIPAL BRIDGE TASK FORCE

PennDOT has formed a Municipal Bridge Task Force, in conjunction with the North Central Rural Planning Organization (RPO), Northern Tier RPO, Williamsport Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and the CCMPO. This group has been working to develop a process for inventorying municipal bridges throughout the Commonwealth.

Lycoming County was chosen as a pilot study, and in cooperation with PennDOT District 3-0, has undertaken a process to identify all local

bridges between 8' and 20' in length. Using the Lycoming County Geographic Information System as a base, a significant number of small bridges have been identified that currently are not part of a regular inspection program. The study results to date have shown that the bridge problem facing Pennsylvania could in fact be much larger than originally realized.

Lycoming County's inventory acknowledged a need for an expanded inspection program that would supplement the existing inspection program

that considers those local bridges over 20' in length. PennDOT District 3-0 Municipal Services completed a very basic observation of each structure, and assigned a "good, fair or poor" rating to determine which of the structures needed an immediate inspection. Lycoming County's intent is to access liquid fuels funding to provide the initial funding for an enhanced inspection program.

The CCMPO staff has actively participated in the Municipal Bridge Task Force, and is interested in undertaking a simi-

lar inventory process to determine if the need exists to request an expansion of the municipal bridge inspection program in Centre County. The CCMPO staff, through this task force, is also investigating an approach to make municipal and state bridges compete more equally for limited federal and state fiscal resources. The Municipal Bridge Task Force will be continuing its work throughout 2009.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM

The CDBG program has been a source of versatile and comprehensive funding to help local rural municipalities meet their community development needs by funneling over \$7.7 million of Federal HUD Funds into facilities and services in Centre County since its inception in 1984.

Historically, water and sewer infrastructure projects received

the most attention in the program and that continued in 2008. Centre County Commissioners approved the following projects in 2008 for the funding indicated:

- \$28,000 to Rush Township for Water Main Installation in the Village of Casanova;
- \$67,000 to Rush Township for sewer lateral assistance grants for

the Loch Lomond Road Area;

- \$55,000 to Spring and Potter Townships for sewer lateral assistance grants for Centre Hall Mountain and Greens Valley Road;

- \$47,000 for sewer plant construction in the Village of Pine Glen, Burnside Township

- \$90,000 for Sewer System Rehabilitation in the North Philipsburg area of Rush Township; and

- \$55,000 for Street Improvements (including storm water) in Patton Township for a Habitat for Humanity Affordable Housing Project.

The Centre County Commissioners and CCPCDO recognize that Economic Development and Public Health are dependant on viable infrastructure, which is a critical need in rural Centre County.



HOUSING

Centre County's First Time Home Buyer Program, an initiative of the Centre County Board of Commissioners and administered by the CCPCDO, continued to assist first time home buyers throughout Centre County.

In 2008, \$125,400 in down payment and closing cost assistance was provided to 13 home buyers. The assistance was in the form of a zero percent loan, a second mortgage with a limit of \$10,000 or 10% of the purchase price, whichever was less. The loan is to be paid back when the home is no longer used as a principal residence, refinanced for more than 100% of the purchase price, resold, or the mortgage is paid off.

Since the beginning of the program in 1996 and through 2008, 289 home buyers have been assisted.

Affordable housing continues to be a priority concern. The Office participates as an active member of the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition, addressing the affordable housing needs in our communities.

The Office participates as an active member of the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition, addressing the affordable housing needs in our communities.

CENTRE COUNTY FIRST TIME HOME BUYER PROGRAM 1996-2008		
	# of Housing Units Assisted	Assistance
CENTRE COUNTY	289	\$2,279,927
CENTRE REGION	92	\$764,612
LOWER BALD EAGLE VALLEY	37	\$298,312
NITTANY VALLEY	75	\$595,850
MOSHANNON VALLEY REGION	12	\$85,846
MOUNTAINTOP	18	\$115,589
PENNS VALLEY	41	\$327,551
UPPER BALD EAGLE VALLEY	14	\$92,167

MODEL INCLUSIONARY REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

The CCPCDO, in partnership with the Centre Regional Planning Agency, has received a LUPTAP Grant (Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program) to develop model regulations and policies to promote affordable housing development.

The process will entail: inventorying municipal regulations, researching innovative methods to address housing

affordability, drafting regulations and policies to promote development, and obtaining public input. The end product will provide a menu of options for municipal officials to consider when planning for affordable housing development.

Affordable Housing Defined:

A household spends no more than 30% of its gross income

on housing costs, according to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). **Renters:** Rent and utilities; **Owners:** Principal, interest, taxes, and insurance.

Income limits are based on the County's Area Median Income, as adjusted annually by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

An excellent resource is the **HOMES WITHIN REACH TOOL-**

KIT developed by the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition, which may be accessed on the County's website at www.co.centre.pa.us under Housing on the Planning and Community Development Office's home page. The document outlines the strategies to promote affordable housing in local community.



Centre County is in its third year of a major gypsy moth infestation. A total of 48,980 acres was treated in Centre County by the state in 2008, of which the homeowner portion administered by the County made up 13,570 acres. Most of the treated areas were located in the western and central parts of the county.

The 2008 season started out with an unusually wet spring and early summer. Such wet conditions characteristically led to a high incidence of the fungal pathogen *Entomophaga maimiga*, resulting in population mortalities of around 80% according to government researchers monitoring gypsy moths in the county. Despite such mortality, untreated areas around the country suffered marked defoliation extending from Rush Township at the western boundary to Liberty Township in the east.

The 2008 program was successful in reducing defoliation and coincided with significant larval population reduction survivor-

GYPSEY MOTH SUPPRESSION PROGRAM 2008-2009

ship as a result of the fungal pathogen. In addition to the 13,570 acres of private residential areas treated in 2008, the state treated 26,400 acres of state forests and 6,670 acres of state game lands.

Public meetings

Three public meetings were held in March 2008 in different parts of the County to educate County residents on the gypsy moth outbreak. They were held at the Philipsburg-Osceola, State College and the Bald Eagle High Schools.

2009 Project Management

The 2008/2009 program proceeded more efficiently than the previous year. Many procedures had been adopted to streamline the spray sign-up and invoicing protocol in the intervening year between the 2008 and 2009 programs. In 2008, all sign-ups were done online; users were asked to enter their names which were then compared with the tax parcel database. All parcels associated with that name were then displayed to the user, who selected the parcels that s/he wanted sprayed. As in 2007, the County's GIS (Geographical

Information System) was the key tool used in drawing up spray blocks.

2009 Spray Block Implementation

Because population crashes had occurred in many of the County's municipalities, the surveying workload was much higher in 2008 than it had been in 2007 when the majority of infestations were new. Spray blocks were designed according to DCNR rules. Given the centralized nature of the homeowner spray data and the ease of invoice production, it was decided that all municipal invoices were to be prepared and printed at the County and sent out to municipalities along with address labels to ease their workload. This was greatly appreciated by the municipalities.

The 2009 spray program will have 124 spray blocks totaling 6,556 acres. Non-payment issues resulted in the withdrawal of 29 spray blocks that had previously qualified for spraying under DCNR rules.

Open Administration

As in 2007/8, all requesters

and all blocks (including withdrawn blocks), were plotted on a map on the County's gypsy moth web site so that homeowners could see whether their application had qualified for spraying (and if not, the reason for non-qualification), and whether they were included in a spray block. As last year, all developments were reported on the County's *Gypsy Moth News* newsletter, which has around 1,700 recipients. All requesters are automatically added to the recipient list.

Early Warning for Future Gypsy Moth Outbreaks

The gypsy moth infestation is subsiding. In a year or two it will have left the County. However there is little doubt that it will be back, whether in as serious a form as the present outbreak or in a milder one. An objective for 2009 is to liaise with foresters, extension staff and experienced landowners to examine the possibility of setting up a regional or county-wide monitoring network which would serve as an early warning of a building gypsy moth population.

CENTRE COUNTY 2008 WEST NILE VIRUS SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL PROGRAM



West Nile Virus (WNV) is a disease that resides in bird populations and can be transmitted to humans through the bite of a mosquito that has previously bitten an infected

bird. While most cases of WNV in humans are mild or even undetected, in some instances the virus can result in inflammation of the brain or spinal cord, and can result in death.

Since mid year 2000, the Pennsylvania Department of Envi-

ronmental Protection (PADEP) has made funds available in the form of annual grants to each County for the purpose of monitoring the local mosquito population for the presence of WNV, for the purchase of equipment and pesticide products for controlling mosquito numbers, and for

public outreach to teach citizens how to protect themselves from becoming infected by WNV.

In Centre County the WNV Program is administered by the CCPCDO. In 2008 the staffing consisted of a County Coordi-

Continued page 7...

WEST NILE VIRUS SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

nator and two Project Assistants, all of whom are part time County employees. This staff logged 2,349 hours and accumulated 18,164 miles of travel while carrying out the program.

Funding

The PADEP grant funding for the Centre County WNV Program that was expended in 2008 totaled \$78,985; Centre County's funding for the 2009 WNV Program will be \$76,813.

Surveillance and Control

During the surveillance season from late April until the end of October, larval and adult mosquitoes from over 500 test sites throughout the County are captured and sent to PADEP in Harrisburg for identification. The adult mosquitoes are further tested for WNV if they are found to be a species that can infect humans with the virus. In 2008 there were 1,127 sampling events in Centre County that resulted in 15,573 mosquitoes being shipped for identification and testing. There

were 377 WNV tests performed on adult Centre County mosquitoes, with no positive results. In 2006 the County WNV programs also assumed responsibility for collecting and shipping dead birds for virus testing, a function previously performed by the PA Department of Health. Five birds from Centre County were tested in 2008, with one, an American Crow found in State College Borough, being positive for WNV.

The presence of a positive mosquito or the presence of large numbers of a mosquito species that can transmit the virus to humans can result in the application of pesticides to reduce the population of these "target vectors". In 2008, Centre County WNV staff conducted 173 pesticide applications to control mosquito numbers.

Additionally, County WNV staff responded to 45 citizen requests for dead bird collection or mosquito surveillance and control.

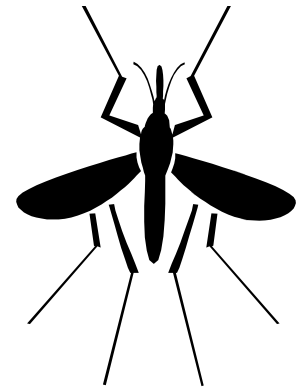
Public Education

Public education is also an important part of the WNV program. In 2008, County staff made presentations to six Senior Citizen Centers. In addition, the WNV program maintained an educational booth at the Grange Fair in Centre Hall.

Protect Yourself

In 2008 there were 14 reported human cases of WNV in Pennsylvania, with one death. Additionally, positive WNV birds and mosquitoes were found throughout the state in 2008. Residents should take reasonable precautions to avoid mosquito bites, such as wearing long sleeved clothing where mosquitoes are active, and using insect repellants outdoors, especially those containing DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Elimination of standing water in both natural areas and artificial containers is the single most important thing residents can do to reduce breeding populations. Rain gutters, swimming pool covers, bird baths, wheelbar-

rows, ornamental ponds, and especially tires are all capable of breeding large amounts of mosquitoes.



DRILLING FOR NATURAL GAS—MARCELLUS SHALE

By mid-year 2008, Centre County received its first notification that drilling for natural gas to the Marcellus Shale was about to begin. In the six remaining months of 2008, the County received 12 additional notifications, with most of the activity scheduled to occur in Burnside and Snow Shoe Townships. Seismic testing was underway in a 22-square mile area to locate the underground areas most likely to

hold the highest potential for yield. Four of the wells were drilled and hydrofractured, a process whereby large amounts of water, sand, and lubricants are used to fracture the Marcellus shale in order to increase yield. By the close of the year, two of these wells were in production.

Assistance has been provided to local municipalities as they address the potential impacts created by truck traffic on rural

roads, water withdrawal requests, and emergency preparedness.

Natural gas activity is expected to increase in 2009 as the industry transitions through the exploratory phase into production. Due to the high pressure of the gas extracted from the Marcellus Shale, new lateral gas lines will be surveyed and built providing a connecting link to the Texas Eastern and Dominion lines running north

– south through the county. Access roads will become established, compressor stations will be built, and the potential for economic development activity will grow.

For more information about gas exploration, visit Penn State's Natural Gas Exploration and Leasing Web site: www.naturalgas.psu.edu.

CENTRE COUNTY RECREATION & GREENWAY PLAN

In 2008, the planning staff completed the public meeting process and data collection for the County's recreation and Greenway Plan. The steering committee provided valuable key input and technical assistance throughout this process and many thanks to all of those individuals for their volunteer time to assist with this project. Staff met with neighboring county planners, state park managers, district foresters, historians, conservation groups,

watershed associations, and other key individuals and user-groups to gather critical input for the development of the greenway corridors and the action and implementation plan. The plan when completed will suggest implementation projects and funding sources to assist local municipalities and non-profits to achieve successful recreation, cultural, and green infrastructure projects within their communities.

BEECH CREEK GREENWAY "BRICK TOWN TRAIL"

The project team has completed the feasibility study with specific recommendation to prepare trail master plans for 12 special study areas along the approximate 14 mile Bald Eagle Corridor. In addition to offering recreational, educational, health and fitness benefits, the Brick Town Trail is expected to help revitalize the economies of the towns along the way including Mt. Eagle, Howard,



Blanchard, Beech Creek, Monument, and Orviston. The study identified that cultural heritage travelers spent an average of \$623 per trip (not including transportation) compared to \$457 spending for all other U.S. travelers. Tourism is the 3rd largest industry in the US, contributing \$650 billion to the economy, and employing more than 8 million workers. A sampling of some of the jobs generated by the outdoor recreation economy include: bicycling, camping, fishing, hunting, paddling, snow sports, trails, and wildlife viewing.

BELLEFONTE CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY

This study was completed in late Summer 08' resulting in two documents that the County and others can use to implement the recommendations within the plan. The trail construction was separated into five phases, with the initial phase, entailing Upper Gyp Road to Coleville Park and Buffalo Run Community Park to Lower Gyp Road. The alignment of this section of trail

lies within the Spring Benner Walker Joint Sewer Authority easement and would require a partnership from the authority for future trail development. The County will continue to offer support and technical services related to implementation of this project and will work with agencies and local contributors to acquire the necessary monies to proceed with construction of the 1st phase of

the project. Development of the initial phase will greatly improve the character and quality of the existing park facility in Coleville and offer an opportunity for hiking/biking the historic path of the Bellefonte Central Rail with picturesque views of Buffalo Run stream and enormous opportunities for wildlife viewing.

LUMBER HERITAGE REGION OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Lumber Heritage Region's (LHR) biggest asset in the region has been the development of partnerships throughout the 15 county region and beyond and they now serve as the driving force for what the organization accomplishes. In 2008, the LHR Interpretive signs were completed and when installed in their locations will identify the region and give the

LHR a sense of place. The Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) video that was produced through a grant from the organization was featured on PBS television. This video will be distributed to schools, libraries, historical societies and more to tell the story of the CCC. A marketing and communication plan for the CCC video will be developed

in the near future. The organization has been working closely with the Pennsylvania Wilds initiative by becoming more vocal about the opportunities and possibilities this initiative provides to local communities. New projects include: Historical and archeological research at a canal site in Muncy, Upgrades at the Wildwoods Animal Park, ex-

hibit at Jefferson Co. History Center, promotion of second annual "Art in the Wilds" in Kane, construction of the Big Bend Bird Viewing Area in Warren, CCC Camp restoration project in Centre County, and Clarion River signage project. Please visit the LHR website at www.lumberheritage.org

CENTRE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

The mission of the Agricultural Land Preservation Board is to preserve the County's prime agricultural land. The nine member board was established in 1989 and has purchased Agricultural Conservation Easements on 34 farms in seven townships totaling 5,742 acres. The Board evaluates farms that are enrolled in

Agricultural Security Areas of at least 500 acres, have 50 percent of the productive soils in capability classes I through IV and 50 percent of the total acreage in harvested crop land or pasture.

Funding for easement purchases comes from the Bureau of Farmland Preservation, Centre County Gov-

ernment, and the federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program. Townships also have the option to participate in the easement purchase program. The total amount of funds used to purchase Agricultural Conservation Easements now exceeds eleven million dollars. This is an average of 1.8 farms per year at \$1,980 per acre or

\$334,444 per farm. On a broader perspective, Pennsylvania leads the nation in farmland preservation with 3,701 farms preserved totaling 407,647 acres in 57 counties.

CENTRE COUNTY FARMLAND TRUST

The Centre County Farmland Trust is a publicly supported, tax exempt, non-profit organization [501(c)(3)]. The trust is authorized by the Internal Revenue Service and the Pennsylvania Department of State to accept, hold and administer conservation easements. Governed by a 15 member Board of Trustees established in 1996, the Trust has preserved five farms totaling 553 acres. Eight more farms, totaling over 1,750 acres, are

on the waiting list.

Land owners wishing to donate a conservation easement as a charitable gift must meet the minimum criteria established by the Internal Revenue Service and the Trust. Land owners must have a current survey and legal description of the property along with an appraisal by a Certified General Appraiser who determines the easement value. Once approved by the trustees, an easement deed is prepared along with

extensive documentation that establishes the condition of the land at the time the easement deed is recorded. Land owners who qualify, may be able to claim their donation as a charitable gift and take advantage of federal tax reductions. Eased properties are inspected annually by the Board to ensure that the easement deed is being observed. Conservation easements are permanent and become part of the deed when land is sold or trans-

ferred. The land owner still owns the land but has donated the right of present and future land owners to develop the property.

Funding comes from annual memberships of individuals, families and corporate sponsors. Grants to support specific projects have come from the Centre County Community Foundation, The Bureau of Farmland Preservation, Wal-Mart and Sam's Club.

FLOOD INSURANCE

All municipalities in the county began a process to update their Flood Plain Ordinances in anticipation of the May 4, 2009 effective date for Centre County's updated Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Flood Hazard Boundary Maps. These maps serve as an initial determinant for floodplain location. Local municipal

ordinances supplement these maps and define building requirements for new development projects. While the newer developments fall into the current floodplain regulations, some older developments were built before the regulations were in place. Floodplains are regulated to protect property, decrease the risk of injuries and main-

tain the balance of the hydrologic system. In 2009, nearly every municipality in the county will be conducting public meetings pursuant to adopting their new ordinance.

CCPCDO STAFF

Robert B. Jacobs, *Director*

rjacobs@co.centre.pa.us

Susan B. Hannegan, *Assistant Director*

shannegan@co.centre.pa.us

Mike Bloom, *Senior Transportation Planner*

dmbloom@co.centre.pa.us

Anson C. Burwell, *Subdivision and Land Development Planner*

acburwell@co.centre.pa.us

Susan G. Krosunger, *Senior Planner*

sgkrosunger@co.centre.pa.us

Norman K. Lathbury, *Senior Planner, Agricultural Land Preservation Program Coordinator*

nklathbury@co.centre.pa.us

Albert M. Lavan, *West Nile Virus Coordinator*

amlavan@co.centre.pa.us

Stacy J. Mann, *Secretary III*

sjmann@co.centre.pa.us

Linda Marshall, *Senior Planner/Housing Coordinator*

lmarshall@co.centre.pa.us

Karl Mierzejewski, *Gypsy Moth Coordinator*

gypsymoth@co.centre.pa.us

Matt Milliron, *Senior Planner*

mmilliron@co.centre.pa.us

Beth A. Rider, *Senior Environmental Planner*

barider@co.centre.pa.us

Christopher D. Schnure, *Assistant Subdivision and Land Development Planner*

cdschnure@co.centre.pa.us

Elizabeth A. Lose, *Research Technologist*

eatuck@co.centre.pa.us

Mary L. Wheeler, *Secretary III*

mwheeler@co.centre.pa.us

Centre County Planning & Community
Development Office
Willowbank Office Building
420 Holmes Street
Bellefonte, PA 16823

Phone: 814-355-6791
Fax: 814-355-8661

E-mail: ccpc@co.centre.pa.us

CENTRE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

The Centre County Planning Commission is comprised of elected officials and interested citizens to represent the regions of the County. The Commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the Willowbank Office Building. The Commission provides valuable input on the activities of the CCPCDO.

Many thanks to these individuals for the commitment of their time and energy to the work of the Centre County Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission Members in 2008 were:

Robert L. Corman, <i>Chairman</i>	<i>Penns Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/10</i>
Freddie Persic, <i>Vice Chairman</i>	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/12</i>
Kevin Abbey, <i>Secretary</i>	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/12</i>
Thomas E. Hoover	<i>Mountaintop Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/11</i>
Cecil J. Irvin	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/11</i>
Thomas Poorman	<i>Lower Bald Eagle Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/12</i>
Jack Shannon	<i>Moshannon Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/10</i>
Vacant	<i>Upper Bald Eagle Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/10</i>
Robert P. Dannaker	<i>Nittany Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/11</i>

CENTRE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jon W. Eich, *Chairman*

Rich Rogers

Stephen G. Dershem

Timothy T. Boyde, *County Administrator*

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.CO.CENTRE.PA.US/151.ASP