

Three Rivers Conservation Plan User's Guide

How to Use this Plan

If you aren't familiar with River Conservation Plans (*Plan*), you may feel a bit overwhelmed and confused as you glance through this document. The Executive Summary on pages ix-xi provides a succinct explanation of what a *Plan* is, and who administers and funds them. This guide is designed to tell you how you can use them.

A River Conservation Plan is only partly a *Plan* – it also is a reference tool and river conservation study. There are essentially three major components: 1) a data component that summarizes existing information about river-related resources, 2) a public-participation component that gathers input about river-related needs and desires, and 3) a *Plan* component that uses the public input and data components to suggest projects that will restore, enhance, or conserve our rivers and riverfronts. Found in Chapter Eight, this *Plan* component is referred to as the Recommendations or Management Options section.

Anyone may use the Three Rivers Conservation Plan. For example:

- A student may use it as a resource for completing a term paper about water quality in the Pittsburgh Area.
- A citizen may use it to find out whom to contact about boating and fishing in the Allegheny River.
- Elected officials may use it to find out what types of zoning and planning are occurring in surrounding communities and what they can do to conserve resources in their own municipalities.
- Nonprofit groups may use it as a guide for deciding what their next project will be and as a way to apply for funding for a project.
- Municipal governments may use the recommendations as a guide for action to enhance their riverfronts and other amenities.

How to get Started on Implementing Projects

If, after reading through the recommendations (see Chapter 8), you are interested in implementing a project, there are several things you can do (note: you need not be listed as a potential partner to implement a project):

1. Gather thorough ideas of how you might implement the project, what the need is for the project, and how it will benefit the river/riverfront and the communities affected.
2. Contact the other potential partners, including local municipal officials, to find out if there is a way to collaborate on the project. Also, make sure that no one else is working on the same, or similar, project.
3. Seek potential funding sources, some of which are listed in the recommendations matrix. If you choose to apply to DCNR or DEP, follow these guidelines:
4. DCNR provides grants for *technical assistance, implementation, development, and acquisition* (see pg. x). DEP, through its Growing Greener program, offers grants that address non-point source pollution. Visit these websites to familiarize yourself with the grant programs: www.dcnr.state.pa.us, www.dep.state.pa.us. (Take note of grant application timelines.)
5. Contact the local agency representatives for DCNR and DEP to discuss the potential for your project. DCNR: 412-880-0486 DEP: 412-442-4184.
6. Secure grant applications online or from the local contacts (see #4, #5).
7. Call the Pennsylvania Environmental Council for assistance in putting together your ideas and contacting potential partners.