

# Curwensville Borough SUCCESS STORY

By: Curwensville Borough

## Irvin Park canoe launch upgrade

### SUMMARY

A recommendation in the Master Site Development plan for Irvin Park was to implement a canoe launch area to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. A group of community volunteers began clearing several areas in Irvin Park for walking trails and a primitive canoe launch. The existing primitive launch lead canoers down to the river along a steep slope. Curwensville Borough wanted to improve and upgrade the path to the river for easier access and safer entry. They also wanted to highlight the history of the log booms that are still visible in the river at the canoe launch area.



### CHALLENGE

Before the primitive canoe launch area was cleared to reach the Susquehanna River canoers had to carry their canoes through the middle of Irvin Park, approximately 600 feet, to gain access to the river. A group of community volunteers cleared an area for a designated drop off area and a primitive canoe launch which is much closer to the river and is away from the main section of the park. Now canoers can enter the West Branch of the Susquehanna River at the site of existing log booms that were once used to transport lumber down the river. The convenience of a designated drop off area closer to the river helped increase the usage of the primitive canoe launch but had also worn down the existing path so that it became slippery and unstable when the ground was wet. The transition zone between the river bank and water also made it difficult to safely get into a canoe.

To ensure the safety of the canoers Curwensville Borough enlisted Curwensville Area Revitalization Entities and The EADS Group who developed the Master Site Development Plan to provide specific design recommendations for the canoe access area.

### FUNDING

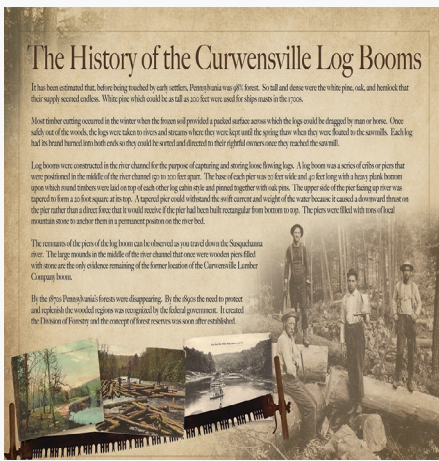
**Grant Award: \$2,600.00**

**Total Project Cost: \$5,296.85**

### PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

**Federal Home Loan Bank-  
Pittsburgh \$2,600.00 match  
Lumber Heritage Region, Inc.,  
PA Wilds Center for  
Entrepreneurship, and DCNR-  
\$2,600.00 grant  
Curwensville Borough crew-  
labor  
Curwensville Regional  
Development Corporation and  
Curwensville Area  
Revitalization Entities- project  
management**





## SOLUTION

A new design for the canoe launch was provided. The recommendation was to construct a 6-foot wide x 5-inches deep crushed limestone path with contours and switchbacks in steeper slopes with a grade of 8% to the river. This new path makes access to the river safer and more user-friendly. Meetings with Clearfield Co Conservation District and the DEP determined that there were not any permits needed for this project. The borough crew was tasked with the installation of the new path. They cleaned and excavated the area to prepare the path for the 2A stone base. An interpretive sign that details the history of the Curwensville log booms was installed at the beginning of the path. As canoers head downstream they can see up close what a log boom looks like, how it was constructed and how it helped hold back the logs in the river.

## RESULTS

In 2014 Curwensville was accepted into the Blueprint communities program sponsored by the Federal Home Loan Bank with the intent to build local capacity and leadership to guide and improve our community and the surrounding region. To address long term impact, Curwensville Regional Development (CRDC) which Curwensville Area Revitalization Entities (CARE) is a subcommittee entered into a cooperative agreement with Curwensville Borough and the Curwensville Area School District to raise funding for community projects that support economic development and tourism. One of the objectives on the CARE Nature Based Five-Year Strategic Plan is to provide staged improvement for Irvin Park through a Master Site Development Plan. Two of our outcomes in the Nature Based Five-Year Strategic plan are to increase the number of visitors to the park and to increase the number of recreational and educational activities in the region. The establishment of a canoe launch at Irvin Park will accomplish both goals. Irvin Park is situated along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. The history of the Susquehanna River lends itself to heritage tourism. The Susquehanna River has historical significance to the lumber industry and the river is very important to Irvin Park's history.

## Contact

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