

// RETURN ON ENVIRONMENT STUDY

# Berks County 2023



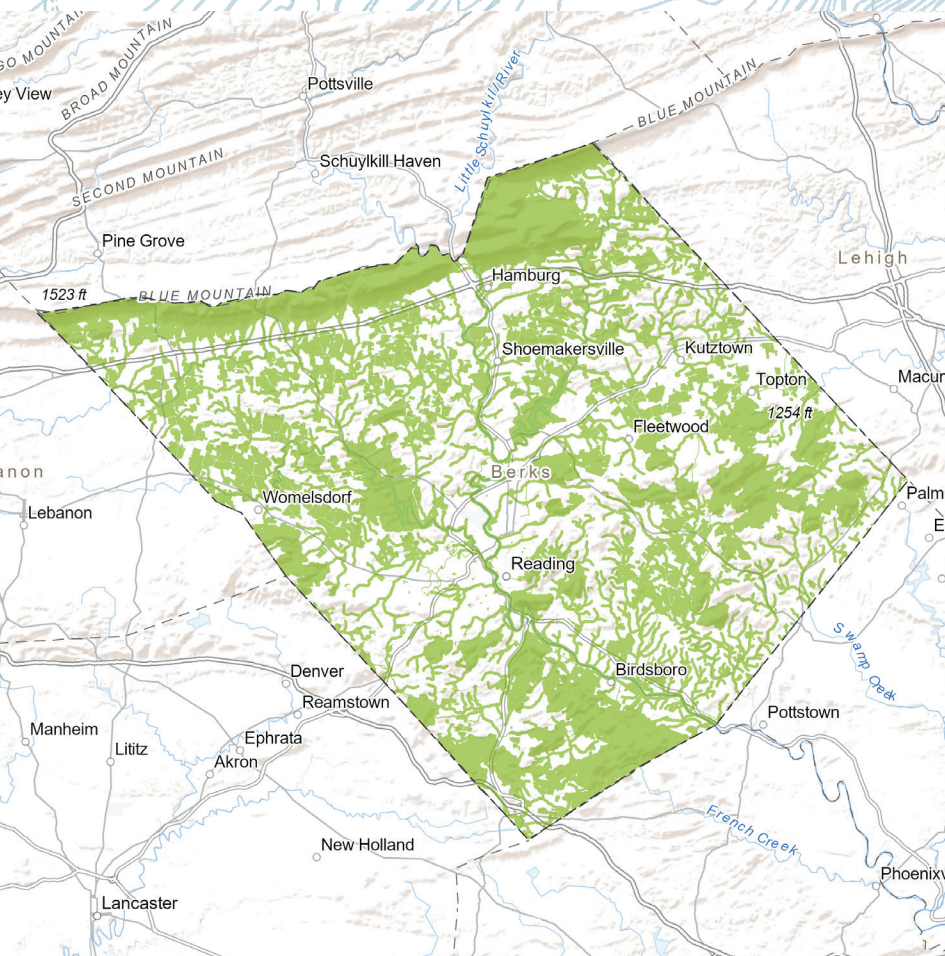
## PROTECTING BERKS COUNTY'S

## OPEN SPACES PROTECTS OUR FUTURE.

Berks County's environmental resources supply our communities with sparkling clean drinking water, critical wildlife habitats, flood protection, and impressive recreational and tourism opportunities. The Berks County Return on Environment Study demonstrates how open space and a healthy environment are integral to our economy, cost of living, and the well-being of our residents. By understanding nature's financial value, we are better equipped to strike an effective balance between protecting our natural resources and supporting smart economic growth.







## INCREASING OUR RETURN ON ENVIRONMENT

Green Ribbon Landscapes – areas where large, native forests, stream sides, and grassland habitats connect with trails, parks and green, open space – provide the highest environmental health, biological diversity, and economic sustainability.

■ GREEN RIBBON LANDSCAPE  
■ WATERWAYS

NATURE IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR QUALITY  
OF LIFE. PROTECTING THOSE SPECIAL  
LANDSCAPES THAT DEFINE BERKS COUNTY,  
HELPING FARMERS BE MORE SUSTAINABLE  
AND RESTORING OUR WATERSHEDS AND  
CREATING NEW PLACES TO RECREATE  
ARE ALL PART OF OUR MISSION.

– BERKS NATURE

### 🌲 GO NATIVE

Native plant species ensure ecological sustainability, diminish pests, and support local wildlife.

- // Remove invasive plant species, and replace lawns with native flowers, shrubs, and trees.
- // Improve stormwater absorption by creating rain gardens and reducing paved surfaces.
- // Make a brush pile of downed leaves and branches to provide food and shelter for wildlife.

### 🧑🌿 GROW TOGETHER

Connected healthy habitats protect water sources, improve air quality, and benefit the community.

- // Share photos of your native garden and local wildlife on social media and community websites.
- // Organize a neighborhood landscape challenge or community native plant and seed swap.
- // Limit mowing along waterways to reduce erosion and support clean water for the community.

### 🔄 GET INVOLVED

Awareness, inspiration, and action will lead to better policies for environmental protection.

- // Support local conservation efforts to protect open spaces and watershed wildlife corridors.
- // Promote the use of native plants in parks, trails, community gardens, and public spaces.
- // Join Berks Nature, your local land trust, or community watershed association.