

MONTOUR AREA RECREATION COMMISSION OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE MONTOUR PRESERVE



7:00pm OCTOBER 13, 2015

MONTOUR PRESERVE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

PRESENTED BY:

BOB STOUDT, MARC DIRECTOR

JON BEAM, MARC ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Montour Area Recreation Commission (MARC) overview
- Montour Preserve history
- MARC / Talen Energy lease agreement overview
- MARC Montour Preserve operational strategy
- What happens if MARC fails?
- MARC support needs
- Discussion / questions

(SLIDE BACKGROUND IMAGES COURTESY OF KATIE GARBER)



ABOUT THE MONTOUR AREA RECREATION COMMISSION



The Montour Area Recreation Commission (MARC) was created in 2005 by an Intergovernmental Agreement of Cooperation between Montour County, Washingtonville Borough, Riverside Borough and the Danville Area School District. The Borough of Danville has since joined the organization.

MARC is incorporated in Pennsylvania under 15 Pa C.S., Section 5306, as a Domestic Nonprofit Corporation; MARC is not a 501(c)(3) entity.

MARC's operations are overseen by an unpaid Commission of elected municipal and county officials and volunteers. MARC has two part-time staff (Bob Stoudt, Director and Jon Beam, Assistant Director) and subcontracts its accounting, lawn care/weed control and other services on an as-needed basis.

MARC's mission is *'to make and promote Montour County, PA as a healthy and desirable place to live, work and play.'*

MARC's stated goals are to:

(BUILD AND MAINTAIN) Improve the quality and quantity of outdoor recreational opportunities in and around Montour County, PA

(PARTNER) Collaborate with volunteers and public and private partners to create, maintain and promote an interconnected network of trails, parks, natural areas and other green spaces

(PROMOTE) Promote the economic, natural and cultural resources of our community

(FUND) Create an endowed funding source for the long-term operations of the Montour Area Recreation Commission and the stewardship of Montour County's outdoor recreational resources

(ASSIST) Serve as a clearinghouse for information, technical and planning assistance related to outdoor recreation in and around Montour County

More information online at www.MontourRec.com



ABOUT THE MONTOUR AREA RECREATION COMMISSION (CONTINUED)



MARC meets the second Monday of each month (excluding July) at 7:00pm in the Montour Preserve Environmental Education Center.

MARC's 2015 representatives include:

President/Treasurer / Montour County Resident Representative – Mike Mills

Vice President / Washingtonville Borough Elected Representative – Councilman Frank Dombroski

Secretary / Washingtonville Borough Elected Representative – Mayor Tyler Dombroski

Montour County Elected Representative – Commissioner Jerry Ward

Montour County Resident Representative – Joseph Ward

Montour County Resident Representative – David Walker

Montour County Resident Representative – Heather Good

Danville Borough Elected Representative – Councilman Bill Hause

Danville Borough Resident Representative – Will Carswell

Riverside Borough Resident Representative – Bill Lavage

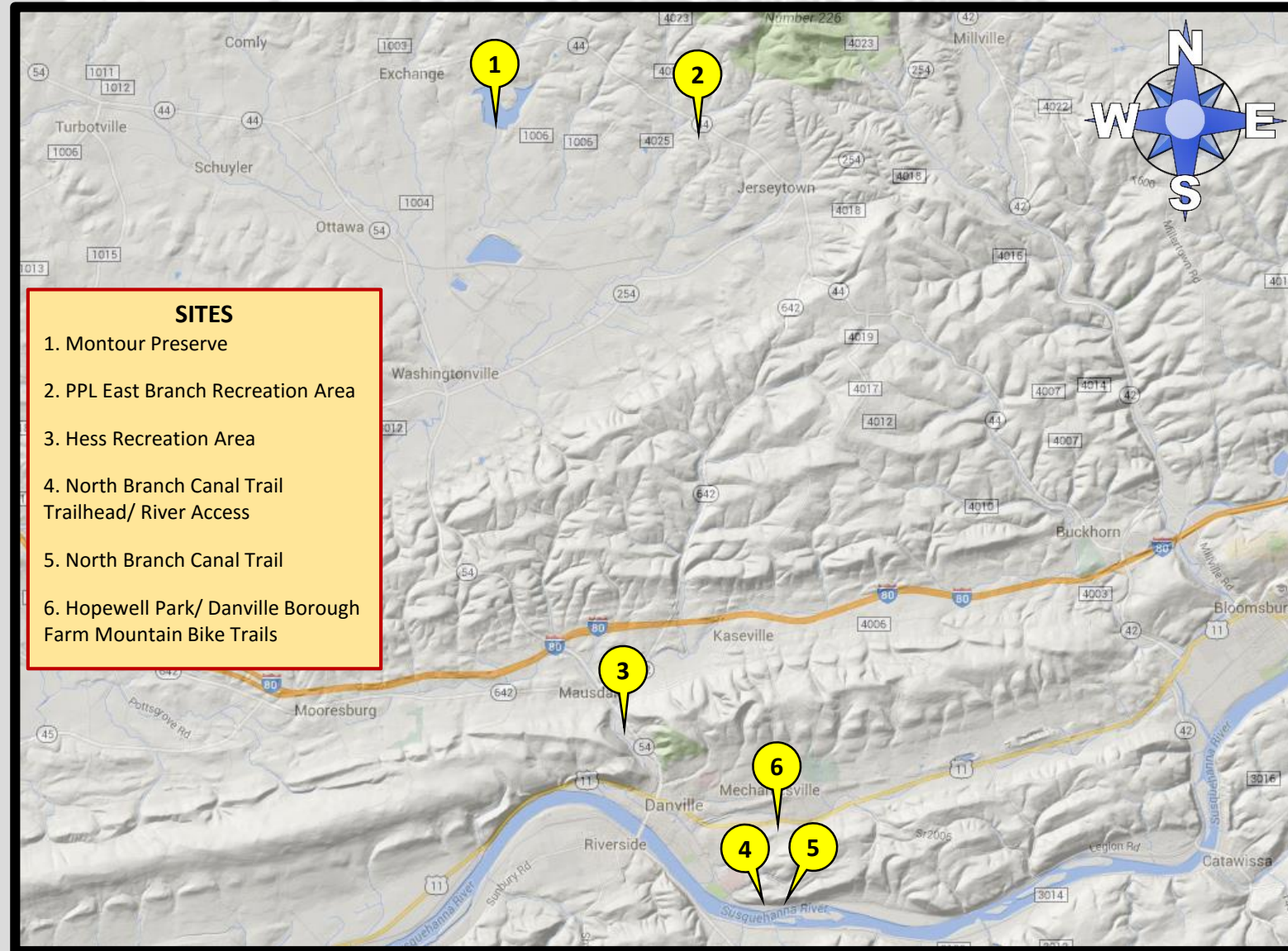
Riverside Borough Resident Representative – Michael Smith

Danville Area School District Staff Representative – Chris Johns

Danville Area School District School Board Representative – Jamie Hosterman



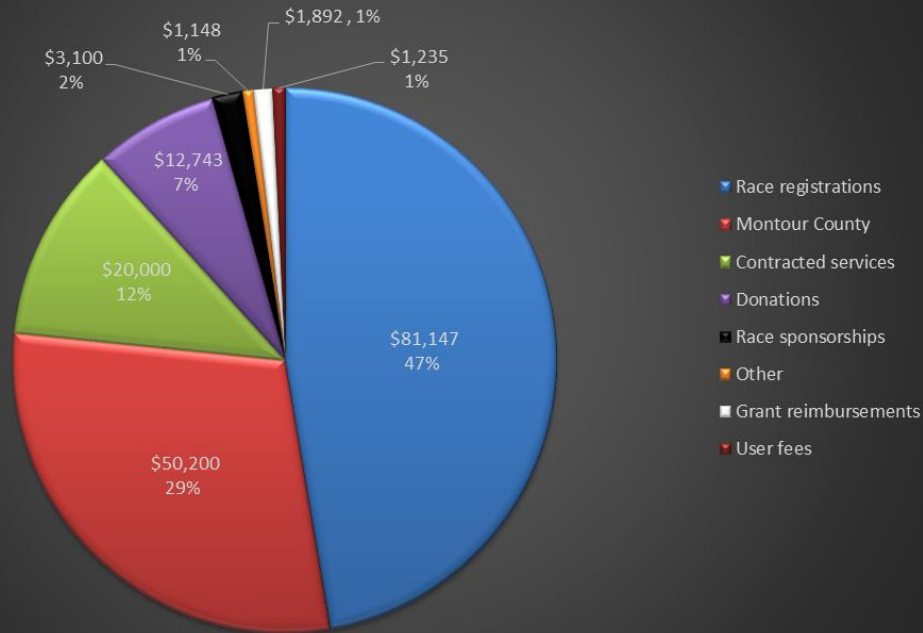
MONTOUR AREA RECREATION COMMISSION MANAGED PROPERTIES



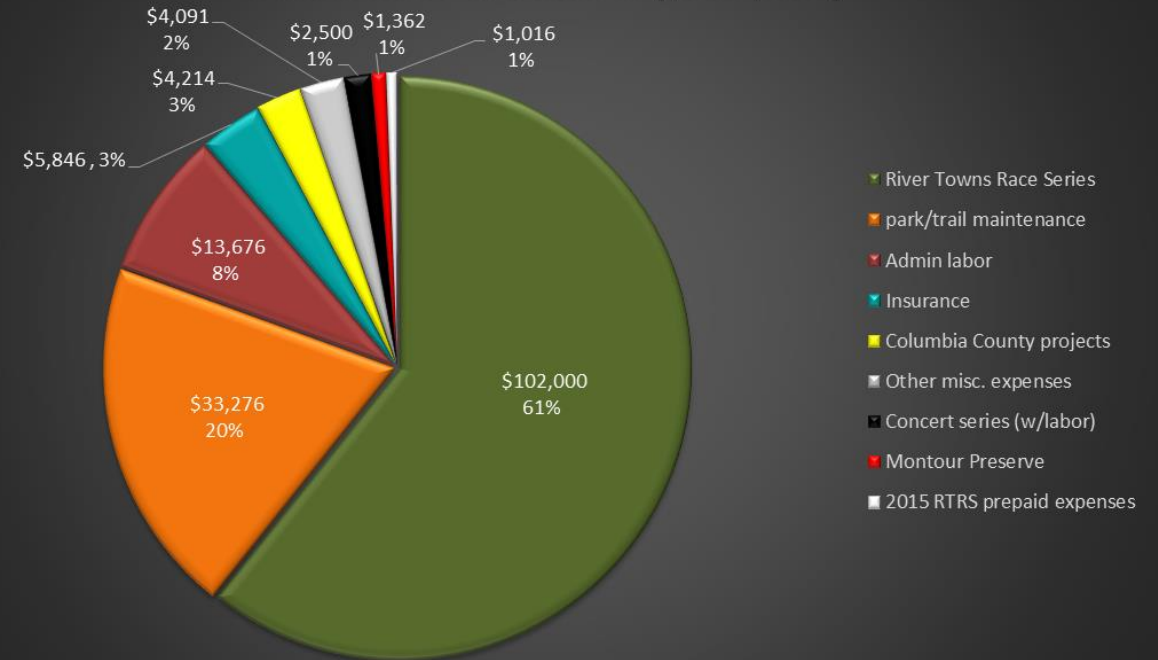
ABOUT THE MONTOUR AREA RECREATION COMMISSION (CONTINUED)



MARC 2014 INCOME (\$171,465)



MARC 2014 EXPENSES (\$167,981)



MONTOUR PRESERVE HISTORY

- The Montour Preserve and Lake Chillisquaque were constructed by PP&L in 1972 to provide a backup reservoir of cooling water for the PP&L Montour coal-fired power plant, located roughly three miles south of the Preserve.
- During the next decades, the company added various amenities at the Preserve, including the sugar shack, fossil pit, pavilions, parking lots, restrooms, play areas, boat launch, wildlife observation blinds, trails, gardens, visitors' center/environmental education center and other features.
- PP&L (PPL) operated and maintained the Montour Preserve for 40+ years, announcing in September 2014 that it would discontinue programming at the Montour Preserve and consider proposals from other organizations interested in providing programming at the site. At about that same time, PPL also announced its intention to spin off the competitive electrical generation side of its operations to a newly created Talen Energy (to be initially owned 65% by PPL shareholders, 35% by private equity firm Riverstone Holdings).
- In September 2014, the Montour Area Recreation Commission (MARC), Montour County and other entities approached PPL to explore options for programming at the Preserve. Discussions continued through the winter and the first half of 2015.
- On May 11, 2015, MARC, Montour County and others received notice from PPL setting a June 1, 2015 deadline for an agreement regarding operations at the Montour Preserve. From May 11 through June 1, MARC successfully raised more than \$100,000 from 170 donors (eventually \$118,064.55 from 197 donors) and negotiated a semi-final agreement with Talen Energy.
- On June 1, 2015, Talen Energy assumed ownership of the Montour Plant and, as a result, the Montour Preserve. Talen Energy continued to maintain the Montour Preserve through the summer and early fall of 2015 while an agreement was finalized.
- Final revisions to the agreement continued through the early fall of 2015, culminating in a final agreement on October 1, 2015. On that date, MARC assumed operational control of significant portions of the Montour Preserve, while Talen Energy retained ownership of the lands and facilities.



MARC / TALEN ENERGY LEASE AGREEMENTS OVERVIEW

- The MARC / Talen Energy lease agreements are for a one-year term (October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016), renewable for up to ten one-year terms.
- Talen Energy retains ownership of the site and its improvements.
- MARC will operate and maintain site amenities and provide special programming at its sole expense.
- MARC may conduct special events, allow concessionaires and take other steps to raise funds needed to meet its obligations, subject to site rules and regulations.



MARC / TALEN ENERGY LEASE AGREEMENT OVERVIEW

TALEN ENERGY COMMITMENTS:

- Retain ownership of the Montour Preserve land, structures and building contents
- Allow free public access to the lands and waters of the Preserve (approximately 650 acres total; subject to site rules & regulations)
- Operate and maintain the dam and related features, including lake levels
- Operate the site's sewage treatment facility



MARC / TALEN ENERGY LEASE AGREEMENT OVERVIEW

MARC COMMITMENTS:

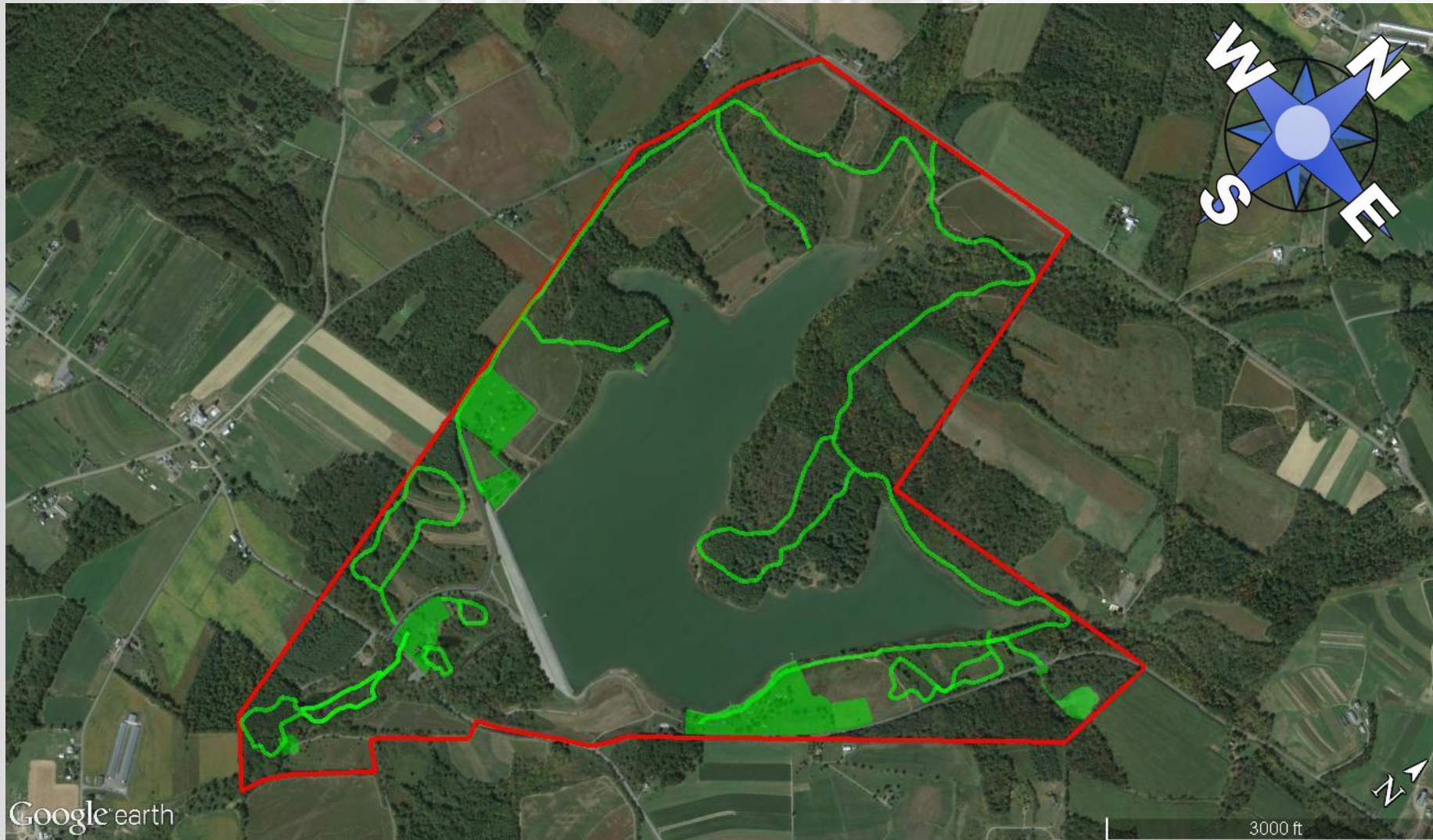
- At MARC's expense, operate and maintain site amenities, including: pavilions, restrooms, play areas, fossil pit, sugar shack, wildlife observation blinds, boat house, trails, visitors' center/environmental education center, parking lots, roads, gardens and lawns
- Coordinate and provide special programming
- Enforce Talen Energy rules and regulations for site use
- Secure funding necessary for continued operations



MARC / TALEN ENERGY LEASE AGREEMENT

MARC LEASE AREAS MAP

(PRESERVE BOUNDARY IN RED; MARC LEASE AREAS (32.4 ACRES+/-) IN GREEN)



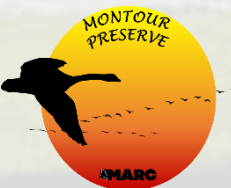
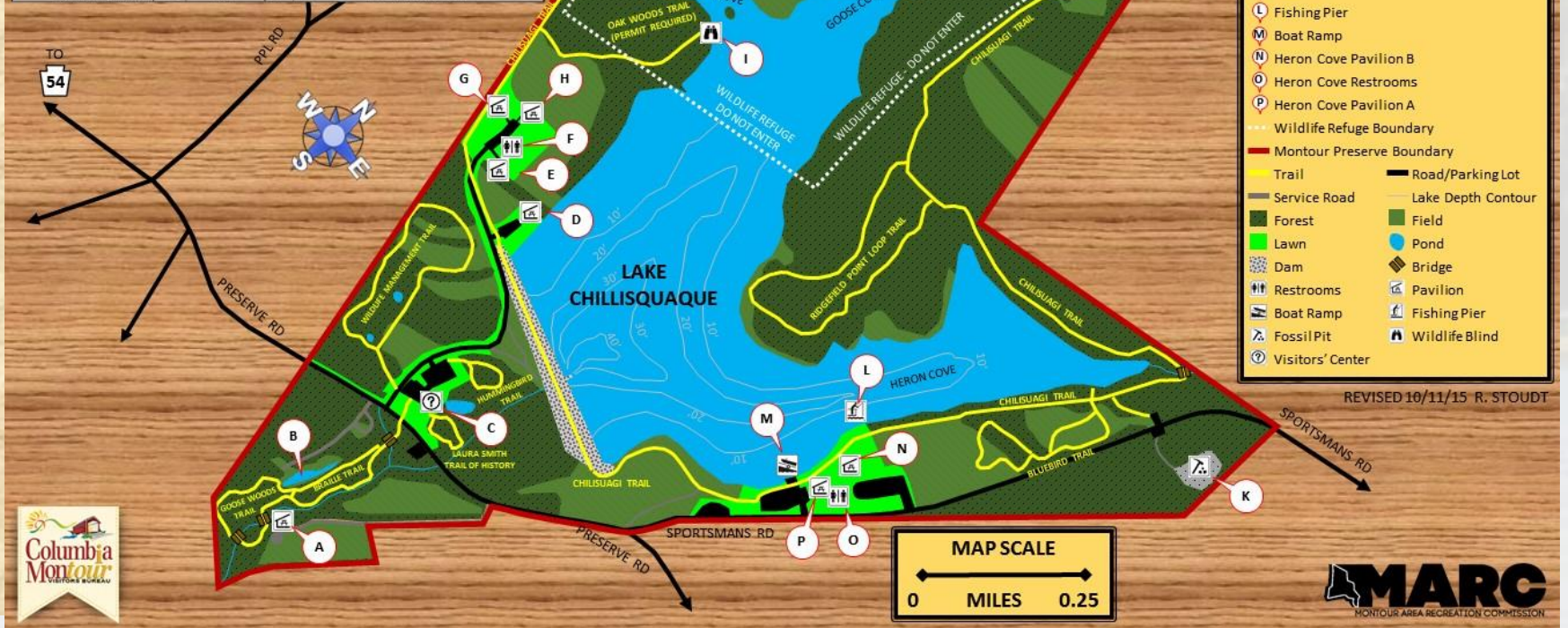
MONTOUR PRESERVE SITE RULES

Because many people visit and enjoy the Montour Preserve throughout the year, we ask your help in keeping the Preserve a safe and beautiful natural recreation area. For your safety and the protection of the natural resources, we ask that you adhere to the following rules while at the Preserve:

- Preserve hours are sunrise to sunset.
- Leave all pets at home.
- Vehicles must be parked on paved surfaces in designated spots.
- Do not swim in the lake, ponds or streams.
- Alcoholic beverages, narcotics and firearms are prohibited.
- Boating in Lake Chillisquaque is prohibited from March 15 – April 30.
- Boating in the Goose Cove refuge area is prohibited year-round.
- Gasoline engines may not be used on the lake; electric motors are allowed.
- Visitors must obtain a permit from MARC before entering the wildlife refuge and observation blinds.
- Fishing is allowed in Lake Chillisquaque, but not in preserve ponds or streams.
- Do not move picnic tables.
- Hunting and trapping are not allowed in the Preserve.
- Collecting of plants, animals and other natural resources is not allowed except in the Fossil Pit.
- Open fires are not allowed except in charcoal grills or gas grills.
- Radios and other sources of noise must be kept at a level that will not disturb other Preserve visitors.
- Camping is not allowed in the Preserve.

www.MontourPreserve.org

MONTOUR PRESERVE TRAILS	TRAIL LENGTH (miles)	TRAIL SURFACE	LOOP TRAIL?	NOTES
Alder Swamp Trail (permit required)	0.3	grass/forest	no	access to Smokehouse Blind (permit required)
Bluebird Trail	0.8	grass	yes	access to meadow area and bluebird nest boxes
Braile Trail	0.5	mudh	yes	includes aids for the visually impaired
Chillisquagi Trail	3.9	grass/gravel/forest	yes	trail encircles Lake Chillisquaque
Goose Woods Trail	0.9	mudh	yes	access to Sugar Shack and environmental study pond
Hummingbird Trail	0.2	crushed gravel	yes	accessible to users with restricted mobility
Laura Smith Trail of History	0.2	grass	yes	access to pollinator garden
Oak Woods Trail (permit required)	0.3	grass/forest	no	access to Muskrat Blind (permit required)
Ridgefield Point Trail	0.7	grass/forest	yes	accessible from Chillisquagi Trail
West Branch Trail	2.1	grass/forest	no	connects the Montour Preserve to the West Branch Recreation Area
Wildlife Management Trail	0.8	grass	yes	access to wildlife food plots



MARC MONTOUR PRESERVE OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

- MARC has created the new **www.MontourPreserve.org** website to be the one-stop location for all Montour Preserve-related information
- Visitors' Center hours will be Monday – Saturday 8am-4pm from mid-February through mid-December, then Monday – Friday 8am-4pm from mid-December through mid-February
- MARC has established an office in the Environmental Education Center, to be open variable hours while MARC staff (Stoudt and Beam) are on site
- Programming will be conducted in the Environmental Education Center and on the Preserve as often as funding will allow; MARC will actively seek the assistance of outside groups willing to conduct programming at the Preserve
- The 2016 maple sugaring programming will occur in essentially the same form as in 2015
- Lawn care will be subcontracted through a competitive bid process (anticipated release January 2016)
- MARC staff will be responsible for Goose Cove, Heron Cove and Visitors' Center/Environmental Education Center restroom cleaning during the off-season (late September through early May), but will likely subcontract cleaning services during the peak season (funding permitting)
- MARC expects to hire a seasonal employee during the May – September season (funding permitting)
- MARC will rely heavily on volunteers for assistance with trail stewardship, garden maintenance, visitors' center greeting, educational programming and other miscellaneous tasks
- MARC will seek food, watercraft and sporting good concessionaires for operation at the Preserve; a request for proposals will be distributed as soon as possible
- MARC will actively seek additional partners (health care, educational, recreational, tourism promotion, other) to supplement MARC's operations at the site
- MARC will create new special events (runs/walks, festivals, entertainment, etc.) at the Preserve to serve as fundraisers for the site's operation
- MARC will allow outside groups to reserve the Environmental Education Center auditorium and kitchen; fees will be used for site operation and maintenance
- MARC will process all pavilion reservations; all fees will be used for site operation and maintenance
- MARC will implement a sustained fundraising campaign with a goal of \$1 million to ensure funding for ten years' operations



MARC PROGRAMMING OVERVIEW

- Programming will be conducted in the Environmental Education Center and on the Preserve as often as funding will allow; MARC will actively seek the assistance of outside groups willing to conduct programming at the Preserve
- The 2016 maple sugaring programming will occur in essentially the same form as in 2015
- MARC will rely heavily on volunteers for educational and entertainment programming
- MARC will create new special events (runs/walks, festivals, entertainment, etc.) at the Preserve to serve as fundraisers for the site's operation
- Jon Beam, MARC Assistant Director, will announce additional programming as information becomes available



PROJECTED 2016 EXPENSES VS. INCOME

MARC MONTOUR PRESERVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE BUDGET PROJECTIONS

REVISED 10/13/15 R. STOUDT

EXPENSE	ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST	NOTES
Visitors' Center/EEC maintenance and utilities	\$ 30,000	electricity costs projected to be ~\$20,000/year; heat pump maintenance costs will vary significantly depending upon maintenance issues encountered
MARC labor	\$ 30,000	includes all site operations and maintenance tasks not subcontracted to others (assumes approx. 30 hrs./wk total MARC labor)
mowing/trimming/lawn care	\$ 18,000	assumes 28 weekly cuts and trimming of 24 acres +/- of lawns and trails and once yearly brush hog of select areas (subcontracted)
misc. site supplies (excluding EEC/Visitors' Center)	\$ 10,000	includes mulch and stone for trails, restroom supplies and miscellaneous expenses
general liability insurance	\$ 1,000	assumes coverage of all structures and site operations
snowplowing	\$ 2,000	assumes treatment of all facility roads, parking lots and sidewalks (subcontracted)
real estate taxes	\$ 2,000	MARC to pay on leased acreage
parking lot/road maintenance	\$ 3,500	assumes routine maintenance of existing surfaces; does not allow for major repairs (subcontracted)
Heron Cove/Goose Cove restroom sewage pumping	\$ 1,500	estimating 4-month interval (subcontracted)
dumpster / trash service	\$ 1,000	weekly removal
tree care	\$ 1,000	professional cutting as needed on hazardous trees near trails (subcontracted)
TOTALS	\$ 100,000	

2016 MONTOUR PRESERVE REVENUE ESTIMATES

REVENUE SOURCE	AMOUNT	NOTES
special event revenues	5,000	
pavilion rentals	3,000	assumes \$250/week for 12 weeks
concessionaire fees	1,500	
EEC use fees	500	
TOTAL EARNED INCOME	\$ 10,000	



WHAT HAPPENS IF MARC FAILS?

Per the terms of the May 11, 2015 letter from Talen Energy to MARC, Montour County and Montour County's state and federal elected officials, MARC anticipates the following consequences if it cannot meet the terms of the lease agreements:

- The Visitors' Center would remain open weekdays from 8am – 3pm.
- Montour Preserve lands would remain open for public use for passive recreation such as hiking, fishing and canoeing.
- The trail system would remain available for public use, but Talen Energy staff would no longer perform maintenance.
- All picnic pavilion reservations would be canceled and payments refunded.
- Pavilions and restroom facilities would be removed and roads leading to the pavilions will be closed to vehicle traffic. All parking lots will remain open.
- The boat launch area will be gated and closed to motor traffic. Access to Lake Chillisquaque by foot will be maintained for fishing and canoeing.
- Other actively managed recreation facilities within the Preserve, such as the fossil pit, would be closed or removed.



WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

MARC is staffed by two part-time employees (Stoudt and Beam). To succeed at the Montour Preserve (and elsewhere), MARC needs significant volunteer support, including:

- trail stewards
- garden guardians
- visitors' center champions
- educators/entertainers
- litter cleaners, site observers and volunteers of all kinds!



WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

ELECTRICAL / HVAC SPECIALISTS NEEDED

MARC anticipates total annual electrical costs at the Montour Preserve to be approximately \$20,000 - \$25,000, primarily due to heating and lighting the Visitors' Center/Environmental Education Center. MARC is seeking qualified individuals or organizations to assist with evaluating electrical usage at the Preserve and implementing alternative energy sources and/or electrical conservation measures.

Additionally, MARC anticipates significant expenses related to the maintenance of the five heat pumps serving the Visitors' Center/Environmental Education Center. MARC is seeking qualified companies to evaluate existing units and recommend strategies for maintenance or replacement.



WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

MARC is in need of a Gator-type utility vehicle for trail and park maintenance at the Montour Preserve, as well as at the other parks and trails MARC manages. The vehicle must be 4WD, have a cargo bed, roll-over protection system, and a wheel base of not more than 60". If used, the vehicle must be in good working condition.

MARC is also in need of a utility trailer (flat bed or enclosed) capable of hauling tractors and loads of at least 5,000 lbs. The trailer must be at least 16ft long and 6ft wide (inside dimensions), with a drive-on tailgate or ramps. If used, the trailer must be in good working condition.

If you or your organization/company has a utility vehicle or trailer to donate or sell at a deeply discounted rate, please contact Bob Stoudt at (570) 336-2060 or RStoudt@MontourRec.com.



WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

The Montour Area Recreation Commission is working hard to ensure the long-term viability of the Montour Preserve. If you believe the Montour Preserve is worthy of your support, please consider making an investment today. MARC has established a fund at the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation to enable donors to make tax-deductible (to the extent allowed by law) contributions.

To learn more about donation options, please visit:

<http://montourpreserve.org/donate/>



AUDIENCE QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



www.MontourPreserve.org



POINTS OF CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND VOLUNTEERS

Bob Stoudt, MARC Director – (570) 336-2060 or RStoudt@MontourRec.com

Jon Beam, MARC Assistant Director – (570) 772-4021 or JBeam@MontourRec.com



Montour Area Recreation Commission | PO Box 456, Danville, PA 17821

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