

**Friends of Deckers Creek
Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan
April 1, 2006**

VISION

Our vision is a rehabilitated and clean Deckers Creek watershed that is valued and enjoyed by the residents and visitors. The creek will once again support healthy fish and wildlife in a self-sustaining ecosystem with the restoration of the watershed's functions and processes. People will fish, boat, and swim in the creek and will hike, bike, and cross-country ski along the Deckers Creek Trail. The community will proudly maintain a sense of shared responsibility and respect for Deckers Creek and its watershed.

MISSION

To improve the natural qualities of, increase public concern for, and promote the enjoyment of the Deckers Creek watershed.

2006 STRATEGIC PLAN

Background

For decades, a polluted Deckers Creek has been a liability to the community. Friends of Deckers Creek is working to turn this liability into an asset. Our focus is on Deckers Creek and its tributaries, but activities on land that contribute pollution are also of concern. Acid mine drainage from coal mines, illegal dumps, and litter along roads and the rail-trail have been and continue to be our major priorities, while uncontrolled storm water runoff, bacteria from untreated or poorly treated wastewater and agriculture, sediment discharges, and protection of critical land are emerging priorities.

To reduce pollution to Deckers Creek and its tributaries, it is necessary for the public to want clean water; to understand the importance of rehabilitation for the economy, recreation, and human health; and to enjoy the watershed through activities on or alongside local creeks. Friends of Deckers Creek will continue to provide public education and to sponsor events with these goals.

Success will be achieved when the general population is joined by community leaders and local, state, and federal governments and agencies with the resources to support rehabilitation projects. Friends of Deckers Creek will continue to disseminate original research reports among these decision makers and will sponsor meetings to share information and develop partnerships. We

will ensure that all appropriate resources are used efficiently, for the public good, in the Deckers Creek watershed.

Once all current pollution sources are corrected, we will continue to monitor the health of the creek for potential new sources of pollution, and we will address these new sources as they arise. We will continue to promote the responsible use of the creek and to educate the public about responsible use of our water assets.

Vision for 2010

For the state of the creek

By 2010, Deckers Creek will be fishable. We will have addressed most of the acid mine drainage in the Deckers Creek watershed. Deckers and its tributaries will meet water quality standards for acid mine drainage-related pollutants, and a healthy fish population will have been reestablished along the entire creek, including downstream from the Richard mine through Morgantown. Friends of Deckers Creek will also have established an annual maintenance program for all installed acid mine drainage systems, to ensure that they continue to operate as planned to protect water quality in the creek. The local community will promote fishing in Deckers Creek in its efforts to attract tourists to the region. Tourists and residents alike will hike, bike, and cross-country ski along the Deckers Creek Trail.

By 2010, all major trash dumps will have been cleaned up and will remain clean. Periodic trash cleanups along the creeks, rail-trail, and roads will keep the watershed virtually litter free.

Friends of Deckers Creek will increase contacts in local schools to reach at least 100 students per year. We will also support full integration of the stream with the Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners' (BOPARC's) recreation plan.

Friends of Deckers Creek will have laid the groundwork to start addressing its second tier priorities: uncontrolled storm water runoff, untreated or poorly treated wastewater, sediment discharges, and protection of critical land.

For the organization

A well managed program will involve volunteers in a variety of useful tasks, including stream monitoring, illegal dump and litter clean-ups, fundraising, festival organization, and school outreach.

A small but stable staff of two or more full time equivalents will work out of an office in Morgantown. The staff will include an executive director and other program staff who focus on developing and implementing rehabilitation projects and public education. If necessary, the staff will also be responsible for organizational issues such as membership development, database management, volunteer organization, and related tasks. To the extent possible, Friends of Deckers Creek will make use of summer interns and Office of Surface Mining Volunteers in

Service To America (OSM VISTA) workers for low-cost but qualified people. Because of the number of acid mine drainage rehabilitation projects that will be in various stages of grant writing, bidding, construction, monitoring, and maintaining, the Friends of Deckers Creek staff size will likely peak in or around 2010.

The Friends of Deckers Creek board will consist of about 10 people, with diverse backgrounds and skills. One or two new board members will join the board each year, to provide fresh ideas and new energy.

Vision for 2015

For the state of the creek

By 2015, Deckers Creek will be fishable and swimmable. Acid mine drainage rehabilitation projects and trash clean-ups will have been completed and will be maintained.

Bacteria problems will have been identified and solved, making Deckers Creek and its tributaries safe for boating and swimming, in addition to fishing. In partnership with the Morgantown Utility Board, bacteria discharges to Deckers Creek within the city limits will be reduced or eliminated.

Through a regular public education campaign geared toward adults and children, Friends of Deckers Creek will partner with state and local governments to reduce or eliminate the negative impact of storm water pollution in the watershed.

Friends of Deckers Creek will also have identified and helped solve sediment discharges, and will have identified critical land that deserves protection to maintain water quality and/or to provide access to the creek for recreation. A creek-side park with creek access will be established, with information about the watershed and water quality. We will also work to protect critical flood plain and riparian environments from harmful development.

Friends of Deckers Creek will increase contacts in local schools to reach at least 200 students per year.

In general, we will work for the continuous protection and improvement of the rehabilitated watershed.

For the organization

Volunteers will remain at the core of Friends of Deckers Creek.

After peaking in or around 2010, the Friends of Deckers Creek staff size will stabilize and include a full time executive director and one full- or part-time staffer.

The board will be maintained at the same size, with the same goals of diversity.