



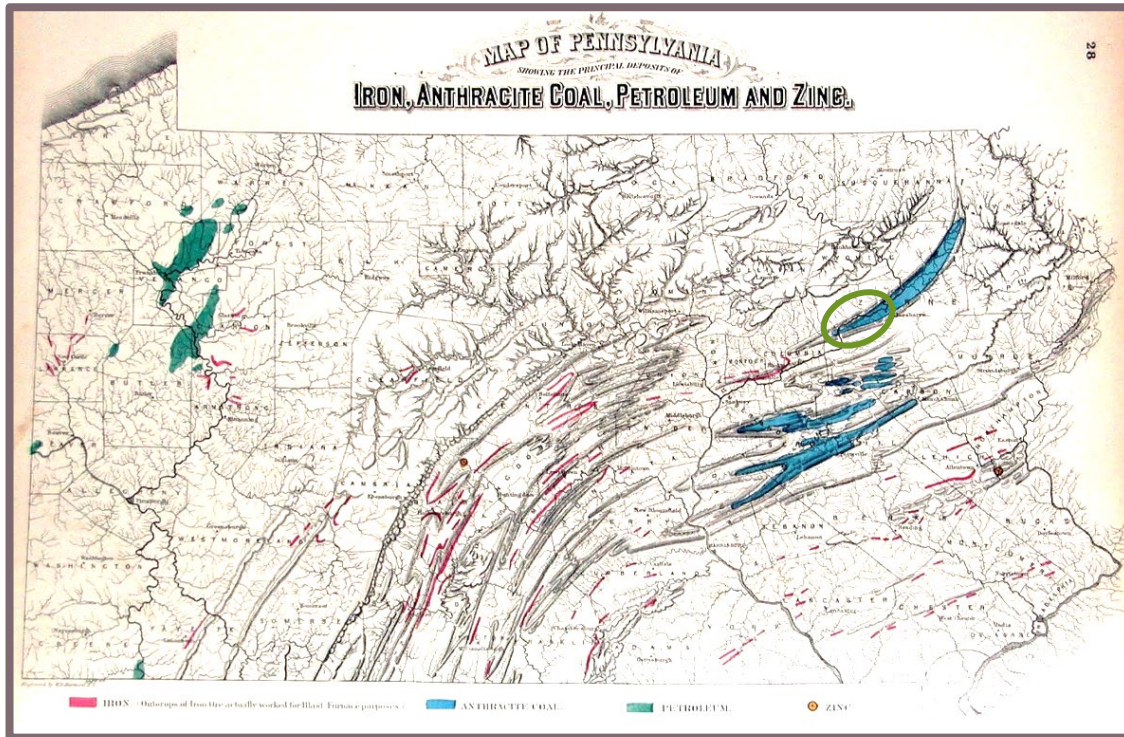
# Recovery through Reclamation in the Wyoming Valley

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2023 | USEPA MID-ATLANTIC REGION VIRTUAL SUMMIT

Elizabeth W. Hughes, EdD | Director of Communications  
Wednesday, May 17, 2023

# The Wyoming Valley of Northeastern Pennsylvania



"Map of Pennsylvania Showing the Principal Deposits of Iron, Anthracite Coal, Petroleum and Zinc," by H. F. Walling and O. W. Gray, published by Stedman, Brown & Lyon, Philadelphia, PA, 1872. Retrieved from [www.explorepahistory.com](http://www.explorepahistory.com)

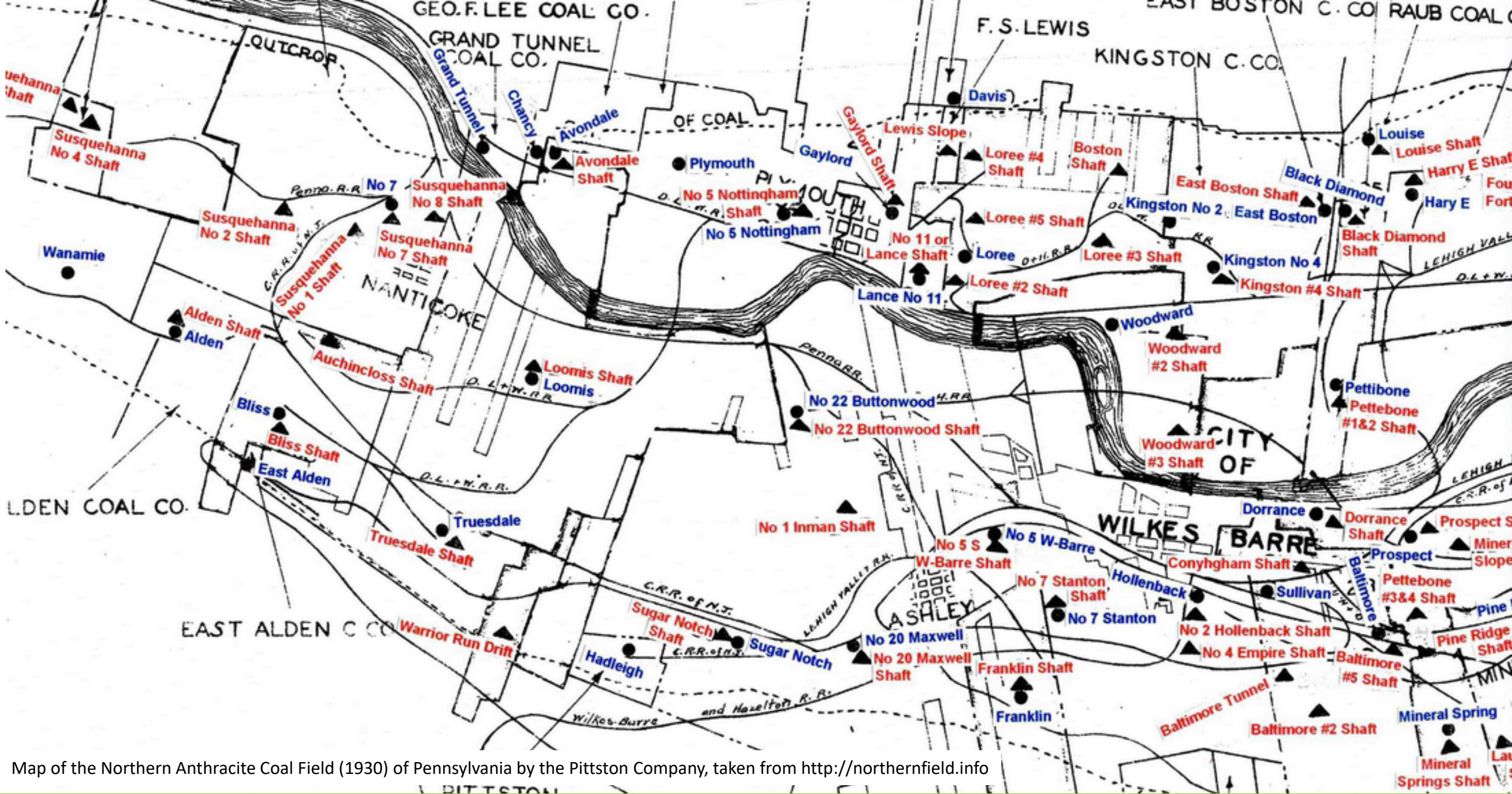
- Settled in the late 1700s
- Flourished with rise of the coal industry, particularly anthracite: a hard, clean, long-burning, and thus efficient fuel source.
- At the industry's peak, over 100 million tons of coal were mined annually for distribution along the East Coast.





Taken by the Glen Alden Safety Department, 1954; retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/pa2251/>



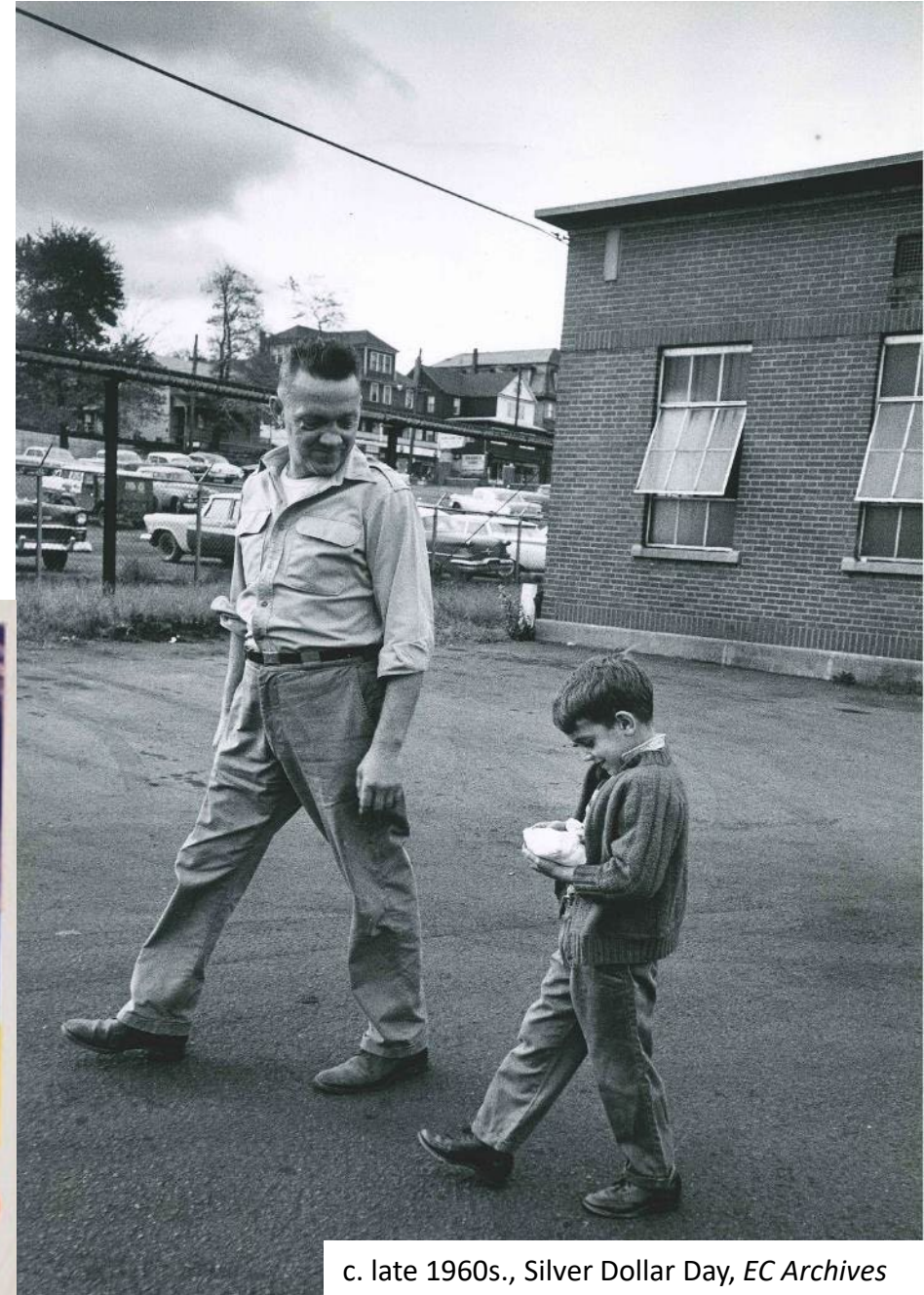


Map of the Northern Anthracite Coal Field (1930) of Pennsylvania by the Pittston Company, taken from <http://northernfield.info>





c. late 1960s., Silver Dollar Day, EC Archives



c. late 1960s., Silver Dollar Day, EC Archives

IT'S SWELL TO WAKE UP IN A NICE WARM HOUSE

...**EASY** TOO WITH **'blue coal'**

TRADE MARKED FOR YOUR PROTECTION

**The Shadow**  
RADIO'S MASTER DETECTIVE  
Tune in every Sunday Afternoon

'blue coal' starts quicker, burns better, lasts longer—it makes home heating easy. ★ 'blue coal' warms up the house in a hurry. For trouble-free, money-saving heat in every room, order a supply of 'blue coal' today.

★  
Phone for a free demonstration of the 'blue coal' deluxe heat regulator. Opens and closes furnace dampers automatically. Insures healthful temperature.

**PAVONIA ICE & COAL**  
23rd and Howell Streets  
Phone: 988

**PHONE TODAY**

c. 1940s, Blue Coal Blotter, comics.ha.com

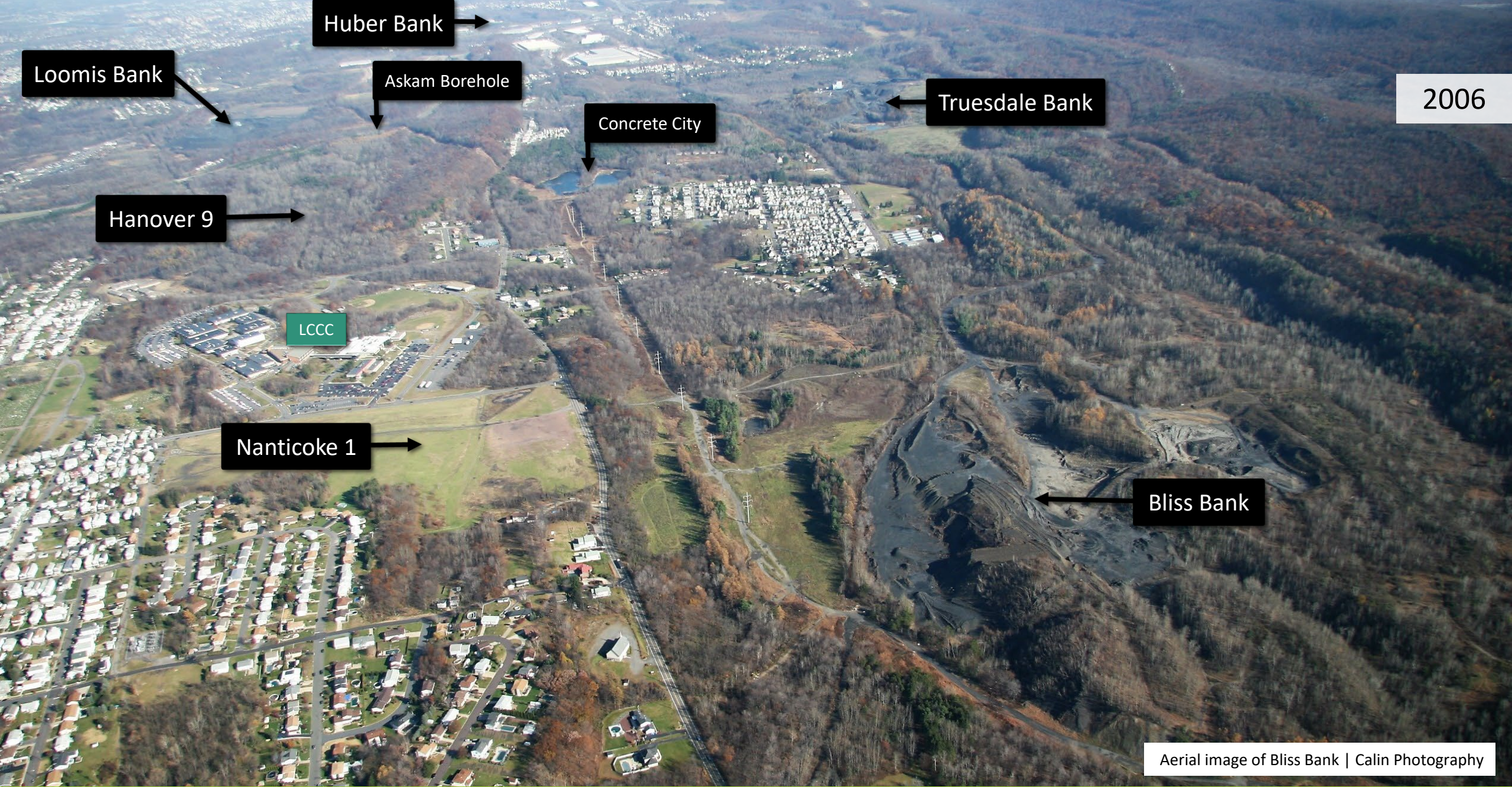


# Industry in Decline

- After World War II, mining began to decline.
- Knox mine disaster prompted local collapse.
- When companies shut down, operations were abandoned entirely.
- Pennsylvania has over 250,000 acres of abandoned mine lands in 45 of its 67 counties – higher than any other state.
- Associated water pollution contaminates more than 5,500 miles of Pennsylvania waterways.







Loomis Bank

Huber Bank

Askam Borehole

Concrete City

Truesdale Bank

2006

Hanover 9

LCCC

Nanticoke 1

Bliss Bank

Aerial image of Bliss Bank | Calin Photography



# Reverberating Effects

	Luzerne County	Wilkes-Barre	Nanticoke
<b>Population</b> (1920 v. 2021)	390,991 ↓ 324,825 (-17%)	78,888 ↓ 44,086 (-44%)	23,614 ↓ 10,588 (-55%)
<b>Unemployment</b>	5.9%	8.1%	6.7%
<b>Median HH Income</b>	\$56,534	\$42,430	\$49,934
<b>Poverty</b>	14.2%	20.4%	17.4%
<b>College Graduate</b>	24.0%	16.7%	18.6%

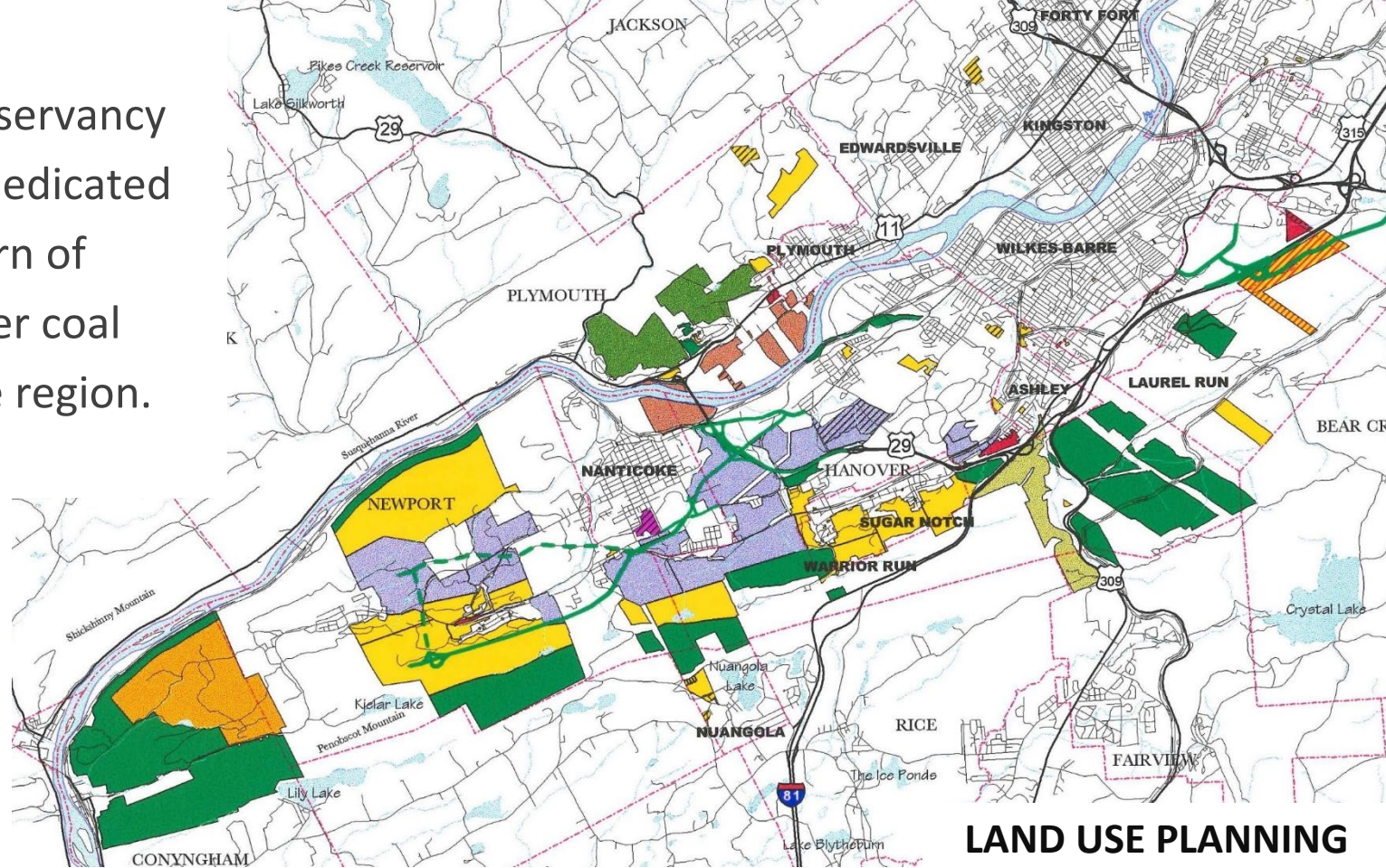


Huber Breaker, 1968; retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/pa2251/>



Founded in 1992, Earth Conservancy is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the reclamation and return of nearly 16,500 acres of former coal company-owned land to the region.

Our mission is to mend the environment, improve the community, and encourage economic growth.



**LAND USE PLANNING**



**MINE LAND RECLAMATION**



**WATERSHED RESTORATION**



**CONSERVATION**



**EDUCATION & OUTREACH**



# Concrete City

2003 • 36 acres • Hanover Twp. & City of Nanticoke

Project Cost: \$333,000

Funded by USEPA & Earth Conservancy





# Espy Run Constructed Wetlands Enhancement



2008 • AMD Mitigation • Project Cost of \$266,000 • Funded by USEPA and Earth Conservancy



# Franklin Bank



2009 • 15 acres • Hanover Township • Project Cost: \$337,000  
Funded by USEPA and Earth Conservancy



# Hanover 9 | Phases I & II



2014 • 149 acres • Hanover Township & City of Nanticoke

Project Cost: \$1.6 million

Funded by USEPA, PADEP, and Earth Conservancy



Bliss Bank | 2005





# Bliss Bank | On-Site









Bliss I

Bliss II

Bliss III

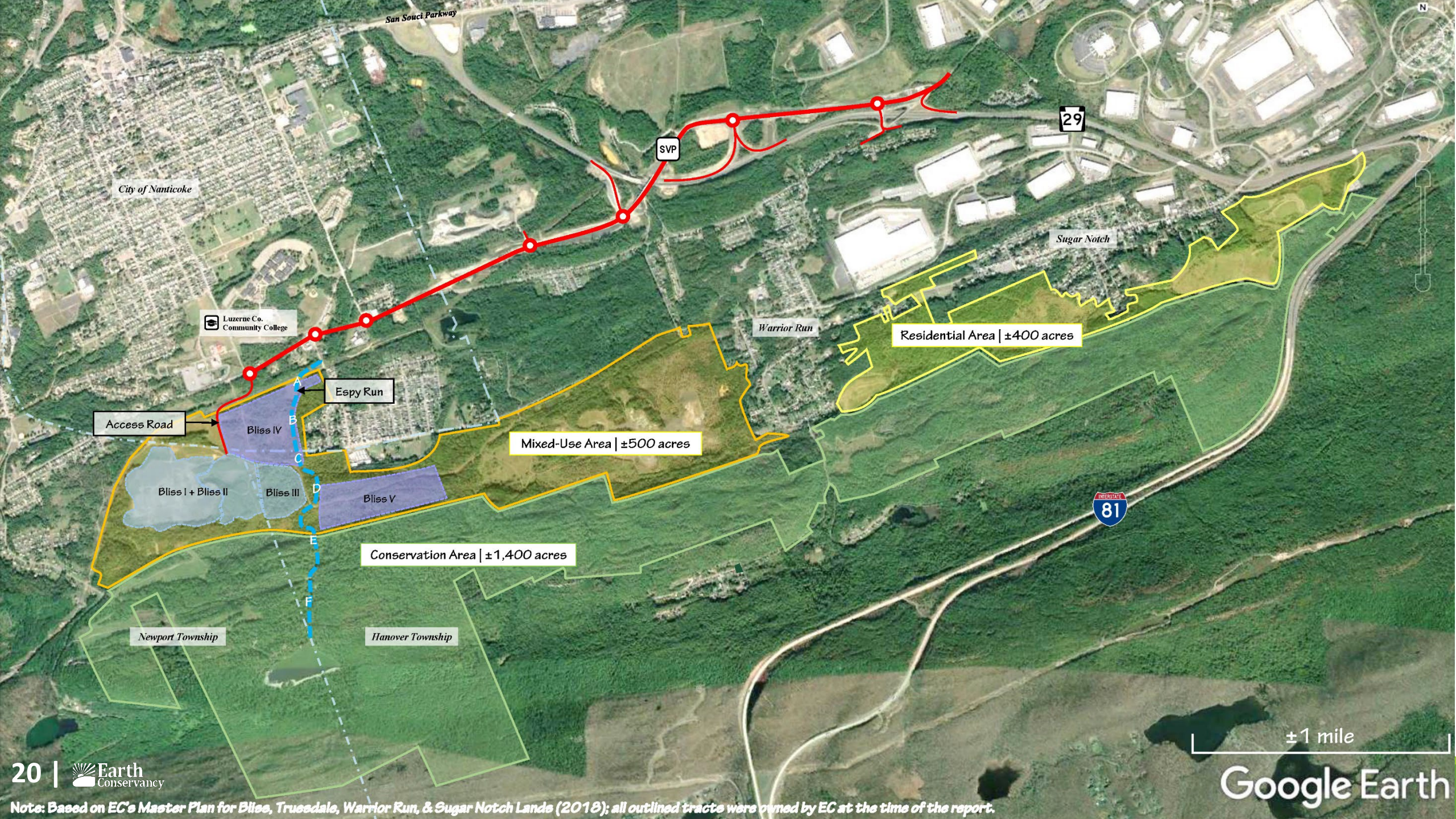












±1 mile

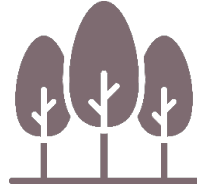
Google Earth



# Our Accomplishments



**2,000 ACRES  
RECLAIMED**



**8,677 ACRES  
CONSERVED**



**\$58.9 MILLION  
INVESTED**

Constructed **three** acid mine drainage treatment systems • Completed land use planning for an additional **4,000 acres** • Donated **755 acres** to 20 local entities, valued at \$3 million • Built three trail systems, totaling **12.5 miles** • Operate a large-scale compost facility serving Luzerne County residents and municipalities, processing roughly 27,600 yd<sup>3</sup> of green waste annually • Have managed a small community garden for **23 years** for local residents, offered free-of-charge.

## LAND USE PLAN GOALS & REALIZED ACREAGES • 16,496 ACRES TOTAL



**BUSINESS  
& INDUSTRY**  
2,200 / 1,706



**RESIDENTIAL  
& RESORT**  
3,800 / 2,300



**RECREATION  
& GREENSPACE**  
10,000 / 8,532



**OTHER**  
496 / 250

