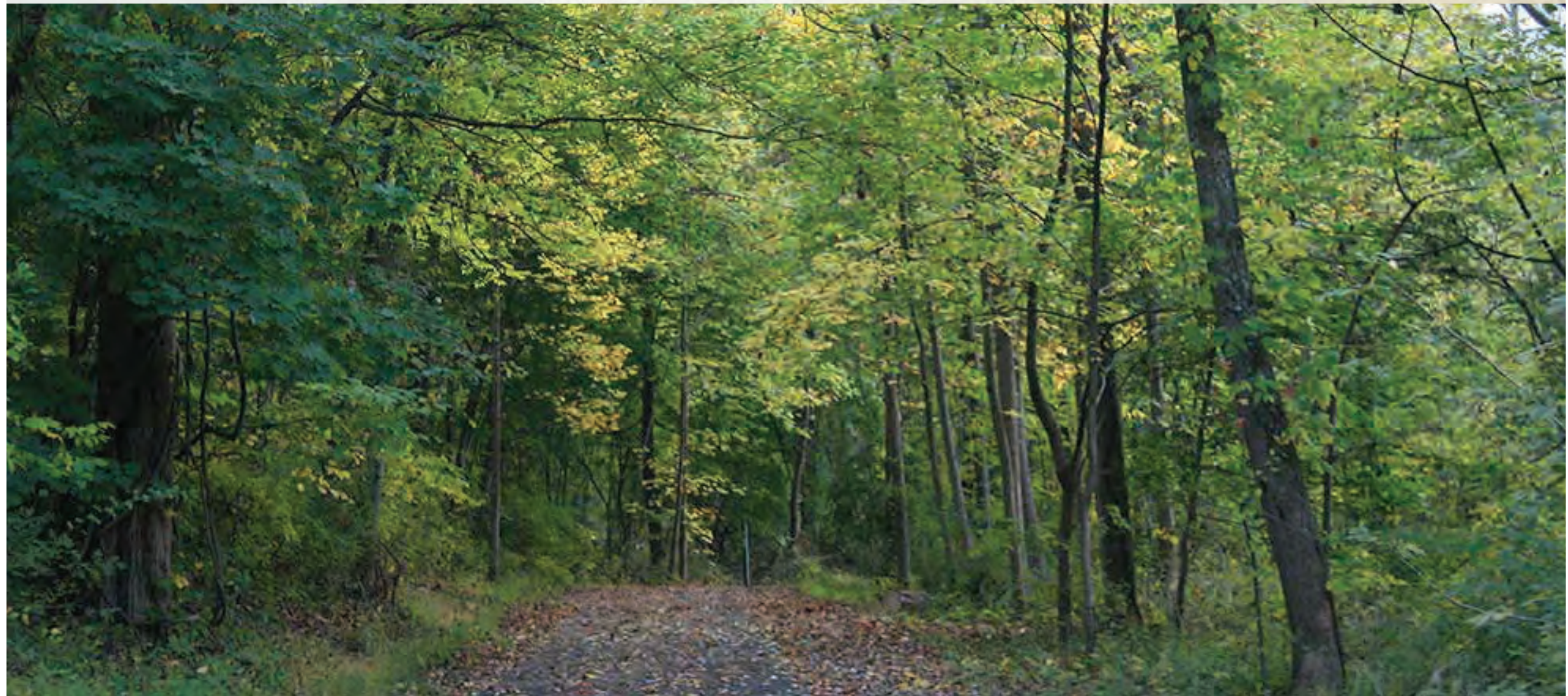


Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study

*Chester County, Pennsylvania
On the Brandywine Creek*

DECEMBER 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study Chester County, Pennsylvania

BRC-TAG-19-129
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In-kind support is also acknowledged from Chester County Planning Department and the Brandywine Conservancy.



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Table of Contents

A. Introduction and Context	2	E. Trail Feasibility	24
A.1 Project Purpose and Goals.....	2	E.1 Legal Feasibility	24
A.2 Study Area Description and Context.....	2	E.2 Physical Feasibility	26
A.3 Base Map and Description.....	4	F. Trail Mapping	28
B. Public Participation	6	F.1 Map Book of Trail Corridor	28
B.1 Study Committee Formation	6	G. Trail Recommendations	42
B.2 Public Meetings.....	6	G.1 Segment A: Dorlan’s Mill to Marshall Road	42
B.3 Landowner Outreach.....	6	G.2 Segment B: Marshall Road to Burgess Park.....	44
C. Physical Inventory and Assessment	8	G.3 Segment C: Glenmoore Village	45
C.1 Aerial Map	8	G.4 Segment D: Glenmoore to Wyebrook Road	46
C.2 Topography	10	G.5 Segment E: Wyebrook Road to Chestnut Tree Road.....	46
C.3 Hydrology	12	G.6 Segment F: Honey Brook Township and Borough	47
C.4 Existing Land Use.....	14	H. Appendices (on CD included)	
D. Needs, Wants, and Desires	16	1. Landowner Survey Packet	
D.1 Local, County, and Regional Land Use plans	16	2. Chart of Survey Responses and Comments	
D.2 Proposed Trail Use.....	18	3. Key-Person Interview Notes	
Multi-use Trail Cross Section	18	4. Title Report Documents	
Multi-use Trail Cross Section with Adjacent Bridle Path.....	19	5. Photo Points	
D.3 Estimated Trail Usage	20	6. Trail Location Photos	
D.4 Landowner Outreach Results.....	21	7. Plats of Adjoining Subdivisions as Referenced	
Survey Results	21	8. Waynesburg Branch Railroad Maps	
Landowner Responses Summarized by Segment	21		

A. Introduction and Context

A.1 Project Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study is to determine a viable corridor for a potential 13.5 mile extension of the existing Struble Trail. The planned multi-use and equestrian trail would be operated, maintained, and policed by the Chester County Facilities and Parks Department in partnership with municipalities through which the trail extends. This Study identifies physical and legal opportunities and barriers, public support levels, and recommendations for a phased trail implementation.

Three main goals for this Study are:

- To provide recommendations for a trail that would link the boroughs of Downingtown and Honey Brook.
- To provide recommendations for connections among popular recreation destinations along the corridor such as Marsh Creek State Park, Springton Manor County Park, and Struble Lake (which is owned by the state and managed by the PA Fish and Boat Commission).
- To provide recommendations for equestrian use of the corridor by users of the stables at Marsh Creek State Park.

The Struble Trail, from Downingtown to Honey Brook, is included in The Circuit trail network of the Greater Philadelphia region. The vision for The Circuit is to connect 750 miles of off-road multi-use trails through urban, suburban and rural communities in

the region. Chester County’s Planning Department and Parks and Recreation Department are actively working to complete three multi-use trails in The Circuit: the Schuylkill River Trail; the Chester Valley Trail; and the Struble Trail.

A.2 Study Area Description and Context

The Struble Trail is a three-mile multi-use rail trail located in Chester County, Pennsylvania that is owned and maintained by the Chester County Parks and Facilities Department. Constructed in the late 70’s along an abandoned freight line that once connected Downingtown with Honey Brook, New Holland, and Lancaster, the Struble Trail is one of the state’s oldest rail trails. Now paved, the Trail follows the East Branch of the Brandywine Creek through lush woodlands and scenic landscapes that thread through quiet suburban Chester County neighborhoods.



continued to page 4



*Abandoned Rail Bridge
over Brandywine Creek,
south of Glenmoore*

continued from page 2

The Struble Trail was named for the late County Commissioner (1976-1980) and longtime Executive Director of the Brandywine Valley Association, teacher and conservationist Robert G. Struble. The majority of the trail is a paved surface and the trail is open to many types of uses including walking, running, biking, skateboarding, and roller skating. The existing Struble Trail is closed to motor vehicles and horses.

There are three official trailheads:

- Kardon Park in the heart of Downingtown Borough;
- Norwood Road north of Downingtown in East Caln Township; and
- Dorlans Mill Road in Uwchlan Township, south of Marsh Creek State Park.



Rail right of way north of Reeds Road

The Struble Trail is also accessible from the Uwchlan Trail, which extends east into Uwchlan Township at Dowlin Forge Park. In August 2008, Chester County purchased twenty-three acres of land in Uwchlan Township from the Shryock Paper Mill after a highly publicized grass roots effort to preserve this key property to extend the Struble Trail into Marsh Creek State Park. Safe, continuous passage from the Struble Trail to the approximately six miles of hiking trails within Marsh Creek State Park, in Upper Uwchlan Township, is now possible.

The Struble Trail serves as a section of the Brandywine Trail, a longer hiking path that connects the Horseshoe Trail in West Vincent Township, northern Chester County with the Mason Dixon Trail at Chadds Ford Township, Delaware County. Over 400,000 visitors walk, run or bicycle the existing Struble Trail each year. Thousands of County residents would benefit from an extension of the Struble Trail for recreation, fitness, and a transportation alternative. Many residents already use sections of the abandoned rail lines within the study area as informal footpaths and for horseback riding.

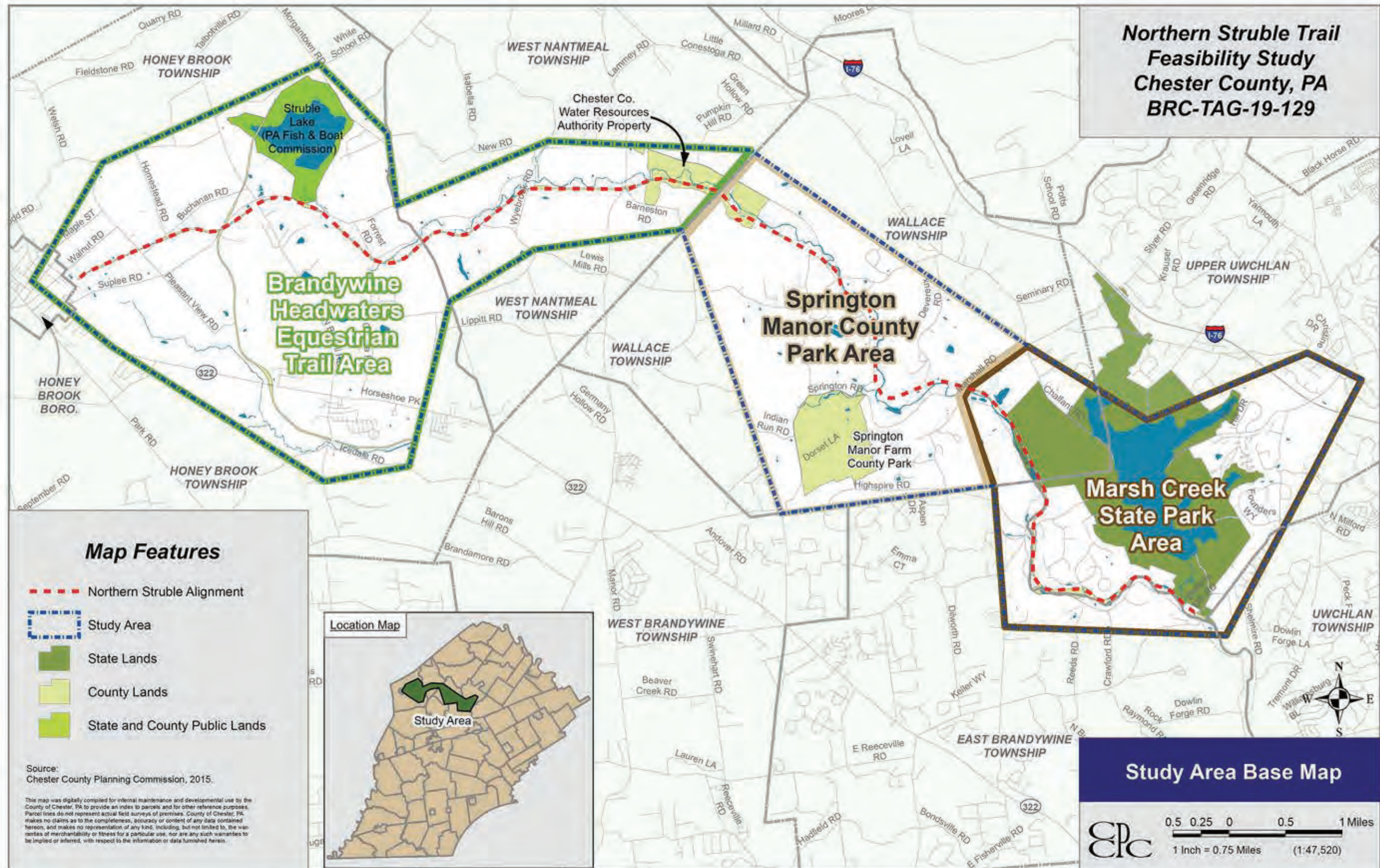
A.3 Base Map and Description

The study corridor was initially organized into three logical areas for the purposes of the feasibility study. See Overview Map. Note that this map was created prior to a title analysis of the rail parcels and does not fully reflect this study’s findings on corridor ownership. Each of the areas has its own distinct geographic and geopolitical characteristics.

1. The Marsh Creek State Park Area includes the Dorlans Mill trailhead in Upper Uwchlan Township for the existing Struble Trail. It extends west to include residential neighborhoods southwest of Marsh Creek State Park in Upper Uwchlan Township, and ends in east Wallace Township at Marshall Road. Although this is perhaps the most suburbanized landscape in the study area, most of the abandoned rail corridor is owned by Chester County and much of the abandoned corridor is already being used informally by local residents for recreation.

2. The Springton Manor County Park Area is within Wallace Township from Marshall Road to the border with West Nantmeal Township. This area is very rural in character, and a few large privately-owned properties line or overlap with the corridor. It includes the village of Glenmoore, a crossroads and historic district, where residences are located in very close proximity to the corridor. In some cases in Glenmoore, the abandoned rail line has been obliterated and/or built upon. Ownership of the rail parcels by the County is very fragmented in this section.

3. The Brandywine Headwaters Area includes West Nantmeal Township, Honey Brook Township, and Honey Brook Borough. This western-most area has a strong agricultural presence and some large productive farms line or overlap with the corridor. The Amish community has a strong presence here, farm integrity is a significant issue, and careful outreach efforts are essential. County ownership of the rail parcels is fragmented within this area except in West Nantmeal Township. ■



B. Public Participation

Public participation in this project included four meetings of the Study Committee, a survey mailed to the 170 private adjacent landowners, five public meetings to take comments and answer questions, over twenty key-person interviews, and two official township meetings. The public participation process is described further below.

B.1 Study Committee Formation

TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY COMMITTEE

The Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study Steering Committee was assembled in July of 2014. The committee members, listed on the inside cover of this report, include officials and staff of all five affected townships, township trail planning committees, State Park staff, Chester County Planning staff, Brandywine Conservancy Planning staff, Fish and Boat Commission staff, and local trail users, including equestrians.

B.2 Public Meetings

- Steering Committee: *September 29, 2014, 7 pm in Honey Brook Township*
- Public Meeting: *October 29, 2014, 7 pm in Honey Brook Township*
- Steering Committee: *July 22, 2015 in Wallace Township*
- Public meeting #2: *April 23, 2014, at 7 pm in Wallace Township Building*

- Public meeting #3: *April 27, 2015, at 7 pm in Honey Brook Borough*
- Open space meeting: *March 17, 2015, at 7 pm in Honey Brook Township*
- Steering Committee: *July 23, in Wallace Township*
- August 10, 2015: *Wallace Trails Committee meeting, at 7 pm in Wallace Township*
- Steering Committee: *August 26, 2015 in Wallace Township*
- County Parks Board: *October 5, 2015, 6 pm in West Chester*
- Public Meeting #4: *October 15, 2015 Wallace Township 7 pm, draft study review.*
- Public Meeting #5: *October 27, 2015 Honey Brook Township, 7 pm, draft study review*
- Steering Committee: *December 1, 2015 Held via email December 1-8*

B.3 Landowner Outreach

WORKSHOP MEETING

The October 29, 2014 public meeting held in Honey Brook Township was organized as a workshop. Natural and cultural resource existing conditions maps were first reviewed by participants, followed by a description of this study's goals and timeline, and introduction of County and consultant planners, after which participants broke into three groups. Those groups, aligned with the three study areas shown on the Base Map on page 5, gathered around large aerial maps with stickers, markers, and a group note-taker. Problems, opportunities, hidden trails, etc. were marked on the maps. The results of that workshop are included with this report, in the appendices.

MAILED SURVEY

The number of private landowners next to the abandoned rail line (the potential trail corridor) exceeds 170, making individual face-to-face contact unrealistic. A survey was mailed in late winter of 2015 to all 170 private landowners, accompanied by an introductory letter, a location map, a fact sheet regarding this feasibility study, and a stamped self-addressed envelope. A sample packet is in the appendices of this report.

Sixty property owners responded to the survey; a 35 percent return rate. The introductory letter announced a date, location, and times for two public meetings where the planners and township officials would meet with any interested landowners and other citizens.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

The two public meetings were informal, briefly summarizing the feasibility study's goals, the timeline for the study, and allowing plenty of time for a question and answer session. Brandywine Conservancy's planning staff was present to hold individual conversations, take notes, and answer questions. Notes from both meetings were transcribed and are included in the appendices to this report.*

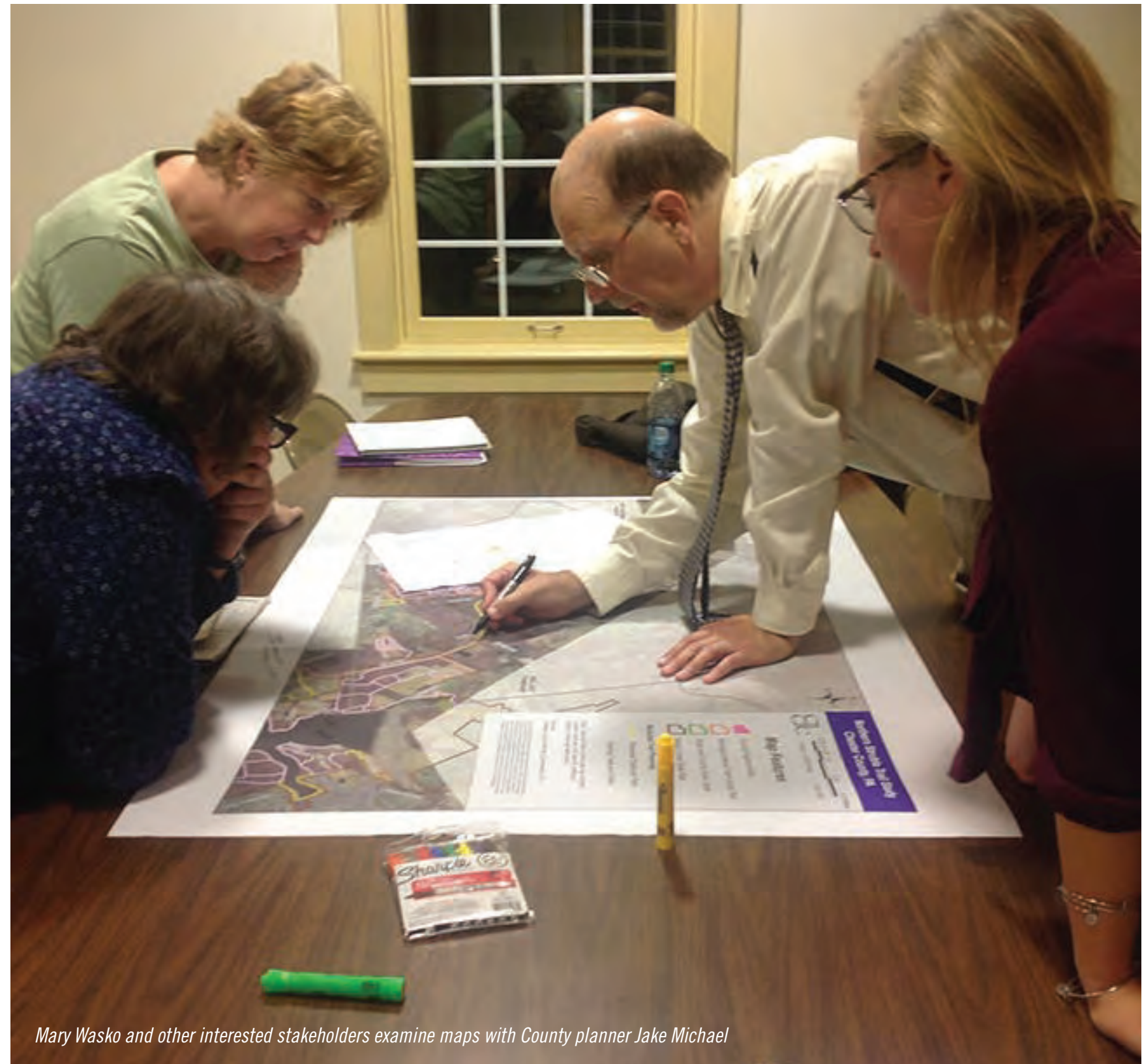
KEY-PERSON INTERVIEWS

In addition to private landowners, corporate and government property owners were contacted and asked for their feedback. The Chester County Water Resources Agency, Struble Lake and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Marsh Creek State Park, Burgess Township Park, Philadelphia Suburban Water Corporation, and PECO are among those landowners.

SUMMARY FORM OF LANDOWNER OUTREACH RESULTS

Results of the landowner surveys, the two public meetings, the individual key person interviews, and the corporate and institutional landowner feedback were assembled in a chart, including quotes from respondents. (This chart is found in the appendices.)

The landowner outreach results were also mapped on a parcel level for the length of the study corridor, permitting an assessment of landowner interest and/or opposition to the trail. These mapped and charted results were integral to the final recommendations in this report. ■



Mary Wasko and other interested stakeholders examine maps with County planner Jake Michael

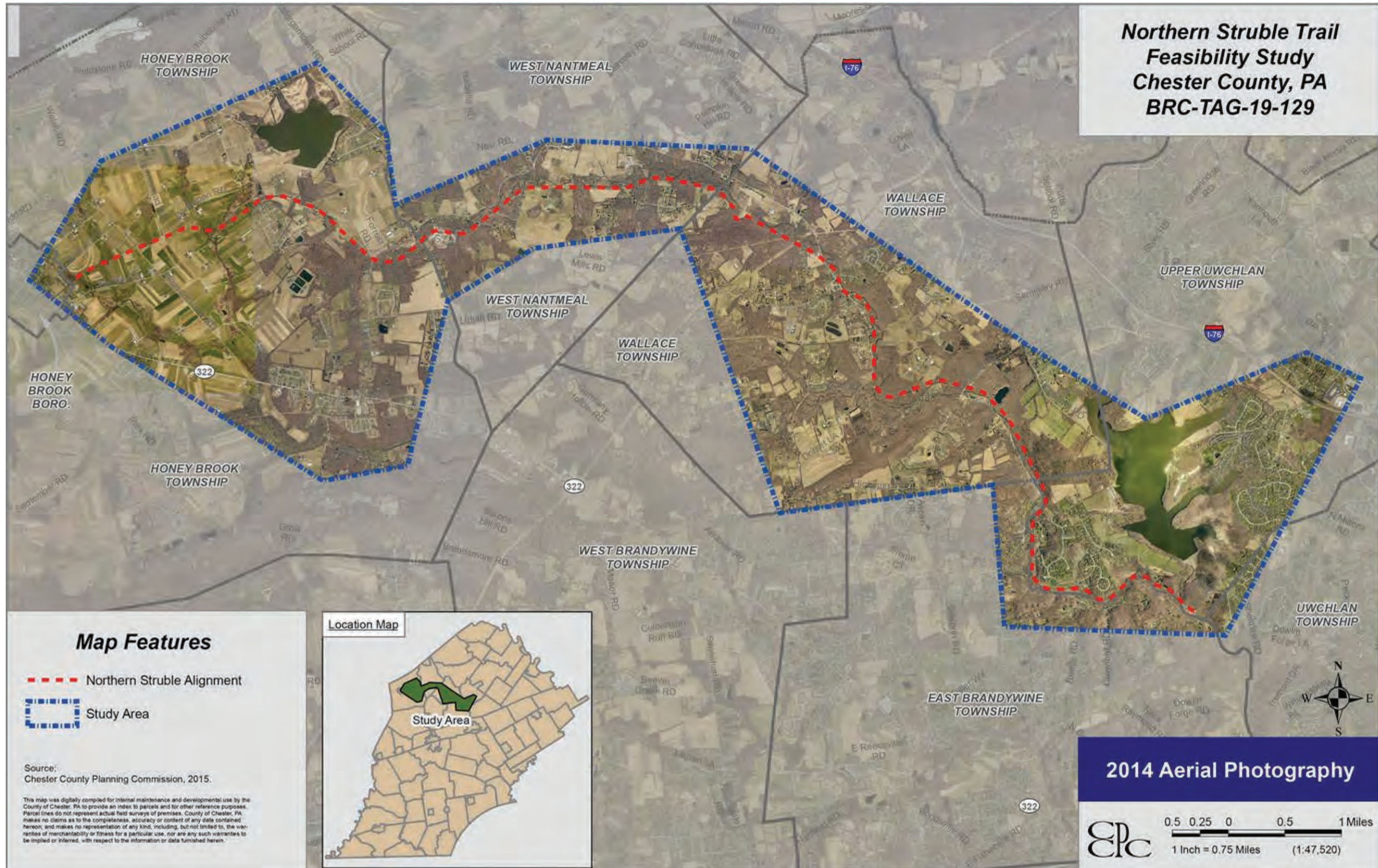
C. Physical Inventory & Assessment

The following maps and narrative descriptions of the natural and man-made features show physical impacts to the feasibility of creating a multi-use trail along the former rail corridor. The larger scale study area maps show the municipal boundaries, major roadways, and an overview of the features that may impact trail development. The more detailed Trail Mapping, found on thirteen pages later in this report, shows specific locations of the features directly impacting the former rail line being evaluated. Other site information specific to the rail corridor, such as historic train station locations, bridges, encroachments, road crossings, and potential access points, are also noted on the more detailed Trail Mapping.

C.1 2014 Aerial Photography

The most recently available aerial photography (2014) for the study area provides an overview of the vegetation cover and a picture of other features adjacent to the studied rail alignment, such as major water bodies, land uses, and topography. The central portion of the study area is perhaps the least impacted by land development when compared to the eastern and western portions. A comparison of this 2014 image to historical 1937 aerial photography reveals that little has changed relative to land cover with the exceptions of the creation of the Struble and Marsh Creek Lakes flood control features, and the transformation of farm land into suburban residential development in the eastern portion of the study area.

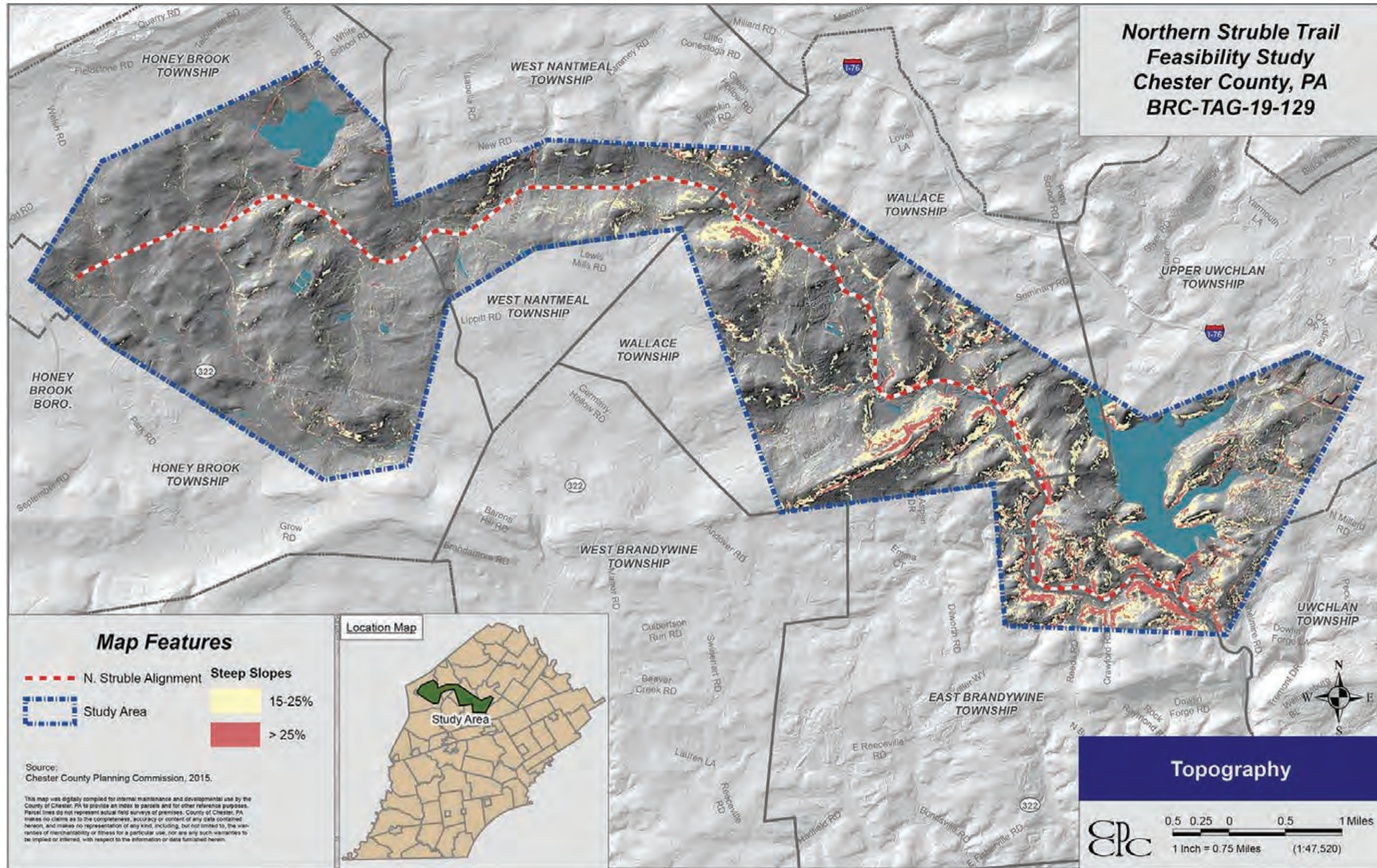
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C.2 Topography

Topographic relief and the occurrence of steep slopes increase as one passes from west to east, downstream through the study area. Lands in the Brandywine Headwaters are generally the most broad and level, as befits the dominant farming land use, but as the Brandywine Creek cuts its way through the landscape, the valley deepens resulting in steeper wooded slopes lining the creek. This increase in adjacent steep slopes is evident along the former rail corridor as possibilities to provide for either alternate multi-use trail routing and/or community connector trails are limited by steep slopes.

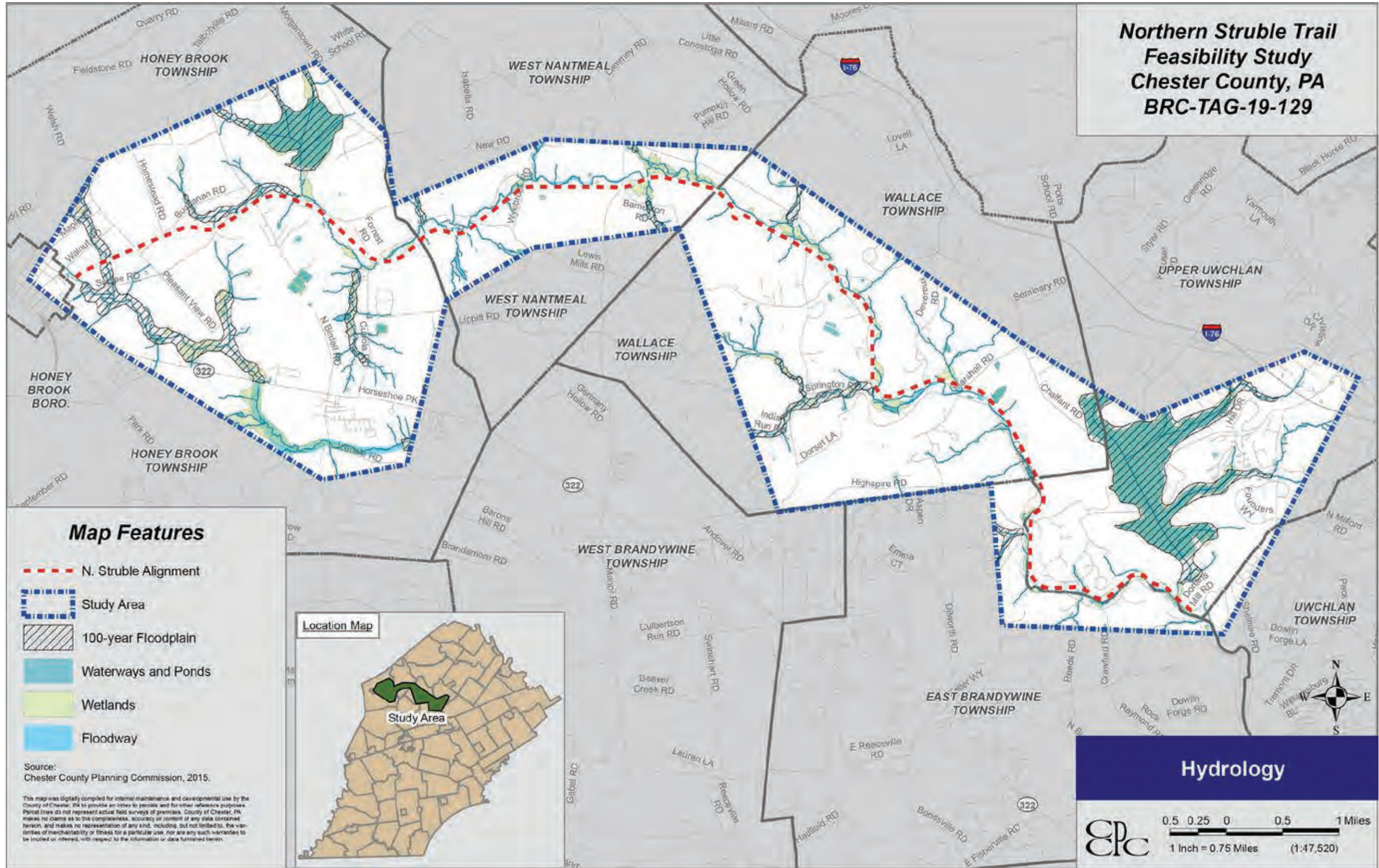
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C.3 Hydrology

The entire project study area is within the watershed of the East Branch of the Brandywine Creek. The headwaters of the East Branch of the Brandywine begin in the Struble Lake area and flow east through the study corridor. Since the former rail line generally parallels the Brandywine, the presence of the 100 year floodplain and numerous wetlands are factors that must be considered during design and engineering. Generally speaking, railroad lines were designed and constructed to keep rail beds located above the 100 year flood elevation to provide uninterrupted train service and to protect the railroad from damage. This rail line is no exception; however increased development within the valley and the accompanying increase in stormwater runoff volumes may potentially raise the flood elevation and negatively impact the proposed trail in major storm events. Flood control facilities in the study area include the impoundments at Struble and Marsh Creek lakes, and the dry dam located in West Nantmeal Township. This study takes into account the restrictions on public access to these facilities—especially the dams at Struble Lake and in West Nantmeal—as required by the agencies with oversight at these dams. Finally, the old Cornog Quarry, now owned by Philadelphia Suburban Water, is a default hydrologic feature which also may be used for water storage and must be protected from trespass by trail users.

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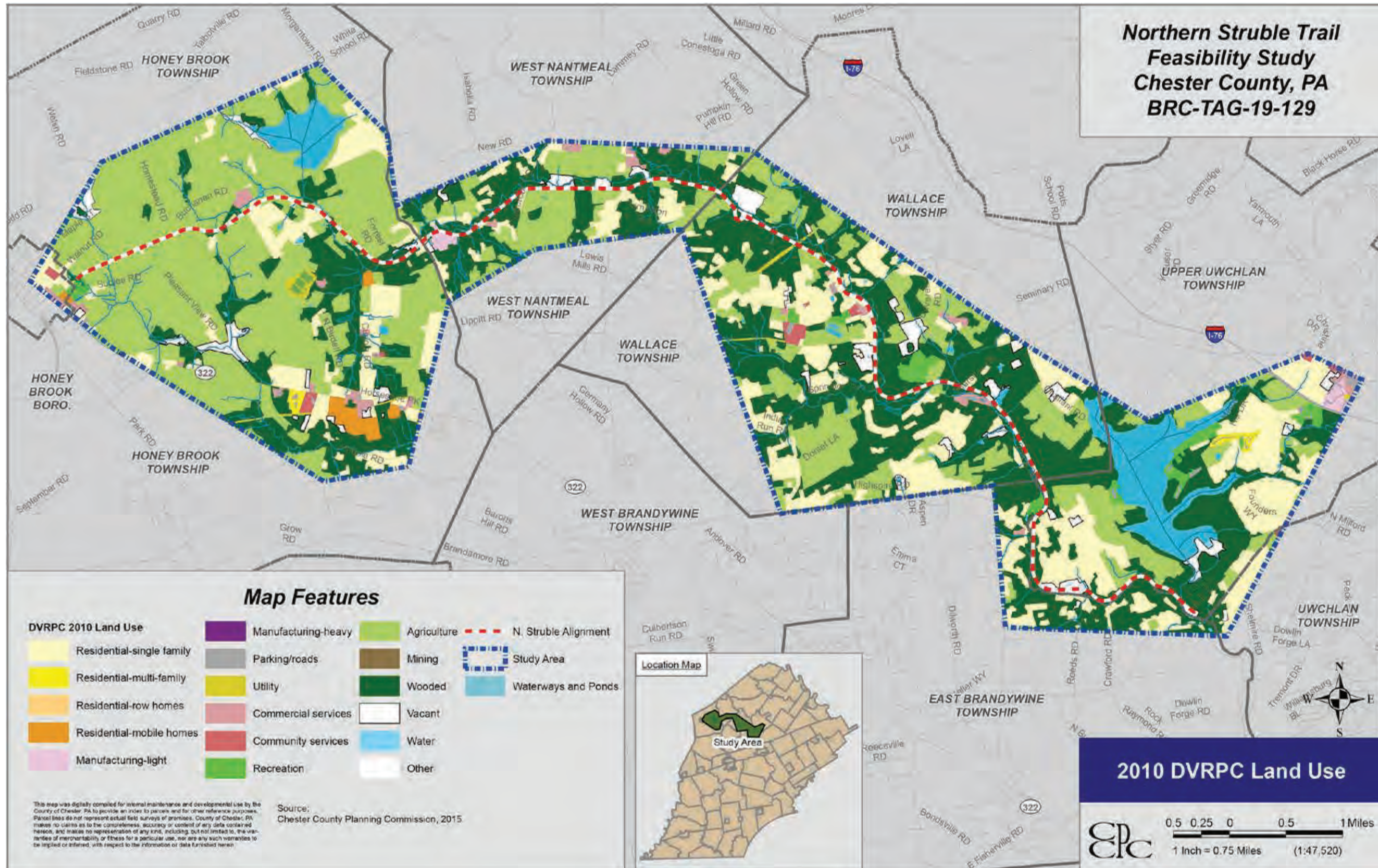


C.4 Existing Land Use

The land use mapping for this report is provided by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's 2010 Land Use Geographic Information System.

Wooded land is much more prevalent in the eastern half of the study area, although it is highly fragmented in ownership and physically discontinuous, other than in Marsh Creek State Park. The study area east of West Nantmeal Township shows a fairly uniform mix of agricultural, single family residential, and wooded land uses, with the exception of the higher population densities found around Glenmoore Village in Wallace Township.

The western half of the study area is predominantly open, agricultural land, in relatively large parcels, with low population densities and only small wooded areas. Honey Brook Borough is, of course, the exception to this generalization. Land uses become more fractured, increasingly single-family residential, and more wooded moving west to east, downstream on the Brandywine Creek, and towards the densely populated center of Chester County. ■



D. Needs, Wants, and Desires

D.1 Local, County, and Regional Land Use plans

The Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study is consistent with the following County, municipal, and regional planning documents and initiatives:

LOCAL PLANS

The Borough of Downingtown completed an Urban Center Revitalization Plan in 2004. The document sets forth an infrastructure and transportation action plan with the following narrative (page 7-4): “The Revitalization Goal for Transportation and Streetscapes is to create a more interconnected and functional multi-modal transportation network for vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and others.”

East Brandywine Township updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2009 at which time was included the following language: “The Struble Trail, located across the Brandywine Creek, currently is the principal trail opportunity within or proximate to the Township for passive recreation pursuits. It offers access to Marsh Creek State Park and Downingtown Borough.” “..., the Township has conceptualized a main ‘spine’ trail running essentially east/west, and has established several links in that trail route including a link to the Hybernia Trail, through land development approvals, the crossing of public lands, and conservation easement terms.”

Uwchlan Township completed a Comprehensive Plan Update in 2010. Recommendations for the Walkway Network are provided (page 4.25): “Continue to evaluate walkway linkages and crosswalks throughout the Township as part of the 10-year update to the Comprehensive Plan and/or Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Upper Uwchlan Township updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2014 and it includes recommendations from its Open Space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan of 2009. Both documents support trail planning and implementation. Strategy HB 3 (page 90) recommends: “Form partnerships with other agencies and organizations to promote and facilitate the implementation of the Brandywine Creek Greenway, and the regional trail networks as depicted by the Chester County and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commissions.”

The Wallace Township has posted the following on its official website: “Trails preserve our rural atmosphere, foster physical and mental health, provide backyard neighborhood watch services, protect home values and reduce costs of municipal services. Because trails link various parts of the township and provide alternative means of transportation, they enhance our sense of community and well-being.”

COUNTY PLANS

Landscapes2 is Chester County’s comprehensive policy plan. It establishes growth management and preservation strategies to guide municipalities, developers, preservationists, and others in making decisions that promote sustainable practices and ensure that future residents have access to the same benefits that we currently enjoy. The Chester County Board of Commissioners adopted **Landscapes2** on November 9, 2009. **Landscapes2** establishes a long-range strategy for how to manage growth and preservation in Chester County. The Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study is consistent with the following policies recommended in **Landscapes2**:

OSG3b: Chester County will plan, construct, and maintain county-owned trails as multi-use collectors which serve as links for secondary trails, paths, and sidewalk networks.

T2.1: Chester County will provide a safe network of bicycle and pedestrian links within and between residential, employment, commercial, educational, public, and recreational land uses.

T2.5: Chester County will promote separate bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian facilities, to avoid user conflicts, where warranted and appropriate.

T2.6: Chester County will protect and create a network of multi-use corridors.

REGIONAL PLANS

The Brandywine Creek Greenway is a regional planning initiative of the Brandywine Conservancy in partnership with Chester County, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and private funders. The Strategic Action Plan was completed in 2014 and project portfolios were suggested for each of the 24 participating municipalities and Chester County. The Northern Struble Trail is shown on the Regional Trails Priority Map, figure 4 (page 23). A recommended high priority project for Chester County is CHESCO 2—Northern Struble Trail. The project focus is “To extend the Struble Trail from its current terminus at Dorlans Mill Road in Upper Uwchlan Township to Honey Brook Borough.”

continued to page 18



Rail Bridge crosses Marsh Creek north of Dorlan's Mill Road



Rail right of way through Wyebrook Farm in West Nantmeal.

D.2 Proposed Trail Use

The purpose of this study is to determine the feasibility of extending the existing Struble Trail beyond its current terminus at Dorlan’s Mill Road in Upper Uwchlan Township along the former rail line that extends to and beyond Honey Brook Borough, a distance of nearly 13.5 miles. The equestrian community in the participating study area municipalities have expressed their desire to see equestrian use be considered and included with any potential trail development.

The existing Struble Trail is a multi-use trail consisting of asphalt paved surface 10 feet wide from its origin in Downingtown to its current terminus at Dorlan’s Mill Road, a distance of 2.6 miles. Equestrian use is presently prohibited on the existing Struble Trail. This study looks to continue that configuration and provide for an adjacent equestrian path within the former railroad corridor/right-of-way, wherever possible.

Due to the projected volume of trail users, asphalt surfacing, and potential for conflicts between equestrians and pedestrians/cyclists sharing the same space, a separate equestrian tread is recommended.

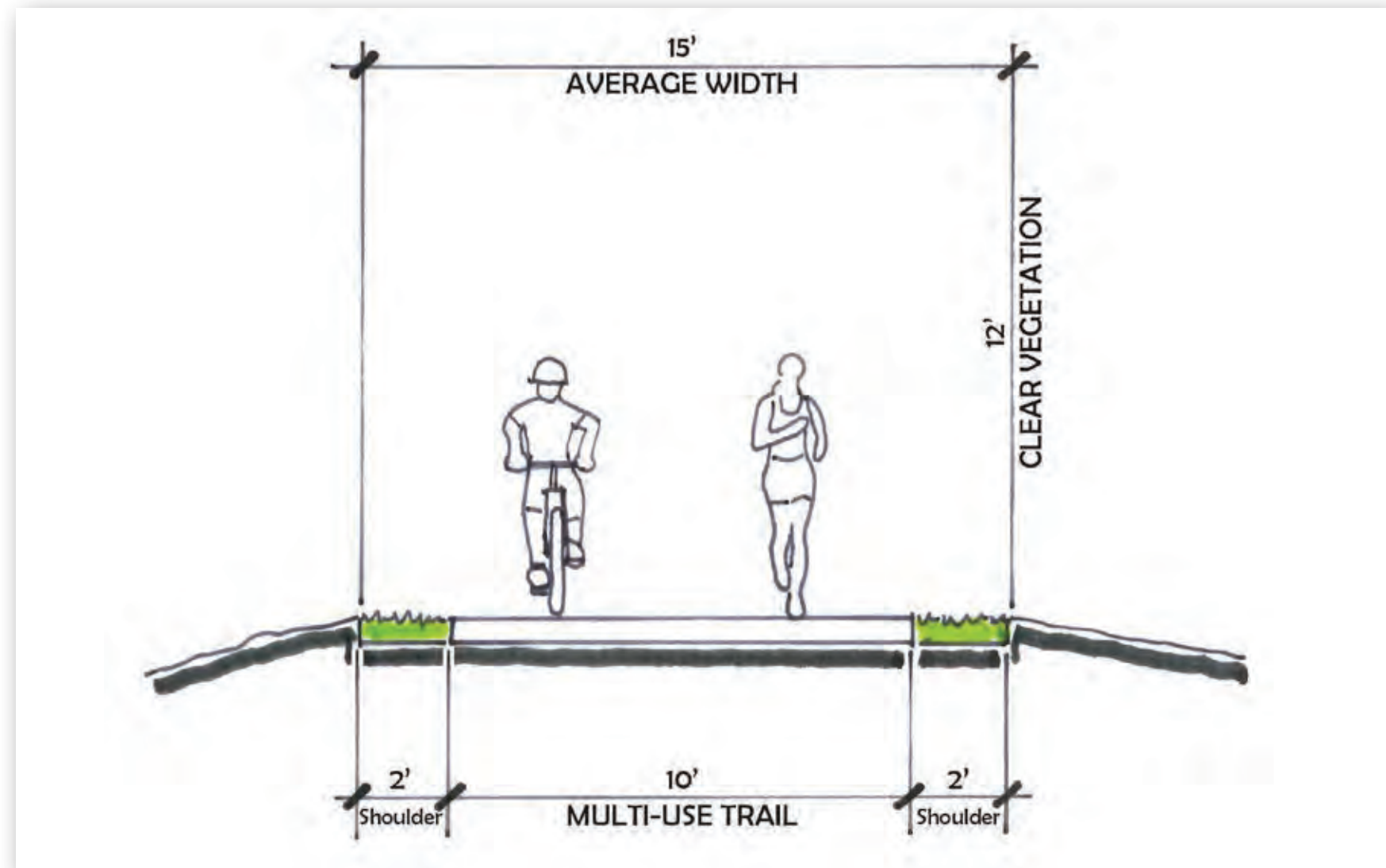
The following are cross sections illustrating both the A) ‘Multi-Use Trail’ and B) ‘Multi-Use Trail with Adjacent Bridle Path’ that will be tested versus the legal and physical feasibility of providing these standards described later in the ‘Trail Feasibility’ chapter of this report.

MULTI-USE TRAIL

The ‘Multi-Use Trail’ cross section illustrates the recommended width of 10 feet with adjacent minimum 2 foot wide improved shoulders along the outside edges. The trail may be reduced in width to an absolute minimum of 8 feet wide, but only in locations where space is limited. The trail may also consider expanding to 12 feet wide in heavy use areas. The improved shoulders may typically be 2.5 feet in width to account for the overall average width of the trail development within the corridor to be 15 feet.

Trail surfacing is recommended to be a continuation of the existing Struble Trail as macadam. Existing vegetation should be cleared to the width of the improved area and a minimum height of 12 feet.

For more information relative to the design and placement of Multi-Use Trails, please refer to the Shared Use Trails design element within the *Multimodal Circulation Handbook for Chester County* found here: <http://www.landscapes2.org/transportation/circulation/03-SharedFacs.cfm>.

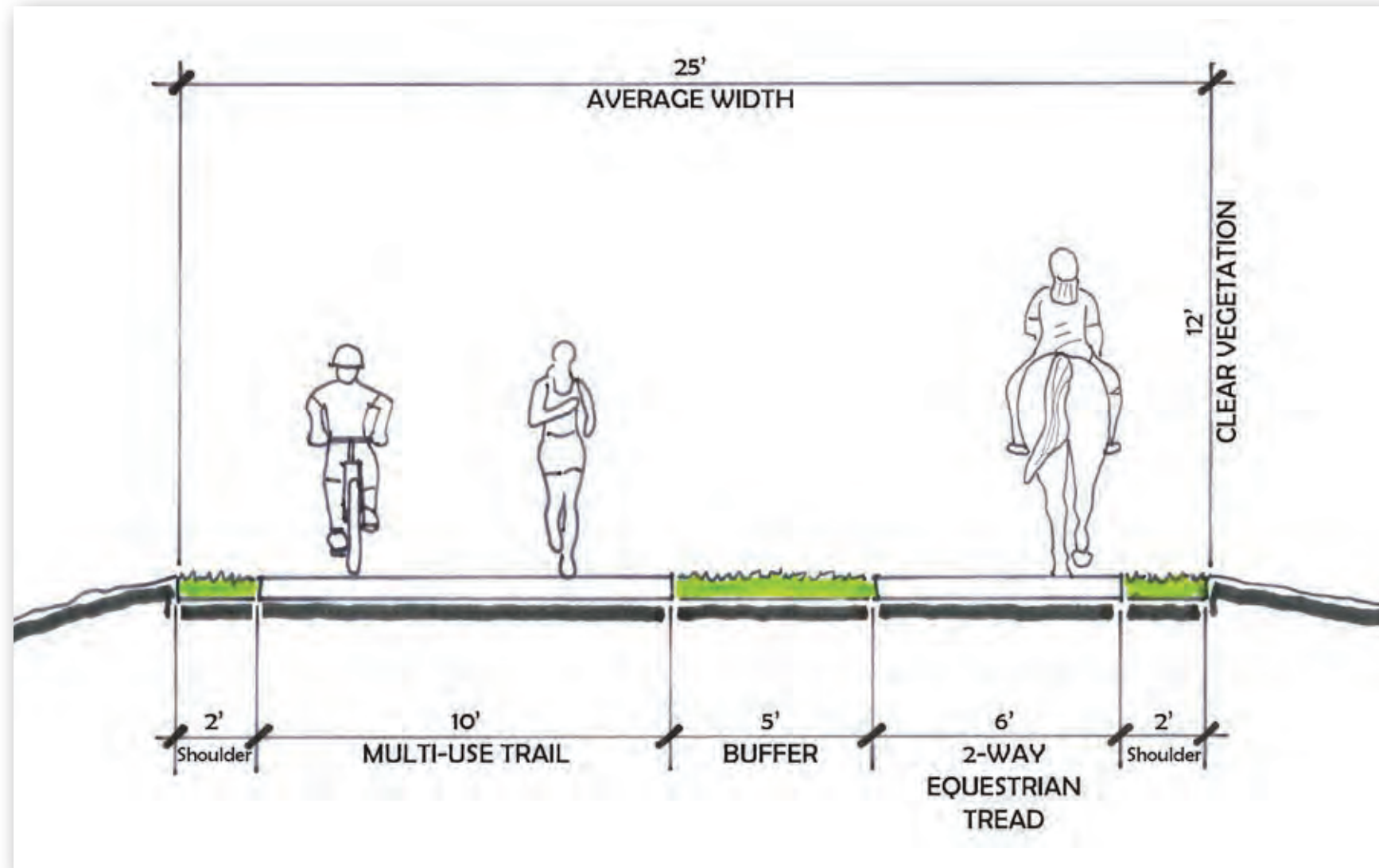


MULTI-USE TRAIL WITH ADJACENT BRIDLE PATH

The 'Multi-Use Trail with Adjacent Bridle Path' cross section illustrates the typical space required to accommodate for bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians within a shared trail corridor. In addition to the previously described minimum dimensions for a multi-use trail, a buffer zone should be placed between the multi-use trail and the equestrian tread wherever possible. This buffer could expand in areas where this is sufficient right-of-way available, and may be eliminated in locations where space is limited.

The constant should be to provide a separate tread for equestrians to avoid any potential user conflicts with bicyclists and pedestrians, and to maintain the minimum 2 foot shoulder on the outside edges of the trail surfaces. The multi-use trail is recommended to be a continuation of the existing Struble Trail with macadam surfacing, while the equestrian tread (or bridle path) should have a softer surface composed of fine aggregate, stone dust, or dry woodchips.

continued to page 20



West Nantmeal right of way north of the Barneston Dry Dam.

D.3 Estimated Trail Usage

The populations of the municipalities found within the project study area are as follows:

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION	% OF COUNTY TOTAL
East Brandywine Township	7,058	1.40%
Honeybrook Borough	1,598	0.32%
Honeybrook Township	7,744	1.54%
Upper Uwchlan Township	11,291	2.24%
Wallace Township	3,544	0.70%
West Nantmeal Township	2,051	0.41%
Study Area Municipalities Total	33,286	6.62%
Chester County Total	503,075	

Data source: American Community Survey 2013 5-Year Estimates



Existing Struble Trail just south of Dowlin Forge Road.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The most populous municipality is Upper Uwchlan Township, which resides closest to the Downingtown population center, while the other municipal populations reflect their more rural and agricultural landscapes. Combined, these municipalities account for a relatively small percentage of the entire Chester County population, however the establishment of a multi-use trail thorough these municipalities would provide for one of the few community accessible recreation resources for local residents outside of the Struble Lake, Springton Manor County Park, and Marsh Creek State Park facilities.

STRUBLE TRAIL COUNTS

The Chester County Parks & Facilities Department installed a permanent trail counter on the existing Struble Trail nearest the Dowlin’s Forge trail access. The counter was originally installed in early August 2014. After one full year of providing counts with the latest being recorded on 8/3/15, there have been 93,037 cyclists and pedestrians counted as users of the existing Struble Trail.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) installed a temporary counter on the Struble Trail East of Dorlan Mill Road for the week of June 25th through July 1st, 2015 as part of their monitoring of the Circuit, Greater Philadelphia’s Regional Trail Network. The total number of trail users counted during this period was 1,426. The DVRPC counters record and factor the weather and time of day when people are using the trail to project and annual estimate of daily users, which for this counter and time period were 224 average daily users. This estimate projects to 81,760 annual users, which is slightly less than the counts provided by Chester County’s permanent counter more centrally located along the trail.

In summary, the projected number of users for extending the trail is significant. While the vast majority of the pedestrian users of the trail will be from the local community, extension of the trail would make it more attractive for bicyclists thus expanding its regional draw. Also, due to the relatively high volume of users this trail attracts, the addition of equestrian use of the trail corridor north of the Dorlan’s Mill trailhead would require an adjacent bridle path to minimize potential trail user conflicts.

D.4 Landowner Outreach Results

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey, sent to all 170 trail-adjacent private landowners, was returned by sixty landowners; a thirty-five percent return. The results of the first survey question:

I. Please indicate your general support for the development of a multi-use trail in your community:

- Yes, I think a multi-use trail would be a great addition to our community.
- No, I do not think a multi-use trail would be appropriate for our community.
- Maybe, I would like to know more.

were closely examined for the entire study corridor and used in making the recommendations of this feasibility study.

To summarize answers to question #1, thirteen landowners were unequivocally positive towards this trail extension, twenty-one were against this trail, seventeen were ‘maybe’, wanting more information, and nine did not answer the question. It should be noted that the survey results were largely returned and tabulated before the public landowner meetings and some perceptions may have changed as a result of those sessions.

A full transcript of all landowner comments is included in the survey results appendix of this study.

LANDOWNER RESPONSES SUMMARIZED BY SEGMENT

The Study Maps (pages 42 through 47) show the railroad right of way parcels outlined in red and, where there is clear Chester County ownership, show green hatching within the red outlines. More on county ownership, potential conflicts, and the mapping of both is described in the Legal Feasibility Chapter of this study. The maps were used at the public landowner meetings to discuss points of conflict, opportunity, and special features of note.

There is little direct correlation between County trail corridor ownership and negative opinions of this trail extension. Negative sentiment regarding trail extension often corresponds to the trail’s proximity to houses, to residential views, and to trails crossing farm fields. Frequently voiced concerns regard safety—including children’s safety, noise, littering, partying, large parking lots, and land trespass. Several people asked that parking lots be kept small and infrequent. A number of respondents said they presently use the corridor to cycle, hike, enjoy wildlife, fish, and walk dogs. A few people asked how dirt bikes and other motorized vehicles would be banned. Fences, clearly marked trails, including entrance and exit signs and milepost markers were requested. Several landowners offered to help by making critical parcels available or by volunteering to help promote or even build a trail.

continued to page 22



Existing Struble Trail north of Norwood Road.

Out of a wealth of commentary, landowner responses are summarized here:

***D.4a—Marsh Creek State Park Area
Landowner response***

Landowners within the Marsh Creek State Park Area are largely positive to the idea of extending this trail, with a few notable exceptions. One large landowner within this Area requested that the trail be placed on State lands rather than through his property; about two-thirds of the corridor through his land is County-owned.

***D.4b—Springton Manor County Park Area
Landowner response***

Through the Springton Manor County Park Area, especially within Glenmoore, residential lots are smaller and houses are far closer to a potential rail-trail, making unknown trail users a more threatening and intrusive prospect. Many Glenmoore landowners attended the Wallace landowners’ meeting and expressed strong support for Glenmoore’s recreational trail connections, while stressing the difficulty of getting a multi-use trail through the village, given title issues, loss of rail corridor parcels, dense development patterns, and traffic on Route 282 through the center of town. Glenmoore residents were interviewed and want safer walking routes within the village, especially along the streets so that children can go

to the parks. Village residents want connectivity, if only for their own use, but see no consensual way to make it happen. The one formal attempt to hold a Village visioning workshop and survey the residents on a possible sidewalk was negative and fairly inconclusive. The rail corridor through Glenmoore is still intact but owned by private parties rather than the County. One landowner to the south of the village offered to relinquish two small triangular parcels along Creek Road below Burgess Park if that would help the trail alignment (which it would, as a side trail to Springton Manor County Park.) The Glenmoore section of the trail faces complex issues of public sentiment and private ownership.

***D.4c West Nantmeal Landowner Response
(part of the Brandywine Headwaters Area)***

West Nantmeal Township’s rail corridor is entirely owned by the County. The rail corridor here runs through Chester County’s Water Resources Authority property, including through a dry dam, and the Authority has expressed support for a trail with sufficient fencing and policing protection to protect the dam. As the trail passes through Wyebrook Farm property, the corridor is used as a farm road which the landowner is willing to share with a trail. Property owners west of Wyebrook Road up to Chestnut Tree Road were largely uncommunicative regarding a trail except for ‘no’ votes on both ends of this sub-section. Also within this sub-section the corridor cuts through Cupola Industry’s truck parking lot, but no one from the business has commented on the trail.

***D.4d Honey Brook Landowner Response
(part of the Brandywine Headwaters Area)***

In Honey Brook Township, in the Brandywine Headwaters Equestrian Trail Area, there is more negative reaction to a trail than in any portion of the study area. Land holdings are generally larger so there are fewer Honey Brook survey respondents but, out of seventeen respondents, twelve were against a trail, four were ‘maybes’, and only one was in favor of the trail. The public landowner’s meeting had approximately the same percentage spread, ranging from anger at outsiders intruding on their quiet, clean community, to farmers’ concerns about the safety of school children. A group of farmers wanted to know if the County would force this trail on them without community acceptance or if the community’s voice would be heard. Coupled with the low percentage of County owned rail corridor in Honey Brook, a further study of the community’s needs, wants, and vision for walking, cycling, and horses should be planned, rather than pursuing a Struble Trail extension here. Clearly the community does not feel its voice or vision has been heard and any trail in Honey Brook needs to be endorsed by that community. ■



Looking from Creek Road across Brandywine Creek at the rail grade visible on the opposite bank.

E. Trail Feasibility

This chapter summarizes both the legal and physical feasibility of providing for both a multi-use trail with equestrian use (adjacent bridle path) as well as the minimum standard of a multi-use trail without equestrian use within the former railroad corridor.

E.1 Legal Feasibility

Due to the land ownership along the former New Holland Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad corridor not being clear and/or confirmed, the services of the Manito Abstract Company were procured to perform a title search of the tax parcels associated with the former railroad alignment from Dorlan’s Mill Road to the end of the line nearest Honey Brook Borough and Umble Memorial Park, a distance of approximately 13.5 miles. Manito Abstract also revisited a previous title search performed for the former Hibernia Line which travels north/south from Struble Lake to Icedale Road within the project study area. The Hibernia Line intersects the New Holland Branch alignment at Suplee junction in Honey Brook Township, and was initially suggested as a potential trail alignment to connect Honey Brook Borough with the PA Fish and Boat Commission’s facilities at Struble Lake.

The title search revealed that many of the current tax parcel boundaries investigated contain both portions of the original right-of-way that were acquired via fee simple purchase by the railroad

company from the original landowners, AND lands that were acquired by rights-of-way. Only the lands that were originally acquired via fee simple purchase are now owned in fee by Chester County. All of the other portions of the corridor originally acquired as rights-of-way reverted back to the original landowners to either side of the corridor centerline at the point in time when the railroad service was determined to be officially abandoned. The approximate boundaries of these fee purchased parcels were transferred from the railroad track mapping to the Trail Mapping generated for this report.

The full title search documentation along with the original track maps showing how the right-of-way was originally acquired may be found in the report Appendix (CD/PDF).

The following is a summary of the title search findings by project sub-area. Please refer to the Trail Mapping to see the approximate boundaries of lands owned in fee by Chester County located within and adjacent to the former rail alignment.

Marsh Creek State Park Area

Beginning at Dolan’s Mill Road and heading northwest along the corridor, Chester County has an existing agreement with the landowner for parcel immediately north of Dorlan’s Mill Road to provide for a trail easement through this parcel. This easement will require some additional working and/or clarification so that the trail may work in conjunction with the future development plans.

The next segment of rail corridor is owned by the Commonwealth of PA as a portion of Marsh Creek State Park. Between the Marsh Creek State Park owned segment and Reed’s Road, Chester County owns in fee all but approximately 500 feet+/- along the corridor centerline which has reverted. This reverted segment lies to the west of a Chester County owned segment that has been encroached upon by a private landowner.

From Reed’s Road to Lyndell Road, Chester County owns approximately 50% of the former rail corridor in fee as well as a number of adjacent parcels to the south and west adjacent to the EB Brandywine

continued to page 26



View from the existing Struble Trail, looking towards the Shady Acres Campground.

Creek. Ownership of the remainder of the right-of-way is assumed to be Chester County as the land development plans for the adjacent developments noted Chester County as the owner of the corridor, as was the intent of the original purchase of this corridor segment from the Pennsylvania Railroad in the 1970's.

Chester County owns in fee the corridor segment between Lyndell Road and Marsh Creek State Park. The Commonwealth of PA owns the corridor segments through the State Park. The remaining segment between Marsh Creek State Park and Marshall Road is through the former Cornog Quarry site and is now owned by the Penn Aqua/Philadelphia Suburban Water Company.

In summary, Chester County has significant land holdings in this project study sub-area, along with a willing partner towards trail development for segments of the former corridor that lie within Marsh Creek State Park.

Springton Manor County Park Area

Between Marshall Road and Fairview Road at the north end of Glenmoore Village in Wallace Township (approx. 2 miles) Chester County has no ownership of the former railroad corridor. There is one Chester County holding immediately south of Fairview Road within the corridor, but it is not physically feasible towards development of a multi-use trail. Two (2) private landowners control the former corridor between Marshall Road and Park Lane with one of those landowners holding a significant portion between Park Lane and Fairview Road. The remaining parcels are privately owned.

The Chester County Redevelopment Authority owns the former corridor in fee between Fairview Road and where the alignment crosses Creek Road (PA 282) at Indiantown Road. From this crossing northward, Wallace Township owns the parcel upon which they have placed their maintenance facility, and the next parcel in line is owned by PECO, assumed to be associated with the transmission line that crosses the former rail corridor approximately 700 feet north and west of the Wallace owned maintenance facility parcel.

Beyond the PECO owned parcel and transmission line, Chester County owns the former rail corridor in fee to and through the dry dam flood control facility to the West Nantmeal/Wallace Township line.

Brandywine Headwaters Trail Area

Continuing from the West Nantmeal/Wallace Township line, Chester County owns in fee the entire former rail corridor through West Nantmeal Township. This fee ownership ends at the West Nantmeal/Honey Brook Township line at Chestnut Tree Road. There are two observed encroachments along this segment—one at Wyebrook Farm where the former alignment is now being used as a private road, and the other nearest Chestnut Tree Road where the corridor is being utilized as part of an industrial operation.

Once the alignment enters Honey Brook Township, Chester County ownership is fragmented and non-continuous. The most significant stretch of Chester County ownership in this project sub-area occurs nearest Suplee Junction and westward towards Honey Brook Borough and Umble Memorial Park, however it does not include the full width and travels through active farm land.

The north/south running former Hibernia Line ownership was evaluated as part of a previous study of that corridor between the City of Coatesville and the Borough of Elverson towards the prospect of developing it as a trail. The previous and current re-visitation of that study revealed that while Chester County does own some former parcels in fee. However, there is no continuous Chester County ownership along the former alignment with a majority of the corridor having been originally acquired as rights-of-way. These lands subsequently reverted to the original landowners once this line was officially abandoned.

E.2 Physical Feasibility

The following is a summary of the physical feasibility of the former railroad corridor (by project sub-area) to provide for the ‘Multi-Use Trail with Adjacent Bridle Path’ and ‘Multi-Use Trail’ design standards as described in the previous ‘Needs, Wants, and Desires’ chapter.

Marsh Creek State Park Area

The entire former rail corridor between Dorlan’s Mill Road and Marshall Road, a distance of approximately 3.7 miles is physically feasible for the development of a multi-use trail with equestrian use.

From the existing trailhead, the trail will need to cross Dorlan’s Mill Road. The existing conditions of the roadway geometries and sight distances will require careful design & engineering to provide for a safe trail crossing. The location of this crossing should be coordinated with the development plans of the privately owned parcel through which Chester County has obtained an easement.

Once through this parcel, the park will enter Marsh Creek State Park and require a bridge crossing of Marsh Creek. The existing 75 foot span structure appears to be in good condition, but will require structural inspection during design and engineering to determine whether or not this structure may be renovated for trail use.

Beyond the first segment through the State Park, the rail corridor is well suited for development of a multi-use trail with equestrian use. The floodplain and wetlands may impact trail construction between Reed's and Lyndell Roads. The rail corridor is elevated through this segment, but may require additional measures to protect a trail from more intense flooding events.

Potential trailhead/access points include former station sites at Reed's Road and Marshall Road. The Marshall Road location may require additional property acquisition to provide for a parking area. Equestrian facilities within Marsh Creek State Park would be the main points of access for horse riders as the trail within this segment would expand upon the existing network of equestrian trails found within Marsh Creek State Park.

Springton Manor County Park Area

The former rail line from Marshall Road to Park Lane at the southern end of Glenmoore Village is physically feasible for development of a multi-use trail to Park Lane in Glenmoore Village if the right-of-way were available for development. The extent of equestrian use should be limited to Burgess Park at the southern end of the village as to minimize potential impact to adjacent residents. A separate equestrian trail could be developed to make a connection to Springton Manor County Park via additional easements, safe crossing of Creek Road, and a trail bridge crossing adjacent to Creek Road over Indian Run.

The large privately owned parcel south of Burgess Park is where the former alignment crosses to the western bank of the Brandywine Creek nearest its confluence with Indian Run. This 140' existing span will require structural inspection during the design and engineering phase to determine whether or not this structure may be renovated for trail use. An alternative alignment was suggested early in the process to keep a trail on the eastern bank, however significant earthwork would be required to overcome the steep slopes to provide for a multi-use trail cross section so this alternative would not be feasible.

Continuation of a multi-use trail north of Park Lane and through Glenmoore Village is not physically feasible as the corridor intertwines with the Creek Road right-of-way and has been dissolved by private development. The corridor regains its physical feasibility north of Fairview Road and continues to be feasible through the remainder of this project sub-area.

A trail would require realignment from the original corridor centerline as it has been replaced by the Chester County Water Resources Authority (WRA) dry dam facility. This realignment may require an easement from an adjacent private landowner to go around the dam and continue north and west. To allow for development of a trail facility in this relatively remote location, the WRA requires that the trail be monitored by park rangers with additional security measures installed to protect the integrity of the dry dam facility.

Potential trailhead access locations within this sub-area include Burgess Park at the southern end of Glenmoore Village, and the Wallace owned parcel nearest the Creek Road/Indiantown Road intersection with the former rail corridor. A local trail access point may be considered at Park Lane if a multi-use trail may be developed to this location in the future.

Brandywine Headwaters Trail Area

The entire length of the former rail corridor through West Nantmeal Township is physically feasible for development of a multi-use trail with equestrian use. This corridor segment would require the improvement of 3 short span bridge structures over unnamed tributaries to the EB Brandywine Creek: 1 approximately ¼ mile east of Barneston Road; and, 2 between Lewis Mills Road and Chestnut Tree Road at the western end of West Nantmeal Township.

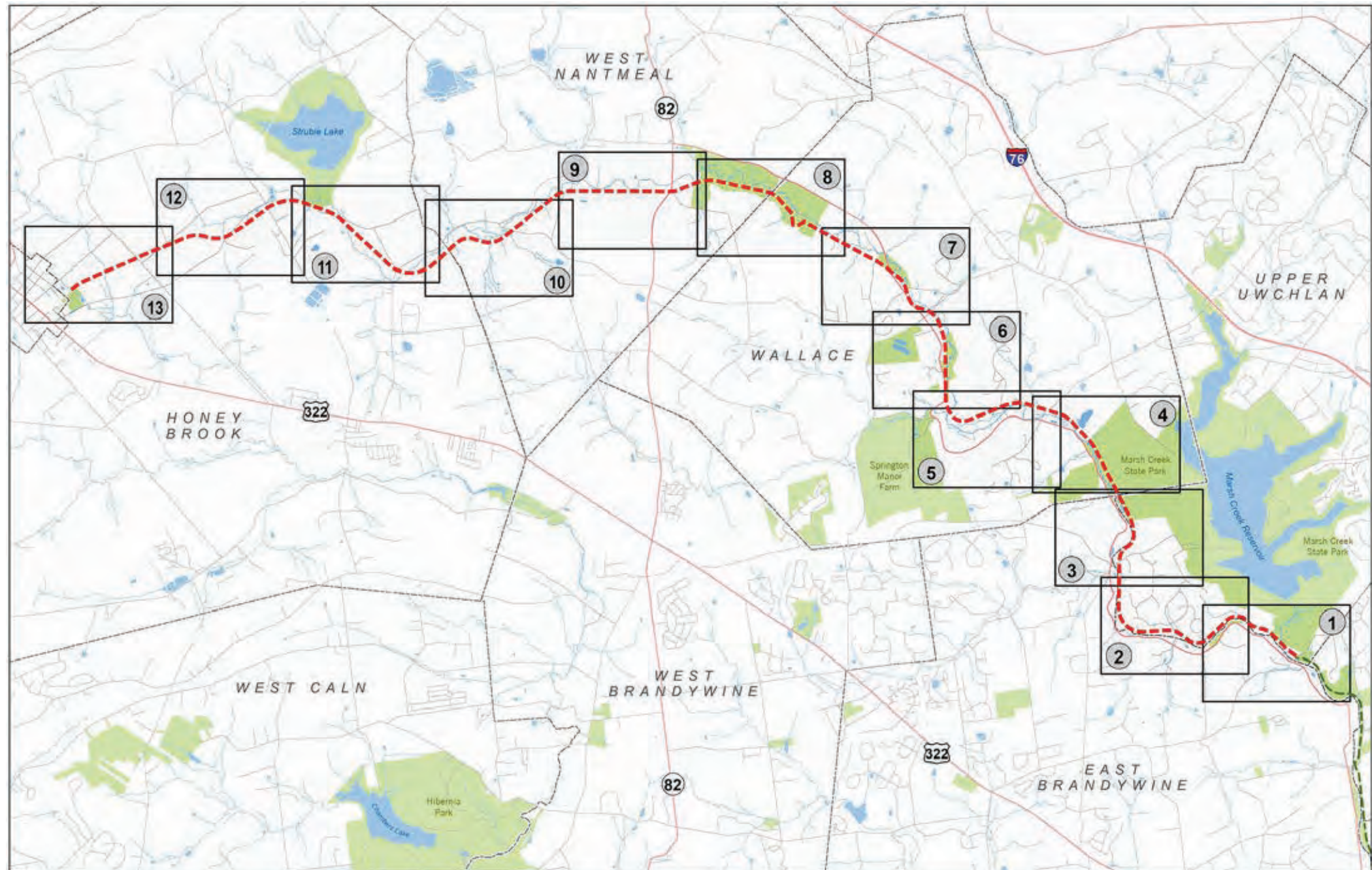
In Honey Brook Township the rail corridor remains physically feasible for multi-use trail development for another ½ mile to the intersection with Forrest and Cupola Roads. This segment contains an 80 foot span bridge crossing where the corridor crosses back over to the north bank of the creek approximately 1/8 mile east of the Forrest/Cupola Roads intersection. Beyond this intersection, the corridor is no longer physically feasible as it has reverted to adjacent landowners and has been dissolved by adjacent land use. Alternative alignments were explored towards extending a trail to Honey Brook Borough, but no feasible corridor was identified that could support the multi-use trail standard.

The location with the most potential to be a trailhead/access point within this project sub-area would be at Wyebrook Farm which could serve as a logical endpoint for a multi-use trail with equestrian use that would extend approximately 3 miles from Indiantown Road in Wallace Township. ■

F. Trail Mapping

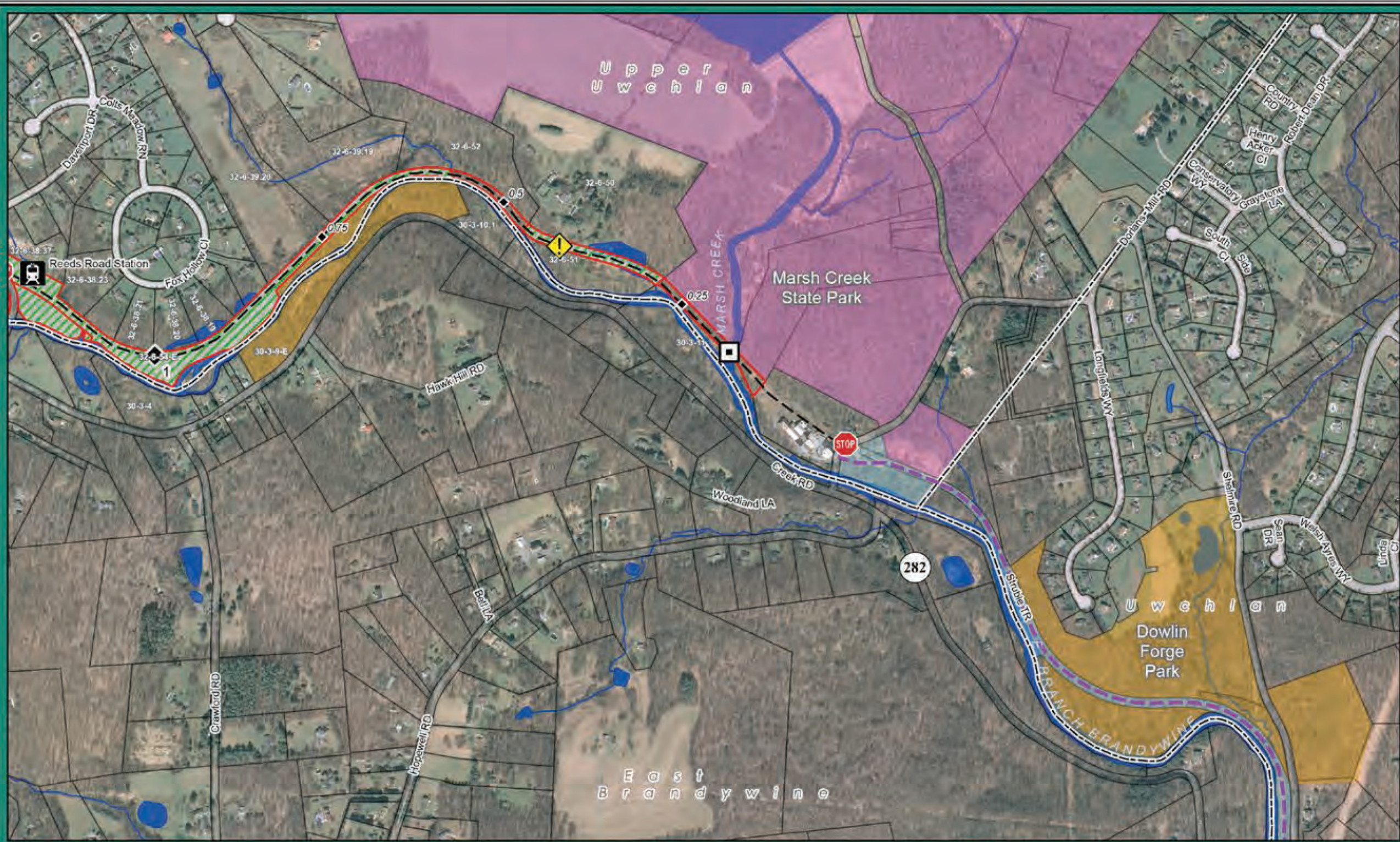
F.1 Map Book of Trail Corridor

The following thirteen maps depict the entire length of the study area from Dorlan Mill Road up to Honey Brook Borough. By clicking on the segment of interest in the index map, you will be taken directly to the corresponding segment. The information on these maps has been compiled from Chester County Tax Parcel data, title search information as referenced in the appendices of the study, ground observations, and interviews with municipalities and landowners. Public lands, roads, hydrology, road crossings, the abandoned rail parcels, and proposed trail heads are mapped.



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a field survey.



Legend

Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

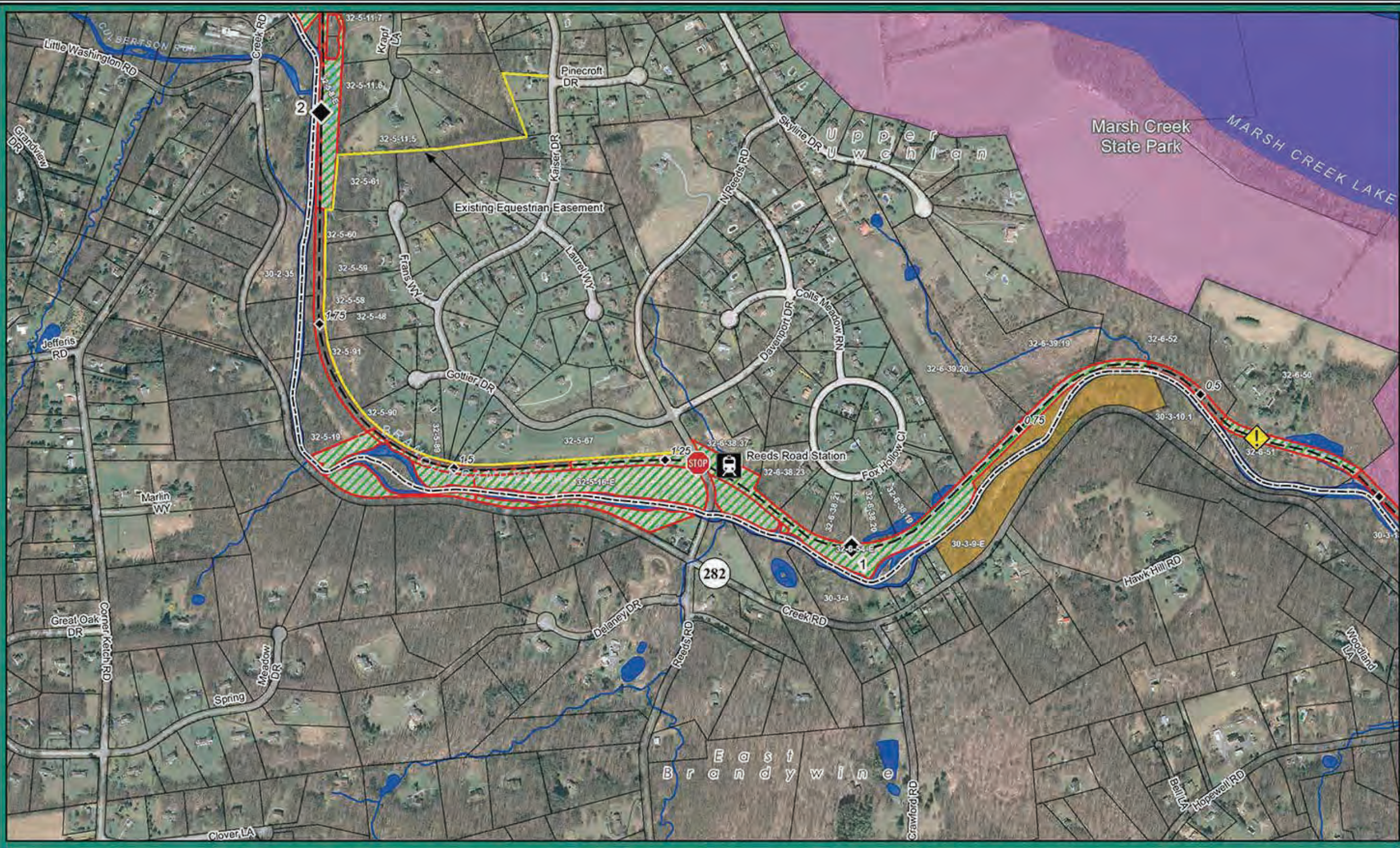
Scale: 0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet
 Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014
 Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

MAP: 1
 Map created: September 23, 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



Marsh Creek State Park
MARSH CREEK LAKE



Legend

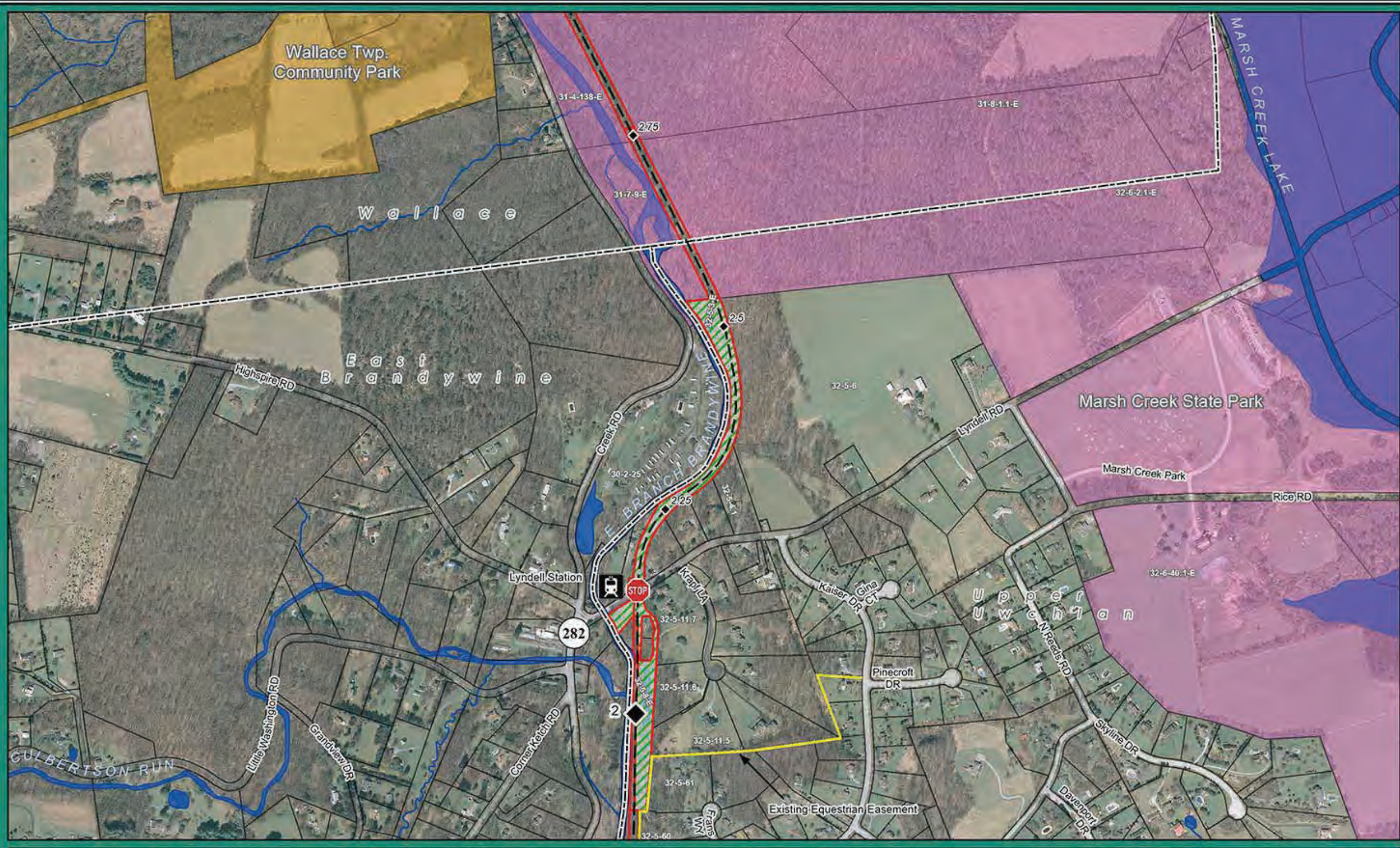
Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources	 <small>Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CO, 12/2014 Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.</small>
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water	
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA		
				County		

MAP: 2
Map created: September 23, 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

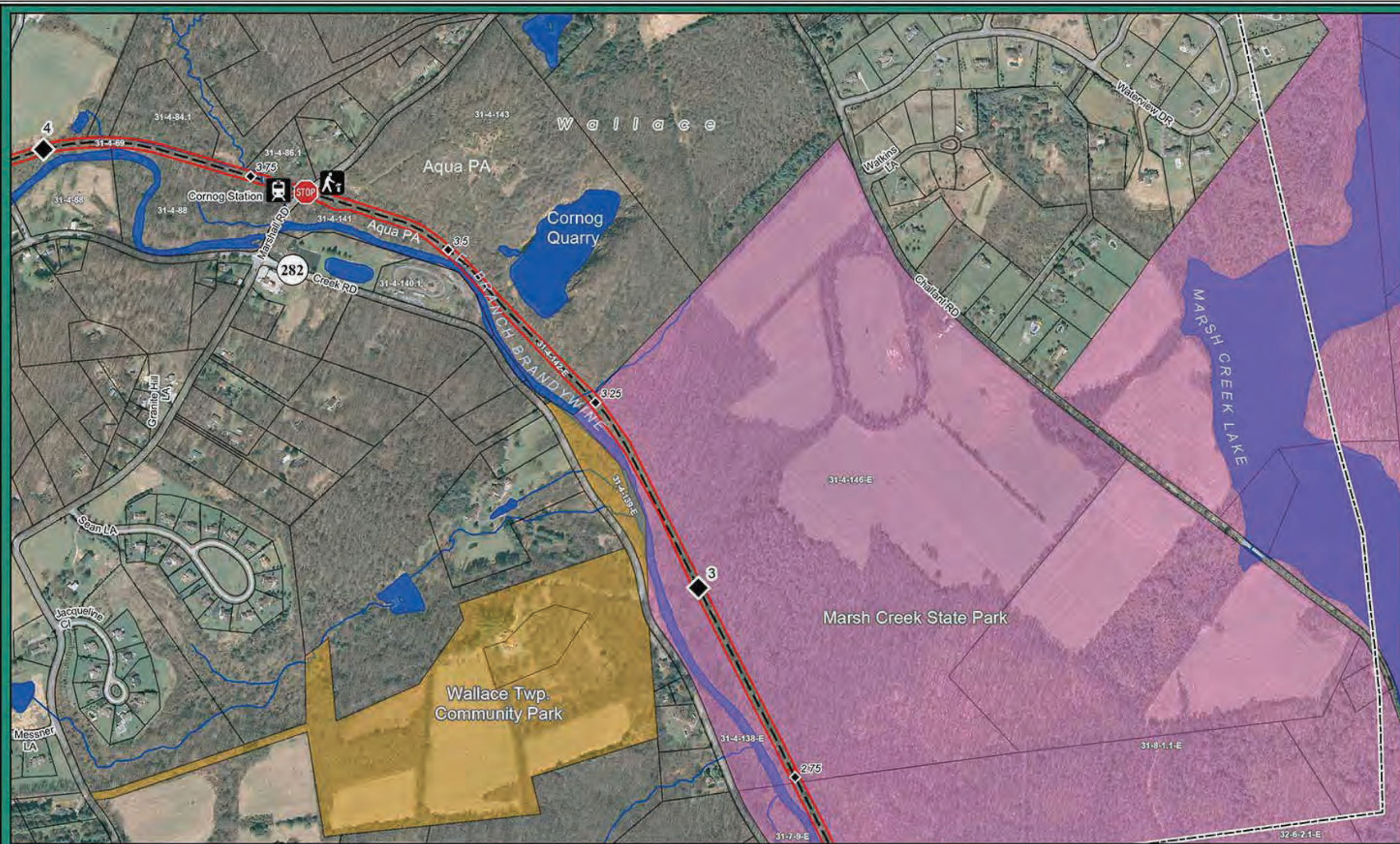
Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



Legend Potential trailhead/access Former station site Bridge		Road crossing Encroachment Distance markers		Corridor centerline/trail alignment Existing Struble Trail Municipal boundary		Approx. tax parcel boundaries Railroad parcel Chester County owned lands		Protected Lands Municipal Commonwealth of PA County		Water resources Bodies of water		 0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014 Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.
MAP: 3 Map created: September 23, 2015												

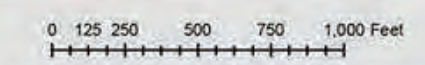
Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



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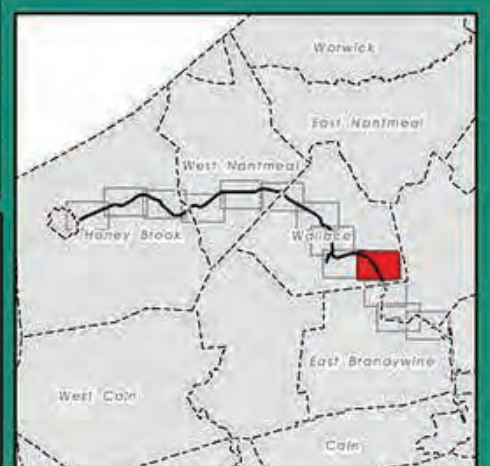
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|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Potential trailhead/access | Road crossing | Corridor centerline/trail alignment | Approx. tax parcel boundaries | Protected Lands | Water resources |
| Former station site | Encroachment | Existing Struble Trail | Railroad parcel | Municipal | Bodies of water |
| Bridge | Distance markers | Municipal boundary | Chester County owned lands | Commonwealth of PA | |
| | | | | County | |



Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CO, 12/2014
Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

MAP: 4

Map created: September 23, 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study

BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



Legend

Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	UCI Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet

Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014
Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

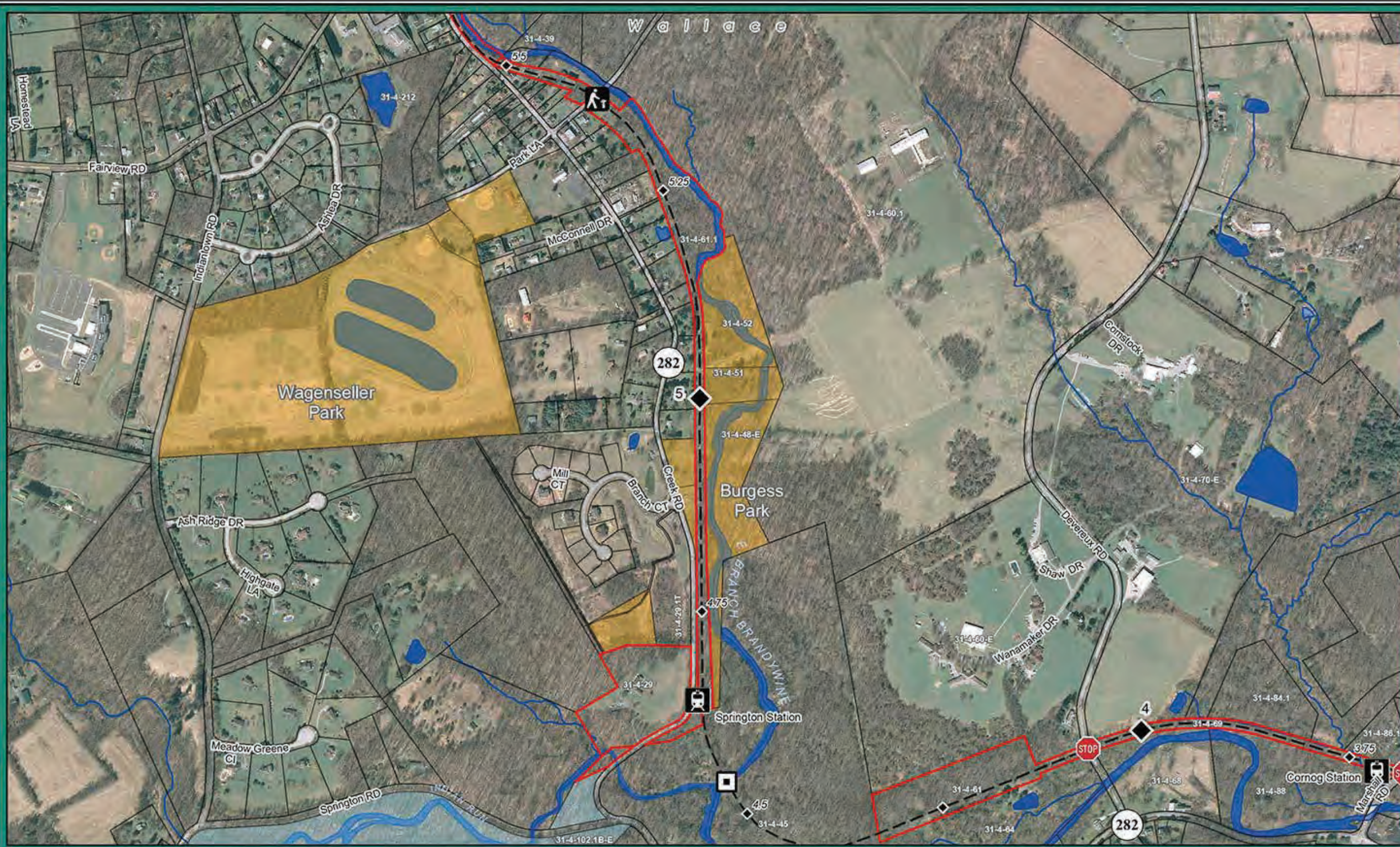
MAP: 5

Map created: September 23, 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.

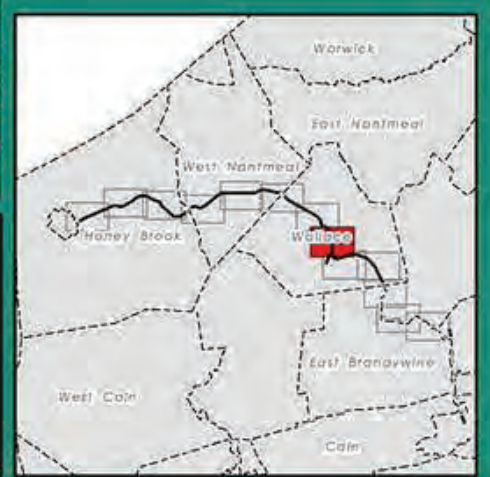


Legend Potential trailhead/access Former station site Bridge		Road crossing Encroachment Distance markers		Corridor centerline/trail alignment Existing Struble Trail Municipal boundary		Approx. tax parcel boundaries Railroad parcel Chester County owned lands		Protected Lands Municipal Commonwealth of PA County		Water resources Bodies of water	
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Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CO, 12/2014
 Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

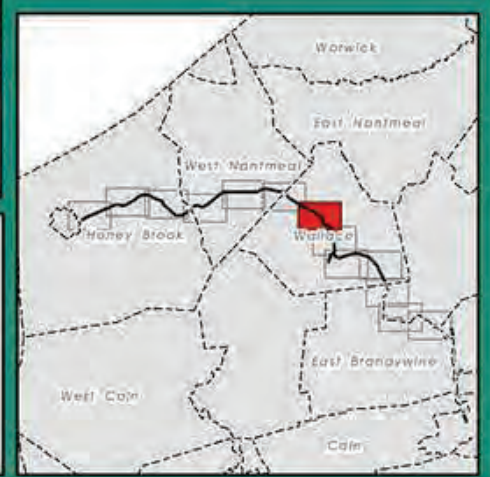
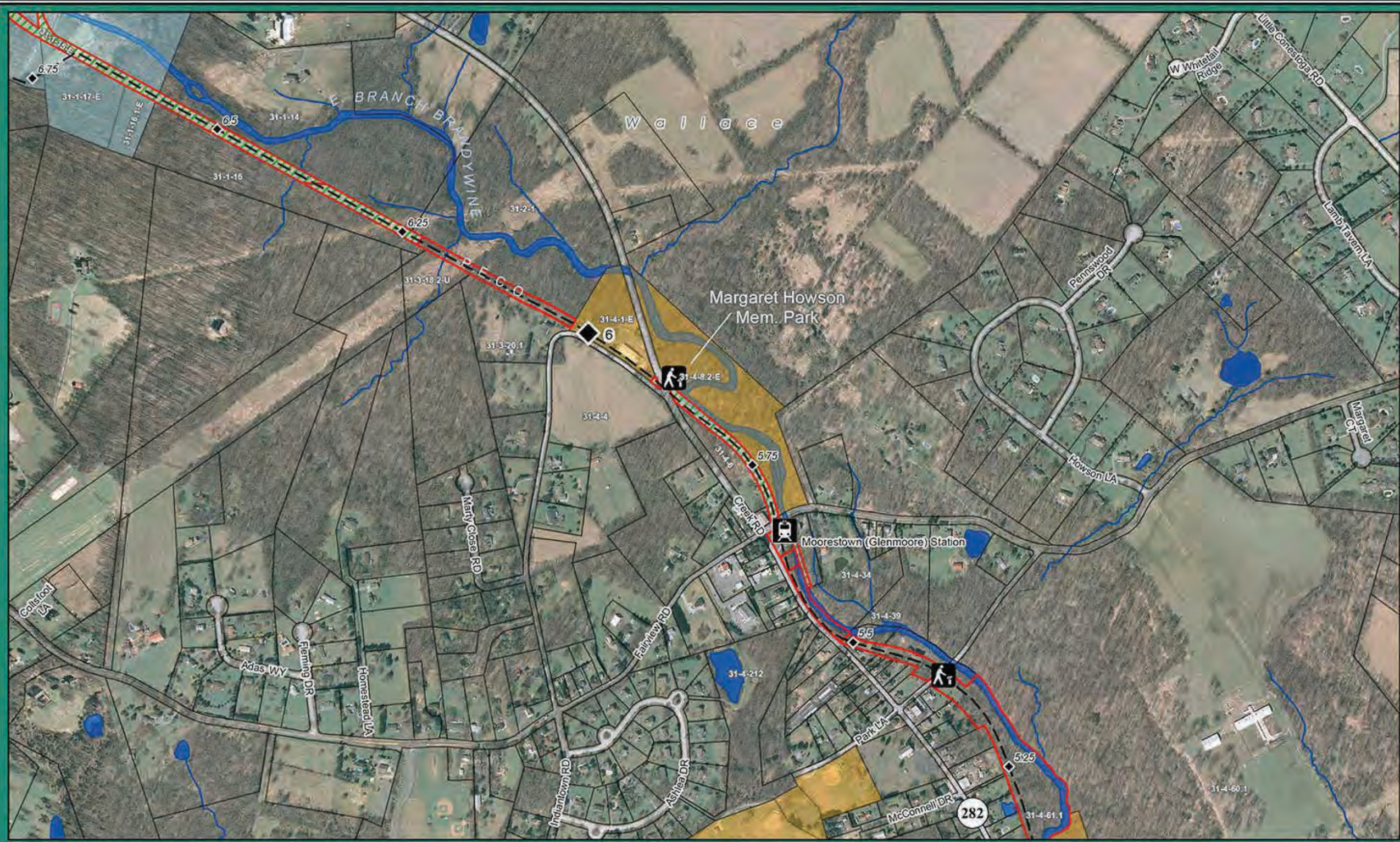
MAP: 6

 Map created: September 23, 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



Legend

Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet

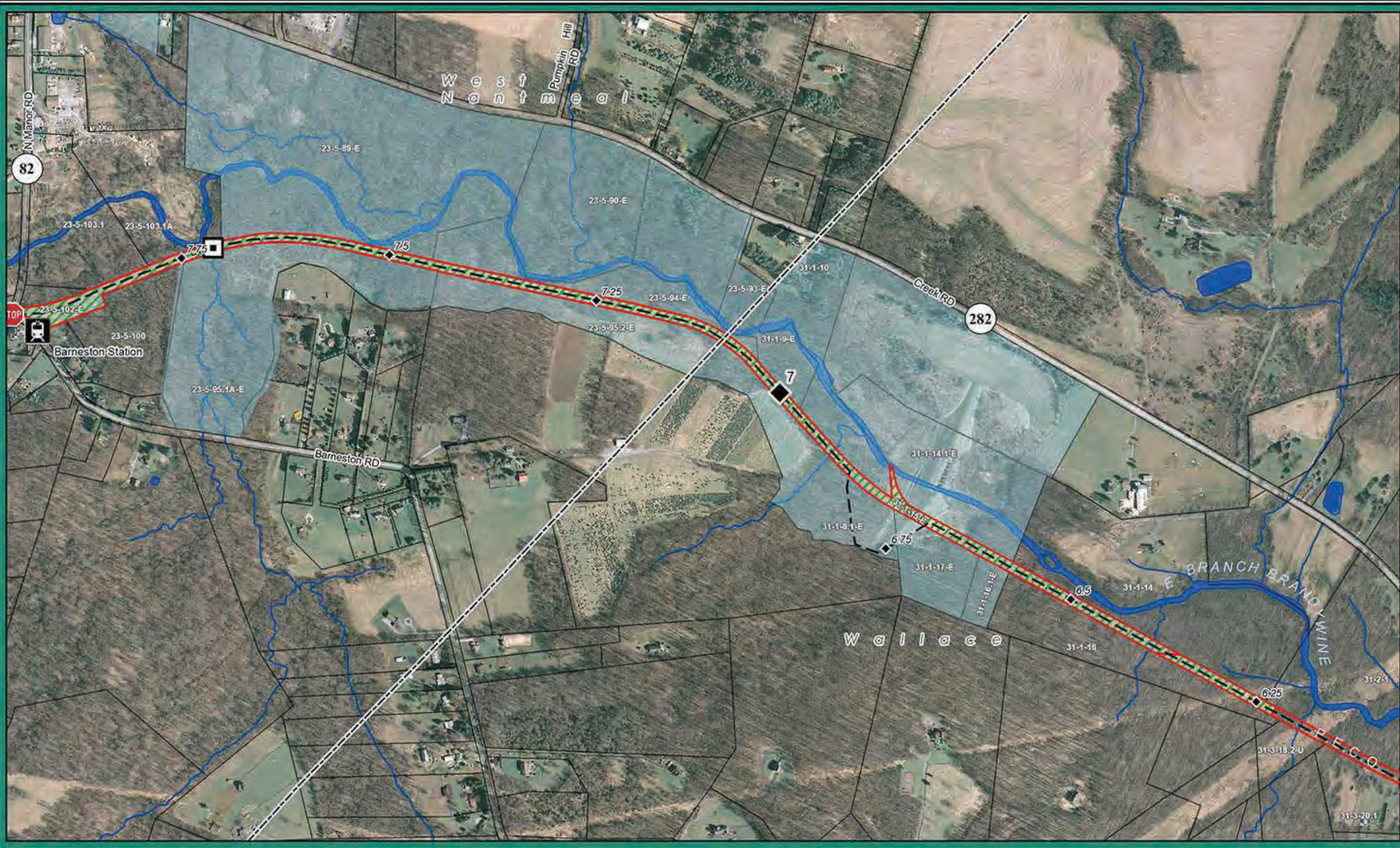
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Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

MAP: 7
Map created: September 23, 2015

Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study

BRC-TAG-19-129

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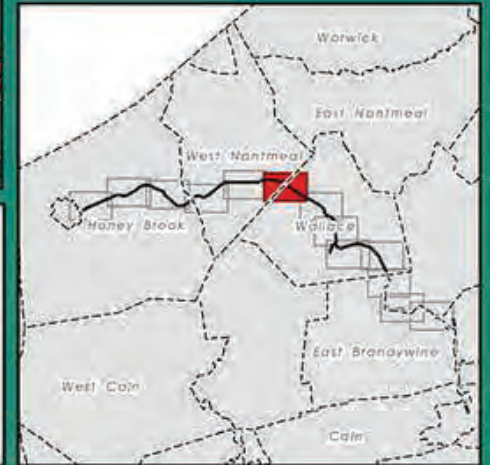


Legend

Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

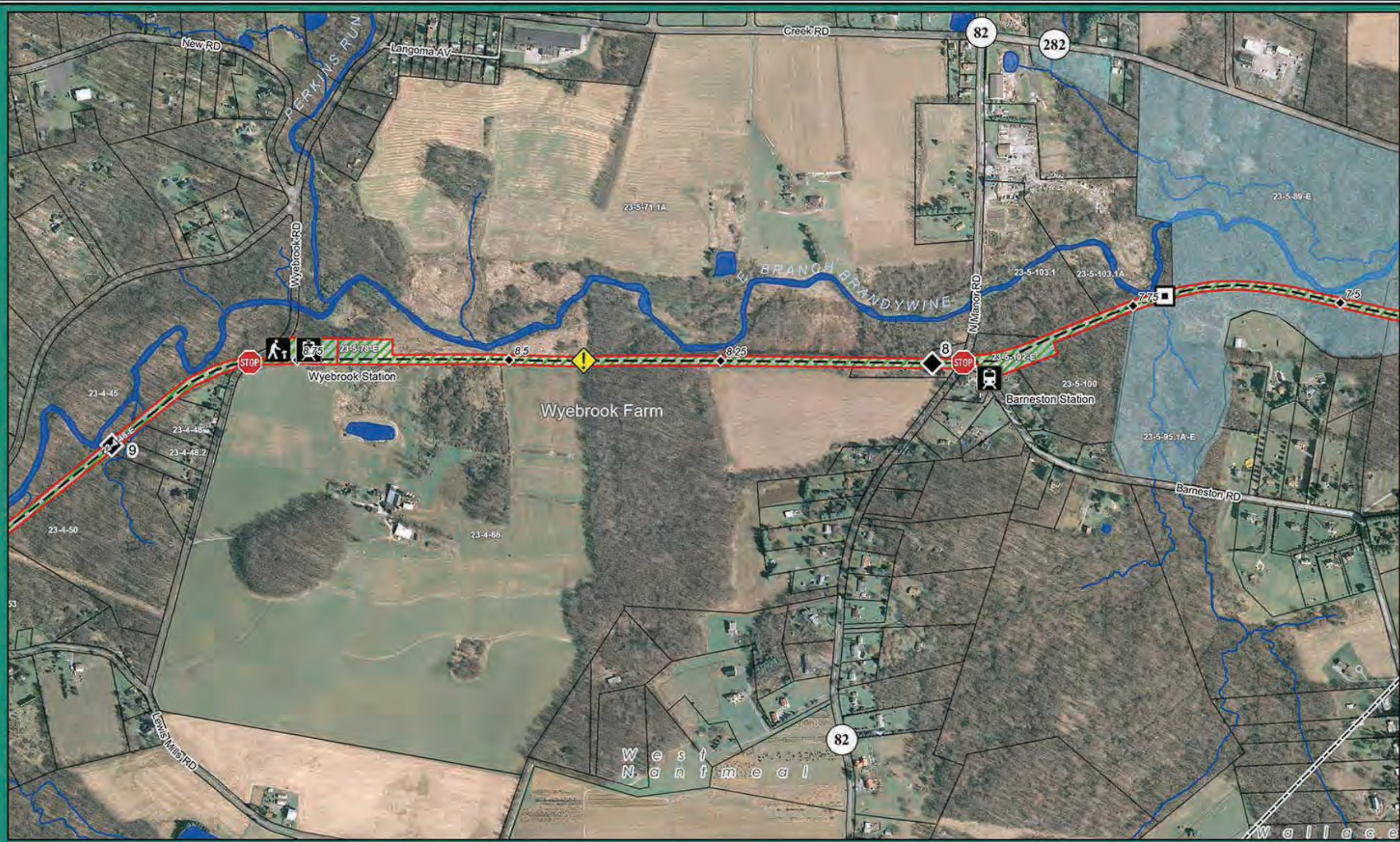
Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014
Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

MAP: 8
Map created: September 23, 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



Legend

Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet
Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014
Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

MAP: 9
Map created: September 23, 2015

Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study

BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.

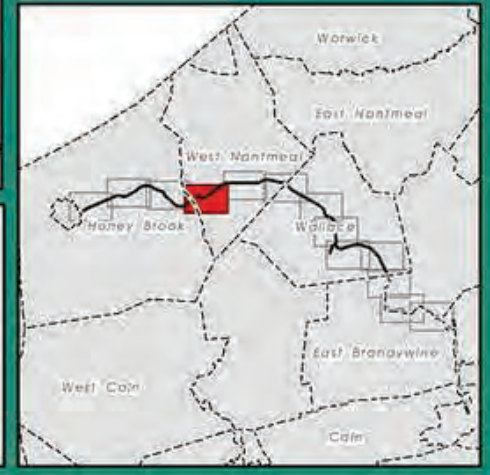


Legend

Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014
Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

MAP: 10
Map created: September 23, 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study

BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	UPI	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet

Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014
Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

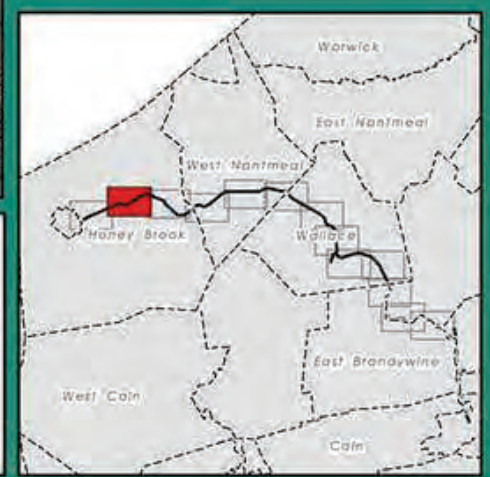
MAP: 11

Map created: September 23, 2015



Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



Legend

Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet

Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014
Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

MAP: 12
Map created: September 23, 2015

Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study BRC-TAG-19-129

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.



Legend

Potential trailhead/access	Road crossing	Corridor centerline/trail alignment	Approx. tax parcel boundaries	Protected Lands	Water resources
Former station site	Encroachment	Existing Struble Trail	Railroad parcel	Municipal	Bodies of water
Bridge	Distance markers	Municipal boundary	Chester County owned lands	Commonwealth of PA	
				County	

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet
Data Source: Base data from CHESCO Data Distribution CD, 12/2014
Aerial data from Chester County, 2010.

MAP: 13
Map created: September 23, 2015

G. Trail Recommendations

The following lettered segments correspond to the DRAFT Recommendations Segment Map. Recommendations are based on title reports, field observations, committee input, landowner feedback, staff discussion, and research as detailed in this report with appendices.

G.1 Segment A: DEVELOP MULTI-USE TRAIL Dorlan's Mill Road to Marshall Road (3.7 miles) Marsh Creek State Park Area

This feasibility study finds that Segment A is the highest priority segment of the former railroad right of way to develop as a multi-use trail, including equestrian use.

In terms of the land ownership for the trail, most of this segment is owned by Chester County or by large landowners interested in or sympathetic to the development of this trail; landowners such as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in Marsh Creek State Park, and the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company, at the old Cornog Quarry property. The remaining non-County parcels are few—between one and five (depending on the more detailed findings of the ownership of the rail parcel)—and may be secured through negotiations with those landowners.

Physically this segment of the former railroad ROW is feasible as a multi-use trail with adjacent bridle path. It has creek-crossing bridges that appear to be structurally intact, and, perhaps most importantly, this segment connects directly to the existing Struble

Trail. The importance of this connection to a popular public trail cannot be overstated in terms of public perceptions. The residents closest to the Struble Trail are likely to be already using the trail and positively inclined to its extension.

This study recommends that the County secure the remainder of the corridor through negotiations outlined below, and then design and develop this corridor as a multi-use trail with equestrian use. Securing the balance of Segment A will include:

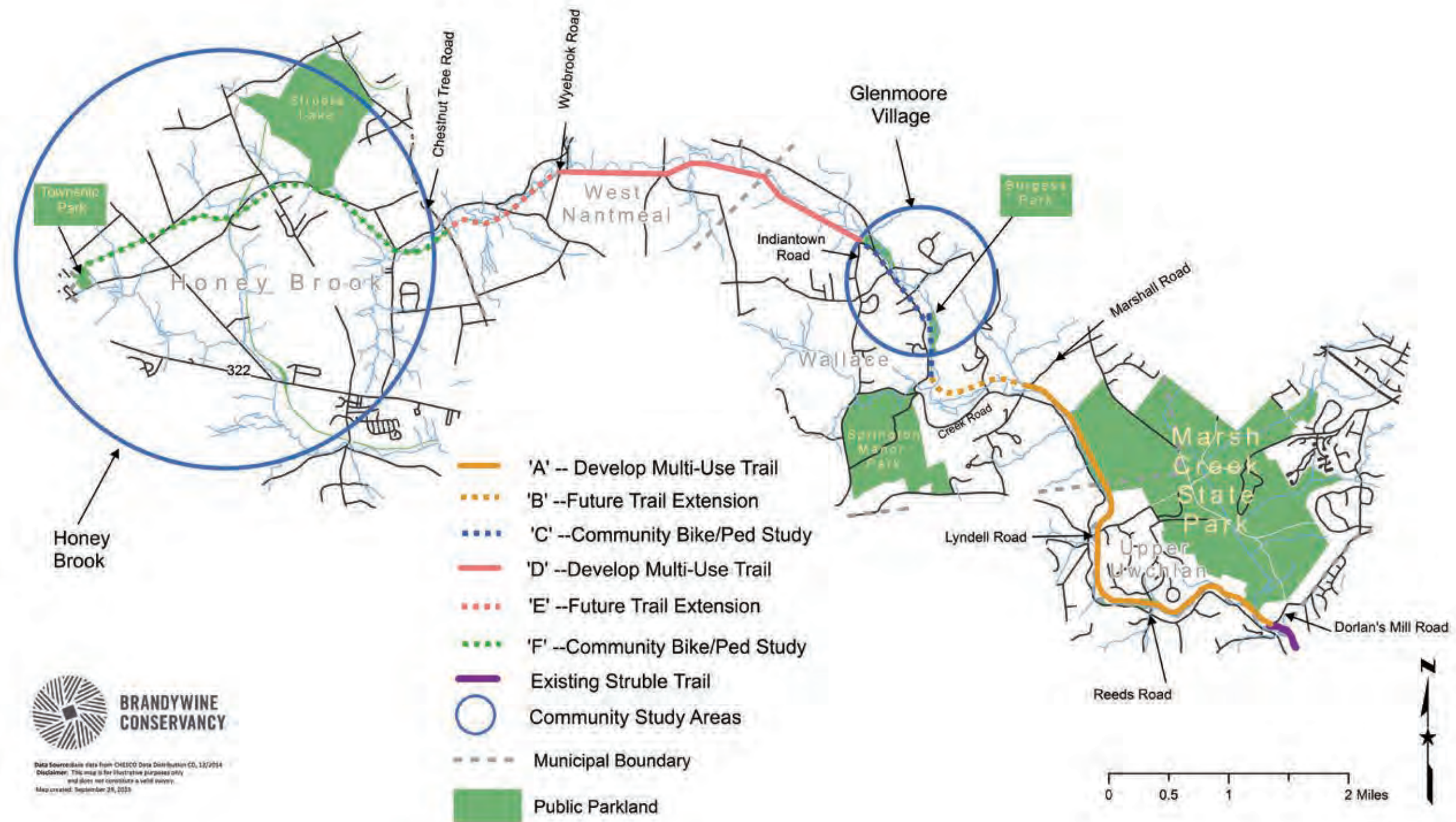
- Refining the existing public access easement through the Shryrock Brothers parcel at Dorlan's Mill Road;
- Negotiating with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to secure trail easements at two segments within Marsh Creek State Park, including over a culvert and stream crossing;
- Meeting with the appropriate representative of Philadelphia Suburban Water Real Estate division (Aqua PA) regarding a trail easement across the former Cornog quarry site ; and,
- Negotiating with the private landowners or trail easements.

This approximately 3.7 mile Struble Trail extension would more than double the length of the existing Struble Trail.



continued to page 44

Northern Struble Trail Feasibility Study: Recommendations Summary





**G.2 Segment B:
FUTURE TRAIL EXTENSION
Marshall Rd. to Wallace's
Burgess Park (1.0 mile)
Springton Manor County Park Area**

Segment B provides a key connection to the County Springton Manor Park and to Wallace Township's Burgess Park, on the old rail right of way. Unfortunately, the County has no ownership of the former railroad corridor in this segment. The ROW is visible from the public roads and on aerial photos and it appears to be physically intact.

An existing rail bridge crosses Brandywine Creek on private property within this segment and, as noted for Segment A, the bridge appears to be structurally sound.

This study recommends that the County consider Segment B as a future extension of a County multi-use trail and that the County secure the rail corridor as follows:

- The County should negotiate with the 4 private landowners of the former corridor to create a connection between Marshall Road and Wallace Township's Burgess Park. In most cases the railroad right of way still exists. This segment is entirely wooded with one road crossing at Devereux Road. In the one instance where the railroad right of way is no longer shown as an intact tax parcel, the large 88-acre property is largely in floodplain and a conservation easement to protect the riparian woodland here would be eminently suitable. The County should reach out to this landowner by conservation staff, either county or non-profit land trusts, and secure funding necessary to protect this high priority property with a conservation easement that includes a trail easement connecting to Burgess Park.

- The rail bridge on the 88-acre property would need to be assessed for structural integrity, if an easement was obtained.
- The County should negotiate with the owner of the small triangular parcels on opposing sides of Indian Run and Creek Road south of Burgess Park to develop a trail connection to Springton Manor Park. This landowner has expressed an interest in such a dialogue.
- The County should plan for an at-grade crossing of Creek Road between Indian Run and Burgess Park as the sightlines here appear to be sufficient. Also, a new trail bridge will be needed crossing Indian Run just west of Creek Road, to connect the main trail with Springton Manor Park; this portion of the connecting trail would be on the small triangular tax parcels referenced above.



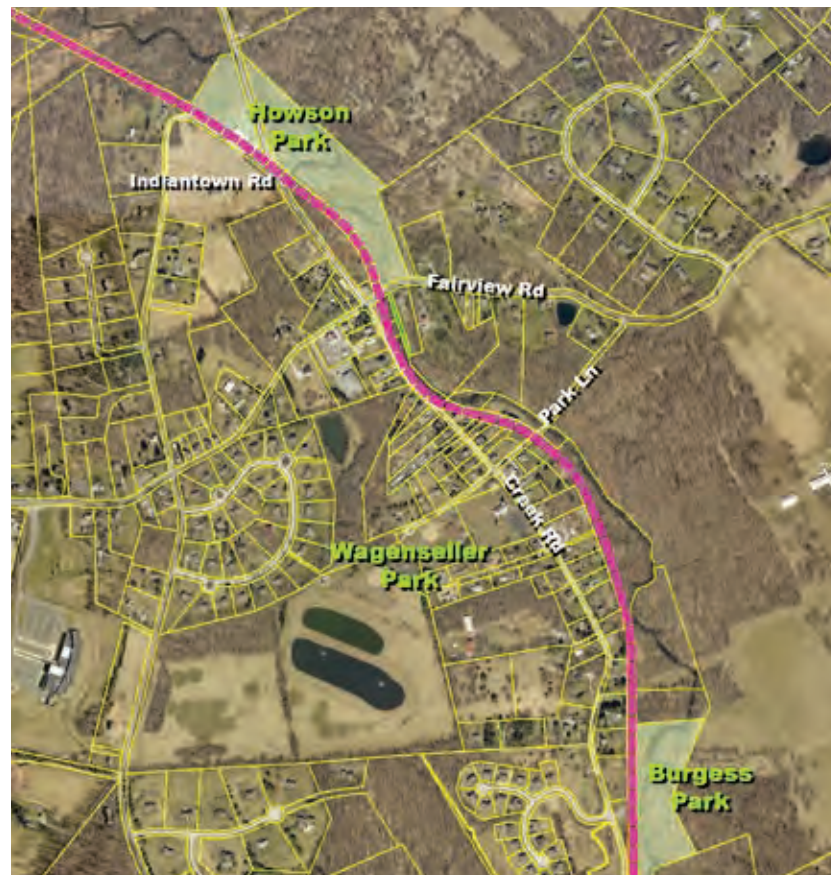
Springton Manor County Park equestrian barn.



Parking lot at Burgess Township Park

**G.3 Segment C:
FUTURE COMMUNITY BIKE
and PEDESTRIAN STUDY
Glenmoore Village (Burgess Park
to Indiantown Rd) (1.2 miles)
Springton Manor County Park Area**

Segment C of the trail corridor within Glenmoore is densely populated, only sporadically intact as separate tax parcels, none of it is owned by the County, and it has, for a significant length, been subsumed under Creek Road through the middle of Glenmoore Village. Some landowners use the rail right of way as part of their backyards and in some cases the right of way runs extremely close to residences.



The County might consider purchasing the railroad ROW currently held by one landowner south of Park Lane as this is the only physically feasible location for a multi-use trail within the village of Glenmoore. Adjacent residents have stated that they do not want a trail at this location saying it would be too close to their homes. In time, residents may change and a trail alignment here may be more palatable to the community, whether it's a township trail or a county trail.

North of Park Lane, the former railroad corridor is not physically feasible for the construction of a multi-use trail; the right-of-way is privately-owned and shares space with Creek Road (PA 282). To continue north, bicyclists and pedestrians would need to share the road as there is no other existing bicycle or pedestrian facility within the Village of Glenmoore.

Many residents voiced an interest in seeing the trail alignment on the east side of the Brandywine, away from Glenmoore and through land that was at one time proposed for major development including trails. The many unknowns in this alignment including the property owner's responses and the lack of connections to Springton Manor or Burgess Parks make this option infeasible for a County trail. Glenmoore Village may find this segment useful for their trail purposes.

The Study recommends for Segment C that Wallace Township engage in a Glenmoore Village Master Planning process to identify the location and type of bicycle/pedestrian facilities for implementation within the Village. The residents of Wallace Township and the trails committee there have long considered some of the issues surrounding pedestrian and bike movement through their town; there are no obvious or easy solutions. With that history and the physical constraints in mind, this study recommends that



Coming into Glenmoore Village

Glenmoore Village enter upon a master planning effort, as distinguished from a sidewalk study, to come to consensus on what trail or multi-modal facilities the residents want here, if any.

The Chester County Redevelopment authority owns the former corridor from Fairview Road north to Indiantown Road, which may be considered for pedestrian and possibly bicycle use, pending the outcome of a Glenmoore Village Master Planning process.

Wallace Township owns a small parking lot opposite the Township Maintenance building in the larger Howson Park; this lot could serve as a trail head and provide creek access.

continued to page 46

**G.4 Segment D:
DEVELOP MULTI-USE TRAIL
Glenmoore to Wyebrook Farm
(Indiantown Road to Wyebrook
Road) (2.9 miles)
Part of Springton Manor County
Park Area and Brandywine
Headwaters Trail Area**

This study recommends that the County develop Trail Segment D as an independent facility if and when the County is willing and able to proceed. It may connect to other trails in the future but is large enough to function alone, given the destination attractions now in place. Segment D is 2.9 miles long, nearly the length of the existing Struble Trail.

Nearly this entire segment is owned by either the County or by Wallace Township at the south end, where PECO owns a parcel, presumably for transmission line access.



Many of the major landowners along this alignment have expressed positive reactions to a multi-use trail, and the rail bed is largely intact except directly adjacent to the large WRA dry dam. An easement from an adjacent owner may be necessary to route the trail around the dam.

The Water Resource Authority has repeatedly voiced support for this trail, and another large landowner who operates an agri-tourism destination farm has also expressed support and interest in the business it might bring to his operation.

The study suggests developing Segment D after Segment B (Marshall to Burgess Park) is complete and a Master Plan (Segment C) is in place for Glenmoore Village, should those segments be developed.

Trailheads could be developed at both ends of Segment D: at Wyebrook Farm & and at Wallace’s Howson Park. The owner of Wyebrook Farm should be consulted on an appropriate location for a trailhead there as the County-owned former station parcel off Wyebrook Road is

fully wooded and buffers the headwaters of the Brandywine Creek. Given the effort expended to reforest this property, it would be inconsistent to develop a parking lot within this riparian buffer.

**G.5 Segment E:
FUTURE TRAIL EXTENSION
Wyebrook Farm to Chestnut
Tree Road (1.1 miles)
Part of Brandywine
Headwaters Trail Area**

This 1.1 mile segment is mostly wooded with significant encroachment on the western end by the industrial operation.

This study recommends that the County maintain ownership of this segment in West Nantmeal Township to keep in reserve should Honey Brook Municipalities develop a trail system that connects to Chestnut Tree Road.





Narrow roads in Honey Brook typically lack shoulders.



Main Street in the town of Honey Brook

**G.6 Segment F:
COMMUNITY BIKE/
PEDESTRIAN STUDY
Honey Brook Township
and Borough (3.5 miles)
Part of Brandywine
Headwaters Trail Area**

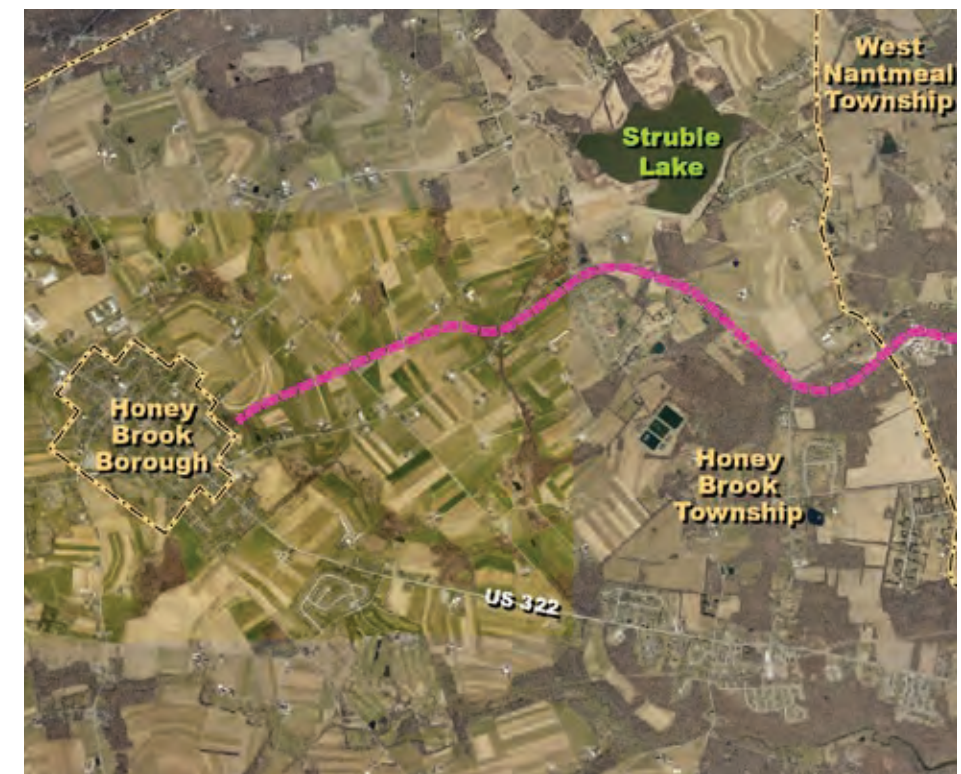
This study recommends that, for Segment F, Honey Brook Township and Borough create a joint recreational, gateways, and traffic calming plan as recommended by their recently adopted joint HBB & HBT Comprehensive Plan.

The community needs to define where it would like to locate bicycle and pedestrian facilities through the Township and if residents want to connect to a regional trail network. There is an officially stated desire to develop a trail system, but the location and type of system should be determined by the community. This study finds that insistence on a regional trail system will hinder any community efforts and interest in developing multi-use trails for local needs. The relatively large population of Plain Sect farmers here, driving buggies and bikes, has created a unique set of needs and desires which should also be discussed and incorporated into such a plan.

Chester County has approximately 25% fee simple ownership of the former railroad alignment within Honey Brook Township, and the alignment repeatedly crosses Suplee Road for much of its length between Chestnut Tree Road and Suplee Junction. The area around the Struble Lake Dam is off limits to the public and no viable alternatives for routing a multi-use trail in this area have been identified.

Between Suplee Junction and the Borough of Honey Brook, Chester County owns approximately 50% of the former rail line, which passes through actively farmed land with a significantly elevated surface. The adjacent landowners, in part Plain Sect farmers, are not at this time in favor of a regional trail, and the physical constraints of the corridor may limit developing a multi-use trail here without significant modifications.

Honey Brook Township/Borough should investigate the possibility of using the former Hibernia line north from Suplee Junction for a trail connection between the Borough (park) and Struble Lake. While the County owns a few small parcels along the old Hibernia (north/south) rail line, the bulk of the Hibernia line extending north to Struble Lake is privately owned. ■





H. Appendices (on CD at left)

- 1. Landowner Survey Packet*
- 2. Chart of Survey Responses and Comments*
- 3. Key-Person Interview Notes*
- 4. Title Report Documents*
- 5. Photo Points*
- 6. Trail Location Photos*
- 7. Plats of Adjoining Subdivisions as Referenced*
- 8. Waynesburg Branch Railroad Maps*



Autumn on the Struble Trail