

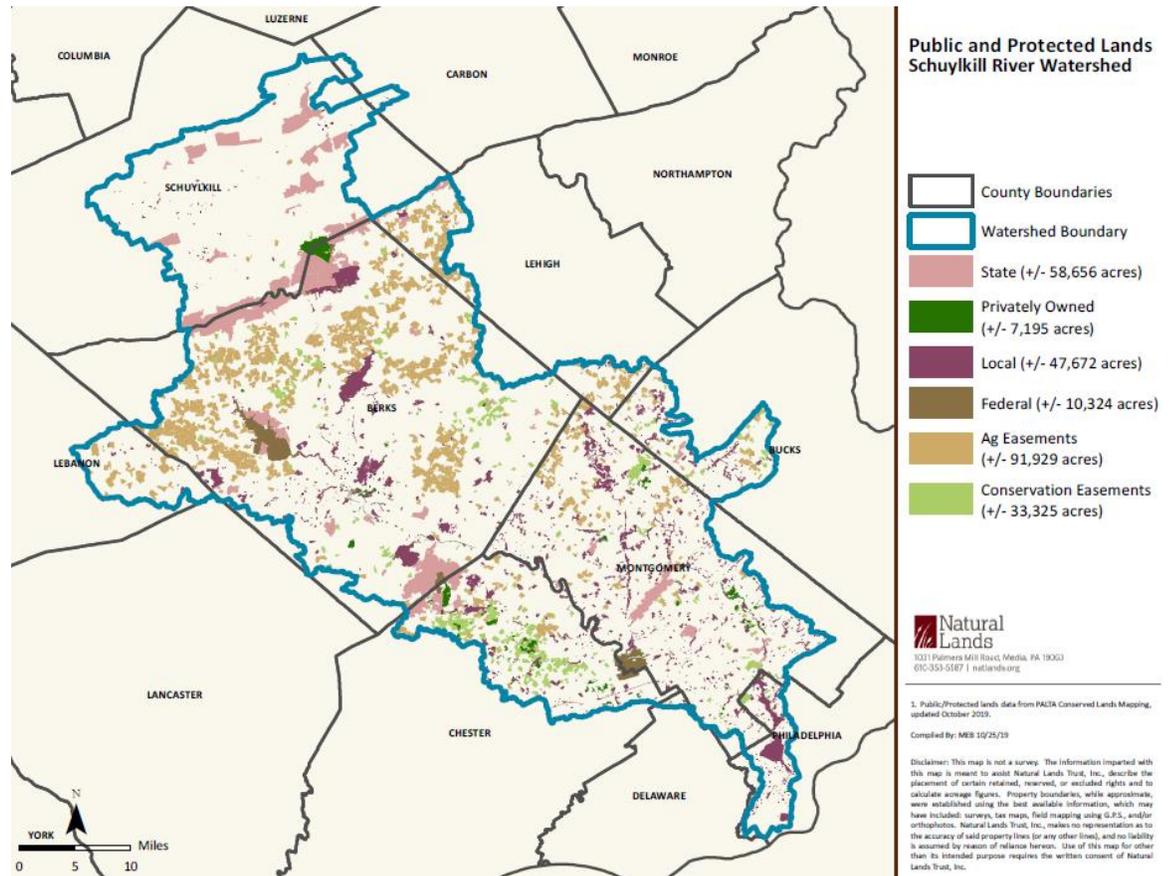
# XI. Watershed Land Collaborative (WLC) Workgroup

## About

The Watershed Land Collaborative (WLC) works to conserve high priority lands for drinking water protection and open space preservation. The WLC aligns with the goals and timeframe of Delaware River Watershed Initiative's (DRWI) Schuylkill Highlands Cluster.

## Goal

To conserve natural lands and open spaces for water quality improvement.



## Objectives & Actions

1. **Preserve** – Conserve and protect natural lands, especially high priority habitats.

- a. Use **models** to identify and prioritize land for conservation.
- b. Protect **500 acres** of priority watershed lands annually as part of the Schuylkill Highlands Cluster.
- c. Secure **agricultural easements** and **riparian buffer** protections.
- d. Direct development away from critical natural areas, encourage **redevelopment** of urban and suburban infrastructure, and **offset** any new development with conservation practices.

“A partnership of conservation groups aims to preserve unprotected areas in northern Chester and southern Berks Counties. Ongoing land protection efforts across the region will be supplemented by stormwater management projects and restoration of farmland and riparian buffers. The partners will also work with farmers, suburban landowners, and students to promote environmental stewardship... Work with municipalities will emphasize open space protection, green stormwater infrastructure, management of unpaved roads, and ordinances that protect water resources.”

The Schuylkill Highlands Cluster, 4states1source.org

2. **Restore** – *Implement land restoration activities on conserved properties.*

- a. **Reforest**/restore natural cover on conserved lands.
- b. Work with **landowners** to implement best land management practices on their conserved lands to further protect water quality.
- c. Monitor **water quality and aquatic life** downstream of land acquisition and restoration sites.

3. **Engage** – *Increase awareness of the values of preserving natural lands for water quality, provide technical assistance, and foster stewardship values.*



- a. Provide targeted outreach, technical assistance, and workshops to **municipalities** for implementing conservation measures.
- b. **Communicate** successes of land protection projects to communities, landowners, and partners through **compelling story-driven media**.
- c. Connect local communities to preserved lands by promoting **recreational opportunities** and accessibility.
- d. Share the **economic and public health benefits** of reforestation, stormwater management, and land preservation with partners and the public.

4. **Collaborate** – *Partner together and share expertise for effective land preservation and project implementation.*

- a. Maintain, strengthen, and build **partnerships**, especially with local and state government agencies, landowners, communities, and land trusts.
- b. Share **lessons learned and best practices** from larger initiatives with local partners.

5. **Finance** – *Identify and secure funding for land preservation transactions and restoration projects.*

- a. Apply for grants, contracts, and other **funding opportunities** to support workgroup projects.
- b. Support and work with the **Schuylkill River Restoration Fund** to administer a land transaction assistance program for land trusts, municipalities, and nonprofits.
- c. Explore new, innovative, and sustainable **funding strategies** for land preservation transactions.