



STRENGTHENING & INSPIRING COMMUNITIES OF THE PENNSYLVANIA WILDS



PA WILDS CENTER
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

PA Creative Industries - Grants & Opportunities Workshops | June 15, 2026

TODAY'S PRESENTERS



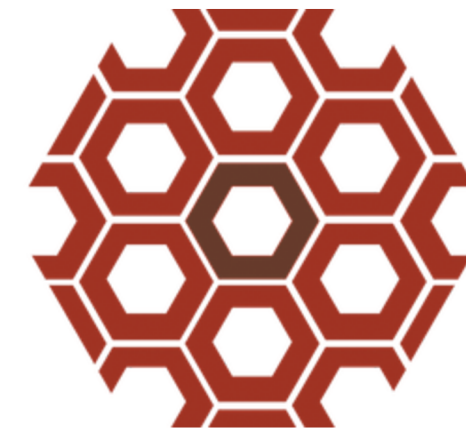
Ashley Fosbrink-Horrell
PA Wilds Center
Value Chain Manager



Marc Wilken
Economic Recovery
Corps Fellow

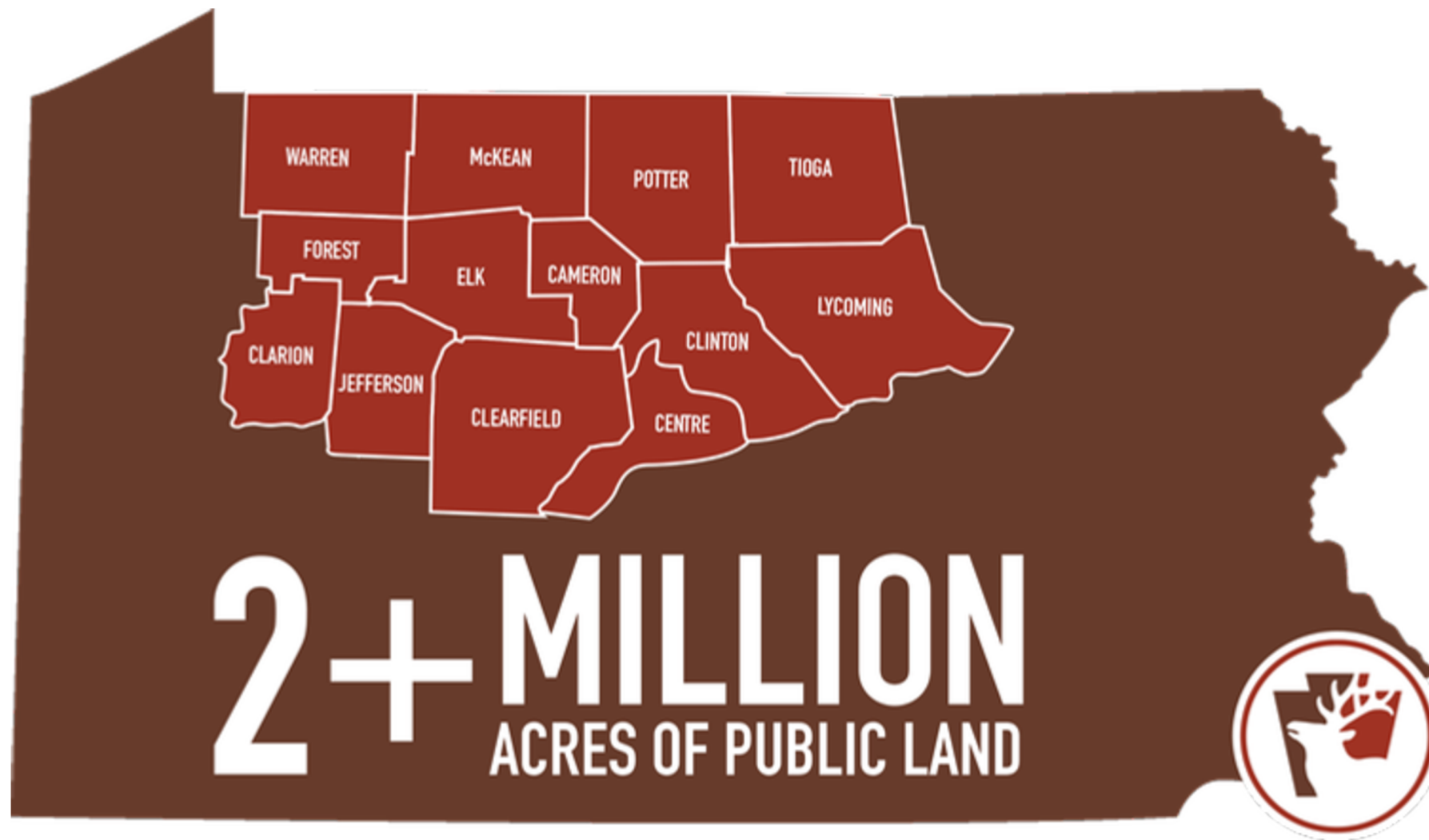
ABOUT OUR NONPROFIT

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2013, led by a nonprofit board of directors based in the region.
- Mission: Integrate conservation and economic development to strengthen and inspire communities in the PA Wilds.
- Operates all of the PA Wilds programs, platforms and networks.
- Leads regional strategy to sustain the rural communities in the region by
 - positioning the region as a premier outdoor recreation destination by leveraging the tremendous amount of public lands in the region and the power of place-based branding
 - growing locally rooted entrepreneurship
 - coordinating investment by a variety of local, regional, state and federal partners from the public and private sectors
- Sustained through partnerships, program fees, philanthropic giving, grants and entrepreneurial activities related to the PA Wilds brand.
- Serves as a Rural Development Hub – A Rural Development Hub is a place-rooted organization working hand-in-glove with people and organizations within and across a region to build inclusive wealth, increase local capacity and create opportunities for better livelihoods, health and well-being.



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ABOUT THE PENNSYLVANIA WILDS: THE PLACE



A DESIGNATED AND BRANDED PLACE

- 13 county rural region of northcentral PA, established at state level in early 2000s.
 - designated as a Conservation Landscape
 - designated as a Tourism Region
- Home to the greatest concentration of public land in the Commonwealth

THE BIG PICTURE CHALLENGES

Communities across the region are combatting:

- An aging + shrinking population
- Industry workforce issues
- Aging + lacking infrastructure

DESIGNATED BY



Strengthening + inspiring communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds

LEVERAGING A PLACE-BASED BRAND





*2+ million acres of public land;
hundreds of miles of trails*



*The largest wild elk herd in the
Northeast United States*



*The world's second certified
International Dark-Sky Park*



Two National Wild & Scenic Rivers



*29 state parks, 8 state forests,
50 state game lands*



*The Allegheny National Forest (ANF),
Pennsylvania's only National Forest*

OUR CORE PROGRAMS & SERVICES

CREATING AN ECOSYSTEM OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESSES TO
LEVERAGE THE POWER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA WILDS PLACE-BASED BRAND

REGIONAL MARKETING



Promoting communities, nonprofits, and small businesses as part of the regional experience, as well as the assets that attract people here

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



Empowering a network of 700+ businesses, communities, and organizations to address market demands for regional products, services & experiences

TRADEMARK LICENSING



Providing brand power to local communities and businesses who want to position themselves as part of the Pennsylvania Wilds region

PLANNING & PARTNERSHIPS



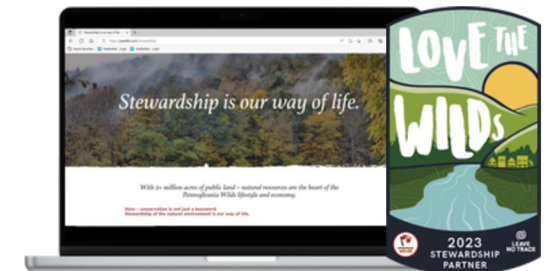
Collaborating with regional planners and strengthening partnerships to support sustainable regional development

BRANDED MARKETS



Helping local artisan entrepreneurs bring their products to market and connecting them to the visitor experience and brand opportunities

INSPIRING STEWARDSHIP



Stewarding the unique community character and natural assets this region is known for by creating and promoting tools and best practices for local developers and travelers.

Highly integrated and designed to complement (not duplicate) services already offered by partners

Strengthening + inspiring communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds

PA WILDS COOPERATIVE

"Charm Not Chain"



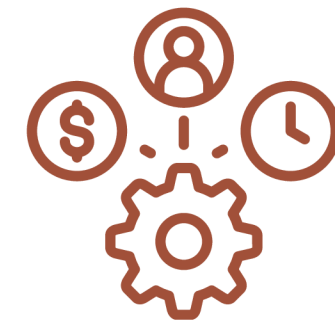
CREATIVE MAKERS

artisans who make products that allow visitors to take home a piece of the PA Wilds and/or offer creative services to help tell our region's story and support other businesses



EXPERIENCE MAKERS

hospitality or cultural establishments that foster memories and add to the region's charm



RESOURCE PARTNERS

community partners and service providers that support businesses, the environment, or production, and who help the region thrive

members.pawildscenter.org/join

Strengthening + inspiring communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds

PA WILDS MEDIA LAB



The creative hub is outfitted with specialized technologies needed to expand the PA Wilds commerce platforms and deliver business development workshops to the WCO. It features a professional photography studio, a recording studio, a conference room, and event space.

61 North Fraley Street, Kane, PA 16735

members.pawildscenter.org/media-lab

PA WILDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MINI-GRANTS

Projects must align with our mission and the broader PA Wilds strategy, thereby tying into outdoor recreation, community placemaking/placekeeping, the creative sector, stewardship, etc.

Examples of eligible projects include:

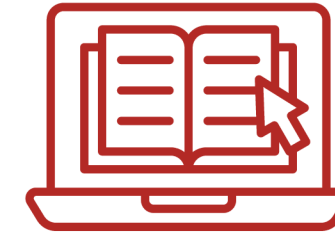
- Public art or other placemaking projects that engage the local community
- Efforts to mobilize and engage volunteers to support local trails or cultural assets
- Initiatives that empower and encourage community involvement in local beautification projects
- Welcoming and wayfinding signage that builds on recommendations from the award-winning PA Wilds Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship.

pawildscenter.org/blog/applications-pa-wilds-community-engagement-mini-grants/



2026 PA WILDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MINI-GRANTS

PA WILDS RESOURCE GUIDE



An enhanced, comprehensive regional resource guide **co-developed with MW Impact and the WCO member network** to support the Cooperative's evolved governance structure. Built as a practical, member-facing tool, the guide reduces information overload **by helping members quickly identify and prioritize the resources and opportunities most relevant to their organization or business.**



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PA WILDS RESOURCE GUIDE

Drawing on research from local, regional, and national programs, each resource is now coded to give users the key details they need to quickly determine fit, including:

1

Who the resource is designed for: specific organization and business types, filtered by mission focus and trade/industry

2

Eligibility criteria: permitted uses and applicants

3

Funding details: award amounts, matching requirements, grant cycles, and application deadlines

4

Loan terms: loan amounts, interest rates, and repayment conditions

5

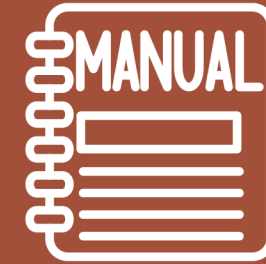
Contact information: names, emails, and phone numbers for the person or office to reach out to when a member is ready to take the next step

PA WILDS RESOURCE GUIDE



Short Instructional Video:

A Google Vids tutorial demonstrating how to navigate the resource guide, including search strategies and practical tips for locating relevant resources.



Step-by-Step User Guide:

A visual how-to manual created via Scribe that walks members through the guide's key features at their own pace.

PA WILDS RESOURCE GUIDE



The QR code will take you to the Resource Guide's instructions tab, including access to the:

- Instructional Video
- Manual
- Glossary



pennsylvania WILDS™ RESOURCE GUIDE

The PA Wilds Resource Guide offers a listing of programs available to place-based businesses, entrepreneurs, nonprofits and governments across the P. business loans, grants and tax credit programs, technical assistance, hiring and human resources, marketing resources and recognition programs.

Some grant programs may require collaboration with a nonprofit organization. Every effort is made to ensure that program details are current, but applica with program managers before applying. Programs may have additional requirements.

Inclusion does not imply endorsement.

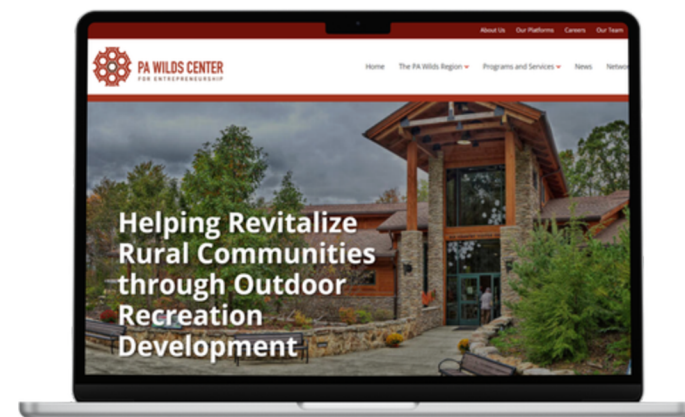
Have an update or a new program you think should be listed here? Did you come across inaccurate information in the guide?

Email details to wildscopa@pawildscenter.org.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

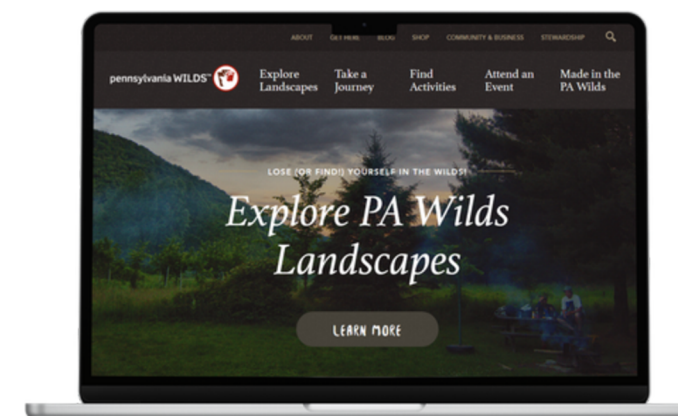
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QUESTIONS?



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