



MAWA

MURRYSVILLE AREA WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Strategic Plan LEGACY 2030



JANUARY 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This strategic plan was developed by a team of dedicated leaders and loyal supporters of the Murrysville Area Watershed Association (MAWA). The Strategic Planning Team consisted of the MAWA Executive Committee, staff, and consultants including:

Ben Sampson, *President*

Rob Bowman, *Treasurer and Secretary*

Jim Morrison, *Executive Director*

Jessica Mallisee, *Property Manager*

Tim Denicola, *Project Manager, CEC*

Kim Gridley, *Facilitator, Earth Integration*

The plan serves as a roadmap to guide MAWA towards their vision of resolving the legacy of coal mining impacts in Turtle Creek and consequently uplifting the environmental quality of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The team showed tenacity and ambition in 2024 throughout the strategic planning process, concurrent with construction of their first major AMD Remediation project on Lyon's Run. The team gracefully faced challenges throughout this planning period and remained cohesive, maintaining forward momentum toward their goals.

Six priority areas of focus were identified within five strategic initiatives for this Strategic Planning period (2025-2030).

Priority Areas of Focus:

- HR/Development
- PR/Coordination
- Planning and Implementation
- Funding
- Maintenance
- Monitoring

Strategic Initiatives:

- Administration and Management
- AMD Remediation Projects
- Watershed Stewardship Program
- Legacy and Succession Planning
- Program Expansion



Tim Jim Jess Ben

THE EMERGENCE OF MAWA



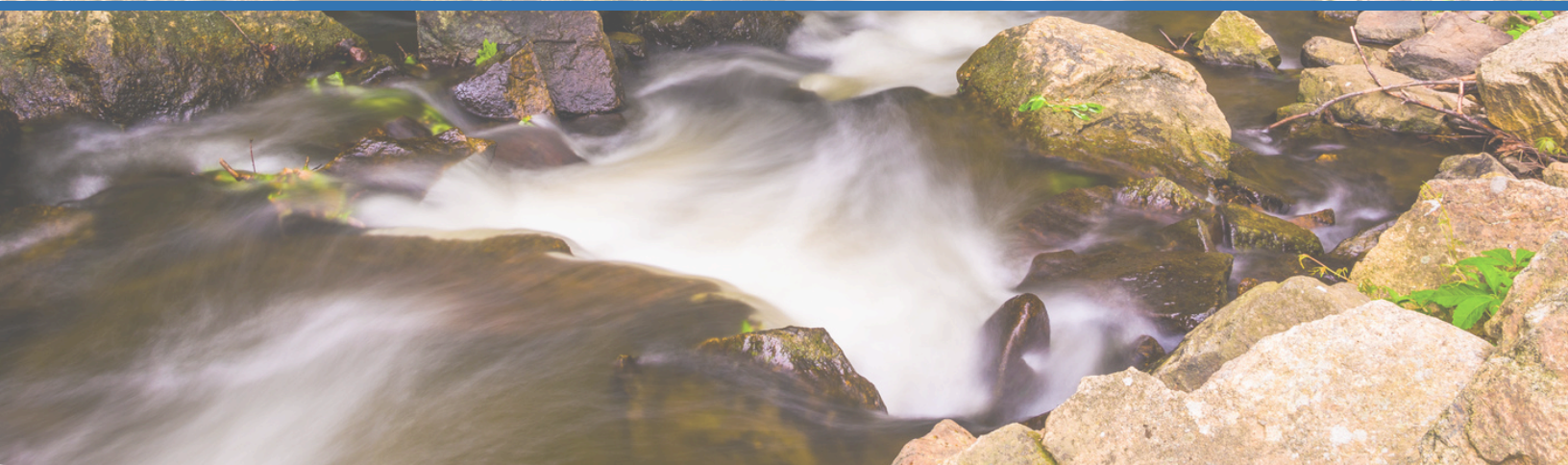
The Murrysville Area Watershed Association (MAWA) was founded in 2022 by the president of the Lyon's Run Watershed Association (LRWA), Ben Sampson. Mr. Sampson, a regional real-estate developer, identified a need for leadership in the remediation of Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) polluted waters in his community. Nearing retirement, Sampson, longed for a way to give back to the community that had supported his family and business throughout his career.

With the heart of a steward and philanthropic means to initiate his vision, Ben has developed a team of highly skilled and environmentally minded professionals and volunteers eager to restore the waters in the Murrysville area for wildlife habitat enhancement and community access and recreation.

This small team of committed individuals came together to conceptualize, design, and secure funds for implementation of the Lyon's Run passive AMD project. In 2024, vision became reality with the construction of this ground breaking project. As the project developed, the team became aware of additional opportunities for restoration and remediation projects, community engagement and education, and organizational capacity building outside of the Lyon's Run watershed. This expanded vision and ambition led to the creation of the Murrysville Area Watershed Association (MAWA) in 2022. MAWA has become the umbrella organization and administrative arm of the Lyon's Run Watershed Association.

In early 2024, the MAWA team engaged Earth Integration to facilitate a strategic planning process. This document is the culmination of that 10 month process. MAWA leaders did not wait for the plan's completion to take action. A few of MAWA's highlighted accomplishments of 2024 include:

- Construction of the Lyon's Run passive AMD remediation project.
- Design and Implementation of The Common's data management platform.
- Creation of a informational video describing the Lyon's Run project.



MISSION AND VISION



Mission:

MAWA promotes the enhancement of environmental quality throughout the watersheds of the Murrysville and Export areas of Southwest PA.

Vision:

We resolve the legacy of coal mining impacts in Turtle Creek leading to development of a template for successful AMD remediation projects beyond our waters.

We uplift the environmental quality of Southwestern Pennsylvania through our commitment to enhancing ecological function across the watersheds of our region.

A vision of MAWA in 2030:

- Completing the White Valley active AMD remediation project implementation.
- Supporting 4 staff (PT/FT): Executive Director (FT), Administrative Assistant (PT), Volunteer/Stewardship Coordinator (PT), Programs Manager (FT), Development Director/Grant Writer (PT).
- Sustained funding plan through 2035.
- Maintaining an active and successful Watershed Stewardship Program.
- Collaboration with Turtle Creek Watershed Association.
- Leading a consortium of regional watershed associations.
- Preceding reputation of high quality delivery and performance.
- Project pipeline prioritization in place.
- Expanded area of influence.
- Expanding beyond water quality: safety, historical preservation, greenway and greenspace development (DCNR coordination).
- Coordinating with municipalities to develop an effective maintenance plan for ongoing maintenance of existing projects.
- Coordinating with municipalities to advocate for and facilitate stormwater retrofit and maintenance programs.
- Collaborating with municipalities to enforce septic maintenance across the region.

VALUES



We are *environmentally conscious leaders*. Our shared value system prioritizes the well being of the planet alongside human needs. We elicit the strength of our value system through a core set of values:



INTEGRITY

Aligning our words and actions we demonstrate honesty, accountability, reliability, transparency, and a strong foundation of ethics.

EXCELLENCE

We consistently strive for improvement, exceed expectations, and take pride in delivering high-quality work.



HUMILITY

We interact with empathy and modesty, acknowledging contributions and learning from each other.

DIPLOMACY

We promote cooperative dialogue, open negotiation, and compromise to foster relationships and expand our impact.



HUMOR

We are adept at bringing levity to difficult situations as a tool to build rapport and release tension.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES



The leadership team at MAWA has identified six priority areas of focus within five strategic goals. Each goal will be realized by efforts in multiple priority areas. Strategic goals are listed below in bold with their corresponding priority areas of focus.

- **Administration and Management Systems Development**
 - HR/Development
 - Maintenance
- **Watershed Stewardship Program Development**
 - HR/Development
 - Planning and Implementation
 - Funding
 - Monitoring
 - Maintenance
- **AMD Remediation Project Implementation**
 - Planning and Implementation
 - Funding
 - Maintenance
- **Legacy and Succession Planning**
 - HR/Development
 - PR/Coordination
 - Funding
 - Maintenance
- **Program Expansion**
 - PR/Coordination
 - Planning and Implementation

Additional details regarding each of the Strategic Initiatives and Priority Areas of Focus can be found in the following pages and in the MAWA Strategic Action Plan 2025-2030. The accompanying action plan serves as a tool for benchmarking progress and work plan guidance. It is meant to inform annual planning including work plan development, budgeting and funding plan, progress reporting, and adaptive management. The action plan is a 'working document' lending itself to periodic review, updates, and development.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT



Founded in 2022, MAWA is an organization in the early stages of developing administrative controls and processes. Currently, the Sampson Morris Group offers in-kind administrative support to the organization including accounting services, HR support, networking, and office space. With the goal of becoming a self-sustaining organization, MAWA leadership is taking steps to develop internal administrative controls and organizational management processes.

Short-term actions include:

- Developing an organizational Structure/Chart
- Developing an employee manual
- Committing to ongoing website maintenance and a social media presence.



WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT



The Watershed Stewards are the boots on the ground and public facing ambassadors of MAWA. This group of dedicated volunteers complete the EPA Watershed Stewardship Training and commit to monthly in-stream water quality monitoring throughout Murrysville Area watersheds.

Short-term actions include:

- Grant-writing and funding acquisition for water quality monitoring equipment.
- Developing a Watershed Monitoring Plan and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- Developing a Watershed Stewardship Orientation Training.
- Implementing the Watershed Stewardship Pilot Project including in-stream data collection.



AMD REMEDIATION PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION



MAWA is in the final stages of construction of their first passive AMD remediation project on Lyon's Run. Development of the Lyon's Run project was the catalyst that formed MAWA, expanding the organizations reach and vision. In addition to maintenance of the Lyon's Run AMD Remediation facility, in the near term, the group is beginning to pursue development of the White Valley Active AMD Remediation project.

Completion of these high priority AMD projects along with others in the area aim to improve stream water quality throughout the region, restoring aquatic habitat and providing recreation opportunities for the community.

Short-term actions include:

- Completing the Lyon's Run AMD project landscaping.
- Grant writing and funding acquisition for design and permitting of the White Valley AMD project.
- Data collection and design of the White Valley AMD project.



LEGACY AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

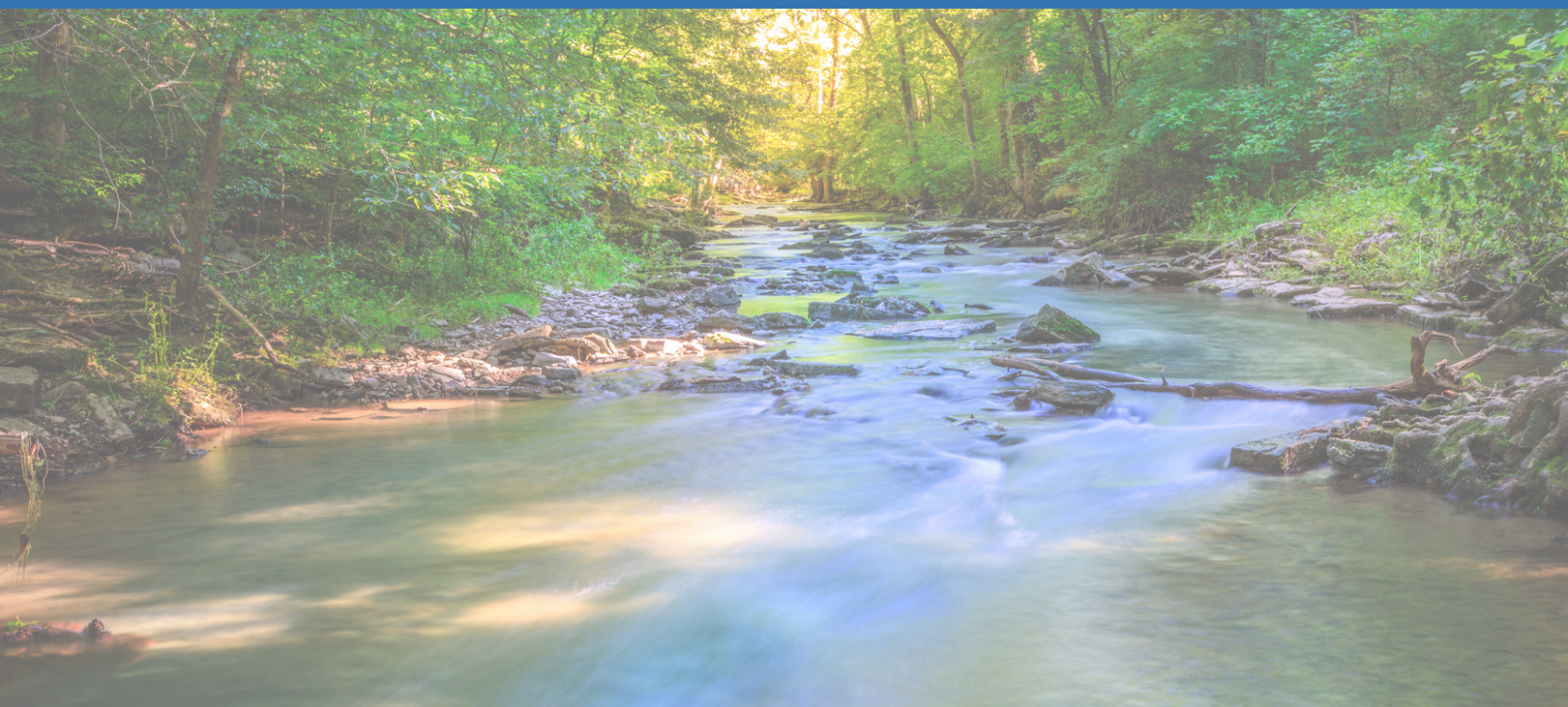


As the founding leadership of MAWA looks toward the future, they are considering how the organization will continue to thrive after their tenure has expired. They recognize the need to carry forward the institutional knowledge of the organization through the next generation of MAWA leaders.

Through strategic hiring and formal relationship building with private donors, the MAWA leadership is developing a framework of sustained investment in organizational structures, operations, and capital.

Short-term actions include:

- Hiring a Watershed Director.
- Developing a Funding Plan for leveraging private and foundation donations.
- Clarifying and formalizing the relationship between MAWA and the Twyla Sampson Foundation (MOU, Endowment, Annual grantmaking or donation).



PROGRAM EXPANSION



MAWA is a fast growing organization with an opportunity to have a major impact on the water quality, aquatic habitat, and community environmental awareness in the Murrysville Area. They are filling a niche of high-level project development and implementation acumen, direct and engaged leadership, and relationship building; opening new opportunities for program development beyond remediation projects and citizen science.

Short-term actions include:

- Relationship building with advocates of the Irwin Upwelling remediation project.
- Developing Priority Project/Program Pipeline built upon the MAWA Strategic Action Plan 2025-2030.
- Developing conceptual design of the Lyons Run Greenway and connectors.
- Developing a Lyons Run Restoration Plan.



STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2025-2030



MAWA

MURRYSVILLE AREA WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

LEGACY 2030



The following action plan serves as a tool for benchmarking progress. It is meant to inform annual planning including work plan development, budgeting and funding, progress reporting, and adaptive management. The action plan is a 'working document' lending itself to periodic review, updates, and development.



Strategy	Priority	Project	Timeline
Administration and Management Systems Development	<i>HR/Development</i>	Develop Employee Manual	2025
		Develop organizational chart and structure	2025
	<i>Maintenance</i>	Website and social media: regular updates	ongoing (monthly)
Stewardship Program Development	<i>HR/Development</i>	Watershed Monitoring Plan and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)	2025
		Watershed Stewardship Program (Pilot Project)	2025
		Watershed Stewardship Program Training	2025
		Watershed Stewardship Program (Expansion as public facing ambassadors)	2027
	<i>Planning and Implementation</i>	Public events and school visits	ongoing
		Haymaker Riparian Buffers	TBD
		Lyons Run Riparian Buffers	TBD
	<i>Funding</i>	Grant Writing: Watershed Stewards Monitoring Equipment (R.K. Mellon Foundation)	2025
	<i>Monitoring</i>	In-stream Data Collection	2025
		Turtle Creek Headwaters	2025
		Turtle Creek Watershed (White Valley)	2025
		Continuous Data Logging	ongoing
		Lyons Run Watershed	ongoing
	<i>Maintenance</i>	Other Watershed Monitoring	TBD
		Properties: identify assets (easements, enhancements, maintenance needs)	2025
		Data: Hydroview, The Commons (H2 observe)	ongoing (weekly)
		Equipment: calibration, cleaning, data reporting	ongoing (weekly/monthly)

Strategy	Priority	Project	Timeline
AMD Remediation Project Implementation	<i>Planning and Implementation</i>	Lyons Run AMD: Construction Complete	2025
		White Valley AMD: Begin design and permitting	2026
		Lyons AMD and Greenway trail signage	2027
		White Valley AMD: Construction Complete	2030
		Irwin AMD	2035
	<i>Funding</i>	Grant Writing: White Valley, Turtle Creek Design and Permitting (DEP/BAMR)	2025
	<i>Maintenance</i>	White Valley Active AMD Remediation	2030
		Lyon's Run Passive AMD Remediation	ongoing
Legacy and Succession Planning	<i>HR/Development</i>	Staffing: Hire Watershed Director	2025
		Develop Board Orientation Manual	2026
		Board Development	2030
		Staff: Watershed Director transition to FT Executive Director	2030
		Annual Assessment by the board: Staff, Consultants, Volunteers	ongoing (annually)
	<i>PR/Coordination</i>	Leveraging Board relationships and influential connections	ongoing
		Networking and relationship building with partners, funders, and colleagues	ongoing
		Westmoreland Conservancy Donations	TBD
	<i>Funding</i>	Develop Funding Plan: Leveraging private and foundation donations	2026
		Clarify relationship with the Sampson Foundation (MOU, Endowment, Annual grant or donation)	2027
	<i>Maintenance</i>	Wetlands property	ongoing



Strategy	Priority	Project	Timeline
Program Expansion	PR/Coordination	Meet with representatives of TCWA, offer technical assistance with Irwin upwelling	2025
		Attend partner meetings and invite to engage with MAWA	ongoing
		Ag BMPs and landuse: report pollution to municipalities	TBD
		Septic Maintenance: educate public and report malfunctioning to municipalities	TBD
		Stormwater Management: offer assistance and discuss MAWA role with municipalities	TBD
	Planning and Implementation	Lyons Run Greenway	2027
		Lyons Run Stream Restoration	2027
		Turtle Creek Greenway	2027
		Westmoreland Heritage Trail connector	2030
		White Valley Greenspace Development	2030
		Bank Stabilization	TBD
		Engineered Infrastructure Projects	TBD
		Green Infrastructure Development	TBD
		Lyons Run Watershed septic upgrades	TBD
	Maintenance	Riparian Forest Buffer Restoration	2030



Timeline	Strategy	Priority	Project
ongoing	Stewardship Program Development	Monitoring	Continuous Data Logging
		Planning and Implementation	Lyons Run Watershed
	AMD Remediation Project Implementation	Maintenance	Public events and school visits
		Maintenance	Lyons Run Passive AMD Remediation
	Legacy and Succession Planning	PR/Coordination	Multiple
ongoing (monthly)	Program Expansion	PR/Coordination	Wetlands property
	Administration and Management Systems	PR/Coordination	Leveraging Board relationships and influential
	Stewardship Program Development	Maintenance	Networking and relationship building with partners,
ongoing (annually)	Legacy and Succession Planning	HR/Development	Attend partner meetings and invite to engage with
			Website: regular updates
2025	Administration and Management Systems Development	HR/Development	Data: Hydroview, Commons (H2 observe)
			Equipment: calibration, cleaning, data reporting
	Stewardship Program Development	HR/Development	Annual Assessment by the board: Staff, Consultants, Volunteers
			Develop Annual Workplan and Reporting
		Funding	Develop Employee Manual
		HR/Development	Develop organizational chart and structure
			Grant Writing: Watershed Stewards Monitoring Equipment (R.K. Mellon Foundation)
			Watershed Monitoring Plan and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
	AMD Remediation Project Implementation	Maintenance	Watershed Stewardship Program (Pilot Project)
		Monitoring	Watershed Stewardship Program Training
		Funding	Properties: identify assets (easements, enhancements, maintenance needs)
2026	Stewardship Program Development	Monitoring	In-stream Data Collection
			Grant Writing: White Valley, Turtle Creek Design and Permitting (DEP/BAMR)
	AMD Remediation Project Implementation	Planning and Implementation	Lyons Run AMD: Construction Complete
	Legacy and Succession Planning	HR/Development	Staffing: Hire Watershed Director
	Program Expansion	PR/Coordination	Meet with representatives of TCWA, offer technical assistance with Irwin upwelling
2027	Stewardship Program Development	Monitoring	Turtle Creek Headwaters
			Turtle Creek Watershed (White Valley)
	AMD Remediation Project Implementation	Planning and Implementation	White Valley AMD: Begin design and permitting
	Legacy and Succession Planning	Funding	Develop Funding Plan: Leveraging private and foundation donations
2028	Stewardship Program Development	HR/Development	Develop Board Orientation Manual
			Watershed Stewardship Program (Expansion as public facing ambassadors)
	AMD Remediation Project Implementation	Planning and Implementation	Lyons AMD and Greenway trail signage
	Legacy and Succession Planning	Funding	Clarify relationship with the Sampson Foundation (MOU, Endowment, Annual grant or donation)
	Program Expansion	Planning and Implementation	Lyons Run Greenway
2030	AMD Remediation Project Implementation	Maintenance	Lyons Run Stream Restoration
			Turtle Creek Greenway
	Legacy and Succession Planning	HR/Development	White Valley Active AMD Remediation
			White Valley AMD: Construction Complete
			Board Development
2035	AMD Remediation Project Implementation	Planning and Implementation	Staff: Watershed Director transition to FT Executive
			Riparian Forest Buffer Restoration
	Program Expansion	Planning and Implementation	Westmoreland Heritage Trail connector
TBD	Stewardship Program Development	Monitoring	White Valley Greenspace Development
			Irwin AMD
			Other Watershed Monitoring
	Legacy and Succession Planning	PR/Coordination	Haymaker Riparian Buffers
			Lyons Run Riparian Buffers
	Program Expansion	Planning and Implementation	Westmoreland Conservancy Donations
			Bank Stabilization
			Engineered Infrastructure Projects
TBD	Program Expansion	PR/Coordination	Green Infrastructure Development
			Lyons Run Watershed septic upgrades
			Ag BMPs and landuse: report pollution to
TBD	Program Expansion	PR/Coordination	Septic Maintenance: educate public and report
			Stormwater Management: offer assistance and