



SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP

CONSERVATION NETWORK

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Mission

Conserving Landscape Resources to enrich the quality of life and sense of place of the South Mountain region's citizens and communities. The Partnership identifies three primary goals:

1. **Conservation of Landscape Resources** - conserving and stewarding the natural, cultural, recreational, and agricultural resources that makes the South Mountain landscape unique;
2. **Promotion of Landscape Resources** - elevating public awareness of the natural, cultural, recreational, and agricultural resources;
3. **Connections Across the Landscape** - creating a community of collaboration amongst a critical mass of public agencies, non-profit and community organizations, businesses, and citizens.

Vision

The South Mountain Partnership envisions a future of – a landscape of conserved resources and vibrant communities sharing a common sense of place and collaborating on well-planned growth and sustainable economic development.

Goal 1

Serve as a regional leader in preserving and promoting Landscape Resources (facilitating committees, regional meetings, Speakers Series, Research Corps, solar action group)

Objectives

#1 Identify key landscape issues and communicate these to public and decision makers

#2 Convene and/or participate in regional committees, work groups, action teams, and/or projects that support SMP's mission and vision

#3 Deepen committee member and staff knowledge of Landscape Conservation practice by participating in and collaborating with other regional landscape initiatives and educational opportunities

Actions

1. Create and share State of the Environment Report Card & interactive map
2. Develop and share recommendations for addressing priority landscape issues
3. Develop and share project plans to implement priority recommendations, aligning with funding and programs like ATLP, Highlands, and CCP funding priorities as appropriate.

4. Create and deploy a "call to action" template or process that communicates to public the identified landscape issues and recommendations

6. Meet with County, Twp, and Borough Groups - COGs

7. Attend partner planning processes during plan creation and updates to provide input on priorities of the SMP.

8. Communicate projects or successes that address overlapping plans.

1. Facilitate committees: Leadership Committee and Communications, Organizational Development, Program, and Research Corps Subcommittees and work groups

2. Lead Solar work group to create best practices for solar location

3. Engage with PSATS, PSABs, COG, and APA-PA .

4. Prioritize SMP convening and attendance to those issues/activities that are oriented toward achieving the recommendations of the SOTR Report Card, environmental justice, time sensitive, and/or those deemed as having a high amount of negative impact or missed opportunity.

1. Identify opportunities for collaborative projects and participate in communities of practice as needed (PA DCNR CL Program, ATC Landscape Conservation Program, PA Highlands Coalition, Kittatinny Ridge, A.T. Landscape Partnership

2. Provide ongoing training and professional development to staff and committee members with an emphasis on landscape conservation and network collaboration (include in DCNR and/or other funding applications)

Goal 2 Prepare for a financially sustainable and dynamic future (financial management, transparency, sustainability)

Objectives

#1 Maximize PA DCNR funding to advance the work of SMP

#2 Diversify SMP operating funds and increase donors and sponsors

#3 Provide financial assistance to projects and activities that preserve and promote our Landscape Resources

#4 Operationalize Friends of the South Mountain Partnership

#5 Increase SMP capacity to provide services to the region

Actions

1. Prepare annual grant application to DCNR with input from the Leadership Committee

2. Implement programs and initiatives in accordance with DCNR funding scopes and work plans

1. Develop fundraising plan with WeConservePA that establishes short and long term fundraising goals

2. Implement fundraising plan with committee members

1. Implement DCNR funded mini-grant Program

2. Explore all opportunities to increase mini-grant funding

3. Evaluate opportunities to pool funding for greater impact

1. Create Friends group brochure about ways to support: gift levels, sponsorship, testimonial
2. Refine FOSMP copy and materials
3. Develop standards for FOSMP bookkeeping

4. Review value of TFEC relationship and review other fiscal agent alternatives
5. Continue work with We Conserve PA to create infographic map to demonstrate what is at stake
6. Explore use of ATC Salesforce

6. Explore use of ATC Salesforce for registration, Friends group, and additional financial and communications needs
7. Streamline FOSMP outreach, renewal
8. Provide opportunities for in-kind donation

1. Explore financial feasibility of expanding SMP staffing

2. Evaluate the feasibility of fee for service opportunities

3. Seek new and innovative grant funding to support SMP programs & initiatives

Goal 3 Actively encourage the community and world to engage with our Partners and SMP Programs (communications, content of programs)

Objectives

#1 Communicate the story of the SMP, center our Partners and the collaborative State of the Environment Report Card and Interactive Map work.

#2 Deliver networking and educational opportunities for Partners

#3 Encourage community, region to support and engage with work of Partners

Actions

1. Prepare and distribute bi-monthly newsletter
2. Implement new website

3. Enhance social media content
4. Celebrate successes through “Spirit of South Mountain” Award program

5. Prepare Informational videos

1. Conduct winter and spring partnership meetings (shift schedule to spring/winter)
2. Conduct “Power of the Partnership” Celebration, shift schedule to fall and evolve event

3. Set benchmarks and budgets for regional meetings (Spring and Winter Partnership Meetings, Annual “Power of the Partnership” Celebration in fall)
4. Implement “Walk and Talk” Program (formerly speaker series)

5. Rotate locations between communities to improve balance of exposure to SMP over the year
6. Update Spirit of South Mountain award (award itself, categories?)

1. Track, and promote storytelling of Partners
2. Clearly define SMP target audience and focus work in that fashion
3. Tell our story more to increase the awareness of the SMP as a resource.

4. Create new website redesign
5. Activate and engage all participants to post more of what they do.

6. Seek additional radio/tv/news advertisements for SMP work, programs and meetings
7. Create 5-minute informational videos on CL/SMP work and house on website

Goal 4

Develop the SMP community as a vibrant and resilient network that gets measurable results and celebrates successes (staff work planning and prioritization; committee structure and process; transitions; recruitment)

Objectives

#1 Encourage and support committee member engagement and retention

#2 Grow committees with new members

#3 Ensure alignment between strategic plan and staff/SMP sub-committee work

Actions

1. Provide social opportunities for members to celebrate the SM and our successes
2. Maximize committee member benefit opportunities with value added and/or off-hour engagement/training/involvement opportunities

1. Establish recruitment process with focus on those transitioning out of workforce, students, young professional, and faith based community.
2. Deliver committee member orientation in a timely manner

1. Create framework/tool to evaluate potential involvement in new projects
2. Create dashboard to monitor implementation of strategic plan
3. Evaluate committee structure/roles and revise as needed every other year

3. Offer free attendance of regular annual meetings to new/first-time attendees who are interested in participating in or learning more about the Partnership (budget)
4. Transition to hybrid meetings or rotating in-person or virtual schedule

3. Enhance social media presence, and utilize other partner social media accounts, to connect and recruit from broader audiences.

4. Periodically (annually?) assess progress of work groups and committees, as well as involvement in external groups and projects, and determine what activities will remain as priorities and what will be removed, as well as which projects can be phased out.

5. Explore barriers to people participating on committees and develop strategies to address

4. Engage and connect SMP work with non-traditional conservation stakeholders, diverse populations and underserved communities.

5. Monthly SMP staff review of SMP strategic plan accomplishments, monthly ATC Conservation Team meeting

Goal 1

Promoting and Preserving
Landscape Resources

Respect = for partners and
resource

Ultimate stewardship – tension
of protect and promote

1. Take actions to elevate
stewardship of the
landscape – with friends
groups, research corps, ag
sustainability, volunteers,
case studies
2. Integrate
nature/culture/recreation
into farmland attachment
– with land conservancies,
tourism, county ag pres.,
NRCS/RCPP

Goal 2

Financially Sustainable and
Dynamic Future

1. Div. SMP operations
funds and increase
donors and sponsors –
Grow sponsors –
engineering and
consultant firms, explore
earlier partnerships
2. Operationalize Friends of
the SMP

Led by the Fundraising Action
Team

Goal 3

Engagement with SMP
Partners & Programs

1. Activate Communications
Committee to identify
group in region and
communicate
appropriately
2. Programs Committee to
educate partners on
value of DEI and SMP's
value statement

Goal 4

SMP community gets
measurable results and
celebrates successes

1. Replicate/study Solar
Work Group approach to
address key regional
issues –develop recipe
(Staff & Program SC)
2. Implement transition
expectations–ex:
subcommittee members
each serve as chair for at
least 1 year (each
Committee chair)
3. Develop
guidance/process to
assess what to let go
(Leadership Committee
with input from Chairs)