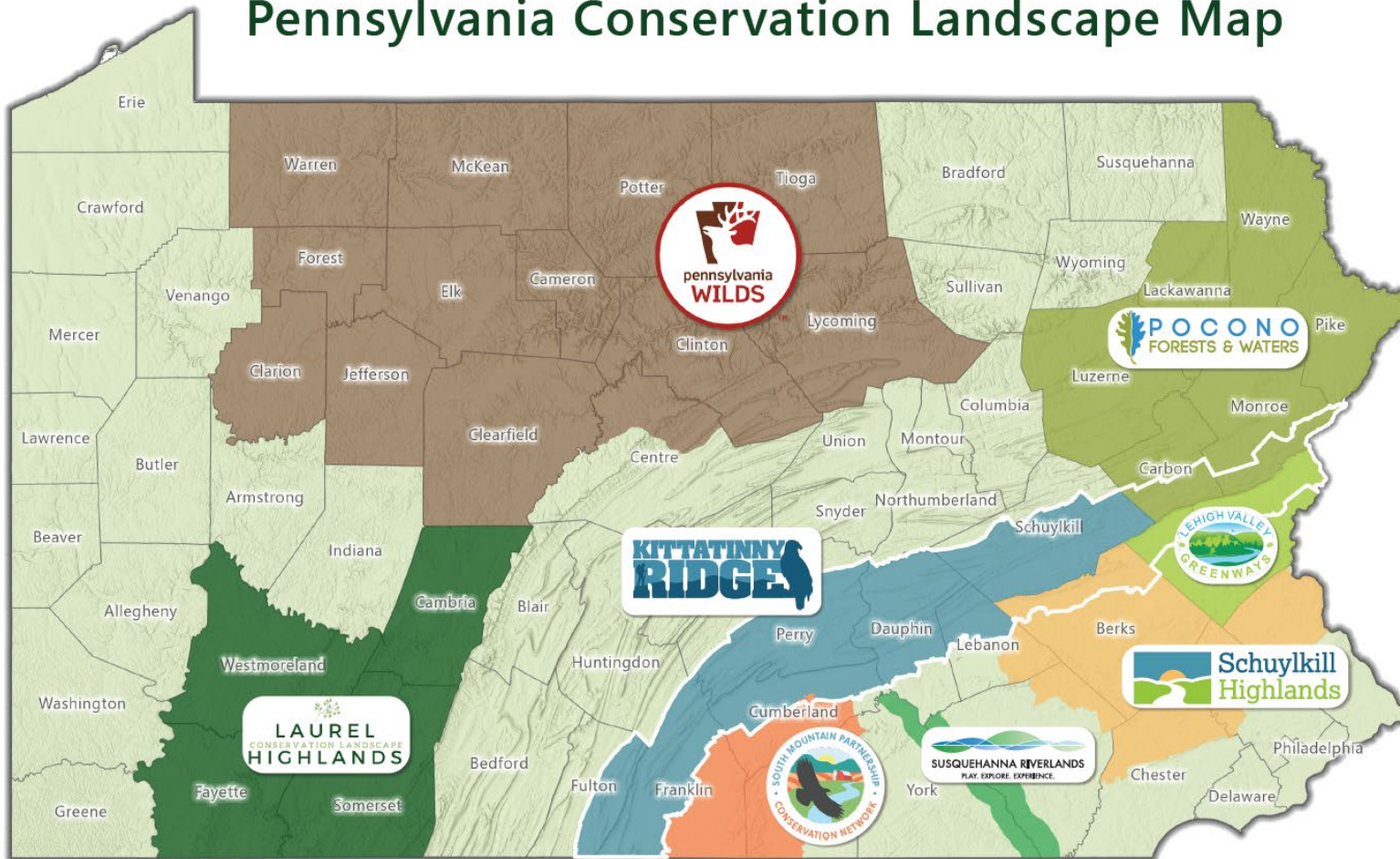


# South Mountain Conservation Landscape

June 11, 2025



# Pennsylvania Conservation Landscape Map



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

c. 2000 – DCNR program launched. Focus on natural resources, tourism, and place-based economic development. Each landscape is different depending on local needs and culture.

## Key ingredients:

1. Core of public lands
2. Strong sense of place
3. Unique social, economic, natural, recreational and agricultural resources
4. Active/engaged partners, people, organizations, individuals, institutions



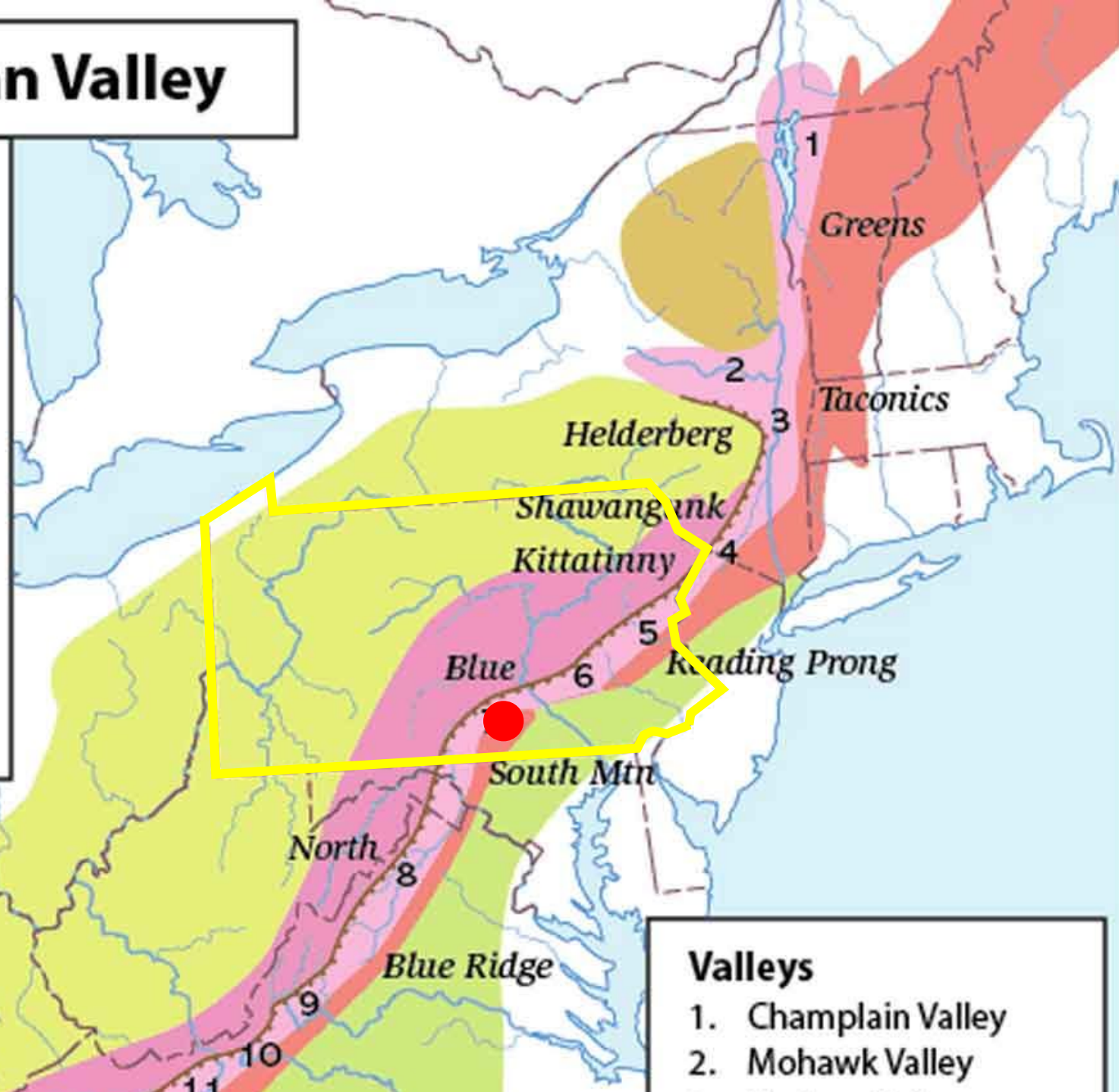






# Great Appalachian Valley

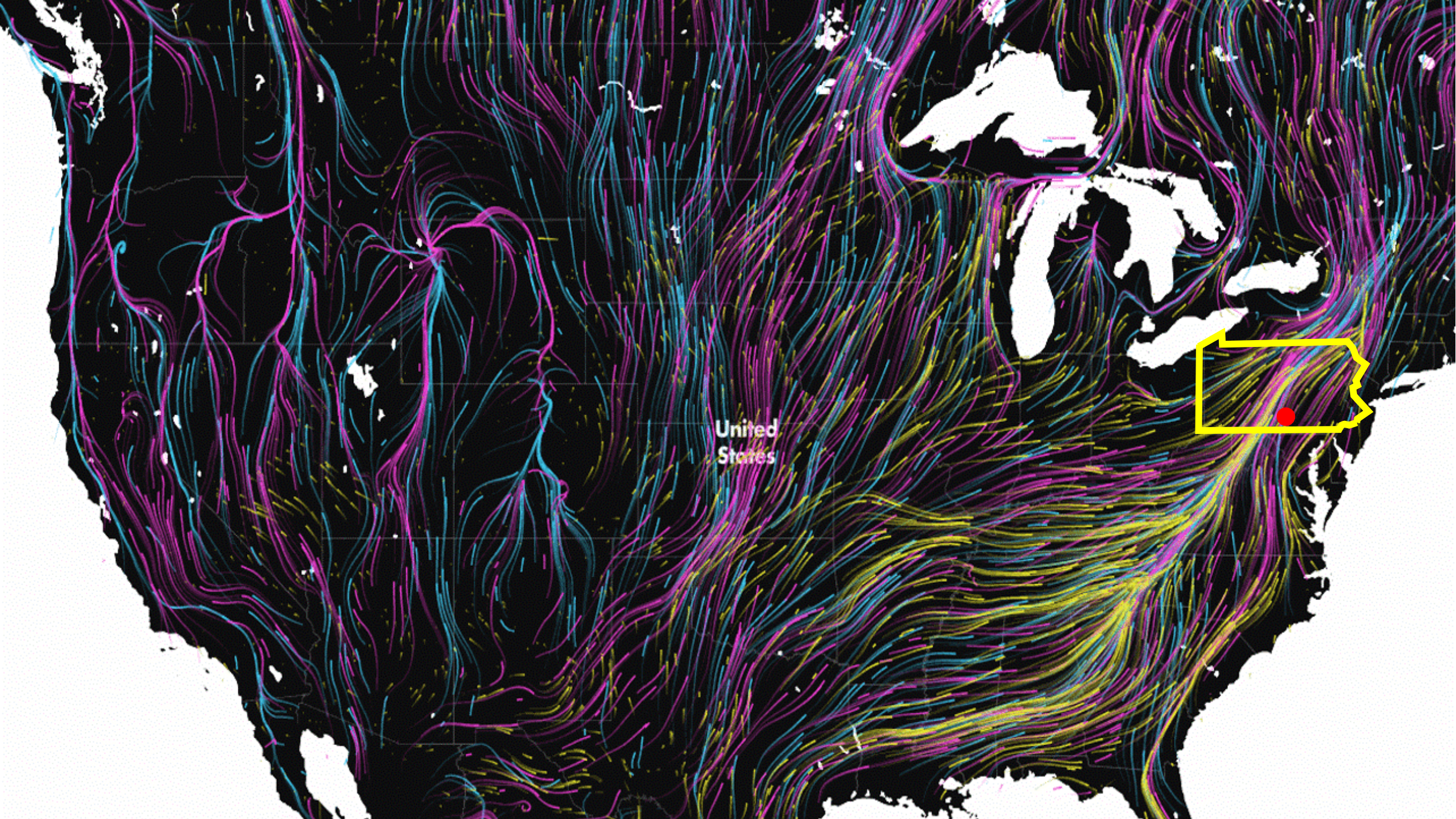
- Piedmont
- Blue Ridge and northern highlands
- Ridge & Valley
- Great Valley
- Appalachian Plateaus
- Adirondacks
- Escarpments & Ridge mountains



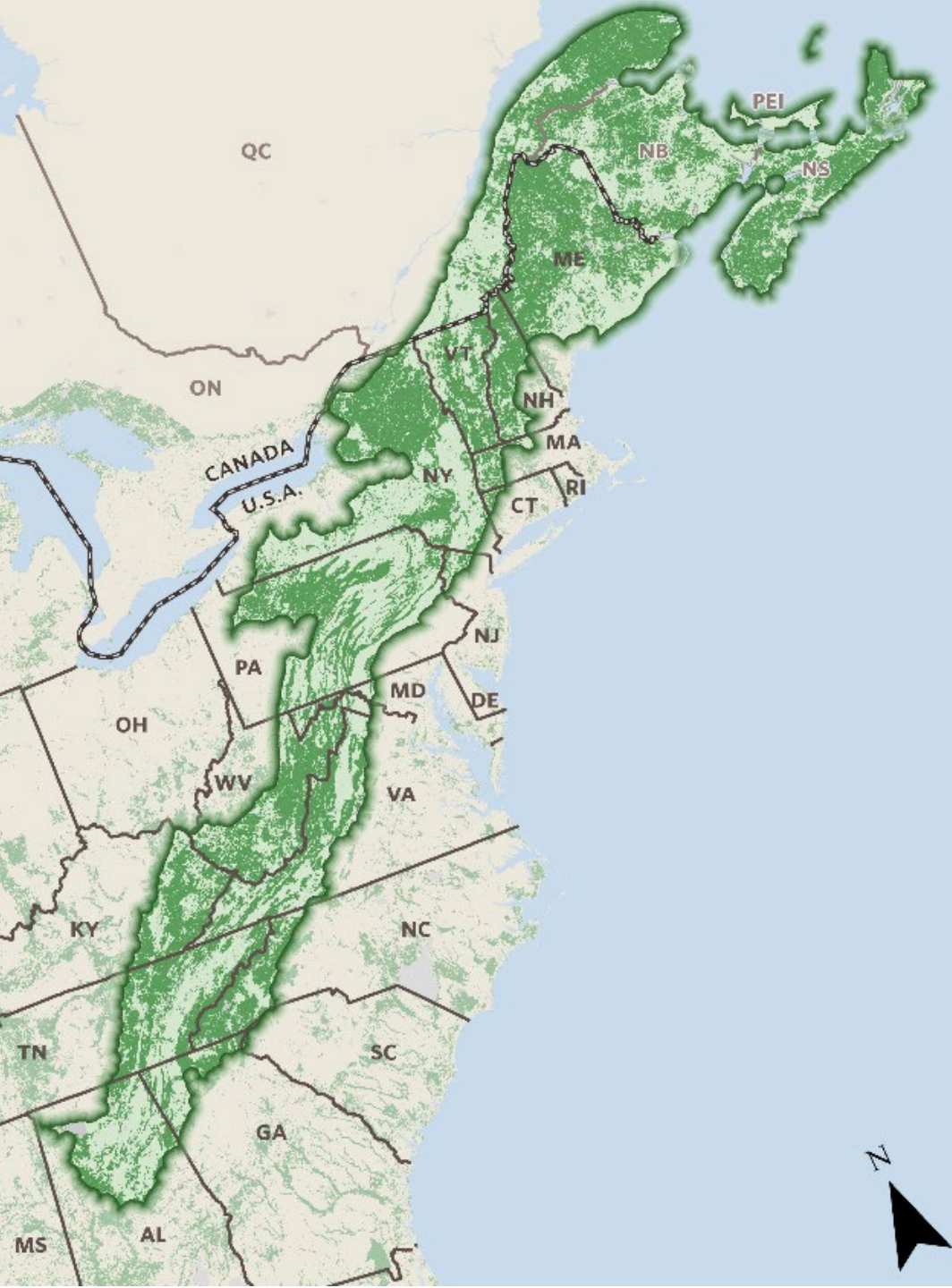
## Valleys

1. Champlain Valley
2. Mohawk Valley









## WHAT WE STAND TO LOSE

Natural forces have made the 400-million-year-old Appalachians one of the world's most resilient, diverse and carbon-rich landscapes.

- 80,000 occurrences of rare species
- 56% of the eastern region's above-ground carbon storage
- Oxygen for 1.8 billion people
- Mitigates 1.3 million tons of pollution
- \$25 billion in recreation spending





## 2026 Pilot – A.T. Community Conservation Collaborative

### New York

- Warwick\*
- Dover/Pawling\*

### New Jersey

- Vernon\*
- Greater Blairstown

### Pennsylvania

- Boiling Springs
- Duncannon
- Greater Waynesboro
- Delaware Water Gap\*
- Wind Gap\*

### Maryland

- Boonsboro
- Brunswick (pending approval)



# *The many hats we wear..*



**SOUTH MOUNTAIN  
PARTNERSHIP**  
CONSERVATION NETWORK

- Conveners
- Facilitators
- Resource finders, funding allocators
- Partner/people connectors
- Project advancers
- Educators
- Motivators
- Information sharers
- Regional thinkers





# Landscape Resources We Seek to Protect



NATURAL



CULTURAL  
HISTORIC



RECREATIONAL



AGRICULTURAL



**We bring people together across geo-political & sectorial boundaries to highlight the importance of this landscape & take action to secure its future.**

- State of the Region
- Convene the region's conservation & preservation
  - Regional meetings – 3+ each year
  - 4 Committees, 40+ local committee members
  - 50+ partners
- Grant Programs
  - DCNR Mini-Grants
  - Research Corps Grants
  - Flex Grants
- Research Corps & Science Summit
- Communications





Partnership Meetings – 3 each year

Educational | Highlight partner projects | Camaraderie





# Working Committees – 40+ members





# Mini-Grant Program

Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park Mini-Grant



*Pre-application opens in April | Catalyzes on-the-ground projects to preserve & protect*

South Mountain Partnership Conservation Network | [southmountainpartnership.org](https://southmountainpartnership.org)



# 2025 Mini-Grant Program

SMP's Mini-Grant is designed to catalyze on-the-ground projects that sustain South Mountain's sense of place through the protection and promotion of SMP's four identified Landscape Resources for all:

- Natural (Environmental resources like plants and animals, as well as streams and forests)

- Cultural (Historic buildings, Cultural history)

- Agricultural (Farming, orchard, gardens and more)

- Recreational (Trails, parks, fishing and hunting, biking)

- Our Mini-Grants are single-year grants for projects or work from September 2025 to December 2026, ranging from \$2,500 to \$15,000. A 1:1 match (in-kind or cash) is required. Projects exceeding \$15,000 and up to \$25,000 may be considered if they cover the geographic majority of the South Mountain Region and are in a high funding priority category.
- Eligible applicants include authorized 501(c)(3) non-profits, municipalities, counties, and academic institutions. Projects must occur within Cumberland, Adams, Franklin, or York County.
  - Pre-applications are due by April 30, 2025.



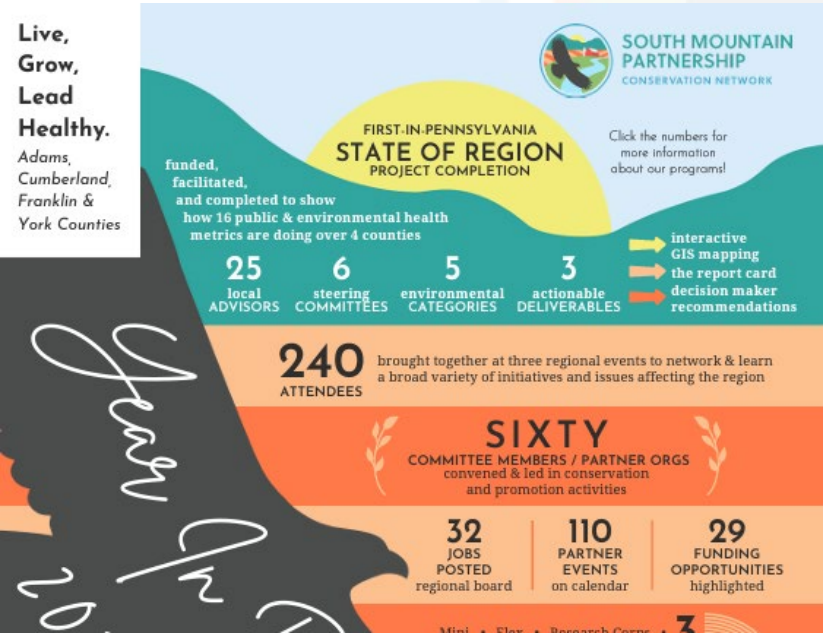



# Research Corps Program & Science Summit





# Communications & Engagement



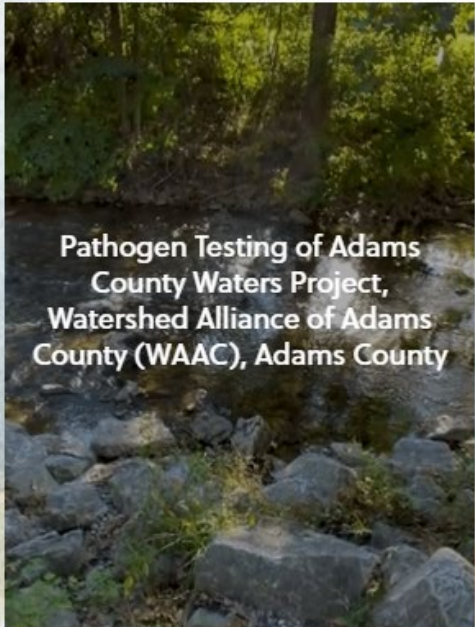


**SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP**  
CONSERVATION NETWORK

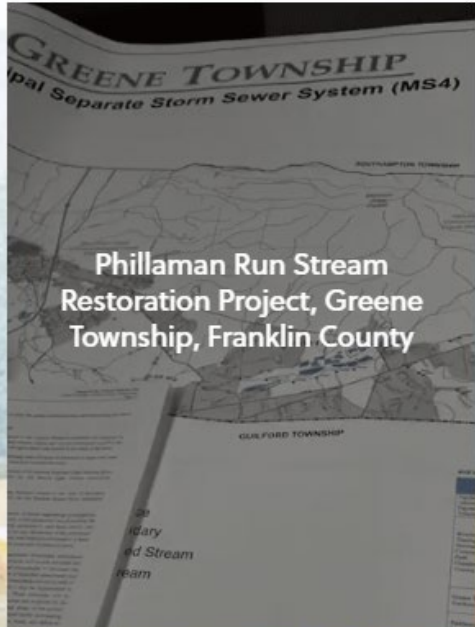
Who We Are ▾ Partners ▾ Our Work ▾ Get Involved ▾ News ▾ Latest Newsletters [DONATE](#) [SEARCH Q](#)

## Our Impact

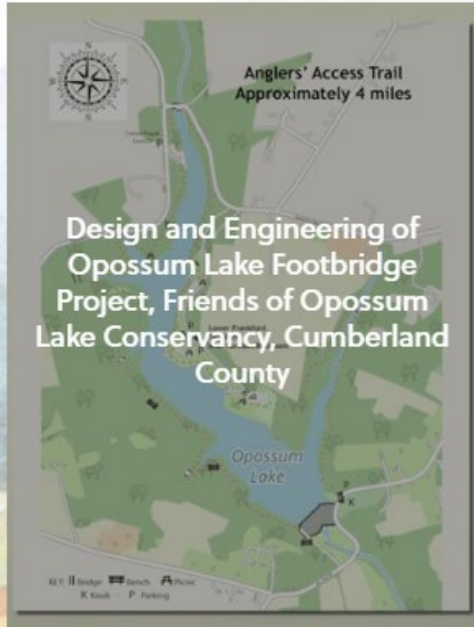
Our work within the region



**Pathogen Testing of Adams County Waters Project, Watershed Alliance of Adams County (WAAC), Adams County**



**Phillaman Run Stream Restoration Project, Greene Township, Franklin County**



**Design and Engineering of Opossum Lake Footbridge Project, Friends of Opossum Lake Conservancy, Cumberland County**

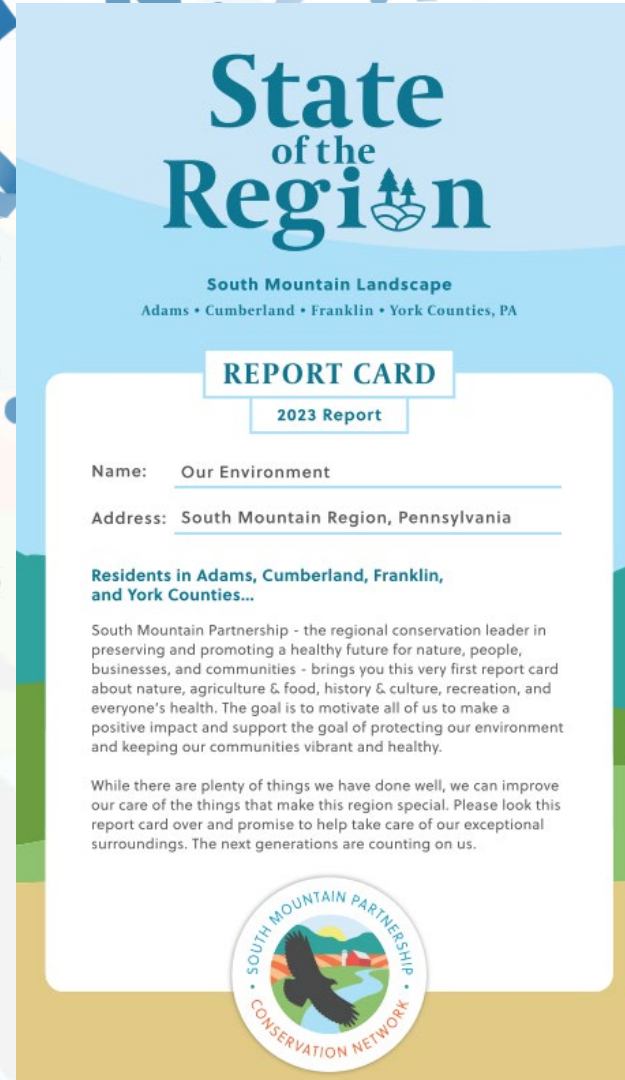
Anglers' Access Trail Approximately 4 miles



# State of the Region

## first in the state!

- Report Card
- Mapping
- Final Report/Recommendations



The report card is titled "State of the Region" with a small mountain icon. Below the title is "South Mountain Landscape" and "Adams • Cumberland • Franklin • York Counties, PA". The main heading is "REPORT CARD" with a sub-heading "2023 Report". The form includes fields for "Name: Our Environment" and "Address: South Mountain Region, Pennsylvania". A section titled "Residents in Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, and York Counties..." contains two paragraphs of text. The bottom right corner features the "South Mountain Partnership Conservation Network" logo.

**State of the Region**

South Mountain Landscape  
Adams • Cumberland • Franklin • York Counties, PA

**REPORT CARD**  
2023 Report

Name: Our Environment

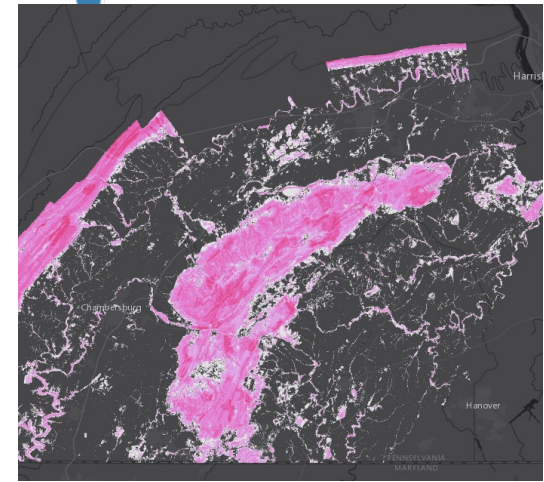
Address: South Mountain Region, Pennsylvania

**Residents in Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, and York Counties...**

South Mountain Partnership - the regional conservation leader in preserving and promoting a healthy future for nature, people, businesses, and communities - brings you this very first report card about nature, agriculture & food, history & culture, recreation, and everyone's health. The goal is to motivate all of us to make a positive impact and support the goal of protecting our environment and keeping our communities vibrant and healthy.

While there are plenty of things we have done well, we can improve our care of the things that make this region special. Please look this report card over and promise to help take care of our exceptional surroundings. The next generations are counting on us.

**SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP CONSERVATION NETWORK**



# Goals & Objectives

- Understand and communicate regional observations, trends, challenges (quality of life, conservation, recreation, public health) over time
- Develop recommendations and tools
- Facilitate collective and collaborative actions to impact identified challenges



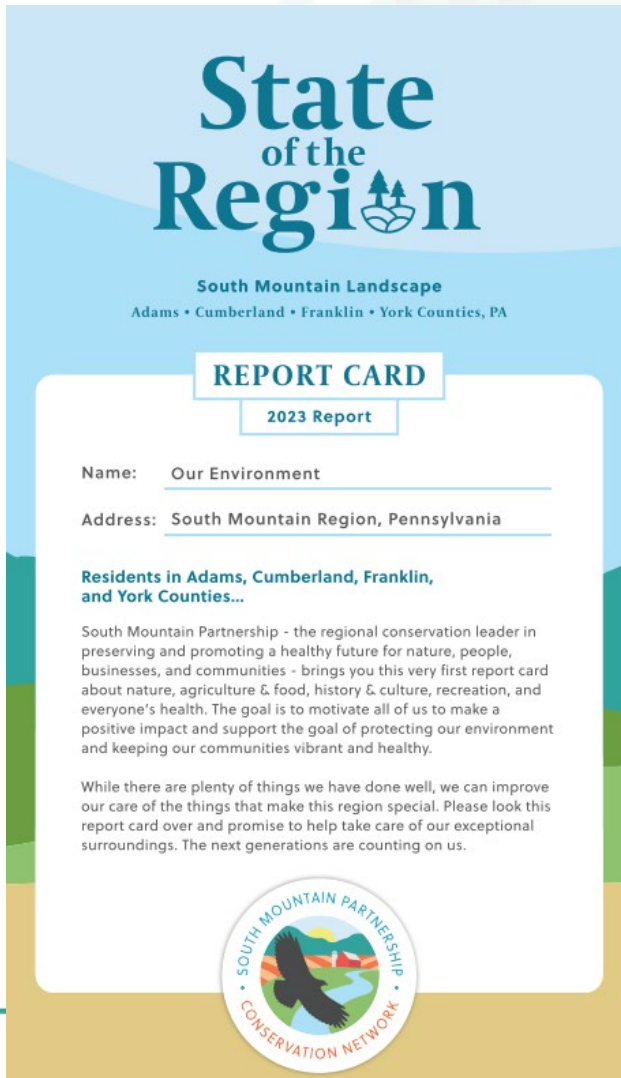


# Counties' Input

- Steering Committee
  - Role
  - Input
  - Monthly meetings
- Survey & Questionnaire
- Plan Review
- Planning Directors' meeting



# Report Card – “How are we doing?”

A report card template for the South Mountain Partnership. The header features the logo "State of the Region" with a mountain icon, followed by "South Mountain Landscape" and "Adams • Cumberland • Franklin • York Counties, PA". Below this is a "REPORT CARD" box with a "2023 Report" label. The form includes fields for "Name: Our Environment" and "Address: South Mountain Region, Pennsylvania". A section titled "Residents in Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, and York Counties..." contains two paragraphs of text. At the bottom is a circular logo for the "SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP CONSERVATION NETWORK" featuring a mountain, river, and eagle.

**State  
of the  
Region**

South Mountain Landscape  
Adams • Cumberland • Franklin • York Counties, PA

**REPORT CARD**

2023 Report

Name: Our Environment

Address: South Mountain Region, Pennsylvania

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**SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP  
CONSERVATION NETWORK**

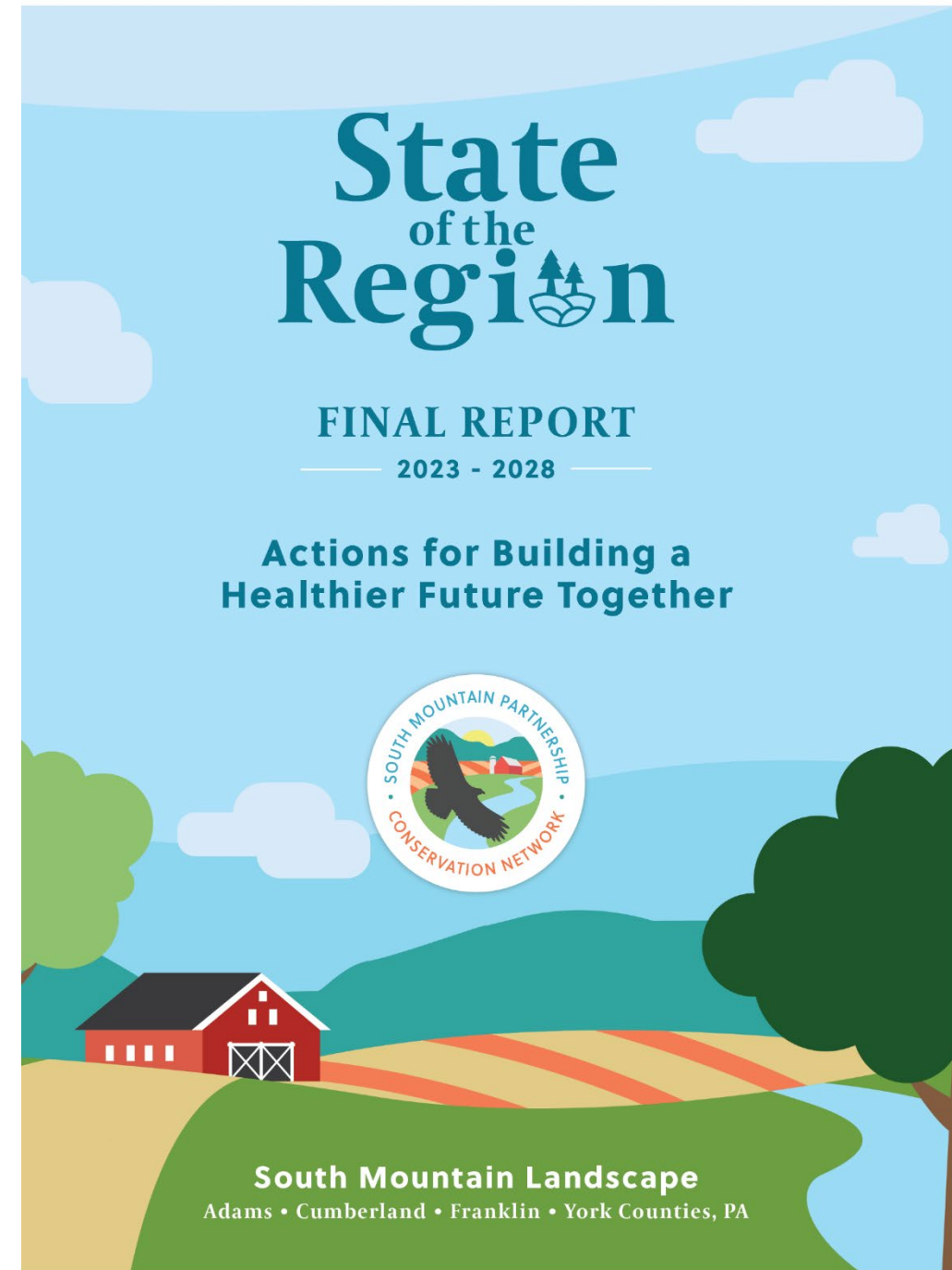
- FOR: PUBLIC
- Confirms what is going well and what we should continue!
- Identifies lots to understand better
- Understand where we need course corrections





# Final Report & Recommendations

- FOR: DECISION MAKERS, ELECTED OFFICIALS, INFLUENCERS
- Summary of entire process
- Details about measurements, analysis, mapping
- Identifies regional challenges
- Proposes 70 recommendations for addressing challenges
- SMP adopted 5 of the 70 recommendations



# What has happened? What's next?

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

*SMP adopted 5 recommended actions that fit our unique role in the region.*



Update Natural Heritage Inventories (*in progress*)



Convene a Regional Trail Coalition

- Expand regional trails
- Connect trails to parks and communities



Establish wildlife corridors



Inventory the region's historic resources



Track land conversion



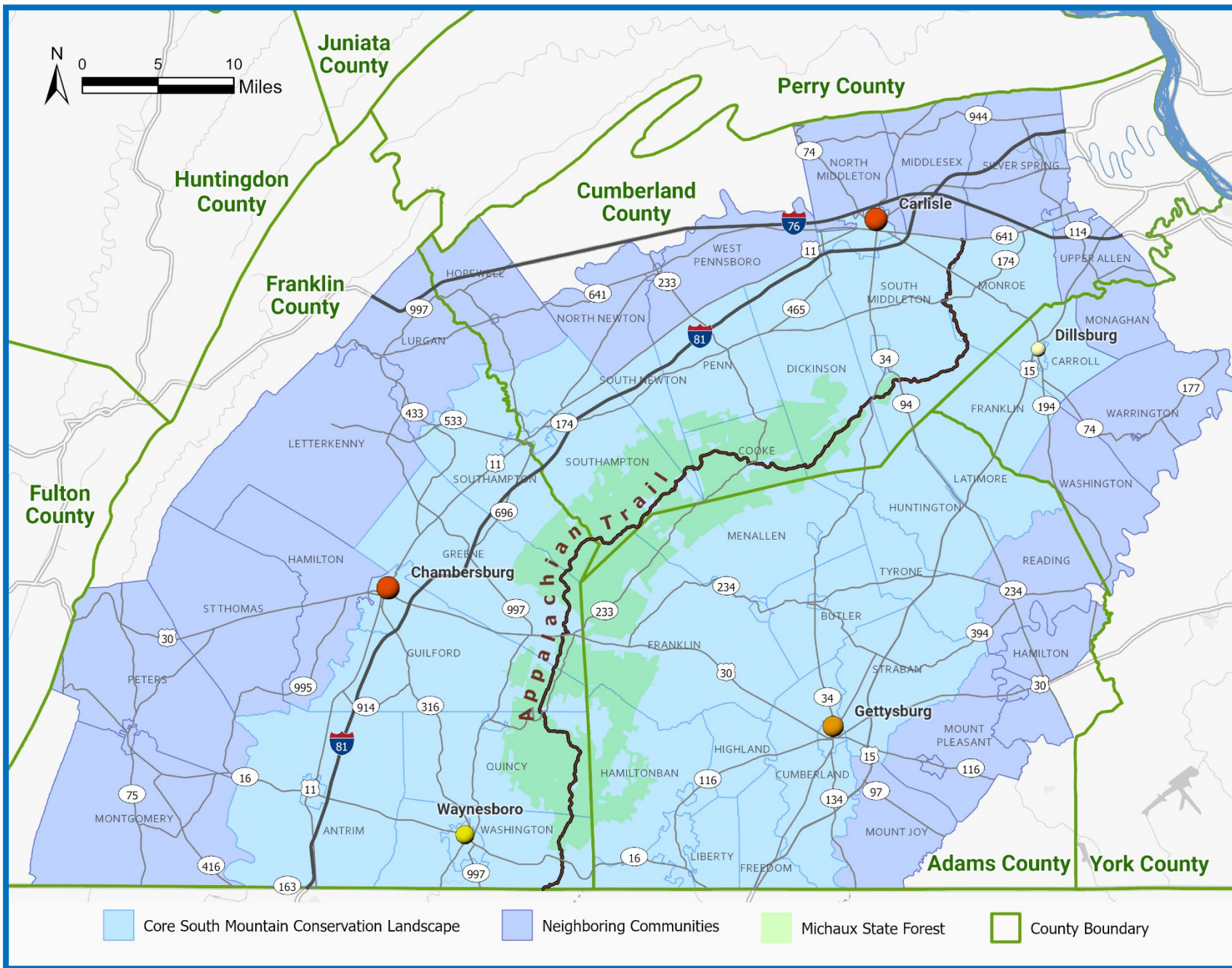


# Get Involved!

- Sign-up for newsletter (sign up sheet being passed around)
- Financial support (Friends of South Mountain Partnership, TFEC)
  - Sponsor events
  - Donate
- Attend a regional meeting (next one is May 16 in Adams County!)
- Volunteer
  - Committee member
  - Connect us to your community







# Comments/Q&A

Katie Hess

Director of Pennsylvania  
Landscape Conservation, Director  
of South Mountain Partnership

[khess@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:khess@appalachiantrail.org)

