



The Latest South Mountain Partnership News

Flex Grant DEADLINE is June 27

It's not too late to submit your Flex Grant application! Do you have a creative idea to benefit your community? Apply today!

Funding is available to support initiatives within our community that further the goals of the Partnership and advance the capacity of partners throughout the region. Awards from \$1000- \$2000 will be considered. All projects must be within Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, or York County.

Applications are due June 27. Find more information and apply [HERE](https://southmountainpartnership.org).



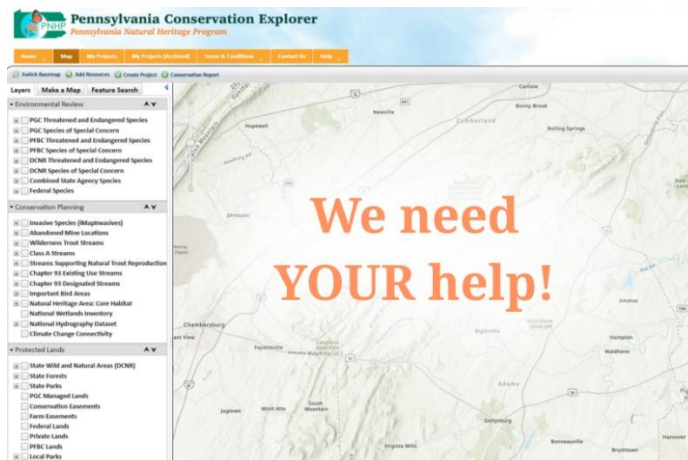
Spring Partnership Meeting



The 2025 Spring Partnership Meeting and the Regional Trail Coalition Kick-Off was a wonderful day (and thankfully we dodged the rain and thunderstorms!) Thank you to everyone who joined us for bringing your energy, great feedback, and community spirit to our meeting. Thank you again to our sponsors who helped support delicious snacks and our venue: Franklin County Visitors Bureau, and the Penn National Community. More than 70 participants attended the Spring Partnership Meeting, and approximately 35 attended the Regional Trail Coalition Kick-off. The SMP Program Committee helped to plan the agendas, select speakers, and engagement activities. Thank you to Deputy Secretary Jantz for offering welcome remarks alongside Adams County Commissioners and to Marian Orlousky of ATC for leading the celebration of ATC's centennial (and DCNR's 30th), complete with cake!

Read the wrap-up [HERE](#).

Help the Natural Heritage Inventory Update



Our ask to you: tell us about locations of quality habitat and wildlife to inform what areas are surveyed. Local contacts/landowner information is very valuable, and we ask that you include this information if able.

Complete the form [HERE](#).

Through coordination from the South Mountain Partnership, the counties of Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, and York are participating in an update to their Natural Heritage Inventory. Field survey is happening this summer, led by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. The Inventory gathers and shares information on the location and status of important ecological resources (plants, vertebrates, invertebrates, ecological communities and geologic features) and helps inform land conversion permits and land use planning decisions.

Support Flex Grants: From Rehabilitation to Rebranding and Beyond



The Flex Grant Program launched just three years ago! 2025 is the program's fourth year and interest is higher than ever! Can you help us to support even more projects? We can't do it without your help.

That's why we're kicking off our Summer Friends of South Mountain Partnership campaign. **Your support keeps programs like this going.** If you haven't yet, **please consider [becoming a Friend or renewing your support today](#)**. Together, we can build a stronger South Mountain region.

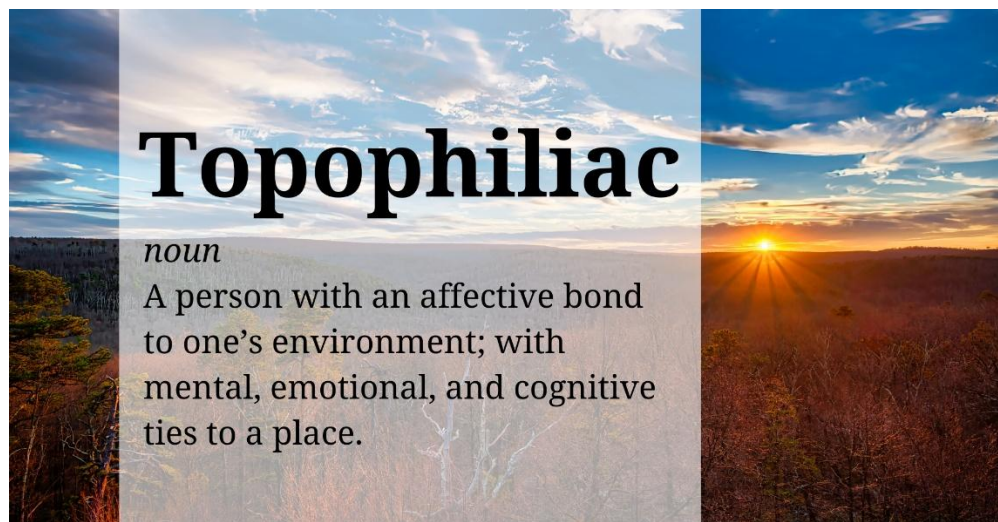
Donations to Friends of South Mountain Partnership go to your neighbors in the form of Flex Grants! These small grants strengthen local organizations in meaningful and tangible ways. One recipient, the West

Shore Wildlife Center, provided job training to college students through a Wildlife Rehabilitation Assistant position. The project provided hands-on training while helping care for injured and orphaned wildlife.

Another Flex Grant helped the Adams County Farmers Market to develop a fresh, modern brand identity through a new logo and style guide reference. The project grows the number of shoppers to the Farmers Market, increases vendor sales and success, and supports long-term sustainability for everyone who relies on and benefits from the market in Adams County. These are just two examples of the impact made possible through our Flex Grants. Other funded projects include:

- 1) Museum Accessibility Project that provides **ramp access into the museum and signage** to direct users there. (Cumberland County Historical Society)
- 2) Cumberland County Land Preservation Forum - an **educational event** that presented successful models of land conservation funding programs. (Central Pennsylvania Conservancy)
- 3) **Gardening Education and Mentorship Program** that pairs experienced gardeners with young adults to build specialized expertise in gardening and site maintenance practices benefit soil health, native plants, and wildlife. (LadyBug EarthCare)
- 4) Restore the Wittlinger - provided tools and supplies needed to **remediate invasive species** from the Wittlinger Nature Preserve in Boiling Springs and owned by South Middleton Township.
- 5) Community gardening and sustainability club that creates and maintains a **community garden** where people of all ages garden together and share their knowledge and energy while promoting sustainability and healthy living. (YWCA of Cumberland County)

Save-the-date! Topophilia Support Group Meet-Up on June 27



You may be wondering, what IS a Topophilic? Topophilia (From Greek topos "place" and -philia, "love of") is a strong sense of place, which often becomes mixed with the sense of cultural identity among certain people and a love of certain aspects of such a place. We know this love of place is something we all share in both our work and personal lives. However, this work can also be really hard, and we are exploring this lighthearted "support group."

Gather with us! Our next meet up is scheduled for **Friday, June 27 at 5:30PM at Big Hill Ciderworks**. There will be music bingo and feel free to bring cash or card for pizza and of course cider!

All are welcome, please feel free to share this with a friend!



Become a Partner

We are always looking to work with organizations in the community who share our goals! By becoming an official "Partner", you can help support our vision and mission of the Partnership by attending meetings/events, keeping us informed of your organization's related activities and increasing access to the natural, cultural and recreational resources of our region to all! **Becoming a partner is easy and free!** Find more information [here](#).

Partner News

Layers of Connection: Why Landscape Conservation Matters

Are you interested in learning more about how the South Mountain Partnership fits into larger landscape conservation efforts? The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is more than just a steward of the world-renowned Appalachian Trail; it unites the expansive landscape in a conservation strategy that supports and protects the hiker experience, the ecological corridor, and the unique identity of nearby communities. Read more [HERE](#) to learn how the ATC and its partners are working to unify the landscape around the foot path.



More Partner News of Note:

- [**Chesapeake Bay Recognized as a Hope Spot for Nature, History, and Community**](#): The Chesapeake Bay, the largest estuary in the United States and the third largest in the world, has been officially designated a Mission Blue Hope Spot. Hope Spots are areas recognized for their exceptional ecological, cultural, and historical value, and this new designation celebrates the Chesapeake Bay's biodiversity, deep Indigenous heritage, and the broad coalition of community efforts driving its ongoing restoration.
- [**Share your opinion about public electric vehicle charging stations by June 22**](#): The York County Planning Commission is seeking feedback about the expansion of electric vehicle charging stations across York County. Whether you own an electric vehicle or not, this survey is open to all York County drivers.
- [**Professional development opportunity for educators**](#): Our friends at the Center for Land Use and Sustainability are collaborating with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to create a weeklong professional development for teachers. This course will be an active, hands-on exploration of the connections between nature/natural systems and the cultural history of south-central Pennsylvania.

Employment and Funding Opportunities

Grants

- [**Wild East Action Fund Grants**](#): In celebration of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC) 100th Anniversary and the Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership's (ATLP) 10th Anniversary, the ATC announced today the opening of the 2025 Wild East Action Fund grant cycle on June 11. Up to \$400,000 will be granted to qualified land protection, conservation planning, or community resiliency projects.
- **Partnership for Better Health** is offering three grant programs due August 1.
 - [**Spark Grants**](#)
 - [**Project Grants to Address Root Issues**](#)
 - [**General Operating Grants for Organizations Leading in Equity Work**](#)

View our listing of [**Regional Funding Opportunities**](#) on our website, and suggest funds we should add.

Job Opportunities

- **Agency Advocate**: At Ghost Writer, the Agency Advocate plays the most important role in the business model, functioning as the primary point of contact for the client as well as the coordinator of the client's services across the Ghost Writer team. Agency Advocates are rewarded with job flexibility, autonomy, and work that is personally meaningful. The Agency Advocate assigns

work, organizes, and updates agency files, keeps the agency informed, and tracks projects in Ghost Writer's project management software.

- **Communications and Publicity Director:** The Buttonwood Nature Center is seeking a communications and publicity director. This person will be responsible for publicizing and supporting all events and programs. This includes sending appropriate notices to media outlets like newspapers and online calendars, as well as creating printed materials. Maintenance of Buttonwood's website, Mailchimp emails, Facebook graphics and occasional posts are also required. The communications and publicity director must work in cooperation with administrators and other personnel of Buttonwood Nature Center/The Institute.

View our [Regional Job Board](#) on our website, and send jobs we should add.

Events

- [SOAR Bird Walks | June 21 @ 8 a.m. | Buttonwood Nature Center](#): SOAR (Studying Ornithology Around the Region) bird walks find birding enthusiasts Sharon and Larry Williams of Waynesboro leading the walks along the hiking trails at varying locations throughout the area. Free and open to the public.
- [Summer Saturday Herp Hike | June 21 @ 9 a.m. | Buttonwood Nature Center](#): SOAR Head out on a hike through the woods with Buttonwood educators and look for reptiles and amphibians. Learn about different adaptations that these classes of animals have made to survive in the wild.
- [Explore and Play at the Nature Classroom | June 21 @ 9 a.m. | Strawberry Hill](#) : Explore and Play is an opportunity for families and community-members to enjoy access to free, play-based learning, and self-guided tabletop activities with a focus on environmental education, STEM, literacy, and local history. This event takes place every Saturday through Aug. 30, with the exception of July 5.
- [Yoga on the Terrace | June 22 @ 10 a.m. | Friends of Kings Gap](#): Join for an all-levels yoga class with a spectacular view on the top of the mountain, led by Ally Gregg and Maurice Sipos. Classes are held on the Mansion terrace and are appropriate for beginners. They include breathing and meditation, and end with a guided relaxation. Modifications will be offered. There is no better way to reset your nervous system and practice mindfulness than in the great outdoors!
- [Art in the Park: Summer Art Camp begins | June 23 @ 9 a.m. | Buttonwood Nature Center](#): In an outdoor park setting surrounded by nature, students spend a full week exploring and creating with a variety of mediums and techniques such as drawing, painting, sculpture, clay, fiber arts and collage. Each student will create two artworks every day. An Art Show on the last day, Friday, June 27 at 3 p.m. allows students to share their work with their families.
- [Bay Supper Fundraiser 2025 | June 27 @ 5:30 p.m. | Buttonwood Nature Center](#): The 28th Annual Bay Supper Fundraiser is all it's cracked up to be! Members, friends, and families come together to support Buttonwood with a fabulous evening of food, fun, and frolic featuring steamed

crabs from the Bay, shrimp, chicken, side dishes, dessert, and Bay-related activities at the Waynesboro Country Club. Bid it up on great items during the silent and live auctions.

- **Summer Music Series | June 27 @ 6 p.m. | Dickinson College:** Join us for a Friday evening on the farm featuring live music and our famous artisan wood-fired farm pizza. Tickets include a personal pizza and additional certified organic farm-fresh sides. Complimentary water and sun teas available to all. Food and entertainment will be picnic style-please bring your own chairs, cups, and utensils.
- **Appalachian Trail Arts & Culture Festival | June 29 @ 10 a.m. | Appalachian Trail Museum:** This event will feature authors, artists, poets, musicians, and storytellers. Join us for discussions, readings, exhibits, demonstrations of artists at work, a chance to interact with cultural figures, and opportunities to purchase works of art and signed copies of books. Complimentary lunch provided.

View these events and more on our [Partner Events calendar](#)! You can add your events directly onto our calendar or email them to jchain@appalachiantrail.org.

Social Media Catchup

Click to explore our social media channels. Follow us for the latest news, upcoming events, and more!



Live, Grow, Lead Healthy.

Despite the different opinions, perspectives, and worldviews that each of us carry, we all share a common trait: we call the South Mountain landscape home. We believe in the power of this common ground to build conversation around the future of this landscape - and our future while living within this landscape.

Learn more at southmountainpartnership.org



**SOUTH MOUNTAIN
PARTNERSHIP**
CONSERVATION NETWORK



The South Mountain Partnership [SMP] is managed as a public-private partnership by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. SMP is financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, the Environmental Stewardship Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Unsubscribe [here](#).