

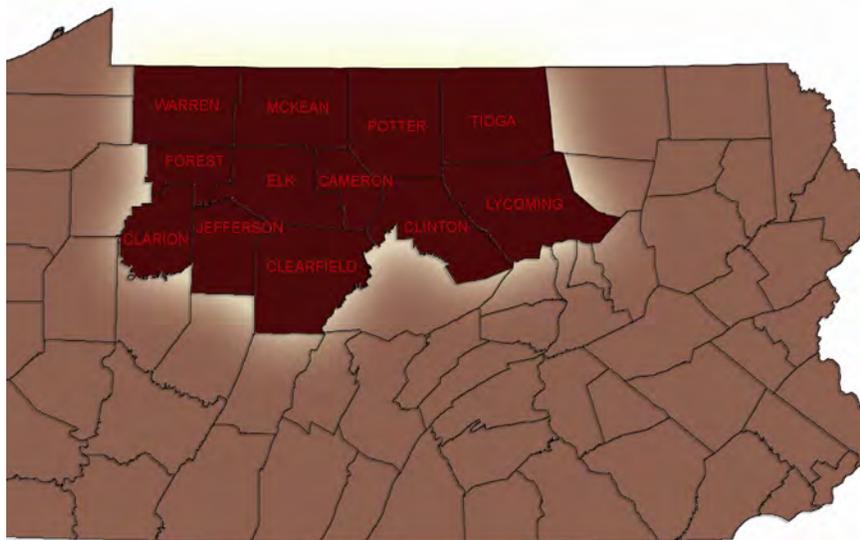


The Pennsylvania Wilds

Design Assistance Initiative

Summary of Pilot Projects, 2011-2012





THE PENNSYLVANIA WILDS REGION

The Pennsylvania Wilds is a 12 ½ county region in North Central Pennsylvania, consisting of Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga, and Warren County and a portion of Centre County. Public lands cover over two million acres and include 27 state parks; the Allegheny National Forest; the Pine Creek Gorge; one of the largest elk herds in the East; and thousands of miles of backpacking trails, bike paths, and trout-fishing streams. The area has a unique character that reflects its natural assets, including dense forests, natural landforms, and timber industries dating back to the 1800's. In 2006, county leaders in the region signed a ground-breaking Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement, vowing to work together with the Commonwealth and other partners to grow the region's nature and heritage tourism industry to create jobs, inspire stewardship, and improve quality of life. The Design Assistance Initiative is a pilot project that demonstrates how good design makes positive impacts on communities and businesses, and attracts visitors to the Pennsylvania Wilds.

The Pennsylvania Wilds Design Assistance Initiative was made possible with funding provided by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC), Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Lumber Heritage Region of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service's Preserve America Program.

The contents and opinions contained in this document do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. This program receives federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: Office of Equal Opportunity; National Park Service; 1849 C Street, N.W.; Washington, D.C. 20240

The Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide and the Design Assistance Initiative

The Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide: A Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship is an award-winning planning document that highlights how communities in the PA Wilds region can preserve their rural characters as they grow. Voluntary application of the guidelines allows public agencies, businesses, and property owners to achieve the benefits of change and growth while protecting their communities' uniqueness and appeal.

In 2011, the Pennsylvania Wilds Planning Team awarded grants to eight (8) Pilot Projects as part of the Pennsylvania Wilds Design Assistance Initiative (DAI) to demonstrate successful application of the *Design Guide*. The Pilot Projects described in this summary are examples of typical projects that occur throughout the 12 ½ county region where the *Design Guide's* recommendations can be applied.

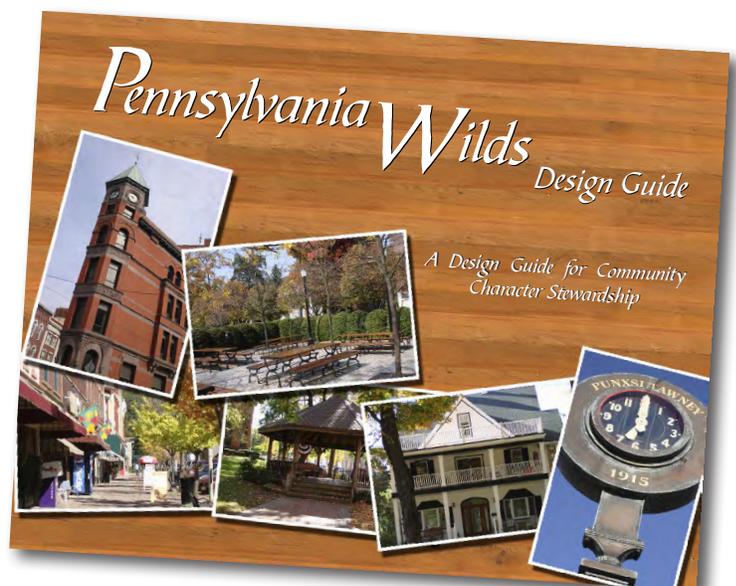
Region-Wide Guiding Principles

The *Design Guide* encourages communities to enhance their individual assets and appeal while tying to a regional identity. Regional thematic elements are the distinguishing marks that, when seen repeatedly, both shout and whisper, "You are in the Pennsylvania Wilds, a welcoming, charming, and very special place!" Regional design principles are:

- Invoke a welcoming atmosphere and inviting character for residents and visitors.
- Enhance regional identity by providing coordinated identification signage and thematic design elements.
- Eliminate blight in the form of deteriorating or poorly maintained properties.
- Encourage clustered development and discourage sprawl.
- Ensure that utility infrastructure facilities are not visually offensive and are located on appropriate sites.
- Encourage large-scale development of regional impact to be placed only in appropriate locations.
- Avoid confusing patterns of development and circulation.
- Control the appearance and location of big box commercial development, chain stores, strip centers, and franchises.
- Encourage private investment for public benefit.
- Support capital improvement projects that benefit authentic community character.

For more information:

For questions about the Pilot Projects, to learn more about how the *Design Guide* was used to influence the design of these projects, or to obtain more information about the *Design Guide* or Design Assistance Initiative, contact the Lumber Heritage Region at (814)486-0213. The *Design Guide* also is available through the Lumber Heritage Region's website (www.lumberheritage.org).



Index of Pilot Projects

	<i>PAGE</i>
<i>BENEZETTE HOTEL</i>	<i>5</i>
Small Business Renovation	
<i>COALPORT NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT</i>	<i>6</i>
Historic Commercial Downtown Revitalization	
<i>DICKINSON CENTER</i>	<i>7</i>
Large Building Construction	
<i>GATEWAY LODGE</i>	<i>8</i>
Small Business Expansion	
<i>GOBBLER'S KNOB</i>	<i>9</i>
Master Plan for Large Gathering Space	
<i>ROUTE 6 INTERPRETIVE SIGNS</i>	<i>10</i>
New Interpretive Signs	
<i>SMETHPORT BOROUGH GATEWAYS</i>	<i>11</i>
Community Entry Gateways	
<i>VETERAN'S PARK</i>	<i>12</i>
Main Street Pocket Park	



“The renovations will definitely have a positive effect on our business...[and] give the appearance of a restaurant/hotel that is much more inviting to a broader range of potential customers, especially families.”

Brian Kunes,
Benezette Hotel Owner

Highlights:

Project Type: Small Business Renovation

Goal: Attract More Customers

Design Service: Architectural Drawings

Design Guide Principles Applied:

- Locally-owned business growth
- Natural color palette used on exterior
- Use of sustainably-harvested lumber
- Improved business signage
- Covered entries and outdoor seating
- Wood and stone façade materials

Locally-owned businesses are an asset to the region’s character and economy. One of a few major businesses in Benezette, Elk County, the Benezette Hotel has a major impact on the overall look and feel of this small town. Located approximately one mile from the Elk County Visitor Center, the Benezette Hotel has seen tremendous growth in demand for dining and bar services. The owners hired an architect to prepare an architectural design package consistent with recommendations given in the *Design Guide*. Improvements focused on the building’s exterior and providing more open-air restaurant seating on the 2nd level. When completed, the facility will be more welcoming to visitors and overnight guests.





AFTER: ARCHITECT'S RENDERINGS

© JUDY COUTTS, AIA

“Thoughtful design and planning are critical to good development, but the ability to eventually implement the project is also important.”

Mary Sue Hoey
Coalport Streetscape Committee

Coalport was once home to one of the largest coalmining operations in the eastern United States. Main Street offered general stores, hardware stores, barber, lodging, dining, and other services, housed in buildings that are now considered historically significant. In 1999, a segment of Main Street was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but today, many structures are vacant and underutilized. A new economic strategy was long overdue. Located just a few miles from Prince Gallitzin State Park, and with a pending streetscape improvement project in the final stages of design, the community recognized a potential opportunity to draw new investment from the PA Wilds Initiative. An architect specializing in historic buildings was hired to conduct a public workshop about the advantages of using tax credits to offset costs of historic building rehabilitation. The architect also worked with five building owners to develop improvement concepts for their buildings. Of equal importance, the community hired an economist to prepare a market study and develop an action plan to draw more investment to Coalport. The results indicate that the economic advantage brought to communities by the PA Wilds Initiative is not equal in all places, and that a tailored strategy is needed based on the community's assets, challenges, and opportunities.

Highlights:

Project Type: Downtown Revitalization

Goal: Improve Downtown Coalport

Design Service: Public Education, Architectural Concepts, Economic Study

Design Guide Principles Applied:

- Preserve significant historic buildings
- Restore and maintain traditional storefronts
- Educate business owners
- Use unique assets in productive ways
- Add dates to historic buildings
- Use the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards for historic building rehabilitation



BEFORE: EXISTING GLASS, FLORAL, AND GIFT SHOP



“The influence of the PA Wilds Design Guide is evidenced in this building’s architectural lines with offset walls, pitched roof design, among other notable design facets. The Design Guide influenced both texture and color schemes proposed by the architect.”

**Heidi Thomas,
Dickinson Center**

Dickinson Center grew larger than its existing site could hold and opted to construct a new building in a different location. When new buildings are constructed, especially large ones, it is important they positively contribute to the local and regional character. The architect designed the new Dickinson Center to incorporate elements recommended in the *Design Guide*. The new site provides a large front lawn, outdoor gathering areas, and landscaped parking areas around a traditionally-designed vernacular building that might otherwise have been designed as a simple big box. By using the *Design Guide*, the Dickinson Center’s architect was able to propose a building schematic that reflects the Center’s respectful relationship with the greater Ridgway area.

Highlights:

Project Type: Large Building Construction

Goal: Build New Center to Better Serve Clients

Design Service: Architectural Design

Design Guide Principles Applied:

- Elkwood Arts program and gift shop located inside
- Articulated building façade with multiple textures
- Earth-toned color palette
- Gable roof with varied orientation
- Exterior gathering areas
- Windows on all sides
- Covered, welcoming entries





AFTER: ARCHITECT'S RENDERING

©DRS ARCHITECTS

“As this business continues to grow so does its ability to contribute to the [local] economy. The planned changes will allow us to work with clients that have demands we could not previously fill.”

Debra Adams,
Gateway Lodge

Highlights:

Project Type: Small Business Expansion

Goal: Expand Capacity for Events

Design Service: Architectural Concept

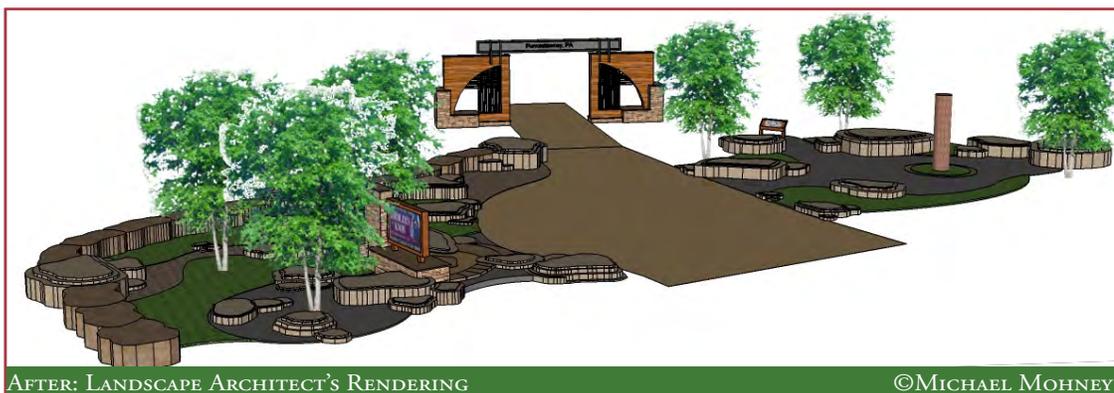
Design Guide Principles Applied:

- Reflects natural setting of the PA Wilds
- Locally owned business growth
- Wood as a primary building material
- Welcoming gathering areas
- Lodging in historic structures

Lodging facilities that offer unique guest experiences are significant tourism assets in the Pennsylvania Wilds. The Gateway Lodge is one of a few upscale lodging facilities located near Cooks Forest. The original structure was built in 1934 and underwent a series of renovations and additions since that time. Applying the recommendations given in the *Design Guide*, the building owner worked with an architect to develop concept drawings for future renovations. The concept shows how an obsolete indoor swimming pool could be removed and replaced with a large covered patio to accommodate weddings and other celebrations. Options are included to allow year-round use of the space. Associated changes to the lodge's interior will improve customer service and increase the capacity of the business, while maintaining the structure's historic appearance and unique log construction.



BEFORE: EXISTING LODGE



AFTER: LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT'S RENDERING

©MICHAEL MOHNEY

“The Groundhog Club desired a master plan to enhance Gobbler’s Knob. The design changed during the course of the planning process after seeing ideas professionally designed and interjected into a visual context.”

Katie Donald
 Punxsutawney Groundhog Club

Highlights:

Project Type: Master Plan

Goal: Enhance the Visitor Experience

Design Service: Landscape Architecture

Design Guide Principles Applied:

- Maintain communities as authentic places
- Enhance public gathering areas
- Display public art and historic artifacts
- Use native and naturalized landscaping
- Improve welcome signs

Since 1886, the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club has celebrated the local holiday Groundhog’s Day. Thousands of tourists descend on Gobbler’s Knob each year on February 2nd to partake in the festivities. The celebration attracts a worldwide audience and throughout the year tourists visit Punxsutawney and Gobbler’s Knob. Maintaining the premises for the constant stream of visitors is integral to promoting Groundhog’s Day as a quality family-oriented event that advertises the community of Punxsutawney and western Pennsylvania hospitality. The premises were in need of physical improvements and the Groundhog Club hired a landscape architect to prepare a Master Plan that could be implemented in four phases. Highlights include an enhanced entrance and entry sign, improvements to existing structures, the addition of an educational trail, timber-frame pavilion and processional walkway, and a new focal area that contains an information booth, bonfire pit, and children’s area. All of the improvements reflect design recommendations in the *Design Guide*, and the overarching goal to enhance key public gathering areas in the region.



BEFORE: EXISTING GOBBLER'S KNOB ENTRY



AFTER: "HISTORIC GALETON" SIGN DESIGN © BRENDA ADAMS-WEYANT



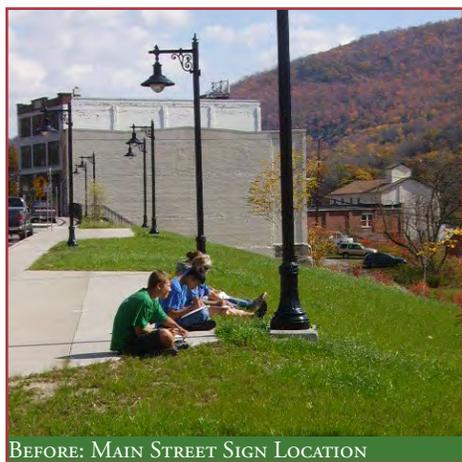
AFTER: "A LOGGER'S LIFE" SIGN DESIGN © BRENDA ADAMS-WEYANT

"This project highlights the efforts of many forces. At the on-set, we only had a vague idea of what we wanted. The consultant helped us flush out the concepts and stories told on the interpretive panels."

Terri Dennison
PA Route 6 Alliance

Highlights:

- Project Type:** New Interpretive Signs
- Goal:** Interpret Local and Regional History
- Design Service:** Sign Design
- Design Guide Principles Applied:**
 - Signs that reinforce a town's history
 - Visually appealing signs
 - Cost effective, durable signs
 - Identify historically significant structures
 - Avoid plastic, internally lit signs

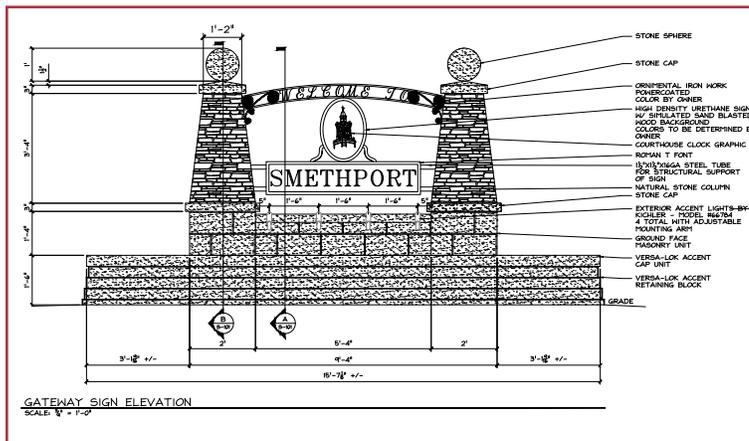


BEFORE: MAIN STREET SIGN LOCATION



BEFORE: LUMBER MUSEUM SIGN LOCATION

The PA Route 6 Alliance desired to heighten the understanding of local history by placing interpretive signs in Galeton Borough. Appreciation of a place can be increased when context is built around historic significance. A new sign containing a historic photograph of Galeton's lumber industry will be placed on Main Street in a location that provides the same viewpoint given in the photo, so that visitors can compare the difference over 100+ years. A second new sign on Main Street shows the street in a historic context and directs visitors to a self-guided tour brochure available at local businesses. To tie Galeton with regional significance of the lumber industry, two additional signs will be placed on an existing wooden overlook at the southern end of the PA Lumber Museum parking lot, overlooking Route 6 and Denton Hill. The signs are intended to attract people to stop at both locations along Route 6 and lead to a better understanding of the local history. Because the signs cross promote the other location, the signs will aid in helping to keep travelers in the area a little longer.



AFTER: ENGINEERING DRAWING AND RENDERING

© C.J. WALLACE ENGINEERING

Highlights:

Project Type: Community Entry Gateways

Goal: Provide Attractive Arrival Statements

Design Service: Civil Engineering

Design Guide Principles Applied:

- Durable, attractively designed entry
- “Welcome” conveyed by sign text
- Street-light fixtures complement surroundings
- Locally-produced building products (stone)
- Local craftsmanship

“Two waterways flank each side of our community. With proper design and planning, each bridge can become a handsome entry gateway.”

Ross Porter
 Smethport Borough Mayor

To visually identify rural communities, the *Design Guide* recommends placing welcome signs at primary road entries, drawing from the community’s most beloved icons in the sign design. Travelers to Smethport Borough arrive via US Route 6, crossing over either Potato Creek from the east or Marvin Creek from the west by bridges that do not convey a sense of welcome. PennDOT had already completed bridge improvements at Potato Creek and was in the initial design phases of a new bridge at Marvin Creek. So, Smethport Borough concurrently planned for new lighting, landscaping, and welcome signage at these locations. The Borough retained a civil engineer to prepare an east/west entry plan detailing how these improvements can be implemented in phases as funding allows. Also, early coordination with PennDOT was initiated at the Marvin Creek location to determine if the bridge design could include elements that fit the “look and feel” of Smethport and complement the gateway design. When completed, the new entry gateways will be inviting to travelers on US Route 6.





AFTER: LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT'S RENDERING

© SEDA-COG Community Resource Council

“The PA Wilds DAI grant seriously helped in expediting the [design] process and gave the individuals involved a ‘let’s get this done’ way of thinking.”

Patrick Weber,
Muncy Borough

Highlights:

Project Type: Main Street Pocket Park

Goal: Increase Park Use and Attractiveness

Design Service: Landscape Architecture

Design Guide Principles Applied:

- Theme of history and patriotism
- Welcoming gathering place for visitors
- Productive and attractive use of a vacant lot
- Improved pedestrian access
- Improved public safety
- Use of wood, stone, and brick materials
- Attractive landscape screening
- Public display of the PA wilds logo

Town centers act as gathering places and street-side amenities can add to the appeal. The small 25-foot wide Veterans Park sits between two buildings on Muncy Borough’s Main Street. The space consisted of a solitary bench, a few shrubs, a flag pole, and a bronze plaque honoring war Veterans. Muncy Borough’s Main Street is within the Muncy Historic District and draws visitors for shopping and other daily activities. The pocket park was in need of updating to improve usability and safety. Following the *Design Guide*, the Borough hired a landscape architect to prepare a design concept, construction drawings, and a cost estimate to improve the park. The final design continues to honor veterans and provides a welcoming public gathering space with more seating, tables, landscaping, art/message boards, and lighting.



BEFORE: EXISTING CONDITION (2011)



©The Pennsylvania Wilds Planning Team, 2012
Prepared by: T&B Planning, Inc.