

# The Voluntary Pennsylvania Eco-Initiative (VPEI)

Presented to: The Governor's Marcellus Shale Advisory  
Commission – Subcommittee on Public Health, Safety  
and Environmental Protection

Presented by: Womble Carlyle Ecology Innovations, LLC

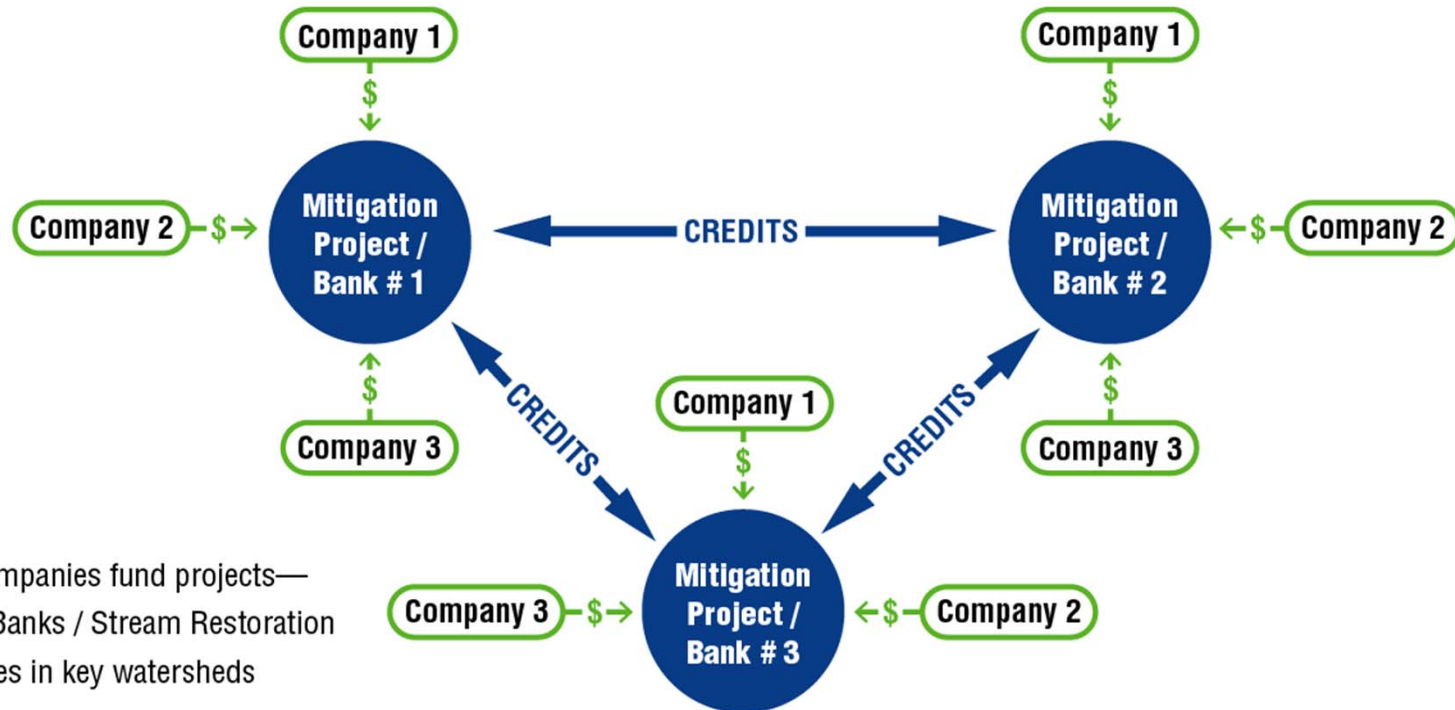
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# Highlights of the Initiative

- With energy resource growth, inevitable impacts to publicly and privately-owned wetlands, streams and forests
- A private sector initiative to address the restoration of wetlands and streams, replace impacted forest land, improve floodplains and address the capture of nutrients (TMDL's)
- Produce a network of state-wide wetland, stream, floodplain, forest and nutrient restoration, mitigation sites and banks, all operated and produced by private sector (primarily energy resource) entities
- Will produce thousands of acres of restored wetlands, miles of restored streams, open space, parkland and cleaner water
- All voluntary program
- No cost to Pennsylvania
- Creates green jobs
- Involves schools, universities, and not-for-profit organizations

## The \$100 Million Voluntary Pennsylvania Eco-Initiative (VPEI)

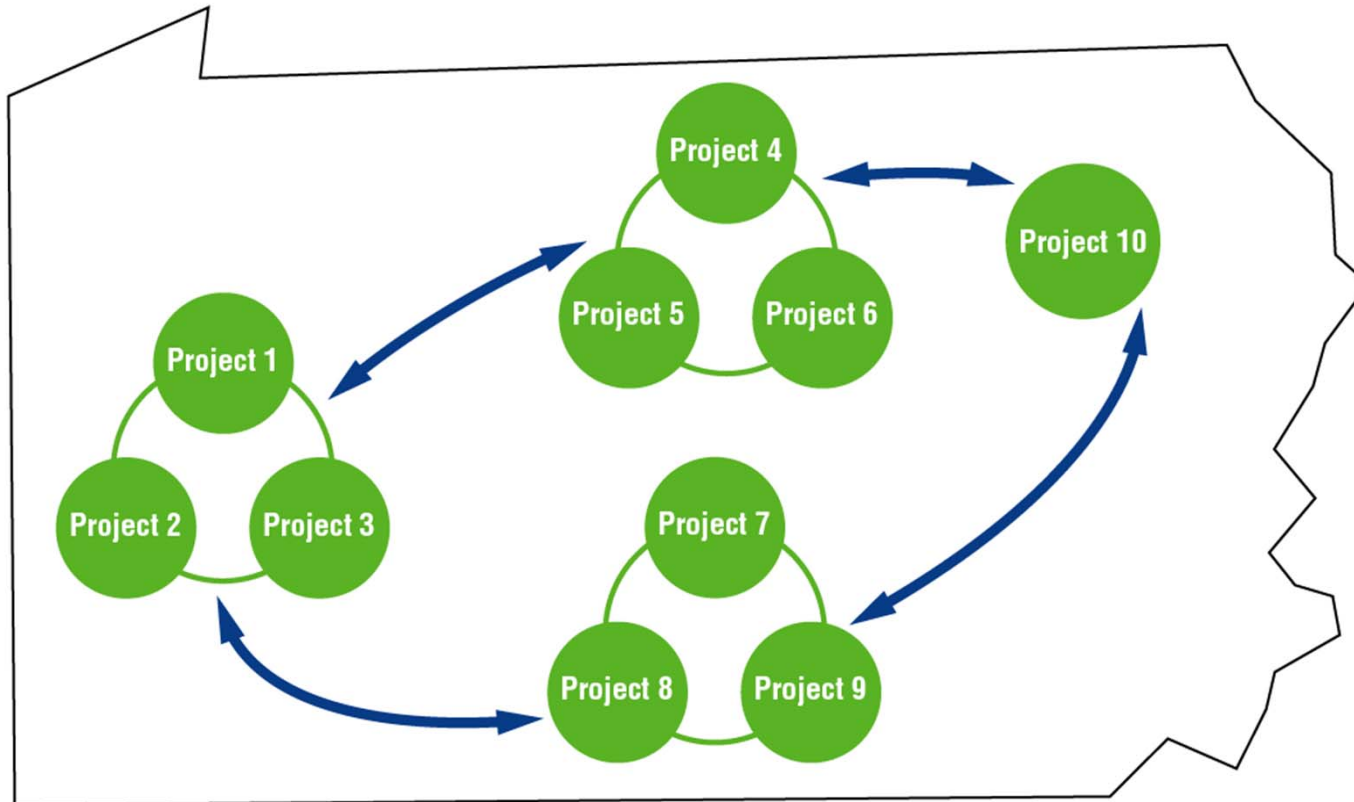
### Example of Companies Jointly Developing Wetland and Stream Restoration, Reforestation Projects



- Multiple companies fund projects— Mitigation Banks / Stream Restoration opportunities in key watersheds
- A single “umbrella bank” instrument (Agreement with Federal and State Regulators) allows for joint ownership, use and sharing of credits from each project

## The \$100 Million Voluntary Pennsylvania Eco-Initiative (VPEI)

### Example of Statewide Network of Company-Developed Wetlands, Steam Restoration and Reforestation Projects



- Multiple umbrella bank projects will be developed statewide producing a network of valuable and ecologically-beneficial projects in critical areas benefiting the energy industry and other ecological initiatives important to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

## But . . .

- Not all projects will be “mitigation banks” – some may produce no “credits”
- Even those projects gaining bank approval will not likely sell out of credits for many years, or at all.

## So . . .

- The environment will benefit from the restoration of the wetlands, streams, forests and floodplains for many years, far in advance of impacts to corresponding resources
- Projects will be sited in critical locations in watersheds throughout Pennsylvania where DEP, environmental advocates and others believe they will provide the greatest benefits to . . .

# Ecological Benefits

- Restoration of wetlands for:
  - Water quality
  - Flood control
  - Nutrient capture/sedimentation control
  - Diversity and growth of aquatic species
- Stream restoration for:
  - Water quality
  - Sedimentation and nutrient control
  - Improvements to aquatic resources
- Floodplain enhancement for:
  - Flood control
  - Water quality
  - Sedimentation control
- Reforestation for:
  - Water quality
  - Sedimentation control
  - Habitat diversity and enhancement
  - Carbon sequestration
- Placement of projects in “the right places” – not just in the “back of the Walmart”

# Financial Benefits

**Green Jobs!**

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- Ecological enhancements without government cost or enforcement requirements
- Economies of scale in production of multiple, large-scale, multi-faceted projects
- “Free” parkland and open space for communities
- Restoration, maintenance, monitoring and long-term stewardship opportunities for not-for-profit groups, educational institutions and communities

# Users of Ecological Credits (when available)

- Gas drillers
- Pipeline companies
- Coal mining
- Rock and gravel extraction
- Road construction



# Who / What Benefits from VPEI

- The comprehensive Pennsylvania environment
- Cash-strapped communities
- Parkland/open space for State and local governments
- Passive recreation/outdoorsmen and women
- Educational institutions and students
- Environmental and other not-for-profit organizations
- Participating landowners
- Industry seeking ecological solutions

# A Final Thought

The birds, fish and deer do not know, or care, what organization financed or developed their new, restored eco-habitats. . . but, they are appreciative . . . and so should we be.

Seize the opportunity.

WOMBLE CARLYLE  
**ECOLOGY**  
INNOVATIONS, LLC

