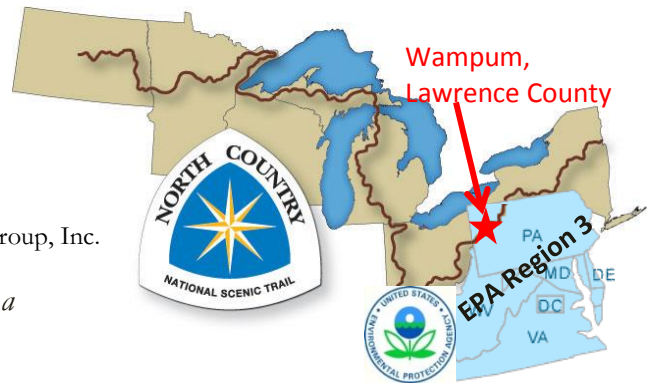


WHERE THE NATIONAL TRAIL MEETS EPA REGION 3, A PHASE I ESA MADE A DIFFERENCE

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A grassroots revitalization effort in a very small town is turning a former Rail Town into a Trail Town, and the EPA is helping.



Since its founding in 1796, the small town of Wampum, Pennsylvania has been “a stop along the way” for many. The Erie Canal, subsequent railroads, and recent Interstate Highways have all brought people and material through Wampum. When a segment of the North Country Scenic Trail was built to pass through the Borough more than a decade ago, it seemed natural that Wampum would be a stop for hikers, and the Borough was soon designated as Pennsylvania’s first Trail Town.

About that same time, longtime resident Barbara Marshall, observing that Wampum was losing its luster, rallied friends to complete simple tasks to beautify the Main Street. Their efforts were well received and the group soon took on weightier tasks; by the time they incorporated as Wampum Community Revitalization (WCR), a non-profit 501C3, they had plans to purchase and revitalize Wampum Junction, an old rail freight depot at the entrance to town. They envisioned restoring the structure to its original dark red exterior with green trim, and using it as a comfort station for hikers, a Welcome Center for visitors, an historic attraction for tourists, and a community center for residents. The project, which celebrated the borough’s history as a rail town and enhanced its standing as a Trail Town, was embraced by the community which enthusiastically supported project fundraisers.



But before they could begin work, the structure’s location just yards away from a former gas station necessitated a Phase I ESA. At this time, Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation (LCEDC) was seeking sites with economic potential to invest their **US Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Assessment Grant**. Fortunately, LCEDC’s Brownfield Steering Committee had the foresight to see that this non-traditional brownfield site had a lot going for it and could be a catalyst for WCR to take on additional projects in Wampum. After the Phase 1 ESA was completed, WCR leveraged the Brownfield Assessment Grant and their local contributions by applying for funds from Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources and a private foundation. They were successful in raising \$150,000, and at the start of 2015, the project was near completion. (see photo)



WCR believes development of the Wampum Junction site has already spurred growth. Activities planned for the site have expanded to include a satellite classroom for The Hoyt Center for the Arts, a setting for Yoga and other classes, and the site will provide canoeists and kayakers with better access to the Beaver River.

If you would like to learn more about the EPA Brownfields Program’s impact on Lawrence County, contact Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation at 724-658-1488/ www.lawrencecounty.com.