

PROTECT FORUM - AGENDA

Protect Your Resources – Promote Clean Energy

- **Welcome** – Commissioner Michelle Kichline
- **Introduction – Landscapes3 Protect Goal**
Carol Stauffer, Assistant Director
Chester County Planning Commission
- **Local Protection of Natural Resources**
Kate Clark, Community Planner
Chester County Planning Commission
- **Protecting and Growing West Chester’s Urban Forest**
Will Williams, Sustainability Director
West Chester Borough
- **Implementing Clean and Sustainable Energy at the Local Level**
 - **Solar Ordinances - Municipal Best Practices**
Liz Compitello, DVRPC, Manager, Sustainable Energy
 - **Phoenixville Area Clean Energy Transition Plan**
Paul Spiegel, Director of Energy & Sustainability Services,
Practical Energy Solutions





Chester County Comprehensive Plan



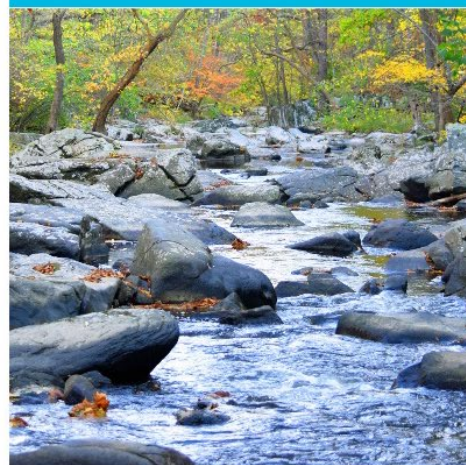
Landscapes GOALS



How We
PRESERVE



How We
PROTECT



How We
APPRECIATE



How We
LIVE



How We
PROSPER



How We
CONNECT





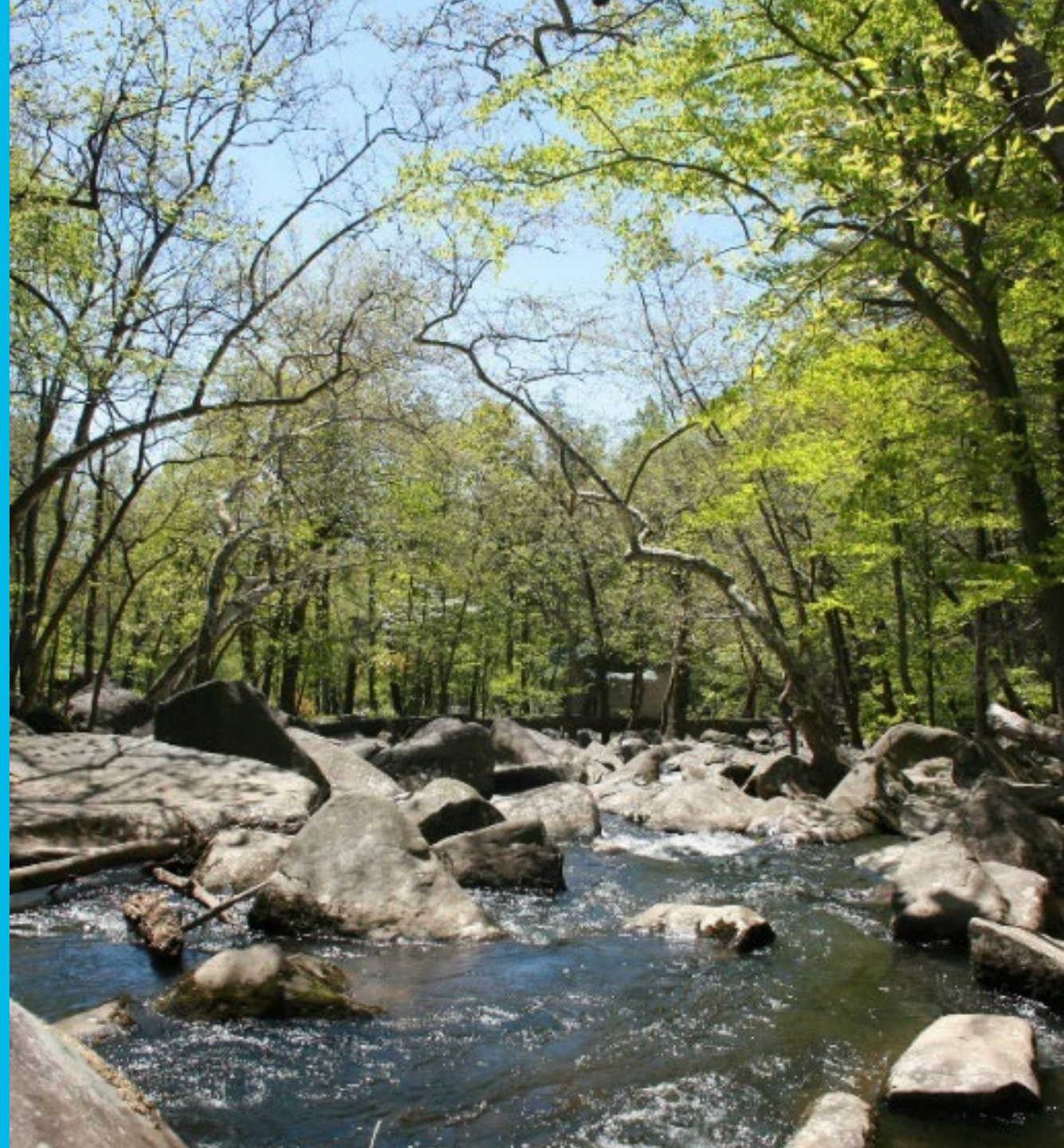
HOW WE
PROTECT

Goal: Protect and restore critical natural resources to ensure a resilient environment that supports healthy communities.

Protecting Natural Resources

Through Local Ordinances

April 19, 2022



Natural Resource Planning

- The first step to protection is understanding what resources you have!
- Natural Resource inventory often included in comprehensive plan
- Comprehensive resource protection provides multiple layers of protection – land, water, and biotic resources are interrelated
- Generally, most effective to group together in the zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance

Zoning vs Subdivision and Land Development Regulations

- **Zoning Ordinance (generally recommended)**
 - Offers broader protections
 - Requires variance for relief/modifications
- **Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance**
 - Applicable only under subdivision and land development
 - Requirements can be waived during review process

Natural Resources Inventoried



Woodlands



Wetlands



Steep Slopes



Floodplains



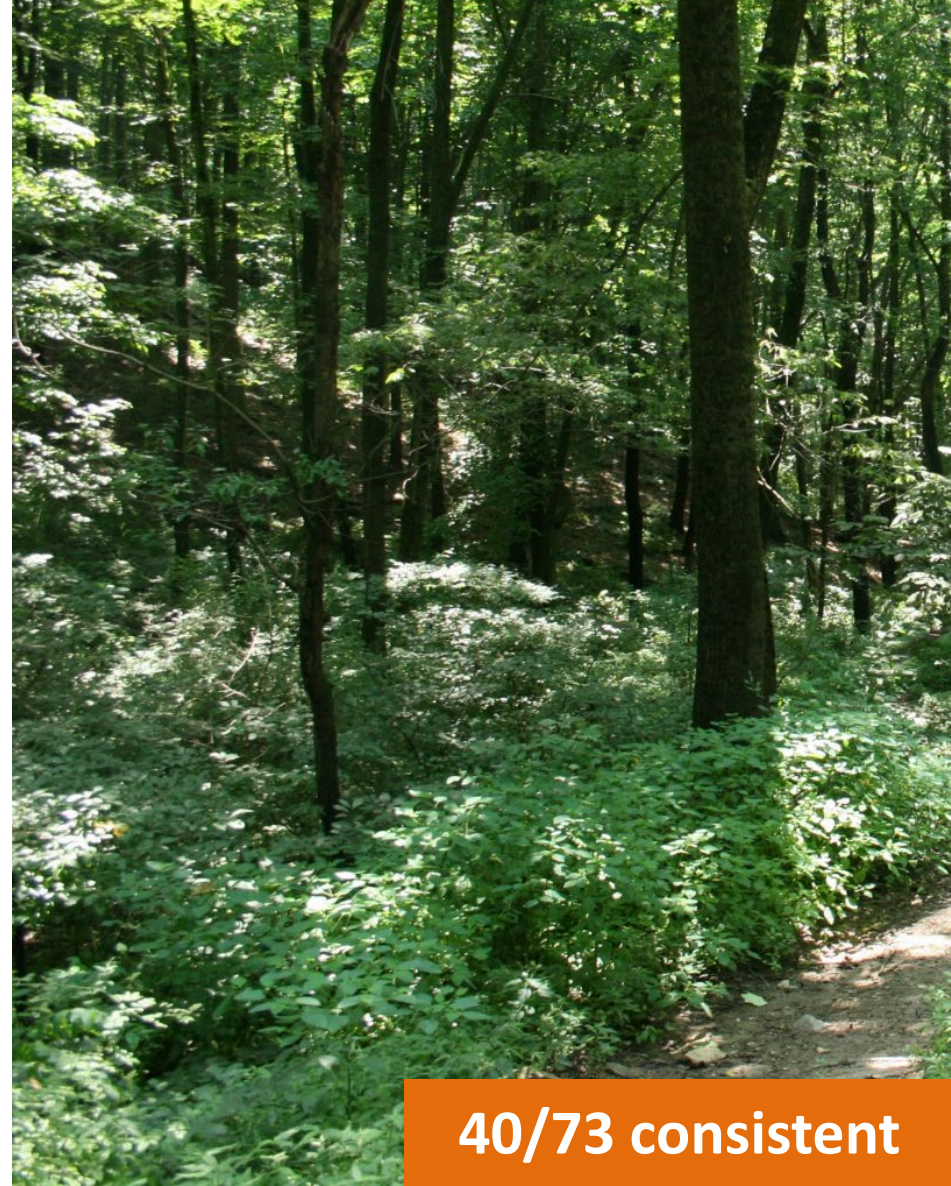
Riparian Buffers

Natural Resource Inventory Overview

- Countywide metrics established for protection of natural resources:
 - **Protected:** Meets all recommended standards
 - **Somewhat Protected:** Meets some recommended standards, additional standards/revisions may be recommended
 - **Not Protected:** Major additions or revisions recommended
- Recommended standards are based on CCPC/Brandywine Conservancy model ordinance for natural resource protection

Woodlands

- **Limit disturbance** to a maximum of 50%
- Establish a **definition** for “woodland” that is defined in a measurable way
- Include **tree protection** regulations
- Prohibit disturbing **specimen trees**
- Require **tree replacement** if more than a specified area or number of trees are removed
- Include **exceptions for forestry** or timber harvesting, as set forth in the MPC



Wetlands

- Establish specific wetlands **identification and delineation** criteria.
- Prohibit the disturbance of a wetland except with **state and federal permits**.
- Advise a **zero-disturbance limit** for wetlands except for approved necessary activities
- Establish a **50'-75' wide margin** around all wetlands. Within this margin, land disturbance would be limited to no more than 20% or prohibited.



Steep Slopes

- **Limit disturbance** to 30% of areas with slopes of 15 to 25%
- **Limit disturbance** to 15% for areas with slopes greater than 25%
- Describe the slope **measuring method**
- **Prohibit certain activities** on steep slopes
- Provide **additional guidance** for minimizing the disturbance, grading, and erosion of steep slopes



Riparian Buffers

- Require a **75'-100' buffer** from both sides of the stream bank
- Require **re-vegetation** of un-forested riparian buffers
- Establish a **two-tiered riparian buffer** with stricter standards applied adjacent to streams
- Refer to PA Department of Environmental Protection's Chapter 102 for PA **Special Protection Waters** (HQ and EV)



Floodplains

- **Prohibit** both land disturbance and the construction of new structures and substantial improvement of existing structures within a floodplain (which includes both the floodway and the flood fringe.)
- **Specify** that any new development in both the floodway AND flood fringe should not result in any increase in base flood levels.



How is Chester County doing?

- Steep Slopes
- Woodlands
- Wetlands
- Riparian Buffers
- Floodplains



What's next?

- Check out CCPC's Environment [information page!](#)
- Model ordinance language can be found in the [Brandywine Creek Greenway Strategic Action Plan](#)
- Need some help? Contact CCPC for further information



The screenshot shows the "Environment" page of the Chester County Planning Commission website. At the top, there is a blue header with the word "Environment" in white. Below the header is a large image of a white egret standing in a pond. The main content area is white and features a grid of eight links to various environmental resources. Each link includes a small image and a brief description.

Environment
Chester County is home to high-quality streams and waterways, prime agricultural soils and important natural areas like the Hopewell Big Woods and the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River. This web page provides information on environmental protection, including climate action planning, sustainability, and natural resource protection.

Home » Planning Topics » Environment

- 50 Ways Your Community Can Protect Our Planet**
In honor of recognizing Earth Day for the past 50 years, this booklet features 50 ways your community can help protect earth's resources and ensure a resilient environment that supports healthy living year-round.
- Climate Action Plan**
The plan includes a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and an action plan for reducing emissions and improving energy efficiency throughout the county.
- Sustainable Practices**
Local case studies showcase successful sustainability and resource protection initiatives.
- Protecting Natural Resources**
Local ordinances, guidelines, and best management practices are important tools for the protection of natural resources.
- Natural Resources Mapping and Data**
Find natural resource mapping, data, and related publications here.
- Watersheds Plan**
Watersheds is the county's integrated water resources plan and serves as the County-wide Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan.
- County Environmental Planning Policies**
Learn more about Chester County's comprehensive plan, Landscapes3, Watersheds, and the Greenhouse Gas Report.
- Environmental Planning Partners**
The Planning Commission coordinates with other County departments as well as Federal and State agencies to protect Chester County's resources.

Q&A

Kate Clark, AICP
Community Planner
kclark@chesco.org

