

As a means of using local municipal funds and resources most efficiently, the COG could:

- Update and keep current the list of vehicles and equipment owned by all COG municipalities.
- Serve as a clearinghouse and notify all COG participants when a municipality is selling or purchasing equipment which may meet the needs of another municipality.
- Investigate the possibilities for increased sharing labor and equipment.
- Investigate the possibilities for increased contracting with or swapping with adjoining municipalities for winter road maintenance where travel savings may be realized.
- Coordinate joint purchasing of supplies and materials whenever possible to reduce unit costs.

Other vehicle and equipment actions:

- Maintain an accurate inventory of all vehicles and equipment.
- Liquidate obsolete vehicles and equipment.
- Include planned purchases of vehicles and equipment on a capital budget to plan for large expenditures. (See *Comments and Needs* on the *Township Facilities and Staff Tables*.)

**Recreation Opportunities and Support**

Manchester Township and Oregon Township community survey respondents rated recreation opportunities at a lesser importance than other elements of the local community such as environmental quality, quality of schools and overall quality of life, and on par with cultural activities and places to shop. In addition, recreation facilities were reported at a much lesser importance than road maintenance and emergency services. Manchester respondents agreed, by a very small majority (54%-46%), that recreation facilities are adequate; in Oregon the majority was somewhat larger (62%-38%), and less than twenty percent of respondents in each Township would support a tax increase to fund recreation facilities. In Damascus Township a large majority of survey respondents agreed that outdoor recreation activities are important and that the Township should continue support of community recreation facilities. As noted earlier, local officials must prioritize local resources to meet the most important needs, and recreation does not appear to be as important to ECWC residents as basic services.

**Recreation Facilities**

Damascus Township owns and maintains two recreation areas – the twenty-acre Damascus Park adjoining the Township Building and the sixty-two-acre Damascus Forest on MacCubbins Road. Damascus Park includes ballfields, a playground, and pavilion with a tennis court and additional playground equipment planned. The Damascus Forest is a natural area with hiking trails and is preserved in perpetuity by a conservation easement.



**MANCHESTER  
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION  
LIBRARY & BALL FIELD**



Neither Oregon Township nor Manchester Township own any recreation facilities although part of Manchester’s land is leased to the Community Association for a ballfield and a library. This is in no way a reflection on past or present municipal officials. Simply put, the facilities and programs provided by the School District, and nearby municipalities have served to meet community needs, and providing more recreation facilities is another opportunity for municipalities to work cooperatively.

In addition, local sports and civic organizations have historically played a key role in recreation and this must be encouraged. Recreation planning and facility construction are eligible for funding under the Keystone Recreation Grant Program which should be considered for any future recreation improvements.

**Recreation and the Planning Code**

Under the authority granted by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Section 503(1.1), local municipalities can require the dedication of land for public use, and upon agreement of the developer, the construction of recreation facilities or the payment of fees in lieu thereof by developers for the construction and maintenance of recreation facilities accessible to the residents of the proposed residential development. Inclusion of this requirement in the subdivision and land development ordinance should be considered by each municipality, particularly by Damascus Township which already owns and maintains recreation facilities. Fees can be assessed on a per lot basis for subdivisions, on a per unit basis for any mobile home park or multi-family dwelling, and for commercial land developments.

**Damascus Township Recreation Plan**  
 This *Comprehensive Plan* constitutes the Damascus Township plan for recreation. Any recreation fees collected by the Township will be used to improve the existing Township park and recreation facilities, and in the long run, to acquire additional park land as the need dictates. Recreation and park planning will be spearheaded by the Damascus Township Park and Recreation Board.

**Resident Expectations**

The community surveys conducted by the three ECWC Townships asked about the types of recreation facilities needed in the Planning Area. The full details are included in the *Community Survey Section*, but the salient point is that hiking/biking trails, open space/parkland and youth recreation facilities ranked near the top with respondents in each municipality. The surveys suggest a community interest in additional recreation opportunities. However, this must be tempered by the fact that recreation ranked below roads and emergency services in the list of facilities and services improvements respondents would support with local tax revenues.

**Specific Actions Related to Recreation**

- Work cooperatively within ECWC and with other nearby municipalities to provide recreation facilities and services and focus on providing the types of facilities deemed important by residents.
- Damascus Township will make the maintenance and improvement of existing Township recreation facilities at the Damascus Park and at the Damascus

Forest the priority.

- Continue to work cooperatively to . . .
  - plan for recreation and open space from an area wide perspective.
  - coordinate individual municipal efforts.
  - maximize use of resources.
  - improve standing for state grants.
- Ensure improvements at existing facilities are made in accord with this overall plan and all facilities are maintained.
- Develop a funding plan to include:
  - use of fees assessed for residential development under the subdivision and land development ordinance.
  - solicitation of private contributions.
  - grants.
  - direct municipal contributions.
  - a special fund for land acquisition and capital improvements
- Obtain technical assistance from State agencies.
- Show planned recreation facilities on Municipal Official Maps to ensure that the land can be acquired. (See later *Official Map* section.)
- Cooperate with area wide community recreation organizations to improve recreation facilities and programs.

**Police Protection**

The three East Central Wayne County Townships are served solely by the Pennsylvania State Police from their barracks located along Route 191 south of Honesdale. About three-fourths of community survey respondents in Manchester Township and Oregon Township rated police protection as poor to fair while fifty-five percent of resident respondents in Damascus are dissatisfied with police protection.

While there appears to be some community support for expending Township funds for police protection, a local police force can be one of the most costly services provided by local government, not only in terms of the number of employees and equipment requirements, but also continuing benefits and pensions, as well as liability insurance. The

regionalization of police protection can be a means of providing service at reduced cost to each participating municipality. Savings in manpower, administration, space and equipment costs can be realized by intermunicipal cooperative efforts. The two regional police forces in Monroe County, Pocono Mountain and Stroud, are good examples.

Given the cost and need to prioritize local facilities and services, no local police protection is proposed for East Central Wayne County at this time or for at least five years. Should the Boards of Supervisors determine that local police protection is required, regionalization should be considered. Funding assistance to study the viability of a regional police force is available from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the ECWC and neighboring municipalities should consider such a study as the need and demand for police service dictate.

**Fire Protection and Ambulance Service**

Emergency response is typically one of the most important services to residents of small communities, and the community surveys confirmed this in the Planning Area. In Manchester Township and Oregon Township, a large majority of survey respondents in each municipality rated emergency services as good to excellent. In Damascus Township almost 100 percent of resident and nonresident respondents were satisfied with emergency services.

PROVIDER	DAM	MAN	ORE
<b>Fire Protection</b>			
Beach Lake	x		x
Callicoon, NY	x		
Equinunk	x	x	x
Honesdale			x
Lake Huntington, NY	x		
Narrowsburg, NY	x		
Welcome Lake	x		
<b>Ambulance Service</b>			
Damascus (volunteer)	x	x	
Honesdale EMS (commercial)	x	x	x
Tusten, NY (volunteer)	x		
x = served			



Equinunk Volunteer Fire Company



Lookout Unit, Equinunk Volunteer Fire Company



Damascus Volunteer Ambulance Corps

In the case of ECWC, fire protection is provided by six volunteer fire companies, and ambulance service by two volunteer companies and one commercial operation. All services are dispatched via the 911 System and the companies are organized in a regional mutual aid system. Mutual aid agreements are good examples of how intermunicipal collaboration can improve both the efficiency and quality of service.

Township officials and emergency service groups have historically maintained a good working relationship and each municipality annually provides funding to support fire protection; Damascus and Manchester each levy a dedicated millage and Oregon includes a line item in the general fund budget. Manchester Township also levies a dedicated millage for ambulance support.

The Townships will continue to support the existing volunteer services and monitor the need for increased support. Adequate emergency service will continue to be an important element of maintaining the existing quality of life in the ECWC Planning Area. The issues must be addressed as a long term goal of the Townships and area wide municipalities. Many volunteer organizations are finding it more difficult to find volunteers given the increased demands for training, and this situation must be monitored along with the need for paid staff. Issues of concern include:

- Volunteers - The volunteer organizations are finding it more and more difficult to recruit and retain volunteers.
- Large time commitment required not only for answering calls but for training.
- Individual liability does not appear to be an issue; the *Good Samaritan Law* applies.
- Husband and wife both work in most families which limits volunteer time.
  - More and more residents work at jobs out of the area which limits availability for day time response.
  - Many young recruits go away to college and do not return.
  - Fewer and fewer residents have a direct feeling of connection to the community.
  - Generally changing attitudes about volunteering -- more people expect to be paid.
- What to do about volunteers and staffing?
  - Paid staff for emergency services.
  - Regionalize services with a number of paid staff

supplemented by volunteers.

- An adequate pay scale would be critical.
- Volunteer marketing plan linked to service organizations, schools, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, etc.
- Offering EMT and paramedic training in high school.

**Emergency Management**

Emergency management planning at the local level is coordinated by the Wayne County Emergency Management Agency (EMA). County emergency management agencies throughout the Commonwealth receive direction from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The three ECWC Townships work with the County EMA, and have appointed Emergency Management Coordinators. The Damascus Township, Manchester Township and Oregon Township emergency management plans are incorporated into this *Comprehensive Plan* by reference.

**Libraries**

The Wayne County Public Library in Honesdale serves as the state-designated library for the ECWC Planning Area, and the Manchester Community Association operates a small library on the grounds of the Township Building. There are no plans for additional library facilities in the ECWC Planning Area.

**Wayne County Recycling**

*In order to meet the recycling needs of all county residents, Wayne County developed and implemented a countywide system of drop off sites, which are strategically located throughout the County. Currently there are 13 municipal sites that are staffed by local volunteers, and are open on various Saturdays throughout the month. The County provides roll off containers and collection and processing services to these sites. The materials are processed at the County facility, where they are then shipped to market. The following materials are accepted at the drop off sites: clear, brown & green glass bottles, metal cans, aluminum cans, #1 and #2 plastic bottles, newspapers, magazines and junk mail and office paper.*

(Source: Wayne County Recycling Center web site.)

**Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling**

Planning for solid waste disposal is a county responsibility as mandated by state statute, and local municipalities are authorized to regulate solid waste disposal by ordinance. In the ECWC Planning Area homeowners and business owners contract with private haulers for the collection and disposal of solid waste, and this has been adequate to meet current needs. The Townships will monitor the adequacy of the private hauler solid waste collection/disposal and recycling system, and should any deficiencies be identified, take corrective measures via municipal ordinance.



Manchester Community Association Library

Wayne County operates a recycling drop-off facility just off Route 652 near Beach Lake. Each of the three ECWC Townships participates in the county-wide municipal drop-off program, with the local site open one Saturday of each month. (See the *Wayne County Recycling Sidebar*.) A large majority of Damascus survey respondents would support expanded recycling in the Township while respondents in Manchester and Oregon are satisfied with the current programs.

### **Water Supply**

Groundwater is the sole source for potable water in the ECWC Planning Area with supplies provided by individual wells and, in a few cases, springs. None of the three Townships anticipates any public water service in the long term. Reflection Lakes in Manchester Township and Pine Grove Estates in Damascus Township are each served by a private water company. See the *Natural Features Section* for a more detailed discussion of groundwater and Township actions to protect quality and conserve supply.

### **Sewage Disposal**

Adequate sewage disposal is vital to the environmental health of a community, as well as to long-term growth potential. Development in communities without central sewage collection and disposal is limited by the suitability of the existing soils for on-site sewage disposal, and sewage flows which can be assimilated are often limited by poor percolation rates. Central sewage and collection broadens the possibilities for development, yet can also stimulate unanticipated and unwanted development. In other words, central sewage collection and treatment not only serves to address environmental concerns, it can also stimulate development. In short, a community must carefully consider the balance between the environmental need for central sewage and its relationship to increased development.

### **On-Site Sewage Systems**

All of the dwelling units in Damascus Township and Oregon Township and most areas of Manchester Township are served by on-site, sub-surface disposal systems. State environmental regulations governing sewage disposal systems were initiated in 1969 following the passage of the Sewage Facilities Act. All of the on-lot disposal systems installed since that time should be in compliance with state requirements.

Given the soil conditions in the Townships, most newly constructed on-site disposal systems are

elevated sand mounds, which are constructed with state approved sand/soil placed on top of the natural soil surface.

No widespread malfunction problems have been reported and individual malfunctions are addressed via the sewage enforcement program. Careful sewage planning as part of subdivision regulation, and system construction and maintenance are critical to protecting surface and groundwater quality.

Improperly functioning on-lot sewage disposal systems can affect both surface and groundwater quality. The ECWC Townships apply state regulations through the local sewage enforcement program to ensure new on-lot disposal systems are installed properly. However, maintenance of on-lot systems is also critical and the Townships should consider an on-lot sewage management program. Homeowners, via Township-licensed contractors, would be required to pump septic tanks and conduct periodic system inspections, and submit a confirmation to the Township. The program could be operated directly by the Township or by a Township-appointed authority. An on-lot management program would extend the useful life of systems and protect water quality.

Specific actions related to on-lot sewage disposal:

- Monitor the functioning of existing on-lot sewage disposal systems and order corrections when malfunctions occur.
- Ensure that all new systems meet DEP regulations.
- Consider on-lot sewage systems maintenance program.
- Update sewage facilities plans as needed.

### **Wastewater Treatment Plants**

The only public sewage and collection treatment system in the Planning Area is operated by the Manchester Township Sewer and Water Authority which serves some 350 units in the Reflection Lakes Development. The Authority was formed in response to sewage disposal problems in the development when the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection directed the Township to address the problems. The five-member Authority owns and operates a 45,000 gallon-per-day spray irrigation

system with all costs assessed to the Reflection Lakes service area.

Three small private sewage treatment plants serve parts of the Planning Area - Pine Grove Estates and Tyler Hill Camp in Damascus Township, and Camp Equinunk in Manchester Township.

### **Community Facilities for New Development**

A critical concern for any community is the provision of adequate facilities for new development. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code establishes the authority for local governments to require developers to provide adequate community facilities for their particular project. Via the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, roads, central water supply, central sewage disposal, storm water control and other improvements, must either be installed or be financially guaranteed prior to the sale of any lots in the development. It is critical that the Townships carefully enforce the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, and continue to update it to ensure that roads, drainage and other community facilities are installed to standards which will result in quality, durable facilities.

### **Community Facility and Service Priorities**

A common theme in this *Comprehensive Plan* is the need for local municipalities to set priorities for the use of resources in meeting community needs and resident expectations. Concurrently, immediate community needs and resident expectations must be balanced with local officials' long term view of the future of the community and the costs of action or non-action in providing or postponing facilities and services. Based on this tenet and the results of the community surveys, the Township will focus local municipal resources on those facilities and services traditionally provided by small municipalities and those important to residents.

- Road maintenance now accounts for much of the municipal budgets and this will continue to be a primary role of the three municipalities.
- In Oregon Township, the acquisition of land and construction of a maintenance building will be considered.
- The three Townships will also work with the volunteer organizations to maintain and improve emergency services, and will explore regional

solutions for police service as demand dictates.

- The provision of recreation facilities will be pursued from an area wide perspective.
- Capital improvements planning is a good means for facilities and equipment. Damascus Township and Manchester Township have created special funds for road equipment and this approach should be adopted for all capital expenditures.

In any case, Damascus Township, Manchester Township and Oregon Township will continue to work together to manage growth and development in the area as the best means for minimizing community impacts, planning for the use of municipal resources, and maintaining a quality lifestyle.